



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

# 2019-2021 BIENNIAL REPORT



October 15, 2021

Dear Governor Evers, members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, and citizens of Wisconsin:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Historical Society, I am pleased to submit our report on the performance and operation of the Society during the 2019-2021 biennium, as required under s. 15.04(1)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes. Since its creation in 1846, the Society has been our state's memory and premier storyteller. Because we are among the nation's oldest, largest, and most active state historical societies, with world-class collections, the Society is a trusted source of authentic historical information for people across our state and beyond.

In addition to the details shared within these pages, I would like to recognize the more than 50 Society employees who accepted temporary reassignments for several months to help the Department of Health Services and Department of Workforce Development meet the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic. These employees transitioned to new positions and used their expertise to help establish Covid testing centers, devise contact-tracing systems, manage vaccine distribution, and process unemployment insurance claims, among other duties. I am enormously proud of the way they embraced their spirit of service and made significant personal and professional sacrifices to support our fellow state agencies and help the citizens of our state during this unprecedented time of need.

We are also grateful for your continued support as our agency faced enormous financial challenges as a result of the pandemic. Through it all, the dedicated public servants of the Wisconsin Historical Society remain committed to the mission you have entrusted to us: to collect, preserve, and share the history and heritage that bind us together. It continues to be our privilege and honor to serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Christian W. Overland'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C'.

**Christian Øverland**

The Ruth and Hartley Barker Director & CEO

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# 2019-2021 Review of Performance and Operation by Division

## WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS; the Society), founded in 1846, ranks as one of the largest, most active, and most diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, its mission is to help connect people to the past by collecting, preserving, and sharing stories. WHS serves hundreds of thousands of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs, and services. More information is available at [wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org).

**Mission:** Connect people to the past by collecting, preserving, and sharing stories.

WHS is organized into five divisions and offices: Administrative Services; Library, Archives, & Museum Collections; Museums & Historic Sites; Programs & Outreach; and the State Historic Preservation Office. WHS is also supported by the Wisconsin Historical Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. A breakdown of WHS divisions follows.

## STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The Society's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) administers the State Register of Historic Places and Wisconsin's portion of the National Register of Historic Places, certifies building projects for federal and state tax credits, reviews federal, state, and local unit of government projects for their effect on historic properties, and administers statutes that protect American Indian and Euro-American burial sites and cemeteries.

**More information is available at [wisconsinhistory.org/preserve](http://wisconsinhistory.org/preserve).**

**Program Purpose:** Because historic places are critical to quality of life, we will expedite the preservation of places of enduring value.

**During fiscal years 2020-2021, the division accomplished the following:**

- Continued operations in all work areas throughout the COVID-19 pandemic despite five staff members assisting other state agencies with pandemic response projects.
- Approved \$325.5 million of income-producing rehabilitation projects, generating over 5,425 jobs and \$63.7 million in federal income tax credits to taxpayers.

- Listed 49 individual properties and 13 historic districts (a total of 570 buildings) to the National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Historic Places.
- Produced 53 public workshops, meetings, and webinars, including 20 live webinars on a variety of maritime topics, serving 2,300 people.
- Assisted with the designation of the 962-square-mile Lake Michigan NOAA Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary.
- Completed Phase I of the digital compliance project test to allow certain agencies to submit projects to SHPO completely digitally.
- Along with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, partnered with the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office, the Menominee Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office, and the Forest County Potawatomi Community Tribal Historic Preservation Office on a Neenah road project. The resulting archaeological investigations were culturally sensitive and scientifically important.

## DIVISION OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVES & MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Spanning from early American Indian settlement in Wisconsin to the current day, the Society's Library, Archives & Museum Collections (LAMC) make up one of the preeminent history collections in the country, with a library of over 4 million items, 3 million photographs, 750,000 three-dimensional artifacts, 105,000 cubic feet of textual collections, 25,000 maps and atlases, one of the nation's largest collections of newspapers and periodicals, an extensive sound and moving-image collection, and much more. Also, in partnership with the Department of Administration and the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, the Society operates the State Archive Preservation Facility, providing state-of-the-art security for Wisconsin's most important historical and cultural resources. **More information is available at [wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS3556](https://wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS3556).**

**Program Purpose:** The Division of Library, Archives & Museum Collections serves the Wisconsin Historical Society's mission of connecting people to the past by collecting, preserving, and sharing stories. Through an active collecting program, the Society seeks to continually develop, refine, and enhance the scope and depth of its holdings by acquiring significant historical materials. The Society supports the free exchange of ideas by promoting the widest possible access to the collections in its care.

### **During fiscal years 2020-2021, the division accomplished the following:**

- Hired Angela Fritz as the new Administrator of the Library, Archives & Museum Collections Division and State Archivist, and Estella Chung as Chief Curator.
- Completed the move of collections to the new State Archive Preservation Facility (SAPF) and celebrated its opening with media events and numerous donor tours.

- Further operationalized the SAPF with the installation of \$1 million of new shelving.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, engaged the public by launching initiatives such as the COVID-19 Journal Project, which has led to nearly 400 submissions of diaries in various formats; the COVID-19 Poster Project, for which the Society commissioned artists to use World War I and World War II public information posters in the WHS collections as inspiration to create pandemic-related posters; and “Big History is Happening – Then & Now,” an online series on the Society’s website in which we utilized the WHS collections to put the COVID-19 pandemic in perspective with previous historic moments. View these initiatives at [wisconsinhistory.org/bighistoryishappening](https://wisconsinhistory.org/bighistoryishappening).
- Created “Wisconsin Response to COVID-19,” an online archive of websites relating to Wisconsin’s pandemic response: [wihist.org/WICovidResponseArchive](https://wihist.org/WICovidResponseArchive).
- Successfully served the public despite temporary closures and having numerous staff temporarily reassigned to other state agencies to help them meet pandemic demand. Among the myriad adjustments to our public services, LAMC staff:
  - Provided safe access to our library and archives reading rooms when open to the public, and offered remote support for at-home researchers.
  - Shifted programs and instruction for genealogists, UW-Madison courses, and other classes to an online environment which allowed for more attendees.
  - Launched numerous digital collection galleries featuring relevant topics.
- Despite pandemic limitations, our collections team maintained its mission to continue to grow WHS resources by acquiring approximately 200 collections and more than 1,400 objects. These included numerous items related to the pandemic and social justice protests, fulfilling the Society’s mission to collect and preserve items that will help future historians and citizens better understand important moments in history.
- Met increased demand following the November 2020 election by servicing hundreds of offices through the Capitol Loan Program from WHS collections. This included moving artwork to new offices in the State Capitol, exchanging artwork, and working with first-year state legislators to select and install artwork in their offices.
- Completed the Citizen Petition and Access Project, which provided online access to territorial and state legislative petitions by digitizing 2,543 citizen petitions representing 67 counties: <https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/petitions>.
- Created an online training module to introduce UW-Madison students to the WHS archives. View this project at [https://lo.library.wisc.edu/whs\\_archives/#/](https://lo.library.wisc.edu/whs_archives/#/).
- Began work on the Oscar Mayer Storytelling Project, comprised of 28 interviews that capture diverse viewpoints, including perspectives from corporate staff, manufacturing workers, marketing and sales teams, and women in the workforce. We collected more than nine hours of video interviews and nine hours of audio-only interviews.

## DIVISION OF MUSEUMS & HISTORIC SITES

The Society owns and operates the Wisconsin Historical Museum and 11 additional historic sites, museums, and attractions that share stories of Wisconsin’s physical and cultural heritage, and promote tourism, community engagement, and economic development. The Division of Museums and Historic Sites (DMHS) interprets and develops experiences that promote the region’s history for the public. The division fulfills its educational role through preserved historic interiors, exhibitions, facilitated tours, and a variety of public programs conducted at the Wisconsin Historical Museum in Madison, and at historic sites and other venues throughout the state. **More information is available at [wisconsinhistory.org/sites](https://wisconsinhistory.org/sites).**

The division also includes the Museum Archaeology Program (MAP), which actively engages in the identification and preservation of Wisconsin’s cultural resources and has been an active field research branch of the Wisconsin Historical Society since 1958. (See Page 9 for program purpose and highlights.) **More information is available at [wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4047](https://wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4047).**

### MUSEUMS & HISTORIC SITES

**Program Purpose:** The division uses physical environments and artifacts to create immersive and engaging learning experiences at 12 locations across Wisconsin.

**During fiscal years 2020-2021, the division accomplished the following:**

- Hired Nicholas Hoffman as the new Administrator of Museums & Historic Sites.
- Realigned our work to create new virtual programming during the COVID-19 pandemic, assisted with the statewide pandemic response through work reassignments to the Department of Health Services (DHS) and Department of Workforce Development (DWD), made internal reassignments on agency-wide initiatives, and gradually reopened locations with safe visitor experiences in 2021.
- Reassigned staff internally to support three initiatives related to the planning of operations for a new state history museum: Box Office and Online Ticketing; Experience Design, including process and philosophies for developing major exhibitions and experiences; and “Learning with WHS” (see Page 10 for program details).
- After the shutdown in 2020, we reopened sites with safe, guided tours, limited programs, or virtual programs. By August 2021, we fully reopened all sites, thanks to the access of \$1 million in funding support made possible by Governor Tony Evers, the Wisconsin State Legislature, the Department of Administration, and communities across the state.
- During paused operations, staff at every location focused on major restoration and facility projects. Among the most significant included a walkway restoration at Villa Louis,

building repairs at Old World Wisconsin, arena engineering and planning at Wade House, and Historic Structure Reports (HSR) launched at Pendarvis and Circus World.

- As sites reopened, careful planning went into providing a safe experience for guests that exceeded COVID-19 safety precautions. The Box Office and Online Ticketing project offered online ticket purchases as an option for guests who prefer a touchless transaction and programs were redeveloped as outdoor or virtual experiences.

### **Black Point Estate and Gardens (Lake Geneva)**

- Emerged from pandemic shutdown with robust summer 2021 attendance and record revenue (June 1-Sept. 30), beating the previous mark set in 2019 by 4.8 percent.
- Made grounds improvements including installation of a new shade garden, historic brick path restoration, and irrigation system expansion. The gardens were recognized by the Geneva Lake Conservancy.
- Developed new programs, including neighborhood walking tours and a boat tour, and redesigned outreach programs for virtual platforms, allowing for safe group participation.

### **Circus World (Baraboo)**

- Began to focus on long-range planning to reposition the site as a year-round attraction.
- Launched a Historic Structure Report thanks to \$125,000 in private funding. The HSR will focus on the National Historic Landmark Ringlingville buildings that formed the winter headquarters for the Ringling Bros. Circus. The study will document current building conditions and prepare work plans and a timeline to restore the buildings to their 1915 appearance.
- Partnered with Sauk County Health, the City of Baraboo, and Baraboo Fire/EMT to utilize the outer parking lot as a host location for weekly community COVID-19 testing, helping local teams accommodate and mobile-test individuals in over 450 cars.
- Big Top performances returned in June 2021 with safe, socially distanced seating options, resulting in near-record attendance despite only 40% of traditional programmatic and marketing budgets.
- Completed the successful dissolution of Circus World Museum Foundation, transferring donor relations to the Wisconsin Historical Foundation.

### **First Capitol (Belmont)**

- Began restoration of interpretive markers on site, including three state historic markers.
- Launched a research project to enhance the historical content on outdoor interpretive panels to provide guests with a more complex history of Belmont and legislative activities at Wisconsin's first territorial Capitol.



### **H.H. Bennett (Wisconsin Dells)**

- Launched the DigiType Experience as a historic photographic alternative to the in-person Tintype Experience, which provided an added safety option during the pandemic as well as a new opportunity for revenue. This process transforms a modern digital photograph into a one-of-a-kind tintype.
- Unveiled new storefront signage to better communicate the core components of the visitor experience: gift shop, museum exhibits, and studio experience.
- Made enhancements to the photography studio, with period-appropriate furnishings and modern equipment added to deliver an exceptional and authentic Tintype Experience.

### **Madeline Island Museum (La Pointe)**

- Launched a major accessibility project in 2021 to ensure equitable access to the museum and historic grounds. Work included new and refurbished ramps at all entries and exits, a paved parking lot, button-activated door entries, and paved pathways connecting the museum to outdoor program areas.
- Created a walking tour of historic La Pointe as a safe, outdoor program for groups to explore the layers of history in the community.

### **Old World Wisconsin (Eagle)**

- Made significant progress on the multi-phase New Arrivals welcome area project, especially on the first phase of the planned new Brewing Experience. Brewhouse construction reached major milestones and is slated for completion in November 2021, historic Wittnebel's Tavern was successfully relocated from Old Ashippun, and visitor experience planning was completed for the Brewing Experience.
- Introduced new guided tours in 2020 to accommodate COVID-19 pandemic precautions, one of which offered rare access to the second floor of the Four Mile House.
- Launched new virtual field trips as part of the "Learning with WHS" initiative (see Page 10), featuring animal ambassadors and other popular elements of in-person field trips.
- Offered a new signature event called "Family Fun Drive" that provided drive-thru access of the grounds in fall 2020 and spring 2021, with staff performing demonstrations of seasonal farm life and trades. It allowed for safe programming during the pandemic and provided equitable access to the grounds for guests who are mobility challenged.
- Remodeled the gift shop and upgraded the point-of-sale area with new fixtures and products, resulting in strong retail sales in May and June 2021.
- Completed restoration work on several historic structures.

### **Pendarvis (Mineral Point)**

- Updated the original, five-page National Register of Historic Places nomination form for Pendarvis, completed in 1971, to 95 pages to expand the era of significance on the site.

- Completed a Historic Structure Report to document building conditions, establish the era of restoration to the Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum era (1935-1970), and outline work priorities and cost estimates for future restoration. The privately funded report is essential towards qualifying for additional funding for future restoration work.
- Began work on interpretive panels at the 43-acre Merry Christmas Mine Hill Trails and Prairie, which saw significant increase in usage during the pandemic. The panels will better connect hikers to the site's history of lead and zinc mining operations.

### **Reed School (Neillsville)**

- Planned for historic and continued grounds restoration projects
- Began the process to revamp multimedia experiences in the lower-level exhibitions.

### **Stonefield (Cassville)**

- Enhanced the visitor experience inside the State Agricultural Museum with new interpretive panels that explain the founding of the museum and technology changes to farming in Wisconsin.
- Significant capital projects focused on the rural village, with building repairs, enhanced ramp accessibility to the one-room school, and roof repairs to the printing shop.

### **Villa Louis (Prairie du Chien)**

- Continued restoration of the historic walkway around the mansion and outbuildings (completed in August 2021). This work replicated and replaced the bricks and stonework, while vastly improving accessibility to the site's National Historic Landmark buildings.
- Completed a restoration project on the Astor Warehouse, a National Historical Landmark building, including stabilization and prevention of further deterioration of the building.
- Began work, thanks to a FEMA grant, on repairs to prior existing flood damage on historic buildings and landscape.
- Began research in collaboration with the National Park Service to update the National Historic Landmark documentation for the mansion and grounds (originally designated on Oct. 9, 1960) to better incorporate social and cultural history in the report.
- Planned for the resumption of signature events at the site following the pandemic, including the 40th annual Carriage Classic (subsequently held in September 2021).
- Celebrated, during CY2021, the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Villa Louis mansion, with social media posts and an article in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*.

### **Wade House (Greenbush)**

- Installed over 1,000 feet of ADA-standard gravel pathways between the historic buildings, improving accessibility for all visitors.

- Launched a forestry study to prioritize harvesting trees impacted by the emerald ash borer.
- Began work on planning and engineering to significantly enhance the arena for public and private equine and carriage events.
- Began master planning for future visitor experiences across the 240-acre site.

### Wisconsin Historical Museum (Madison)

- Opened our first bilingual exhibit, *Hmong in Wisconsin*, to coincide with the release of the Wisconsin Historical Society Press book of the same name, as well as the exhibit *We Stand on Their Shoulders: A History of Wisconsin Women and Voting*, which celebrated the centennial of the passage of the 19th Amendment.
- Began offering new virtual education programs to schools across the state through the Society’s new K-12 initiative, “Learning with WHS.”
- Successfully re-envisioned the National History Day program for a virtual format with regional, state, and national competitions. Staff, volunteers, and thousands of student competitors connected and presented entirely through a virtual platform.
- Along with the museum’s reopening in June 2021, staff offered a variety of walking tours around the Capitol Square, providing a safe outdoor group experience.

### FY20 Division of Museums & Historic Sites Revenues and Expenses:

| Historic Site / Museum       | FY20 Earned Revenue | FY20 Contributed & Endowment Income | FY20 State Tax Contribution | FY20 Expenses |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Wisconsin Historical Museum  | \$210,634           | \$37,495                            | \$561,358                   | \$686,466     |
| Villa Louis                  | \$94,774            | \$6,150                             | \$349,376                   | \$386,058     |
| Wade House                   | \$226,307           | \$105,217                           | \$506,014                   | \$620,263     |
| Stonefield                   | \$20,258            | \$26,057                            | \$130,093                   | \$180,764     |
| Circus World                 | \$571,522           | \$23,643                            | \$713,460                   | \$744,912     |
| Madeline Island Museum       | \$99,312            | \$167,310                           | \$71,871                    | \$303,968     |
| Pendarvis & First Capitol    | \$26,009            | \$3,088                             | \$148,462                   | \$175,241     |
| Old World Wisconsin          | \$515,980           | \$82,841                            | \$781,559                   | \$1,493,893   |
| H.H. Bennett Studio          | \$36,490            | \$19,015                            | \$155,041                   | \$188,901     |
| Reed School                  | \$153               | \$36,236                            | \$4,481                     | \$40,970      |
| Black Point Estate & Gardens | \$96,191            | \$53,643                            | \$11,809                    | \$134,892     |

**FY21 Division of Museums & Historic Sites Revenues and Expenses:**

| Historic Site / Museum       | FY21 Earned Revenue | FY21 Contributed & Endowment Income | FY21 State Tax Contribution | FY21 Expenses |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Wisconsin Historical Museum  | \$29,690            | \$42,419                            | \$725,321                   | \$791,844     |
| Villa Louis                  | \$22,750            | \$10,090                            | \$261,243                   | \$277,378     |
| Wade House                   | \$21,092            | \$139,142                           | \$224,067                   | \$474,572     |
| Stonefield                   | \$6,642             | \$30,456                            | \$117,240                   | \$156,673     |
| Circus World                 | \$179,232           | \$18,940                            | \$873,903                   | \$948,357     |
| Madeline Island Museum       | \$38,671            | \$165,772                           | \$16,650                    | \$198,740     |
| Pendarvis & First Capitol    | \$4,981             | \$1,249                             | \$152,313                   | \$155,263     |
| Old World Wisconsin          | \$110,064           | \$75,077                            | \$1,074,804                 | \$1,198,497   |
| H.H. Bennett Studio          | \$15,417            | \$15,902                            | \$26,858                    | \$156,028     |
| Reed School                  | \$0                 | \$17,953                            | \$4,629                     | \$22,582      |
| Black Point Estate & Gardens | \$68,294            | \$29,790                            | \$113,362                   | \$169,412     |

**MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM**

The Museum Archaeology Program provides technical services to federal and state agencies to aid in compliance with historic preservation laws and regulations, including:

- Identification of archaeological resources, burial sites, and historic buildings and structures that may be affected by development and construction projects.
- Development of instructional materials and programs for educators to aid in teaching the history of Wisconsin.
- Curation and management of state-owned archaeological object collections and associated documentation.

**Program Purpose:** To serve as a leader in Wisconsin archaeological research, working side-by-side with other archaeology programs at the Society, academic institutions, agencies, and local historical societies throughout Wisconsin.

**During fiscal years 2020-2021, the Museum Archaeology Program accomplished the following:**

- Archaeologists and historians traveled to 38 counties (53%) to conduct research. On average, MAP visits 36% of Wisconsin’s 72 counties each year.
- Discovered 57 archaeological sites and investigated 173 historic buildings.



- Documented a shipyard on the banks of the St. Louis River that operated during both World War I and World War II.
- Implemented new protocols so field research and artifact handling can be accomplished safely and effectively.
- Completed 652 research projects on behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), Department of Natural Resources, Village of Albany, and the Society.
- Partnered with the Ho-Chunk Tribal Historic Preservation Office and WisDOT to protect culturally significant places during ongoing highway construction in Columbia County.
- Published *Embracing the Antiquities: Archaeology at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, History to 1976*.
- Acquired 50 new archaeological collections and entered 6,050 historical object records into the collection management system.

## OFFICE OF PROGRAMS & OUTREACH

The Office of Programs and Outreach aims to expand the reach of the Society’s mission, programs and services to all Wisconsinites through three main functions: Field Services, the Wisconsin Historical Society Press, and Education. The office develops curriculum for K-12 classrooms, conducts school visits, administers tours and programming at Society locations, creates traveling exhibitions, and administers the state National History Day program. It also provides technical assistance to more than 400 affiliated historical societies statewide and assists the general public and researchers on a variety of historic preservation and other history-related inquiries and projects. The Wisconsin Historical Society Press publishes the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, books for general readers, and textbooks and curriculum support materials for teachers and students. **More information is available at [wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/cs14818](https://wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/cs14818).**

**Program Purpose:** The office helps to enhance the understanding of history through reading, listening, and learning.

**During fiscal years 2020-2021, the office accomplished the following:**

- Welcomed Angela Titus into the new role of Assistant Deputy Director and Chief Program Officer.
- Revised the Outreach Team structure to better provide services to every region of Wisconsin.
- Launched a new education philosophy, “Empowering Curiosity,” and a digital learning hub, uniting all preK-12 digital education sources and programs within WHS divisions.
  - Introduced “Learning with WHS,” a virtual programming platform that coalesces K-12 education programs into a shared strategy and online resource with coordinated communications.

- Connected teachers to relevant Wisconsin Historical Society Press titles, including free digital downloads of our fourth-grade Wisconsin history textbook *Wisconsin: Our State, Our Story*, providing easier access to our resources during the pandemic. In the 2020-21 pilot school year, 5,533 students participated in the programs.
- Facilitated 19,562 middle and high school students' participation in the National History Day program, with 113 Wisconsin students qualifying to compete at the National Finals, where seven finished in the Top 10 or won special awards.
- Reached 992 students in elementary school classrooms around the state through the traveling Hands-On History program.
- Published 25 new titles through the Society Press, sold 78,080 books resulting in \$1,208,274 in net sales, and received 22 awards.
- Partnered with Wisconsin Public Radio to share the Society Press book, *Make Way for Liberty* on its "Chapter a Day" program, and partnered with the Wisconsin Veterans Museum for a panel discussion about Wisconsin African Americans in the Civil War.
- Booked 346 events with 9,772 attendees and more than 20,000 post-event views online and through the Society's social media channels.
- Began development of an LGBTQ+ History series which includes Society Press books, a webinar, local history conference session, and exhibits.
- Updated online resources for local history affiliates and community partners to offer more virtual services.
- Produced eight adult education seminars and webinars that reached more than 2,000 people. Topics included the Hmong refugee experience and interpreting women's history.
- Attracted 812 attendees to our 13th and 14th annual Local History and Historic Preservation Conferences, including our first fully virtual conference in 2020 due to the pandemic, which drew 382 attendees from 19 states and 53 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.
- Produced "Monuments, Markers, and Meaning," a three-part series of webinars on the meaning and message of historical markers, monuments, and statues at the local, state, and national level. These timely events, moderated by Society Director Christian Øverland and featuring national experts, further enhanced the Society's reputation as a nationally recognized leader and resource of expertise. More than 1,500 people from across the country registered for the programs, with recordings reaching additional online viewers.
- Partnered with the Wisconsin Council for Local History to offer \$21,175 in small grants to 38 affiliated museums and historical societies.
- Secured a \$75,190 grant to support a three-year effort to expand the State Historical Markers program to include stories of local underrepresented histories.
- Completed framework for "Share Your History," the next phase of community engagement to support the Society's planned new state history museum.

## DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Division of Administrative Services provides a wide range of day-to-day support and long-range planning for the Wisconsin Historical Society, including its divisions, the Director’s Office, the senior leadership team and over 177 permanent and 173 limited-term employees. The division also assists in the management and maintenance of the Society’s 247 buildings located throughout the state.

### Flexible Work Schedules and Alternative Work Patterns:

- Pursuant to s. 230.215, Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Historical Society currently supports and has implemented flexible-time schedules and other alternative work pattern programs. As a result, the Society has many permanent and part-time employees using flexible-time work schedules. The Society has found that implementing alternative work patterns serves the needs of the state by offering consistent and reliable service to the public, increasing efficiency and maximizing employee productivity. The Society’s Alternative Work Patterns Program complies with the requirements of the state Alternative Work Patterns Policy and Procedures Outline.
- To further the achievements gained under the Alternative Work Patterns Program, the Society has published a Telecommuting Policy to allow employees to work occasionally at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for a portion of the regular work week. The Society understands that, in appropriate circumstances, this policy will promote productivity, conservation of resources, and better service to the public while also offering a benefit to suitable employees.

### 2019-2021 Biennial Budget:

| Overview                           | FY20                | FY21                |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| General Program Operations         | \$ 15,539,100       | \$ 15,543,000       |
| Earned Revenue                     | \$ 4,180,600        | \$ 4,058,500        |
| Debt Service                       | \$ 5,136,100        | \$ 5,308,300        |
| Transfer Revenue                   | \$ 2,378,600        | \$ 2,330,500        |
| Federal Revenue                    | \$ 1,382,700        | \$ 1,371,900        |
| Foundation Contributed Income      | \$ 820,100          | \$ 820,100          |
| Utilities and Fuel                 | \$ 903,300          | \$ 914,400          |
| Endowment Income                   | \$ 613,800          | \$ 613,800          |
| Wisconsin Black Historical Society | \$ 84,500           | \$ 84,500           |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$31,038,800</b> | <b>\$31,045,000</b> |

# 2021-2023 Programs, Goals, Objectives, & Activities

Note: Goals, objectives, and activities have been modified.

## PROGRAM 1: HISTORY SERVICES

### **GOAL: Expedite the preservation of places of enduring value.**

Objectives/Activities:

- Educate Wisconsin residents, property owners, and stakeholders on Wisconsin's archaeological, maritime, and built environment resources.
- Facilitate Wisconsin's historic preservation programs, including private investment in historic properties utilizing the state and federal historic building rehabilitation tax credit programs.

### **GOAL: Enhance the understanding of history through reading, listening, and learning.**

Objectives/Activities:

- Publish and distribute highly valued and widely read Wisconsin Historical Society Press (WHSP) books sold to general audiences.
- Distribute highly valued WHSP student titles and textbooks to schools and students.
- Provide transformative history educational experiences for middle school and high school students through the National History Day program.
- Provide assistance and support to local history affiliate organizations and support to local heritage and community groups through consultations, programming, and educational services.

### **GOAL: Acquire, catalog, preserve, and share collections that sustain our national reputation and provide egalitarian access to research services for seekers of historical information.**

Objectives/Activities:

- Acquire and document history through a revised collection policy and collection plans.
- Provide valued service and unparalleled access to the Society's research collection to patrons and visitors.
- Provide assistance with electronic records to state agencies.



**GOAL: Use physical environments and artifacts to create immersive and engaging learning experiences.**

Objectives/Activities:

- Deliver quality, engaging, entertaining, and educational experiences for visitors of all ages that result in lasting and inspirational memories and connections to Wisconsin history.
- Advance the Old World Wisconsin master plan to improve the quality of the guest experience.
- Provide enriching educational experiences for school children that meet Wisconsin instructional standards.
- Increase safety and security at Society facilities and reduce deferred maintenance.

**GOAL: Replace Wisconsin Historical Museum with a modern, new 21st-century museum for history.**

Objectives/Activities:

- Prepare and collect stories for new museum.
- Engage citizenship of Wisconsin to develop relevant guest experience.
- Develop facility and realize capital funding requirements.

## 2019-21 Biennium Metrics & Future Goals:

| Performance Measure   | Goal 2020 | Actual 2020 <sup>1</sup> | Goal 2021 <sup>2</sup>       | Actual 2021                  | Goal 2022                          | Goal 2023                          |
|---|-----------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| # of buildings rehabilitated using the rehabilitation tax credit programs | 310       | 390                      | 300                          | 478                          | 350                                | 350                                |
| Total rehabilitation tax credit project investment <sup>3</sup>           | N/A       | \$210M                   | \$100M                       | \$143M                       | \$140M                             | \$140M                             |
| # of Wisconsin Historical Society Press (WHSP) books sold or distributed  | 47,000    | 37,162                   | 15,235                       | 40,918                       | 25,000                             | 42,000                             |
| # of WHSP student titles and textbooks sold and distributed               | 14,500    | 7,655                    | 2,500                        | 8,248                        | 3,125                              | 4,000                              |
| # of participants in National History Day program                         | 17,250    | 15,000                   | 10,000                       | 3,562                        | 15,000                             | 17,000                             |
| # of local history affiliate consultations                                | 750       | 269                      | 550                          | 451                          | 600                                | 640                                |
| People engaged in new museum development process                          | 2,000     | 996                      | 1,500                        | 163                          | 1,500                              | 1,500                              |
| # of collection donations (donor transactions)                            | 1,500     | 189                      | 200                          | 232                          | 215                                | 230                                |
| # of patrons served by State Archives & North American History Library    | 190,000   | 133,790                  | 15,000                       | 19,238                       | 60,000                             | 130,000                            |
| # of agencies provided with e-records assistance                          | 28        | 20                       | 15                           | 20                           | 25                                 | 28                                 |
| # of local governments served via in-person consultations                 | 20        | 88                       | 15                           | 79                           | 20                                 | 25                                 |
| Attendance at museums & historic sites                                    | 275,000   | 142,342                  | 68,000                       | 30,585                       | 140,000                            | 250,000                            |
| K-12 student attendance at museums & historic sites                       | 55,000    | 17,153                   | in-person 0<br>virtual 5,000 | in-person 0<br>virtual 6,698 | in-person 20,000<br>virtual 10,000 | in-person 40,000<br>virtual 20,000 |
| Unique visits to website content  | 4.8M      | 5.43M                    | 5.7M                         | 5.7M                         | 5.7M                               | 5.7M                               |
| Total Wisconsin Historical Society members.                               | 13,000    | 10,680                   | 11,000                       | 9,880                        | 11,500                             | 12,000                             |
| Value of deferred maintenance at WHS facilities                           | \$10.9M   | \$8.28M                  | \$6.81M                      | \$8.1M                       | \$5.4M                             | \$5.0M                             |

<sup>1</sup> Actuals for 2020 impacted by COVID-19; <sup>2</sup> Some 2021 goals revised due to COVID-19. (WHS expects it will take a few years to return to 2018-19 service levels); <sup>3</sup> Performance measure revised during the 2019-21 biennium