

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERIND FOUNDATION

FALL 2005 (VOL 2, NO. 4)

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. Barbara Hanson, editor/art; Maureen O'Neill, technical editor; C. Charnley, design and layout.

ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE TROWEL'S EDGE

In October the Amerind hosted its second annual Society for American Archaeology Symposium, this year entitled Indigenous Archaeology at the Trowel's Edge: *Exploring Methods of Collaboration and Education*. The symposium, chaired by Dr. Stephen Silliman of the University of Massachusetts-Boston, brought together a dozen scholars from universities and Indian nations throughout the U.S. and Canada to address issues of growing concern about the way archaeology is practiced in North America. The new approach, called "indigenous archaeology," involves the active collaboration of archaeologists and indigenous communities

in the reconstruction and telling of Native American histories. At the Amerind seminar native and non-native scholars shared their experiences in joint field research, field training programs, and publication efforts.

To highlight a couple of case studies at the symposium from the Southwest region: The University

of Arizona archaeological field school, in operation since the 1930s, has taken a new tack under the direction of Professor Barbara Mills, who restructured the curriculum three years ago to make it more community oriented, collaborative, and participatory. Although traditional field and laboratory skills are still taught, ethics and heritage management were added to the curriculum, and the primary focus of the program is to provide students with the skills necessary for working in and with indigenous communities; in the case of the UA program, the White Mountain Apache Tribe of eastern Arizona.

Another approach to indigenous archaeology, presented by Davina Two Bears, Program Manager for the Navajo Nation Archaeology Department at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, is to train Native peoples to do their own archaeological research. The Navajo Nation has developed its own tribal archaeology program, in cooperation with



Bottom Row, I-r: Davina Two Bears, Barbara Mills, Kathy Sebastian, Michael Wilcox, Elaine Thomas. Top Row, I-r: Stephen Silliman, Kent Lightfoot, George Nicholas, Russ Handsman, Jack Rossen, Jeff Bendremer, Jordan Kerber

the Department of Anthropology at NAU, with the goal of training future generations of Navajo archaeologists to undertake cultural resource management surveys and excavations on Navajo Nation lands.

In addition to these two very different cases from the Southwest, the book

that will come out of the Trowel's Edge seminar will provide case studies from across North America that will, we hope, serve as a model for future collaborative research between archaeologists and Native Americans. This is an exciting new direction for American archaeology, and the Amerind is delighted to be involved.

GEOLOGY OF AMERIND

Visitors to the Amerind are often curious about the spectacular rock formations that can be seen from the museum. This rocky section of the Little Dragoon Mountains is called Texas Canyon (for the homesteaders who came from Texas in the 1890s) and geologists refer to the rock here as the Texas Canyon quartz monzonite. Quartz monzonite is an igneous rock crystallized from magma (molten rock) slowly beneath the surface of the earth. It is composed of several minerals, including quartz, biotite, and two kinds of feldspar.

> The Texas Canyon granite is young in relation to the other rocks of the Little Dragoons, being crystallized about 50 to 55 million years ago, long after the extinction of the dinosaurs. Subsequent erosion exposed this rock and as the softer materials around it were worn away, the harder, more resistant rocks remained high. Weathering

by water and oxygen, a process still going on today, further eroded the boulders, forming the rounded corners, spires and balanced rocks so distinctive here.

The Little Dragoons are part of a larger region of similar mountain ranges, separated from each other by intervening valleys or "basins," that is called the "Basin and Range province," a region which stretches eastward from California to western Texas and southward from Oregon and Idaho to central Mexico. This mountainous topography continues to be formed by the stretching and thinning of the earth's crust.

As part of the Amerind's educational mission to help the public understand and appreciate our surroundings, we will soon be offering a brochure written by Dr. W. Scott Baldridge, a geologist with the Los Alamos National Laboratory, to answer many of the questions about the geology here. Make sure to pick up a copy of the brochure when it becomes available at the museum desk to learn more about:

- The specific minerals of the rocks
- The details of how the rocks are shaped
- Why Texas Canyon looks different than the rocks in the Chiricahuas

THE PUEBLO WORLD TOUR - MAY 11-15, 2006

Next May, Amerind members will have a unique opportunity to experience a place where present meets past in a way seen nowhere else in the US. Immersing ourselves in two thousand years of cultural continuity and

change in the Four Corners region, our tour will take us to the Pueblo communities of Acoma, Zuni and Hopi, where the present day people still live in ancestral communities established nearly one thousand years ago. We'll also explore the spectacular ancestral Puebloan sites at Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde and Canyon de Chelly.

A special feature of this trip

will be the interplay between our trip leaders. Dr. Joseph Suina, former governor of Cochiti Pueblo and professor of Education at University of New Mexico, will give us his perspective firmly rooted in traditional Pueblo culture. Dr. John Ware, director of the Amerind, will speak from his experience conducting archaeological and ethnohistorical research in the Four Corners for over 35 years. Our

small group of participants will be treated to the singular experience of exploring this area with these two guides telling interweaving stories from the very different viewpoints of cultural insider and expert outsider.

We will be sending out the itinerary and other information about this unique educational opportunity to all our members soon, or if you would like to call or e-mail with

questions or to reserve a place on the tour, please contact Jill Williams at 520.586.3666, ext.17, or jillwilliams @amerind.org.



FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Inupiaq

By Walter Van Horn, collections curator at the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Anchorage, Alaska

I remember being stopped dead in my tracks the first time I saw the hat. It was nearly twenty years ago. I was taking a museum training course at the Arizona State Museum in Tucson and the class was on a field trip to the Amerind Foundation in Dragoon. As I walked slowly through the collections storage area I suddenly saw the hat, spectacular and rare, made by the Alutiiq people of coastal Alaska, probably not much later than the mid 19th century. Conical in shape, with a flat, truncated top, it was made of finely twined spruce root and painted with the abstract design of some creature. It was heavily decorated with glass trade beads, dentalia shell (a sea shell from the Vancouver Island area traded over western North America), and two long bundles of sea lion whiskers. I slowly knelt down to stare at it.

I had never actually seen such a hat before, but knew of them from books and museum catalogs. Most were in European collections, brought home by

Russian explorers and Russian American Company officials. One had been sent to England by the explorer Captain James Cook in the 1780s. As luck would have it, last year a similar hat, still owned by a prominent Creole (Russian and Native) family from Alaska, came

to auction at Bonham and Butterfield's in San Francisco. No one Alaska museum had the money to buy it but the Alutiiq Museum of Kodiak and my museum, the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, scraped up the funds to make a successful joint bid. Now we are in the very unusual position of sharing ownership of this very fine piece.

Shortly after our purchase my wife and I were making plans to vacation in Arizona. Remembering what I had seen almost 20 years before, I contacted the Amerind Foundation and asked permission to examine and photograph the hat. In January 2005, Amerind staff ushered me into the storage area and I was able to examine the hat at length, photograph it, and compare it to photographs of our hat.

There is little known about the Amerind's hat. It was part of a collection of Indian materials purchased by the Amerind in 1944 from the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, whose collections now form the core of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. (Amerind's founder, William S. Fulton, was a long time member of the Board of Directors of the Heye Foundation.) The hat was collected between 1860 and 1882, and there are a number of other fine pieces from Alaska in that collection, including an Alutiiq baidarka (kayak) model with several figures, at least one of which was wearing a conical spruce root hat. (See photo below).

According to Bill Holm*, an expert on Northwest Coast Indian artifacts, the conical spruce root hat probably originated among the Tlingit, a Northwest Coast Tribe. The Alutiiq, who are related to the Eskimo of Alaska's Bering Sea coast, inhabited the Pacific coastal area west of the Northwest Coast Indians. Although hostile to the Northwest Coast Indians, they apparently copied some Tlingit Indian objects, but added substantially to the form. The Alutiiq craftsmen simplified the rigid style of Northwest Coast totemic imagery, and added beads, shells, and the large bundles of sea lion whiskers. Also added was a wood or bone appendage, about an inch long, tied to the top of the hat with a woven cover.

There is much we wish we knew about these finely made hats with their elaborate decorations. Why were they worn? What was the creature painted on the hat, and why was it important? Was the appendage on the top of the hat an amulet, to ensure success in the hunt and a safe return? Were the hats passed down in a family, gaining power and prestige for the owners, or did each man have to earn his own prestige, building up the wealth and hunting success that was demonstrated by the valuable trade beads, dentalium shells, and the whiskers of the large sea lions. We do not know. Alutiiq elders today can tell us some stories about the past, but some cultural information is no longer available due to the passage of time and events. The Alutiiqs suffered under the forced labor of Russian rule (1784-1867) and the population was severely reduced by smallpox and other epidemics. Many Russians intermarried with the Alutiigs, and after a time, Russian culture became a part of Alutiiq life. American rule after 1867 increased immigration from America and Scandinavia. Schools were established

and the children were forbidden to speak their own language. The strength of Alutiiq culture is certainly evident today in the creation of their own museum, and it is

reassuring to know that they now have (shared with the Anchorage Museum) one of these wonderful hats, too.

*Bill Holm, "Art and Culture Change at the Tlingit-Eskimo Border," in *Crossroads of Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska,*" edited by William W. Fitzhugh and Aron Crowell, 1988, Smithsonian Institution, pages 281-293.

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CULTURAL COLLAPSE: LESS

by John

Jared Diamond's most recent book, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*,* a follow up on his award winning *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (1997), has maintained a prominent place on the New York Times best seller list for much of 2005. The book describes the histories of societies from prehistoric times to the present that failed catastrophically, in most cases because they mismanaged scarce resources and fragile ecosystems, or made decisions that restricted their survival options when external conditions deteriorated. Diamond's preeminent example of cultural collapse comes from Easter Island in the southeastern Pacific, famous for its monolithic carved basalt heads—some weighing in excess of 70 tons—which served as mute witness to the collapse of Polynesian society on the island during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

When Easter Island was first populated in the tenth century AD the sixty-six square mile island supported a dense subtropical rainforest. During their occupation of the world's most remote piece of terra firma (the nearest land is 1,300



miles away!) the Easter Islanders chopped down every tree on the island, in part, archaeologists think, to help transport and erect those massive stone monuments to their ancestors. Without trees to build watercraft, deep water fish and marine mammal resources, once a dietary staple, could no longer be exploited. With the loss of a forest canopy wind and rain washed away top soil that had sustained the islander's taro and sugarcane fields. By the seventeenth century Easter Islanders were starving to death and the collapse of their society came in a spasm of violence and cannibalism as the island's scarce food resources dwindled. As testimony to the

structural collapse of Easter Island society, nearly all of the stone ancestor monoliths were toppled and defaced.

Elsewhere in *Collapse* Diamond describes the failure of ancient societies from Arctic Greenland to the Mayan rainforest to the desert Southwest, and he expands the story of collapse to include modern cases as diverse as Rwanda and eastern Montana, but Easter Island remains his most poignant case study—perhaps because the remoteness of Easter Island is such an obvious metaphor for our earth. Isolated as it is, there was no one to save Easter Islanders from themselves. In an age in which the earth's dwindling rainforests are being destroyed for the sake of short term profits, as unchecked population growth threatens global economic and political stability, and as technological "progress" threatens to disrupt global climate systems, the specter of Easter Island looms large for anyone who appreciates that history is often repetitive.

Of course, archaeological lessons are not always about catastrophe and collapse, and as I read through the case studies of cultural collapse in Diamond's book I couldn't help think of some archaeological success stories. For example, the most persistent of all human societies are hunter-gatherer bands, and quantitative studies of hunter-gatherers in the twentieth century belie many of the myths that farmers and descendants of farmers invent about these simple societies. Far from living on the brink of survival, twentieth century hunters and gatherers had such intimate knowledge of their environment and exploited such a wide variety of edible wild resources that they rarely concerned themselves with storing food as a hedge against scarcity. Moreover, studies show that the health and nutrition of contemporary hunters and gatherers are at least as good as most farmers, and hunter-gatherers maintain their populations at levels well below the carrying capacity of their environment through a variety of fertility control measures (from the jaundiced perspective of "civilized" society, it was long assumed that hunter-gatherer populations were low because of high mortality rates). Perhaps most surprising of all, many hunters and gatherers do not have to work very hard to make a living. In fact, recent studies have characterized hunter-gatherers as some of the most leisured people in the world.

Now it is true that some of the optimistic conclusions of these studies have been challenged in recent years and some scholars have rightly pointed out that hunters and gatherers in especially harsh environments like the Arctic do, in fact, starve to death with some regularity. Nevertheless, the nutrition, health, labor, and leisure time statistics compiled for modern hunters



and gatherers came for the most part from groups that had already been pushed into some of the most marginal environments on the planet—places like the Kalahari Desert of southern Africa and the western deserts of Australia. Prior to the agricultural revolution when our hunter-gatherer ancestors occupied the world's prime real estate, the challenges must have been fewer and the quality of life incomparably better than it is today. Is it any wonder that hunting and collecting was the dominant mode of subsistence for 99% of



ONS FROM ARCHAEOLOGY

A.Ware



our species' history, or that humans discovered and first occupied every continent on earth, with the exception of Antarctica, not as farmers or industrialists, but as hunters and gatherers?

What can we learn from our hunter-gatherer ancestors and contemporaries? One of the most important lessons concerns flexibility and adaptive resilience, encapsulated in the old axiom about putting all one's eggs in a single basket. The San hunter-gatherers of southern Africa can name over a hundred species of wild edible

plants in the Kalahari Desert, of which they regularly exploit only a handful of favorite comestibles. If their favorite foods should fail, they can fall back on dozens of less desirable foods until their priority resources bounce back. It's like food in the freezer or money in the bank, except it's more reliable. And the residential mobility of hunters and gatherers—who must go to where the food is rather than wait for the food to come to them—requires small families and careful attention to child birth spacing, constraints that are relaxed when people settle down on farms where large families supply much needed labor for the fields. The explosive growth of human population that currently strains earth's resources was a byproduct of the agricultural revolution.

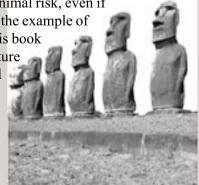
The good news is that we can put some of these lessons to use without becoming hunters and gatherers again. We can become *virtual* hunters and gatherers by consciously refraining from making technological commitments that

lock us into an undesirable future by foreclosing on future options. To begin down this road we must first acknowledge our basic ignorance about the future and design systems that are resilient as opposed to maximally productive. And we can learn from our own mistakes in this regard. When commitments were made to petroleum-based energy systems in the late nineteenth century, who could have predicted the long-term risks associated with that commitment? Who, for example, predicted the impact of the automobile on the quality of our natural and cultural environment: the air pollution, suburban sprawl and inner city decay, and the tens of thousands of traffic fatalities on our nation's highways each year? What turn of the century prophet predicted the geopolitical consequences of oil scarcity? Hunters and gatherers instruct us that the best way to deal with future uncertainty is to design systems that, above all else, can accommodate the unpredictable and absorb the unexpected; systems that have sufficient diversity and flexibility to accommodate future events in whatever unexpected form they may take.

With a diverse energy system, for example, if unpredictable adverse effects emerge in the future from any single energy source, we will have preserved the option of curtailing that component of the energy mix without major system consequences. But when we put all or most of our energy eggs in one basket, as we did with petroleum at the turn of the twentieth century, then we are likely to find we have no choice but to live with the noxious consequences of our commitment, or else devise expensive technological remedies that treat the symptoms of the illness but not the underlying disease (remedies that often have their own adverse side effects).

As the world fills up with people and as our ecosystems are stretched to the point of collapse, will the global community heed the lessons of our hunter-gatherer forebears or will we follow the route of Easter Island? Will our political and economic organizations lead us into an uncertain future down a path of minimal risk, even if

it means foregoing perpetual economic growth and maximum profits, or will we follow the example of the man who chopped down the last tree on Easter Island? Jared Diamond concludes his book with a plea that we begin to tackle these questions today rather than pass them on to future generations, but judging from modern consumption patterns, delayed gratification and long-range planning and sacrifice are not the strong suits of modern complex societies. The Iroquois believed that we should live our lives today so that the earth will be a better place for the "seventh generation" of future children. America's founding fathers learned some important lessons in representative democracy from the Iroquois, and Jared Diamond's book reminds us that there is still much to be learned—and perhaps unlearned—from the anthropological enterprise.



*Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, 2005, Jared M. Diamond, Viking Penguin Group, New York, 575 pgs., ISBN 0-670-03337-5

... NATURE SIGHTINGS AT THE AMERIND

by Barbara Hanson

What a lush summer we had this year! Over 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches of rain in July and August and by September the hills around the Amerind were verdant with more species of grasses and wildflowers than I've seen since I came here. It's also been a good year for watching the story of a particular plant unfold before my eyes - a plant with which I had only a vague familiarity before I moved to southeastern Arizona. Somewhere in someone's dusty nature collection I had seen the strange curled object called a devil's claw and at some time I had heard that devil's claw was used by the O'odham basketmakers for the black patterns against the lighter ground of

beargrass and yucca. I had also been told that the more devil's claw in a basket, the more valuable it was. But I never understood the alchemy that turned this dry, gray claw-thing into such striking designs.

The story of my devil's claw education began on July 16th with the first summer rains of the year. Within days, it seemed, the stout, pinkish stems and hairy leaves of devil's claw started appearing along the road. Every morning on my walk I'd check the plants for blossoms, which usually appear only a few weeks later. This is the annual devil's claw, *Proboscidea parviflora*, that favors disturbed ground like the edges of roads and agricultural fields. It looks out of place in the desert with its large, soft leaves and tropical-looking white or pink flowers marked on the throat with yellow and purple, almost orchid-like in their showy beauty.

It's what happens after the flowers are finished, though, that makes them so special and what I watched for every morning on my walk. In early September I saw the first green seedpods forming, velvety with fine hairs. It's this shape of the fleshy pod with its single, long, curling horn that inspires its other common name – unicorn plant. The pods seemed to swell visibly overnight into fat, green fruits and I hoped they would survive the hungry mammals that find them tasty. Last year all the green pods I had found were eaten overnight – deer? javelina? squirrels?

So last year I never got to see the third stage of development that gives this plant the name of devil's claw, when the outer green flesh dries up and a woody pod is left, eventually splitting apart at the horn to form two hooked claws which grab onto the ankles of any mammal passing by. As the deer (or human!) walks, the ripe seeds spill out on new ground, ensuring the dispersal of the plants. This year I was lucky – they weren't all eaten – and

at the end of September the pods I was monitoring were starting to dry up and split open. This is the part of the plant that has become legendary as one

of the most widely used decorative fibers for southwestern native baskets, from prehistoric times to today. Picking up one of the

dry claws from the roadside I marvel at how someone could weave with a material that feels so brittle and hard. I've learned that the dry pods are soaked in

water before splints are stripped off the claws. Also a big change that occurred in the second half of the 19th century made devil's claw even more valuable as a basket material than it had been – it was domesticated! Among the O'odham peoples of southern Arizona, a cultivated variety, *Proboscidea parviflora hohokamiana*, began to appear, which had longer, more pliable fibers and seeds that germinated more readily than the wild type. This new variety provided such an improved material to work with that it began to appear in the baskets of more than 25 native cultures across the southwest in less than one hundred years and was grown by people living far from the original range of wild devil's claw.

The Amerind collection includes many examples of basketry using devil's claw, such as the large Akimel O'odham (Pima) basket in the photo. The two smaller ones are new Tohono O'odham baskets for sale at the Amerind shop, just waiting for you to take a bit of devil's claw magic back to vour own home!

THE BACK PAGE

The extended book review and discussion in the center spread article of this issue is a significant departure for the Amerind Quarterly. Although modern archaeology traces some of its major roots back to affluent nineteenth century antiquarians and collectors, by the early twentieth century archaeology had emerged as a modern social science; one of the few scholarly disciplines that systematically collects and analyzes data on long term culture change and the rise and fall of world cultures. Of course, the study of the past has always been relevant to understanding the present and predicting future trends, however, archaeologists rarely contribute to national debates about economic growth, long-range planning, energy development, environmental protection, etc.

Part of the problem lies with a professional reward system that is based on writing for members of the profession rather than the public at large (significantly, one of archaeology's best current popularizers, Jared Diamond, is a biogeographer with little formal training in archaeology). Ultimately, archaeological writing will be directed toward current issues when universities alter their promotion systems to reward different kinds of scholarly publications. In the meantime, museums and research institutes like the Amerind have an added responsibility to take archaeological knowledge to a wider audience. Henceforth, space will be devoted in our newsletter to archaeological and anthropological perspectives on a range of contemporary issues, by both Amerind staff and guest authors. If you have thoughts or suggestions about this new direction, we would appreciate hearing from you.

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

Yes, I want t	o become a	member!
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Please enroll me at the level checked.

	Individual Family Cochise Club San Pedro Club Casas Grandes Club	\$30 \$40 \$100-\$499 \$500-\$999 \$1,000 or above	Check enclosed \$ (Please make payable to Amerind Foundat I prefer to charge my VISA Master Card Credit Card Number Expiration Date Signature This is a GIFT membership at the Leve	
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□ Please check this box if you do NOT want your name shared with our partner organizations.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT THE AMERIND

December 19, 2005 Volunteer and Staff Holiday Party.

January 7, 2006 Art Exhibit Opening Painting Our O'odham Way of Life, featuring the work of Tohono O'odham artists, Leonard Chana and Michael Chiago.

January 19, 2006 Brown Bag Lecture.

February 4, 2006 Native Voices - a program featuring Native writers.

February 16, 2006 Brown Bag Lecture.

February 25, 2006 Botany walk with Barbara Hanson for members. Meet at the museum entrance at 11:00 a.m. March 16, 2006 Brown Bag Lecture.

March 18, 2006 Cultural Day at the Amerind.

March 27, 2006 Volunteer Appreciation Day.

March 29, 2006 Botany walk with Barbara Hanson for members. Meet at the museum entrance at 11:00 a.m.

April 13, 2006 Brown Bag Lecture

April 15, 2006

Botany walk with Barbara Hanson for members. Meet at the museum entrance at 11:00 a.m.

April 22, 2006

Seven Generations: Native perspectives on the health of our world.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL US AT 520-586-3666 OR VISIT US ON THE WEB: WWW.AMERIND.ORG