



Blackfoot Crossing

historical park

Blackfoot Crossing

The Blackfoot Crossing area was of particular significance to the Siksika (Blackfoot) First Nation as a traditional wintering ground and gathering place.

It is also a significant location in Canadian history; this is the site where the signing of Treaty No.7 took place, with the Government and the tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy. The Blackfoot Confederacy consisted of the Siksika, Piikani (Peigan), Kainaiwa (Blood), Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee), and the Stoney (Bears paw, Chiniki, and Wesley/Goodstoney).



In late September 1877, representatives of the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Canadian and British governments with the insistence of Siksika Chief Crowfoot became the official gathering place and entered peacefully Treaty 7 negotiations here at Blackfoot Crossing.

The choice of this site was controversial among the Blackfoot peoples at the time. The leaders of the Kainai (Blood) and Piikani (Peigan) tribes preferred to meet at Fort Macleod, the original site chosen for the negotiations.

Chief Crowfoot, however, would not meet in the fort, and as Crowfoot was deemed by government officials as a First Nations leader whose influence was critical at the treaty negotiations, Blackfoot Crossing was chosen instead. After the signing of Treaty 7, Blackfoot Crossing became the heart of Siksika reserve lands.

Treaty Seven Monument

The site tells of the agreement made between the five Blackfoot Confederacy Tribes, the Blackfoot, Bloods, Peigan, Stoney (now Nakoda) and the Sarcee (Tsuu T'ina) and the government.

The signing of the treaty is a true historical event which has had a major impact on the evolution of the Blackfoot Nation (Siksika).



A monument exists at this location at Blackfoot Crossing to mark the signing of Treaty 7 and the centennial celebrations with Prince Charles attending a re-enactment in 1977 of the Treaty.



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Poundmakers Monument

The site of Poundmaker is marked with by a stone circle and a small cairn. Poundmaker was Chief Crowfoot's adopted son. On their first encounter, Crowfoot was immediately struck by the resemblance of Poundmaker to his dead son, who had been killed during a raid on a Cree camp. Crowfoot invited Poundmaker to stay with the Blackfoot at Blackfoot Crossing as his adopted son.

Poundmaker became a visionary Cree chief, and demonstrated his concern for the future of his people in his reluctance to accept Treaty # 6.

Like his adoptive father- Crowfoot, Poundmaker counseled peace with the whites. In the face of growing frustration over government mismanagement culminating in the 1885 North-West Rebellion, he urged restraint, and was able to prevent further bloodshed at the battle of Cut-Knife Creek.

Following the rebellion, Poundmaker was sentenced to 4 years and jailed at Stoney Mountain penitentiary for "treason-felony", he was release from jail after serving one year due to poor health. After his release he returned to the Blackfoot Crossing Reserve in 1886, 4 months later he suffered a severe lung hemorrhage and died.

Only later was he acknowledged for his uncompromising role as a peacemaker and defender of his people. His burial site was marked by an Alberta Government cairn in 1961, but he was exhumed and reburied at his reserve in Saskatchewan, in 1967.





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Chief Crowfoot's "Isapo-muxika" Grave Site

The grave is located near Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. The grave is marked with a cross. The life of Crowfoot and the Blackfoot people are inextricably linked.

Chief Crowfoot is commemorated for his instrumental role in leading his people through changes on the Blackfoot Reserve. He was truly “the Father of his people”.

Crowfoot was born along the Belly River in approximately 1830, Crowfoot had been born into the Blood Tribe, but later became chief of the Siksika. He earned his name after becoming wounded while fighting the Crow tribe.

By 1865 he had become a minor chief of the Siksika. In that same year, Crowfoot met Catholic missionary Father Lacombe. Following the smallpox epidemic of 1869-70, Crowfoot became one of the two remaining main Siksika chiefs. He welcomed the North-West Mounted Police when they arrived in 1874 because he feared the effects of the whisky trade on his people.

Crowfoot played a pivotal role in the Treaty Seven negotiations. At their conclusion, he asked that the government be charitable and that the police protect the Blackfoot. He soon became disillusioned, however, with the Department of Indian Affairs and the role of Indian agents on the reserve. He died in 1890.

Last Tipi Site

The site is marked by a circle of stones and a hearth. Crowfoot returned to this final campsite at the end of his life and nearby is the final resting place of his favorite horse.

For more information please contact us at 1-888-654-6274 or email us:
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