

OUT OF THE WOODS AND ONTO THE PLAINS

July 31, 2013 marg Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2013, Excavation Alberta, Network architecture, Torrington Gopher Museum

So, I have a problem. People ask me for help and I say yes. Every time. That creates a bit of stress, but it also creates a lot of variety in my work. And it's archaeology, so it never really feels like work, does it?!

So, for the Day of Archaeology 2013 (which for me was July 29), I was extremely excited to be on the plains, after playing in the forest for the last few weeks. No bears, no spiders, no twigs in the eye. Just mosquitos and sunshine.

Our task was to mitigate a stone feature, which in this case was a cairn. This cairn had actually been identified two years ago, and was subject to Stage 1 excavations last year. A total of five 1-x-1 m units were excavated and they found a bunch of lithics, including a scraper and a multi-directional core. It's actually somewhat rare to find artifacts associated with stone features, so when that happens, mitigation often goes to Stage 2. That's where we came in.



This is me, ecstatic to be out of the woods and onto the plains.



This is Rachel, digging away.

I decided to complete excavations on the cairn itself, and to investigate areas adjacent to the units that were most productive from 2012. We dug and we dug and screened and mapped and found... squat. Well, we found the odd sketchifact but really nothing to write home about. We were allowed to excavate up to 6 metres here, but I decided that the last unit would have been pointless. Sigh.



Our cairn, post-ex and somewhat reconstructed.

So we shut it down, took some final photos, and left a reminder of what used to be here. A short and sweet day. Tomorrow, we will start mitigations on a much larger site, with multiple stone circles and cairns. This photo, taken at the Torrington Gopher Museum, is a (not-so-accurate) representation of what we are trying to investigate. We are crossing our fingers for some really good finds!



"An Indian Village" from the Torrington Gopher Museum, Alberta. A must-see!