

Waseca  
County  
History  
Center

# HISTORY NOTES

315 NE 2nd Avenue P.O. Box 314 Waseca MN 56093

www.historical.waseca.mn.us



## What's Inside:



**Just Leave It Be!**

### WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- All artifacts found on public lands are protected by state and federal laws. It is illegal and unethical to collect artifacts on public lands.
- Artifacts include anything made or used by humans including weapons, tools, and files, pottery, building materials, coins, metal pieces, and farm-related items.
- Collecting artifacts disrupts the archaeological record. What is USGS significant about an artifact is its placement in the time/space context of a site. Once an artifact is moved, that information is lost forever.
- You may instruct or photograph artists, but never dig, use or photograph sites or collect artifacts from the ground on-site.
- If you find an artifact, leave the place. Do not touch it. Report the location to the nearest Forest Service office.

Thank you for your help in preserving America's past.



## March Membership Drive 2023!

WASECA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### USED BOOK SALE

- NO Encyclopedias
- NO VHS Tapes
- NO Bibles
- NO Textbooks

**JULY 12TH-16TH, 2023**  
**WASECA COUNTY FAIR**  
**HODGSON HALL**

WWW.HISTORICAL.WASECA.MN.US

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P.O. Box 314, Waseca, MN 56093  
315 Second Avenue N.E., 507-835-7700  
www.historical.waseca.mn.us

**WCHS 2023 Board of Directors:**

Diane Beckmann, President  
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Jackie Peters  
Anna Pollock  
Carol Raimann  
Mikhail Rostislavovich  
Dave Zika

**Staff:**

Joan Mooney, Executive Director  
Grant Administration, Programs & Research  
director@historical.waseca.mn.us

Pauline Fenelon, Artifacts/Library Curator  
paulinef@historical.waseca.mn.us

Amanda Larkin, Museum Manager  
amandal@historical.waseca.mn.us

Virginia McCarthy, Researcher, Genealogy  
research@historical.waseca.mn.us

**Museum Spring-Summer Hours**

Open Tuesdays-Fridays, 9-5 p.m.

**Bailey-Lewer Library**

Open for research Tuesdays and Fridays,  
9-5

**Traveling?  
Please call ahead.**

**WCHS is a recipient of**

**Thrivent Financial Choice  
Dollars Program**

With Thrivent Choice®, you can recommend where some of Thrivent Financials charitable outreach funds go. Since 2010, more than \$370 million has been distributed to churches and nonprofits nationwide.

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**From the Executive Director**

Joan Mooney

Warm regards to all of you! Another season on the wane. Although we still have some time left for complaining, we have for the most part, weathered through another Minnesota winter!

With mud season approaching, I thought it was a good time to revisit the topic of found objects. The feature article “Finders Keepers...Or Maybe Not” addresses the basic question “what do I do if I find a culturally sensitive object?”

This question has been posed to staff enough to know that objects have been and continue to be found in our county. I use the term “culturally sensitive” in reference to human remains, indigenous items like tools, shards, ceremonial objects or other unidentifiable objects that may raise question of historic value.

Most of the laws in place protect federal and state lands, including parks, rivers, lakes etc. The laws were enacted over the years to protect and preserve our landscapes and historically significant places from destructive human activity.

A great resource for what you can and cannot do can be found on the Minnesota State Archaeologist website.

<https://mn.gov/admin/archaeologist/the-public/resources/faqs/>

If objects are found on private property, they belong to the owner of the property. There is however, a rising awareness and opportunity to return indigenous objects to their place of origin as mentioned in the article. We, in recent past, fielded a phone call from a gentleman doing just that. He was able to contact a tribal representative who traveled from out of state to retrieve the artifact and return it to its place of origin.

As stated in the article, the artifacts in the WCHS collection were donated by Waseca County residents. Some were found in the fields, some were purchased at garage sales, some were given to the Boy Scouts. We continue searching for more information regarding the acquisition of these Native artifacts . If any one knows the back story of how these items were acquired we would appreciate a call. In the meantime, the artifacts are secure and respectfully displayed. They have been cataloged and reported to the State Archaeologist Office and are ours to keep.

If you come upon a possible burial site or human remains on public or private property, call the sheriff.

It’s fun to explore and collect but it’s good to know what the law says we can and cannot do. It’s also good to know there are ways to give back if we choose to.

Thank you to all of you who contributed to our “Year End Giving” campaign. WCHS received \$7330. The money will be used for operational support.

We are also launching our March Membership Campaign! Thank you to all current and renewing members. Membership support also keeps our buildings staffed, maintained and our artifacts protected.

Another popular fund raising event is the WCHS Used Book Sale. We host this event every other year in Hodgson Hall during the Waseca County Fair in July. We will start accepting donations in May. Please do not drop off books at Hodgson Hall or the museum without an appointment.

Thank you and Happy Spring!

Joan



# Share Your Skills

Do you know how valuable your skills can be to WCHS? Do you know you can be credited for donating your time? In kind labor can be assigned a cash value and considered a donation. Here is a list of volunteer opportunities that would greatly assist staff and enhance our efforts to preserve your history. If you would like to consider any of these opportunities please give us a call. (507) 835-7700

- Website Optimization and Enhancement: 5 hrs. per month.  
Work with staff to add content and explore website function and capabilities.
- Maintenance: As needed, painting, exterior ramp staining, weed whacking here and there, Hodgson Hall prep.
- Bailey-Lewer House Garden maintenance: As needed, assist in bed prep and planting, watering and weeding.
- Hofmann Apiaries Pollinator Gardens: As needed, Assist in bed prep and planting, watering and weeding.

## In Recognition of Two Very Special Members and Volunteers

The Waseca County Board of Directors and Staff would like to extend our condolences to the families of Keith Smith and Don Wynnemer. Don served as President on the WCHS Board of Directors for many years and is an Honorary Lifetime Member. Don was an incredible volunteer and a generous supporter of WCHS. Keith Smith came on board after retirement, just in time to join Don and crew in restoring the Bailey/Lewer Library. Without the countless hours invested, the Bailey Lewer Library would not exist.



Thank you Don and Keith



Thank you Virginia McCarthy for donating two new mannequins!

WASECA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**JULY 12TH-16TH, 2023**  
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HODGSON HALL

[WWW.HISTORICAL.WASECA.MN.US](http://WWW.HISTORICAL.WASECA.MN.US)

**Drop Off Begins May 1**

Please call ahead to schedule a drop off time at Hodgson Hall. Thank You!

## STAFF

**Pauline Fenelon**

Artifact & Library Curator



**Jan Hunter**

Research & Genealogy



**Virginia McCarthy**

Research & Genealogy



**Amanda Larkin**

Museum Manager



# FINDERS KEEPERS, Maybe Not...

When the soil warms it heaves. The process of freezing and thawing creates pockets that fill with dirt, pushing objects like rocks closer to the ground surface. Rocks can be thought of as the earliest crop of the season and must be picked in preparation for spring planting. Because of this perennial occurrence, many interesting objects work their way up to the surface and believe it or not, into our collection!

The WCHS collection contains many stone tools. Tens of thousands of years old. These items were found in the fields of Waseca County, evidence of indigenous people who lived here thousands of years ago. The grooved hammers, knives, axes, grinding stones, arrowheads and more are on display in the WCHS museum. Also on display are more recent artifacts (late 1800 - early 1900) representing the indigenous people of Waseca County: moccasins, beaded bags, pouches and trading objects. Some are ceremonial and some utilitarian. The items represent the Dakota, and Ojibwe nation. The items in this collection have been cataloged and reviewed by the Minnesota Historical Society and The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. So far, we have not been asked to return any of these items to native tribes, however, if asked we will return selected objects to the tribe of origin.

## Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA)

Many laws and regulations have been established to protect cultural and natural resources on federal and public lands. The Antiquities Act of 1906 led to laws to preserve America's archeological places on public lands. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 established that "it is a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States." [NPS.gov](http://NPS.gov).

More laws, regulations and guidelines established to protect archeological sites and collections can be found on the National Park Service website.

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) was signed into law on November 16, 1990. The law addresses federally funded institutions to return culturally sensitive objects back to their place of origin. Archeological and anthropological expeditions on tribal homelands unearthed many culturally sensitive items. The items were collected, curated and displayed. Included in these collections were human remains. NAGPRA was established to return these sensitive objects back to the place of origin. Federally funded institutions are in the process of doing just that.

## Minnesota Statute 307.08

In the early 1970s, Minnesota passed legislation to protect American Indian cemeteries and burial grounds. The law allowed the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council to repatriate remains to their place of origin. In the mid 1980s Minnesota State Archaeologist Christy Hohman-Caine contacted museums and universities across the state to encourage the return of human remains to the state for repatriation. Many museums participated in the return of ancestral remains. <https://mn.gov/indian-affairs/cultural-resources/repatriation-legislation>.

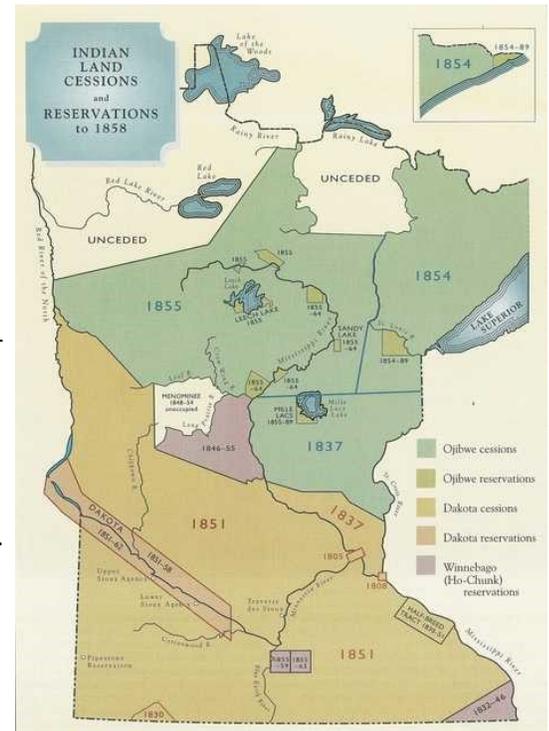
The WCHS collection has reported our Native American artifacts in collection and has never been in possession of human remains.

Native American Indian Dancers. : Note on front: "A few of the dancers, photo by A.B. Wild"; addressed to John Cawley, Waseca, Minn.



## What do you do if you discover remains or culturally sensitive objects on your property?

This is not a hypothetical question. This has happened numerous times in our county. An article appeared in the Janesville Argus, May 11, 1886.



Map of the lands within Minnesota Territory ceded by Native Americans by 1858. Created by Alan Ominsky ca. 1999. Reproduced in *Making Minnesota Territory, 1849–1858* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1999), page 7.



The article tells the story of five fisherman on Lake Elysian making a stop on the island before returning to shore. As they were exploring the island *“Mr. Emerson observed a bleached bone protruding from the ground. Out of curiosity he pulled it from the loose dirt and on examination found it to be a human bone, a femur. This led to further investigation. The ground was dug up and the full outlines of a human skeleton were made plainly visible. In life it must have been immense, as it measured over six feet in length.”* The article goes on to recall a *“traditionary”* story that years ago, an Indian chief died and was buried on the island. Buried beside him were his implements of war, his necklace and other tribal adornments. This was proven to be true as the men also found numerous items described above as well as a stone axe, two whet stones, a nicely carved piece of pipestone engraved with a teepee, a piece of wampum, used for money, made of blue translucent stone, six pieces of coiled wire, a cylindrical hollow bone, six inches long, flattened on one side with curious marks and figures, two handles made from a buffalo’s ribs, thought to be the handles of a tomahawk and pointed tips of bone made into a necklace.

#### **Fast forward 2023**

What should the men do upon this discovery?

- Notify the state or local police and the medical examiner about the discovery and location. If the county coroner determines the remains are non-forensic then the State Archaeologist will take jurisdiction on remains found on non-Federal and Non-Tribal Land.

**What did the men do in 1886** when they dug up the remains? According to the article...*“These were all in a fine state of preservation. WM. Emerson took them in charge, cleaned and polished them and now have them on exhibition...The bones of the Indian however were not preserved well. They were brittle and many of them broke when taken up. The teeth were the only parts perfectly preserved. The enamel is as white and polished as when the chieftain led his tribe in the wilderness and over the wild plains of the west.”*

The article states the bones were put in a box and given to Mr. Emerson who cleaned them. His intention was to keep them *“as a curiosity and as a valuable memento of the day’s work and the traditionary story of the chief and his tribes.”*

More documentation of remains discovered from an article in the *Waseca Herald, July 8, 1910...When the workmen were opening a gravel pit on the Charles Clement farm a few days ago, they found an Indian spear head about six inches long and*

*two and one-half inches wide, and a human skull and bones. Some of the “find” is on exhibition at Castor’s Jewelry store.”* WCHS staff have tried numerous times to track down information on these remains. Where did they end up? Does anyone know what happened to them? Another article appeared in the *Waseca Herald, June 25, 1953. Burial Lot Uncovered by Road Crew* *“A burial knoll used likely by both whites and Indians was discovered at the Mrs. George Ewest farm four miles southwest of Waseca Monday. The skeletal remains of several persons were unearthed by Frank Brown road construction workers under Geo. Nelson. Herman Panzram who has taken a keen interest not only in the early history of Waseca County but in a movement to preserve its cemeteries, visited the scene shortly after the discovery. He said that the late Rudolph Briese had informed him of the plot before his death but it never was located exactly.”* The article states years of cultivation led to the exposure of the graves. Panzram further states this parcel of land was owned by the state and used for burials prior to the establishment of the Wilton Cemetery in 1863. Also noted was some of the remains thought to be white settlers were in caskets and those not in caskets were thought to be Indian. One skull was sent to the University of Minnesota for examination to determine if it was white or Indian. Other remains were to be preserved and moved to a section of Woodville Cemetery maintained for that purpose.

WCHS Staff has reached out to the University of Minnesota to see if they have a record of the remains. We are also in the process of locating where in Woodville Cemetery the other remains were buried. So far, there is no record.

It is our intention to work with the caretakers of the cemetery to locate where unknown remains were placed and place a marker in remembrance. If you have any information pertaining to anything in this article please contact us.

#### **Who owns cultural objects found on private land?**

According to the Minnesota State Archeologist Office, artifacts found on private property belong to the landowner unless the landowner has signed an agreement to donate them to someone else.

With spring weather approaching there is opportunity to discover culturally sensitive artifacts. It is unlawful to remove any found object from state and public land, including parks. If you do find an object on public property, leave it where it is and remember the location. If you think it could be remains, on public or private land, call the sheriff and do not disturb the site.



## First Quarter Contributions: December 20th, 2022 – March 23rd, 2023

### Renewing Members

Bluhm, Robin and Jane  
Bruesch, J. Carl  
Callahan, Joseph  
Cervenka, Robert  
Dankert, Mary  
Dietz, Mary  
Dunn, Jane  
Espe, Charles and Kathryn  
Forrest, Dan and Cheryl  
Fruechte, Neil and Sharon  
Garms, Dennis and Linda  
Giesler, Paula  
Gilomen, Carollea  
Habeck, Bill  
Holmes, James  
Holmquist, Harlan  
Jones, Doug and Lela  
Kendall, Karen  
Knecht, Susan  
Neidt, Millie  
Ofstedahl, Kathleen  
Page, Jean  
Raimann, Carol  
Reak, Bonnie  
Roemhildt, Terry  
Ryan, Thomas  
Schepp, Gary  
Selvik, Bruce and Debbie  
Spies, Loy  
Tollefson, Nancy  
Vogler, William  
Walker, Roger and Roberta  
Walter, Bonnie

### Appropriations

City of Waseca

### Sustaining Members

Barbknecht, Rosanne  
Britton, Valerie  
Byrne, Robert  
Engle, Diane  
Frederick, Edward  
Gjelten, Ann  
Kramer, Robyn  
Miller, Sarah and Bruce  
Purcell, Pat  
Streng, Gary  
Wobschall, Carol

### New Members

Allen, Sierra  
Finch, Doug  
Kirchoff, Denise  
Wiitanen, Heidi  
Wood, Laura

### Donations

Bluhm, Robin and Jane  
Bluhm, Joan  
Britton Plumbing & Heating  
Britton, Valerie  
Buker, Barbara and Mark  
Buland, Eric  
Cawley, Jerome  
Deef, Romelle  
Dobberstein, Deb and Gary  
Engle, Diane  
Ewert, Margaret  
Finley, Joseph  
Flitsch, Kathleen  
Forrest, Daniel and Cheryl  
Harguth, Dorothy

### Donations

Holmquist, Harlan  
Hoversten, Patricia and William  
ICAN Inc. of Waseca  
Jackson, Carol  
Johnson, Jody  
Kiesler, Barbara  
Klinger, Robert  
Kugath, LeAnn and Bruce  
McCarthy, Virginia  
Miller, Gene and Bonnie  
Minnwest Bank  
Moonan Walbran, Mark  
Nelson, John  
Peters, David and Deb  
Raimann, Carol  
Roemhildt, Terry and Debra  
Roesler, Neil  
Suek, Peter and Teresa  
Tollefson, Kathryn  
Waggoner, Linda  
Walter, Bonnie  
Walter, Kevin  
Waseca Glass  
Wildgrube, Beverly

### Thrivent Financial Choice Dollars Program

The Beckmann Family  
Senne, Jacqueline

### Memorials/Honorariums

In memory of Don Wynnemer  
By Dave Dunn

In memory of Maureen Collins  
By Donna Fostveit

In memory of Norma J Buland  
By Donna Fostveit

# Waseca County History Center

*Since 1938, the Waseca County Historical Society has provided a depository to collect, preserve and showcase Waseca County History. Since our humble beginning, WCHS has grown from a log cabin on the Court House lawn to a History Center campus. The Collection holdings contain 58,465 artifacts to date. The WCHS Annual Operating Budget is approximately \$140,000 to maintain and staff the facilities, catalog, store and exhibit Waseca County History. Your membership directly contributes to this effort. Please support WCHS with a new or renewing Membership today! Thank you!*

Get to know us! Join WCHS and support Waseca County History!

[www.historical.waseca.mn.us](http://www.historical.waseca.mn.us) With growing membership, Waseca County history stays alive and accessible for all. The museum and library are ADA compliant. All memberships receive these benefits:

- An online or printed quarterly newsletter, History Notes
- FREE or reduced rates for exhibits, education and cultural programs
- 10% Discount in the Museum Gift Shop
- Access to high-resolution images of every photographed item in our collection
- Free access to the Bailey-Lewer Research Center which includes access to microfilm viewers/printers, maps, books, LDS records and other genealogy resources.

All LIFETIME Membership purchases receive a copy of Child's History of Waseca County By James E. Child, a \$25.00 value. The 847 page book covers the years 1854 to 1904 for Waseca County and includes biographical sketches of early settlers. I want to join and learn more about Waseca County history!

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Choose:             New Membership  Renewing Membership

Choose one:      \$30 ONE-YEAR Membership  
                       \$100 ONE-YEAR Sustaining Membership  
                       \$1,000 LIFETIME Membership-Benefits the Endowments

Chose delivery of newsletter:  Email  US Mail

Please make check payable "WCHS" 315 2nd Avenue N.E. | Waseca, MN 56093 507.835.7700

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Membership Renewal Date



Please Join Us!

## March Membership Drive 2023 !

### From our Board of Directors:

*"We must preserve our past so we can learn and grow for the future, especially Waseca County."* Diane Beckmann, WCHS Board Chair

*"It's rewarding to be part of an organization that works to preserve and honor all that went into making our community and surrounding area such a great place to live".* Marty Boom, WCHS Vice Chair

*"I love learning more about the families. settlements and commerce in early Waseca County."* Dawn Halgren, WCHS Treasurer, New Richland Twp.

*"I joined the Board and support WCHS because knowing our history helps us understand who we are and where we come from".*  
Linda Finley, Janesville.

*"I am a member of the Waseca County Historical Society because history is important and I like it!"* Dale Groskreutz, Vivian Twp.

*"I support WCHS because an understanding of our history is essential to understanding who we are as a society."* Gregg Johnson Blooming Grove Twp.

*"I support WCHS because preserving our history is important for future generations to learn from and enjoy".* Trevor Kanewischer, Woodville Twp.

*"I am happy to be a member of WCHS because it is preserving the incredible stories and history of families and our communities."* Carol Raimann,  
New Richland, Waldorf

*"I support WCHS because Waseca's history matters. By recording, documenting, & learning from our history we are better able to move forward into the future."* Anna Pollock, Waseca

*"I firmly believe that if we don't understand and accept our past we have no future."* Mikhail Rostislavovich, Waseca

*"WCHS is rich in fantastic stories, a treasure to our community, and a wealth of information: every one of us should work to preserve this legacy."*  
Dave Zika, Waseca