

Director's Report

by Ryan Huna Smith, Director

During the annual closure of the museum in January, the Exhibits Team and volunteers worked hard to clean exhibit cases, add new text blocks, and apply a few new coats of paint. The cases look better than ever! Thanks to everyone that took the time to enhance the museum!

The exhibit entitled "Season of the Yei Bicheij, featured paintings by acclaimed Navajo artist Al Bahe. The exhibit which ended March 15, was very successful not only for the artist, but for the museum as well. We sold six paintings during the exhibit, and received plenty of press and exposure. I want to thank Adam Mikos (our former Curator) for putting together a successful exhibit, the Exhibits Team, and last but not least Al Bahe for allowing us to exhibit his beautiful paintings.

The Winter Rug Auction held on March 14, 2009 went very well. Despite the economy, we had a good turn out and sold more rugs than we expected. Although profit was down from last year, I was pleased that we made money for the museum. I would like to thank R.B. Burnham Trading Post, the Rug Auction Committee, Jeff Ogg of Ogg's Hogan, and all the volunteers who helped out with the auction. Great Job!

The 5th Annual Southwest Indian Arts Festival will be held on May 30 and 31, 2009.

The festival will feature over two dozen Native American artists, performers, and entertainers. Native American food such as fry bread, Navajo Tacos, piki bread, and parched corn will be available! The Festival's featured artist is Peterson Yazzie (Navajo). Peterson submitted a beautiful painting entitled "Trickster Moon" which will be used as our Festival poster and post card. The Festival will run 9:00am to 5:00pm on Saturday and 9:00am to 4:00pm on Sunday. Admission is \$5.00 for Adults, \$4.00 for Seniors, \$3.00 for Students, and Children 12 and under are free, and members are free.

If you're interested in assisting with events such as the Southwest Indian Arts Festival or other events at the museum, call the museum at (928) 445-1230. We are always looking for new members and new volunteers to help!

American Heritage's Favorite History Site in Prescott

by Goodie Berquist

In its winter 2009 issue, the editors of American Heritage selected the Smoki Museum as one of their 11 favorite historic sites in Arizona, the only one chosen in Prescott. As Martha Stewart would say, "It is a good thing," to be listed in the company of the Heard Museum in Phoenix, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West in Scottsdale. The magazine headline description of the Smoki Museum is both accurate and concise. We could not have done better ourselves!



Peterson Yazzie this years festival poster artist
See back of newsletter for a picture of poster..

An Opportunity for the Museum

by Cindy Gresser

"The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few ... or the one." **Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan 1982**

For us "trekkies" a great movie and a very memorable line. And very applicable to the status of our collection and museum at this point in time.

During October of 2008 the Board and museum members met to discuss the financial future of the museum. During that meeting the suggestion of selling a non-mission related piece of the collection was discussed, and a letter from Sotheby's sent in October of 2007 reviewed. At that time, I was appointed by the Board *continued on next page*

to further investigate the possibility of selling or auctioning the subject of Sotheby's letter, Item #6438, the Plains Pony-beaded Blanket strip.

This piece was donated to the museum in the 1960's by the late Barry Goldwater. It is thought to be of Upper Missouri River Bands (Mandan, Hidatsa, Blackfoot, etc.) origin and dates to pre-1850, possibly as early as 1830. The blue and white beads adorning the blanket strip are of European manufacture, brought to Native Americans via fur traders. They were then sewn on to hides with sinew creating the blanket strip, which was then sewn onto a hide or blanket. They served as identification of the wearer – generally a person of importance within the tribe.

I contacted Sotheby's and requested the "gratis" opinion of value of the blanket strip that they had offered. I also contacted Bettina Raphael, our CAP (Conservation Assessment Program) Assessor to obtain her opinion on how best to proceed. The Board also formed our "Collection Enhancement Committee" consisting of myself, Charley Krauskopf, Ron Robinson and Goodie Berquist.

David Roche of Sotheby's visited the museum in November 2008, and informed us that the blanket strip is worth \$100,000 to \$150,000! This value has since been confirmed by an independent appraisal, and verbal consultation with other native art dealers. Sotheby's then offered to place the blanket strip in their May auction at minimal cost to the museum, to maximize our return.

I consulted with Bettina Raphael, who informed me that while de-accessioning a non-Mission related item is considered a "bona fide practice," the use of any funds obtained for such a sale needed to be used to either purchase more relevant pieces for the collection, or provide for the existing collection's direct care and curation. Further, that prior to auction, the piece needed to be offered to other museums.

I reported this information back to the Collection Enhancement Committee, and we concurred that:

- The blanket strip would be offered to other museums prior to sale
- An independent appraisal would be performed
- All proceeds would be used for the care of the existing collection



**Plains Pony-beaded
Blanket strip**

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Our Mission

The mission of the Smoki Museum is to instill an understanding and respect for indigenous cultures of the Southwest.

Contact

<http://www.smokimuseum.org>
info@smokimuseum.org (928) 445-1230
147 North Arizona St., Prescott, AZ 86301
Regular hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10:00a.m.-4:00p.m.
1:00p.m.-4:00p.m. Sunday (Open Year Round)

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Memberships

Student \$20
Individual \$25
Family \$35
More membership levels and additional information available by calling the Museum during regular hours or going to the website: <http://www.smokimuseum.org>

SMOKI MUSEUM CALENDAR

APRIL - MAY - JUNE, 2009

DATE	TIME	EVENT
April 9 through May 14 (Thursdays)	1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.	OLLI Class: Western Indians – Rebuilding Their Cultures. In the Pueblo.
Monday, April 13	2:00 p.m.	The Smoki Book Club discusses "Capirotada: A Nogales Memoir", by Albert Rios. Join us to discuss this 2009 One Book Arizona selection. Refreshments and stimulating discussion.
Tuesday, April 28	9:00 a.m.	Volunteer Meeting in the Pueblo. Join our friendly volunteers for coffee and doughnuts.
Tuesday, May 5	5:30 p.m.	Board of Trustees Meeting (all Museum members welcome)
Monday, May 11	2:00 p.m.	The Smoki Book Club discusses "Chaco Canyon", by Brian Fagan. Come learn about this ancient site and prepare yourself for a special Museum sponsored field trip coming later this year.
Monday, May 25	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	The Museum will be open for visitors on Memorial Day.
Tuesday, May 26	9:00 a.m.	Volunteer Meeting in the Pueblo. If you've been thinking about volunteering at the Museum this is a great time to check out the opportunities and meet other volunteers.
Saturday May 30	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	5th Annual Southwest Indian Arts Festival. Enjoy an exciting lineup of entertainers, vendors of authentic Indian arts and crafts, and tasty Navajo tacos. Fun for the whole family!
Sunday, May 31	9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	\$5 adults, \$4 seniors, children under 12 and MEMBERS FREE.
Monday, June 8	2:00 p.m.	The Smoki Book Club discusses "Seldom Disappointed," by Tony Hillerman. Refreshments served.
Tuesday, June 23	9:00 a.m.	Volunteer Meeting in the Pueblo
On the Horizon		
Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25	TBA	Annual Navajo Rug and Indian Art Auction
Saturday, October 24	TBA	Second Annual Native Harvest Fundraiser Dinner

Smoki Museum to Sponsor Trip to Chaco Canyon

by Ron Robinson

The Smoki Museum is planning a trip to Chaco Canyon, NM for Museum members the weekend of September 12 & 13. We will offer a professionally guided tour of the Chaco Culture National Historic Park, and possibly other Chaco “outlier” sites.



Pueblo Bonito by Charles Lindbergh, 1929.

The people of the Chaco Culture lived in Chaco Canyon and many other sites within a 250-300 mile radius from there for several centuries. For 100 years ending in 1130 AD, there was a frenzy of building activity in the canyon and surrounding area, completing roads, great houses, and great kivas. But soon after 1130 AD the system began to deteriorate, and the population rapidly diminished. There was a short re-occupation, but by 1300, the Great Houses of Chaco Canyon were emptied forever, the kivas ‘closed’. They are best known as builders: completing huge structures, wide roads, and numerous large kivas. ‘Downtown’ Chaco (the Chaco

Canyon area) contains ruins of six great houses, defined as habitation structures of more than 100 rooms. Excavation of the largest great house ruin, a four story pueblo called Pueblo Bonito, which contained over 700 rooms, was first undertaken in 1890 by Richard Wetherill, a Mancos rancher turned archaeologist, also famous for his exploration of Mesa Verde and other 4-corners sites. Since then, hundreds of archaeologists and other scientists have studied the Chaco Culture and produced hundreds of publications on the subject. Pueblo Bonito is open for visitation. Originally thought to be a giant apartment house, current population estimates are much lower; for example some believe as few as 100 people lived in Pueblo Bonito.

Our guide and lecturer for the weekend will be Wolcott (Wolky) Toll, PHD, from the Office of Archaeological Studies, Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe. Wolky has many years of study and research experience in the Chaco Culture. He has participated in projects on Mesa Verde, in Mancos Canyon, on the Dolores and San Miguel Rivers, and for the Dolores Project. In 1976 he began working for the National Park Service Chaco Project, and continued with the NPS until 1986. His dissertation, Pottery Production and Public Architecture in the Chaco System was based on the Park Service analyses. He has published numerous papers and articles for Chaco books, most recently contributing to the School for American Research book *In Search of Chaco*. Some of us met Wolky a couple of years ago when he was the tour guide for the Yavapai Chapter, Arizona Archaeological Society, for a similar trip. He provides a great educational experience and is a lot of fun.

The Chaco Culture National Historical Park is located between Gallup NM and Farmington. It is 367 miles from Prescott; 76 miles south of Bloomfield NM, and 80 miles north of Gallup. We plan to drive individually, and participants may camp *continued on page 7*



Tragedy At The Fairgrounds

by Goodie Berquist,
Museum Historian and Archivist

The account presented here is based on an oral history interview with Richard Allen conducted June 30, 2001, and archival materials in the JoAnn Cline Research Library at the Smoki Museum.

The Richard Allen story epitomizes what the Smoki People were all about - a caring, close-knit community group of white businessmen and women dedicated to the preservation of Indian culture, especially Indian dances. Their annual ceremonials, along with the town's rodeo, dominated Prescott tourism throughout the twentieth century.



Richard Allen's grandparents were prominent members of the "tribe." They ran the Old Mill Restaurant on West Gurley opposite the Sharlot Hall Museum. Their eatery became a sort of unofficial "Smoki Headquarters" where members and friends gathered for hamburgers and fellowship after each performance. Three generations of Allens were Smoki dancers.

At age six, Richard participated as "a little Indian extra." His task was to don Indian garb, put on makeup, sit on the sidelines, and "eat as much food" as he could. His active participation in the ceremonials began in his mid-teens when he served as a chanter and hoop dancer. At eighteen, he officially joined the "tribe." He came to think of

his Smoki friends as an extension of his own family.

The event which was to change Richard's life forever occurred when he was twenty-three. The date was August 8, 1981, the day on which the annual Smoki Ceremonials took place. Richard was a backup dancer for Los Voladores, an ancient Aztec pole dance still performed in some sections of Mexico.

A 45 foot pole was erected in the center of the Prescott fairgrounds. Attached to the top was a wooden platform that could accommodate four "flyers" and a captain. A long cable was attached to the top of the pole. Each flyer had a telephone lineman's belt attached under his costume. At a signal from the captain, a motor on the ground would start the rotation. Each dancer would jump from the pole upside down, all four leaving together.

Richard had "flown" twice in practice and was eager to go again if he had the chance. When an older Smoki chose not to participate, he became his replacement.

The flyers were told to attach their belt hooks to the central cable. Like the others, Richard did so, but the captain told him to readjust his line. Each flyer was to release a dove as he descended. There was a 16 inch slack in the cable.

As he jumped from the platform, Richard's hook suddenly gave out. "I dropped straight down," he later recalled.

His head landed on an empty wood box, partially breaking his fall. A doctor at the scene rushed forward and, upon examination, pronounced the young man dead. He told the paramedics to stop trying to revive him, but one of them dated Allen's sister. "No, this is Richie," he said, "we've got to save him."

Some viewers even thought the tragic accident was simply part of the performance. Then the paramedics and ambulance attendants placed the young man on a stretcher and eased him into the ambulance. "The doors shut," Lowe recalled, "the red light turns and the scenario of life concludes, amid a light sprinkling of sincere, but apprehensive applause." *to be continued in the next*

Talking Sun newsletter



Trading Post Notes

Janet Shaw, Trading Post Manager

The Trading Post Team would like to thank the Smoki members for continually supporting your Trading Post even during these hard economic times. Our members know that the Trading Post is a great place to shop for quality items at great prices and pay no sales tax! Whether it is for a greeting card or special gift “those in the know” come to the Trading Post.

To thank you, the Trading Post will have a sale during our South West Indian Art Festival on May 30 and 31. Everything, except new books, will be 20% off the entire weekend to members and 10% off to non-members. Non-members who join on the spot will be entitled to 20% off as well. We have a great selection of Zuni fetishes, Hopi baskets and pottery, Mata Ortiz pottery, Hopi katsinas, alabaster carvings, jewelry, Dine folk art, sand paintings, small Navajo rugs and much more

Many of you have been asking for the Mimbres design mugs. We are happy to report that we have received a large shipment and now have a good selection. These mugs display designs created by the Mimbres culture of southwest New Mexico from 1050 A.D. to 1200 A.D. The ceramic mugs are food, dishwasher and microwave safe. The mugs are not Native American made.

Have you seen our new line of ladies summer shirts? They are cool, comfy and good looking with their various Native American motifs. Some have short sleeves, some three quarter and all have caused a lot of excitement among our female volunteers. The Smoki Museum logo is discreetly located on each shirt.

The Tohono O’Odham had a great yield of white tepary beans during the last growing season. For this reason we now have them in stock. If you have never tried them, pick up a bag for tonight’s dinner and an extra one for a gift!

Native American artists with increasing frequency stop at the Museum to sell their beautiful work. I never know which artist will be walking through the door and

look forward to buying new items. Just as I am impressed with the new inventory, I am sure you will be as well.

Come and visit us soon!

Joanne Cline

Research Library

Ginger Johnson, Librarian

The most wonderful event has occurred in your museum library! We have two new volunteers. Sharman Gerdes, former director of the Prescott Public Library, and Charlotte de Jesus, a new Prescott resident. Both have great library experience and are a welcome addition.

By the time you receive this newsletter our new exhibit will be up. As it will be on Navajo rugs, I call your attention to one of several books in our collection. Posts and Rugs, the story of Navajo rugs and their homes, by H. L. James. This book tells the history of and offers information on various regional rugs and the areas they represent, along with specialty rugs, all accompanied by wonderful photos and drawings. We also have books on other crafts such as jewelry making and basket weaving.

Come by on Wednesdays, 1-4 p.m., meet Sharman and Charlotte, and look at all of the new books that have been added for your reading and/or research enjoyment. Oh yes, if any of you have non-fiction books on the desert tribes (Tohono O’Odham, Tohono A’Chin, Yaqui, Mohave, others?) that are looking for a new home, we are looking for some to add to the collection. See you soon!



continued from page 2

- Proceeds would be set aside in a separate fund
- Volunteers would be informed throughout the process

The Board then looked into what would be the best use of these funds ... what could bring us the most income, the most new visitors, increase our membership, bring us new volunteers, strengthen our relationship with native peoples, provide us with new grant resources and lead us to accreditation? In reviewing all aspects of the museum, past and present, our Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, CAP and MAP Assessments the answer became crystal clear ...

NEW EXHIBIT CASES!!!!



Is this the final design? BY NO MEANS! This is just one designer's idea of what is possible. And can we afford it if we sell the blanket strip? YES!

It is our belief that new exhibit cases will:

- Give people that have been to the museum a reason to come back

Chaco Canyon continued

in the park campground or stay in motels in Bloomfield or Farmington. (Because of the road conditions for the south entrance, Gallup is probably not a good choice.) We will coordinate car pools if desired. Participants should plan to be either in the park or Bloomfield/Farmington on Friday evening. We will probably begin our tour by 0900 on Saturday.

The park group campground as well as a regular campground, both of which are dry camps. Toilets are nearby. There are also some nearby ranches and trading posts which offer limited RV camping. The downtown Chaco area is flat and has easy trails. Part of our organized tour will include hiking up the cliff and out to the outliers. There is also a museum/visitor center which has a nice collection of artifacts, so folks who might not

- Offer an opportunity to launch a major publicity campaign to showcase our changes
- Let the general public know that we are making improvements and give them a reason to support us
- Invigorate our existing Volunteers with new tasks and challenges
- Bring opportunities for new Volunteers with special skills
- Give tribal groups the opportunity to partner with us to tell their own stories – the way they wish them to be told
- Perhaps receive funding from tribes for their “own” case
- Institute an “Adopt an Object” campaign for the public and volunteers to tell that object’s story
- Environmentally stabilize our collection and make a HUGE step toward accreditation, which will allow us to apply for many new grants
- Cooperation with other museums becomes possible because of the stability of our collection
- And put us back on the path toward accreditation, because the #1 factor keeping us from accreditation is “the care of our collection”

All of the above will in turn provide for the financial stability and growth of the museum in the years to come. I hope that all of you will become as excited about this project as I am. The blanket strip has been sent to Sotheby's and calls are being made to museums right now. Remember my opening quotation ... “The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few ... or the one.” While we lose a piece in our collection, we will be able to tell the magnificent stories of the rest of the collection with new cases and interpretive displays.

be up to a more difficult hike can still have a great trip; there's plenty to see on the flat.

There is a lot of information on the park website: www.nps.gov/chcu/. We also have a number of books about Chaco in the Smoki library if you want to study up a bit before the trip.

The trip is being coordinated by Ron Robinson and Gary Baumert. We will publish maps and lodging and camping info well before the trip. Ron is keeping a list of interested members and will seek information on participant preferences as the details are added to the plan. Although we have not yet determined the final cost per person, it will be budget priced. To sign up (no commitment at this point), contact Ron at ronsmail@cablone.net. If you do not have email, call Ron at 443-9405.





Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ e-mail _____

- Membership Levels
(Benefits and more member levels, see: <http://smokimuseum.org>)
- \$20 Student
 - \$25 Individual
 - \$35 Family
 - \$60 Patayan
 - \$125 Mogollon
 - \$250 Hohokam
 - \$500 Kokopelli!

Yes, I'm interested in volunteering at the Smoki Museum.

Currently the Museum is looking for help with the following events or teams: Grants Team, Education Team, Marketing Team, Library, and Visitor Services. And many more opportunities exist! To inquire about these opportunities or others, please call (928) 445-1230.

Send form with check made out to Smoki Museum.
Mail to: Smoki Museum, P.O. Box 10224, Prescott, AZ 86304-0224

Smoki THE MUSEUM of American Indian Art and Culture

Smoki Museum
American Indian Art and Culture
PO Box 10224, Prescott, AZ 86304-0224
www.smokimuseum.org

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