

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY CAPITOL CONNECTIONS



Welcome to the December 2025 edition of *Capitol Connections*—your source for the latest news and updates from the Wisconsin Historical Society. Our mission to collect, preserve and share stories is made possible by continued support from the Wisconsin Legislature and administration. Thank you!

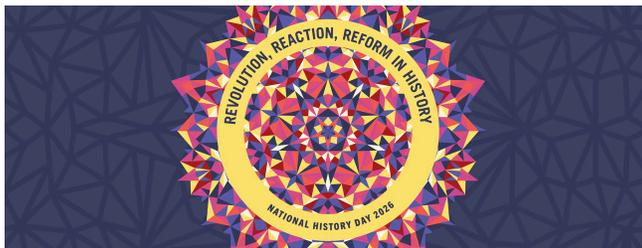


We're Beaming With Gratitude

Thank you to all the legislators and staff who joined us last month for the Wisconsin History Center beam signing opportunity at the Capitol! Your signatures—and your longstanding support—will quite literally become part of the future landmark, now rising on Capitol Square.

This milestone event marked more than a construction update—it was a moment to honor the partnership that has made this project possible. Thank you for helping us build a space that will inspire lifelong learning, spark curiosity and preserve Wisconsin's stories for generations to come. We're grateful to have you with us as the Wisconsin History Center continues to take shape!

Interested in keeping up with the progress? Tune into the [Wisconsin History Center construction cam](#) for a live look at the site.



Grant Supports National History Day in Central & Northern Wisconsin

Did you hear the good news? We're thrilled that the Wisconsin Historical Society has secured new grant funding to help expand the National History Day® (NHD) program throughout 17 counties, boosting educational opportunities for students and professional development for educators. This means more Wisconsin students will get to dive deep into history, build research and critical-thinking skills and experience hands-on learning beyond the textbook.

NHD contests take place around the state from February to May, and volunteer registration will open this month for those interested in supporting young learners. Learn more about the grant by [clicking here](#) and [check out our webpage](#) for volunteer opportunities.



Unwrap Holiday Cheer at Wisconsin's Historic Sites

Make your season merry and bright by stepping into festive celebrations at our historic sites—where twinkling lights, holiday traditions and a dash of Wisconsin history make every visit special!

Get Your Tickets:

- Dec. 12-14: [Victorian Holiday Tea at Villa Louis](#) (Prairie du Chien)
- Dec. 13: [Make It Merry: A Family & Friends Crafting Event](#) (Madison)
- Dec. 13-14: [Home for the Holidays at Old World Wisconsin](#) (Eagle)
- Dec. 13-14: [A Wade House Christmas](#) (Greenbush)
- Dec. 19: [Gleam & Glow: A 60s Holiday Celebration](#) (Madison)

[Click here](#) for a complete listing of Society events!

In The News

WMTV 15: [Wisconsinites get a sneak peak of Ken Burns' new documentary at Baraboo's AL Ringling Theatre](#)

Walworth County Community News: [Estate of William Madlener, great-grandson of Conrad Seip, donates \\$1 million to Black Point](#)

Superior Telegram: [Historic marker honoring the Edmund Fitzgerald unveiled](#)

WUWM: ["What America is about": Historical marker honors Milwaukee's Chinese Laundry Era](#)

Smithsonian Magazine: [Why Are There So Many Shipwrecks in the Great Lakes?](#)

The New York Times: [At the Great Lakes, Unearthing the Submerged History](#)



Photo: Recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Blackhawk Avenue Historic District includes 42 buildings with the oldest dating to 1847.

Recent Listings

National Register of Historic Places:

- [Portage Canal](#) (Columbia County)
- [Blackhawk Avenue Historic District](#) (Crawford County)
- [Luling School](#) (Manitowoc County)

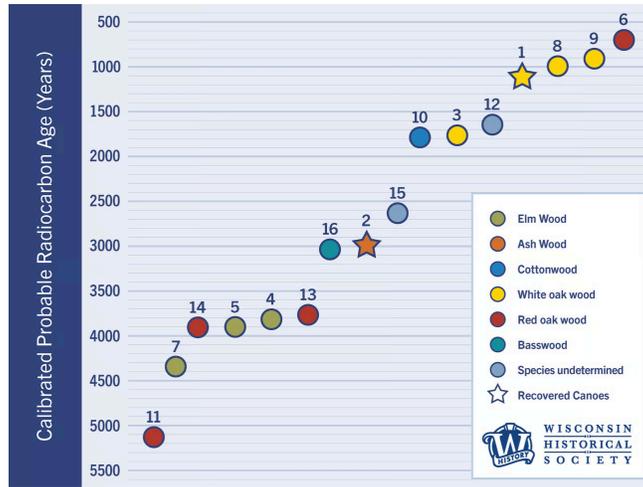
State Register of Historic Places:

- [Frost Woods Historic District](#) (Dane County)
- [Paul Kuehl House](#) (Grant County)
- [Peniel Chapel](#) (Fond du Lac County)
- [Sandy Bay Pier](#) (Kewaunee County)
- [Platteville Army National Guard Armory](#) (Grant County)

DID YOU KNOW?

Four years after recovering a 1,200-year-old canoe from Lake Mendota, Wisconsin Historical Society archaeologists, along with First Nations in the region and other partners, have now identified 16 ancient canoes—including one dating to about 3000

BCE, making it the oldest dugout canoe in the Great Lakes and the third oldest in eastern North America! Check out the ages and wood types represented in the chart below and read more about the canoes [in this article](#) from the Associated Press.



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
[www.wisconsinhistory.org](#)
[facebook.com/wisconsinhistory](#)
[twitter.com/wisconsinhistory](#)
[linkedin.com/company/wisconsin-history-society](#)
[youtube.com/wisconsinhistory](#)
[instagram.com/wisconsinhistory](#)
[pinterest.com/wisconsinhistory](#)