

A SAMPLING OF COMMENTS POSTED TO THE CBC STORY

AND RELATED NEWSPAPER WEBPAGES ABOUT THE EVENTS AT ENGLISHMAN RIVER SITE ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

CBC NEWS | Homeowner charged \$35,000 by archeologists: Vancouver Island resident unaware her land held aboriginal bones, artifacts.

By Kathy Tomlinson, CBC News, Tuesday, April 20th, 2010

Story comments (318)

betherington (10:34 AM): What ever happened to "a man's home is his castle"? It's my property. I pay taxes on it. If I chose to build on it then I will build on it. If I find a cache of bones and relics then I will call the government to send an archeologist to examine the find. If it is a grave yard they can move it at their expense and have a ceremony with a reinterment at another location—at their cost. Now sod off and let me build my home on my property as is my right to do in Canada.

ScottinOttawa (11:20 PM):A law abiding, tax paying, fellow Canadian land owner is being bilked \$35,000 directly so that some unseen entity ... can add some more bones to his collection—FACT. This will NOT be used for science or the advancement of us as a species, as Canadians or even as historians. Do tell me, how many skeletons does this guy need in his closet before he's satisfied?...and if you care so much, start digging in your yard and I can bet, sooner or later, you will find a 'relic' of the past.

Bad Karma (10:53 PM): Working for an engineering company a couple of years back I found that there is a similar law in Alberta while working for a developer. While the costs were not so astronomical, the decision that an archeological exploration had to be done seemed to be a random decision by the government. Seems to be bogus to me.

Chad Getten (9:21 PM): So if a first nations person claims this is a heritage land, how does the government verify this? It would be nice if the article states that. If they just found a few arrowheads and part

of a skull, then what was so important about this land? What is the definition of heritage land? Can I go to the land where my dad grew up and claim it heritage because my great grandma and some old knives are buried there?

good-ol-boy (8:53 PM): Moral of the story is: if you find anything on your property hide it and don't tell a soul.

GaryCalgary (5:18 PM): Archeologists shouldn't be called unless something is found and then only to determine the significance. After all if you keep digging the odds get better and better that you'll find something! ... The way it is now it is a license for archeologists to print money. How do we know they didn't plant the part of a human skull there so they could "find it" again and use it to justify more digging?

Randy D (5:05 PM): We are gonna wish government in this country merely stopped at communism. These power hungry corrupt complete idiots are going to destroy our society. What an ugly time in Canuckistan history.

freesky2 (5:02 PM): What a gigantic scam the Natives and diggers have going here. Wow, and old dog. Yippie, let's all do a back flip. That certainly is worth going bankrupt over. This is government BS.

Keylimepie (4:57 PM): How is it heritage if they didn't even know it was there? It's not like it's an obvious site. How do I know the old owner didn't bury their dead dog in the garden? How do I know it's an extinct dog? If no person ever visits that site as a heritage site, how can it be deemed important after the fact? How is digging them up preserving the heritage? So many questions!

artiste (4:49 PM): This is absolutely ridiculous! All this situation is creating is that anyone who finds aboriginal artifacts on their property is going to keep very,

very silent. The government needs to rethink this system as it is not working. It only is harming innocent land owners, and creating a situation where native artifacts are considered a detriment instead of a treasured part of our heritage.

already (4:42 PM): If the government wants to run around declaring land a heritage site let them pay the costs involved. Shame on the government for passing their responsibility on to private citizens. Why are they digging around looking for human remains, only to put them in a box, and maybe bury them somewhere else years later. Let the dead rest where they are. These people have been dead for hundreds of years. Where's the honour and respect in digging them up, and putting their remains in a box. The whole thing sounds like some kind of make work project for archeologists. Try doing the same thing in a registered cemetery and you'd be charged with grave robbing, or grave desecration.

The ROOSTER (4:31 PM): I am a Historian and even I am totally disgusted at the way this family is being treated. Have to pay for their meals even? You have to be kidding me! Crap like this makes Canada look like a third world country. And as much as I hate government overspending this is an area where the government should step up. It is bad enough you dug up the land they are living on. Do not make them pay for it.

bonedustwoman (4:02 PM): Heritage sites in BC are protected because human history is important to everyone. If a subject property was going to impact a fish bearing stream, the homeowner pays for assessments and remediation, if a homeowner is going to impact the foreshore, they have to have the required professionals to provide assessments and remediate. Should the

government pay for this too? Absolutely not. Do we value our environment? Yes. The system is called USER PAY.... A word of advise to those of you who may need to hire an archaeologist. Don't break the law, and bring a nightmare upon yourself. Evaluate your consultant. Talk to their previous clients to verify they weren't hosed by a low-ball estimate. Ask to read some of their reports, to see how their work will contribute to the archaeological record in BC. Get other estimates. Not all consultants were created equally

Wow..throw away tax payer's money..... (3:54 PM): You think the archeological consultants care??? They are not held responsible to anybody.....feeding at the trough. They would make good politicians.

Lowebräu (3:49 PM): It's this kind of ridiculousness that got me out of Archaeology in the first place. This family owned the land for a long time, no one knew what was there, not even the Aboriginals. I don't see what we can learn from the relics at this site, I'm sure I'm going to hear from west coast Archaeologists for that comment. But seriously....there is so much data from similar sites in the records that it doesn't make a difference. Is this about the Archaeologists or the Aboriginals? It seems like a cash grab for the Archaeological firm and a press grab for the Aboriginals. Life goes on, do we need to dig up EVERYTHING from our past? The only way to preserve culture is what we do everyday to remember it, what gives archaeologists the right to dig this stuff up in the first place? Leave sleeping ghost dogs lie.

Araneas (3:44 PM): LotusRich wrote: "I can't believe the disrespect towards the First Nations ancestors by some of these posters. I wonder if their tune would change if some developer wanted to dig up the cemetery where their ancestors are buried." They do dig up my ancestors—it's detailed in a BBC show called Time Team. And frankly it's no big deal to me especially when they were buried 1000+ years ago. The worst thing about draconian charges and fines is that it will lead to the destruction of archeology of all sorts. Re-bury and build—that's how they do it in Egypt.

DavidFrumforPM (3:44 PM): I thought people with archaeology degrees all worked at Starbucks. Nice to see there are a few more options out there—screwing over homeowners.

Veteran (3:37 PM): The archeologists are more interested in protecting their tenure, grant allocations and the resulting income than anything else. These types of digs should be performed by archeology students under the supervision of their instructors, negating the need to bill the property owner entirely. These same instructors, who are already being paid by the property owners through taxation, see this as an easy cash cow and have no intention of supporting any equitable resolution to this.

Northstrongfree (3:30 PM): It's time to re-write the Heritage Conservation Act. Point. Blank.

Houseman (3:24 PM): Pretty expensive dog bones...

sigh_ottawa wrote (3:22 PM): Hmmm, lets see, \$35,000 to pay the bill OR build now and accept the fine late of only \$2,000... yup, makes sense. Lets face it, no one would go to jail for this and the fine is only up to \$2,000... So much for doing the right thing. Good luck, hope this gets resolved somehow in your favour !

CaptainKangeroo (3:19 PM): How do they know the archaeologists didn't just place the bones there knowing they could charge an astronomical amount??? Very suspicious!!

Bad Karma (3:15 PM): What a crock. Once you have found one bone, you've found them all.

Heritage dig leads to surprise bill for Vancouver Island family
By Walter Cordery, Vancouver Sun, April 20th, 2010.
Story Comments (47)

anonymous (11:48 AM): I think it is unacceptable that this elderly, "rule following" couple was basically preyed upon by an apparent money grab. Does this archeologist actually think that these people would have allowed him to continue his "study"

if they knew it would be at that cost? Give me a bloomin' break!!

anonymous (4:00 AM): If you find something on your property and it looks valuable, sell it on the e-bay. Otherwise, throw it out. Never, ever tell anybody.

anonymous (3:20 AM): Yes, if the government wants artifacts, let the government pay for the artifacts. Not everything thinks these intellectual hobbies should be payed for. Actually, let the people that do the dig pay for the expenses themselves.

Old bones cost family \$35,000: Construction discovery was reported to government which made owners pay to excavate
Walter Cordery, The Nanaimo Daily News, April 21, 2010

island girl (9:36 AM): So what if there has been human habitation in the province for thousands of years? Don't you think most parts of the world are in the same situation? Native bones are no more sacred than any other nationalities'. To think so would be racist. We're all the same. If they value the bones so much, they should pay for the excavation and compensate the landowner.

Jpb (10:30 AM): way to go archeologist, forgot to charge for the napkins... used to clean your nose.....you are unreal

general custard (6:07 PM): If I ever find any old bones while digging in my garden, I plan to give them a new resting placenanaimo river from the top of cedar bridge

Our world isa cracked out vacuum (7:33 PM): \$17,000 for a barking dog, \$35,000 for a bone! People here are WAY to up-tight! Political correctness sucks-HUGE!

Cluck (8:52 PM): I found chicken bones in my backyard last summer. Can anybody point me in the right direction for a quality archaeologist? I feel that determining if they are from a free range frying chicken, or from KFC is really vital to the bones... I Mean, what if those chicken bones were really important to the province, or to some chicken farmer? They may even be Prehistoric!