

HOUSE

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ervation architect Danielle Euer. Their insights and recommendations are indispensable as we evaluate and prioritize current and future preservation needs.

The CAP assessment has provided essential information which allows us to gain a better footing from which to pace investments in a proactive preservation approach. We are developing an initiative designed to deal with the most pressing preservation exigencies, while at the same time laying a strong foundation for a long-term preservation strategy. Priorities will be updated on an ongoing basis, as well as policies for routine monitoring and documentation.

The preservation of historic structures and collections is a continuous endeavor requiring attentiveness, diligence, creativity, and flexibility in responding and adapting to changing conditions. It is part science, part elbow grease, and it requires a good overall plan in order to be successful. While it is challenging and costly to maintain a 190-year-old historic timber frame house, it is worth the investment to preserve this piece of history which was at the center of some of the most consequential stories in Wisconsin's past.

We are grateful for the Collections Assessment for Preservation program which provided the resources required for a thorough evaluation of the house and the collection. Thank you to Mr. Deller and Ms. Euer for contributing their expertise and providing valuable recommendations that play an important role in the long-term stewardship of the Historic Indian Agency House.

What we invest in this significant vestige of the historic landscape today will ultimately benefit generations to come.

WADA addresses archival needs

Thanks to a \$700 grant from the Wisconsin Antiques Dealers Association, we are able to improve our capacity to care for the artifacts we steward.

WADA has generously provided funding for individualized archival mounts and custom storage envelopments to best protect the most vulnerable artifacts. We also plan to purchase hygrometers for monitoring microenvironments in storage areas and display cases to help us determine where to prioritize environmental control efforts for preservation.



HIAH in *Silent Sports* magazine

Silent Sports magazine's October issue features a great article on HIAH contributed by the Portage Area Chamber of Commerce's Brad Conrad. The magazine was founded in 1984 "to provide solid, reliable and timely regional information on bicycling, running, paddlesports, multisports, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, in-line skating and other nonmotorized aerobic activities."

- WEBSITE: www.agencyhouse.org
- FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/historicindianagencyhouse/
- TWITTER: www.twitter.com/AgencyHouseWI
- INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/agencyhousewi/?hl=en
- YOUTUBE: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZnvcuYoCCOMx1wIFQKOhfg/videos>

Wau-Bun Express

THE AGENCY HOUSE AT 190 YEARS PRESERVING A HISTORIC TREASURE

"[T]he Agency buildings, now erecting at this place...consist of a frame dwelling house, 30 by 34 ft. – two stories high, with a kitchen attached thereto of 16 by 20 ft, 1 ½ stories high and stone cellar underneath; also an outhouse of 6 by 8 feet. These buildings will be furnished, on or before the 15th prox....The house is well built; the work inside is plain and substantial....The buildings are on Indian land, and well situated for an Indian Agency....There are now more Indians who reach this place than in any other within your superintendency except Chicago."

—Fort Winnebago Indian Sub-Agent John H. Kinzie to Territorial Governor George Porter, October 1, 1832

Exactly 190 years ago this month, the Agency House was receiving its finishing structural touches. The autumn months of the house's completion coincided with a time of pivotal change, uncertainty, and critical decisions at the portage as decades of accumulating tensions came to a head. Before the plaster had dried on the home's massive timber walls, hundreds of Ho-Chunk families had converged here. Numerous meetings took place, culminating in a poignant formal council as the Ho-Chunk Nation stood on the brink of forced expulsion from their homeland the following spring.

This weighty era in history marked the commencement of the Agency House's journey through time. Serving as the epicenter of the unique narrative recorded by Juliette Kinzie in *Wau-Bun*, the house subsequently functioned as a frontier tavern (inn for travelers), a trading post, and a farmhouse as it kept in step with the shifting historic landscape throughout Wisconsin's formative years. One century later, on October 22, 1932, the home officially began its story as a museum.

Today, the house continues to stand as a testimony to the stories and lessons of a significant period of history. Having weathered 190 years of time and elements, it feels the creaks and groans of age. A major part of our mission as a museum is to preserve the structure as it presses onward toward its second century of existence.

This past year, we were fortunate to have received a substantial grant from the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation in conjunction with the Institute of Museum and Library Services to fund a CAP (Collections Assessment for Preservation) assessment conducted by materials conservator Craig Deller and pres-

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Archaeological Excavation



Flute-Making Station, Enduring Skills



THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

Dear Friends,

We find ourselves wrapping up another season of learning, exploring, connecting, and memory-making at the Agency House. As we investigated “The Historic Landscape” together, we encountered some unique opportunities along the way, one of which led to the installation of an important new exhibit in our visitor center. We were privileged to collaborate with many wonderful people — volunteers, donors, speakers, historians, the Ho-Chunk Nation, scientists, experts in various fields — who offered their skills and expertise. We hope you’ve enjoyed the season as much as we have!

More than a thousand visitors from the Midwest, across the nation, and around the world traveled to the Agency House this year to participate in tours, exhibits, events, and outdoor offerings. We invite you to join us for our upcoming off-season activities, as well.

Each year, we strive to look at history from a different perspective through thematic programming and special exhibitions. We are hard at work planning for next year and are looking forward to sharing our 2023 season offerings with you.

Respectfully,



Adam Novey
Executive Director and Curator

Discovering the Blue Mounds trail

A sign now stands in the Cherrywood neighborhood of Middleton marking the location of a trail traveled by Indian sub-agent John H. Kinzie and his wife, Juliette, in March, 1831. The lay of the land still harbors hints of this long-erased trail that was so important to Native residents of the region two centuries ago.

Juliette wrote: “In this open country there are no landmarks. One elevation is so exactly like another, that if you lose your trail [as the Kinzies did] there is almost as little hope of regaining it as of finding a pathway in the midst of the ocean. The trail...is a narrow path, deeply indented by the hoofs of the horses on which the Indians travel in single file. So deeply is it sunk in the sod which covers the prairies, that it is difficult, sometimes, to distinguish it at a distance of a few rods” (*Wau-Bun*, 2021 Historic Preservation Edition, page 105).



Voyageur Canoe Excursions



Tracey Lee Roberts, Speaker Series



Frontier Tavern Living History

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

We are so grateful for these generous artifact contributions which the public can enjoy and learn from now and into the future.



Baskets honor Ho-Chunk resilience

Portage resident Annette Monthey (right) recalls that a basket she donated to our new “Rediscovering Fort Winnebago” exhibit was made by local Ho-Chunk women who came to her parents’ Fort Winnebago-area farm to trade baskets for chickens and eggs in the 1930s. The older generations at that time told of Ho-Chunk families returning and traveling on the rivers from which they had been driven decades earlier. The Anglim family also donated four Ho-Chunk baskets (ca late 1800s) in memory of their mother, Margaret Anglim. (left: director Adam Novey and intern Chloe Foor with Rob Charlier-Anglim)



Timber-framing tools enhance exhibit

Dwain Schroeder (left) of Sun Prairie donated three historic timber framing tools—a timber slick, iron auger bit, & carpenter’s scribe – to supplement our Ft. Winnebago exhibit by illustrating construction methods of the era. Schroeder collected tools, including these unique pieces, from the older “timber framers” of the region.

First edition publication gifted

Allen and Jaime Kinzie (right) of Westerville, OH, visited HIAH and brought a generous gift with them: a first edition (1856) copy of Juliette Kinzie’s memoir, *Wau-Bun*. Juliette’s important lithographic drawings are only extant in these early editions as the original drawings burned in the Chicago fire.



UPCOMING OFF-SEASON EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Prairie reclamation

Thanks to a grant from the Alliant Energy Foundation, we will continue with our prairie reclamation work over the winter. Invasive black locust trees will be felled, and we will need many volunteers to help cut up the branches with loppers and burn them. Let us know if you are willing and able to help. Many hands make light work.

<https://youtu.be/YzZPO5G24Hg>

Christmas events

Saturday, December 10, from 1 to 3 pm: 16th Annual Kiddie Christmas and holiday shopping in our gift shop. Find details at www.agencyhouse.org/events

Lunch break series at PCA

Are you looking for something enjoyable and educational to do over your lunch break? The Portage Center for the Arts hosts a Lunch Break Series which explores a wide variety of topics. Agency House director Adam Novey will be the lunchtime presenter on February 23 at noon in the Zona Gale Theatre. Explore the story of a period of America’s history which is rich with lessons and insights. PCA charges \$5 at the door for its series.

<https://www.portagecenterforthearts.com/brown-bag-lunch-hour>

“Reflections” campfire

Join us on Saturday, November 5, at 5:30 pm for a campfire with stories of remembrance on the 190th anniversary of an important Ho-Chunk gathering at the Agency House. Contemplate the events that happened here. November is Native American Heritage Month. Free event.

www.agencyhouse.org/events



THANK YOU

A “Rooted in Conservation” grant through CFSCW funded a walk-behind string trimmer this year to keep the two acres of reclaimed prairie mowed so prairie plants may compete to become established.