

Historic and Prominent Treaty 7 Figures

Chief Crowfoot

Chief Crowfoot was born as Astoxkomi-Shot Close in the year 1830 in what is now known as Southern Alberta.¹ After showing bravery in battle he was given his adult name, Isapomuxika, Crow Indian's Big Foot, which when translated to English became Crowfoot.¹ As a young man, Crowfoot showed himself to be a skilled leader and a brave warrior, and he became chief of the Blackfoot Big Pipes band in 1865.¹ In 1877, after witnessing the changes that were happening on Blackfoot territory, such as an increase of settlers, small pox epidemics and the dwindling of the buffalo, Crowfoot signed the Treaty 7 agreement with the Queen's representatives and the North West Mounted Police.¹ Despite the treatment of his people by the government, Chief Crowfoot used diplomacy and constraint during his leadership. He became known as a major influencer of peace and often mediated tribal disagreements.¹ Crowfoot rejected an alliance with the Riel rebellion of 1885, avoiding bloodshed, violence and the annihilation of his people. Ultimately, this earned him the respect of both the Blackfoot and Canadian officials.

Chief David Crowchild

David Crowchild was born in 1899 on the Tsuu T'ina reserve and was elected as Chief of the Tsuu T'ina people in 1946.² During his time as Chief, he established himself as a

¹ Chief Crowfoot: Determined leader through difficult times. (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.windpeaker.com/news/footprints/chief-crowfoot-determined-leader-through-difficult-times/>

² BGRS - Engaging Students. (2018). Retrieved from <http://engagingstudents.blackgold.ca/index.php/division-ii/soc-d2/social-4/4-2-the-stories-histories-and-the-people-of-alberta/let-s-bring-alberta-s-history-to-life/builders-of-alberta/crowchild/>

distinguished and diligent leader, dedicated to creating strong relations and peace between the people of Calgary and the Sarcee First Nations. Crowchild worked tirelessly to improve infrastructure for the people on the Tsuu T'ina reserve. He created jobs for community members by building a school, repairing roads and establishing a farm and cattle herds.² Even after his tenure as chief ended, Crowchild remained involved in the community and was a member of many organizations such as the Calgary Pioneers, the Old Timers Association, the Canadian Citizenship Council and the Indian Association of Alberta.³ Crowchild is remembered as a wise person who worked diligently to increase the prosperity of his people and who was dedicated to increasing equality among all people.

Dr. Vivian Ayoungman

Dr. Vivian Ayoungman, a residential school survivor from the Siksika Nation Reserve, was the first Indigenous person to graduate from the University of Calgary in 1970.⁴ After receiving her Bachelor of Education, she taught in Morely for three years before returning to the University of Calgary to help establish the Indian Student University Program.⁴ Afterwards, Ayoungman headed South to obtain a Master in Education, followed by a Doctor of Education from Arizona State University.⁴ Throughout this time, Ayoungman has become a champion for Indigenous learning. The Old Sun Community College, the residential school of Ayoungman's youth, now houses what Ayoungman considers her most important work to date: Developing and teaching a Blackfoot Studies program.⁵ In addition to the program running at Old Sun

³ Chief David Crowchild (1899-1982). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://albertachampions.org/Champions/david-crowchild/>

⁴ YW She Who Dares - 150 Women through 150 Years. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.ywcalgary.ca/ywdares/>

Community College, Ayoungman has developed a Blackfoot language learning app which allows users to learn at their own pace. The language app has 29 categories of phrases, while also holding cultural significance as it includes several cultural songs, lullabies, historical images and videos.⁵

Elaine Cairns

Elaine Cairns, the executive director of the Further Education Society of Alberta (FESA), is the 2017 recipient of the Chief David Crowchild Memorial Award.⁶ This award acknowledges the efforts and contributions of a person or group who creates bridges of understanding through cross-cultural experiences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures within the City of Calgary. Recipients of the award encourage or support Indigenous people in areas of education, employment and training, while helping to shape an understanding of the uniqueness and value of Indigenous culture. Cairns is a literacy expert who has developed both curricula and facilitator training for Indigenous learning programs in isolated communities and has been recognized for her outstanding work within these communities.⁶ Cairns work embraces Indigenous traditions and she works with community members and families to incorporate the knowledge of Elders about how to share traditions, culture and information and build relationships both inside and outside their communities.

⁵ Solway, T. (2016). Blackfoot app developed in former residential school. Retrieved from <http://www.calgaryjournal.ca/index.php/news/3197-blackfoot-app-developed-in-former-residential-school>

⁶ City of Calgary (2017). Chief David Crowchild Memorial Award. Retrieved March 05, 2018, from <http://www.calgary.ca/CS/SPS/CNS/Pages/First-Nations-Metis-and-Inuit-Peoples/Calgary-Aboriginal-Urban-Affairs-Committee/Chief-David-Crowchild-Memorial-Award.aspx>