



TRACKS, FALL 2012: VOLUME 24 NO. 3

MUSEUM INFORMATION

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OUR MISSION

The Sam Noble Museum at the University of Oklahoma inspires minds to understand the world through collection-based research, interpretation, and education.

OUR VISION

As one of the finest museums, we are at the heart of our community, collectively working to inspire understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of the earth and its peoples.

TRACKS

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Henry Peter Shelton (U.S. 1929) Sun Kachina (1972) from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection. PHOTO Jen Tregarthen

Thanks to our Corporate Benefactors:











From the Director



Dear Friends,

We are entering a new era. In the last year we have said farewell to five outstanding staff. Drs. Wyckoff, Vitt and Caldwell retired in 2011 and Dr. Schnell retired Aug. 31. Combined they offered more than 150 years of experience and expertise to our research and collections. Associate Director Peter Tirrell also recently retired. Each played an important role in research, as well as in our outstanding collections, permanent exhibits, and education and public programs. Each contributed to the development of the facility we are housed in today. Staff members contribute to the greatness of the museum and as they move on, they leave very big shoes to fill.

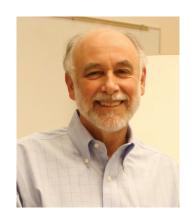
This fall, we are proud to be one of the venues on campus to display works of art from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection. Dancers and Deities and Southwest Visions highlight some of the very special pieces from the collection. The kachina exhibit is the finest I have ever seen and I hope all of you will visit this magnificent display. Gifted to OU in 2010, the collection continues to grow from Mr. Bialac's passion and dedication to Native art.

A Gathering of Traditions is a very special centennial celebration. Made possible by the Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma, this exhibit recognizes the life and work of Dr. Charles Marius Barbeau, a Canadian anthropologist. Dr. Barbeau documented the culture and language of the Wyandotte and Seneca-Cayuga tribal nations in 1911-1912. This exhibit, done in collaboration with the Canadian Museum of Civilization, recognizes the significance and special place Barbeau holds with the tribes.

The museum's educational programs continue to be highly successful. This year, 19,986 school children participated in programs to date.The Whitten-Newman Foundation ExplorOlogy® Program visited a new site in Black Mesa this summer. Designed to offer high school and junior high students a life-changing field experience in science, ExplorOlogy® has served more than 17.000 statewide since 2007.

On behalf of everyone at the museum, I thank you for your continued support. I hope you have enjoyed the programs and exhibits this year as much as we have enjoyed bringing them to you. We look forward to seeing you at the Sam Noble Museum!

Museum Bids Farewell to Associate Director, Peter Tirrell



BY JEN TREGARTHEN, PUBLIC RELATIONS

a ssociate Director Peter Tirrell celebrated his retirement from the Sam Noble Museum with a reception Aug. 31. After 36 years of managing the exhibits, education and facility operations of the museum, Tirrell is now ready to begin his next adventure.

Tirrell began his career at the museum in 1976 as head of education. "Someday this place will be great!" he recalled stating when telling his family of his new role in Oklahoma. When the doors opened for the first time at the new Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History in 2000, Tirrell knew his vision had come true.

During his tenure at the museum, Tirrell established a grant-funded series of traveling exhibits and outreach programs, which currently has reached more than 7

million people in 20 states and internationally in Canada. Additionally, he took part in establishing the Museum Studies Program Online with the University of Oklahoma College of Liberal Studies.

He has served in the museum field as president of the Mountain-Plains Museums Association and of the Association of College and University Museums and Galleries and as a board member of the American Association of Museums.

He recently was awarded the Hugo G. Rodek Award for Excellence for service to the Mountain-Plains Museums Association and the museum profession. Among additional awards, he is the recipient of the Kenneth E. Cook Faculty Award from the OU College of Liberal Studies and the Regents' Award for Service Beyond the Call from the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History.

While Tirrell plans to continue teaching as an adjunct professor in the Museum Studies Program at OU, he has nested away some time to play his steel guitar, restore his antique vehicles, and work with the North American Falconry and the Archives of Falconry.

"Peter has had an extraordinary career at the Sam Noble Museum over four decades. He is among the most respected museum professionals anywhere and has played a major role in the museum's success," said museum director Michael Mares.



Top Right: Peter Tirrell during retirement celebration Right: Peter Tirrell with Falcon



Black Mesa, 2012

ExplorOlogy®: A Summer Review

BY JES COLE, EXPLOROLOGY

tudents and teachers from across Oklahoma had the opportunity to join Sam Noble Museum scientists in the field this year. The Whitten-Newman ExplorOlogy® Program provides Oklahomans with authentic science opportunities through residential field programs and outreach education to schools statewide.

Since its establishment in 2007 through a partnership between the Sam Noble Museum and the Whitten-Newman Foundation, the program has served more than 17,000 participants in its core programs. Through generous funding from the Whitten-Newman Foundation, there is no cost to participants.

"It is amazing the kinds of changes we see in the students," said program coordinator Jes Cole. "It's like a door has opened for them. Science becomes more than a book, more than a classroom. Science is everywhere and they have the ability to explore it."

For the first time this summer, students visited Black Mesa, Oklahoma's highest elevation point. They assisted scientists from the Sam Noble Museum and Oklahoma State University with the excavation site, which is believed to be a new fossil bed. After six hours of digging, the students discovered fossils belonging to a long-necked sauropod, believed to be from the late Jurassic era, 150 million years ago. The students camped at Black Mesa State Park and enjoyed hiking to the top of the mesa and viewing the unique local wildlife.

"When I think of science now, I don't see a classroom anymore. I see a field of opportunities," said Laura Gray, a Paleo Expedition student from Broken Arrow High School.

Additional information about the Whitten-Newman Foundation ExplorOlogy® Program can be found online at www.explorology.snomnh.ou.edu.





Above: Nicholas Stark, OSA, 2012

Right: Laura Gray, Rick Otto and Kristin Harry-Cooper, Paleo Explorers, 2012

Far Right: Paleo Explorers, 2012, Black Mesa



A Gathering of Traditions: A Centennial Celebration of Dr. Charles Marius Barbeau in Oklahoma

BY JEN TREGARTHEN, PUBLIC RELATIONS

A Gathering of Traditions, celebrating the centennial fieldwork undertaken by Dr. Charles Marius Barbeau, a Canadian ethnographer who traveled to Oklahoma to research Native Americans, is on display at the Sam Noble Museum thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Wyandotte Nation and support from the Sam Noble Museum, University of Oklahoma and the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Ottawa.

Barbeau is widely recognized as a pioneer in the fields of anthropology and folklore studies. In 1911, he traveled from the National Museum of Canada to Oklahoma to study the Wyandotte Nation and Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma, distant cousins of the Hurons of Lorette, in Ouebec.

Like most Oklahomans, the citizens of the Wyandotte Nation are the children of immigrants, whose travels spanned from their traditional homeland on the eastern shore of Lake Huron in Ontario, Canada, to villages in Michigan, Ohio, Kansas and Oklahoma.

While in Oklahoma, Barbeau studied the traditions of the tribes, recording their languages, incorporating their songs and stories in his research, and taking many photographs. He also purchased many items belonging to the tribes to take back to the National Museum of Canada. A particular focus of his efforts in Oklahoma was documenting traditional stories. In 1915, these were published in a book titled *Huron and Wyandot Mythology*.

The narratives told by Wyandotte elders and gathered by Barbeau testified to the nation's culture and the artistry of the Wyandotte people.

For the citizens of the Wyandotte Nation, the objects that Barbeau collected form a unique resource. Several of these once relatively commonplace objects are now unique and considered cultural treasures. As such, Barbeau's collections help contemporary community members learn more about their ancestors and the lives they lived.

A Gathering of Traditions recognizes the importance of the materials collected by Barbeau within the culture and heritage programs used by contemporary Wyandotte Nation and Seneca-Cayuga communities. The exhibit will remain on display through Nov. 25. For more information, visit www.snomnh.ou.edu.





Above: Wyandotte Nation Chief Billy Friend with Wyandotte Princess Cortney Glass.

Left: Mary McKee, Wyandotte Nation

Dancers and Deities: Kachinas from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection

BY DAN SWAN, ETHNOLOGY





he Sam Noble Museum features dozens ■ of beautifully cast Kachina dolls in Dancers and Deities: Kachinas from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection, on display through Jan. 6, 2013. This exhibition features an amazing selection of Native American Kachinas created by master artists from Hopi and Zuni Pueblos.

As deities, Kachinas are important figures in the cosmology and religion of the Pueblo people of the American Southwest. Kachina-based rituals build on the idea that all things in the universe — animals, celestial bodies, natural elements, and weather possess a life force. Humans interact with these spiritual forces to ensure their survival as a people. Kachina spirits bestow great gifts and blessings on Pueblo communities that adhere to moral living and follow the annual ceremonial cycle. The greatest gift that the Kachina spirits impart is life-sustaining rain.

As dancers, Kachinas function as highly symbolic representations of deities. Masked Kachina dancers, members of a Kachina society, assume a sacred status. Kachina dancers are central to Pueblo rituals and ceremonies conducted to ensure the rain and fertility necessary for a bountiful harvest. It is no coincidence that Kachina dances coincide closely with the annual

Top Left: Earl Yawytewa (U.S., 1923-2006) Kemis Kachina (1972) from the James T. Bialac Collection

Bottom Left: Henry Peter Shelton (U.S. 1929) Sun Kachina (1972) from the James T. Bialac Collection. agricultural cycle beginning with the planting of crops and often ending after the late summer harvests. During the 20th century, carved Kachina figures became increasingly complex artworks that exhibit deep cultural significance and creative ability. The Bialac collection includes works by dozens of accomplished artists dating from the mid 20th century to the early 21st century, a period spanning the full development of this contemporary art form and its popular appeal.

The use of miniature, carved and painted wooden representations of Kachina deities is a cultural tradition that most likely originated among the Hopi people. Although Hopi society is matriarchal, following the mother's lineage, men possessed the closest relationship with the supernatural due to their ritual impersonation of Kachina deities during ceremonial dances. Men often presented small wood representations of Kachina spirits to their female relatives. These carvings were particularly given to dancers' children and young female relatives so that they might enjoy the blessings associated with the men's religious service as masked Kachina dancers.

In recent times Kachina carvings have become treasured artworks that exhibit deep cultural significance and creative ability. The Bialac collection includes works by dozens of significant artists and dates between 1950-2010, representing the full development of this art form and its commercial appeal. For more information, visit www.snomnh.ou.edu.



Above: Helen Hardin (U.S., 1943-1984), Winter Awakening of the O-Khoo-Wah, (1972) from the James T. Bialac Collection. © The Helen Hardin Estate

Southwest Visions: Paintings from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection

BY DAN SWAN, ETHNOLOGY

Building on centuries-old traditions of painting on rock, earth and clay with mineral pigments, Native artists from the American Southwest quickly adopted European easel painting and developed a distinct style that continues to help define Native American art today.

Ranging from the representational style promoted by the Santa Fe Indian School in the 1930s to contemporary responses to the School's colonial roots and romantic aspirations, *Southwest Visions* presents a comprehensive suite of Southwest Native American paintings than spans the development of 20th century Native American art.

In March 2010, James T. Bialac donated a collection of more than 3,500 works of art to the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art at the University of Oklahoma. The collection consists of approximately 2,600 paintings

and works on paper, 1,000 kachina figures and 100 pieces of jewelry representing indigenous cultures across North America with a focus on the pueblos and tribes of the Southwest.

In 1964, Bialac purchased a painting by Robert Chee (Hashke-Yil-Cale), initiating his nearly 50-year journey into art collection. Art from the Bialac collection featured in this exhibition include works by an incredible range of artists, including Pop Chalee, Harrison Begay, Helen Hardin, Alan Houser, Joe Hererra, Mateo Romero, Fritz Sholder, Pablita Velarde, and many others.

Works from Bialac's collection have appeared in many books and periodicals, including National Geographic magazine and publications by the Smithsonian Institution. On the whole, Bialac's lifetime collection spans 100 years of Native art in a wide variety of media from across North America.

Georeferencing for Museums, Research and Collections

BY JEN TREGARTHEN, PUBLIC RELATIONS

Ination are beginning to recognize the importance of having assigned coordinates for all specimens. Georeferencing is a method of establishing a location in terms of coordinate systems (like a GPS location) based on textual descriptions and is being used and taught through workshops and classes across the nation to enable older data to be useable with modern data.

"Georeferencing doesn't just apply to specimens," says Margaret Landis, paleobotany collection manager at the Sam Noble Museum. "It applies to any data you have."

It has been argued that georeferencing is crucial to developing the relationship between objects and their origin. As it applies to research collections, this tool can be used universally without the barrier of language.

Using funds from a National Science Foundation grant, Landis has been working for more than six years to digitize the specimens in the paleobotany collection at the Sam Noble Museum so that they can be georeferenced. Currently, she is working on supporting the use of 3-D georeferencing to better define the precise location of specimens as they apply to the surface and the layer of the Earth (or geology) that they come from, which will better identify and date the objects.

Earlier this year, Landis attended the iDigBio Paleocollections Workshop, which addressed the digitization needs, opportunities and grand challenges of the paleontological collections community throughout the United States. After her presentation, she was invited to attend the "Train the Trainers" Georeferencing Workshop this fall.

The workshop will cover tools and techniques used to correctly interpret textual location data into spatial descriptions that can be used in mapping and analyses. Within one year of completion of this event, Landis is expected to organize and facilitate at least one multi-day georeferencing workshop.

The goal of these training workshops is to make the practice of georeferencing more available and accessible to the museum, research and collections communities and to be seen as a universal tool in processing data.

 $Poster\ created\ by\ Land is\ for\ iDigBio\ workshop$

What is "locality"? Must account for how locality is visualized, sampled, & recorded in notes & literature • information & markings on paper maps • additional data needs & formats for GIS data portrayals (especially 3D or relief)

Outcrop as Multiple Localities:
Paleobotany System

Outcrop as Multiple Localities:
Paleobotany System

Outcrop as One Locality:
Invertebrate Paleontology System

Surface
CIFS 5

Locality 5

Formation C

Locality 4

CLocality 4

CLocality 4

CLocality 4

Command CIFS 1

Locality 3

Formation D

CIFS 2

Locality 2

Locality 2

Command CIFS 1

Formation D

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Forma



Farewell to Curator, Gary Schnell

BY ANDY RIEGER, EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE NORMAN TRANSCRIPT

ver his 42-year career at the University of Oklahoma, biology professor Gary D. Schnell developed a reputation for tardiness. Colleagues joked that they altered meeting notices until Schnell figured out the pattern and just came later.

Schnell was spot on time Tuesday afternoon as friends, colleagues and former students gathered to wish him and his wife, Mary Sue Schnell, well on his university retirement. He has the record of being the longest-serving faculty member in the Department of Biology (formerly zoology). He surpassed Teague Self's record by two years.

"He loves meetings. He gets there late, but once he gets there, you can't get him out," joked Michael Mares, director of the Sam Noble Museum.

Mares and other colleagues praised Schnell's record of scholarship, service to the state, his discipline and his role in the museum's founding. He retires as professor of biology and curator of birds at the museum. Schnell twice served as interim museum director.

"He was an unsung hero," Mares said. "I don't think anybody tops Gary in terms of service."

The biology department presented Schnell with a painting and announced the naming of a Richards Hall conference room in his honor. A fund has been established to maintain the room, with many former students contributing.

Schnell's research interests have included birds, mammals, rodents and beetles. Biology department

chair Randy Hewes said Schnell has brought in more than \$11 million in grants and contracts since coming to OU and has 101 publications and 315 unrefereed publications and reports.

"He has had a very remarkable career. OU is a better place for it. His students are better off for it," Hewes said.

Schnell served as an assistant professor from 1970 to 1975, associate professor from 1975 to 1983, and was promoted to full professor in 1983. At the museum, Schnell was curator of birds during his OU employment. He also directed the Oklahoma Biological Survey from 1978 to 1999.

Schnell received the Regent's Award for Superior Accomplishment in Professional and University Service in 1982, the Robert L. Packard Outstanding Educator Award, the Southwestern Association of Naturalists in 1994, was inducted into the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame and has an honorary doctor of science degree from Central Michigan University.

College of Arts and Sciences Dean Paul Bell said the fact that Schnell was tenured in only three years was indicative of Schnell's scholarship and service.

"I've certainly found being a teacher to be fulfilling," Schnell said. "It has been a wonderful career."



Above: Field Crew in Colima, Mexico, 2009.



Above: Camp site in Colima, Mexico, near "Fire Volcano." 2009

Above Top: Schnell in Colima, 2009.

Grant Awarded to Museum

Thanks to a \$149,956 grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Sam Noble Museum at the University of Oklahoma will initiate a three-year project to inventory, catalog and database artifacts and associated archives from two important collections: 272 sites recovered by the Works Progress Administration from 1934-1942 and seven sites of the Spiro Mounds Group. The Sam Noble Museum's Collection of Archaeology includes at least 80 percent of all prehistoric and early contact-period material recovered from Oklahoma, and is composed of more than 5,000,000 artifacts. The grant will support exemplary stewardship of the museum's archaeology collection by promoting the use of technology to facilitate discovery of knowledge and cultural heritage, and supporting the care and management of the collection to expand and sustain access for current and future generations.

Museum Hits 2 Millionth Visitor



David and Gloria Fox with Pam McIntosh, Sam Noble Museum

The Sam Noble Museum celebrated its 2 millionth visitor July 3. David Fox and his wife, Gloria Fox, walked into the museum looking forward to exploring an attraction they had wanted to visit for years.

Fox was greeted by dozens of faculty, staff and volunteers cheering and congratulating him as the 2 millionth visitor to the museum. Fox, of Claremore, was given a gift basket containing a dozen Oklahoma treasures, including a Native American blanket, local chocolates, a stuffed buffalo and a family membership to the museum. The 12 keepsake items represented the 12 collections housed at the museum.

The 2 millionth visitor reflects the number of visits the museum has received since the new facility was built in 2000 on 2401 Chautauqua Ave. The Sam Noble Museum inspires minds to understand the world through collection-based research, interpretation and education.

Museum Receives Awards

Museums from across the state gathered in Shawnee, Okla., Sept. 26 through 28 for the Oklahoma Museums Association's annual conference. More than 200 people attended, including staff, volunteers, board members and students of Oklahoma museums.

At the Oklahoma Museums Association Annual Conference Awards Luncheon on Sept. 28, the Sam Noble Museum won two awards in the categories of Newsletters for the Spring 2012 Newsletter and in Interpretive Exhibits for Warrior Spirits: Indigenous Arts of New Guinea. The luncheon was held at Oklahoma Baptist University's Geiger Center.

The mission of the Oklahoma Museums Association is to assist Oklahoma museums with their efforts to educate, inform and entertain. The conference is one of the many programs and services OMA offers to Oklahoma museums.



Calendar Receives Recognition



Sherri Isbell and John Sarantakos, University of Oklahoma Printing Services with Hadley Jerman, Sam Noble Museum

Seventy-eight printed pieces submitted by 37 organizations were selected from 452 entries as winners in this year's In-Print Competition, cosponsored by International Publishing Management Association and In-Plant Graphics magazine. University of Oklahoma Printing Services received nine awards, among them a Silver award for the Sam Noble Museum's 2012 Native American Calendar.

The contest was open to all U.S. printing in-plants. The winners each year are selected by five printing industry experts from all around the country. Selection criteria is based on the quality of printing and design. OU Printing Services currently is the most award-winning university printer in the nation, with a total of 174 awards.

Discovery Lab: Dolls, Dancers and Deities



Kachinas from Dancers and Deities exhibit

10 a.m. to Noon, Saturday, Nov. 3 Grades 1 through 3

In this fun workshop, kids will learn about kachinas in Southwestern culture through stories, artifacts and exhibits! They will visit the museum's new temporary exhibit, Selected Works from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection, and have a chance to make their own kachina figure.

Discovery Labs are designed for children and youth who love science, culture and natural history! Participants can explore museum galleries and collections, meet scientists, do real field work and get hands on with crafts and science experiments! Space is limited and pre-registration is required. To enroll, please call (405) 325-1008.

Cost: Members \$10, Non-members \$15

Registration Deadline: October 26



Holiday Happening



Visitor, Terra Tregarthen with Santa

5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 6

Join the Sam Noble Museum for a holiday celebration to remember! Admission is free, and visitors will enjoy live holiday music, crafts, storytelling and shopping throughout the evening.

Santa Claus will be present to hear children's holiday wishes and pose for pictures. The museum's Discovery Room will be open, and the dinosaur mascots, Spike and Slash, will be there to meet guests. The Great Hall will be filled with free craft stations for kids, story times and live musical entertainment.

The museum also is accepting donations of gifts for children and teens and non-perishable food items on behalf of Food and Shelter Inc. All attendees who donate will be entered to win a \$50 gift card to Excavations. For more information, visit www.snomnh.ou.edu.

Spikes Club: Buggin' Out!

Are you ready to get buggy? Discover a world where insects and spiders rule as we investigate the science of butterflies, beetles and other crawly creatures up close! We will learn all about how entomologists study insects, and explore the museum's new exhibit, *Bugs: Outside the Box!*

Each session meets once a week for six weeks beginning Jan. 29 and 31 and focuses on investigating our natural world and discovering the amazing stories unfolding all around us. Students explore our galleries, study museum objects from our collections, play games, get creative with craft and science projects, and have fun! Participants will receive a special Spike's Club T-shirt (one shirt per school year). Space is limited and pre-registration is required. To enroll, please call (405) 325-1008.

Cost: Members \$35, Non-members \$45

Member registration begins Monday, Nov. 21; Non-member registration begins Monday, Dec. 5 Registration deadline Jan. 22



Participants investigate insects



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