

August 6, 2021

Mr. Jamie Kelly
Head of Anthropology Collections
Field Museum of Natural History
1400 S. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I hereby nominate Alan H. Harn as a candidate for the Illinois Archaeology Career Achievement Award. For more than 60 years, Alan has embodied the tagline of the Illinois State Museum—explore, discover, learn, and share. As a youth, Alan, often joined by Pat Munson, explored the cultivated fields of Fulton County, especially those within the Illinois River basin. Together, they discovered many sites, collected artifacts, documented their finds, and systematically organized their collections of objects and information. Today, these collections may be found at the Illinois State Museum—Dickson Mounds.

Drawn to the Dickson's excavations at Dickson Mounds, Alan, while still in his teens, was a crew member of the team that unearthed a series of three buildings at the Eveland site. The footprints of these important structures remain preserved at Dickson Mounds and provide museum visitors with an archaeological-eye view of the past.

When the Illinois State Museum decided to construct the present-day Dickson Mounds Museum, Alan was a member of the crew that meticulously excavated the burial grounds. The decision to do so was controversial at the time, but concerns notwithstanding, excavation proceeded with precision and care. In time, Harn would prepare a monograph and other articles on the subject.

Harn's scholarly contributions range far beyond the Dickson excavation. He has published numerous articles on Mississippian Period lifeways in the central Illinois Valley, and more recently, co-authored monographs on the discovery of bison remains at the Lonza site, and a systematic survey of the Emiquon Preserve, the latter two being monographs in the State Museum's Reports of Investigations series.

For more than five decades as a member of the Dickson Mounds staff, Alan has been "the archaeologist" and as such, the link between the museum and artifact collector, and those who have simply "found" something of interest. He has spent hundreds of hours with citizens identifying artifacts and often telling people that their object was not an artifact.

Throughout his tenure at the museum, he has shared his discoveries and perspectives. He remains a captivating speaker, who meticulously prepares lectures, writing out his remarks on 5" x 8" index cards to ensure that each point is delivered.

In addition to his service to the citizens of Illinois as a curator of anthropology, Alan has also long been involved in forensic work for law enforcement. In 2010, the Illinois State Police recognized his achievements with a citation that read: "your contributions in this case were critical to the successful

identification and arrest of the person responsible for the death of a least eight women. Your devotion to duty removed a dangerous killer from the streets."

In 2014, Knox college awarded Alan an honorary doctorate for among other things "For many years, Harn has taken time from his immense research and writing agenda in order to guide visiting groups of Knox College students through the museum, as well as the laboratory and collections areas normally open only to research staff and visiting scholars."

Now in his eighth decade, Alan continues to research and write about the past. At present, he is working on a monograph on the Larson site, the remains 900-year-old Mississippian town overlooking the confluence of the Spoon and Illinois rivers.

As a decades-long member of the Illinois Archaeological Survey, Harn served on committees and contributed many presentations on Illinois archaeology at annual meetings.

For all the foregoing, and much more, I believe that Alan has earned an Illinois Archaeology Career Achievement Award and he deserves to be among those distinguished colleagues who have been so recognized.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Wiant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michael D. Wiant, Ph.D.

Director Emeritus, Illinois State Museum—Dickson Mounds