

SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Chapter of Colorado Archaeological Society



FIELD TRIP REPORT

Date: **January 31 – February 4, 2013**

Destination: **Missions and Forts of Southern Arizona**

Leaders: **Gail and Marlo Schulz**

Number of Participants: **16**

Sixteen SJBAS members took a break from Durango cold and snow to enjoy a bit warmer weather in Tucson AZ. Gail and Marlo Schulz led "Missions and Forts of Southern Arizona." Special thanks go to Beverly Danielson who provided vital assistance in choosing restaurants and making reservations for the group. Special thanks also go to former SJBAS member Gail LaDage who gave us a great referral for touring the Laboratory of Tree Ring Research on the University of Arizona campus.

Our first stop was the Arizona State Museum on the University of Arizona campus where we viewed 150 choice specimens from the museum's 20,000 whole-vessel collection of pottery from the American Southwest and Northern Mexico. We also viewed part of the collection on display in the pottery vault through viewing windows and on computer screens. These pots were stunningly beautiful, unique examples of the extensive pottery-making technology of the American Southwest and Northern Mexico. We were given a very informative tour of the "Paths of Life: American Indians of the Southwest" exhibit representing the history, culture, origins and lifeways of 10 Native cultures. Special emphasis was placed on five cultures in this area: Yaqui, Tohono O'Odham, Apache, Navajo and Hopi.

We toured the Laboratory of Tree Ring Research (LTRR) at the University of Arizona with Dr. Jeffrey S. Dean, Professor Emeritus, as our very gracious and knowledgeable guide. The LTRR was established in 1937 by A. E. Douglass, who founded the modern science of dendrochronology. The LTRR website states: "The Tree-Ring Lab is recognized worldwide as a preeminent center for the advancement of tree-ring techniques and the broad application of dendrochronology in the social and environmental sciences." The lab is located under the U of AZ football stadium and is in the process of moving to a new state of the art building funded by the widow of Emil Haury, who was one of the finest archaeologists of the Southwest. We were awed by the vast number of wood samples on shelves and in boxes, in several rooms, from all over the world. We learned that the results of evaluations are stored, not on computers, but on index cards in a card file a room away from the wood samples. We saw sample boxes from sites in our area and learned that the oldest date from our area is 332 BC at the Falls Creek Rock Shelter. The lab, through the study of evidence of fire on long-lived trees, has been instrumental in convincing the Forest Service that fire has been a natural, frequent and beneficial occurrence for millennia, and that our fire suppression practices have led to the large, devastating fires we now face every year.

We toured the Mission San Xavier del Bac, just south of Tucson, also known as "The White Dove of the Desert", with a wonderful guide who told us so much about the history of the Jesuit Father Eusebio Kino who founded so many missions in the Pimeria Alta, the "upper land of the Pimas". This lovely mission was completed in 1797 by the Franciscans, and still serves the Tohono O'Odham people as a parish church. The interior of the church has been lovingly, painstakingly restored by highly trained art conservators from Italy. Restoration and conservation of the exterior of the mission

continues. The paintings and statues in the church were visual aids the Franciscans used to teach the native people about their religion.

Then we moved on to Tubac for a more modern historical event, the Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts annual collectors car show featuring around 500 cars displayed at the Tubac Golf Resort. Okay, so this is Marlo's favorite event. The girls explored Tubac while the guys enjoyed the car show. We drove to Tumacacori to visit the Tumacacori National Historical Park. This park preserves the sites and remains of three of Father Eusebio Kino's missions, Calabazas, Guevavi and Tumacacori. Another wonderful guide gave us a great tour and explained the history, construction and later uses of the Tumacacori mission. In 1801 Franciscan Friar Narciso Gutierrez began construction of the beautiful church that remains in ruins at Tumacacori. Construction was nearly completed in 1828 when the Mexican government expelled all Spanish-born priests leaving the church in the care of the Papago governor of Tumacacori, Ramon Pamplona. In 1844 the Mexican government declared the lands of the Tumacacori village abandoned, in spite of the Papagos who remained there, and sold the lands at auction. President Roosevelt established the Tumacacori National Monument in 1908.

Our last tour, with another wonderful guide, was of the Barrio de Tubac Archaeological Preserve and the Presidio de San Ignacio de Tubac. The Presidio was founded in 1752 and is the first presidio and the first permanent European settlement in what is now Arizona. The Barrio de Tubac was located with the assistance of a detailed map drawn by Joseph de Urrutia in December 1766 and January 1767. The map was in great detail and very accurately depicted the location of the ruins of the buildings located in archaeological excavations in the 1980s and early 1990s. The Presidio site features an underground glassed-in exhibit of the actual foundation of the presidio and showcases some of the artifacts found on the site.

- Prepared by Gail Schulz

Participants: Gail and Marlo Schulz, Letha and Bill Cagle, Stephanie and Curtis Matthews, Kathleen and Jim Shadell, Bev and Bob Danielson, Bill Belkengren, Steven Zwick, Lydine and Tom Hannula, Beverly and John Moore