



Smithsonian Institution

**Annual Report of Repatriation Activities
of the Smithsonian Institution**

2018

Annual Report 2018

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Repatriation and the Smithsonian: An Overview

The Smithsonian Institution has a long and successful history conducting respectful repatriations of Native American human remains and certain cultural objects to their communities of origin. Prior to the passage of federal repatriation legislation, the Smithsonian engaged in such returns, including the voluntary return of human remains in the early 1980s and the well-known return of certain cultural objects affiliated to the Pueblo of Zuni in 1987.

In 1989, Congress enacted the National Museum of the American Indian Act (NMAIA). This law established the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) as part of the Smithsonian Institution and authorized the transfer of the collections from the Museum of the American Indian-Heys Foundation in New York City to the Smithsonian. The NMAIA is also the first piece of federal legislation to address the repatriation of Native American human remains and funerary objects. The NMAIA requires the Smithsonian to return, upon request, Native American human remains and funerary objects to culturally affiliated federally-recognized Indian tribes. The NMAIA was amended in 1996, following the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), to include the return of certain Native American cultural objects, including sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony. To assist in the repatriation process, both the NMAI and National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) have repatriation policies and procedures.

The Smithsonian has repatriated or made available for repatriation the human remains of more than 6,000 individuals, 250,000 funerary objects, and 1,400 sacred objects and/or objects of cultural patrimony. These totals for repatriation far exceed any other museum complex in the United States. The Smithsonian is committed to the repatriation process and consults with Native Americans throughout the nation. This report to Congress will be sent to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, House Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Congressional Regents, Government Accountability Office, and will also be posted on the repatriation websites of the NMNH and NMAI.

Repatriation Activities: Year at a Glance

National Museum of Natural History



Human Remains and Funerary Objects available for repatriation or that have been repatriated by the NMNH:

	CY 2018 ¹	TOTAL ²
Human Remains³		
Number of Individuals	79	6,298
Catalog Numbers	76	5,696
Funerary Objects (Associated and Unassociated)⁴		
Total Object Count	83	221,660
Total Catalog Numbers	41	3,315

¹ CY 2018 lists the number of human remains and objects made available for repatriation during the calendar year. Overall lists the total number of human remains and objects made available for repatriation, including CY 2018.

² NMNH totals are for Native American human remains and objects repatriated or made available for repatriation within the United States.

³ At the NMNH *Human Remains* means the physical remains of a human body of a person of Native American ancestry. The *Number of Individuals* refers to the minimum number of individuals or MNI; a concept commonly used in anthropology to represent the fewest possible number of individuals represented by a skeletal assemblage. *Catalog Numbers* refers to the quantity of museum numbers assigned to the human remains or objects.

⁴ *Funerary object* means an "object that, as part of a death rite or ceremony of a culture, is intentionally placed with individual human remains either at the time of burial or later." NMAIA, 20 U.S.C. §80q-14.

Objects of Cultural Patrimony and Sacred Objects Repatriated by the NMNH:

	CY 2018	TOTAL
Objects of Cultural Patrimony⁵		
Total Object Count	0	50
Total Catalog Numbers	0	13
Sacred Objects⁶		
Total Object Count	0	3
Total Catalog Numbers	0	3
Objects of Cultural Patrimony/Sacred Objects⁷		
Total Object Count	0	2
Total Catalog Numbers	0	2
Other Items⁸		
Total Object Count	0	26
Total Catalog Numbers	0	11

⁵ *Objects of Cultural Patrimony* mean items “having ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group [Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization] or culture itself, rather than property owned by an individual.” NAGPRA, 25 U.S.C. §3001 (2) (3) (D).

⁶ *Sacred Objects* mean items that are “specific ceremonial objects which are needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the practice of traditional Native American religions by their present-day adherents.” NAGPRA, 25 U.S.C. §3001 (2) (3) (C).

⁷ *Objects of Cultural Patrimony/Sacred Objects* refer to claims for the repatriation of cultural items that meet the definition of both an Object of Cultural Patrimony and a Sacred Object.

⁸ *Other Items* refer to circumstances in which the cultural item offered for repatriation does not meet the definition of an object available for repatriation under the NMAIA or the policy of the NMNH. Since the NMAIA was not intended to limit the authority of the Smithsonian to conduct repatriations of certain items from its collections, the category of *Other Items* was developed to track and monitor NMNH museum collections offered for return for which no other repatriation category is available or appropriate.

National Museum of the American Indian



Human Remains and Funerary Objects Repatriated by the NMAI:

	CY 2018	TOTAL ⁹
Human Remains¹⁰		
Total Count ¹¹	0	540
Total Catalog Numbers	0	245
Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects		
Total Object Count	0	44
Total Catalog Numbers	0	41
Funerary Objects (Associated and Unassociated)¹²		
Total Object Count	1	29,646
Total Catalog Numbers	1	1,015

⁹ NMAI totals include repatriations within the United States as well as international repatriations to First Nations in Canada and indigenous communities in Latin America.

¹⁰ At the NMAI the term *Human Remains* means the physical remains of a human body of a person of Native American ancestry. In accordance with NMAI Repatriation policy, it is assumed that all human remains in the collection are of Native American ancestry unless otherwise known. The term does not include remains or portions of remains that may reasonably be determined to have been freely given or naturally shed by the individual from whose body they were obtained, such as hair made into ropes or nets (NMAI Repatriation Policy 2014).

¹¹ Historically, the NMAI did not assess the minimum number of individuals (MNI) but used other methods, including counts of individual elements, counts of the number of bone fragments, and other counting standards. Currently, the NMAI uses this legacy data for numerical consistency and, when possible, also calculates MNI in its case documentation.

¹² *Funerary Objects* are identified as a part of the death rite or ceremony of a culture reasonably believed to have been placed with individual human remains either at the time of death or later (NMAI Repatriation Policy 2014).

Objects of Cultural Patrimony and Sacred Objects Repatriated by the NMAI:

	CY 2018	TOTAL
Objects of Cultural Patrimony¹³		
Total Object Count	0	19
Total Catalog Numbers	0	9
Sacred Objects¹⁴		
Total Object Count	12	993
Total Catalog Numbers	12	886
Objects of Cultural Patrimony/Sacred Objects		
Total Object Count	1	425
Total Catalog Numbers	1	352

Illegally Acquired Objects Repatriated by the NMAI:

	CY 2018	TOTAL
Objects Acquired Illegally¹⁵		
Total Object Count	0	31
Total Catalog Numbers	0	26

¹³ *Objects of Cultural Patrimony* are objects having ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization or culture, rather than property owned by an individual Native American, and which, therefore, cannot be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by any individual regardless of whether or not the individual is a member of the Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization. The given object shall have been considered inalienable by the Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization at the time the object was separated from said group (NMAI Repatriation Policy 2014).

¹⁴ *Sacred Objects* are objects needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the practice of Native American religions, including objects needed for the renewal of a religious practice (NMAI Repatriation Policy 2014).

¹⁵ *Objects Acquired Illegally* refers to the longstanding Smithsonian policy that the NMAI may repatriate any materials that were acquired by or transferred to the NMAI illegally or under circumstances that render the NMAI's claim to them invalid.

International Repatriation at the NMAI:

The NMAI Act and its 1996 amendment address repatriation only to federally recognized Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organization within the United States. However, in accordance with its mission and in recognition of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the NMAI considers repatriation requests for human remains, associated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony by Indigenous communities outside of the United States on a case-by-case basis. The following table lists the countries outside of the United States where the NMAI has conducted repatriations.

	Year	Province	Country
1.	1992	British Columbia	Canada
2.	1995	Pichincha	Ecuador
3.	1996	Ontario	Canada
4.	1996	Cusco	Peru
5.	1997	Ontario	Canada
6.	1997	Alberta	Canada
7.	1997	Ontario	Canada
8.	1998	British Columbia	Canada
9.	1998	Ontario	Canada
10.	1998	Ontario	Canada
11.	1999	Alberta	Canada
12.	2000	Alberta	Canada
13.	2002	Santiago de Cuba, Guantánamo, Piñar del Rio	Cuba
14.	2002	British Columbia	Canada
15.	2002	British Columbia	Canada
16.	2007	Alberta	Canada
17.	2007	Alberta	Canada
18.	2007	El Loa	Chile
19.	2007	Arica	Chile
20.	2008	Ontario	Canada
21.	2012	Ontario	Canada
22.	2014	Ontario	Canada
23.	2016	Ontario	Canada

Additional Repatriation Activities at the NMNH and NMAI

CY 2018 Repatriation Visits:

	NMNH	NMAI	Joint NMNH-NMAI ¹⁶
Repatriation Consultation Visits			
Number of Representatives	69	40	9
Number of Tribes	27	26	2
Number of Smithsonian-sponsored Repatriation Visits¹⁷			
Number of Representatives	5	9	3
Number of Tribes	3	6	1

Claim Processing, Reports, and Repatriations at the NMNH and NMAI:

	NMNH		NMAI	
	CY 2018	TOTAL	CY 2018	TOTAL
Claims				
Claims in Queue ¹⁸	7	7	0	14
Reports and Repatriations				
Repatriation Reports in Process	11	11	6	6
Completed Repatriation Reports ¹⁹	2	142	4	104
Completed Repatriations	1	123	3	109

¹⁶ Also counted under each museum.

¹⁷ The Smithsonian under certain circumstances funds the travel of tribal representatives to visit the Smithsonian as part of the repatriation process. Sponsored visits at the NMNH include both consultation and repatriation visit totals.

¹⁸ For the NMNH the total is the estimated number of reports that are in the queue.

¹⁹ For NMAI, *Completed Repatriation Reports* refer to the total number of assessments. This includes reports, addenda, and/or memoranda that have resolved repatriation cases. Due to the complexity of repatriation claims, there is not a one-to-one correspondence between reports and *Completed Repatriations*. A single report may address more than one claim and/or result in multiple repatriations. Conversely, a single repatriation may be the result of multiple claims and/or reports.

Oversight of Repatriation Activities

Native American Repatriation Review Committee (NMNH)

The Native American Repatriation Review Committee met in Washington, DC, on April 26–27, 2018, and October 29–30, 2018, to monitor the progress of repatriation at the NMNH. The committee is composed of individuals nominated by tribes, tribal organizations, and scientific and museum organizations.



Native American Repatriation Review Committee members for the NMNH (*left-right*): Walter Lara, Sr., Yurok Tribe; George Milner, Department of Anthropology, Pennsylvania State University; Darlene Miller (Vice-Chair), Seneca Nation; Vincas Steponaitis, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina; former member Shelby Tisdale; Ian Thompson, Historic Preservation Department, Choctaw Nation; Bonnie Newsom (Chair), Penobscot Indian Nation. Bonnie Styles, Executive Director of the Association of Science Museum Directors, not shown.

National Museum of the American Indian Board of Trustees (NMAI)

The National Museum of the American Indian Board of Trustees meets three times a year to discuss museum business, including NMAI repatriation matters brought forth through the Repatriation Committee of the Board. As necessary, the NMAI Repatriation Committee meets outside full board meetings to complete committee work.



NMAI Repatriation Committee members, 2018–2019 (*left-right*): Colin Kippen (Native Hawaiian), Armstrong A. Wiggins (Mískito), Shari Huhndorf (Yup'ik), Amanda Cobb-Greetham (Chickasaw Nation), Philip J. Deloria (Sanding Rock Sioux), Richard Luarkie (Pueblo of Laguna), and G. Peter Jemison (Seneca Nation). Not pictured: Margaret Brown (Yup'ik), Brenda Child (Red Lake Ojibwa), Sven Haakanson (Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor) and Darrell Deacon Turner II (Cherokee Nation).

Highlighted Repatriation Activities

National Museum of Natural History

Northern Arapaho Tribe Consultation and Repatriation

Representatives of the Northern Arapaho Tribe from the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming came twice to the National Museum of Natural History, once on May 25, 2018, for a consultation, and then on August 1 and 2, 2018, for a repatriation. During the first visit, Crystal C’Bearing, Tribal Historical Preservation Office (THPO) Deputy Director; Devin Oldman, THPO; Yufna Soldier Wolf, THPO repatriation representative; and Jordan Dresser, THPO, visited the NMNH to discuss repatriation procedures and then visited the Museum Support Center to examine Arapaho objects in the ethnology collections.



Left to right: Yufna Soldier Wolf, Devin Oldman, Jordan Dresser, and Crystal C’Bearing of the Northern Arapaho Tribe examine a Northern Arapaho bow, arrows, and quiver at the Museum Support Center.

Crystal C’Bearing and Jordan Dresser returned later that year for the repatriation of the skeletal remains of two individuals. The remains of one individual was obtained near Fort Robinson, Nebraska, and the second individual from near Riverton, Wyoming. While at the museum, the tribal representatives met with NMNH Museum Director Kirk Johnson, Anthropology Chair Torbin Rick, and Repatriation Office Program Manager Bill Billeck for the signing of the deaccession papers to repatriate the skeletal remains to the Northern Arapaho tribe.



Left to right: Torbin Rick (NMNH Anthropology Chair), Crystal C’Bearing (Northern Arapaho Tribe THPO Deputy Director), Kirk Johnson (NMNH Museum Director), Jordan Dresser Northern Arapaho Tribe THPO), and Bill Billeck (NMNH Repatriation Office), after the signing of the repatriation deaccession papers in the NMNH Director’s Office.

Alvin Windy Boy, Director at Cultural Resources Preservation Department, and Jonathan Windy Boy (THPO) visited the NMNH on May 31, 2018, to discuss a recently discovered museum records that identify the remains of one individual from Montana as those of a noted Cree leader. They also had the opportunity to visit the ethnology collections at the Museum Support Center, including the Samuelson collection of objects acquired from the Chippewa-Cree Crafts Co-op on the Rocky Boy's Reservation in the 1960s for which they noted that they knew the creators of many of the objects.



Left to right: Alvin Windy Boy, Director at Cultural Resources Preservation Department, and Jonathan Windy Boy (THPO), examine a headdress from the Samuelson collection at the Museum Support Center.

National Museum of the American Indian

REPATRIATION

Angoon Community Association and Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (October 25, 2018)

The NMAI repatriated the *Xoots S'aaxw* (Brown Bear Hat) from the village of Angoon, Alaska, to the Angoon Community Association and Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCHITA). This hat was identified as *at.óow*, a sacred object and an object of cultural patrimony that belongs to the *Teikhweidí* (Bear Clan). This hat depicts the den and bear in the story of *Kaats'*, the Man who Married the Bear. The song that accompanies the hat refers to the *Teikhweidí's shuka*—their ancestor, present, and future.

Mr. Harold Jacobs, Cultural Resources Specialist for the CCHITA, traveled to the NMAI Cultural Resources Center to retrieve the Brown Bear Hat, which was witnessed by Michael McNulty, a member of the *Kiks'adi* clan, from a moiety opposite of the *Teikhweidí* Clan. NMAI, NMNH, and Smithsonian Exhibits staff were invited to attend the ceremony acknowledging the return. Shortly after its repatriation, the hat was used at a *ku.éex'*, or memorial ceremony, in Angoon. According to Mr. Jacobs, approximately 17 additional repatriated objects (from the NMAI and other museums) were present at the memorial ceremony.



Left to right: Michael McNulty, Harold Jacobs and Terry Snowball signing the Receipt and Release form.

CONSULTATION

Delaware Nations of the Delaware Nation, Oklahoma, the Delaware Tribe of Indians, Oklahoma, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community of Indians, Wisconsin and the Munsee Delaware Nation, Ontario, Canada (October 16-17, 2018)

The Repatriation Department hosted a consultation with Delaware and Munsee Tribes and First Nations to discuss pending repatriation cases at the NMAI. As the group reviewed the collections and inventories, the Delaware and Munsee representatives shared their expertise on the traditional ceremonies and practices that assisted and honored those who have passed on. This information has given the museum an opportunity to identify more thoroughly the unassociated funerary objects from sites ancestral to the Delaware and Munsee. Collaboration about the collection is ongoing. During the consultation, the group also discussed the repatriation plans for a current case from New York. A challenge for the repatriation is an absence of a suitable reburial location at or near the original resting place, so the group discussed potential alternatives. As part of their visit to the NMAI, the tribal representatives also met with Associate Director David Penney and the exhibit team to review plans and objects for the permanent exhibit “Native New York,” which will be installed at the NMAI’s George Gustave Heye Center in New York.



Left to right: Lauren Sieg (NMAI), Jackie Swift (NMAI), Emily Tarantini (NMAI Intern), Mark Peters (Munsee Delaware Nation), Nekole Alligood (Delaware Nation), Chief Roger Thomas (Munsee Delaware Nation), Sherry White (Stockbridge Munsee Community), Terry Snowball (NMAI), Brice Obermeyer (Delaware Tribe), and Risa Arbolino (NMAI).

INTERNATIONAL REPATRIATION EFFORTS:

Consultation in Ecuador (September 15-21, 2018)

In 2018 Repatriation staff consulted with representatives from organizations in Washington, D.C. and Ecuador to share information regarding NMAI's international repatriation mission, specifically the department's interest in working with the Ministry of Culture and Patrimony (MCP) and National Institute of Cultural Patrimony (INPC) of Ecuador on the repatriation of ancestral remains to indigenous communities in the provinces of Manabí, Santa Elena, Esmeraldas, and Pichincha in Ecuador. These meetings culminated into a site consultation visit to Ecuador September 15-21, 2018. Consultation in Quito allowed for a more detailed discussion regarding the NMAI's repatriation process and a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlining the role of the NMAI, MCP, and INPC to ensure the participation of the indigenous communities in this process.



NMAI staff meeting with Raul Pérez Torres, Minister of the Ministry of Culture and Patrimony of Ecuador, and representatives of MCP and the National Institute of Cultural Patrimony.

NMAI staff met with indigenous leaders and representatives of the Pueblo Kayambi, Chachi Federation, Pueblo Manta, and the Comunas of Sequita, Pepa de Huso, and Picoaza. Each representative consulted expressed an interest in collaboration with the NMAI, and a willingness to consult with their community regarding their participation in the respectful disposition of ancestral remains with historic or ancestral ties to their Native territory. These site visits also allow NMAI an opportunity to meet with staff from various local and community museums in these regions. In Manta, for example, NMAI staff toured the local museum and archaeological park that focuses on the Manteño culture in this region. NMAI staff spoke to the Native cultural interpreters and visited the site where Marshall Saville, a well-known collector for the Museum of

the American Indian Heye Foundation, conducted several excavations in the early 20th century.



Left to right: Terry Snowball (NMAI), Augistin Cachipuendo, President (Pueblo Kayambi); Nancy Kenet Vickery and Jackie Swift (NMAI).



Representatives of NMAI, MCP, INPC, CONAIE, and communities and comunas of Picoazá, Sequita and Pepa de Huso.

Since these meetings have occurred, the NMAI has maintained contact with all parties involved and will be transitioning into the final phase of this project in 2019 by finalizing the MoU and confirming each community's decision regarding their role in the respectful disposition of ancestral remains to their Native lands.

Additional Information



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History

Bill Billeck
Program Manager
Repatriation Office
Department of Anthropology
National Museum of Natural History
Smithsonian Institution
10th and Constitution Avenue
Washington, DC 20560
billeckb@si.edu
202-633-0865



Smithsonian
National Museum of the American Indian

Jacquetta (Jackie) Swift
Repatriation Manager
Repatriation Department
National Museum of the American Indian
Smithsonian Institution
Cultural Resources Center
4220 Silver Hill Road
Suitland, MD 20746
swiftj@si.edu
301-238-1548

Repatriation Websites:

NMNH Repatriation: <http://anthropology.si.edu/repatriation/>

NMNH Guidelines and Procedures for Repatriation:
[http://anthropology.si.edu/repatriation/pdf/NMNH Repatriation Guidelines and Procedures 2012.pdf](http://anthropology.si.edu/repatriation/pdf/NMNH%20Repatriation%20Guidelines%20and%20Procedures%202012.pdf)

NMAI Repatriation: <http://nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/repatriation/>

NMAI Repatriation Policy:
<http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/repatriation/NMAI-RepatriationPolicy-2014.pdf>

Smithsonian Collections Search Center: <http://collections.si.edu/search/>