

Museum Notes

by Kristen Parrott, curator
for the week of April 28 – May 4, 2019

Genealogy and archaeology are both on tap at the museum for Thursday, May 9. In the morning, at 10AM, the genealogy class will meet in the conference room. Megan Isley of the La Crosse Public Library's archives room will present a program called "Where Did They Come From? Immigration and Naturalization Records".

The class will explore both paper and digital sources of immigration information. Feel free to bring a lap-top computer if you have one. And if you have a familysearch.org account, bring that information too. New students are always welcome to join the class. Vernon County Historical Society members attend for free, and non-members are asked to pay \$5 per class.

At 7PM on the same day, May 9, archaeologist Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt will talk about "Ancient Colonies at Stoddard and Trempealeau – Rare Middle Mississippian Outposts". Note the change in date from our usual monthly programs. This is a free public event that will be held in the handicapped-accessible conference room.

May is Wisconsin Archaeology Month, and we are fortunate that Ernie is able to come help us celebrate with a program about archaeology in Vernon County. He will talk about the Middle Mississippian Culture of the ancient city of Cahokia (near modern-day St. Louis), and how this culture was transplanted to two settlements in Wisconsin, one at Stoddard and the other at Trempealeau.

In 1929, a group of researchers from the Milwaukee Public Museum, headed by the museum's curator of anthropology W.C. McKern, conducted an archaeological expedition on Indian mounds near Stoddard. The work is described in an article from *The Milwaukee Journal* newspaper of September 22, 1929, which we have in our archives:

"The camp was pitched on the bank of the Mississippi just outside of Stoddard and the excavators ranged to the mound sites. The summer's work was productive of four important things. It supplied the key to interpret a government survey of Indian mounds made 40 years ago; it revealed group burials as the rule in the region visited, something not found generally in the state; it gleaned information from a Siouan burial ground; and it discovered a campsite with deposits of pottery of two different cultures, one above the other."

Archaeology has changed a lot in the 90 years since this dig, and scientists are still gaining more knowledge from the Stoddard site. Ernie has been working as an archaeologist in our Driftless region for more than 40 years and is now studying the Middle Mississippian Culture represented at Stoddard.

Learn more at the May 9 program. Refreshments will be served afterward. Everyone is welcome to attend.