

SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Chapter of Colorado Archaeological Society



FIELD TRIP REPORT

Date: **January 21 – 24, 2016**

Destination: **Exploring Cochise County**

Leader: **Gail Schulz**

Number of Participants: **17**

From January 21st through 24th, seventeen SJBAS members enjoyed warmer weather and no snow in southern Arizona while exploring Cochise County. We spent Friday January 22nd, at the Amerind Museum east of Benson AZ just off I-10 in Texas Canyon. Chief Curator and Deputy Director Eric Kaldahl, PhD, spent the morning with us telling us about the founding of the Amerind, showing us the Amerind's extensive library, pointing out exhibits of special interest in the museum and teaching us about a selection of artifacts pulled specifically from collections to further explain the Southwestern cultures of this area. After his presentation, we explored the museum and art gallery at our leisure.

The Amerind Museum was founded by William Shirley Fulton in 1937 as a private, non-profit archaeological research institution. Mr. Fulton became enamored of the archaeology and cultures of the American Southwest through his many visits to the West from his home in New England. He became interested in excavation when he found a small ancient pot, still intact after several hundred years, on his ranch in Texas Canyon. He worked with Emil Haury, PhD, who was an influential archaeologist associated with the University of Arizona in Tucson AZ, to expand his knowledge and conduct excavations of the American Southwest and the Mexican Northwest cultures. Mr. Fulton hired archaeologists recommended by Dr. Haury, one of whom, Charles C. Di Peso, PhD, became the first professional director of the Amerind Foundation in 1952. Di Peso remained at the foundation for 30 years and conducted intensive excavations at Casas Grandes (Paquime) from 1959 through 1962. These excavations were entirely funded by Mr. Fulton. Di Peso published a highly detailed, very comprehensive eight volume report on these excavations. Di Peso conducted many excavations in the Southwest, and although his conclusions were sometimes controversial, his work helped to confirm that the cultural regions of the American Southwest extended far south of the Mexican border. After Di Peso died in 1982 the Amerind Foundation changed course and instead of focusing primarily on the Amerind's field research programs, developed the museum to the point that it was opened to the public in 1985. Today the Amerind Museum exhibits document the stories of America's first peoples from Alaska to South America and from the last Ice Age to the present. Special events and educational programs focusing most frequently on Native cultures are a hallmark of the Amerind. The excellent Fulton-Hayden Memorial Art Gallery focuses on Western art and features contemporary Native American art. The museum also houses an excellent bookstore with books on prehistory, history and Native American cultures and fine quality Southwestern arts and crafts. Beautiful Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings designed by noted Tucson architect Merritt Starkweather, house the museum and art gallery, which are nestled in the spectacular rock formations and scenery of Texas Canyon.

Following our visit to the Amerind Museum we drove a few miles southeast to visit the Dragoon Springs Butterfield Stage Station ruins from 1858 and four Confederate graves from 1862. The stage station was a swing station where teams were changed quickly and the stage continued on its way. It operated until 1861 when the Civil War broke out and nearly all military troops were withdrawn from the western frontier. This southern mail route was abandoned for a safer northern route. The four Confederate soldiers who lost their lives were part of General Sherrod Hunter's command from Tucson sent out to gather cattle near the abandoned stage station in May 1862. The foraging party was attacked by Apaches led by Cochise and Francisco. Most of the soldiers escaped but they lost these four soldiers and left behind most of their horses and mules. These four Confederate soldiers were the most westerly battle deaths of the Civil War and the only ones to occur in what is now modern Arizona. The graves are maintained and decorated by the Sons of Confederate Veterans.



Saturday January 23rd, we spent the day in Ramsey Canyon just south of Sierra Vista AZ in the Huachuca Mountains. We started the day in The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve which is located along Ramsey Creek, a key tributary to the San Pedro River. The Preserve is the first Natural Landmark designated by the U.S. National Park Service. The canyon was settled in the 1880s and until the late 1920 was home to around 100 people. Gardner Ramsey constructed a toll road through the canyon to provide access to the Hamburg copper mine. The mining community of Hamburg was located in the canyon and was granted a post office in 1906. A cabin and a house built by John James in 1902 and 1911 respectively, remain in the canyon, as well as evidence of rock walls, orchards and other buildings throughout the canyon. The canyon is a haven for Coues whitetail deer, Gould's turkeys, 15 species of hummingbirds, many species of birds and butterflies, coatis, ringtail cats and the occasional black bear. Elegant Trogons are also seen in the canyon. Giant Arizona Sycamores line Ramsey Creek. One immense specimen has been tree-ring dated to about 1760. The Preserve is located at the interface of the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts, the Sierra Madres and the Rocky Mountains. The Huachuca Mountains, known as "sky islands" because they are isolated mountain ranges surrounded by desert, have very diverse habitat, plants and animals. Some of us wandered the canyon bottom along Ramsey Creek and visited remains of the early settlements while others hiked to The Overlook high above the canyon bottom to view the upper canyon and Ramsey Peak.

Our next stop along Ramsey Canyon Road was Brown Canyon Ranch which was first settled around 1880 by John Thomas Brown. Brown owned a hotel in neighboring Ramsey Canyon. The Brown Canyon Ranch House is a restored, historic four-room adobe ranch house built between 1905 and 1907 by later owners of the ranch, James and Tom Haverty. In the following years the ranch was owned and operated by several different families. The last owners were the Barchas family who raised livestock on the land until 1997. In 1998 the ranch was deeded to the U.S. Forest Service in a land exchange. The Friends of Brown Canyon Ranch, a group of dedicated volunteers, works with the U.S. Forest Service to preserve the ranch and to tell its story through photos, stories and exhibits in the ranch house. Other structures include a one-room adobe storeroom adjacent to the house, corrals, outhouse, remnants of a stone barn and two man-made ponds which provide habitat for the Chiricahua leopard frog. The Brown Canyon Cemetery is located up the trail. Further up the trail are the remains of the Pomono Mine and an old house. The historic Brown Canyon Ranch gives a view into the early settlements and ranches of the San Pedro Valley and the everyday lives of the hardy people who settled here.

After our visit to Brown Canyon Ranch we moved back up Ramsey Canyon to the Arizona Folklore Preserve to attend a musical performance titled "Arizona Characters I Have Known" by Dolan Ellis, Arizona's Official State Balladeer for the past 50 years. This statement from the AFP website describes their mission and purpose: "The Arizona Folklore Preserve: Where Arizona's songs, legends, poetry, and myths are collected, presented for audiences of today, and preserved for the enrichment of future generations." The AFP was founded by Dolan Ellis for this purpose and opened in June 1996. Performances

were in the small 1920's ranch house called the Moffett House, named for the family who had owned it. Dolan partnered with the University of Arizona South to build the current theater in 2000. Partnership with the U of A South ensures the continued existence of the AFP. Dolan Ellis is the Artist-in-Residence and performs one weekend a month at the AFP. The other weekends of each month a great variety of very talented Western music artists perform. We wanted to take our SJBAS members to hear this specific performance by Dolan because his songs tell so much of the history of not only early Arizona characters, mining, railroads and settlements, but also touch on Casa Grande and the Hohokam culture and the Chiricahua Apaches, which special emphasis on Geronimo. Dolan is one of the original New Christy Minstrels and his powerful voice and 12 string guitar can be heard on their recordings.

Sunday January 24, we traveled to the Turquoise Valley Golf, RV Resort and Restaurant in Naco AZ for a breakfast buffet and presentation on the Chiricahua Apaches by Becky Orozco. The golf course encompasses Greenbush Draw which is one of several important Clovis mammoth sites in the San Pedro River Valley. Becky is the history and anthropology instructor for Cochise College. Becky's presentation covered the history of the various Apache bands in the Arizona and New Mexico territories and their movements and interactions with other Native populations, Mexican soldiers and settlers, discovery of silver and copper and the influx of miners, U. S. soldiers and settlers. Excellent power point slides accompanied her presentation. She explained how and when the Apache Wars began and how they were perpetuated as well as how the withdrawal of U.S. soldiers from the West during the Civil War impacted relations with the Apaches. She detailed the lives and character of well-known Apache leaders and U.S. military officers involved throughout the era of the Apache Wars. It was a fascinating presentation and it really helped to pull together things we had learned in the previous two days at the Amerind Museum and the Arizona Folklore Preserve. Following a lively question and answer period we left the restaurant for a tour of the neighborhoods of Bisbee with Becky.



Becky first took us to the neighborhood of Warren located southeast of Old Bisbee. Warren was the first planned community in Arizona. Warren was founded in 1905 to be a residential community for higher ranking members of the Bisbee copper mining district. The town was laid out in a plan like Washington D.C. Many of the beautiful Arts and Crafts style bungalow homes are on the historic register. There are even a few mansions. Vista Park is centrally located and adjacent to the once thriving downtown area. Becky is very involved in the Friends of the Warren Ballpark volunteer association dedicated to the restoration and promotion of the oldest professional ball park in Arizona, established in 1909. She took us to the ballpark and told us a bit of the history of the teams that have played there and the rules by which they played. Each year the Arizona Territories Vintage Base Ball League, wearing vintage uniforms, plays a tournament at the ball park by 1860s

rules, which are quite different from current regulations.

Next Becky took us to the neighborhood of Lowell, founded in 1880 during the early days of copper mining in the Bisbee district. Most of the town site was consumed by the development of the Lavender Pit mine in the 1950s. Part of Erie Street remains and it is a scene from the 1940s and 50s. Numerous old vehicles have been restored and reside in front of the mostly vacant store fronts on Erie Street. Lowell sits on the east end of the Lavender Pit and we drove around it to the north side of the Lavender Pit where Becky provided a bit of the mining history and techniques used. We then drove through Old Bisbee to the Cochise County Courthouse located on Quality Hill near the top of Tombstone Canyon. The courthouse is in the Art Deco style and was completed in 1931. The county seat was moved from Tombstone to Bisbee in 1929 when silver mining and population declined in Tombstone. The courthouse is an elegant structure featuring beautiful, tall, bronze cast, Art Deco style front doors. The Art Inventories Catalog, Smithsonian American Art Museums published this description of the doors: "Pair of door grilles depicts identical figures of Justice as a female figure in a long garment. She leans on a downward pointing sword with both hands resting on top of the handle. Rays emanate from the figure. The piece is geometric and Art Deco in style." Our last stop with Becky was downtown Old Bisbee in front of the Bisbee Mining Museum. Becky pointed out many of the prominent buildings in the area and told a bit about their history and current use and answered questions for us. At this point, some of us were distracted by the prospect of food and the Denver Broncos playoff game so we split up with some who had never seen the wonderful Bisbee Mining Museum touring it and others opting for ice cream. Our last activity for the day for some of us was a short trip to Whitewater Draw to view the Sandhill cranes. Winds were high so the cranes were mostly settled on the water or the land surrounding it. We didn't see the huge flocks coming in from feeding to land for the night as we usually do. Still we saw and heard large numbers of cranes on the water so it was worth the drive. It was a beautiful end to three very full days of learning, laughter and conversation.

Prepared by: Gail Schulz