

Mint Edition

Newsletter of the Nevada State Museum, Carson City
Nevada Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs

Winter 2024
Vol. LII, No. 3

A Glimpse Behind the Scenes of Nevada State Museum Exhibits with Volunteers

by Dr. George Baumgardner

While visitors enjoy the exhibits at the Nevada State Museum, many aren't aware of the seemingly odd ways in which these displays are sometimes made. We're fortunate to have three highly talented staff members employed in our Exhibits Program. There is little these people can't create—from graphics that tell the story of Nevada's heritage to stands for displaying artifacts to replicas of animals and their poop.

Exhibits projects are greatly enhanced by dedicated people volunteering their time, skills, and energy, too. Exhibits staff and volunteers have been focusing on three major projects: History's *Mint to Museum* exhibit, which summarizes the history of the Carson City Mint and how it became this museum; Anthropology's new basketry gallery, showcasing the Museum's remarkable basket collection; and a complete re-creation of our Natural History exhibits.



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Top detail and above: Desert Tortoise

left: Volunteers Suemi Atherton (left) and Sandy Bell paint the edges of images for the new *Mint to Museum* exhibit. Photo: Jeanette McGregor



above left: Suemi Atherton working on a basketry gallery touch specimen.
above middle: Judy Anderson assembles cave popcorn for natural history.
above right: Jeanette McGregor (left), Exhibits Preparator, and Sandy Bell decorate the mine for a Halloween event.
bottom left: Sandy Bell does repair work on the cave display in *Under One Sky*.

All photos this page: Laurel Weil

Some of the tasks our volunteers perform include making cave formations, like cave popcorn and soda straws out of combinations of paper mâché, drinking straws, pipe cleaners, glue, and stone dust; painting the sides of mounted images so it looks like they wrap around the edges of the backing; repairing existing displays; and installing new exhibits.

Currently the Exhibits Program has three volunteers: Sandy Bell, Suemi Atherton, and Judy Anderson. Sandy continues to use the graphic skills she developed during her career, primarily in art museums, and says that while using her hands to create three-dimensional exhibit objects is new for her, she finds it enjoyable. When Suemi was asked why she chose to volunteer, she said she wanted to do something creative and enjoys how all these jobs are different. Judy Anderson has only recently begun helping in exhibits and has jumped right into making cave formations.

right: Sandy Bell (left) and Suemi Atherton build cave straw formations for natural history.

There are a myriad of things involved in the creation of museum displays. The processes can be very time-consuming. We are frequently in need of people that enjoy working with their hands and coming up with innovative ways to solve unique problems. We are thankful for the assistance provided by these volunteers.



Enter the Dragon for Lunar New Year

by Brett Fisher

If your Chinese Zodiac sign is the Dragon, then 2024 is yours to conquer. According to the Chinese Zodiac, the Year of the Dragon occurs every 12 years and 2024 is the next one on the calendar. Dragons are described in mythology as natural leaders filled with self-assurance. Their tenacity makes them ideally suited for taking on challenges.

The Nevada State Museum is once again celebrating the Lunar New Year in downtown Carson City, expanding this year with an opening ceremony performed by the Reno Chinese Dance Club on Friday evening, February 9, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

The first day of the Lunar New Year is February 10, 2024, and the Carson Valley Chinese Cultural Group leads our celebration on Saturday morning by telling the story of this traditional Chinese holiday through music and folk dance.

“Lunar New Year is a tradition that goes back to ancient times in China as a welcoming of Spring,” said Xian Carlson of the Carson Valley Chinese Cultural Group.

According to legend, the Chinese Zodiac calendar was established by the order in which invited guests—the signs of the Zodiac—had arrived for a Spring feast held in celebration of the new year.

The Lunar New Year celebration was introduced in the United States during the 1850s by Chinese immigrants who joined mining camps during the California Gold Rush and later followed the Central Pacific Railroad east.

Activities at the Nevada State Museum begin around 9:30 a.m. on the first-floor landing with Chinese noisemaker and dragon crafts, followed by the Carson Valley Chinese Cultural Group performance in the Dema Guinn Concourse.

Festivities culminate at 11 a.m. with the traditional Lion Dance parade leading a procession to the Children’s Museum of Northern Nevada, where the cultural fun continues. A tradition meant to bring good luck to those in its path, the Lion Dance parades up the sidewalk along Carson Street.

All of Saturday’s activities in the Dema Guinn Concourse are free. Admission to the rest of the Museum is \$10 for adults and free for members and visitors 17 and under. Admission is charged for Friday evening’s opening ceremony, except for members and visitors 17 and under.

“We invite the community to come out and join in the fun,” said Nevada State Museum Director Josh Bonde. “Lunar New Year at the Nevada State Museum is an exciting way to learn about the legacy of Chinese culture in the Silver State.”



top: Sonia Carlson dancing during the 2023 Lunar New Year celebration. Photo: Brett Fisher

above: Participants dancing with tambourines during the 2023 Lunar New Year celebration. Photo: George Baumgardner

left: Detail of costume used in the Lion Dance parade from the 2023 celebration. Photo: George Baumgardner



Unique Donation Offers Revealing Look at Striptease in Nevada

by Jan Loverin,
Curator of Clothing and Textiles

While giving a behind-the-scenes tour last month at the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textiles Center, a woman approached me and said, “I am the conservative daughter of a liberal mother . . . my Mom was a stripper.” Then she mentioned that, between she and her sister, they had her mother’s striptease clothes! I must admit, I was a bit dumbfounded. No one has ever offered the Museum a striptease outfit before!

Later on, I met with Donna and her sister, Kim, to see the ensembles and hear the story of their mom. Donna began by telling me that their mom was born in 1930 and moved to Reno in 1950. She held various occupations, including hairdresser, waitress, and ultimately became an exotic dancer at Club Basin Street in Reno in the 1960s.

It was a fascinating story and one that moved me greatly, as Donna described her mom as endearingly loving and having a personality “larger than life.” Indeed, when I looked at the collection of garments and accessories, which their mom, known by her professional name of Cimmeron the Gambling Strip, wore when working, I was amazed.



above: Promotional photograph of Cimmeron. Courtesy Nevada State Museum.

below left: Club Basin Street in Reno. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

There were several layers of clothing, each peeled off slowly, as Cimmeron danced burlesque-style, eventually revealing an almost nude woman with pasties and a G-string. As Donna pulled out the garments, she explained to me that her ensembles usually included a cape, an evening gown, panel skirt, two pairs of long gloves worn one on top of each other, jewelry, bra, pasties, and two G-strings.

As I began to understand Donna and Kim’s mom, they clearly remembered how passionate and supportive she was when they were growing up and recalled when she sat both girls down and explained to them that she was an exotic dancer. They thought she was just a fun mom who was a great listener, seamstress, and artist, who made a mean spaghetti!



Jan Loverin steaming Cimmeron's dress to remove wrinkles. Photo by NSM staff

Along with one full burlesque ensemble, Donna and Kim also had the full-length gown featured in Cimmeron’s promotional photograph, which I have now steamed and mounted as part of the Nevada State Museum’s clothing collection.

Calendar of Events

Check www.carsonnvmuseum.org/events for more detailed information

January 2024

Saturday, January 6

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, January 13

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, January 13

Family Fun Saturday: Nevada Reptiles, Auditorium, 10 am–2 pm

Saturday, January 20

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, January 27

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm



February 2024

Saturday, February 3

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Friday, February 9

Lunar New Year Opening Ceremonies
Dema Guinn Concourse, 6:30–8pm
Free for members and children ages 17 and under.



Saturday, February 10

Lunar New Year 2024 Celebration
Dema Guinn Concourse, 9:30 –11am
Admission in Concourse for the event is free.

Saturday, February 10

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, February 17

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Thursday, February 22

Frances Humphrey Lecture Series, TBD,
Dema Guinn Concourse, 6:30–7:30 pm

Saturday, February 24

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

March 2024

Saturday, March 2

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, March 9

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, March 9

Family Fun Saturday, TBD,
Auditorium, 10 am–2 pm

Saturday, March 16

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Saturday, March 23

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm

Thursday, March 28

Frances Humphrey Lecture Series, TBD,
Dema Guinn Concourse, 6:30–7:30pm

Saturday, March 30

Historic Coin Press No. 1 history and demonstration, 11 am–3 pm



Museum Director, Curator Honored by University of Nevada, Reno

by Brett Fisher

Two Nevada State Museum staff members were recognized this past fall by the University of Nevada, Reno, for their academic and professional accomplishments.



Dr. Anna Camp and UNR President Brian Sandoval.
Photo: Brin Reynolds, UNR

Drs. Joshua Bonde and Anna Camp were selected among university alumni A-listers as inaugural members of The Wolf Pack Way, a visual campus showcase of outstanding graduates.

Portraits of Bonde, Director of the Nevada State Museum, and Camp, Anthropology Curator and Tribal Liaison/NAGPRA coordinator, were printed on banners placed along a major pedestrian thoroughfare on campus. The Wolf Pack Way initiative, part of the university's sesqui-centennial celebration, is meant to promote the successes of university graduates.

Dr. Camp holds both master's and doctorate degrees in Anthropology from UNR with expertise in Native American culture and basketry. She first worked with indigenous tribes while completing an undergraduate honors thesis on Mountain Maidu basketry at the University of California, Berkeley. Following an internship at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City, she joined the curatorial staff full time in 2018 and continues serving the tribes of the Great Basin.

Dr. Bonde graduated from UNR with a bachelor's degree in biology and spent time working at the W.M. Keck Museum on campus. He later earned a master's degree from Montana State University, Bozeman, and a doctorate in Geoscience from UNLV. A paleontology expert, Dr. Bonde co-authored the name and description of Nevada's first dinosaur, *Nevadadromeus schmitti*, and also co-founded the Nevada Science Center in Las Vegas with his wife, Becky Hall, before being named Director of the Nevada State Museum in Carson City in June 2022.



UNR President Brian Sandoval and Museum Director, Dr. Josh Bonde. Photo: Brin Reynolds, UNR

Museum Welcomes New Education Curator

The Nevada State Museum is pleased to announce that Mahal Moon started as the Curator of Education on November 27, 2023.

Mahal is a native Nevadan raised in Fallon. She graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno, with a bachelor's degree in Anthropology and cut her teeth in the museum profession on the East Coast before coming back home to the Silver State.

"I take immense pride in being a Nevadan," Moon said. "My goal is to provide support to people from all walks of life in finding representation in this space and contributing to our state's story."

Moon said opening up the Museum to the community with new experiences is something she's really focused on.

"I look forward to collaborating with my Museum colleagues to create new opportunities for members of our community to connect with Nevada's natural and cultural heritage in meaningful and exciting ways," she said.



Mahal Moon. Photo: Jane Moon

Welcome to Our Newest NSM Members!

New Members

Jerry Arnold & Cathy Wencke
Jill & David Baker
Lynn Brown
Jannette Bryant
Robert Butler
Robert Casos & Theresa Bruno
Jorge Crespo
Kate & Joe Emery
Jayne & Bob Finkbohner
Betsy Fish
Patrick Fosco
Lois Gemme
Alan & Joelle Griffen
Richard Gumns
Margaret Hall
Chris Hancock
Ashley Hannah
Aaron Harroun
Bob & Linda Hersch
Beth & Farouk Hussein
Miranda Jones
Donna & Jim Koepp
Linda Law
Cody & Bailey Logan
Rosemary Manning
Dean & Kathy Mansfield
Dale McCombs
Janis Miller
Mark Minshew
Roberta Montgomery
Timothy Montgomery
Ken Morton & Diane Kennedy Sigala
Octavio & Veronica Nava
Rulon & Darikamane Olsen
Merlyn Paine
William & Frances Pierce
Paige Poulos
Kathleen Proctor
Jennifer, Shawn & Sophia Ruedy
Julia Ruedy
Cyneil Saxton

David Schmitt
Bill & Christine Seals
Loreen Smith
Roger & Janine Smith
Andrea Smutz
Lee & Babette Sperling
Jim Unroe
Frank & Rose Velasco
Mike Walsh
Natalie Wood
Emma Wynn
Karen Zavora

Enhanced Memberships

Contributing

Don Ketterling

Sustaining

John & Judy Barnett
Brad Bryson
Thomas Chin
Vicki & Brian Curwen
Harry Dent
Paul Franklin
Tom & Sherry Grundy
Barbara & Bob Harmon, Jr.
Dr. Bryan Hockett
Virgil & Linda Johnson
Elmer & Elisabeth Kanago
Daryl & Karen Klein
Raymond F Larochelle
Anne & Wayne Lenhares
Larry Marinell & Johanna Foster
Roland & Glenda Sammelman
David & Robin Shriver

right: Detail of 1920s green silk tunic, showcasing the handstitched beadwork.



775/687-4810
Fax 775/687-4168
carsonnmuseum.org

Josh Bonde
Museum Director, ext. 226
j.bonde@nevadaculture.org

George Baumgardner
Curator of Natural History, ext. 236
gbaumgardner@nevadaculture.org

Eugene Hattori
Curator of Anthropology, ext. 230
ghattori@nevadaculture.org

Jan Loverin
Curator of Clothing and Textiles,
775/687-6173
jloverin@nevadaculture.org

Kelly Brant
Membership Coordinator, ext. 224
membership@nevadaculture.org

Brett Fisher
Business Office Manager, ext. 222
bfisher@nevadaculture.org

Mahal Moon
Education Curator, ext. 243
mmoon@nevadaculture.org

Mary Covington
Registrar, ext. 240
mcovington@nevadaculture.org

Laurel Weil
Exhibits Manager, ext. 252
lweil@nevadaculture.org

Albert Depew
Facilities Supervisor, ext. 254
adepew@nevadaculture.org

Cayce Weislow
Museum Store Manager, ext. 244
c.weislow@nevadaculture.org

Indian Hills Curatorial Center
775/687-3002

Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile
Research Center
775/687-6173

Anthropology Resource Center
775/687-4810, ext. 229

Bretzlaff History Resource Center
775/687-4810, ext. 239 or 245

Natural History Resource Center
775/687-4810, ext. 236

The Nevada State Museum in Carson City is an agency of the Division of Museums and History within the Nevada Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs. The museum engages diverse audiences in understanding and celebrating Nevada's natural and cultural heritage.

State of Nevada
Joe Lombardo, Governor

Nevada Department of
Tourism & Cultural Affairs
Brenda Scolari, Director

Division of Museums
and History
Dan Thielen
Division Administrator

The Friends of the Nevada State Museum, a 501(c)(3) private nonprofit organization, supports the museum through volunteer assistance, fundraising, and advocacy. For more information contact Jim Spain, Chair at spainnopain@charter.net

The Nevada State Museum publishes the *Mint Edition* newsletter for the purpose of highlighting museum exhibits, education programs, special events, and collection activities.

Museum members receive the *Mint Edition* as a benefit of membership if they provide an email address.

Newsletter staff:
Brett Fisher, Editor

Sandy Bell, Graphic
Designer

Please address
all newsletter
communications to:

Nevada State Museum
600 North Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada
89701-4004
775/687-4810
Fax 775/687-4168



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Adults \$10

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\$75 family
\$125 sustaining
\$20 senior discount on any
membership level

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BA 2940
600 North Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4004