

NEVADA STATE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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FEBRUARY 2006

Pardon Our Progress

Your Museum Just Keeps Getting Better and Better

Major improvements continue at the Nevada State Museum. We're nearing the end of one round of construction and are about to start another. You'll experience inconveniences over the next year due to construction. We ask for your patience. We're confident you'll appreciate the end result. You'll enjoy improved access, appearances, and conveniences. The museum will remain open regular hours throughout construction.

Considerable facility upgrades were achieved in 2005. Restoration work on the historic Carson City Mint preserved the building and brought back original colors and floors. Remodeling work updated galleries in the main museum building. Air conditioning was improved. Long-term exhibits were renovated and made accessible to those with disabilities. Changing galleries were expanded and remodeled. These galleries were unveiled last fall with the opening of the well-received exhibit, "Art and the Animal." Contractors are now installing fire sprinklers in the main building.

Now we're moving into the second phase of improvements, highlighted by the construction of a connecting structure between the main building and north building. The glass corridor, stylizing a mine head frame at one end, will serve as a centerpiece, unifying the museum complex. A new passenger elevator will provide easy access to the mine and exhibits on the second floor. The structure adds exhibit space for large artifacts, such as vehicles. The museum store will gain space for more merchandise relating to Nevada's heritage.

Simultaneous with construction, the museum will offer new exhibits, beginning this early February with "Havens in a Heartless World," an exhibit on Virginia City saloon archaeology. The museum will maintain a full calendar of education programs and the usual special events, like the "Annual Carson City Mint Coin Show." Again, the museum remains open through construction.

Staff continue remodeling long-term exhibits. We're now focusing on ungrading exhibits on mint history and Nevada silver, including the spectacular *USS Neva-*

da silver service. These new exhibits will look better than ever before and meet accessibility requirements.

Plans are progressing on new natural history exhibits, relocated to the second floor. As portions open in the future, you'll once again see your favorite mounted animals, presented in more engaging ways than the old exhibits.

The award-winning *Under One Sky* exhibit will receive exciting additions. Once heating and cooling are repaired, a new exhibit on Native American baskets will open on the second floor balcony, featuring the famed Dat So La Lee baskets. Plans also call for incorporating select dioramas from past Native American exhibits. Development of the Anthropology Resource Center will occur on the second floor. The center will provide research and classroom space and house some of the museum's finest anthropology collections, available for viewing in regular "Behind the Scenes Tours."

All this remodeling of exhibits will improve appearances, interpretation, and accessibility. Relocating certain exhibits will make the museum less confusing for visitors. Visitors will find Nevada Native American exhibits and the Anthropology Resource Center in the north building. All Nevada history exhibits will center around the historic mint. The mint's second floor will house the Bretzlaff History Resource Center. All Nevada natural history exhibits will appear on the second floor along with the Natural History Resource Center. As a result, visitors will experience a more organized flow through exhibits.

You can see the museum is undergoing many changes. Construction will continue for another year. Remodeling exhibits will occur over the next two or three years. We're excited about the progress. We're confident you'll like the outcome. You'll see your favorite exhibits. But you'll also enjoy new experiences. Please be patient, and remember the museum is open. Come see the exhibits, participate in education programs, and watch the progress! — *By Jim Barmore, Museum Director*



The *Nevada State Museum Newsletter* is published quarterly in February, May, August and November by the Friends of NSM, for the benefit of museum members. This issue edited by Jack Gibson. Printed by Capitol City Press, Carson City. Please address all communications to Newsletter, Nevada State Museum, 600 N. Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701.

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Museum Director

Become a member and support the Nevada State Museum. Membership includes free admission to all seven state museums, a 15% discount in all museum stores, the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, newsletters, and selected invitations to exhibit openings, educational programs, and events.

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Other facilities included in your membership are:

- Nevada State Historical Society, Reno
- Nevada State Museum & Historical Society, Las Vegas
- Lost City Museum, Overton
- Nevada State Railroad Museum, Carson City
- Nevada State Railroad Museum, Boulder City
- East Ely Railroad Depot Museum

www.NevadaCulture.org

Views of the Past . . .



In 1952, Nevada Governor Charles H. Russell presented this painted glass Great Seal of the State of Nevada to the Nevada State Museum. This beautiful seal had hung in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. from ca. 1870 until 1952. Until recent remodels the seal hung in the lobby of the Nevada State Museum, and plans will be made to create a new display of this wonderful piece. The autograph inscription on the photo says "To the founder of the Nevada State Museum Judge Clark J. Guild from his son-in-law Charles H. Russell Governor."

News From the Department of Cultural Affairs Tells of Busy Year Ahead in the State

By Scott K. Sisco,

Interim Department Director

Although winter is now fully upon us, the staff at the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs isn't slowing down. In fact, we make it our goal to continue to provide cultural programming resources and education to Nevada residents and visitors year round.

Again this season the Carson City Railroad Museum and the Boulder City Railroad Museum hosted their annual Santa Train weekends. These events mark the 18th year for Carson City and the fourth for Boulder City. Both weekends, in Northern Nevada and in Southern Nevada, were extremely successful and it's heartening to see how the community has embraced this event and families are returning year after year.

Many thanks are in order for members of the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City, the Nevada State Railroad Museum volunteers and the Southern Nevada Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. It is these dedicated volunteers that make special events like the Santa Train possible.

The Nevada State Library and Archives hosted their Festival of Trees for the second year. Fully decorated trees, wreaths and other holiday craft items were held for silent auction. The festival helps support the Nevada State Library and Archives Joseph Anderson Exhibit Gallery which displays artwork by local and regional artists as well as keeps the original copy of Nevada State Constitution on permanent display. With the success of this second event, the State Library hopes to make the Festival of Trees a permanent part of their fundraising efforts.

Beginning in January, the Nevada State Museum in Carson City and the State Historic Preservation Office are teaming up to present an exciting exhibit about the saloons of Virginia City's Comstock era. *Havens in a Heartless World—Virginia City's Saloons and the Archaeology of the Wild West*, will be on display from January through April at the State Museum in Carson City. This exhibit features remarkable artifacts, historic photographs, lithographs and documents from Comstock saloon life.

This exhibit aims to correct long held stereotypes and provide visitors with a new view of these famous western institutions. Some of the exhibit's most important artifacts include the world's oldest Tabasco Sauce bottle, a two-foot tall ceramic carbon water filter from London, altered coins placed beneath the floor boards of the African American saloon to serve as a ritual blessing, and a wide assortment of bottles, gaming devices, plates, glasses and other objects associated with saloon life.

The Nevada Arts Council has been hard at work gathering nominations for the Governor's Arts Awards. They diligently reviewed applications for individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the arts in Nevada throughout the years. Winners have been chosen and will be announced later this winter with an awards ceremony to follow in the spring.

We hope everyone enjoys all the offerings of the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs this winter. We look forward to providing innovative and exciting cultural programs throughout the upcoming year.

Official Nevada Quarter Souvenir

The official limited-edition Nevada Quarter souvenir will be on sale in the museum stores in the division after the official release date of January 31, 2006. This beautiful reminder features mint-quality quarters from both the Denver and Philadelphia mints. The quarters will be set in a printed insert with a numbered Certificate of Authenticity signed by State Treasurer Brian K. Krolicki. Included is a folding display stand and envelope to hold the quarter set. The set will be sold for \$5.50. Only 3,000 of these unique collector's sets will be available. We received a generous \$3,000 donation from Nevada State Bank to help fund the quarter souvenir sets.

On Display Through April

Virginia City Saloon Archaeology On Display in Changing Gallery

(In partnership with the State Historic Preservation office, the Nevada State Museum presents *Havens in a Heartless World* through April 28, 2006 in the Changing Gallery.)

By **RON JAMES**

State Historic Preservation Officer

Havens in a Heartless World is an exhibit that captures the excitement of the Wild West for the public. Using dozens of remarkable artifacts and several dozen historic photographs, lithographs, and documents, the exhibit brings the saloon to life, correcting the stereotypes and providing visitors with a new view of this famous, western institution.

Some of the exhibit's more important artifacts include the oldest Tabasco Sauce bottle, a two-foot-tall ceramic carbon water filter from London, altered coins placed beneath the floor boards of the African American saloon to serve as a ritual blessing, and a wide assortment of bottles, gaming devices, plates, glasses, and other objects associated with saloon life.

A virtual exhibit of saloon artifacts and associated illustrations will eventually appear on the Nevada Humanities website as part of its Nevada Online Encyclopedia. The virtual exhibit will allow for an elaboration of key themes and

the presentation of additional artifacts and documents. The Online Encyclopedia will allow the exhibit to reach the widest possible audience.

The saloon of the Wild West is an icon that captured the imagination of generations of Americans. From gunfights in dime novels to brawls in movies, the saloon provided a setting for stories about a young nation's conquest of the frontier. The saloon's importance to the West is clear, but its role was more complex than the cliché.

Between 1993 and 2001, archaeologists excavated the remains of four saloons in Virginia City, Nevada. An Irish pub, a shooting gallery and saloon, an African American-owned establishment, and a saloon associated with one of the west's most famous opera houses give us a chance to peer into real saloons from the past.

Virginia City, with riches that inspired the television series *Bonanza*, played a pivotal role in defining the West. Its residents invented industrial hardrock mining and the infrastructure required to exploit remote deposits of mineral wealth. Virginia City's saloons formed a cornerstone of society, not as arenas for deadly showdowns between ruffians, but as centers of society and commerce.

Coming Events

February 28—*The Reno Divorce Trade*, by Mella Harmon, curator of history at the Nevada Historical Society.

March 28—*Saloons and the Wild West: Reality Comes Home to Virginia City*, by Ronald M. James, State Historical Preservation Officer, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office.

April 25—*Nevada Centennial Ranch & Farm Program*, by Terri McBride, archaeologist, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office.

May 23—*Operation Indian Rocks and the Archaeological Resource Protection Act*, by Tim Canady, Lead Archaeologist for the Bureau of Land Management, Klamath Falls Resource Area in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

These programs are part of the Museum's Frances Humphrey evening lecture series held on the Fourth Tuesday of every month from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. There is no charge for the programs. The Loftin Park entrance on the north side of the museum complex will be used for programs. For more information call 687-4819, ext. 239.

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NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

February 8—*Railroad Rhythms*, by The Little Toots.

March 8—*The Military Railway Service in World War II and Korea*, by Frank Ackerman.

April 12—*Water and Timber to the Comstock, An Uphill Ride*, by Stanley Paher

May 10—*Altoona at Work: An Era of Steam*, by Peter Barton.



Carbon Water Filter on display

Marjorie Russell Clothing Center Making Progress

Have you see our website? It is getting better and better. We now have a new virtual exhibit featuring our wedding dress collection with 24 wedding gowns available for your perusal. Mary Ellen Klette, our photographer, does a marvelous job mounting each gown, steaming them and then photographing the entire gown, followed by detail close-up shots. They are absolutely stunning.

Sandy Marshall is a former archaeologist and public historian and her job is to analyze each artifact. By that I mean, she identifies the style of the bodice, the cut of the skirt, the name for the sleeve, and she is even able to identify types of lace, which is the most difficult of all. Sandy has learned the art of fiber identification by doing a burn test. This procedure involves taking a small (very small) piece of yarn from the gown and holding it up to a match and observing whether it ignites (possibly cotton, linen or rayon), fuses and melts (possibly acetate), curls away from the flames (silk) or smells like burning hair (wool).

Diane Underwood is our computer expert and she incorporates the photographs and the cataloging data into a computer record in Past Perfect. She then builds each virtual exhibit, which involves selecting background colors, placing each image in a certain place and order and incorporating the text. Diane works with DCA webmaster Cheryl Mathwig to add each new virtual exhibit to the website.

Our newest (and youngest) worker to the Center is intern Kirsten Hamann. Kirsten graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in history, and she has experience in costume design for the theatre. She is working on cataloging the men's collection. This is perhaps the most challenging project because nineteenth and twentieth century menswear is fairly similar. So Kirsten is learning to identify fiber and fabric.

I am so proud of this dynamic group of co-workers! They are hardworking and enthusiastic and all of us mesh together to produce a database of costumes and textile information as well as a continually expanding website.—Jan Lovern, Director Marjorie Russell Clothing Center



Our wedding dress virtual exhibit is now available online. Shown in the photo are Sandra Marshall, left, and Kirsten Hamann, right. At the far head of the tale is Jan Lovern.—Visit the Clothing Center at Nevadaculture.org—Photo by Mary Ellen Klette

After-school Programs Make Learning Fun

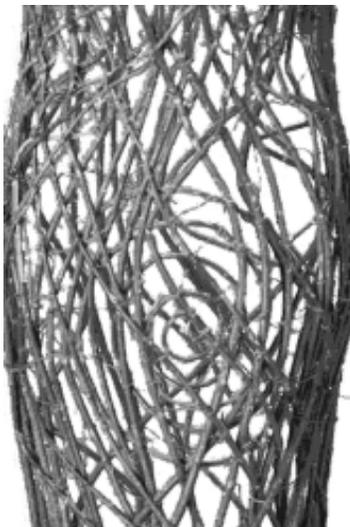
Thirty budding scientists in grades 1-4 from the Science Club at Bethlehem Lutheran School are enjoying after-school explorations in botany, zoology and geology. The students have scheduled to visit the museum from 3:00-4:25 p.m. two Thursdays each month from January-March, 2006. Beginning with *Pines Are Fine* and *Wild and Wonderful Wetlands*, the students studied the interrelationships between people and animals, utilizing important resources such as pinenuts, cattails and tule.

Each educational program includes a science lesson and an art activity or project to take home. The museum encourages students to continue the learning experience at home by sharing hand-outs and engaging in discussion with parents and siblings. This month, the Science Club will discover how *Bird Beaks and Feet* are adapted to the environment in which they live, and have *Fun with Butterflies*, by exploring their life cycle, colorful wing designs, and amazing migrations. The students will investigate *Minerals and Mining* and enjoy *Fun with Fossils* in March.

"It's so satisfying to see a youngster's eyes light up and realize that they have fallen in love with science and the natural world," said Curator of Education Deborah Stevenson. "The ability to inspire curiosity is what keeps education volunteers, like Dian Teigler, motivated to research and design new science programs to complement the school curriculum."

New volunteers are always needed. Call 775-687-4810 ext. 237 for more information.

Coming in May . . .



Interwoven Visions of the Great Basin Basketmakers will showcase beautiful and contemporary art baskets by many of the region's finest basketry artists May 12 through August 7, 2006. As well as their wonderful creations, GBB guild members will offer workshops and demonstrations, and the museum will host two basketry related lectures. Weaving shown is by Mary Lee Fulkerson. More details in the next issue.

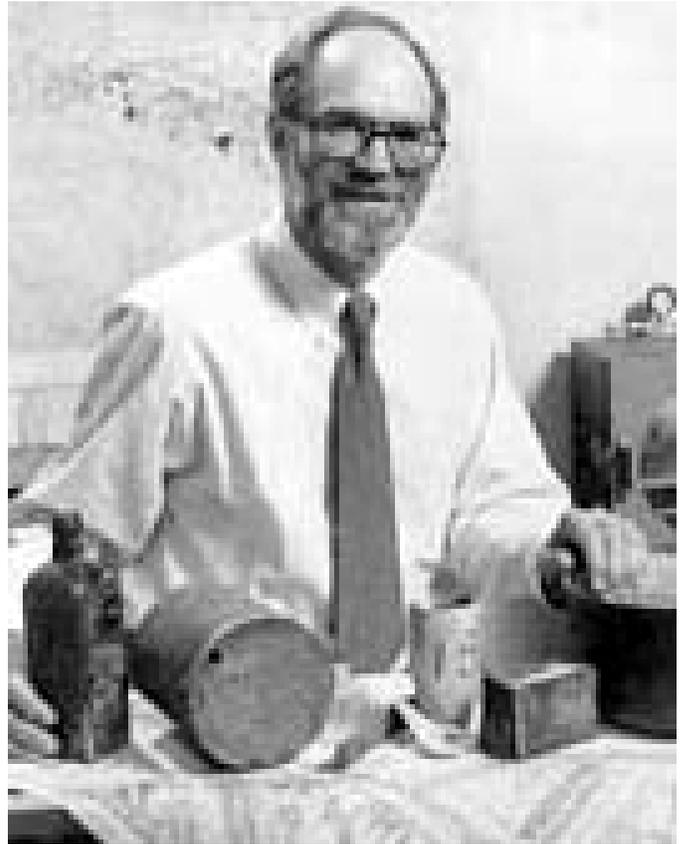


Tootsie Dick Basket Added To Museum's Collection

The Anthropology Program at the Nevada State Museum recently acquired a rare Washoe basket woven by Tootsie Dick in 1915 to add to its nationally recognized Washoe Basketry collection. Ms. Dick is also known as Tootsie Dick Sam, however NSM chooses to use the name Tootsie Dick as it is the convention used by Dr. Marvin Cohodas, foremost expert on Washoe Basketry. The acquisition of this important basket fills a major gap in the museum's collection of documented Washoe basketry. This particular Tootsie Dick basket is a *Degikup* which refers to a Washoe, globular-shaped willow basket, and is decorated with bracken fern root and redbud fibers. The basket has two elaborate geometric designs and is fairly large (14-1/2" diameter X 7-1/4" high.)

A contemporary of well known Washoe basket maker, Dat So La Lee, Mrs. Dick was from Coleville, California. She was one of only three Washoe weavers, including Dat So La Lee and Scees Bryant, who Abe Cohn of Carson City's *Indian Emporium* promoted as the finest Washoe weavers. When famed photographer Edward S. Curtis visited the area in 1925, he photographed and later published a print of Tootsie Dick's baskets, although he failed to identify her as the weaver.

The museum's basketry collection is used for exhibits, education and outreach, and research. Soon after its purchase, the Tootsie Dick basket was used to identify the maker of a Washoe basket for an early-day Carson Valley family. There are plans to display the museum's new basket and selections of other Native American basketry in upcoming temporary and long term exhibits, following remodeling activities at the museum. In the meantime, this basket and other Native American baskets can be seen in the museum's monthly Behind the Scenes Tours. Please call (775) 687-4810 ext. 237 to reserve a spot on a tour, or contact Eugene Hattori, Curator of Anthropology, at (775) 687-4810 ext. 230 for further information on the museum's collection. Behind the Scenes Tours are on the last Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Tour participants can also enjoy a demonstration of the historic Carson City Mint Coin Press No. 1 which is scheduled to follow both the morning and afternoon tours.



Donald L. Hardesty

Board Member Gets Prestigious National Archaeological Award

Professor Donald L. Hardesty received the J.C. Harrington Award in historical archaeology at the 2006 Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) at the annual meeting in Sacramento. Professor Hardesty has been affiliated with the Department of Cultural Affairs since 1977. He served on the State Historic Preservation Office Advisory Board from 1977-1993 and the Board of Museums and History from 1993-present. He is currently the Chairman of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Nevada, Reno.

J.C. Harrington (1901-1988) was one of the founders of North American historical archaeology. The award acknowledges the recipient's lifetime achievements in the field of historical archaeology. A symposium at the SHA meetings was held honoring Professor Hardesty. Among the speakers in the symposium was Eugene Hattori, Curator of Anthropology, who has known Professor Hardesty since his arrival at UNR in 1968 as both teacher and, later, colleague and friend. Donald Hardesty is familiar to many of us as the author of *The Archaeology of the Donner Party* published by the University of Nevada in 1997. This book is on sale in the Museum Store.

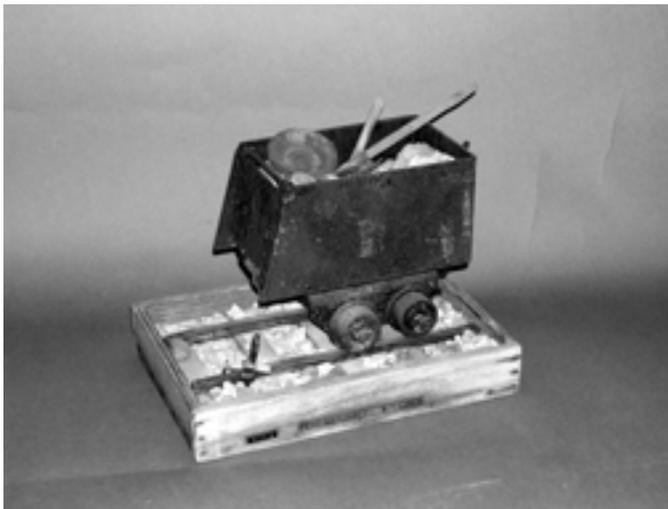
Friends visiting? Bring them to your Museum to view Nevada's past!

Appeal Writer, Photographer Visit



Jarid Shipley, staff writer, and Chad Lundquist, photographer, visited the Nevada State Museum on Sunday, January 15, to do a story for the Nevada Appeal that was printed the following morning. Jack Gibson took them on a tour of the museum .

Mining Models



The Nevada State Museum was able to purchase 21 models of historic mining equipment with a special appropriation from the Nevada Legislature. These scale models were created by John C. Falkowski and include dioramas of stamp mills, square set timbering, the Chollar Mine entrance and various pieces of mining equipment. The models will be used for exhibit and education. Shown is a model of an ore car on tracks complete with pick, shovel, gold pan and miner's candle.

Message from the Museum Director, Jim Barmore

Thanks for supporting the *Annual Appeal 2005!* The fund drive began in December. The museum needed help covering increasing costs for exhibits, education programs, and collection activities. The response was tremendous. As of early January, the museum received seventy-five contributions. More are arriving daily.

Donations are necessary for maintaining programs and services. They are critical. But, they represent more than financial support. They signify endorsement of the museum's mission. Thanks for your generosity and vote of support!

Contributors as of January 13, 2006:

Shelly & Jay Aldean	Earl M. Hill
John & Elenie Antonsen	Robert Kautz, Kautz Environmental Consultants, Inc.
Ms. Lavina H. Atkinson	Kara Kelley & Paul Larsen
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thank all those who have shown
their support for its projects.

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