



ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES

Volume No. 25 Issue No. 1

Jan., Feb., March, 2015

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, February 5th

In The Theater of The Arizona Museum of Natural History
53 N. Macdonald (Enter from First Street)

Speaker, Tom Wilson

Director, Arizona Museum of Natural History

Topic: Chichén Itzá, City of the Sacred Wall

The great site of Chichén Itzá, in the center of the Yucatán peninsula, has fascinated the world ever since the visits of John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood in the 1840s. Archaeological work at Chichén Itzá revealed that many buildings at the site resembled those found elsewhere in Yucatán, such as Uxmal, Kabah and Labná. Other buildings represented a stark departure from the more common Maya architecture of the peninsula. Who were the peoples who created one of the great sites of the ancient world? What do the different architectural styles mean? What is the relationship of the Yucatecan sites and the great Maya cities to the south, such as Tikal, Yaxchilán and Palenque?

AzMNH Director Tom Wilson earned his Ph.D. studying Chichén Itzá in the 1970s. Join him as he revisits Chichén Itzá based on a recent trip to Yucatán.

You won't want to miss this impressive presentation! Refreshments will be served after the talk.

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Chair Chatter

**Donna Benge
Chairperson**



There are a number of events in the next several months in which you might enjoy participating. Also, enjoy us on our website <http://southwestarchaeologyteam.org/> and Like us on Facebook.

It will be interesting in February, besides our regular activities, there are others in which you will enjoy participating. On March 7 is the Arizona Archaeology Expo at the Yuma Quartermaster Depot State Park. This is in a park setting which is all grass and large shade trees adjacent to the Colorado River. There are several museums there including the depot and other quarters. Besides that, field trips to nearby sites are being planned, and it's always interesting to visit with the participants. We will take turns supervising several activities for the guests. Many of us are planning to go to Yuma on Friday as the Expo set-up for us begins about 8 o'clock in the morning on Saturday. We hope you will join us! You can sign up at the next meeting.

On April 4, we plan to do some repair work on the stage stop and schoolhouse at the Verdugo site. Dick and Rosalind Myers have invited us to have lunch at their home near Casa Grande when we have finished. Not only are they a great host and hostess, but you will have the opportunity to see their interesting collections. If you have never been to Verdugo, you must join us. All SWAT members are invited to the picnic lunch even if you don't go to the site. Just let us know if you would like to join us. We'll give you the directions to their home.



Lab Crew Is Busy

We are continuing with the analysis of sherds from Mesa Grande and will soon need to wash more boxes of sherds. Last month we traveled to Pueblo Grande to view a new exhibit that includes many Sacaton pots. It's much easier to see what we have been talking about when we can see a whole pot instead of just a tiny fraction of one. Now we are planning a trip to Casa Grande to see what artifacts have been found there. We meet each Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. near the back door of the Arizona Museum of Natural History.



Donna Benge and Kathleen Krider sanding cabinet doors at Toltec Schoolhouse.

Toltec School Work Progresses

Pound, scrape, plaster, sweep, sand, use paint remover, paint, climb up and down ladders, and make progress on a big job month after month. We are beginning to see what the project will be like when we finish and can be proud of what we have accomplished. So if any of you like to do hands-on work with a wonderful group of volunteers, you are invited to join us the first Saturday of each month except in March when we will meet on the 28th. Contact Donna for more information and carpool departure time at 480-969-0578 or dbenge1@cox.net

Arizona Archaeology Expo Is March 7

SWAT has either sponsored and/or has taken part in every Fair/Expo since they began more than twenty years ago. We meet many people we have known for years plus lots of new archaeologists as well as visitors. It's always interesting to visit the participants, go on field trips, and just have a little time to relax away from the hustle and bustle of our everyday lives. The setting for this year's event is perfect. SWAT has been asked to again provide several activities so the more people we have going, the more leisure time each person will have. Please think about joining us on March 7th at the Yuma Quartermaster State Park. You can sign up at the February meeting or contact Donna Benge at dbenge1@cox.net or 480-969-0578

Mesa Grande Drainage Improved

By Jim Britton

The “Ancient Echoes” newsletter one year ago included an article about installing a drop box and 4 inch diameter pipe in the “Shooting Gallery.” This drop box and pipe were located in the south portion of the “Shooting Gallery.” There is also a north section that includes three levels that step down from the platform mound top to ground level. As water flows over the face of each level it erodes it.

The installation of the drop boxes at each level allows the runoff to flow into the boxes and down the pipe and continue over the edge of each level to the ground surface where the water can pool without causing any damage. This stops the water from eroding the face of each level. On our last workday we installed four more drop boxes and approximately 40 feet of pipe. As you can see from the photos this involved digging holes for the boxes and trenches for the pipe.

The next task will be to contour the dirt on each level to direct the water flow toward each drop box. We will also have to repair and stabilize the faces of each level, which have been badly eroded.

We usually work from 8:30 to noon on the second Saturday of each month. The next workday will be Feb.



Jim Taylor, Jerry Howard, Jim Britton and Dick Brown work to improve drainage at Mesa Grande

14th. In March, however, we will be working on the 3rd Saturday (the 21st). If you would like to help contact Donna Bengé to confirm start time.

Pueblo Grande Stabilization

By Jim Britton

I'm sure you remember the 4.45 inch cloud burst we had at Pueblo Grande in early September. That was just after a 1.26 down pour in late August. Well, we are still trying to repair the damage. Most of the damage is what we call basal erosion. Moisture is pulled up into the walls by capillary action or what some refer to as “rising damp.” The moisture causes the lower portion (basal area) of the wall to deteriorate and fall off. The mudslingers “sling” new mud into the voids to repair the damage.

In the last edition of “Ancient Echoes” I mentioned that in October we had a very large crew. It was “International Archaeology Day” and the Central Arizona Society of the Archaeology Institute of America (AIA) had 33 volunteers join us making a total of 53 mudslingers. Then in November we had a total of 40 volunteers. One of our mudslingers is a teacher and she brought thirteen of her high school students. So with this large group the mud mixers were kept very busy. They mixed a total of 165 gallons of mud.

The December workday was canceled. Since it was close to Christmas there were only a very few people available to work. In addition to that, the forecast was for a possible cold and wet weekend.

There is still a lot of stabilization work to be done. The next workdays are scheduled for February 21 and March 14. If you would like to join the Mudslingers or want more information, email Jim Britton at jabritton@cox.net.



Pueblo Grande Mudslingers repair walls in lower rooms.

Onward and Downward!

The MCC Mesa Grande Field School is a Go!

By Dr. Jerry Howard.

The Mesa Community College Archaeological Field Techniques class (aka the field school) will begin on January 22nd. While enrollments are generally down right now, the field school did attract enough students from MCC but also from ASU.

There are new and exciting things planned for this semester both in research questions and training in new techniques.

In terms of techniques, we are joining forces with a cultural resource management company. These companies have developed a new archaeological field recording systems. We are hoping to do some training on this type of system, which is probably the wave of the future.

Other technologies that have not been focused on in the past include stabilization work and basic mapping. On a trip to Park of the Canals Dutch and I found that the Classic Period Hohokam compound to the east of the milk barn was showing up extremely well, better than any other time I have looked at it. So, we are hoping to do a mapping exercise with the theodolites recording the visible walls of this compound. Each year we also do an exercise at Park of the Canals in the use of Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) systems. There is also a planned work day that will focus on stabilization procedures, providing a rare opportunity for students to learn stabilization techniques.

Another exciting new technology we hope to employ is the use of a 3-D scanner to do the mapping of features in the field. The 3-D scanner is a new tool that the museum has due to the generosity of the SWAT group, the SPS and the museum foundation. This will be a real test of the equipment in the field.

But the most exciting changes are in the realm of research questions. In past years we have been working in the northeast corner of the mound, uncovering the area excavated by Frank Cushing in 1887. A major research

question in this area involved finding the location of the northern compound wall and its effect on the organization of tasks carried out at the mound. That wall has never been located and is not in the area where we expected to find it. To resolve this dilemma, we are going to start where we can last see the eastern compound wall and follow or "track" it. John Russell Bartlett in his wood cut drawing and description of the mound as he saw it in the 1850s suggests that the wall extends farther north and encloses a special plaza area. We are currently scrutinizing his wood cut drawing and his original field sketch which appears to have some significant errors in the relationship between the mound and the compound – he appears to have the mound 180 degrees backwards!

A second research question that we will be working on is the question of the existence of a ramp or stairway up the east side of the mound. We have identified a doorway or entrance in the middle of the eastern compound wall. In the 1990s we identified a set of walls that led from this entryway up to the mound. Where this architectural corridor, defined by the two walls, hits the mound there appears to be an eroding caliche platform. Remote sensing (high-tech equipment used to detect things buried underground) using ground penetrating radar, resistivity and magnetometers have all suggested that there is something buried in this location. If we can find and characterize a feature used for access to the top of the mound it will be a major discovery.

Other areas will be excavated, including further definition of a wall found in the northern area. The last field school found both of the corners of the wall but the type of feature located there has not been fully determined. It is likely that this is a room but it could also be a cell to form a raised platform on the front of the mound.

We are excited about the field school this semester! The class will be working in the field on Fridays from 12 noon to 4pm.

Echoes From The Past

By Jim Britton

BACKGROUND: In the last edition of Ancient Echoes I included an article based on several quotes taken from old newsletters entitled "MESA DIGGIN'S." These newsletters were written for members of the Mesa Historical and Archaeological Society. The copies we received covered most of October 1975 through January 1986. These old issues of the "MESA DIGGIN'S," contained some interesting history that relates to our museum and the Mesa area and I hope you enjoy some more quotes (echoes) from the past.

December, 1975 -

"PARK OF THE CANALS: We have put in our request at the recent public hearings conducted by the task force of the Mesa Community Council for funds to meet the remainder of the purchase price and anticipate that these will be appropriated in 1976. We have also put in a request for funds with which to purchase Mesa Grande Ruins from the Jack Rosses. This ruin will undoubtedly equal Casa Grande National Monument and

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Meet The Museum Personnel

This is the first article in a new series.

YVONNE PETERSEN Volunteer Coordinator

It is hard to write an article about yourself, especially one that would be interesting for others to read. But I will try to make it as painless as possible.

I graduated from Brigham Young University with a Bachelor of Arts in the field of therapeutic recreation. The field of therapeutic recreation deals with the special needs population in recreational settings. Right after I graduated I got married and we moved from Provo, Utah to Mesa, Arizona. This has been my home for almost 40 years. Therapeutic Recreation was a relatively new field at the time and Arizona had not yet recognized it. Not being able to find a job in my field of study I became an orthodontics assistant, where I learned about teeth crowding, overbites, under bites, braces and the dreaded headgear. I worked in this field for three years. I retired after having my first child.

Less than a year later I was asked to teach tumbling classes at a local dance studio. I had competed on the BYU Women's Gymnastics team for two years, which qualified me for this position. I soon was also teaching preschool dance classes including tap and ballet. I even preformed in the Nutcracker for several years as "Mother Ginger". During my career as a dance teacher I had two more children. I taught dance for over 13 years.

While teaching dance I had applied for and received a temporary part-time position at the then, Mesa Southwest Museum, entering data in preparation for a big new exhibition coming to the museum, The Russian Dinosaurs. I loved the museum atmosphere and the opportunity to learn about Mesa History, the Hohokam, SWAT, and dinosaurs. At one point I mentioned to the museum director how much I enjoyed it here and that if any position that I was qualified for opened up I would love to stay. Fate was on my side and I was eventually hired as the Historic Site Manager for the Serrine House. My main duties were recruiting, training, scheduling and managing the Serrine House Volunteers. I grew the program to include a special event on the grounds of the house each month. I loved that position, but then fate took another turn in the direction of City of Mesa Budget cuts. The Serrine House was closed and I was laid off. I had been in that position for almost 10 years.

The budget cuts hurt the museum more than just closing the Serrine House. Other staff members were laid off and funding was cut. By this time the museum's volunteer coordinator position had been frozen for over 18 months. The Guild Board recognized the importance of having a volunteer coordinator, stepped up and offered to fund, temporarily, a part time Volunteer Coordi-

nator and I was lucky enough to fill the position. The first month, with the support and help of some very valuable volunteers, I worked to reconstruct the Guild to encompass all active volunteers regardless of their membership in SWAT or SPS. The goal was to have a unified volunteer organization.

In July of this year I will have the pleasure of being the AzMNH Volunteer Coordinator for 10 years. When I first started at the museum, some 20 years ago, I was unsure of myself and my abilities to do a good job. I came across this quote early in my museum career and it has helped me keep going through all my self-doubts.

If you want to feel secure, do what you already know how to do. But, if you want to be a true professional and continue to grow...go to the cutting edge of your competence, which means a temporary loss of security. So whenever you don't quite know what you're doing, know you're growing.

I have grown a lot at the AzMNH!

Echoes From The Past

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must be protected from vandals as soon as possible."

January, 1976 -

"PARK OF THE CANALS: The Arizona State Parks has just sent a beautiful certificate in recognition of our Park of the Canals being placed on the National Register of Historic Places 30 May 1975. A second certificate was sent for us to present to Mayor Cooley."

March, 1976 -

"LITTLE ADOBE SCHOOLHOUSE (replica of Mesa's first school) had an exciting yet nostalgic dedication on 11 March. This day was by and for the Children though the grownups enjoyed it too. The presence of our First Lady, Betty Ford, will long be remembered by the school children who built the school and proudly showed it to her. The replica of the school will be turned over to HAS June 1 as a part of the museum."

(Author's note: This schoolhouse was torn down when the Mesa Southwest Museum (now AzMNH) was expanded in 2000. Another replica was built at the Mesa Historical Museum in Lehi).

April 1976 -

"MUSEUM: Please let me remind everyone that if we are going to have a great museum we must have beautiful and exciting as well as educational and informative memorabilia to put in it. Please begin to gather up the treasures you have been saving to put on display for others to see. Thank you."

(Author's note: compare this to the exhibit sources we have at the museum today).

New **Membership Application** Renewal

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Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

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Membership Type: Family (\$20) Individual (\$15) Student (\$10)

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Return This Form To: Southwest Archaeology Team
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Ancient Echoes is the
newsletter of the Southwest
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