Rematriation of In'zhúje'waxóbe
Sacred Red Rock
AAM Annual Meeting | May 18, 2024

*is arriving back at one’s home.

Definition by C. Huffman (Kaw) and Tai S. Edwards.
James Pepper Henry
Executive Director/CEO
First Americans Museum
In'zhúje'waxóbe

Sacred Red Rock
Kaw Prayer Rock
Grandfather
Glacial Erratic
Founders Rock
Shunganunga Boulder
Kaánze Nikashinga
THE KAW PEOPLE
TO THE PIONEERS OF KANSAS WHO IN DEVOTION TO
HUMAN FREEDOM CAME INTO A WILDERNESS, SUFFERED
HARDSHIPS AND FACED DANGERS AND DEATH TO FOUND
THIS STATE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THESE WERE THE FIRST TO COME UNDER THE AUS-
PICES OF THE NEW ENGLAND EMIGRANT AID COMPANY.
THEY FOUNDED THE CITY OF LAWRENCE.

THE FIRST PARTY OF TWENTY NINE MEN LEFT
MASSACHUSETTS JULY 17, 1854 AND ARRIVED HERE
AUGUST 1, 1854.
The numbers have been placed to identify the 27 objects of the song as herein given.
Appropriation
Sydney Brooke Pursel
Curator for Public Practice
Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas
Communities coming together
Sacred Native American sites in Kansas are taking on new meaning as tribal representatives seek to preserve their sites.

In the past, such sites were recognized publicly only by state historians and archaeologists — largely because the tribes have long since been removed from Kansas, and partly because tribal members were not interested in keeping them private so curiosity seekers wouldn’t discover them.

But in recent months, the Kaw Indians have started identifyingencesacred sites in the state, including a rock in Lawrence now sitting in a city park and covered from the street by a tree.

These sites are part of the practice of Native American religions. Tribal representatives say they should be treated with the same respect as the sacred sites of other faiths.

“We have ceremonies that have evolved and are older that even Christianity or Islam,” said Betty Pepper Henry, Kaw Museum executive director, and preservation officer for the Kaw Nation in Kansas City, Kan.

When Native American tribes were forcibly removed from Kansas more than a century ago, those sacred sites were left behind, Pepper Henry said. The Kaw Indians have destroyed a grotto that was created, and they have raised money to purchase it. The Kaw Indian site, which the Kaw Nation in 1928 purchased for $1,000, now sits in the center of the Kaw Reservation.

“Walcuta Springs was destroyed,” said Don Blackshear, an associate professor of anthropology at Wichita State University. He has spent the past decade researching Native American sacred sites throughout the Midwest.

Pawnee Rock, another sacred site, was quarried away by early settlers. You try to protect these sites and put them on a map so that people can learn about them.

Most of these sites are on private land, and usually only the landowners and a few archaeologists are aware of their existence. And these sites are not only in Kansas.

Since 1928, this rock in Lawrence has honored early pioneers who settled the city. But tribal members of the Kaw Nation say the rock was taken from Kansas and settled in Lawrence.

“Is it a sensitive issue? She talked about their efforts. Often the sites have significance beyond the state itself.”}

From Page 1E

named Wacoda who came across a wounded man crying for water. She hurried to the spring and brought him water in a deerskin bag.

The two discovered they were from rival tribes, but by that time, they were in love. The girl’s father wouldn’t allow the two to marry. A war broke out, and the wounded man, named Takota, was killed by an arrow. He fell into the springs, and Wacoda, who had been watching, ran to the water’s edge and saw his hands appeared to the gods and plunged in after him.

Around the turn of the century, the springs were commercialized into a health resort with a hotel and brewery known as Wacoda Springs. The area has since been covered over by a rock.

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The Perese Stone Figure in Graham County in northeast Kansas — a 60-foot figure of a man — is the only one of its kind in the state, similar to those found in the Eckleys that were destroyed by early pioneers who simply moved the rocks.

The five council chiefs in McPherson and Rice counties in central Kansas are significantly significant. Each circle has a series of four 240-foot high salmon-shaped structures surrounding them. Three of the circles in Rice County are visible from each other and only during the equinoxes. They may have been built by the Pawnee or Kiowa tribes.

Some of the sites have been destroyed through farming practices. Some states, such as Texas, encourage land stewardship and provide tax incentives for landowners to preserve archaeological sites.

“It is a tricky situation,” said Randy Theis, a cultural resources specialist for the Kansas Historical Society in Topeka. “We are trying to make people aware, but not so aware that they cause vandalism.”

The other thing is that sometimes the natural elements do more damage than anything.

Such was the case of one of the states’ prime Native American petroglyphs in Elkhart County in central Kansas when it crumbled and was destroyed nearly two years ago. The large drawing showed an Indian lying in the foreground with tpees in the background.

“There isn’t much a tribe can do except talk with landowners and ask them to be respectful of these sacred sites,” Pepper Henry said.

Becy Tremain can be reached at 268-6336 or btrann@wichitaeagle.com

Rock from Page 1F

Kansas, Pepper Henry said. “We are in the process of identifying the places that were sacred to us. We know we can’t go back in time and roam the plains. We know there are new fences, roads and boundaries. But many of our sacred places have long since been developed. Those that are left are few and they are, to us, very special.

Lawrence City Manager Mike Wildgen said earlier this week he’d never heard the rock was sacred to the Kaw.

“I assume that if they approached the city, the city commission would take it under advisement,” he said.

Becy Tremain can be reached at 268-6336 or btrann@wichitaeagle.com
Kaw Nation asks for Big Red Rock

THE SHUNGANKUNGA BOULDER, pictured Wednesday, is a 23-ton red quartzite rock that sits in Robinson Park in downtown Lawrence across from City Hall.

November 30, 2020

Honorable Jennifer Ananda, Mayor
City Hall
6 East 8th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Mayor Ananda,

Greetings, I hope this correspondence finds you well.

On Sunday, October 11, 2020, the Kaw Nation held its quarterly General Council meeting. At that meeting, Kaw Nation citizens overwhelmingly voted in favor of having P’sha’je waukwe or the “Big Red Rock” (as it is more commonly known) returned to the Kaw people. Please accept this letter as a formal claim of ownership of P’sha’je waukwe, currently resting in Robinson Park in Lawrence, Kansas, and for its unconditional return to the Kaw Nation.

P’sha’je waukwe is sacred to the Kaw people and considered an item of cultural patrimony. Our stewardship of this rock and its significance as a spiritual link of prayer for our people is well documented by white anthropologists and witnesses including James Owen Dorsey and George Morehouse. After our removal from Kansas to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in 1879, our people no longer had access to P’sha’je waukwe at its original location near the confluence of the Kansas River and Shungankunga Creek, just outside of Topeka. White settlers understood the ceremonial significance and sacred nature of this rock to the Kaw people. Ignoring this fact, P’sha’je waukwe was appropriated by the descendants of White settlers and, in 1929, was removed from its original location to Robinson Park and re-dedicated to “the pioneers of Kansas who in devotion to human freedom came into a wilderness, suffered hardships and faced danger and death to found this state in righteousness.”

Our intent for the return of P’sha’je waukwe is to reclaim our role as its original stewards and to respectfully restore and renew its significance as a sacred item of prayer for our people. We have no intent to remove this item from Kansas, but to bring it to a new home at Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park in Council Grove. The park is owned and maintained by the Kaw Nation and is open to the public.

Here, the rock will join other monuments of historical significance to the Kaw people and the citizens of Kansas. Our long-range goal is to develop and implement an interpretive plan for the site as an educational resource for all Kansans and visitors to learn about Kansas’ original inhabitants, the Kaw.

With this letter, I designate James Pepper Henry (Kaw Nation Vice-Chairman), Pauline Sharp (Kaw Nation Citizen), and Curtis Kekakshish (Kaw Nation Citizen) as official representatives of the Kaw Nation.
City votes to return sacred prayer rock to tribe, issue apology

By Rochelle Valverde
rvalverde@ljworld.com

Decades after the City of Lawrence removed a sacred prayer rock from the Kaw Nation’s homelands and made it into a monument honoring settlers, city leaders will begin working to return the rock and issue a formal apology to the tribe.

As part of its meeting Tuesday, the Lawrence City Commission voted 5-0 to move forward with a request from the Kaw Nation to return the 23-ton red quartzite boulder, which is currently in Robinson Park across from City Hall, 6 E. Sixth St. The city will now formally respond to the request and express its intent to work with the tribe and other community partners to seek grants to pay for the relocation of the rock and develop plans for its return to the tribe.

“I think this is certainly something we are going to keep pushing forward on, and do all we can to right the wrongs of the past, and do it in the best way possible in collaboration with the Kaw Nation,” Mayor Brad Finkeldei said.

In a letter to the city, Kaw Nation Chairwoman Lynn Williams wrote that at the Kaw Nation General Council meeting in October, Kaw citizens overwhelmingly voted in favor of bringing Ta ‘zhūje ‘waxóbe, also known as the “Big Red Rock,” back to the tribe, as the Journal-World previously reported. Williams says in the letter that the tribe’s stewardship of the rock and its significance as a spiritual item of prayer was well documented, and that the tribe’s intent was to reclaim that stewardship and restore the rock's sacred significance.

ROCK, 2A
A boulder’s journey: Lawrence monolith will be returned to the Kaw in thoughtful process

By Dave Kendall

May 1, 2022 3:33 AM

At a time when Confederate monuments across the nation have come down, generating a degree of consternation in many cases, the upcoming dismantling of a Kansas monument dedicated to abolitionists provides a good example of how a collaborative approach can foster constructive dialogue and civic engagement.

Not only did the city and county commissioners agree to the request, they authored and adopted (on March 16, 2021) an extensive joint resolution reviewing the history of the Kaw Nation, acknowledging the hardships they have endured, and apologizing for moving and defacing their sacred stone.

“The City and County further commit,” the resolution states, “to working to forge a new relationship with the Kaw Nation and all Native Peoples built on respect and honor.”

With funds from a large grant provided to the University of Kansas by the Mellon Foundation through its Monuments Project initiative, In’zhúje ‘waxóbe will be removed from its pedestal in Lawrence and transported to a new home at Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park in Morris County.
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Massachusetts July 7, 1854 AND ARRIVED HERE
August 1, 1854.

THE SECOND PARTY OF ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN
LEFT Boston August 20, 1854 AND ARRIVED SEPTEMBER
15, 1854.
Kaw Nation’s Sacred Rock I‘zhúe ‘Waxhbe Moves To Allegawaya Today

On Monday, June 26, the Kaw Nation's 25-foot-tall rock sculpture of I‘zhúe ‘Waxhbe, also known as "Allegawaya," was moved from the Kaw Nation’s Cultural Center in Kaw Nation City to the National Museum of American Indian in Washington D.C. The sculpture, which depicts I‘zhúe ‘Waxhbe, a prominent leader of the Kaw Nation, was dedicated in 1990 and has been a beloved landmark for the Kaw Nation.

The move was part of a larger effort to preserve and protect cultural heritage sites. The sculpture was lowered onto a trailer by a crane and then transported to the museum, where it will be on display for the next two years.

The Kaw Nation, along with other Native American tribes, has a long history of struggling to protect their sacred sites and cultural heritage. The move of I‘zhúe ‘Waxhbe to the National Museum of American Indian is a step towards ensuring that these important cultural sites are preserved for future generations.
Diane Lochner
Vice President
PGAV Destinations
Kaw Clans Circle
Monument to the Unknown Kanza Warrior
Interpretive Trail
In'zhúje'waxóbe
iⁿZHÚJE’WAXÓBE
REMATRIATION CELEBRATION
SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY JUNE 22ND, 2024 @ 2PM
Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park,
Council Grove, Kansas

Visit www.sacredredrock.com for more information