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February 24, 2020

Wisconsin State Legislature
Wisconsin State Assembly
Office of the Assembly Chief Clerk
Assembly Chief Clerk Patrick Fuller

PROJECT: Wisconsin Historic Society Burial Sites Preservation 2019 – 2020 Legislative Report

Dear Assembly Chief Clerk Fuller:

As the Ruth and Hartley Barker Director of the Wisconsin Historical Society I herewith submit to you the 2019 – 2020 Annual Burial Sites Preservation Report prescribed by Wis. Stats. 157.70(2)(j) and 13.172(2).

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Christian Overland

The Ruth and Hartley Barker Director & CEO
Wisconsin Historical Society



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Wisconsin Historical Society Burial Sites Preservation Legislative Report: 2019 – 2020

The following enumerated items prescribe information the Wisconsin Historical Society Director must report to the Wisconsin State Legislature per the provisions of Wis. Stats. 157.70(2)(j) and 13.172(2).

1) Director's Recommendation Regarding Public Acquisition of Burial Sites

Per Wisc. Stats. 157.70(2)(c) to recommend acquisition of privately-held burial sites by the state of Wisconsin, or other public agency, in order to provide for their preservation, the Director recommends acquisition of the following Mound Groups:

A. Fenley Mound Group (47GT191 / BGT-0300)

This mound group is comprised of one linear mound, one bear effigy, and one “dumbbell-style” compound mound on a wooded ridgetop overlooking Sinnerppee Creek, in southern Grant County. Some cattle trampling damage was noted to mounds in spring 2018, and reported to WHS by professional archaeologists Phil Millhouse. Mounds are visible in LiDAR images. This site lies within 180 feet of WI DNR-owned land in northwestern corner of privately-held parcel. WI DNR may be ideally situated to acquire this mound group for protection and preservation.

B. Dellaire Mound Group (47AD227 / BAD-0141)

This mound group is comprised of seventeen (17) conical mounds, between 10 – 30 feet in diameter, and between one to four feet high. They are located along a modern powerline corridor, and are exposed to damage from ATV and 4X4 traffic. The area surrounding the mounds is slated to be developed into a residential subdivision.

2) Number of Human Burial Sites Recorded in Wisconsin's Burial Sites Catalog

As of March 1, 2020, 1482 human burial sites have been recorded in Wisconsin's Burial Sites Catalog.



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3) Disturbances to Uncatalogued Human Burial Sites

For the period between March 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020, following procedures outlined in Wis. Stats. 157.70(4), the Director authorized 477 requests to disturb 525 uncatalogued human burial sites (multiple sites were addressed in some requests). Further information regarding disturbances authorized by the Director for this period are found in staff reports submitted to Wisconsin's Burial Sites Preservation Board (hereinafter Board) and attached to this report as Exhibit A.

4) Applications to Disturb Catalogued Human Burial Sites

For the period between March 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020, the Director received 14 applications to disturb catalogued human burial sites, submitted according to procedures specified in Wis. Stats. 157.70(5). All applications were approved or were in the process of approval as of March 1, 2020. The permitting requirement was waived for one application [the bird mound at Mendota Mental Health] due to a flood-related emergency situation.

5) Appeals to Wisconsin's Burial Sites Preservation Board

For the period between March 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020, 0 appeals to the Board were made under the provisions of Wis. Stats. 157.70(5)(c)(5).

6) Other Board Activities

A summary of Board activities other than those enumerated herein, may be found in the Board agendas and minutes for each meeting held during this Report period; these documents are attached to this Report as Exhibit B.

7) Violations of Wis. Stats. 157.70

Between March 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020, 7 violations of 157.70 was reported.



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Exhibit A:

*Wisconsin Historical Society Staff Reports
Summarizing Authorizations to Disturb
Uncataloged Human Burial Sites
Submitted to the Board Under Wis. Stat. § 157.70 (4) (f),
March 1, 2019 to March 1, 2020*



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WHS Staff Liaison Written Reports to the Burial Sites Preservation Board for consideration at the Board's Quarterly Meetings (identified by date below) on All Determinations Pertaining to Uncataloged Human Burial Sites:

Friday, March 1, 2019

During the three month period since the last Burial Board meeting (December 7, 2019), 77 requests to disturb 80 uncataloged burial sites (multiple sites were addressed in some requests) were reviewed and approved with the appropriate caveats. The vast majority of these projects are related to utility projects, a much smaller number are private developments, with the remainder related to State and/or Federal project reviews.

Friday, June 7, 2019

During the three month period since the last Burial Board meeting (March, 1, 2019), 81 requests to disturb 86 uncataloged burial sites (multiple sites were addressed in some requests) were reviewed and approved with appropriate, case-specific caveats. The great majority of these projects are utility projects, a small number are private developments, while an even smaller number are associated with State and/or Federal historic preservation law projects.

Friday, September 13, 2019

During the three month period since the last Burial Board meeting (June 7, 2019), 213 requests to disturb 243 uncataloged burial sites (multiple sites were addressed in some requests) were reviewed and approved with appropriate, case-specific caveats. The great majority of these projects are utility projects, a small number are private developments, while an even smaller number are associated with State and/or Federal historic preservation law projects.

Friday, December 6, 2019

During the three month period since the last Burial Board meeting (September 13, 2018), 106 requests to disturb 116 uncataloged burial sites (multiple sites were addressed in some requests) were reviewed and approved with appropriate, case-specific caveats. The great majority of these projects are utility projects, a small number are private developments, while an even smaller number are associated with State and/or Federal historic preservation law projects.



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Exhibit B:

*Summary of the Wisconsin Burial Sites Preservation Board
Activities:
Agendas and Meeting Minutes for 4 Quarterly Meetings Held
Between March 1, 2019 and March 1, 2020*