



Cahokia Mounds Museum Society Wins Prestigious History Award For Augmented Reality Experience

by Jayette Bolinski
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COLLINSVILLE – The Cahokia Mounds Museum Society, which has supported Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site since 1978, received an award of excellence from the American Association of State and Local History for “Back to the City of the Sun,” the site’s augmented reality (AR) experience for visitors.

The 2023 award of excellence is part of the association’s Leadership in History awards, the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation of state and local history.

“On behalf of the Society and the site, I am honored this project was selected for this prestigious national award out of the many well-deserving applicants,” said Lori Belknap, superintendent of the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site. “This was a seven-year project and would not have come to fruition without the concerted effort of the project team. I am grateful the Society is recognized for their dedication to outreach and education at Cahokia Mounds. The AR app has extended our outreach, brought more visitors, and has vastly elevated the visitor experience, especially critical now during our renovation closure.”

“Back to the City of the Sun” brings the past to the present with audio and video through an app for personal smart devices. On the tour, visitors can see the temple that once stood on Monks Mound and other cultural aspects of the site that were present 1,000 years ago through the camera of a smart phone or other device.

To download the tour, search for “Cahokia AR Tour” on both the Apple and Google App stores. Cost is \$4.99.

The Cahokia Mounds Museum Society was one of 51 national award-winners, representing the best in the field and providing leadership for the future of state and local history. The AASLH awards program was initiated in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States.

The Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site is at 30 Ramey St., Collinsville. The site’s interpretive center and gift shop are currently closed for renovations; however, the grounds are open to the public daily from 8 a.m. until dusk and guided tours take place twice per day, Wednesday through Sunday. For more information, visit <https://dnrhistoric.illinois.gov/experience/sites/site.cahokia-mounds.html>.