

The Acorn

Newsletter of the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin

Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin receives Historic Land Back, 26 acres in Nicasio

Twenty-six acres of beautiful rolling hills in Nicasio are now back in the hands of the Coast Miwok Tribe.

On July 3, 2023, the Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin purchased through a generous land-back initiative, 26 acres for \$1.3 million. In an amazing outpouring of Marin-style generosity, more than 85 individuals and organizations donated funds for the purchase.

The property is being held by the Council's newly formed cultural and religious non-profit, *Huukuiko Inc.*, a 501(c)3.

The property is within the original 80,000 acre *Rancho Nicasio* Mexican Land Grant designated for the Coast Miwok Indians from Mission San Rafael.

The property is also within the original Coast Miwok village area known as *Etcha Tamal*, which is identified on early maps of Marin County.

"I'm just so happy to be back on our land," said Joseph Sanchez, Coast Miwok Tribal Council member and Tribal Elder. Sanchez's direct ancestors appear on the Nicasio census from 1870's. "It's coming home. It's coming back to our land," he said.

The Council plans to build a ceremonial "roundhouse" on the property and other traditional native structures. Also in the works is a native plant and habitat restoration project.

To learn more, check out the Council's website: coastmiwokofmarin.org/huukuiko.html.

MAPOM Hosts California Native Crafts & Culture Day in support of Marin Powwow

The Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin (MAPOM), a 501(c)3, hosted the California Native Crafts and Culture Day at the Multicultural Center of Marin (MCM) on March 12, 2023. The event was in support of the Marin American Indian Alliance's (MAIA's) 1st Annual Marin Powwow.

For the five Sundays prior to the Marin Powwow, educational activities were offered at the MCM. February 12 & 19, featured powwow dance and drum practice. February 26 and March 5 featured ribbon skirt and regalia making.



full scale tule boat

MAPOM hosted California Native crafts on March 12. The educational event featured California Traditional games such as acorn dice and ring-and-pin. Everyone who attended could make an abalone necklace.

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MAPOM President's Message

Sky Road Webb

Oppun Towish? This is the traditional greeting in Coast Miwok. It means something like "are you well" but literally, it asks, "Are you being good?" Miwoks can be suspicious folks. The proper reply is, *Ka Towish*, "I'm good." Further, I hope this edition of ACORN finds you *Walli Towish*, "really well."

There has been a lot of exciting Native news in Marin County this past year. The Marin American Indian Alliance (MAIA) hosted the first annual Marin Powwow. MAPOM hosted a California Native Craft and Culture Day. The Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin purchased 26 acres of land in Nicasio.

The future of MAPOM looks bright. MAPOM still holds the copyright to many books, and seeks to republish a few labels. MAPOM is partnering with Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin and their non-profit, *Huukuiko* Inc. to help in their native plant garden and in building of some planned traditional structures. MAPOM will also be helping the Coast Miwok Council develop their archeological preservation work.

Our MAPOM organization which was formed in 1968 is a membership type of non-profit. Much of our revenue has come through annual membership dues. Please become a new member or renew your membership. Those dollars help so much. Plus, members get to be a part of something really cool.

And if you feel so inclined, please consider donating generously directly to MAPOM, so we can continue to provide this periodical and other publications, provide educational opportunities, build traditional structures and exhibits, and support the Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin in their endeavors.

In closing, I offer: *Walli Towish! Muk-'am Ka I-ni-'iko*, "Wishing the Great Good to All of You, My Relatives."

MAPOM Hosts California Native Crafts & Culture Day

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A full scale tule-boat was on exhibit, and tule crafts were taught by Rimiko Berreman. Many touch-and-feel Native California material cultural items were on display. Traditional storytelling was offered by Alicia Retes. Native songs, accompanied by clapper sticks, were offered by Sky Road Webb.

As a backdrop to the gathering Erik Gordon Bainbridge displayed on a large screen his compilation of historic videos filmed at *Kule Loklo*, the Coast Miwok Interpretive Village at Point Reyes National Seashore.



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The Acorn is produced and distributed annually by the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin. MAPOM is a volunteer based, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and welcomes new members and public input. We also encourage members to join our Board of Directors and help our ongoing mission to educate with MAPOM programs such as the California Indian Skills classes, and through our publications.

Annual MAPOM membership fees are \$10 for seniors, full-time students, \$20 for individuals, and \$25 for families. The Acorn is received as a membership benefit. For more information and to join MAPOM, visit our website at www.mapom.org or mail us at PO Box 26, Fairfax, CA 94978.

MAPOM Board of Directors Officers:

Sky Road Webb., President
John Littleton, Vice President
Frances Jackle, Secretary
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March 2024: Second Annual Marin Powwow

By David Moller, MAIA Member

The Marin Powwow Committee has begun planning for its second annual Marin Powwow to be held Sunday, March 17, 2024 at Terra Linda High School gym in San Rafael.

The first Marin Powwow, held in March 2023, was a great success drawing more than 1,000 dancers and spectators.

The powwow master of ceremonies was Manny Lieras, Navajo & Comanche, and the arena director was Reuben Crowfeather, Lakota. The host northern drum was All Nations, and the host southern drum was Red Buffalo. The Head Woman and Head Man Dancers were Teresa Littlebird, Northern Cheyenne, and Darren Henson, Keetoowah Cherokee. The Head Teen Girl and Head Teen Boy were Rainy Wilcox, Dine and Ohakay Owingeh, and Jonathan Pediguerra, Shawnee.

The event featured open Gourd Dancing, Intertribal non-competition powwow style dancing, California Indian Style Dancing by the *Sonoma County Pomo Dancers*, Azteca Dancing by *Mixcoalt*, and Hawaiian dancing by *Halau Hula Na Pua O Ka La'akea*. The dance arena was blessed and the opening prayer given by members of the Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin, Dean Hoaglin, Jason Deschler and Sky Road Webb.

During Grand Entry with the Eagle Staff, American, California and military branch flags were carried in by members of the Northern California American Indian Veterans Association. Many booths both inside and outside the Middle Creek Middle School gymnasium featured Native arts, crafts, t-shirts and more.

The Marin Powwow was made possible through a generous sponsorship grant from the Marin Community Foundation.

The Marin American Indian Alliance Powwow Committee invites you to save the date of Sunday, March 17, 2024 and come to the next Marin Powwow with your feathers!

Everyone is invited to attend MAIA's monthly potluck gathering on 3rd Tuesday of each month from 7-9:30pm at 9 Ross Valley Road in San Rafael.

Check out their website for more information:

marinamericanindianalliance.org.

coast miwok word find

ROUNDHOUSE TAQVFWIKZZ
GULQOBDDBHJTULEBOATGO
XMXHQIIZNEALDQGMJGRN
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LIRPSVMVWIQYQIESOOSC
OBNZHAZELNUTDFCPLOTH
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Clapperstick	Grindingrock	Bullroarer
Elderberry	Sweatlodge	Pepperwood
Roundhouse	Artemisia	Kuleloklo
Olompali	Manzanita	Angelica
Hazelnut	Tuleboat	Liveoak
Abalone	Soaproot	Seaweed
Madrone	Mortar	Kotcha
Acorn		

Roundhouse Reflections

By John Littleton, MAPOM Vice President

Guest column in the Point Reyes Light on January 9, 2020

Some 40 years ago, I remember bringing my class of elementary students out to Point Reyes to help construct, along with many volunteers, the Kule Loklo village and the roundhouse. This project was part of a joint effort with the Point Reyes National Seashore and the Miwok Archaeological Preserve of Marin, or (MAPOM), to create a park exhibit. When I asked if any local Miwok were consulted in the design, the ranger in charge said, "No, the Miwok are extinct." Of course, we now know this was incorrect, though it was a popular misconception at the time.



The roundhouse seen from outside before the roof was removed

In building the dance house as a centerpiece of the village, every effort was made to create a traditionally designed structure using fire-hardened digging sticks and abalone shells. Almost inadvertently, the researchers found they had created a sacred ceremonial space. In short order, the roundhouse was re-purposed as a sanctuary by spiritually minded native and non-native people for the next four decades.

Shortly after completion, the venerable Huichol shaman, Don Jose' Matsuwa, was visiting the country. A friend and I had spent time with Don Jose' , participating in ceremonies in his remote Mexican village. We arranged with the park service to host a Huichol "Dance of the Deer" in honor of this new space. Upon arrival Don Jose' immediately commented: "This is the first real temple I've experienced in my travels around the states." That

inaugural roundhouse ritual was a stunning event, which was duly recorded with a photograph in the Point Reyes Light. My wife, Rose describes sitting on the ground around the fire that night and, "for the first time, feeling the power of the Earth."

Some years later Lanny Pinola, a Bodega Miwok/Kashaya Pomo, came on board as a park interpretative ranger. He saw the village and the roundhouse as an invaluable interpretive tool that would serve thousands and thousands of school children and visitors from around the world. Lanny sensed the spiritual power of this place - the "Weya" in his native language - and focused his work on "opening the door" to all who wished to enter. With the park superintendent's blessing, the Kule Loklo roundhouse became a ceremonial site for local Miwok, and, Pomo and Indians of all nations, as well as for Anglos who were searching for a deeper connection with the old ways and with the natural world.



The roundhouse today

Dr. Tom Pinkson founded the Wakan community here in Marin more than 30 years ago to help people "live in balance with the web of life." With decades of shamanic training and ritual practice, Tom was eager to find an appropriate ritual space. Once again, Lanny opened the door, as our teacher, and made it possible for the Wakan community to conduct monthly ceremonies in the sanctuary. In 1988, while studying for my master's thesis in anthropology, I wrote about these ceremonies:

“As a central element, 'passing the staff - or talking stick' affords each celebrant the opportunity to share what comes through for them as we all listen intently. In the safety of this ritual space, disconnected individuals reach inside to express our innermost truths. Layers of protection, which divide and prevent us from attaining a true sense of community and a deeper level of intimacy, begin to peel away. Emotional breakthroughs occur. Our hearts can open more fully to the “Weya” - to the spirit - to the life force in ourselves, in the lodge, in the Earth and in the universe. As the ceremony comes to a close, a visiting Blackfeet Indian honors us as he describes his experience of the power of the collective drumming and his hopefulness in seeing the sacred use of space.”

A devoted group of Kule Loklo volunteers still comes by each month to carry on the work. This year's annual Big Time Festival was widely regarded as one of the best in recent times. During the past seven years, ritual leaders from both the Tomales Miwok and Pomo communities have conducted regular solstice and equinox ceremonies in the roundhouse and in the outside dance circle. These

gatherings have been open to invitees of good heart from both the native and non-native community. Folks come from all around the Bay Area and join together to dance, pray, tell stories and, share food and company in sacred space. Even with the roof laid bare at this year's winter solstice ceremony, participants showed up to keep the fire burning.

As reported in the Dec 12 issue of the Light, the future of the roundhouse is “in flux”. The damaged roof has been completely removed and negotiations between the park service and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, with MAPOM as advisors, have been ongoing. Indeed, the climate has been changing and we may see this cherished cultural resource fade into memory. Whatever comes about, the roundhouse has served as a beacon of light for so many during the past four decades, and that can never be removed.

John Littleton retired from West Marin School and taught toddlers through adults for 45 years. He serves as an officer on the MAPOM board of directors.

MAPOM membership renewal form:

Your annual MAPOM membership renewal is due now.

MAPOM annual dues are:
(check one)

- Individual: \$20
- Family: \$25
- Full-time student: \$10
- Senior: \$10

MAPOM is a volunteer based, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that is funded entirely by your contributions.

Dues amount you are paying:.....	\$
Optional additional contribution:.....	\$
Total amount included:.....	\$

Please print your name, address, and email:

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