



**SAN JUAN COUNTY
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION**
2021 Annual Report

November 16, 2021

Letter from the Board President...

It has been my pleasure to again act as President of the San Juan County Museum Association this past year. 2020 was a year packed full of adversity for us and, thanks to the staff at Salmon Ruins Museum and DCA, we survived. The museum was closed to the public for most of the year, but staff had plenty to do keeping up with issues and tasks that did not stop just because Covid-19 was at our doorstep. Compliance with NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) was something that staff was able to continue onward with. Our people did a fantastic job with all areas of concern! Because of Covid-19, this poured over into 2021, but now it is substantially completed. Thanks to Larry Baker, Tori Myers, Paul Reed, and of course, all the DCA staff for completing something that few museums around the country have so far been able to do.

In 2021, business has returned to something close to normal. It has been great to see people coming back to visit, sign up for Tori's tours to Chaco and the like. The Site Steward program has enlisted a record number of great Stewards to help with the mission of monitoring important historical sites throughout the area. It is great to report that very little vandalism has been reported. Site deterioration continues, but that is something we hope stays minimal for the foreseeable future.



A site steward's work is never complete – Twine Hose update from Russ Bodnar.

I am proud to be a part of this great organization. We have a lot to offer San Juan County and the rest of the world when it comes to educating people about our heritage here as well as protecting that heritage for future generations to learn about and enjoy.

May 2022 bring us great success!

Kim Stradling

President

San Juan County Museum Association

From the Executive Director...

Dear Board and Association Members:

The year of 2021 has been a year of, not only, pulling museum programs back together after the major Covid-19 shut down of 2020, but a project that has been ongoing for several years was completed. The museum has been open to the public all year, and our Journey into the Past tour programs led by Tori Myers have regained the momentum set before the pandemic. We have been able to maintain our core staff as well as add two new crew members to the Division of Conservation Archaeology. These are pluses for the continued growth of the Association in relation to the management of the museum and the sustainability of our archaeological consulting firm. Details related to specific programs will be provided later in this report.

Financially, the Small Business Administration/Paycheck Protection Program (SBA/PPP) Loans helped carry us through into 2021. Given our lack of revenues through our standard resources, these helped us immeasurably to maintain staff. Two loans were received and as of June, both loans were “forgiven”. These loans were managed by Citizen’s Bank in Farmington.

There has been discussion of my retirement as the Executive Director and my current contract expires in January, 2022. I have held this position since 1993. I am considering going for contract renewal, with the Board’s blessing, for one more year. In this way, I can help stabilize the organization during the post-pandemic (let’s hope!) time period, and make it a smoother transition for a new director. This will push the envelope of my tenure at Salmon Ruins to close to 30 years... OMG!

OMG is right! Here’s a capture of Larry at the 2nd Anasazi Symposium, held here at Salmon Ruins in 1983!



For Salmon Ruins, I am not sure that we are back to “business as usual”, but have recovered some and are working toward what might be considered the “new normal”. Visitation at the museum is steady and we are currently making visitors wear masks inside the museum. For tours to Chaco Canyon, Dinetah, Bisti Badlands or the Aztec Arches, we are not engaging multiple couples or groups for single tours as yet, due to the Covid-19 Delta variant. The Board of Directors, staff, and I will continue to maintain Salmon Ruins in relation to our “Mission”, but adhere to and follow formal health directives as they are issued. I appreciate the members of the Association for their continued support and “hanging in there” with us during these uncertain times.

Best Regards
Larry L. Baker
Executive Director

Programs and Accomplishments of 2020 – *Larry L. Baker*

Tori Myers continues to be involved in our Journey into the Past tour programs and curation of Salmon Ruins and ancillary collections housed in the museum. Paul Reed, along with the Executive Director, remains involved in finalizing our Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation grant and the last of repatriation issues. Lyn Wharton is still managing the Division of Conservation Archaeology and bringing Supervisory Archaeologist Jason Meininger into a limited administrative role. Brandi Amarilla holds down the Business Office and directs the day-to-day financial operations of the organization. The following details some of the initiatives our staff has been involved in over the last year.

NAGPRA

The most critical and complex work over the past year has been the consultation with Native American tribes and the repatriation/reburial of human remains and associated funerary objects. In compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), our organization has been working to complete this important project for collections held at the Salmon Ruins Museum. The NAGPRA legislation passed in 1990 governs consultation, repatriation, and reburial of human remains and funerary objects. For our museum, this includes not only the Salmon Ruins excavation materials, the Division of Conservation Archaeology data recovery projects, and donations from private lands and in some cases, unknown sources. Paul Reed and the Executive Director co-authored a grant funded by the National Park Service to undertake this work. Paul Reed and Tori Myers worked diligently to identify these collections. It cannot be emphasized enough the level of scrutiny exhibited by Tori Myers to insure the identification of these materials was complete.



NAGPRA testing took up most of the “down time”.

Several tribes participated in consultation including Hopi, San Felipe, Zuni, Acoma, Zia, Pojoaque, and Santa Clara pueblos. Ultimately, the comprehensive, collections inventory was completed and published in the Federal Register on May 26, 2021. To initiate reburial of those remains designated “unaffiliated”, control of the collection was transferred to the Hopi Tribe and this set the stage for the reburial. The reinternment of 194 individuals and 9, 635 funerary items was conducted on September 30,

2021, with delegations from four tribes officiating in the ceremony. These collections were reinterred at an undisclosed location. A final report is pending.

Salmon Ruins has only a single individual of specified cultural affiliation that is waiting on tribal consultation. The museum has custody of three additional sets of remains that are under the “authority” of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This collection will be transferred to the BLM, hopefully, in the near future.

DIVISION OF CONSERVATION ARCHAEOLOGY (DCA)

Lyn Wharton has been managing the Association’s consulting firm for 28 years and has agreed to continue to “steer the ship” into 2022. Jason Meininger, Senior Supervisory Archaeologist, has been working with Lyn in a limited capacity in relation to administration. Currently, field archaeologists include: Patrick Alfred, Supervisory Archaeologist; Leonard Yazzie, Assistant Archaeologist; and Anthony Tahe, Assistant Archaeologist. Hans Freudan, Laboratory Archaeologist, has been assisting with special report projects unrelated to field work.

Our field archaeologists have been involved with testing in areas of potential NAGPRA reburial to insure that buried cultural deposits will not be impacted by this process. General cultural resource compliance work has increased over the past year and currently is ongoing in the Lybrook area, south of Bloomfield. Although the Westmoreland San Juan Mine is expected to close and the operations of the San Juan Generating Station is discontinued, monitoring the effects of subsidence on archaeological sites as a result of underground mining will continue into 2022. This subsidence monitoring and recording has continued for almost two decades.

Large subsidence cracks like this can affect drainage, site deposition, and even modern roads and construction.



NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO SITE STEWARDS

The Northwest New Mexico Site Stewards Program remains active with the continued monitoring and patrolling of our remote heritage sites. Our steward volunteers remain active in keeping looting and vandalism at bay, which usually increases during tough economic times. The site stewards are diligent and are active the entire year patrolling in Largo and Gobernador Canyon areas, La Plata Valley, and World Heritage Sites along the Great North Road. Not only do they monitor cultural resources, but repair and replace signs, mend fences around archaeological sites, and assess the condition of architectural sites with standing wall sections.

Kim Stradling, Ken Russell, and Linda Wheelbarger serve as Co-Directors of the program, which remains funded by the Bureau of Land Management. Ken has added a new dimension to the monitoring inaccessible sites by operating a drone for aerial observations. Linda has been instrumental in training new stewards with three sessions this year. Kim has been maintaining and updating the individual site files so that information remains current, based on steward reporting. Currently, there are 40 active stewards monitoring 154 sites. As the program administrator, I appreciate this very important work for the protection of our cultural heritage.

Curation and Education - *Tori Myers*

The continuation of Covid restrictions, forced closures, and uncertainty over whether our safety measures are reliable and effective in the face of new adaptations of the virus made this year difficult for everyone! I started offering tours in February as soon as I was eligible for vaccination, due to the volume of requests from people desperate to leave their houses and “go somewhere”. We were able to open the museum to the public in March, and have been entertaining a record number of visitors ever since. We have had little to no volunteer activity this year, partly due to concerns about the ever-present virus, and partly due to the focus on finishing the NAGPRA project, where volunteers proved to be more of a hindrance than a help given level of accuracy required for the project. We did take several donations, as people suddenly found themselves cleaning out their attics and basements while they were at home.

EDUCATION

I had expected to publish another issue of *The Outlier*, our official newsletter, but the frequency of tours and the unexpected NAGPRA work prevented that from taking place, so a 2022 issue will definitely be required this spring.

Summer Solstice was celebrated this year with a “sunrise” tour at 7 AM. The tour was advertised on our websites and Facebook, which have been a good way to reach people. Many visitors have enjoyed adding photos to our Google My Business page. School groups, of course, have been nonexistent this year due to the difficulties of online versus in-person education and children not being eligible for the vaccine. Perhaps by next year we will resume our important educational outreach. The only date that

was offered for our yearly Mata Ortiz pottery event was September 30, which would unfortunately be during the NAGPRA reburial, and so we were unable to host Oralia Lopez and her pottery.

DONATIONS

One of the most impressive donations came to us last January, a pair of Navajo Pinyon Gray vessels that were recovered from Largo Canyon or a side canyon and were discovered by a local family in their relative's basement. One vessel has been repaired with an intact yucca tie. In April, we saw the sad closure of WCRM's Farmington office. They donated their library of archaeological reports and research materials, along with a few shelves and some excavation equipment. In May, a nearly complete Casas Grandes vessel was left on the windowsill at the Aztec Historical Museum, which they passed along to us. We also took a donation of historic Pueblo vessels collected in 1937 during a family's travels.



JOURNEY INTO THE PAST

People travelled a lot during Covid – even when they weren't supposed to. If you recall, I was only able to give 17 tours last year. By comparison in 2019, I had conducted 142 tours during the fiscal year. Our first 2021 tour took place on February 9. In total, I booked 85 tours this year, and of those 17 were cancelled because of illness while traveling, concerns about a Covid resurgence, or travelers who never showed up on their scheduled date. The tours included 2 around Salmon, 10 to Bisti, 61 to Chaco, 8 to Dinetah, 3 to the Aztec Arches, and 1 to Aztec Ruins. The tours remained busy during the summer, which was much hotter for a much longer sustained amount of time than usual, and extended through all of October with 3 and 4 tours per week. Visits to Chaco continue to wrestle with such a high volume of visitors that there are often no places to park at the Pueblo Bonito parking lot. Starting this year, the Park Service as well as the Bureau of Land Management have initiated a significant penalty against us giving private tours on lands that they manage (allegedly against all private tours, but I have yet to see that anyone else is being affected), which reduces the small amount of profit that is brought in by the program even further. Neither entity recognizes Non-Profit status as relevant in their consideration.

RESEARCH

Research has been stalled throughout the pandemic, as we were unable to host anyone. I did follow up on a request made through email regarding human effigies found in southwestern sites. The researcher is Katharine Fernstrom, who was one of the students who excavated Salmon Ruins during the 1970s. I sent her photos of these items, which she found very interesting. The kokopelli bowl and modeled human face are both from our own site collections, while the leg, also made from ceramic, was part of an unproveniented donation that was reburied with the NAGPRA project.



Thirty boxes of faunal bone, borrowed by Eastern New Mexico University students, were also returned following analysis. Some but not all of this material will need to be entered into the database.

NAGPRA

The enormous, often confusing, and decades-long project involving NAGPRA-related human remains and grave goods, tribal consultation, and unpleasant discoveries of previously unknown materials is finally OVER! The amount of time and stress that was devoted to completing this task was so constant that I don't know what any of us are going to do now that we no longer have to worry about it. Obviously the museum has many other curation, display and research-related concerns, and we are far from having what is known as "free time" or "nothing to do". If anything, we have identified numerous duties and tasks that promise to be at least as complicated and frustrating as the NAGPRA process often was. However, the concluding chapter in the NAGPRA saga is truly an accomplishment of which we are proud. Reburial went smoothly and successfully. A positive relationship was established with numerous Pueblo descendants. A gigantic piece of the Salmon puzzle has been completed. The potential for future opportunities to learn, study and organize our remaining materials has been opened, and hopefully our experiences will leave us wiser and better prepared for those future opportunities.

Research Partnerships - *Paul Reed*

In 2021, the covid-19 pandemic continued to have impact and slow progress on projects. However, the Archaeology Southwest and Salmon Ruins Museum partnership was successful on two endeavors: 1) protecting the Greater Chaco Landscape initiative; 2) significant progress and near completion of Salmon's NAGPRA project.

PROTECTING THE GREATER CHACO LANDSCAPE

As the Biden administration took office in 2021, positive things began to occur for protection of Greater Chaco and other threatened areas across the American West. Congresswoman Deb Haaland of New Mexico First District was appointed and confirmed as the Secretary of the Interior, representing the first Native American individual to hold the office.

For 2021, the ongoing Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) planning process undertaken by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) did not see a lot of progress. We have approached involvement in this process by looking at the Greater Chaco Landscape at a different scale than is usually pursued by the Agencies. Although the Agencies' primary avoidance policy has spared many cultural resources from outright destruction, it has resulted in a fragmented cultural landscape across the Greater Chaco Landscape. A better perspective considers cultural sites not in isolation, but as pieces of larger communities on the landscape—a community- or landscape-based approach. This can be implemented to protect communities and site clusters that have not yet seen impacts.



A view across the Greater Chaco Landscape.

As we get into 2022, with the hope that the pandemic continues to ease, effort on the RMPA and EIS process will again ramp up.

NAGPRA PROJECT

In 2021, the San Juan County Museum Association/Salmon Ruins Museum came to near completion on its Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) process. This process has unfolded over the last several years.

As part of the NAGPRA process, Salmon Ruin Museum (SRM) initiated Tribal consultation in January 2018, with letters sent to the following Tribes: Hopi Tribe of Arizona; Jicarilla Apache Nation, New Mexico; Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico, & Utah; Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico; Pueblo of Cochiti, New Mexico; Pueblo of Isleta, New Mexico; Pueblo of Jemez, New Mexico; Pueblo of Laguna, New Mexico; Pueblo of Nambe, New Mexico; Pueblo of Picuris, New Mexico; Pueblo of Pojoaque, New Mexico; Pueblo of San Felipe, New Mexico; Pueblo of San Ildefonso, New Mexico; Pueblo of Sandia, New Mexico; Pueblo of Santa Ana, New Mexico; Pueblo of Santa Clara, New Mexico; Pueblo of Taos, New Mexico; Pueblo of Tesuque, New Mexico; Pueblo of Zia, New Mexico; Southern Ute Indian Tribe of the Southern Ute Reservation, Colorado; Ute Mountain Ute Tribe; Ysleta del Sur Pueblo; and Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Reservation, New Mexico. These Tribes are known to have aboriginal land use in the vicinity of Salmon Ruins (Pueblo) and the surrounding lands.

After initial contact with postal letters, SRM consulted with interested Tribes from October 2018 into the spring of 2020, as the covid-19 pandemic erupted. In all, 16 Tribes were part of the consultation, either via in-person visits to SRM, phone conversations, or visits to the interested Tribe's village or office by SRM Executive Director Larry Baker and myself. Five Tribes visited Salmon Ruins and consulted in person on the human remains and funerary objects. Baker and I visited three Tribes at their offices and discussed SRM's NAGPRA collection and process in person. For eight of the interested Tribes, phone discussions were conducted by either Baker or I.

As a result of the NAGPRA consultation, cultural affiliation was not determined for most of the human remains (ancestors) and associated funerary items. Thus, the determination of culturally not identified is still in place for most human remains at SRM.

One burial and associated funerary object (pottery vessel) is likely to be Navajo in cultural origin. Consultation with the Navajo Tribe has continued with phone conversations and mail correspondence but an in-person visit has not yet occurred.

In May 2021, SRM filed Notices of Inventory Completion with the National Park Service, which were published in the Federal Register constituting formal, legal completion of the Inventory process. Subsequently, the Hopi Tribe of Arizona made a formal claim to the cultural unaffiliated ancestors and associated funerary objects. With approval of the SRM Board of Directors, Director Baker formally acknowledged the claim and transferred control of the remains to the Hopi Tribe. Formal reburial and repatriation occurred at an undisclosed location later in 2021 and involved the Hopi Tribes and four other Tribes.

2021 Donors

\$15 - \$99

Ed and Karen Milszenski
Ronald and Gloria Avery
Bob Young
Huth Family
Jon Uncapher
Luanne Crow
Veronica Frost
Carlan Tapp
John and Molly Renner
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Linda Mayro
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Dorothy Washburn
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Lonnie and Carolyn Pippin
Donation Box

\$1000 and over

Roland And Martha Mace
Ed Deal
Roy and Patty Dan
Jo Hudson



Your donations of time, money and interest make our work possible. Thank You!

2021 Statement of Activities
Cash only, October 31, 2021
Revenue and Related Income

Services	\$225,323.00
Gift Shop Sales	\$38,849.00
Fund Raising and Association	\$4,334.00
Admissions	\$10,712.00
Donations	\$23,880.00
Grants	\$14,450.00
County Support	\$5,000.00
Site Stewards	\$6,349.00
Sale of Assets	\$500.00
Membership	\$1,545.00
Consultant	\$1,570.00
Interest	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$17.00
TOTAL	\$332,529.00

Expenses

Museum	\$ 285,987.00
Division of Conservation Archaeology	\$ 214,122.00
TOTAL	\$ 500,109.00

2021 Financial Statement
Unaudited Statement of Financial Position, October 31, 2021

Assets

In-bank Cash	\$19,469.00
Savings and Short-Term Investments	\$264,849.00
Long-Term Investments (Endowment)	\$1,223,372.00
Accounts Receivable (DCA)	\$88,544.00
Gift Shop Inventory	\$36,376.00
Prepaid Insurance	\$2,497.00
Petty Cash	\$250.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,635,357.00</i>
Property and Equipment	\$131,917.00
TOTAL	\$1,767,274.00

Liabilities and Capital

Accounts Payable	\$0.00
Taxes	\$8,366.00
Vacation Benefits	\$22,123.00
Deferred Revenue	\$0.00
Payroll Protection Loan	\$68,160.00
TOTAL	\$98,649.00

Capital

Investments in Fixed Assets	\$345,897.00
Unappropriated Fund	\$413,736.00
Current Fund	\$593,204.00
Net Income	\$241,862.00
TOTAL	\$1,594,699.00
Total Liabilities and Capital:	\$1,693,348.00

Board of Directors, 2021

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