

EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE

Mills Collection

Native American Artifacts

Self-guided Tour



This world-class collection is on display as a self-guided tour in the College's Student Services Building, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Admission is free.

This booklet provides a background and insight of the collection with a map showing the display locations of EAC's Mills Collection in the College's Student Services Building.

History of the Mills Collection

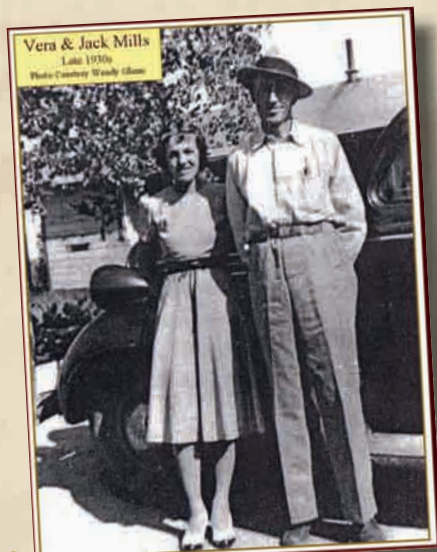
Ardent avocational archaeologists Jack and Vera Mills conducted extensive excavations on archaeological sites in Southeastern Arizona and Western New Mexico from the 1940s through the 1970s. They restored numerous pottery vessels and amassed more than 600 whole and restored pots, as well as over 5,000 other artifacts.

Most of their work was carried out on private land in southeastern Arizona and western New Mexico.

Towards the end of their archaeological careers, Jack and Vera Mills wished to have their collection kept intact and exhibited in a local facility. After extensive negotiations, the Eastern Arizona College Foundation acquired the collection, agreeing to place it on public display.

Showcasing the Mills Collection was a weighty consideration when the new Student Services building at Eastern Arizona College was being planned. In fact, the building, and particularly the atrium area of the lobby, was designed with the Collection in mind.

The public is invited to view the display. Admission is free and is open for self-guided tours during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Safford Basin Archaeology

The Safford Basin extends from today's town of San Carlos on the west to the Gila Box area east of the town of Solomon.

Some archaeologists have divided the Safford Basin into two districts: San Carlos to the west and Pueblo Viejo to the east. The dividing line occurs at the town of Bylas, near Fort Thomas.

Archaeological research indicates that the San Carlos district exhibits more cultural influences from the Hohokam who were concentrated in the Phoenix and Tucson Basins from A.D. 650 to A.D. 1450.

The Pueblo Viejo district exhibits more cultural influences from the Mogollon who inhabited much of east-central Arizona and west-central New Mexico, concentrated around the Mogollon Rim.

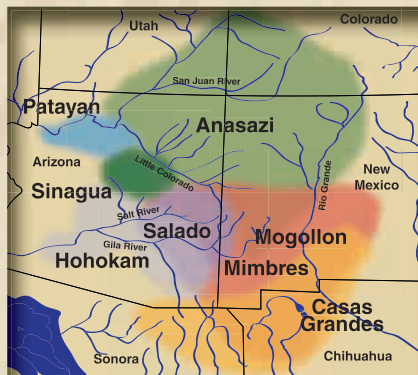
The two maps on this page, provided by the Bureau of Land Management, will aid in establishing geographic understanding of the general archaeological area and the Safford Basin.

The prehistory of the Safford Basin remains sparsely documented despite evidence that the area has been inhabited, at least intermittently, since Paleoindian times, prior to 8000 B.C.

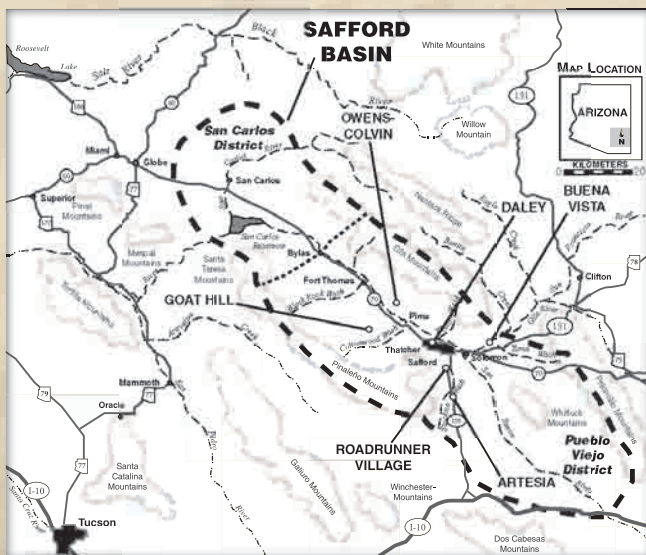
The archaeological record from the Safford Basin exhibits a great deal of variation, indicating the ancient inhabitants of this region were also quite diverse. This diversity indicates that the Safford Basin was a sort of "melting pot" where people from several different prehistoric cultures, many of whom migrated into the area in late prehistoric times, lived together.

Specifically, material remains indicate people from the culture areas known traditionally as Anasazi, Hohokam, Mogollon, and Salado lived in the Safford Basin.

Newer research has demonstrated that these traditional labels do not adequately



begin to characterize the heterogeneity exhibited in the archaeological record of the Safford Basin area. Therefore, archaeologists now use descriptive terms such as Ancestral Puebloan or regional terms such as Mimbres Valley area to describe the origins of the ancient inhabitants of the Safford Basin and the



distinctive material remains they leave in the archaeological record. However, in order to facilitate discussion here, we will be using the traditional terms Anasazi, Hohokam, Mogollon, and Salado.

Prehistoric Cultures in Arizona

Anasazi

(also referred to as Ancestral Puebloan)

The Colorado Plateau, located in the four corners region where the borders of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado meet, is the Anasazi core area. The generally accepted chronological framework for the Anasazi includes three Basketmaker and five Pueblo stages spanning a period from approximately A.D. 1 to some time in the 1300s. This chronology was first proposed and then refined by A.V. Kidder and other archaeologists at the 1927 Pecos Conference. The Pecos Classification still applies over much of the Anasazi area but has been discontinued in favor of local phase designations in some places.



Examples of Anasazi pieces

The Anasazi were sedentary agriculturalists, although hunting and the gathering of wild plant foods played some part in subsistence activities throughout their history. Distinctive cultural traits include replacement of basketry with an increasingly complex ceram-

ic technology and movement from scattered villages to concentrated pueblo dwellings. By A.D. 1200, Anasazi influence was widespread in the Southwest, and both the Hohokam and Mogollon cultures show an increased adoption of Anasazi traits. Some Kayenta and Tusayan groups began migrating from the four corners area about A.D. 1265, probably due to significant environmental and social stresses on the population. The Colorado Plateau was virtually abandoned by the end of the 13th century, and there is increasing evidence to suggest that the Anasazi migrated south into areas previously occupied only by the Hohokam and Mogollon.



Maverick Mountain Vessels

Black-on-white ceramics are the hallmark of Anasazi pottery, although plainware and corrugated types were dominant in the late Basketmaker and early Pueblo periods. Early ceramic designs, including the earliest black-on-white varieties, may have been borrowed from basket patterns. The major Anasazi ceramic types on display in the Mills Collection include Cibola White Ware and some examples of St. John's Polychrome. Additionally, Maverick Mountain Series vessels in the Mills Collection display designs with an Anasazi origin, but most of these vessels were actually manufactured locally in southeastern Arizona.

Hohokam

The Sonoran Desert of southern Arizona is within a zone of alternating mountains and plains known as the Basin and Range



*Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde
National Monument*

Province. The Hohokam core area was in the drainage basin of the Gila and Salt Rivers, centered around the modern city of Phoenix, in the southern Arizona desert. The Gila and Salt Rivers were the lifelines of Hohokam culture because they provided the Hohokam with water for hundreds of miles of irrigation ditches. Modern canals, known today as the Salt River Project near Phoenix, closely follow and/or incorporate the original Hohokam irrigation ditch systems. Secondary and ephemeral drainage tributaries of the Gila and Salt Rivers also supported settled groups, with variations, on the Hohokam agriculturalist theme.

300 B.C. marks the earliest manifestation of settled agriculturalists in southern Arizona. Known as the Hohokam, their origin is still uncertain. A major debate continues among scholars as to whether or not the Hohokam represent an immigrant Mexican group or developed in situ from an ancestral Archaic population. A similarity in some artifact assemblages between the Mogollon and Hohokam suggests that they may have shared a common ancestry from the San Pedro Co-chise, an Archaic Desert Culture tradition. Hundreds of years after the initial appearance of pottery in the desert, traditions emerged that became recognizably Hohokam. Diagnostic traits include small villages of shallow, elongated pit houses, cremation of human remains for burial, ceramics that were plain grey or brown, or sometimes painted red-on-buff. All pottery was paddle-and-anvil

smoothed. Red-on-buff ceramics are the hallmark of the Hohokam cultural tradition.

A strong Mesoamerican influence is evident throughout Hohokam history, particularly during the sequence of phases between A.D. 500 and 1200. New types of maize, shaped trough metates, carved stone bowls with sculptured surfaces, figurines, platform mounds, ball courts, copper bells, mosaic mirrors, a well-developed shell industry, and other luxury items that are common in Mesoamerica all make their appearance in the Hohokam world at this time. Shell craft technology was apparently unique to the Hohokam who exported finished products to the Mogollon and Anasazi. The Hohokam either collected the shell themselves from the Gulf of California, or they had an extensive trading network.



Hohokam Red-on-Buff

Beginning about A.D. 1200, the introduction of new traits such as pueblo buildings, changes in pottery manufacture, and the introduction of new funerary customs suggests an influx of new peoples into the Hohokam area, primarily the Kayenta and Tusayan Anasazi. Traits that were distinctively “Hohokam” disappeared by A.D. 1450 and continued only as an admixture of other cultural groups. It is possible that the present-day Piman peoples are Hohokam descendants, but clear continuity has not been established.

Mogollon

(including Mimbres)

The Mogollon are an enigmatic people whose Late-Archaic lifeways, showing evidence of direct continuity from the Cochise Culture, preceded the Anasazi and Hohokam expansions. Identified by archaeologists Emil Haury and Russell Hastings in 1931, their inclusion into the Southwest hierarchy of early cultures created great controversy. Finally vindicated as a basal cultural type by adept and persistent archaeologists, these highland dwellers are named after the mountains in southwest New Mexico bearing the name of Juan I. F. Mogollon, the governor of New Mexico, 1712-15.

Just as the Anasazi are identified with the Colorado Plateau and the Hohokam are identified with the desert regions around Phoenix and Tucson, the Mogollon are most identified with the mountains and high plateaus of central Arizona to west-central New Mexico. Generally bounded on the north by the Little Colorado River, on the south by the northern portions of the Mexican states of Chihuahua and Sonora, on the west by the Mazatzal Mountains near Payson, and on the east by the Gila Mountains of New Mexico, this adaptive and hardy mountain people roamed freely through their highland range in small groups—exercising an unencumbered hunting and gathering way of life until the late A.D. 1100s and early A.D.1200s.

Known more to archaeologists than the general public, the Mogollon people are now often characterized as an elemental cultural manifestation from which other radiations derived. It is the Mogollon lifeway that appears to have led the way out of the pre-pottery Archaic period in eastern Arizona and western New Mexico. They readily adopted new ideas and technology, and, in roughly A.D. 200 at the beginning of the Early Pit House Period, their production of plain brownware pottery transformed life in the Southwest. Although uncertainty remains concerning the earliest contributions to ceramic production by Mogollon and Hohokam peoples, the early Mogollon association with late Archaic tran-

sitions from clay-covered fiber containers to advanced ceramic traditions is fairly certain.

From the Late Archaic Period until well into the Late Pit House and Mogollon Pueblo periods, these adaptable people subsisted on elk, deer, turkeys, small game, wild plants, and berries. Their gradual experimentation with horticulture may have included, as it did for the Hohokam, agave gardening. It certainly involved inclusion of domesticated maize, beans, and squash.

The timeline of Mogollon history is divided into three distinctive periods: Early Pit House (A.D. 200 to A.D. 600), Late Pit House (A.D. 600 to A.D. 1150), and Mogollon Pueblo (A.D. 1150 to A.D. 1400). Their movement out of the Archaic Cultural



Examples of Mimbres pieces (A.D. 1000-1100)

Period and into the Early Pit House Period is recognized in A.D. 200 by their addition of simple ceramic vessels to the Archaic toolkit and construction of deep pit houses in easily defended locations, changes that eventually effected their nomadic mountain subsistence lifestyle. Around the A.D. 600s, the Mogollon developed red-on-brown decorated pottery and initiated increased focus on valley floor agricultural habitations in less defensible areas, thus ushering in the Late Pit House Period.

In New Mexico during the A.D. 1000s, and Arizona in the A.D. 1100s, the Late Pit House Period ended when these hunter gatherers began construction of masonry pueblos and began to abandon the central mountain

highlands that had sustained them for the previous millennium. They settled on valley floors near arable land and eventually developed extensive irrigation features as their dependence upon maize agriculture increased. As it had with other prehistoric Southwestern cultures, the “Great Drought” in the late A.D. 1200s accelerated abandonment and forced aggregation: both in independent Mogollon culture enclaves and in residential complexes that appear to reflect a mixture of cultural remnants from both the Anasazi and Hohokam.



Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument, New Mexico

Of course, no discussion of the Mogollon is complete without mention of the Mimbres culture, perceived by many to represent a component of the broader Mogollon culture. The Mimbres began building large masonry pueblos in the Mimbres River Valley of New Mexico around A.D. 1000 and in the Point-of-Pines region of Arizona around the mid 1200s. This pueblo architecture, probably inspired by Mimbres’ early associations with the Kayenta and Tusayan Anasazi to the northeast, preceded similar Mogollon construction in other areas by nearly 100 years. The most famous expression of the precocious Mimbres Culture is its intricately designed pottery, a ceramic tradition that represents Mimbres lifeways with clarity and style.

The EAC Mills Collection display includes many ceramic vessels and other cultural implements from the Mogollon people. Of special note will be the plain, corrugated, and black-on-red wares.

Salado

Of all the ancient cultures of the Southwest, the Salado offer the most contentious and circuitous results of archaeological inquiry and hypothesis development. Initially, the Salado were considered to be a composite culture formed from an amalgamation of many of the other southwestern peoples, primarily the Hohokam, Mogollon, and Anasazi. Later, it was suggested that the Salado were a single cultural manifestation, one with widespread influence, which had originated

in the Tonto Basin in an area that is partially inundated today by Roosevelt Lake. Now, thanks to the research of dedicated archaeologists at the University of Arizona, private foundations such as the Center for Desert Archaeology, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, we have come full circle, believing that the Salado manifestations are a “horizon” of agglomerated expressions, including ethnic co-residence, from many migrant

peoples. Perhaps the controversy will never be resolved, but the various views are being brought ever closer by dedicated archaeologists. Some contend that “the answer” will be found amid sites located in the Safford Basin.

Adding to the quandry about who the Salado were, much of their ceramic tradition is referred to as Roosevelt Polychrome. Today, some researchers are fairly certain that those wares might better be called Salado Polychromes but, for the reasons already discussed, the term “Salado” has significant problems. Because so much of the classification record of these polychromes is called “Roosevelt,” it may be simpler to continue using that term, just so long as readers understand that we do not intend to imply that Roosevelt Lake is the only homeland of this cultural horizon.

The Salado people occupied the Central, Southern, and Southeastern Arizona transition zones between the traditional subsistence areas of the mountain-dwelling Mogol-

lon and the Desert Hohokam. The people who inherited the term Salado arose out of a Late Archaic population that moved north into the Tonto Basin shortly after A.D. 100. These migrants began to develop simple gray or brown pottery similar to that initially seen in proto-Mogollon habitations of the same age. It is telling that these archaeological sites look more like Mogollon than they do Hohokam, an observation that is pivotal to later arguments on the origin of the Salado.

By A.D. 800, these people reflect the ethnic amalgamation that would characterize them and their archaeology until the mid 1400s. Late in the Classic Period of archaeological record, we see the Salado Horizon manifested at sites traditionally ascribed to other mainstream cultures, e.g. Casa Grande of the Hohokam and Casas Grandes of the Paquime.

Likely, the Salado Horizon, consisting of peoples who built platform mounds and large, walled pueblos, formed out of an amalgamation of Puebloan migrants - sometimes called the Western Pueblo, Mogollon highlanders, and Hohokam agriculturalists who came together in the Tonto Basin while experiencing a major cultural reorganization in response to significant environmental challenges during the Classic Period (A.D. 1150-1450). The Salado Horizon represents the heyday of this agglomeration of peoples. We can attribute their success and expansion to exploitation of the perennial waterways of Tonto Creek, the Salt River, and the Gila River during the severe droughts and floods of that time frame.

Members of that cultural horizon may have participated in raiding, pillaging, and warfare as environmental conditions deteriorated and agricultural efforts yielded reduced results. Special social cooperation would have been required to build and use the mounds that are so central to much of Salado archaeology.

One of the distinctive ways of ascribing cultural identity is to examine burial or funerary practices. Most Anasazi buried their dead in a flexed position, knees drawn up to the chin, in trash mounds, abandoned storage pits, and under room floors. The Mogollon buried their dead in a supine, extended position under room floors. The Hohokam cremated their dead and buried the ashes, often within ceramic vessels. The Salado ini-



Examples of Roosevelt Polychrome or Red Ware

tially buried their dead in extended, supine posture but in special places under plazas and patios. Later in their history, they too were seen to cremate at least some of their dead. This combination of funerary practices is taken as another indicator of the perception that the Salado Horizon consists of a blending of discrete cultural traits.

Distinctive ceramic styles and methods developed by migrants from the Little Colorado River, including Tularosa Black-on-White and St. John's Polychrome, merged with traits developed by people of the Upper Gila River into what became known as the Pinto Polychrome style of Roosevelt Polychrome ware. Other distinctive pottery designs and methods were also expressed by the Salado Horizon, including Gila Polychrome and Tonto Polychrome. All three of these styles, as well as distinctive types from the Late Classic Period, are well represented among the Mills Collection items on display.

Display Cases in EAC's Student Services Building

The map on page ten shows the display cases and locations that correspond to this walking tour.

Display Case #1

The left side of the case contains projectile points, ground and polished stone axes and hoes, arrow shaft straighteners, and one- and two-handed manos (handstones).

The right side of the case contains Plain Ware, probably Mogollon. Some of these pots are said to resemble "cactus boots" and are sometimes called "duck" pots.

Display Case #2

This free-standing glass display case contains beautiful examples of Tonto Polychrome (A.D. 1340-1450).

Display Case #3

The top of the left side of the cabinet holds Anasazi Black-on-White (A.D. 1000-1330). Below that are examples of San Carlos Red-on-Brown, a Salado Horizon made to imitate Hohokam designs (A.D. 1275-1450); Fourmile Polychrome, a Salado Horizon (A.D. 1330-1390); Tularosa White-on-Red, a late Mogollon type (A.D. 1200-1350); and Tanque Verde Red-on-Brown, a late Hohokam type (A.D. 1150-1300).

The bottom two shelves on the left side of the cabinet include pieces from Mimbres (A.D. 1000-1100), a Hohokam figurine, Hopi Katsinas, and Hopi Yellow Ware.

The right section of the cabinet contains many examples of Mexican pottery and ground stone.

Display Case #4

SIDE A: Classic Period White-on-Red, a Salado Horizon (A.D. 1350-1450)

SIDE B: Tonto Polychrome, a Salado Horizon (A.D. 1340-1450)

SIDE C: Top shelf – Hohokam shell, Mexican copper bells, probably traded to the Hohokam; Middle shelf – Two El Paso Polychrome, a Mogollon type (A.D. 1140-1450); and one Mexican Casas Grandes effigy vessel (late/historic)

SIDE D: Tonto Polychrome, a Salado Horizon (A.D. 1340-1450)

Display Case #5

SIDE A: Salado Horizon, includes unknown types

SIDE B: Top two shelves – Tonto and Gila Polychrome
Middle shelf – Tonto Polychrome
Bottom shelf – Gila Polychrome

SIDE C: Mogollon Red Ware (A.D. 1150-1400)

SIDE D: Miscellaneous baskets and bone awls for mulling baskets

Display Case #6

- SIDE A:** Gila Polychrome (A.D. 1300-1450),
Bottom left - Cliff Polychrome (A.D. 1350-1450)
- SIDE B:** Hohokam Red-on-Buff (A.D. 1200-1400)
- SIDE C:** Maverick Mountain Polychrome and Black-on-Red, a late
and local Anasazi type (A.D. 1275-1325)
- SIDE D:** Gila Polychrome (A.D. 1300-1450)

Display Case #7

This free-standing glass display cabinet contains examples of Tonto Polychrome (A.D. 1340-1450).

Display Case #8

- SIDE A:** Tonto Polychrome (A.D. 1340-1450)
- SIDE B:** Corrugated Ware (mixed utilitarian vessels)
- SIDE C:** Gila Polychrome (A.D. 1300-1450)
- SIDE D:** Tucson Polychrome, a Salado type (A.D. 1275-1450);
Bottom right – Tonto Polychrome

Display Case #9

(located down the East hall on the right)

The three cases on the right contain Plain and Corrugated Wares (utilitarian). The middle case includes one Tonto Polychrome on the bottom. The case that is second from left includes examples of Cliff Polychrome, a Salado Horizon more limited in time than Gila Polychrome (A.D. 1350-1450), on the two bottom shelves. The case on the far left includes examples of Gila Polychrome on the two bottom shelves.

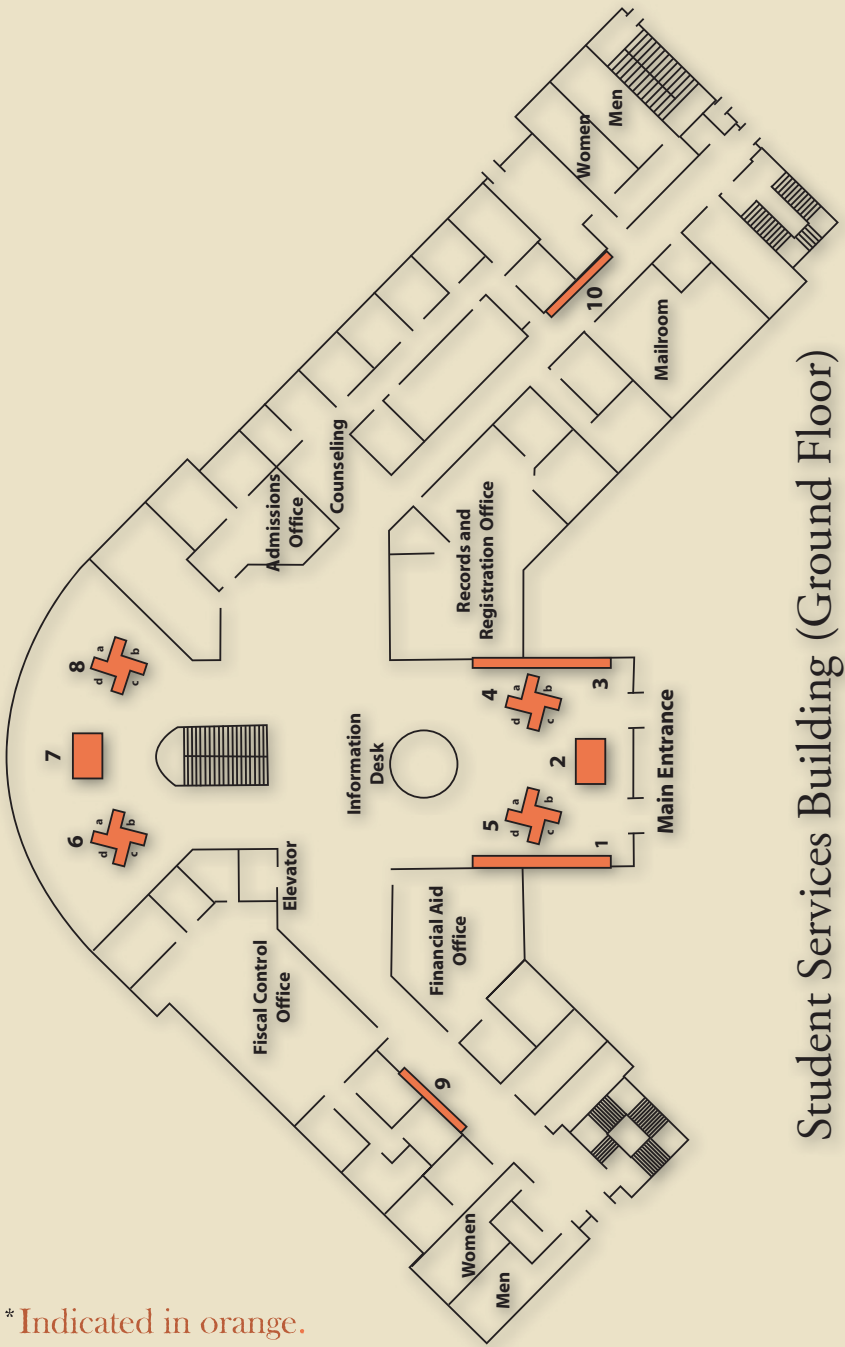
Display Case #10

(located down the North hall on the left)

The top shelves contain interesting examples of Hohokam/Salado shell work and mosaics. The middle shelf of the left case contains Hohokam and Mogollon stone and shell work, and the bottom shelf of this case contains miscellaneous Apache artifacts.

The middle shelf of the right case contains miscellaneous combs for agave fiber, used to make bowstrings, bags, sandals, etc.; spindle whorls, used for carding/spinning cotton and wool; pot smoothers (pot polishers); and projectile points. The bottom shelf on the right contains turquoise pieces, a stone head from the Dinwiddie site in New Mexico and a cradle board.

Display locations of the Mills Collection*



Student Services Building (Ground Floor)

* Indicated in orange.

History of EAC's Mills Collection

Ardent avocational archaeologists Jack and Vera Mills conducted extensive excavations on archaeological sites in Southeastern Arizona from the 1940s through the 1970s. They restored numerous pottery vessels, and amassed more than 600 whole and restored pots and over 5,000 other artifacts. Most of their work was carried out on private land in the Safford Basin area.

Towards the end of their archaeological careers, the Mills' wished to have their collection kept intact, housed and exhibited in a local facility. After extensive negotiations, the Eastern Arizona College Foundation acquired the collection—upon condition that it be displayed in perpetuity.

EAC's Student Services Building in Thatcher, Arizona, was designed specifically to showcase this amazing collection. We invite you to experience it yourself from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, at Eastern Arizona College. Admission is free.



EAC's Student Services Building

District Governing Board Members

Ladd H. Mullenaux, Chairman
Lois Ann Moody, Secretary
Richard W. Mattice, Member
Dennis Layton, Member
Marrienne Rowley, Member

College President

Mark Bryce



Eastern Arizona College
Thatcher, Arizona 85552-0769
www.eac.edu