



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

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Archaeology podcast geared at educating public earns Dr. Ken Holyoke and on-air partner national award

Dr. Ken Holyoke will be the first to tell you how much he loves to talk — especially about archaeology — and that enthusiasm has been recognized with a national award.

Holyoke, an assistant professor in the University of Lethbridge’s Department of Geography and Environment, and his on-air partner Dr. Gabriel Hrynick of the University of New Brunswick, have been awarded the 2024 Public Communications Award from the Canadian Archaeological Association for their unique collaboration — the New Brunswick Archaeology Podcast (NBAP).



The award comes as the duo are putting a wrap on their second season of NBAP, and further validates the concept that led them to create the podcast in the first place — that the general public has an appetite for history. Through their work they are addressing gaps in public education relating to archaeology, archaeological scholarship, heritage legislation, cultural resource management (CRM) and Indigenous pasts.

“We were fully anticipating if we could reach 10 people, that’d be 10 more than we did before,” laughs Holyoke. “We sort of make fun of ourselves in saying that the reach of the podcast in the first season alone far exceeded the impact of any of our academic papers.”

Holyoke encourages newcomers to NBAP to forego the pilot podcast where he admits the two were nervous, meandering and lacking proper production elements, such as good audio. They’ve grown in confidence since and now present a polished, informative and focused show. The production value is also greatly enhanced thanks to the work of ULethbridge Digital Audio Arts student Emanuel Akel. He was brought on board thanks to a ULethbridge SSHRC Exchange grant the duo received that allowed them to enhance

their product while giving an undergraduate student an outstanding work-integrated learning opportunity.

The podcast is centred in New Brunswick because Holyoke does the majority of his work there, he's a born and raised New Brunswicker, and he recognized a dearth of well-established public archeology mechanisms. He and Hrynick explain in a recently published [article](#) about their podcast that archaeology is at a crucial moment for public engagement.

"Pressing societal needs and legal decisions, including Indigenous land claims, increasingly draw on archaeological information," they write. "At the same time, threats to the archaeological record from climate change and development are increasing. In response to these concerns, public archaeology is increasingly necessary as it brings archaeological research to the general public."

Holyoke and Hrynick even presented a live podcast in a New Brunswick tavern during season two and are already imagining where season three might take them. As they approach a landmark 10,000th download, they're just above 8,300 now, they're keen to show their new media approach and open-access format can be applicable in other regions of the country.

"Based on the feedback to the podcast via our email address, social media engagements and attendance at a recent live recording, there is considerable public interest in archaeology," they note.

Holyoke describes running into random people who have mentioned they tune into their show, a student group from St. Mary's University in Halifax that plays it in their lab, and a crew of archaeological consultants in northern B.C who listen in while on the job.

"There are a bunch of people we'd like to interview for season three and we're looking at focusing broadly on the theme of human-environment interactions," he says. "It's great, it's turned into something we really enjoy doing and we want it to continue to grow, in part because there's quite a bit of effort that goes into it now and we'd like to be able to reach more people."

The podcast is hosted through [RSS.com](#), which facilitates posting the podcasts to services such as Spotify or Apple. The full show lineup is available on Spotify [here](#).

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/archaeology-podcast-geared-educating-public-earns-dr-ken-holyoke-and-air-partner-national>

PHOTOS:

Ken-Holyoke — Dr. Ken Holyoke, University of Lethbridge

Ken-Gabriel — Dr. Ken Holyoke, left, and Dr. Gabriel Hrynich, University of New Brunswick

Ken-Gabriel-Live — Holyoke, left, and Hrynich podcasting a live event in a local New Brunswick pub.

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.