

FROM THE ARCHIVES

As part of our 100th Anniversary Celebration, David Wilcox is contributing several articles on the deep history of AAHS. Here is the fifth.

AAHS and the Hohokam Museums Association

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When the U.S. Census in 1920 unequivocally showed that Tucson was no longer the largest city in Arizona, its 20,000 being surpassed by Phoenix's 29,000, the Tucson business community acted quickly to redefine its image as not only a place for health seekers, but also a welcoming place for wealthy winter visitors and retirees. They established the Tucson Sunshine Climate Club as a publicity arm of the Chamber of Commerce (Drachman 1999; Sonnichen 1987). Arrangements were also made to build the luxurious 300-room El Conquistador Hotel out of downtown (where the El Con shopping center is today). Similar strategies were pursued in Phoenix, with construction of the Biltmore resort on Camelback Road (VanderMeer 2010): the race was on for economic rewards and political clout.

Thirty years later, by winning the placement of the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and the Hughes Aircraft Company (now Raytheon) in Tucson, businessmen like AAHS member Monte Mansfield and Roy Drachman (1999) helped Tucson keep pace with similar moves in Phoenix, and the 20,000 acres of developable land conveyed to Hughes made the 1950s an urban boom in Tucson, which led to a parallel expansion of the University of Arizona (UA) (Martin 1960). These large economic and political processes defined the context in which the UA Archaeology/Anthropology department and the AAHS grew and flourished.

One of the wealthy women who moved to Tucson in 1930 was Edith Bird Bass, whose husband Robert had been governor of New Hampshire, and whose mother, Anna Child Bird (1855–1942), had been the first woman on the Republican National Committee.

Anna's husband, Charles Sumner Bird, named for the famous Radical Republican abolitionist, twice ran unsuccessfully for governor of Massachusetts. Edith joined AAHS in 1934-1935 (AAHS Archives). Apparently, while visiting her daughter, Anna Bird went with her to see Byron Cummings' ambitious project at the Kinishba Ruin, near Whiteriver on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (Welch 2007) — and they were thrilled!



Byron Cummings (right); the man on the left is likely his long-time assistant, Turner Thompson.

Soon, they and their Tucson family and friends began to talk about forming a support group, but new urgency was given to that idea in March 1937, when the new president of the UA, Paul Burgess, moved to implement a Board of Regents' directive that all faculty over 70 years old should retire, with those still capable being given half-time appointments and half-pay (Riesen 1937). One of the nine faculty affected was Byron Cummings, then 76 (*Arizona Wildcat* 1938). In April 1937, the constitution and by-laws of the Hohokam Museums Association (HMA) were adopted (Wilcox 2005; also, Cummings Papers, MS 200, AHS Library), creating a new support group for both ASM and Byron Cummings.

The following partial list of the officers of the HMA (Wilcox 2016) indicates (*) those who were also AAHS members, showing a considerable overlap: *Thomas A. Hale Jr. (President; A. E. Douglass's nephew); *Professor Edward Payson Matthewson; *Miss Florence Louisa Pond; Mrs. Selim Maurice Franklin (nee Henrietta Herring); *Pell William Foster Jr.; *Professor Clara Lee Fraps Tanner; *Mr. and *Mrs. Herbert d'Autremont (Treasurer); *Mrs. Anna Mae McGrath (Secretary); *Mrs. Charles Sumner Bird; Miss Marian E. Child;

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Honorable and *Mrs. Robert Perkins Bass; Mrs. Joanne Bird Shaw Parker; *Miss Laura Lancing Page; *Reverend Victor Rose Stoner; *Professor A. E. Douglass; *Mrs. Melville Hanna Haskell; Byron Ivancovitch; *Edward Tadnell Nichols III; *Mrs. Muriel Thayer Painter; Mrs. Margaret Erwin Schevill; *Professor Charles Taylor Vorhies; Joseph S. Wright; Miss Florence Waterbury; General and Mrs. Charles Gates Dawes; Professor John James Thornber; Mrs. Cyril Charles Sanders (nee Phyllis Mansfeld [Monte's sister]); and *Miss Margaret C. Love. One can, today, readily Google these names to learn who they were.

One of them, Helen Congdon d'Autremont (1889–1966) had moved to Tucson with her wealthy family from Duluth, Minnesota, in 1929, became an AAHS member in 1934–1935, established the Inn Christopher Square for wealthy patrons in 1937 (Sonnichsen 1987:217), and was treasurer of the HMA. She was also a founding trustee of the Amerind Foundation, Prescott College, the Tucson Medical Center, and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. Finally, she was the founder and first president of the Tucson League of Women's Voters.

In 1952, Helen helped transfer the remaining funds of the HMA to the Cummings Publication Fund and became treasurer of its Council (*Prescott Evening Courier* 1952). Like her father, Chester Aldgate Congdon, she "was always a good citizen, eager to have [her] part in every forward movement in directions [she] judged wise" (Google). She died tragically in an automobile accident in 1966.

As a result of the strong moral and financial support of the members of AAHS and the HMA, Byron Cummings, as emeritus director of the ASM, 1938–1954, published a book about Kinishba in 1940, *Indians I Have Known*, and in 1952, at age 93, *The First Inhabitants of Arizona* (Bostwick 2006). Let that record be an inspiration to us all!

Suggested Readings:

Arizona Wildcat

- 1938 Museum director, law dean will retire, says Board of Regents; Oliver's position still unfilled; plans for stadium, health service discussed. Vol. XXVII(30), p. 1. Tucson.

Bostwick, Todd W.

2006 *Byron Cummings: Dean of Southwest Archaeology*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Drachman, Roy

1999 *From Cowtown to Desert Metropolis: Ninety Years of Arizona Memories*. Whitewing Press, San Francisco.

Martin, Douglas D.

1960 *Lamp of the Desert: The Story of the University of Arizona*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Prescott Evening Courier

1952 Byron Cummings council is formed. 2 June, p. 3, col. 6. Prescott.

Riesen, Emil Richert

1937 Riesen to Emil W. Haury, 9 March. Emil W. Haury Papers, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Sonnichsen, C. L.

1987 *Tucson: Life and times of an American City*. University of Oklahoma Press, Lincoln.

VanderMeer, Philip

2010 *Desert Visions and the Making of Phoenix, 1860-2009*. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Welch, John R.

2007 A Monument to Native Civilization: Byron Cummings' Still Unfolding Vision for Kinishba Ruins. *Journal of the Southwest* 49:1-94.

Wilcox, David R.

2005 Creating a Firm Foundation: The Early Years of the Arizona State Museum. *Journal of the Southwest* 47:375-410.

2016 Data Tables and Related Information on the History of the Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society, to 1956. Ms. on file, Arizona State Museum Library, University of Arizona, Tucson.

glyphs: Information and articles to be included in *glyphs* must be received by the first of each month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Contact me, Emilee Mead, at emilee@desert.com, or 520.881.2244.