



SUMMER 2021

# ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE 1783 OX ROAST

STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE MOHICAN COMMUNITY

Historic Preservation Extension Office, 86 Spring Street Williamstown, MA 01267

**The Mohican Ox Roast/King Solomon Homesite Community Archaeology Project is funded wholly or in part by the citizens of Stockbridge under the provisions of the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act.**



## Mohicans in the Revolutionary War

At least 59 Stockbridge Mohican men volunteered to fight for the American cause during the Revolution, including Captain Hendrick Aupaumut, who led a company of Mohican soldiers. The first two Native American casualties in the Revolutionary War were Stockbridge Mohicans. Captain Aupaumut petitioned for (and received) full pay for himself and his men from none other than General George Washington. Despite their service, the Mohican soldiers that did ultimately return to Stockbridge following the war found that many of their lands had been taken and pressures were mounting.

## The 1783 Ox Roast

In the summer of 1783, historical accounts state that Gen. Washington provided an 1100-pound ox to the Mohicans in gratitude for the service and bravery of those who fought in the war. The event took place near the house of Mohican sachem Solomon Uhhaunauwaunmut, aka King Solomon. Despite this praise and moment of unity, within several months of the Ox Roast event most Stockbridge Mohicans were forced to leave their homes for western New York, eventually arriving in Wisconsin where the Stockbridge-Munsee Community now resides.

## Archaeological Investigations: June and July 2021

The Stockbridge-Munsee Community is undertaking a grant-funded community archaeology project to investigate the site of the 1783 Ox Roast. Professional archaeologist Ann Morton of Morton Archaeological Research Services and her team will be using a combination of non-invasive techniques including ground-penetrating radar and magnetometer testing to find the location of artifacts and features that might be from the Ox Roast, or from King Solomon's residence, which was originally located on the same site. Different artifact types may indicate different activities – hand-wrought iron nails could be indicative of Solomon's home, while items like military buttons, forks, or burned animal bone might provide clues about the ox roast.

Please respect the Stockbridge-Munsee Community's project through learning about and preserving the site of this important event that remains significant to both Mohican and American history.

For information, donations, or volunteering email [thpo@mohican-nsn.gov](mailto:thpo@mohican-nsn.gov), scan our QR code, or visit [mohican.com/cultural-affairs/](http://mohican.com/cultural-affairs/)





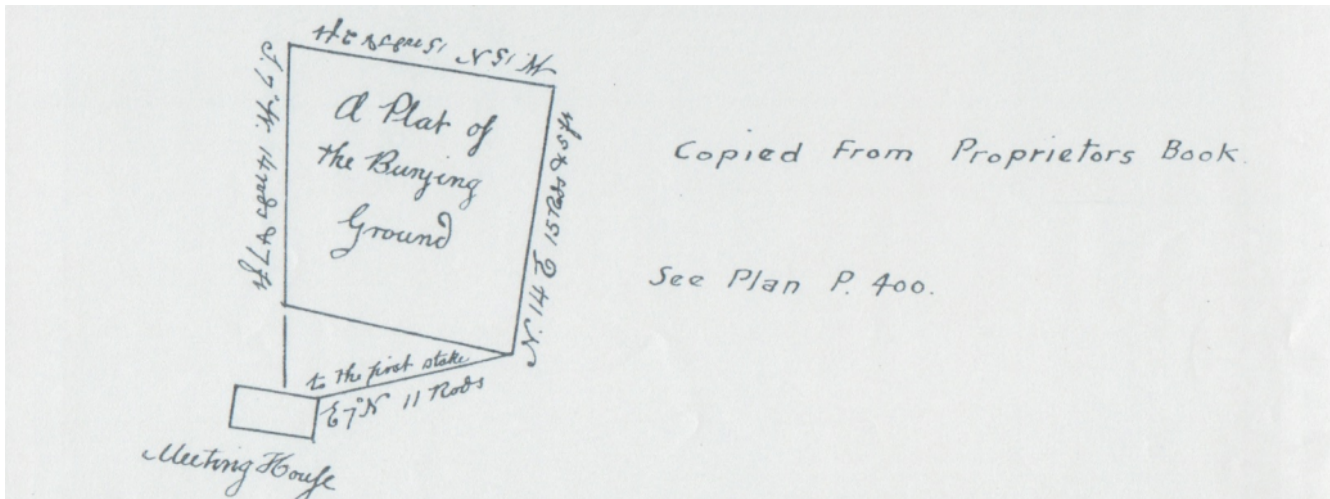
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# ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE 1739 MEETINGHOUSE

STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE MOHICAN COMMUNITY

Historic Preservation Extension Office, 86 Spring Street Williamstown, MA 01267

**The Stockbridge Meetinghouse and National Register Update Project is being supported in part by an Underrepresented Communities grant from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior**



## Mohicans in Stockbridge

Although the Town of Stockbridge was not established as "Indiantown" until 1736, the area was, and remains, a core part of Mohican homelands. The region was initially called Wnahtukook, or the "Great Meadow." In the mid-eighteenth century, English missionaries and settlers arrived in "Indiantown," living alongside Mohicans in a Christian community centered around the Meetinghouse, which was built in 1739. However, by the end of the century settlers had taken over lands and the governance of the town, ultimately forcing the Mohican community from their traditional homelands. The tribe relocated first to New York and then to Wisconsin, where many members now reside.

## The 1739 Meetinghouse

In 1736, Mohican leaders requested assistance from the Governor of Massachusetts to build a meetinghouse and school. The original Meetinghouse was constructed in 1739, and measured 40 by 30 feet. Its location influenced the placement of many other town structures including the school, a sawmill, the cemetery, and the town square. It was not only a religious building but a secular structure where the community could meet. The original Meetinghouse was demolished in 1785 to make room for a larger structure to fit the increasing white population of Stockbridge.

## Archaeological Investigations: June and July 2021

The Stockbridge-Munsee Community is undertaking a grant-funded community archaeology project to investigate the site of the 1739 Meetinghouse. Professional archaeologist Ann Morton of Morton Archaeological Research Services and her team will be using a combination of non-invasive techniques including ground-penetrating radar and magnetometer testing to find the location of artifacts and features that might be associated with the original Meetinghouse. It is possible to find not only artifacts to learn more about the people who visited the Meetinghouse, but also to uncover the footprint of the original building in order to learn more about the site's layout.

Please respect the Stockbridge-Munsee Community's project through learning about and preserving the site of this important event that remains significant to both Mohican and American history.

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