

For Immediate Release

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La Crosse Community is Invited to "Share Your Voice" with the Wisconsin Historical Society on a New State History Museum and See Two Objects from the Society's Vast Collection

La Crosse, WI. – The La Crosse community is invited to join the Wisconsin Historical Society on Wednesday, April 17, at the La Crosse Public Library from 6:00-7:30 pm (doors open at 5:30 pm) to share their thoughts and ideas and see design concepts for a new modern, state-of-the-art history museum on Wisconsin's Capitol Square in Madison.

"The new state history museum project is about more than bricks and mortar and will connect the stories of Wisconsinites from all 72 counties," said Christian Overland, Ruth and Hartley Barker Director of the Wisconsin Historical Society. "The input we receive at these public workshops will help shape future exhibits and storylines, and this is a rare opportunity for the public to provide their vision of how the new museum can represent Wisconsin and their history to create relevant stories that have local significance and national impact."

The event will start with an introduction to the new museum project. Guests will hear from Christian Overland and then participate in workshops that will help develop feedback and conversations on current design concepts, "What makes Wisconsin, Wisconsin" and tell the Society how they would like a state history museum to serve their community.

Prior to the program, guests are invited to enjoy an up-close view of two items from the Wisconsin Historical Society's world-renowned American history collection rarely shown in public: James Wilkins' 1849 sketches of the Oregon Trail, and a [sweater worn by Polish veterinarian](#), Tadeusz "Ted" Kowalczyk when he was a prisoner at the Nazis' Auschwitz concentration camp in Germany, c. 1940. The items will be on display for the public to see until the event starts.

The event is supported by local partners, the La Crosse Public Library and the La Crosse County Historical Society.

The Society is traveling the state and will be holding over 40 community listening sessions as well as 14 American Indian nation engagement sessions and listening sessions with students. Guests can pre-register at wihist.org/yourvoice.

"As we hold more listening workshops across the state, it is important for us to be inclusive and understand what types of stories and programs our guests would like in the new history museum," Overland continued. "We also want to understand how we can better serve our audiences in their towns and cities because we feel that everyone should feel welcomed in this museum, whether they visit in person or participate digitally."

The Wisconsin Historical Society has been working towards building a new \$120 million, 100,000-square-foot museum for more than 20 years. The new museum will more than double exhibition space and include state-of-the-art technology while providing learning, meeting and flexible spaces. The new museum will reach and connect people all across the state through distance learning technology and exciting, modern exhibits.

For more information on the Wisconsin Historical Society visit wisconsinhistory.org.

About Wisconsin Historical Society

The Wisconsin Historical 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 people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Wisconsin Historical Society serves millions of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs and services. For more information, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.

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