



ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES ANCIENT ECHOES

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April, May, June, 2009

It's Time To Renew Your SWAT Membership!
Please Use The Form On The Back Page Of This Newsletter!

SWAT MEMBERSHIP MEETING

May 7, 2009, 7 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Dr. David Abbott

Theater of the Arizona Museum of Natural History,
53 N. Macdonald St., Mesa, AZ (enter on First Street)

Our speaker will be Dr. David Abbott who will present his most recent work titled *"New and Stunning Results from Hohokam Ceramic Research!"* He will include his research about Hohokam ceramic production and exchange. He will discuss new research directions in this important field of study.

David R. Abbott is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Arizona State University. He has designed and is conducting a long-term research program focused on the ancient pottery of the Sonoran Desert. He combines pottery studies with geological, petrographic, and chemical analyses to determine the organization of ceramic production and distribution in southern and central Arizona. This work is dedicated to modeling the exchange and social networks that composed the Hohokam regional system, investigating the impact of large-scale irrigation on sociocultural evolution, and developing the unique contribution that ceramic research can make to the study of prehistoric communities.

Refreshments will follow the meeting. For more information check the website at: <http://www.southwestarchaeologyteam.org/> or contact Donna Bengel at dbengel@cox.net.

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Join Us For
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www.southwestarchaeologyteam.org

Chair Chatter

Donna Bengé
Chairperson



The Southwest Archaeology Team was again busy participating in Archaeology Month activities including the very successful Open House on March 7th at Mesa Grande and the 2009 Arizona Archaeology Expo at Pueblo Grande the next weekend. We have also gotten much accomplished at the Verdugo site schoolhouse. The window and door frames have been replaced where needed and the exterior has been repaired. We are presently applying the final coat of mud plaster. There will be an open house when the project has been completed.

Regretfully I will not be able to attend our next membership meeting on May 7th as I will be traveling to Texas and Oklahoma to attend my niece's graduation from Oklahoma State University. I will also get to see my grand niece who was born on Halloween day.



SWAT Archaeology Study Group Celebrates 15 years

The SWAT Archaeology Study Group will be celebrating 15 years of study with a dinner at Monti's in Tempe on May 3rd. Five hardy souls have been meeting the second Saturday of each month to discuss archaeology based books and papers. They have covered books from the 1800's to the 1930's so far. Their next project is to read and discuss "60 Years of Southwestern Archaeology – A History of the Pecos Conference." After their summer hiatus, they will resume meeting in September. If you're interested in joining the group contact Donna Bengé at 480-969-0578 or email dbenge1@cox.net

SWAT Lab Update

Our lab crew recently finished the analysis of the lithics and ground stone from Mesa Grande Mound site. Louise and Richard Brown, Kathleen Krider, and Donna Bengé spent an afternoon washing sherds which we will be analyzing in the coming months. Thanks to all who participated in the sherd washing activity.



Mayor's Proclamation Honors Volunteers

By Yvonne Petersen
AzMNH Volunteer Coordinator

To honor all the volunteers that serve the City of Mesa, Mayor Scott Smith, at the April 20, 2009 city council meeting, proclaimed "April 19-25 as Volunteer Week in the City of Mesa to acknowledge the contributions of the citizens who have been the heart and soul of our city for over 100 years. The hard work and commitment of volunteers is what makes Mesa a great city to live and work in."

Mayor Smith also stated in the proclamation that volunteers need to be recognized for their community commitment to service. When I read this line I thought of our SWAT volunteers and your commitment in the community by preserving the past and teaching our community the importance of historic preservation. Thank you for the talents, time, and energy you share.

In 2008 approximately 42 SWAT Members gave 4,424 hours of service to the Museum. That is an amazing amount of hours. As Mayor Scott proclaimed, "Through community involvement, volunteers make a difference in the everyday lives of residents; and are part of our community history and vital to the future of the City of Mesa."

SWAT Field Trip May 2



The schoolhouse, above, and the stage stop (shown on Page 1) will be part of the field trip on May 2 to the Verdugo project site.

This is an opportunity for all SWAT members to visit the Verdugo Homestead Site. Dick Myers will lead a tour which will include the historic stage stop, schoolhouse, petroglyph site and a historic ranch site. We will meet at the Verdugo schoolhouse at 2:00 pm on Saturday, May 2nd.

To get to site take Highway 87 through Coolidge, past the small towns of Randolph and La Palma; you will pass the prisons to Houser Rd. Turn left on Houser and go to the end, then turn left on Brady Pump Rd. Go to the end of the pavement and make a quick left turn (two roads here), onto a dirt road that runs along the fence. Follow this road as it winds around the canal embankment, then cross the canal. By now you can see the roofs of the schoolhouse and stage stop in the distance, so just continue to the buildings.

It takes 1.5 hours to get there from the Arizona Museum of Natural History in Mesa. So allow plenty of time. There are no bathroom facilities in the area. Carpooling is not necessary, but you might want to caravan if there is a driver who has been there before. For more information contact Donna Bengé dbenge1@cox.net phone 480-969-0578

Verdugo Schoolhouse Project

By Jim Britton

In 2005, we received a Historic Preservation Heritage Fund Grant to put a new roof on the schoolhouse. Every quarter we have to report our progress to the Grant Coordinator. Periodically we submit a request for reimbursement of expenses. To date we have been reimbursed 88% of the \$3000.00 grant. Due to the Arizona budget issues, Arizona State Parks have suspended further reimbursements. Since we are now in a “suspended” position, we still are required to make progress reports and keep records of hours worked and any additional money spent. There is a chance that the Heritage Fund grants will be activated again and we would then



Jim Britton and Dick Myers adding fine mud plaster at Verdugo



Bert Strobl putting in new window frame, left. Donna Bengé putting final touches on the new window frame, below.

be eligible to get reimbursement for the remaining \$360.00.

We are making good progress on completing this project. All the windows have now been repaired and the final interior mud plastering is going really well. If you would like to help or want more information, call Jim Britton at (480)827-8070 or Donna Bengé at (480)969-0578.



Archaeology And Heritage Awareness Month Expo

Tents for the Expo were placed among the spring wild flowers in the northern section of the Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park. In this colorful setting more than 1500 people participated in the event.

The mudslingers worked with Jim Britton. See more about these efforts in the PGM article below.

SWAT also had a booth where the hands-on activity was working with pump drills. These drills were made by the Lesko's several years ago. Visitors, including the many Girls Scouts working on their badges, tried their hand at drilling holes in small wooden pieces to make a necklace, bracelet, or a zipper pull for their backpacks. Others tried their hand at drilling holes in shells.

It takes much perseverance and patience to work with the actual sea shells! We were able to talk to many people and explain what our organization does and how we work. Another big thank you goes out to those who helped at this very successful event.



learning how to make jewelry the prehistoric way at the SWAT tent, Expo 2009

Pueblo Grande Stabilization

By Jim Britton

The March 14 workday was special. That weekend was the 2009 Archaeology Expo held at Pueblo Grande. The Mudslingers had been asked to work that day to demonstrate the technique being used to stabilize and preserve this important prehistoric site. We had two work shifts during the day so Expo attendees could watch us throughout the entire day. Sixteen volunteers worked 71 hours and mixed 270 gallons of mud.

Since the materials used to do stabilization can be somewhat controversial, I anticipated some interesting discussion with some of the professional archaeologists attending the Expo. However, this did not occur. Only one archaeologist from Tucson came to see and discuss the process being used here. I have had previous discussions with him and knew he does not use amendments, but uses only natural soils and water to make mud. Currently at Pueblo Grande we are using an amendment called SoilShield-LS. This product is made to be used with crushed granite to make natural looking trails, driveways and other stabilized surfaces. I did experiments to adapt it for use with dirt and sand for stabilizing prehistoric sites.

There are different advantages and disadvantages



PGM Mudslingers during the Expo

with every product or technique used when doing stabilization. The goal of stabilization is to preserve with as little on-going maintenance as possible. Amendments act as a "glue" to hold the soil particles together and reduce erosion and therefore reduce maintenance.

However, amendments can be more harmful than they are helpful if they result in a surface that won't allow the wall

to breathe properly. Each site and the related soils are different, so there is no fix-all product or formula. It's a real challenge to pick the best materials and formulas to protect and preserve each prehistoric structure. For years the National Park Service led the way in experimenting with and using various materials. In their work at Pueblo Grande in 1990-91, they used Rhoplex as a mud amendment. Sometimes it takes years of exposure to determine how effective an amendment will be. Maybe someday "the perfect" product will be invented. In the meantime we give it our best shot.

If you would like to help the PGM Mudslingers, call Jim Britton (480)827-8070 for more information.

Mesa Grande Open House

On March 28th we estimate that over 500 people had an early morning breakfast which was furnished by the Mesa Grande Alliance. More than 300 went on tours of the mound led by SWAT members. We were almost overwhelmed with so many wanting to sign up for tours.

We also had hands-on areas including a center where participants could use an atlatl to throw a spear, an area to throw Hohokam style sticks at metal rabbits, pottery making (below, with Glenn Dotson in charge), pump drills for making necklaces and something new this year (complements of JJ and Mike Golio) learning how to throw bolas (below, right). It was among the more popular activities.

Students from the Westwood High School International Studies Program demonstrated how to excavate and let others try their hand at it.



Our members helped at the SWAT table (above) introducing visitors to our organization and as a result SWAT received some new memberships. We appreciated all those members who helped with set up on Friday and during the day on Saturday.



Exhibition Team Projects

Jim Britton and Ed Mack have been working on a new setting for the Apache Gann dancer. Jim created a rock base for the dancer to stand on. Ed designed and made metal prickly pear cactus that appear to grow out of the rock. The rock height and the row of cactus are to provide a barrier to keep visitors from touching the dancer. This natural looking barrier replaces the old post and strap barrier.

The mammoth skeleton that currently stands in the lobby once stood on a platform next to the Southwest Gallery entrance. Museum staff decided to remove the empty platform and use the floor space below the mammoth mural for a 3-D mammoth puzzle. Vern Carpenter used his demolition talents to remove the cement and wood platform. The removal of this platform left large openings below the existing rock formation. Jim Britton and Ken Bennett will be filling these voids by extending the faux rock to the floor. The big challenge here will be to replicate and blend this addition with the existing rock surface.

Donna Bengé and Susan Wolfe are again in the puzzle business making T-Rex and triceratops puzzles for the Dinosaur Hall area. They have also been assisting

Margaret Barton (collection curator) by identifying and storing approximately 400 branding irons. Bert Strobl and Autumn Hall continue to work on various exciting projects. Another weekly task for the volunteer crew is to perform maintenance on all the exhibits. Areas that need weekly attention include the Mars hands-on displays and the prehistoric Hohokam pit house floor.

The copper mine in the courtyard was recently opened again after 15 barrels of pigeon droppings were removed by Tim Walters and Mike Keller. Volunteers stretched chicken wire over the top of the mine to keep the pigeons out and some of the rock areas were sealed by adding cement where needed. Others cleaned the interior exhibit cases and the rest of the mine. When a light fixture was removed in one of the exhibit cases, we noticed some fur above it and went to get a vacuum to clean it. But then the fur moved! It was a live cat. Then another cat showed up and they dropped down along the inside of the wall. We hope they have made it out of there!

Non-SWAT members currently working on various projects include, Frank Burianek, Brandon Wilhem, Tony Burnell, and Carol Mars.

SWAT Membership Is Due Now! Please Renew Today!

If you have not joined the Southwest Archaeology Team yet,
we invite you to do so now.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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This is a: New Membership Renewal Membership

- \$20 - Family Membership
- \$15 - Single or Individual Membership
- \$10 - Student Membership

Return to: Southwest Archaeology Team
P.O. Box 5368, Mesa, AZ 85211-5368

Southwest Archaeology Team

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Southwest Archaeology Team

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Ancient Echoes is the
newsletter of the Southwest
Archaeology Team, which is in
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