

ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS

CONNECTING THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE

MVAC's first 40 years are behind us, and we're continuing to move forward, sharing information that fosters understanding of our region's long cultural heritage. We look forward to working with you over our next 40 years, with the same commitment to quality education, cultural resource management, and public involvement we've upheld in the past.

Besides in-person contacts and events, we'll keep growing our online and digital outreach. And along with traditional approaches to fieldwork and lab analysis, we'll keep expanding our use of newer technologies such as geographic information systems (GIS), LiDAR, and photogrammetry for more in-depth research on known sites and identification of new ones. Stay in touch to stay informed!

EVENTS

We're enjoying offering in-person events again! The Artifact Show was a big success—see article inside. And Dr. Gregg Jamison, a UWL alum, gave a well-attended lecture on the MIA Recovery and Identification Project that is now available **online**.

MVAC AVAILABILITY

MVAC is usually open during regular business hours, but if you would like to visit, we recommend emailing or leaving a voicemail in advance to make sure someone will be available (mvac@uwlax.edu or 608.785.8463).



UPCOMING EVENTS

July 12-13: UWL Hands-On Science, Making Bones Speak, grades 6-8, July 12-13

July 15: Youth Outdoor Fest 2023

August 5-6 & 12-13: Historic Indian Agency House – Archaeology Dig

Visit www.uwlax.edu/mvac/events-display/events for more information on these and other events.

Archaeology News is a publication of the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center.

Newsletter Submission:

T: 608.785.8454

E: jdowiasch@uwlax.edu

www.uwlax.edu/mvac

www.facebook.com/UWLMVAC

www.youtube.com/@uwlmvac

1725 State Street

La Crosse, WI 54601-3788



DONATE



SIGN UP



WEB SITE



FACEBOOK



YOUTUBE



TUMBLR



2023 Artifact Show

MVAC staff were excited to host the Artifact Show at the Valley View Mall on May 4, 2023. The pandemic had put the event on hold since 2021, so it was great to welcome back so many of the collectors who have made the show a success over the years. The collectors came from all over the state, sharing the stories of items made and used hundreds—or even thousands—of years ago. Special thanks to Jack Larson for volunteering to provide flintknapping demonstrations throughout the day.

Each year we feature a “mystery artifact,” with visitors answering questions such as, What is it? What is it made of? and How old is it? This year’s artifact was a harmonica made of wood and metal. Pam Jensen won an MVAC t-shirt for providing the best answers— Congratulations, Pam! The harmonica was found at the historic John J. Cole House (47LC-313) on the corner of King & 6th Streets in La Crosse (see article on next page).

Thanks to everyone who displayed their collections at the Artifact Show:

- Rich Althaus
- Jay Bittner
- Loren Cade
- Jaremy Cobble
- Caleb Durham
- Gene Hynek
- Jim Jordan
- David Kreisel
- Frank Lightfoot
- Jim Losinski
- Dan Maas
- Doug Miller
- Mark Pingel
- Betty Steele & family
- Hoyt Strandberg



The John J. Cole House

Originally from New York, John J. Cole was a prominent lawyer who settled in La Crosse in 1859. Cole was also a United States Commissioner and State Court Commissioner. Cole owned the house on the corner of King & 6th Streets from 1859 to 1897. The structure burned in 1902, but the foundation remained intact. While planting a tree on the property in 1985, then-owner Bill Bruring struck the limestone foundation. From the early 1850s until 1909, limestone blocks quarried from Grandad's Bluff were used for building foundations in La Crosse.

Bruring then exposed the entire foundation and invited MVAC archaeologists to excavate the exposed artifacts. In addition to the harmonica, historic ceramics, metal artifacts, buttons, pipe fragments, glass bottles, and window glass fragments were recovered. Faunal remains at the site included the bones of passenger pigeons, which are now extinct. UW-La Crosse Professor Emeritus and MVAC Research Associate Dr. James

Theler noted at the time that there was "a huge roost in western Wisconsin, and market hunters would go out and pickle them in brine and bring them in fresh to sell." After the foundation was documented, it was reburied with the room sections still intact, and fill was placed over the site to be used as a parking lot.

The site is significant for two reasons. First, it represents the living quarters of a prominent professional who practiced law in the early days of La Crosse history. Second, the foundation area is the only known example in the City of La Crosse where in-situ materials have been carefully sealed for possible future examination.

Information on the John J. Cole House was summarized from the Wisconsin Historical Society site database, a 2014 *La Crosse Tribune* article titled "Signs tell history of King Street buildings," and the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.



1891 - SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP

0 75 150 300 US FEET



MVAC at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
1725 State Street
La Crosse, WI 54601-3788

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
La Crosse, WI
Permit No. 545

Address Service Requested

www.uwlax.edu/mvac
www.facebook.com/UWLMVAC
www.youtube.com/@uwlmvac

CONTACT US

DIRECTOR

Dr. Timothy McAndrews
T: 608.785.6774
E: tmcandrews@uwlax.edu

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Dr. Katherine Stevenson
T: 608.785.8451
E: kstevenson@uwlax.edu

MAIN OFFICE

T: 608.785.8463
E: mvac@uwlax.edu
1725 State Street
La Crosse, WI 54601-3788

MVAC STAFF

Erik Anderson
Michael Bednarchuk
Jean Dowiasch
Wendy Holtz-Leith
Bonnie Jancik
Vicki Twinde-Javner

RESEARCH ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Cindy Kocik
Lindsay Lentz

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

David Anderson
Constance Arzigian
Suzanne Harris
Amy Nicodemus
James Theler

SUPPORTING MVAC

If you haven't already, please consider renewing your support for MVAC's ongoing mission of discovery, research, education, and preservation. If you would prefer, you can make your donation with our **secure online donation** option through the UWL Foundation. Your support is greatly appreciated!

MVAC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE SUPPORTED IN PART BY:

- The United Fund for the Arts and Humanities
- The National Endowment for the Humanities