

What's New at the Museum

Sunday, December 10, 2006, 3:00 - 5:00 Muheim Heritage House Christmas Reception

The Muheim Heritage House Committee invites you to their annual Christmas reception. The Muheim Heritage House is located on Youngblood Hill overlooking Brewery Gulch.

Tuesday, January 16, 2007 beginning at 5:30 'Museum Circle' Seminar

The Bisbee Council on the Arts & Humanities is offering "A Sensible Approach to Creating a Legacy through Charitable Giving" and information on how to become a "Museum Circle" Member. Museum Circle members are those who have made a bequest or have named the Bisbee Council on the Arts & Humanities as beneficiary on an IRA or other account. The new Pension Act allows you to take up to \$100,000 out of your retirement plan to donate to a charity. The seminar will be held in the Museum's Founder's Room. Refreshments will be served.

Saturday, February 24, 2007, beginning at 5:30 Bisbee Council on the Arts & Humanities Annual Membership Dinner

Carlos Schwantes, author of "Bisbee: Urban Outpost on the Frontier," "Visions & Enterprise: Exploring the History of Phelps Dodge Corporation, and the primary writer of our new exhibit - Digging In: Bisbee's Mineral Heritage will be our guest. Invitations to the dinner will be sent to all members in January.



Digging In: Bisbee's Mineral Heritage is now open to the public with rave reviews!



**PO Box 14
Bisbee, Arizona 85603**

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Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum, in association with the Smithsonian Institution

Newsletter

Issue #55, Winter 2006

Museums & Membership

Looking at museums from the inside out, we are a public trust working to fulfill our educational mission to preserve and communicate the history of Bisbee, Arizona. Long a world-class, copper-mining center, Bisbee's history traces the effects of industrial history and historical ideas upon individuals and community life. The Museum encourages visitors to recognize the similarities and differences to their own lives and to tie our shared past with the present.

But what are our perceptions of museums looking from the outside in?

First & Foremost, Museums are Educational Institutions

According to a report in the American Association of Museums website, public education, in its broadest sense, is best served not only by our schools and libraries, but also by our museums. As community centers, museums offer people of all ages and future generations access to our nation's cultural heritage. Our special role in public education is centered on our capacity to provide the public an interactive, object-based place to better understand our community, our nation, and our world.

The educational role of museums is at the core of our service to the public. Americans view museums as one of the most important resources for educating our children and as one of the most trustworthy sources of objective information. America's museums annually spend more than \$1 billion to provide over 18 million instructional hours in educational programming and exhibition. *Your Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum has served over 1,000 school children annually for the past three years.*

Museums are Civic Institutions

Museums - in the extraordinary variety of communities across the country that have created and cherished them - have a deeply rooted community connection that is uniquely their own. Americans from all income and education ranges visit museums. There are 2.3 million museum visits per day, adding up to 865 million visits per year. There are an estimated 17,500 museums in the United States, 75% of which are considered 'small' and over 40% are located in rural areas (that's us!). Surprisingly, among Americans age 18 or older, one in 480 is a museum volunteer! *Did you know that many of your friends and neighbors, approximately 1.5% of our resident population of approximately 6,000, are volunteers at the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum?*

Museums are Protectors of our Historic & Cultural Heritage

Organized as public trusts, American museums are grounded in the tradition of public service and hold their collections and information as a benefit for those they were established to serve. Museums spend approximately 1.1 billion annually to care for more



than 750 million objects in their collections. In a recent survey, after their families, Americans rank authentic artifacts in history museums most significant in creating a strong connection to the past. *Your Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum cares for a collection of over 27,000 artifacts, the core of the collection being the historic photographic archive.*

Museums are Key Partners in Travel & Tourism

Museums provide a common experience that families share across generations to share memories. Museums bring grandparents, parents, and children together to see history and culture come alive. Museums rank in the top three family vacation destinations. One-third of Americans say they visited a museum within the past six months. Tourists who visit museums spend nearly twice as much on their travel as those who do not!

Museums Play a Role in Attracting & Retaining Businesses

According to a recent National Governors Association Issue Brief: "Even in the most successful new economy regions, civic leaders are beginning to take stock of artistic and cultural assets, recognizing that they are essential to quality of life, which, in turn, is necessary to sustain growth in the new economy." *Our Museum averages 22,000 visitors each year. With the opening of our new exhibit, Digging In, we anticipate even greater numbers!*

ADD THIS ALL UP... BEING A MUSEUM SUPPORTER IS A PRETTY TERRIFIC THING!

So how does your membership help your local museum?

On the same American Association of Museums website, a second report offers a surprising (to me as your museum



director) scenario regarding the financial wherewithal of American museums. According to this report, the median cost of serving a visitor is \$21. A museum's earned income generates only about one-third of this amount. Private charitable donations are the largest source of operating income for museums (almost 35%). Government funding provides about 25% and investment income about 10%.

We here in Bisbee are clearly on the downward slope of this bell curve! Believe it or not, the 'median cost' of serving our customers is \$8! Our earned income generates 100% of this amount. We do apply for and receive very competitive state and federal grant funds and corporate donations, but such funds are project specific (such as our new Digging In exhibit). Our Board of Directors is working on establishing an endowment (more on this later), but until that time our investment income is 1 1/2% of a percentage of our dollars spent. Taken overall, this is where you, our members, come into play!

Currently, your Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum operates on approximately \$190,000 annually. Breaking this number down into its major income blocks, admissions generates 53% of our earned income, followed by the Museum Store (19%). Next up: **YOU!** Membership fees and member donations provide 10% of our earned income! The remaining 18% is derived from fundraising activities (again strongly supported by **YOU**, our members!) and services offered by the museum.

Your membership fees and donations assist in supporting the 'behind-the-scenes' business of running a museum to meet our responsibilities to our visitors, the community and to future generations. Salaries and payroll taxes, contract services, utilities and maintenance, liability insurance, store inventory and office supplies start adding up quickly! Running a nonprofit business is the same as running a regular business - we all have bills to pay! Your support helps us pay those bills, which in turn allows us to provide the educational, civic, preservation, and economic support expected of us as an active member of our community.

**ARE YOU IMPORTANT TO OUR MUSEUM?
YOU BET!**

Our New Membership Fee & Benefit schedule

The Governing Board has revised our membership fee schedule to both simplify its structure and add more benefits in appreciation of your continuing support. With the opening of the new exhibit and

the extremely positive response from our visitors, members, and Bisbee businesses, we are adding complimentary admission passes (see left) to our membership benefits structure.

All membership levels include the BASIC BENEFITS PACKAGE:

- *Unlimited free admission* to Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum Muheim Heritage House.
- *10% discount* on all purchases in the Museum Store
- Museum Newsletter
- *Advance notice* and a preregistration period on all Museum events. This is becoming an increasingly important benefit as all Museum events this year were sold out well before deadline!

Starting with the simplest membership category, the new fee and benefit schedule is:

Individual \$30

Individual membership includes the basic benefits package PLUS two complimentary Museum admissions passes for friends or visiting family members (= \$15 value).

Family \$40

Family membership includes unlimited Museum admissions for all family members of the immediate household under the basic benefits package PLUS two complimentary Museum admissions passes for friends or visiting family members who reside elsewhere (= \$15 value).

Patron \$75

Patron membership includes the basic benefits package PLUS four complimentary Museum admissions passes for friends or colleagues (= \$30 value) -or- joint membership with the Smithsonian Institution (= \$25 value).

Business \$75

Business membership resembles the Patron membership level, which includes four complimentary Museum admissions passes for colleagues or employees (= \$30 value)

Life \$350

Life membership includes all the basic membership benefits PLUS your name engraved on a copper plaque displayed on the Museum's membership boards. The real advantage of Life membership is doing away with the annoying yearly membership renewal reminders!

Heritage Keeper \$500 - \$2,500 Annual Donation

Brand new to our membership structure is the support of our members or businesses to give an annual donation to the Museum. With this membership level comes a host of wonderful benefits:

- Unlimited free Museum admission or small group tours with Museum Staff (reservations required);
- Use of Museum facilities for small meetings or receptions (once annually, reservations required); and
- Donor recognition in the Museum Newsletter.

Museum Circle

This is also a new membership category we are introducing for 2007. Museum Circle Members are those who have significantly contributed to the Museum Endowment, established by Alice Metz. On January 16, 2007, Board members Karen Justice and Stanley Stern will offer a seminar on the many options available when establishing a bequest to a charitable trust (see "What's Happening at the Museum" for more information on this new and exciting program).



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTIFICATION FOR 2007

Do you need to renew your membership?

YES **NO**

Your current membership status is _____

**Make Checks payable to
BCAH**

(Bisbee Council on the Arts & Humanities)

PO Box 14

Bisbee, Arizona 85603

Simply cut out this page and mail back with your membership