Welcoming the Tribes Back to Their Ancestral Lands

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Newark Earthworks Center - Ohio State University and
World Heritage - Ohio Executive Committee
INDIANS AND EARTHWORKS THROUGH THE AGES
“We are all related”
Earthen architecture and mound building was evident throughout the eastern third of North America for millennia.

Everyone who lived in the woodlands prior to Removal knew about earthworks, if they weren’t building them.

The beautiful, enormous, geometric precision of the Hopewell earthworks were the culmination of the combined brilliance of cultures in the Eastern Woodlands across time and distance.

Has this traditional indigenous knowledge persisted in the cultural traditions of contemporary American Indian cultures today?
Each dot represents Indigenous architecture and cultural sites, most built before 1491.
Miamisburg Mound is the largest conical burial mound in the USA, built on top of a 100’ bluff, it had a circumference of 830’
People of the Adena Culture built it between 2,800 and 1,800 years ago.
Miamisburg, Ohio (Montgomery County)
Items found in mounds indicate vast travel and trade networks active 2,000 years ago.
Inside the 50-acre Octagon at Sunrise
Octagon Earthworks, Newark, OH
Indigenous people planned, designed and built the Newark Earthworks (ca. 2000 BCE) to cover an area of 4 square miles

(survey map created by Whittlesey, Squier, and Davis, 1837-47)
Two professors recover tribal knowledge

2,000 years ago, Indigenous people developed specialized knowledge to construct the Octagon Earthworks to observe the complete moon cycle:

8 alignments over a period of 18 years and 219 days (18.6 years)
INDIAN REMOVAL
&
THE COLONIZATION OF OHIO
The Removal of American Indian Tribes from Ohio

1788
First American garrison established in Marietta, Ohio after several attempts. Tribal groups began leaving Ohio to escape settler and militia violence.

1795
Treaty of Greenville signed.

1803
State of Ohio established.

1843
Last Tribe – Wyandotte - cedes land and leaves Ohio; forced to resettle in OK, KS, TX

1848
Publication of Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley

1850
No tribal presence in Ohio
The Treaty of Greenville ceded tribal land to the US government, 1795
“My people, the time for our departure is at hand. A few words remain only to be said. Our entire nation has gathered here for farewell. It remains only for me to say farewell...Here are dead are buried. We have placed fresh leaves and flowers upon their graves for the last time. No longer shall we visit them. Soon they shall be forgotten, for the onward march of the strong white man will not turn aside for Indian graves.

-June 12, 1843 condolence speech by Chief Squier Grey Eyes
Maps of the Newark Earthworks, 1820 to 1902

By 1902, Newark builds on top of the earthworks, and today only TWO of the FOUR enormous earthen enclosures remain.

The Octagon Earthworks

The Great Circle
The absence of federally recognized tribal governments and exclusion of American Indian tribal citizens in making policy in Ohio is evidenced by:

Unrestricted sales of sacred and ancient objects
On June 23 Old Barn Auction, Findlay, Ohio held an auction that fetched $275,736 and included the following:

- $19,250 Gneiss bust birdstone, 2½” high.
- $16,500 Banded slate birdstone, Big Springs, Indiana, 4” long.
- $14,300 Cannel coal constricted-center gorget, Liberty Mills, Wabash County, Indiana, 5” long.
- $11,000 Banded slate notched-winged butterfly birdstone, Indiana, 5½” long.
- $9,350 Paleolithic flint fluted point, Wyandot County, Ohio, 4¼” long.
- $7,700 Saddle bannerstone, Alton, Madison County, Illinois, 2¼” long.
- $6,325 Chlorite pick bannerstone, Clark County, Ohio, 4¼” long.
- $6,050 Banded slate animal-type birdstone, Orange Township, Shelby County, Ohio, 3¼” long.
- $5,500 Chlorite D bannerstone, Darke County, Ohio, 2½” long.
- $4,675 Conch shell gorget, Fort Recovery, Mercer County, Ohio, 3½” long.
- $4,400 Banded slate elliptical gorget, Crawford County, Ohio, 5¼” long.

The September 15 Old Barn sale fetched $238,222 and included the following:

- $11,000 Flint Ridge dovetail point, Fairfield County, Ohio, 5½” long.
- $9,900 Banded slate fantail birdstone, Muhlenberg, Cayuga County, New York, 5½” long.
- $6,800 Brown sandstone shaman/buffalo-effigy pipe, Days Creek, Virginia, 4” high.
- $6,050 Animal birdstone, Henry County, Ohio, 4½” long.
- $5,940 Gneiss popeyed-bust birdstone, Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana.
- $4,730 Banded slate popeyed birdstone, Otsego County, New York.
- $4,675 Hardstone Hopewell bird-effigy pipe, Portsmouth, Scioto County, Ohio, 5½” long.

Auction Block continued on page 28
The absence of federally recognized tribal governments and the exclusion of American Indian tribal citizens in Ohio is evidenced by:

Limited understanding of the history of American Indians in Ohio and the federal context for contemporary Tribal Nations
Tribes, Indians, and their Resources in Ohio
Developed for the World Heritage Nomination Proposals, 2010

**FEDERAL LEVEL:**
The President, Congress, and Federal Agencies
National Park Service

**FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES – NATION TO NATION STATUS**

**NATIONAL LEVEL:**
National Congress of American Indians
Native American Rights Fund
National Museum of the American Indian

**STATE LEVEL:**
Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Ohio Historical Society
State Legislature and Governor

**LOCAL/REGIONAL LEVEL:**
American Indian Centers
Individual American Indians
With the absence of federally recognized tribal governments in Ohio, and when American Indian tribal citizens are not included…

...too often in the Midwest, programs and projects are planned about American Indians and not with federally recognized tribes and American Indian citizens.
“We can honor the ancestors by reclaiming the sites today as places of gathering and ceremony.”

Ohio’s American Indian community were included in the planning and participation of events and projects hosted by the Newark Earthworks Center at the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks.
American Indian Citizens live in Ohio

Faye Brings Them, Lakota (Rosebud), artist, activist, mother, grandmother in Cleveland, Ohio

Carol Welsh, Dakota, Past Director, Native American Indian Center of Columbus, OH
The Newark Earthworks Center invites American Indian leaders to Ohio

Ancient Ohio Trail Inaugural Event, 2012

Sonya Atalay, Ojibwe, Archaeologist, U.S NAGPRA Committee

Jennifer P. Weinberger, Athabascan Descendant, Former Superintendent, Hopewell National Historical Park

and

Gerard Baker, Mandan-Hidatsa, National Park Service, First American Indian Superintendent, Mt. Rushmore

Newark Earthworks Symposium, 2011
“All of us who are Indian are descendants of the Moundbuilders and their blood runs in our veins.” - 2006

Professor Donald Fixico, Shawnee/Sac & Fox/Creek/Seminole, History was the first American Indian Studies scholar to visit the Newark Earthworks Center and tour the earthworks.
TRIBAL RELATIONS IN OHIO TODAY
By 1840, there were no tribes left in Ohio.

We began to research Ohio connections to present-day American Indian tribes with histories in Ohio during two eras:

* Post-European Contact to 1840 *
* Hopewell Culture Era *

The Newark Earthworks Center’s goal was to inform the public about the World Heritage nomination of the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks.

We did not meet tribal government representatives until 2007.
Ohio’s Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks are expected to be the next sites nominated by the Department of Interior to be World Heritage Sites

**Newark Earthworks State Memorial:**
The Great Circle + Octagon Earthworks

**Fort Ancient State Memorial**

**Hopewell Culture National Historical Park Sites:**
Mound City Group + Hopewell Mound Group
+ Seip Earthworks + High Bank Earthworks
+ Hopeton Earthworks

~ and the next site will be Serpent Mound ~
The Great Circle in Winter
Octagon Earthworks - view from outside the octagon
Chief Glenna Wallace’s visit to the Newark Earthworks led to a new paradigm in Ohio for American Indian relations and the interpretation of the Earthworks.

"I had spent at least thirty years researching cultures and histories of civilizations throughout the world. I had read everything I could about my Shawnee tribe: all the places they lived, wars they fought, how they dressed, how they worked, how they are, what they built, how they believed, what they valued, and how they worshiped. I knew about Serpent Mound, but I had never heard of the Newark Earthworks. I had never even heard of Newark, Ohio. I was stunned at what I saw. I was in a state of disbelief.... I could not believe it. My people, my ancestors treasured these mounds. Perhaps they did not build them, but they loved them, protected them, revered them. They knew their importance, and these earthworks were sacred to them....

That day I met a group of people who live in Ohio and feel much as I do. These are people who also find the current situation unacceptable, even as they appreciate the fact that the Newark Earthworks have been preserved when so many other earthworks have been destroyed. These people are associated with Ohio State’s Newark Earthworks Center. These are the people who hosted a scholarly symposium that produced the essays in this book.

That day I made a commitment- to learn all I could about the Newark Earthworks, to teach others about them, and to preserve them. I have returned repeatedly to visit these people and to visit the site, and several of these people have visited me in Oklahoma. I have joined them in the effort to preserve the site and win the recognition that it deserves by winning inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

I continue to be amazed, awe stricken, disappointed, and angry. But now I also feel hopeful."

-Chief Glenna Wallace, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma.

“I respectfully ask that the Commission and the State Legislature support a stronger state law protecting prehistoric and historic Native American burial sites.”

“The current law, which considers desecration of cemeteries and gravesites a misdemeanor, is insufficient.”

“Even more disturbing, graves over 125 years of age may not be protected at all. There is no effective state law enforcing the protection of any unmarked grave sites on public or private land from looting or vandalism.”

“That means none of my ancestors are protected.”

--Chief Glenna Wallace
Historical marker commemorating Wapatomica, commissioned by the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, 2010
Newark Earthworks Center Trip to Ottawa County, Oklahoma, 2010
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma
We were greatly influenced by the Chickasaw Nation’s Cultural Center exhibits about their connections to mounds and their statements on cultural preservation.

“Some Chickasaws who have visited mounds sense a special feeling of kinship.”

– Chicksaw Exhibit, Chickasaw Cultural Center, Sulphur, Oklahoma
Moundbuilders

Our ancestors were onchaba ikbi', the moundbuilders of the Mississippi and Ohio river valleys. Our territory stretched from the Midwest, to New England, and through the southeastern United States. Mounds were constructed from 500 to over 2,000 years ago in this region.

In our tradition, the Chickasaws, as well as dozens of tribes, are the direct descendants of Mississippian civilization, which was active from about AD 900 to 1700. The powerful and far-reaching Mississippian economic and political structure greatly influenced and shaped our culture.
The People of the Hopewell Culture created beautiful and artistic things.

The earthworks builders buried their relatives with beautiful man-made and natural objects.

They expected the burials to remain undisturbed for eternity.
“Funerary items recovered from excavations are sacred to the Chickasaws.”

“We do not put burial objects on display.”

“Reburying sacred items is important to prevent spiritual disruptions for our ancestors. When we can, we work with the archaeologists and institutions that house excavated sacred objects to reinter these artifacts.”
National Congress of American Indians Resolution #PDX-11-060:
“Support the Nomination of Ohio Earthworks to become World Heritage Sites (2011)”

Sponsored by the Newark Earthworks Center with support from the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
World Heritage Celebration at the Great Circle co-hosted by the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and the Newark Earthworks Center, 2013
Great Circle Earthworks
Eastern Shawnee Tribe Heritage Tour, 2012
As a result of the visit to the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi tribal council passed a resolution of support for World Heritage recognition in 2015.
A List of Contemporary Tribes whose ancestors lived in Ohio in the Historic Era (after European Contact) continues to be developed, beginning with an initial list of nine nations in 2005.

Oklahoma

Absentee Shawnee of Oklahoma
Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Delaware Nation
Delaware Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma
Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians
Wyandotte Nation

Source: The National Park Service, NAGPRA, and Dr. John Low, OSU-Newark
Michigan
Bay Mills Indian Community
Chippewa Indians Hannahville Indian Community
Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior
Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Wisconsin
Forest County Potawatomi Community
Chippewa Tribe of Indians
Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior
St. Croix Chippewa Indians
North Dakota
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

Minnesota
Chippewa Tribe
Fond du Lac Band Chippewa Tribe
Grand Portage Band Chippewa Tribe
Leech Lake Band Chippewa Tribe
Mille Lacs Band Chippewa Tribe

Source: The National Park Service, NAGPRA, and Dr. John Low, OSU-Newark
Collaboration between American Indian Governments and Ohio Institutions

- Develop projects that meet the needs of Tribes and Universities
- Maintain sustainable, reciprocal relationships with American Indian Governments, national, regional and local organizations
- Protect and Preserve American Indian cultural resources, such as the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks and American Indian historic places
- Participate in the World Heritage Designation of Ohio’s Indigenous Earthworks
Address tribal issues:
- Cultural & Historical Preservation
- Recover and maintain their languages and history
- Enhance tribal systems for health and welfare
- Conserve natural resources

American Indian people are pursuing careers to benefit their American Indian rural and urban communities.

Research partnerships between American Indian governments & universities
Linda Lomahhaftewa, Choctaw and Pueblo
“Northbridge”
Lance Foster (Iowa Tribe) 1996
Christi Belcourt
Nothing About Us Without US

~ Lee Maracle, Metis (Salish and Cree)
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Website:  https://newark.osu.edu/initiatives/newark-earthworks-center.html
Blog:  https://newarkearthworkscenter.blogspot.com/
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