



# ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES

Volume No. 26 Issue No. 1

January, February, March, 2016

## SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm

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

Our speaker, Wilson Allen, shares his trip last May to Bolivia and Peru. He will highlight his experience hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu.

Dr. Allen is a retired psychologist who volunteers on the exhibition team at AZMNH, is a member of S.W.A.T., A.A.S. and is a “Mudslinger” at Pueblo Grande. Wilson was a history major in college. He served as a social studies teacher, counselor, special education and counseling director and a school psychologist in Colorado, Wyoming and Arizona. He has had a lifelong interest in history and archaeology, especially in the pre-Columbian Americas.

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## Dues Are Due!

Its renewal time again! Please use the form on the back page to renew. Just a note, check your records to ensure you don't pay twice, although donations are gladly accepted!

# Chair Chatter



## Donna Bengé Chairperson

2016: This is the 30th year that SWAT has been incorporated, and we worked together for eight year before that so that's 38 years of amazing efforts of excavations, stabilizations, and restorations all over the state. I've been involved since the beginning, and when I sit back and review all that we have accomplished, I'm amazed. After more than ten years of excavating at the Rowley Site, we are still working on processing the information as we are on the excavation of the Pew Site which happened while we were also working at Rowley. In the meantime, we also did careful measured drawings of the interior and exterior walls of the Sistine House, demolished an addition, and restored the original house. You can come visit it during the Mesa Historic Home Tour on January 23rd. We helped convince the City of Mesa to purchase Mesa Grande. And that was what we did just in Mesa.

But we've also done many projects in the southern part of the state including work at three Tumacacori sites, several projects in Tubac, and the stabilization of the historic rock Pennington Cabin east of Nogales. We've stabilized an adobe stage stop and schoolhouse east of the Picacho Mountains. You can visit that during the Arizona Archaeology Expo on February 5th at Casa Grande Ruins National Park as it is one of the field trips that will be offered. Then we restored a one room schoolhouse in Eloy. But now our dedicated work continues as we sling mud to keep the Mesa Grande and Pueblo Grande mounds from completely eroding away. We're restoring another school building in Eloy, working on the Milk Barn at the Park of The Canals, and continue to do lab projects. SWAT can be very proud of what we have accomplished and will continue to do.

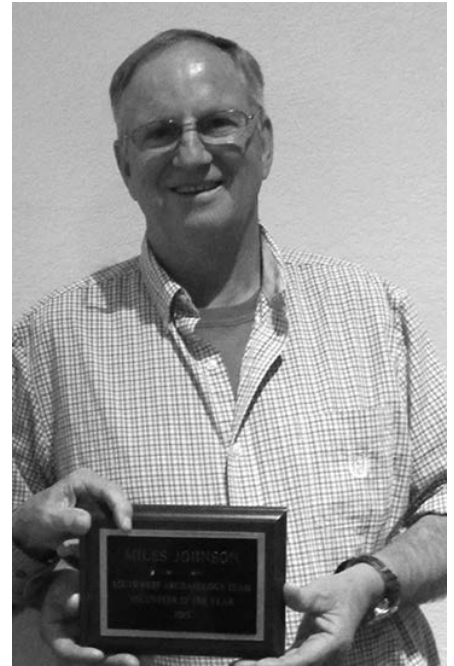


## Mesa Grande

You may remember from reading the Mesa Grande article in the last newsletter, we have been working to stabilize the north end of the platform mound. This stabilization work has been interrupted by wet weather recently on the second Saturdays. Since we didn't want to disappear by sinking in the mud, we have not been able to make as much progress as we hoped. But let's set our sights on the next second Saturday. We'll just have to see what our rainy weather will have in store for us.

# 2015 Volunteer Of The Year

Miles Johnson was named Volunteer of the year. Miles has been involved at Mesa Grande doing stabilization and being a tour guide there, he is a Mud-slinger at Pueblo Grande, he works in the SWAT lab, he participates at Toltec School project, and is a very active member of the Museum Exhibit Crew. He has contributed many hours to make all these projects successful. Thanks Miles!!



## Toltec School

Work continues in the corner where the jail cell will be put back in place. The walls have been primed with white paint and will now be painted with a cream colored paint as will the rest of the interior. The floor has been stripped of a glue substance. Dick Myers related that was quite a chore. Ceilings are in place in the entrance areas to both restrooms. Finish work continues in the classrooms. Because we will miss our work day on March 5th, we take advantage of the five Saturdays in January and work on the 30th and then again the next Saturday on February 6th.

## Rain Delays Lab Work

Progress in the lab has been affected by the rain. We need to wash several boxes of sherds outside so we can do analysis on them but it has been cold and rainy each day we've set aside for this. However, sooner or later, we'll be able to get to this and then back in the lab to do analysis.

We had also hoped to be able to work in the Federal Building storage area but that's in flux too. We will now have almost the whole basement for storage but will have to move our shelves to the room beside where they are now. However, we will be moving some more boxes to that area and hopefully put them in some order. We will have to wait until construction is finished to really do what we had planned to do.

# New Growth At Mesa Grande

By Dr. Jerry Howard

Our director, Dr. Tom Wilson, has remarked about how great it is that we are consistently adding new things to Mesa Grande. Dr. Emily Early, Assistant Curator at Mesa Grande, wrote a grant to the Gila River Community and included money for new and visitor educational facilities. Emily has been doing a terrific job developing the educational program for schools and the educational areas. The new additions include:

1. A new educational area north of the mound with units where the students can learn to map in and record artifacts, identify the types of artifacts and figure out what time periods their unit dates to. Four concrete and steel units containing "life like" artifact reproductions were made through the efforts and genius of our exhibits team. They do look like the real thing! Thanks to Tim, Ed, Jim and Miles who put a great deal of effort into building the units. This new area also has seating for the students and an ADA unit for students in wheel chairs.
2. A new path leading was constructed to the rabbit hunting area where students try to hit metal rabbits using a rabbit stick and where they learn about Hohokam subsistence and how animal bones tell us the story of the Hohokam diet.
3. A new pad was constructed where the memorial bench is located under the mesquite tree, a major upgrade for this area.
4. Last but not least is a major expansion of the parking lot area, doubling the size and capacity of our visitor parking lot. The expansion was constructed north of the existing parking lot in an area containing mesquite trees. We kept all of the trees and constructed the parking lot around them. This resulted in a wonderful feel for the parking area. If you haven't seen it go over and check it out!

The construction also resulted in what may be a major archaeological discovery! Tim Walters positioned the new "excavation units" and the trail material was



Site of possible north compound wall.

built up around them. This creates a situation where the units are down in the ground and rains would then fill them with water. So, Tim and some members of the Exhibit Crew connected up drain pipes. To hide the drain pipes they dug a small (4 inches wide, 4 inches deep) trench to hide the pipe. While removing the very loose soil Tim suddenly hit an area that was hard and white. Then he hit a second one. A close inspection suggested that he encountered 2 east-west running prehistoric caliche walls.

The northernmost wall that Tim encountered may well be the long-lost northern compound wall at Mesa Grande. We have looked for it for years but it is not where we thought it was located. If our hypothesis is correct, the wall is 20 meters farther north than we thought and the Mesa Grande compound is much larger than past estimates!

The 2016 Mesa Community College Field School is now a go! As of this writing we have 18 students enrolled. The class will investigate the features Tim encountered and determine if they are prehistoric walls. If they are, we will scrape down to the tops of the walls (just a few inches) and uncover them. We will "track" the walls and determining where they go, learning more about the compound and its architecture and use. It should be a very exciting season with the field school!

## Arizona Archaeology Expo

This expo is close by and one that shouldn't be missed especially if you haven't been to Casa Grande Ruins recently. For one thing, there will be back country tours by SWAT leaders. There are new museum exhibits. The exhibitors always have new things to demonstrate and tell about, and the presentations sound very interesting: Allen Dart – Southwestern Rock Calendar and Ancient Time Pieces, Brook Jeffery – Stabilization of the Casa Grande Ruins, Alex Lim – Conservation at Southwestern National Monuments (also includes adobe brick making following the lecture), Doug Craig – The Prehistoric Community at Casa Grande, Barnaby Lewis –

Tribal Perspective of Casa Grande. Food will be available too.

You and your friends are encouraged to visit this free event, and if you would like to help and haven't yet signed up, let us know that you would be interested in helping. The more volunteers we have, the more chance each of us will have to also enjoy the expo, attend the lectures, and even visit the Verdugo stage stop and school-house site.

A flyer is included with this newsletter containing all the details.

# DinoZone Exhibit

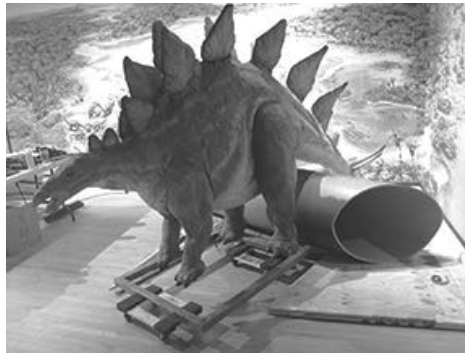
By Jim Britton

When the original Stegosaurus, Triceratops, and T-Rex were removed from Dinosaur Mountain, they were moved to the exhibit room where the What-Is-It exhibit had been. The museum staff decided to create a children's interactive exhibit. The Monday Exhibit Crew went to work to create what will be an incredible opportunity for children to be involved with and learn about these dinosaurs.

This article will discuss the Stegosaurus portion of the exhibit. You will see an adult Stegosaurus standing on an old lava flow protecting three babies hiding behind a lava tube. The lava tube was constructed with a 24-inch diameter plastic pipe. Styrofoam was used as a base under the dinosaur. This pipe and Styrofoam were covered with two types of cement. The final coat was made to look like lava flowing off the tube onto the floor.

When the children crawl into the tube, a motion detector will turn on lights, sound, and activate the three babies that are hiding in the brush. After watching the babies move up and down the children can crawl on through the tube exiting at the other end.

The display sets in front of wall murals that show scenes from the Jurassic Period which includes volca-



**Progression of work on creating a new base for the Stegosaurus in the children's DinoZone. At top left is the metal frame. Above, styrofoam gives shape to the base. Left, the completed cement "lava flow," ready for trees and plants.**

noes that help explain the lava tube and flow. The Stegosaurus portion of DinoZone is complete except for trees and plants that will be placed behind the lava tube to hide the babies.

The next edition of "Ancient Echoes" will feature the Triceratops portion of DinoZone.

The exhibits crew meets every Monday morning at 9:00. For more information, contact: Laura Rodriguez (volunteer coordinator) at [laura.rodriguez@mesaaz.gov](mailto:laura.rodriguez@mesaaz.gov).

# Pueblo Grande Mudslingers

By Jim Britton

Stabilization of exposed earthen architecture is a never ending work in progress. The PGM Mudslinger volunteers have what is known as "job security." As long as there is rainfall we will have work to do. Since the last issue of "Ancient Echoes" we have concentrated on the rooms in the northwest area of the compound and the west platform mound wall. Many years ago a berm was constructed on the wall top of the west wall. This berm diverted runoff from cascading over the wall face to five runoff openings. The "good news" is that this protected the wall face from the runoff, thus reducing the repair work required. The "bad news" is that if the small ditch behind the berm fills with eroded soil from the mound top, the runoff goes over the wall face and erodes the mortar joints around the stones. With all the rain we have had at the site, that is what happened. So now we are in the process of repointing (replacing mortar around the stones) the entire west wall face.

The rooms in the northwest corner of the compound suffered extensive damage from moisture being sucked up, by capillary action, into the wall core. This internal

moisture has caused the basal or lower areas of the wall to erode. We are making progress repairing these room walls, but there is still a lot more to do.

As many of you know, I am retiring as the PGM Mudslinger coordinator. For the past 22 years, I have been getting volunteers, determining what walls to repair, and doing the documentation of work performed, etc. During these 22 years, 397 individuals have worked as Mudslingers for a total of 9768 hours. It has been a pleasure to have worked with all 397 of them.

Beginning January 2016 Miles Johnson will take over this responsibility. I know he will do a great job. I will continue being a Mudslinger and help where needed. Laurene Montero (Phoenix City Archaeologist) is the Pueblo Grande staff member we work with. We are fortunate to have her support. She is very aware of the positive impact the Mudslingers have on preserving this important prehistoric site.

Our next workdays are scheduled for February 20 (3rd Sat.) and March 12 (2nd Sat.). If you would like volunteer or want more information, contact Miles Johnson at [milesjohnson54@aol.com](mailto:milesjohnson54@aol.com).

# Bringing A New Collection Home to Mesa

By Dr. Jerry Howard

Our collections for the new wing of New World Prehistory have received some fantastic new objects! Thanks to Arizona Archaeological Society members Nancy and Bob Unferth over 30 pre-Columbian art pieces were donated as the Lester K. and Rosalyn W. Olin Collection of Pre-Columbian Art. This incredible collection was collected by Mr. Lester Olin, of Chicago, and was generously donated by Nancy Unferth and her sister Margaret Olin. Several objects from the collection were also donated to the Art Institute of Chicago.

The objects include carved stone pieces, including an amazing carved stone mask from Mesoamerica, the Mezcala Culture, Guerrero and dates from 200 BCE to 200 CE.

The Olin Collection was, at the time of the donation, in Chicago. Two estimates for having fine-art movers transport the collection to the museum were in the \$5000 to \$6000 dollar range, beyond what our budget could afford. Graciously, Bob and Nancy provided tickets for us to fly to Chicago and were our hosts while there.

Tom Wilson and I flew to Chicago with Bob and Nancy and arrived late at night. The Olin / Unferth home was on the 69th floor of the "Water Tower building." What a View! It was an amazing place and we could not have asked for more delightful hosts.

We had a great time visiting Chicago for several days. We secured packing materials at the local Staples store and we carefully packed all of the items for transport. We rented a car, packed up and prepared for an exciting road trip. At the last minute, Bob checked the weather through St. Louis and the news was not good! A huge storm was about to hit the area. So we recalculated a northern route that would take us through Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, down into Colorado and through Denver, New Mexico and into Arizona. It was a distance of 1880 miles. But we would miss the snow storm (well...).

The first day we traveled over 600 miles through Illinois, Iowa and into Nebraska where we stayed in Lincoln, Nebraska. So far, so good; just a bit stiff from sitting so long. The next morning we had breakfast and checked the weather. It was crisp and clear in Lincoln and the weather report was clear in Denver. So off we went expecting clear driving conditions. (The operative word there is "expecting"). But soon the weather was cold and the roadsides were white.

Small flurries of snow began to come down. No problem, right? Then the small snow flurries got increasingly aggressive. After a while, we found ourselves in the mid-



dle of a major blizzard with the road getting a heavy accumulation of snow. What to do? Well, we couldn't really get off the highway, the off ramps and local roads were far worse. So, we pulled in behind a snowplow and followed him. Tom kept cheering me up by repeating

over and over "boy I am glad you are driving." When the snowplow pulled off, things got even more exciting. But soon I found another snowplow and stuck with him. The going was slow but the road behind the snowplow was clear. At one point, we saw a family in an SUV and pulling a trailer, they had run off the road and were stuck in between the divided roadways. A rescue vehicle was there to help.

Finally the snow subsided rather quickly, we were still on the road and in one piece and heading for Denver. After a short stop in Pueblo Colorado we drove until after dark and arrived in Raton, New Mexico for the night. The final day took us through New Mexico and Arizona. Tom grew up in New Mexico and regaled me with stories and facts on the early history of New Mexico, pointing out interesting locations along our route.

We made a last "tourist" stop for lunch at the El Rancho Hotel on Route 66 in Gallup, New Mexico. Quite a place! It was known as the "home of the stars" where movie stars stayed while making movies in the area. After a great lunch and looking around the hotel, we headed out to complete our last leg of the journey. Over 1800 miles, 600 miles a day for three days! It was quite a road trip.

Once they arrived at the museum, the objects were cataloged, condition reports were done, they were photographed, labels were written and the objects were on display in one week. They can be seen in our exhibit, Art of the Ancient Americas. That just may be a record!!!! You can also access photos and information on the exhibit at our website, [AzMNH.org](http://AzMNH.org)



Snow alongside the road

New  **Membership Application** Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Family Member Names: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Areas Of Interest

I Want To Help With

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- Education/Teaching Programs
- Excavation
- Lab Analysis
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I Want To Learn More About

- Excavation Techniques
- Historic Preservation
- Stabilization Techniques
- Survey Techniques
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Return This Form To: Southwest Archaeology Team  
PO Box 5368, Mesa, AZ 85211-5368

# Southwest Archaeology Team

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## Southwest Archaeology Team

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Ancient Echoes is the  
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Archaeology Team, which is in  
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