

Senator Bewley Views 500 Year-old Elk Skeletal Remains at Barnes Museum

Senator Janet Bewley of Ashland, representing Wisconsin's 25th Senate District, visited the Barnes Area Historical Association Museum Saturday, September 28 and viewed the museum's newest exhibit, the bones and antlers of an elk hunted by native peoples locally 500 years ago.

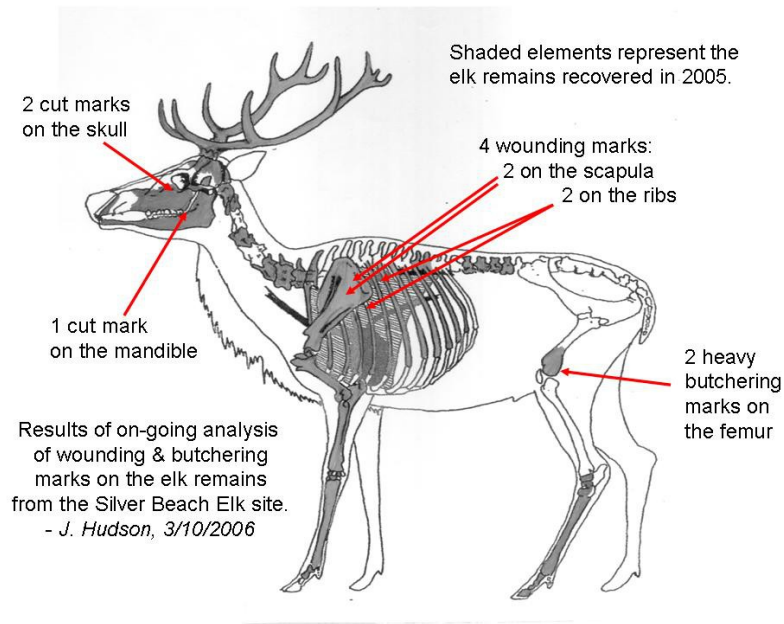
The museum was open to the public at the completion of the weekend's programs to celebrate the return to the museum of the historic elk bones and antlers discovered submerged in the Middle Eau Claire Lake at the Silver Beach Resort in 2005.

Earlier in the day, Dr. Jean Hudson, Zooarchaeologist and Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, presented a talk entitled *Archaeological Perspectives on the Silver Beach Elk*. She described the results of her underwater excavation, identification, investigation, and dating of the ancient elk bones.



Senator Janet Bewley (right) questions Zooarchaeologist Dr. Jean Hudson, UW-Wisconsin (left), about the 500 year-old elk skeletal remains recently returned to the Barnes Museum.

Dr. Hudson gave Senator Bewley a personal tour of the new elk exhibit and discussed the findings of her investigations. Dr. Hudson's study clearly provides evidence that native inhabitants killed and butchered the elk 500 years ago near the shores of today's Middle Eau Claire Lake using stone implements, the traditional stone age hunting practice of the time.



Depiction of the elk skeletal remains that were recovered in Barnes at the Silver Beach Resort in 2005 and studied extensively by Dr. Jean Hudson and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

With the hunting of the historic elk by local native peoples using traditional hunting methods as a backdrop, the museum is presenting a series of public events to increase awareness and understanding of the local and regional history and culture of Native Americans. This effort has been partially supported by a grant from Henry and Sarah Wheeler Historical Awareness Fund of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.

According to Ted Eastlund of Gordon, a museum volunteer, Native American villages, cemeteries, burial mounds, tools and implements have been found and documented on and near the shores of the Eau Claire Lakes. Wild rice gathering, maple sugar making, copper mining, copper implement making and trading by Native Americans have been documented to have taken place during past centuries.



Zooarchaeologist Dr. Jean Hudson explains the investigation of the 500 year-old elk bones and antlers discovered in Barnes in 2005. Left to right: Bill Stewart, Kathy Stewart, Senator Janet Bewley, Professor Jean Hudson, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

To initiate the historic elk celebration, Laine Stowell, Wisconsin DNR elk biologist, gave a talk entitled *Wisconsin Elk Management* on September 27 discussing the history of elk in Wisconsin, the disappearance of elk in the late 1800s, their successful re-introduction and elk herd management practices.

The Barnes Area Historical Association and Museum is located in Barnes, Wisconsin. With a mission of *sharing the history of the Barnes area through education and preservation*, its museum features the 500 year-old Silver Beach elk skeleton found locally, logging and early resort exhibits and an exhibit of the outdoors writer Gordon MacQuarrie. Its new Heritage Village features a historic one-room schoolhouse and will add a historic 1880s log cabin soon. It provides public education events, Gordon MacQuarrie pilgrimages and tours and, starting in October, field trips for Drummond School students.

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