

Southwest Galleries in Griffith Park



The vast Southwest Museum collection will become more accessible to the public when four galleries devoted to the Southwest collection open in Griffith Park. This will be in addition to two galleries in Mt. Washington. To date, less than 2% of the collection has ever been on display. The state-of-the-art facility at Griffith Park will allow the Autry to display, conserve, and catalogue the collection for greater access to curators, scholars, and the public.

The new Southwest galleries at Griffith Park are complemented by the Museum of the American West galleries, open storage spaces, and Convergence Canyon, an innovative exhibition and public space that integrates art and artifacts from the Autry and Southwest Museum collections to introduce the diversity and complexity of the American West.

Southwest Museum of the American Indian Celebrating 100 Years

2008 • Issue 2



Southwest Museum of the American Indian.

The Southwest Museum is marking its 100th year with much needed repair and structural improvements to the rare and extensive Southwest collection and the landmark Southwest Museum building. These improvements will ensure that visitors in the next 100 years will enjoy a safer, more vibrant space and artifacts and artwork that have been restored to their earlier splendor.

When the current rehabilitation project is completed in 2011, the new Southwest Museum Education and Cultural Center will open with exhibitions of Native American artifacts in two galleries as well as complementary education and cultural uses. The new Southwest Center will focus on expanding our understanding of history and contemporary lives in the Southwest.

Although the galleries are temporarily closed during the rehabilitation, the Southwest Museum remains an active destination, with a host of fun activities and events. Take advantage of the special celebrations, ongoing family events, educational opportunities, and more. There is

so much to do and see at the Southwest Museum! Become a member and view the extensive, ongoing preservation efforts in special behind-the-scenes tours. Call 323.667.2000, ext. 326, for membership information.

For more information, visit our website at swmfuture.org.

◆ SOUTHWEST MUSEUM CENTENNIAL PROGRAMS

February - May 2008

In honor of the first 100 years, there is much to do and see at the Southwest. Mark your calendar!

Main Museum Events:

Saturday, February 23; 1 pm
Lecture: "A Power Iconography: Highlights of the Autry Library Research Collections"
Presented by Marva Felchlin, Director of the Autry Library

Saturday, March 29; 1 pm
Lecture: "Hidden Gems from the Southwest Museum's Basket Collection"
Presented by Bryn Potter, Southwest Museum Curator of Basketry

Saturday, April 26; 1 pm
Lecture: "Native Plants for Food and Medicine"
Presented by Barbara Drake, Gabrielino/Tongva

Saturday, May 3 through July 6, Lower Lobby
Exhibition: Who Remembers the Landmark Club? An Unknown Chapter in the Lummi Saga
Curated by Kim Walters, Director, Braun Research Library

Saturday, May 17; 1 pm
Lecture: "Preserving California: Charles Lummi and the Landmark Club"
Presented by Kim Walters, Director, Braun Research Library

Saturday, May 18; Noon to 5 pm
Museums of the Arroyo Day "MOTA"

Store Events:

March 8, April 12, May 10, June 14; 7 to 10 pm
"Second Saturday" Arroyo Art Walks
(Museum Store open evenings, 7 to 10 pm)

February 16, 17; Noon to 5 pm
Bernie Granados Show and Sale,
with continuous artist demonstrations and a Children's Art Workshop on Saturday at 2 p.m.

March 29, 30; Noon to 5 pm
Zuni Fetish Carvings and Native American Jewelry Show and Sale

April 19, 20; Noon to 5 pm
Shiprock Trading Post

Casa de Adobe Events:

February 23, April 19, June 28, August 30, October 25, December 20; 10 am
LA Conservancy Highland Park Walking Tour of Casa (book online at www.laconservancy.org)

April 5; 2 to 4 pm
Casa de Adobe Annual Open House

Braun Research Library Events:

Saturday, May 24; Noon to 5 pm
Poetry Readings and Workshop: Lummi Day

The Braun Research Library

Located in a separate building at the Southwest Museum, the library is open by appointment. 323.221.2164, ext. 255.

The Casa de Adobe

The Casa remains open for special activities and tours. Casa de Adobe is located at 4605 North Figueroa Street.

For the Kids

Bring the kids and settle in for fun, educational weekend activities at the Southwest Museum:

- StoryTime on the first Sunday from 1:30 to 2 pm
- Let's Make History on the second Sunday from 1 to 2:30 pm
- Kit and Kaboodle, a craft-making project in the Museum Store, on the third Saturday from 1 to 4 pm

Tours

Members can enjoy Southwest Preservation Tours, with advance registration strongly encouraged.

Lectures

Special interest lectures take place on the fourth Saturday of the month.

Museum and Museum Store

Open Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5 pm. Admission is free.

Location

The Southwest Museum is located at 234 Museum Drive in Mt. Washington and is easily accessible via the Metro Rail Gold Line, which stops directly across from the museum. From the Pasadena 110 Freeway, exit Avenue 43 and follow the green directional signs. 323.221.2164.

◆ RESTORATION OF THE COLLECTION



Top: Jacqueline Aguilar-Sethi, Collections Assistant, moving a group of beaded artifacts from the Caracol Tower to be cleaned. **Bottom:** (Left) Kwakiutl ceramic masks and figurines signed by Henry Hunt. (Right) Pomo feathered basket from North-Central California.

Preserving, Protecting, Restoring



Conor McCleary, Collections Assistant, preparing a condition report on a ceremonial skirt from Northwest California.

The Southwest Museum holds one of the nation's most important artifact collections, research library, and archives related to the American Indian. There are more than 250,000 objects in the collection, including 11,000 pieces of pottery, 13,000 baskets, 1,900 textiles, and many other important art and artifacts. Already fragile due to their age, these precious artifacts have been further damaged and put at risk due to the significant structural deterioration and inadequate storage facilities at the Southwest Museum.

Conservation and collection management activities are underway to save the collection. As part of the process, each piece is being cleaned, catalogued, and transferred from cramped, inappropriate storage in the Caracol Tower to museum-standard storage in the Southwest Museum exhibition galleries.

◆ RESTORATION OF THE SOUTHWEST MUSEUM



The building's exterior is in poor condition. Plaster in many locations is deteriorating due to cracking and water intrusion.

Repairing a Landmark Building

The Southwest Museum has suffered substantial damage since it was built in 1914. In the 1994 Northridge earthquake, the Caracol Tower sustained major damage, causing significant instability. More recently, heavy rains took their toll on the structure, especially the elevator tower and historic entrance that featured dioramas of Native American life. Other environmental and maintenance issues have added to the challenges.

Thanks to fundraising by the Autry National Center, the Southwest Museum building is currently undergoing major repair. Funded by grants from the California Cultural Historic Endowment (CCHHE) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), efforts are focused on sealing and waterproofing cracks to prevent further water damage and repairing the underlying structure that joins the Caracol Tower to the main building. The building will also get long overdue earthquake retrofitting. Plans also call for the museum's electrical system to be upgraded. The Autry has assembled an expert preservation consultant team led by Brenda Levin, FAIA, who is serving as project principal.



Tests were conducted in spring 2007 to determine the best method for removing and replacing plaster, in advance of repairing structural cracks in the Caracol Tower.

The galleries are closed due to extensive rehabilitation of the building and conservation of its rare collection of Native American and Meso-American artifacts, with the goal of moving most of the collection to a new state-of-the-art home in Griffith Park by 2011. When the infrastructure improvements are completed, the building will be opened for an enhanced cultural use, fulfilling founder Charles Lummis's vision and belief that all Indigenous peoples be understood, respected, and appreciated.

The Autry National Center has listed the Southwest Museum as a landmark of significant historic value on the National Registry of Historic Places. More than \$5 million has been invested to save the collection and stabilize the Arroyo buildings. The Autry anticipates allocating an additional \$1.5 million for continued preservation and rehabilitation this year.

◆ REPAIRING THE CASA DE ADOBE



The Casa de Adobe's kitchen stove, built entirely of adobe bricks, collapsed due to water leaks in February 2005.

Restoring a Cultural Monument



Historic adobe stove now restored.

We are thrilled to report that the Casa de Adobe is back in operation. Built in 1918, the Casa de Adobe is a replica of an 1800s California ranch house, using authentic adobe materials, and is a Los Angeles City Historic Cultural Monument. However, the winter rains of 2004–2005 caused major damage to the Casa, most significantly to the historic adobe stove. But thanks to comprehensive repairs, the Casa is well on its way back. To build a safer, stronger structure, the *cocina* (kitchen) stove, part of the roof above it, and the chimney and plaster from

both walls were demolished and rebuilt. As an added measure, the construction team fabricated a custom steel frame for the stove and lined the replacement chimney with concrete, to provide additional protection from storms and seismic activity. To properly support the new stove, the team excavated a few inches for a foundation—for that, archaeologist George Kritzman was brought in to oversee the process.

The Braun Research Library

The Braun Research Library supports the activities of the Southwest Museum of the American Indian, with a collection of over 50,000 books and serials, 2,000 sound recordings, 3,000 maps, 147,000 photographs, 3,000 works of art on paper, and 700 manuscript collections. The collection's strength is in the fields of ethnology, archaeology, linguistics, folklore, and the history of Arizona, California, and the Southwest. In addition, the Braun Research Library houses works on tribal histories, government, and social life and customs of the native peoples of the Americas, as well as papers of Charles Lummis, George Wharton James, Frank Hamilton Cushing, Frederick Webb Hodge, George Bird Grinnell, and Alanson Skinner.

The collection also includes sound archives, with over 700 wax cylinder recordings of Mexican American and Native American songs recorded by Charles Lummis between 1895 and 1912 in the Southern California area, which are believed to be the first recordings of Mexican American folk songs in California.

Access to the Braun Research Library is by appointment only, Mondays–Fridays, 9 am–5 pm (holidays excluded). Contact Kim Walters, Director of the Braun Research Library, for more information: kwalters@autrynationalcenter.org.