WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2025 REPORT CARD

Collecting, Preserving, and Sharing Stories Since 1846

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Strengthening Relationships with First Nations

In 2025, the Wisconsin Historical Society deepened its commitment to collaboration with First Nations through meaningful partnerships, repatriation efforts, educational resources, and inclusive exhibit development—advancing shared goals of respect, representation, and stewardship.

SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND ON-GOING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- Tribal Historic Preservation Officers viewed 900 items to further repatriation efforts of cultural items and to ensure appropriate care of belongings held by WHS; 11 consultations resulted in 42 cultural items entering the repatriation process.
- Continued collaboration with First Nations in Wisconsin to integrate over 250 Indigenous stories into the new Wisconsin History Center (WHC); more than 300 items identified to illustrate these storylines.
- Commissioned 17 works for WHC by First Nations artists representing Bad River, Forest County Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Menominee, Oneida, Sokaogon Chippewa Community, and Stockbridge-Munsee.
- Commissioned 11 works of Powwow, Dance, and Veterans regalia for WHC from Bad River, Lac du Flambeau, Lac Courte Oreilles, Menominee, Oneida, Stockbridge-Munsee, Santee Sioux, White Earth, and Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska.
- Collaborated on filming and media production for WHC with Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Menominee, Oneida, and Sokaogon Nations.
- Hosted 3-day Ojibwe Elders Gathering on Madeline Island to shape Chief Buffalo and 1854 Treaty of La Pointe storylines for WHC.
- Displayed installations by local Ojibwe artists at Madeline Island Museum, featuring April Stone (Bad River), Joseph Gokee (Bad River), and Nathan Gordon (Red Cliff).
- Supported and shared expertise at Culture Keepers conference, "Honoring Community, Culture, and Collaboration," and hosted tour and reception at Madeline Island Museum.
- Offered First Nations–related seasonal programming at Madeline Island Museum, including Canoe Journeys, birchbark teaching, and lodge construction. Shared video of community celebration honoring the maiden voyage of wiigwaas jiimaan (birchbark canoe) built by Red Cliff Band members.
- Collaborated with Lac Courte Oreilles and Menominee nations on replacing or creating historical markers that center First Nations stories and perspectives.
- Collaborated with First Nations on communications about Wąąkšikhomįk (Lake Mendota) canoe recovery and preservation, including shared participation with Bad River Band for PBS-Wisconsin programming.
- Assisted THPOs and Tribal members regarding archaeological site data and reporting, including Fond du Lac Band projects in Superior.
- Partnered with Sokaogon Chippewa Community on National Register of Historic Places nomination for the house of Chief William and Dora Ackley.
- Attended and exhibited Press and Education offerings at WIEA conference at Menominee Casino and Resort in Keshena.
- Engaged with First Nations educators and THPOs on manuscript reviews of forthcoming 3rd edition of *Wisconsin: Our State, Our Story* textbook.
- Collaborated with advisors from Lac Courte Oreilles, Rosebud Sioux, and Ho-Chunk Nations to develop the *Wisconsin Adventures: Myths and Legends* publication.
- Collaborated with Ho-Chunk Nation's Education Department on professional development for teachers in Wisconsin Dells School District.
- Published article by Ho-Chunk citizens Ritchie Brown and Casey Brown about preserving mounds in southern Wisconsin in *Wisconsin Magazine of History*.
- Released paperback edition of Patty Loew's book *Seventh Generation Earth Ethics*.
- Facilitated bulk purchases of WHS Press's Ojibwe Traditions activity books by First Nations Studies program of Milwaukee Public Schools and American Indian Family and Children Services of St. Paul, MN.
- Organized annual Local History and Historic Preservation conference at Ho-Chunk Convention Center and offered complimentary registration and travel stipend to staff and Elders of Tribal museums and cultural centers.
- Hosted "Native American Genealogy: Honoring Ancestors" webinar with Stefanie Gerberding (Red Cliff Ojibwe).
- Held research/teaching sessions with two UW–Madison American Indian Studies classes: *American Indians in the City* and *Listening to the Land*.
- Highlighted on WHS social media First Nations programming and histories by Tribal museums and cultural centers.
- Shared with WHS staff various First Nations resources and information about external webinars and programs for professional development.