

CONTACT

Historic Preservation

Please contact the Stockbridge–Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation Office in Williamstown, Mass with inquiries regarding the potential return of object(s) or ancestral remains in your possession.

Stockbridge–Munsee Mohican Tribal Historic Preservation Office 86 Spring Street Williamstown, MA 01267

We thank you for your consideration of the immense meaning to the Stockbridge–Munsee Community in reuniting with our cultural heritage items.

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Tribal Archaeology in Stockbridge, MA: Reporting Back on Fieldwork



Stockbridge–Munsee
Community Winter Webinar

Background

This booklet is a supplementary resource to the Stockbridge–Munsee Community 2024 Winter Webinar Series. At this presentation, Hikaru Hayakawa (Past Intern, Stockbridge Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation Office) and Dr. Ann Morton of Morton Archaeological Research Services spoke about what was found during the Stockbridge–Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation Office's Summer 2021 archaeological work in Stockbridge, MA. The office worked to include these sites in the State and National Register of Historic Places to recognize Mohican ancestors and history in the area.



The webinar can be accessed on the Stockbridge–Munsee Cultural Affairs YouTube page

About this Booklet

The information shared in this booklet is enhanced by the Tribal Historic Preservation Program's 2021 innovative archaeological investigation conducted of the 1739 Meetinghouse site in front of the First Congregational Church in Stockbridge. These two projects book-end the experience of the Mohicans with Stockbridge, called "Indiantown" at its founding, from about 1736 to 1783.

This booklet is meant for public education and a community resource. The Stockbridge–Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation Office is continuously working on preserving ancestral items and protecting cultural sites such as those described.

Booklet created by: Brenda Diego, Repatriation Intern

Why this matters

There was no visible recognition of the Stockbridge-Munsee community in the Stockbridge Main Street Historic District, despite its foundation as a Mohican mission town. Because of ongoing erasure, the historic preservation office hopes to restore physical presence to correct Mohican erasure, by documenting our efforts to restore homeland sites. We hope to educate the community about our past existence in Massachusetts, and our current existence as a community that has continued to preserve our existence. The work was possible due to a Town of Stockbridge Community Preservation Fund Grant, and a National Park Service Underrepresented Communities to the National Register Grant received by the Tribal Historic Preservation Program.

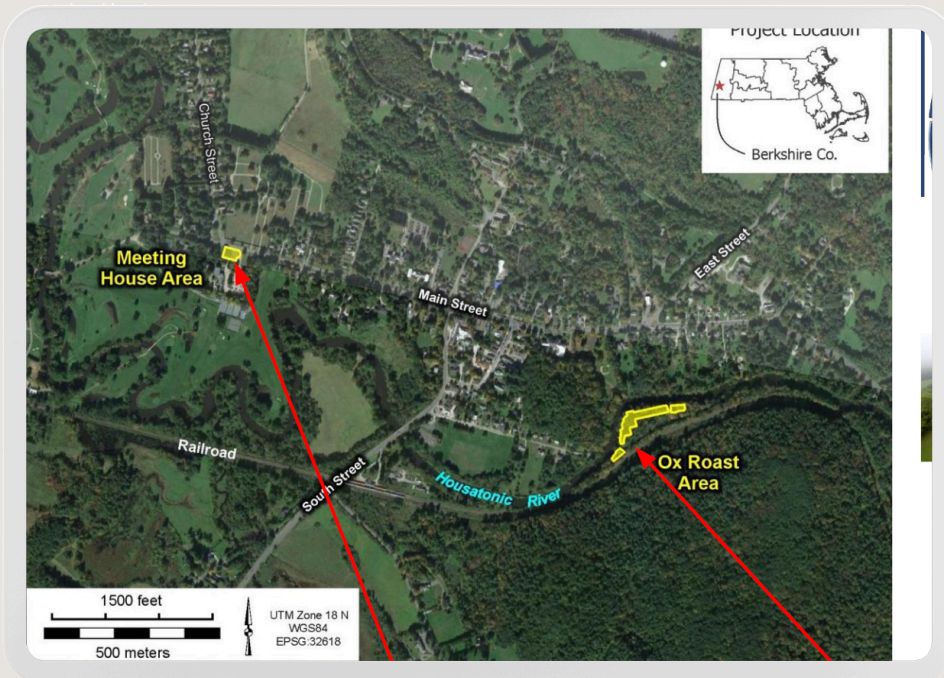
Timeline of the Events Investigated in This Survey

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- 1736 Mohicans moved the Council fire to vicinity of Wnahktukook, now called "Indiantown"; Begin construction of the Meetinghouse
 - 1739 Meetinghouse is dedicated
 - 1755 Uhhaunnuhwannuhmat and his family move to Indiantown
 - 1766 Uhhaunnuhwannuhmat travels to England
 - 1771 Uhhaunnuhwannuhmat becomes Sachem, becomes known as King Solomon
 - 1777 Uhhaunnuhwannuhmat dies
 - 1783 Ox Roast Feast given by George Washington to honor Mohicans
Mohicans leave for New Stockbridge, NY
 - 1785 Meetinghouse dismantled and re-used elsewhere

The Project's Main Focus

1739 Meetinghouse Site

Stockbridge has been part of the Mohican homelands from the earliest times. The Stockbridge-Munsee Community incorporated “Stockbridge” into our name since leaving the area. The goal for this project was to be able to locate and learn more about these two important sites.



Early Connecticut Meetinghouse (circa 1639)
<http://www.firstchurchofmilford.org/website/publish/about/index.php?10>

The Meetinghouse was the center of Community Life. It served as a church but also as a secular structure, where the functions of town government were carried out. Here are two possible examples of what the meeting house could look like.

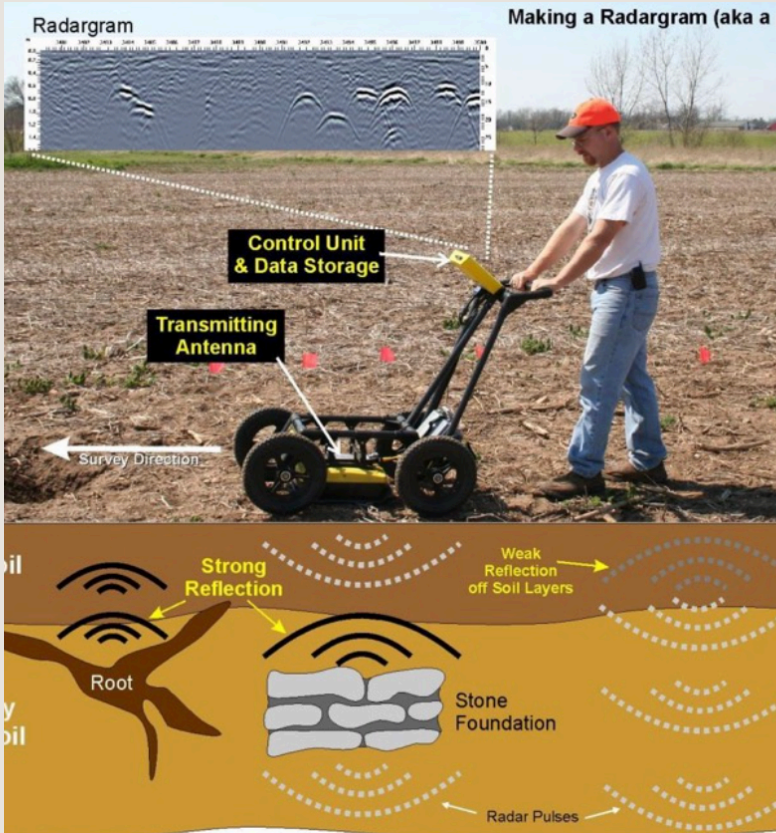


Sandown, NH built 1773,
https://www.colonialmeetinghouses.com/mh_sandown.shtml

The Stockbridge 1739
Meetinghouse and
National Register
Update

The Mohican Ox
Roast/King Solomon
Community Archaeology
Project

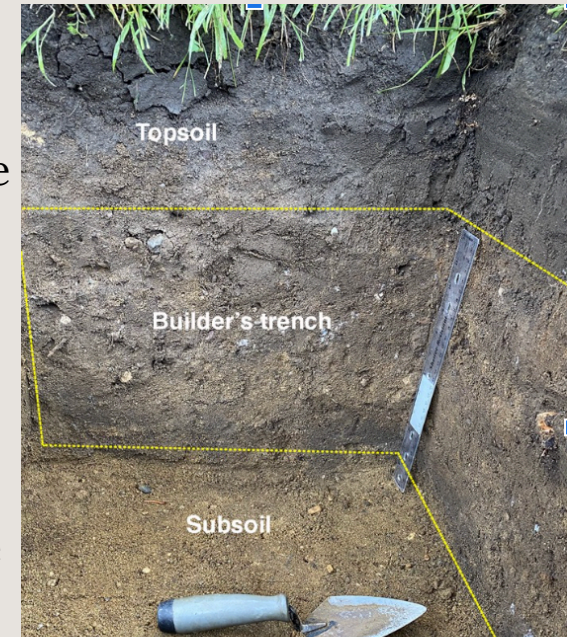
Methods



The project began with a non-invasive survey. Two geophysical survey techniques were used during the survey work at the Meeting House site in Stockbridge: magnetic gradiometry, and ground penetrating radar to help make pictures of what was under ground.

Outcomes

We know that only one English-style building was here in the Town Park until the Chime Tower was built. That building was the Meetinghouse. When they disassembled the Meetinghouse in 1785, they removed the stone foundation, and re-used it in the new Meetinghouse.



That foundation is still there. It was identified in 2010 using ground penetrating radar. Based on information from the 1750 survey, and excavation of the builder's trench, the location of the 1739 Meetinghouse was found.



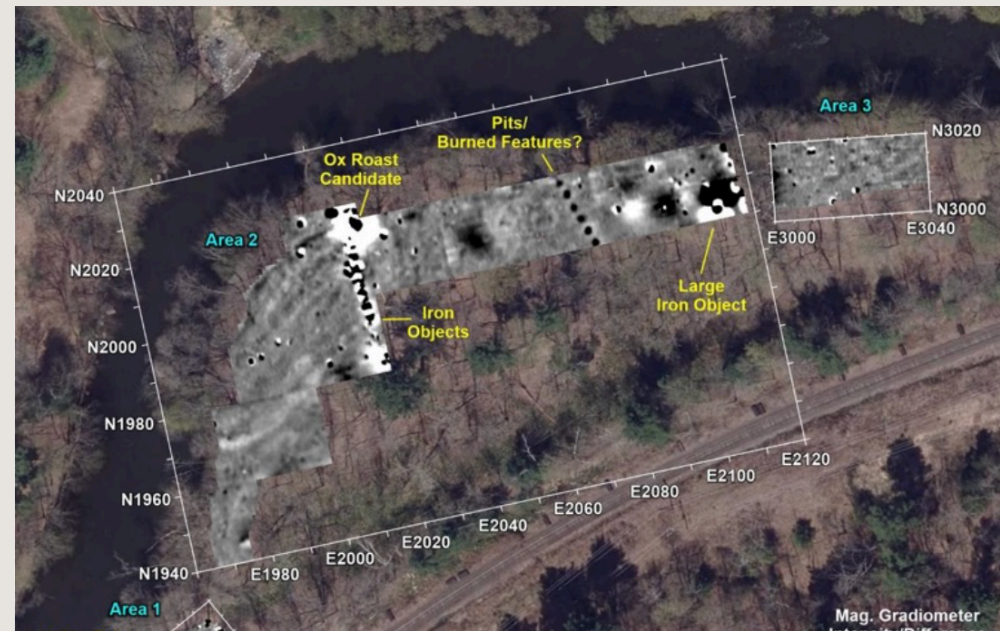
1783 Mohican Ox Roast/King Solomon Homesite

Methods



Mohican soldiers met with Gen. Washington on numerous occasions during the Revolutionary War, as the General sought their service for the war effort (Frazier, 1992). Washington ordered that an ox roast feast be provided, to meet and finalize the arrangements after the war. The feast was kept near the residence of King Solomon. After it was over, by accounts “the Indians buried the hatchet, in token that the war was past, and performed other ceremonies in their own style, for the gratification of the company” (Field, 1829: 243).

Phase I (Intensive) Addendum survey was conducted first to more firmly identify the locations of the Mohican Ox Roast and “King” Solomon/Uhhaunaunauwanmut homesite through the use of two geophysical survey techniques: Magnetic susceptibility survey, and magnetometer survey.





Thanks to the project, we were able to discover Mohican homesites. We collected evidence of two early, pre-Contact living surfaces - three sites identified - the 1739 Meetinghouse and two ancient sites.

**THESE ARE THE MOHICAN
HOMELANDS**

Outcomes



National register nomination



With this project, we were able to update the information on two sites and submit the nominations at the state level. The nomination was processed last October and is now considered in local planning and cultural preservation. This has helped undo this erasure and made more visible the Stockbridge-Munsee histories of Stockbridge, a town that would have never existed were it not for Konkapot, Umpachene, and our ancestors' contributions in the 1730s.

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College partnership

We are grateful for the many volunteers and interns from the Williams College community in this project. The involvement stems from the Tribe's partnership managed by the College's Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (OIDEI).