



# AMERIND QUARTERLY



## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERIND FOUNDATION

SPRING 2004 (VOL. 1, NO. 2)

### MISSION

*Established in 1937, the Amerind Foundation and Museum seeks to foster and promote knowledge and understanding of the Native Peoples of the Americas through research, education, and conservation.*

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*Letters to the director and the board members can be sent care of the Amerind, Box 400, Dragoon, AZ 85609.*

The Amerind Quarterly is produced seasonally by staff and volunteers of the Amerind. Maureen O'Neill, technical editor; C. Charnley, design and layout; Barbara Hanson, art.

[www.amerind.org](http://www.amerind.org)

### SECOND HOHOKAM SYMPOSIUM AT THE AMERIND



In February of 1988 the Amerind Foundation launched its New World Seminar series with a symposium on the prehistoric Hohokam, a subject that was revisited in January of this year by a new generation of Hohokam scholars who assembled to examine many new and some not so new questions of Hohokam prehistory. The symposium, chaired by Drs. Paul and Suzanne Fish of the Arizona State Museum, focused on the reorganization that occurred between the Hohokam Sedentary and Classic periods (circa A.D. 1100) when ballcourts gave way to platform mounds and pithouse villages were transformed into large segmented towns. Seminar discussions focused on how changes in settlement and community organization during the Classic reorganization coincided with changes in demography, household organization, craft production and distribution, ideology, and political and economic organization. Experts from the core area of Hohokam settlement, the lower Gila and Salt River Valleys of southern Arizona, described Classic Period Hohokam towns with thousands of inhabitants linked by vast irrigation systems—a population density and economy that dwarfed all other prehistoric cultures of the Southwest.

Other scholars working on the periphery of the Hohokam core described communities in the Tucson Basin, Papagueria, San Pedro Valley, and Tonto Basin, and offered

insights into how the core may have influenced and interacted with the Hohokam hinterlands.

How did the Hohokam of southern Arizona compare with Neolithic farmers in other parts of the New and Old World? To address such questions, scholars from outside the Southwest were invited to the seminar to present comparative data from Mexico and South America, the eastern U.S., Mesopotamia, Neolithic Europe, and Polynesia. In our comparative discussions we learned that Hohokam communities were much more populous and complex than Mesopotamian towns before the advent of complex city-states, and the scale of trade and interaction in the Hohokam world was comparatively immense, with exchange of ceramic vessels, shell, and other goods transported hundreds of miles (without the aid of wheeled vehicles) and involving specialized producers and distant consumers. From scholars working on the Hohokam periphery we heard fascinating stories of Pueblo migrants to the Hohokam world in the thirteenth century, the new technologies and ideologies they brought with them, and the often mixed receptions they received from the desert Hohokam.

Final papers from the symposium will be assembled this summer, and we hope to go to press with Amerind's second ground-breaking Hohokam book by this time next year. Thanks to all who participated in Hohokam II for a very stimulating week.

### ... NATURE SIGHTINGS AT THE AMERIND

I always forget how early the manzanitas start blooming here. Clambering up out of the canyon in mid-January, I edged past one in a narrow cleft in the rocks and saw the glossy, evergreen leaves decorated with clusters of pink, urn-shaped flowers. I'm delighted this particular specimen looks so healthy because here at the Amerind many of these large shrubs with their lovely, mahogany-red bark are dying. Calling one of the local university extension agents, he told me that he's been seeing dead manzanitas and also oak trees at the lower elevation edges of their range; some biologists are speculating that several years of drought is causing this shift in plant communities. The pointleaf manzanita, *Arctostaphylos pungens*, generally grows from 4000' to 8000' in elevation. Our elevation is 4900', the lower edge of its range, so a manzanita here would usually receive less moisture than one at 7000' or 8000' in the Dragoon Mountains and would lose that moisture faster due to warmer temperatures.

Changes in plant communities are also a concern to the Tohono O'odham. They travel to various elevations to collect plants, and drought could cause them to have to travel farther and higher to find healthy, collectable specimens. The women who conducted our December



basket making workshop (see next page) told me their ancestors used to camp in the Dragoon Mountains in the winter to collect beargrass (moho) and yucca (takwi). I was lucky enough

to get to go with them on a sunny day this past February when they were gathering beargrass for baskets.

Beargrass, *Nolina microcarpa*, also called basketgrass, grows between 3500' and 6500' on rocky slopes from Arizona to Texas. The long narrow leaves form grasslike fountains up to 6' tall, but *Nolina* is not a true grass, being related to sotols (*Dasylirion*) and less closely to agaves and yuccas. Beargrass is used for basketry by many southwestern tribes, and the Tohono O'odham use it to form the bundles of their baskets. They told me winter is the best time to cut because the plants are free of insects then, and we looked for the largest plants with wide, straight leaves. Before they started cutting they expressed their appreciation to the plants and

were careful to cut several inches above the ground to ensure that enough growing material was left to keep the roots strong. If correctly cut, the plants actually get fuller after harvesting as new leaves grow in. The leaves were then



stripped of their sharp edges with a knife. Yucca takes more preparation, needing to be stripped and soaked in water to make the leaves more pliable.

Yucca is harvested in two different seasons depending on its use. "White yucca," used for the coils, is easiest to cut May through October and then left to bleach in the sun while "green yucca," used for the designs, is cut in winter when it won't bleach out. There are nine species of yucca in Arizona; the most common species at the Amerind is soap tree, *Yucca elata*. Growing from 2000' to 6000' it can reach heights of 15 feet and has narrow, flexible leaves which make excellent basket material. Yuccas were utilized extensively by the prehistoric peoples of the southwest for soap and food as well as an important source of strong, durable fibers, used in everything from clothes and bedding to building materials

and rope. The Amerind collection features many items of yucca fibers; see the displays of "perishable materials from caves" in the Hall of Archaeology for examples of prehistoric sandals, baskets and other household items made of yucca—just think, these fibers have held up for more than 800 years! And for lovely examples of contemporary O'odham baskets of beargrass and yucca, make a visit to the Amerind Museum Store – you may want to take one home with you!



by Barbara Hanson

Our second issue of the Amerind Newsletter is dedicated to the scholar who led the foundation for 30 years and helped position the Amerind at the forefront of archaeological research in the Greater Southwest. Charlie Di Peso was, first and foremost, a field archaeologist, and his explorations and excavations in the Southwest and northern Mexico helped rewrite the story of Southwestern prehistory.

As George Gumerman mentions in his tribute to Charlie (pages 4-5), since Di Peso's death in 1982 the Amerind has not embarked on a single large scale excavation project. In fact, Charlie's passing coincided with a fundamental shift in the way archaeology is done in North America. The change was clearly evident at our second Hohokam Symposium last January (cover story) where the majority of new research reported by seminar participants was the result of salvage excavations in advance of land-altering construction projects (highways, housing developments, dams, powerlines, etc.). Because of the infusion of federal and corporate money into "contract archaeology" in recent years, archaeology has become big business, and many museums and universities that once accomplished most of the archaeological research in the Southwest are no longer major players in the field.

The positive side to this story is that contract archaeology has provided much more money to do archaeological data recovery, and this has resulted in a virtual explosion of new data (so much data, in fact, that much of the Amerind's original Hohokam synthesis, published in 1991, has been eclipsed). But, of course,

there is a downside. The laws and regulations that made archaeological excavation a necessary cost of doing business for corporations and federal agencies provide minimal funding for interpretation and synthesis of excavation results. And so, although the quantity of data recovery has increased in recent decades, many would argue that the quality of reporting and synthesis has declined. With its eyes fixed firmly on the bottom line, modern archaeo-business has little time for archaeological synthesis. Many archaeologists manage to work it in, of course, but there is considerable pressure to move on to the next project to keep the money stream that pays salaries and rents flowing.

The Amerind Foundation's role in this changing world of archaeological research has now crystallized. Instead of excavating sites, we provide scholars with opportunities to synthesize their research through advanced seminar and resident scholar programs. During the 1990s the Amerind averaged one advanced seminar every two years, but we now sponsor two seminars a year, on average, and a new cooperative program between the Amerind and the Society for American Archaeology promises to raise the quality of Amerind seminars by an order of magnitude. The spring of 2004 also saw our first resident scholar in many years, Dr. Kelley Hays-Gilpin of Northern Arizona University, and this summer Amerind will host Drs. Randy McGuire of State University of New York at Binghamton, and Ruth Van Dyke of Colorado College. We think Dr. Di Peso, one of the Southwest's great synthesizers, would have approved.

*John Ware, Director*

***If you are not already a member, we invite you to join us!***

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

*Yes, I want to become a member!*

*Please enroll me at the level checked.*

- Individual \$30
- Family \$40
- Cochise Club \$100-\$499
- San Pedro Club \$500-\$999
- Casas Grandes Club \$1,000 or above

Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Please make payable to Amerind Foundation)  
 I prefer to charge my  VISA  Master Card  
 Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
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This is a **GIFT** membership at the \_\_\_\_\_ Level

Member Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
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 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



My name \_\_\_\_\_  
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## A LOOK BACK

### REEVE RUIN AND THE DAVIS RANCH SITE

Reeve Ruin and the Davis Ranch Site, excavated by the Amerind Foundation in 1956 and 1957, respectively, are often referred to as the most compelling examples of ancient migration yet discovered by archaeologists working in the American Southwest. Located across the San Pedro River from each other, near present-day Redington, Arizona, these sites have yielded robust evidence of construction and occupation by people native to far northeastern Arizona.

Traces of northern immigrants at Reeve and Davis take many forms. Reeve Ruin is a pueblo built of stacked stone masonry, like those of the Four Corners region. The walls of the Davis Ranch Site, the site's layout, and many of its features are manifestations of northern architectural traditions. A rectangular, subterranean kiva used by the ancient people of northern Arizona and still used by the Hopi was excavated at the Davis Ranch Site (see photo), and a kiva-like structure was discovered at Reeve Ruin. Many living rooms at both sites share features that are quite rare in the south, but found in northern Arizona: rectangular, slab-lined hearths and living rooms equipped with entryboxes (low walls built in the doorway of a room to deflect the wind).

The pottery recovered from both sites, although produced in the San Pedro Valley, was made using the coil-and-scrape technique characteristic of northern

Arizona, as opposed to the paddle-and-anvil method employed by local groups.

Painted designs, identical to those on pottery from northern Arizona, were found at Reeve and Davis, and the plain pottery also betrays the northern origin of its makers.

Important clues regarding the relationship between immigrants from northern Arizona and the spread of Salado polychrome pottery throughout southern Arizona, parts of New Mexico and northern Mexico are found at Reeve Ruin and Davis Ranch Site. The results of recent studies of sherds recovered from Reeve and Davis strongly suggest that the inhabitants of these sites supplied local groups in many parts of the San Pedro Valley with polychrome vessels.

Although Charles Di Peso published the results of his work at Reeve Ruin, the details of Rex Gerald's excavations at the Davis Ranch site remain known to a select few, as Gerald's manuscript remains incomplete and unpublished. The Amerind Foundation and Center for Desert Archaeology are currently raising funds to support the publication of the Davis Ranch Report. If you are interested in assisting with this important project please contact John Ware at the Amerind Foundation.

*Dr. Patrick D. Lyons  
Center for Desert Archaeology*



## DRAWING ON A LIFE OF RITUAL AND COMMUNITY: HOPI PAINTINGS & CARVINGS



*Eric Polingyouma and J.J. Brody*

Presentations by Eric Polingyouma, from the Hopi village of Shungopavi, and art historian J.J. Brody marked the opening of Amerind's exhibit of Hopi paintings and carvings on January

10th. Focusing on the cultural milieu of Santa Fe in the early 1900s, Dr. Brody gave the audience the contextual background for the paintings of Fred Kabotie and Otis Polelonema, both of whom left Hopi to attend the Santa Fe Indian School in 1915.

The first Hopis to draw katsinas outside of the kivas and their own culture did so at the request of anthropologist Jessie Walter Fewkes in 1900, but the efforts of these artists were shunned by many Hopi. A generation later, the ready acceptance and financial support of the art work of Kabotie and Polelonema by the Santa Fe community led to an eventual acceptance within the Hopi culture.

The art of these Hopi painters has a different tradition than the Navajo paintings on exhibit in the Art Gallery. The Hopi students arrived at the Indian School 17 years before an art program was in place. Kabotie and Polelonema were invited to attend after-school art classes organized by the wife of the school superintendent. According to Kabotie, they were allowed to paint whatever they wanted, and he painted what he missed most—the ceremonies that are an integral part of the community. The work of Kabotie and Polelonema set the stage for other young Hopi painters, some of whose work you will see in the exhibit.

Mr. Eric Polingyouma generously offered the audience insight into some of the complexities of Hopi culture. His son, Lance, with a degree in anthropology, assisted him as he explained some of the intricacies of being Hopi to a non-Hopi audience. They told of the migrations of the Hopi people and the Katsinas, whose separate migrations coalesced in recent history. Their presentation and the discussions that followed helped give meaning and context to the superb paintings and carvings in the exhibition.

## TOHONO O'ODHAM BASKETS

Among the extensive ethnographic collections at the Amerind Foundation are large numbers of baskets woven by the Tohono O'odham Indians of southern Arizona.

The art of basket making has ancient roots in this harsh desert country, as evidenced by 114 basketry fragments recovered during excavations led by Dr. Emil Haury at Ventana Cave on the Tohono



*Older Tohono O'odham basket of a traditional size and shape—showing extensive use of devil's claw in construction.*

O'odham reservation. The age of these fragments ranges from the late historic period to as far back as the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. The vast majority were constructed using the coiled and close stitched technique still favored by Tohono O'odham weavers today.

In the late historic period, from roughly 1700 to the early 1900s, Tohono O'odham baskets were woven using split willow shoots to stitch together bundle coils of beargrass or, rarely, shredded yucca. Black designs were created by stitching with devil's claw, *Proboscidea*, or ihut to the Tohono O'odham. Willow was scarce and generally obtained in trade with their Akimel O'odham (Pima) neighbors who inhabited the more lush Gila and Salt River valleys to the north. Because willow was difficult to obtain, the Tohono O'odham used larger amounts of devil's claw when constructing their baskets. This is one of the main diagnostic features used to distinguish older Pima baskets from those of the Tohono O'odham, and this is reflected in the examples in the Amerind collection.

Historically, O'odham baskets were an essential part of everyday existence. Traditional forms were generally large, shallow trays, and deeper, steep-walled bowls. Baskets were used for gathering food items, parching and winnowing seeds and grains, serving ceremonial saguaro wine, for gifts and trade items, and even as drums. Very large, coarse coiled baskets served as granaries; the lace coiled *kiaha*, or burden basket, enabled the O'odham to transport heavy objects over long distances.

With the intrusion of Spanish and then Anglo populations into southern Arizona, however, new material culture was introduced to the O'odham. Items such as metal buckets and barrels, glazed ceramics, wheelbarrows, and more lately, the ubiquitous plastic bag, were easily obtained and rapidly replaced the traditional uses for basketry.

## FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Fortunately, the art of basket weaving did NOT become obsolete among the Tohono O'odham. The increasing Anglo population provided a huge new market for weavers. By the early 1900s Indian women were able to provide a source of income for their families by selling their wares to traders and tourists alike.



*Modern Tohono O'odham baskets sewn with yucca in a variety of shapes and sizes.*

There was a major change, however, in the types and shapes of baskets being woven, and in the stitching material used. By the late 1930s yucca splints had almost completely replaced willow as a sewing material, and such exotic shapes as animal figures, dolls, wastebasket cylinders, and miniatures were common. Again, these changes are well documented in the Amerind collections.

As part of a recent celebration of Tohono O'odham culture at the Amerind, seven members participated in a daylong basket weaving class taught by three Tohono O'odham weavers: Bernice Belin, Matilda Saraficio and Regina Siquieros. After a brief introduction to the materials and tools, we were shown how to make the starting knot, how to begin the coiling process, and how to actually build a basket. The hours flew by—filled with words of encouragement and gentle corrections, along with Tohono O'odham stories and songs. By the end of the day, most of us had managed to produce a crude, coaster-sized replica of a modern O'odham basket! With aching hands and cramped fingers, we all had



*Matilda Saraficio helps a student with her coiling.*

an infinitely greater appreciation for the skill and artistry of our instructors. Working with Matilda, Bernice, and Regina had enabled us to make a real connection with the traditions and techniques of these special women, and through them to the generations of weavers whose work is preserved at the Amerind Foundation.

*by Linda Stacy*

# CHARLIE DI PESO 1920 - 1982

Charlie not only shaped the character of the Amerind Foundation that we know today, but he was also a dominant force in American archaeology. His extremely provocative ideas about the prehistory of northern Mexico and the American Southwest has forced archaeologists to see what was usually considered separate cultural regions as one tightly integrated zone.

Charlie didn't even use the term "Southwest." He preferred the term "Gran Chichimeca" that included much of northern Mexico and what is typically considered the Southwest. Of his many excavation projects his most famous effort was at Casas Grandes (Paquimé) in Chihuahua where he tested his ideas about the relationships that existed between Mexico and the prehistoric cultures of Arizona and New Mexico. Charlie's ideas were controversial and remain so to this day. He enjoyed the provocative role he played in taking on the established views of the archaeological profession, and while he was considered an archaeologist he was much more than that. He held the presidency of the largest archaeological organization in the United States (The Society for American Archaeology) and was awarded the most prestigious honor in Southwestern and Central American archaeology, the A. V. Kidder medal. But his interest was in the research questions he asked, and he didn't care what formal academic discipline supplied the data to answer those questions. He used not only the methods and theory of archaeology and anthropology, but also history, folklore, economics, botany, geography, and linguistics. Perhaps the best example of his willingness to use any expert to answer his research questions was when he discovered that much of Casas Grandes had burned. He brought in an arson investigator to explore the possibility that the fires were purposely set.

A wise man once said, "To teach is to be immortal," meaning, of course, that knowledge is passed from one generation to the next. Charlie was not known as a teacher – but he should have been. While he never held a professorial position, he was responsible for mentoring many younger scholars – including me. He also instigated an intern program with students from Beloit College (his undergraduate alma mater), and his dedicated work on behalf of Cochise Community College led them to name the library after him. Charlie, and his wife Fran, "adopted" several young Mexican students, helping them financially and training them in

*Most people know the serious scientific side of my father and know him through his books or professionally. There was an artistic side to him that never ceased to amaze me. I was probably in high school and we were visiting friends with a piano, and out of the clear blue he sat down and began to play. At first I thought it would be like chop sticks ... but he was playing classical music from memory with no sheet music ... I never knew until that point that he could play anything, much less classical music from memory. - David Di Peso*



*... he was pretty much always receptive to suggestions & ideas--unless he was having one of those rare days when the German in him came to the fore. I learned to say "Okay," go away & come back the next day when he was back in his fortunately dominant Italian mode. - Gloria Fenner*



## PEOPLE OF AMERIND

*Painting was also within his realm of accomplishments... Some dear friends of theirs, George and Laura Scott, had always wanted Dad to paint a picture for them, but he was, by then, always too busy, except for one night at the Scott's dining room table, after several hours of poker and copious quantities of "Old Tavola" wine. Laura asked Dad for a picture. So he proceeded to paint a mural on her kitchen wall ... of a skeleton, anatomically correct, of course, leaning against the corner with a Mexican sombrero and an empty bottle of Tequila. Across the way was a large saguaro cactus with two vultures looking hungrily down at the poor skeleton. The mural was painted with a stick of charcoal from the fireplace on a white wall. - David Di Peso*

archaeological techniques. Even during periods of intensive excavation the Amerind was open three days a week by appointment for anybody who wanted to tour the exhibits or see the collections.

The Di Peso era was characteristic of a period of American archaeology that is no longer possible. It was a period of time I characterize as the era of the Lone Scholar. Charlie was one of a handful of men (and they were almost all men then) who could envision a huge project (such as digging much of a major city in a foreign country), garner the funding, direct the entire excavation effort, oversee the artifact analysis after the excavation, and shepherd the monumental effort of eight volumes of the Casas Grandes

report through to publication. Large scale excavation projects are now a team effort with many specialists ranging from experts in identifying animal bone to geologists, all having an intellectual stake in the enterprise. Along with the team approach, the expense of large excavations has skyrocketed so that a project like the Casas Grandes program would be unlikely to obtain the funds needed to do the work on a scale that would be required to answer the questions Charlie was interested in.

Because American archaeology has changed from the Di Peso era the Amerind Foundation has evolved into an institution that no longer conducts

excavations. Instead, it fulfills its research role by hosting seminars and workshops that bring archaeologists together to address broad research topics, such as the one just held on the Hohokam culture of southern Arizona. The workshops have resulted in books that make major advances in anthropological knowledge. The Amerind Foundation, therefore, has the important role of facilitating the research of many different archaeologists who are addressing important research questions. The Di Peso era is over, but Charlie's vitality and originality will, we hope, never go out of style.

by George J. Gumerman

*... books were stacked everywhere... You could never just sit down to talk with Charlie without first clearing off the chair. And the amazing thing was that he seemed to know exactly what was in every book! If he asked me to check a reference, he'd say something like "It's in Amsden, Chapter 3, left hand page, third paragraph down"—and nine times out of ten, there it was... - Linda Stacy*



**THE AMERIND FOUNDATION**  
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT THE AMERIND

### **April 12**

“What Can Archaeology Teach Us About the Present and Future.” Presentation by Dr. Ware. Sunsites Gem and Mineral Club, 7:00 p.m.

### **April 13**

Presentation to the Sierra Vista Archaeological Society by Dr. Ware.

### **April 17**

Tohono O’odham Arts Day with crafts, food and music  
Used Book Sale

### **April 18**

Tohono O’odham Basket Weaving Class  
Used Book Sale continues

### **April 25**

Native artists in the Museum, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### **May 2**

Presentation by Dr. Ware at Cochise College, Benson Campus, 2:00 p.m.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL US AT 520-586-3666**  
**OR VISIT US ON THE WEB: [WWW.AMERIND.ORG](http://WWW.AMERIND.ORG)**