



Hello, My American Friends!

The Newsletter of the GoldWell Open Air Museum Issue #1, Summer 2001

Welcome to the first issue of "Hello, My American Friends!"

The Goldwell Open Air Museum is a 7.8 acre outdoor sculpture park in Nye County, Nevada approximately 5 miles west of the town of Beatty and 115 miles north of Las Vegas. It is a free admission facility, open year-round, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Being located along a heavily traveled route between Death Valley, Las Vegas, and Reno, and adjacent to Rhyolite, one of the most heavily visited ghost towns and attractions in Nevada, the Museum has been seen by millions of visitors from around the world. It began as a project of Belgian artist Albert Szukalski in 1984 with the installation of his major sculpture, "The Last Supper," which he created in cooperation with several Beatty residents. In subsequent years, six additional pieces were added to the site by three other Belgian artists (Fred Bervoets, Hugo Heyrman, and Dre Peeters) who, like Szukalski, were major figures in European art with extensive exhibition records.

In January 2000, after Mr. Szukalski died, his U.S. business partner got in touch with us (Charles Morgan and Suzanne Hackett) and asked for our help in preserving the site and improving the public's understanding of it.

Goldwell Open Air Museum achieves tax-exempt status!

We felt the best way to accomplish this was to start a non-profit organization, which we incorporated in Nevada in August 2000, and for which we successfully received an advance ruling as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization in April 2001 with a **mission** to provide for the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of the Goldwell Open Air Museum and the furtherance of its cultural activities. A business plan has been developed for the organization's first four years which will help it follow a logical plan of growth. The **long-term goal** of the Goldwell Open Air Museum is to become a nationally and internationally recognized arts/cultural entity with ties and viability that will become, in time, cultural and economic assets to Nye County and the State of Nevada. Intermediate Goals of the Goldwell Open Air Museum include providing ongoing maintenance, visitor improvements, and adequate conservation for existing sculptures and developing varied self-sustaining educational and cultural programs.

Goldwell receives first Nevada Arts Council Grant!

We were very pleased to learn in June that our organization has been awarded a **\$3,160 Development Grant from the Nevada Arts Council** to assist us in the creation of a permanent interpretive exhibition and the production of a new museum brochure in time for the planned Rhyolite Jamboree (see below) in April 2001.

At present, Goldwell Open Air Museum is an unstaffed, uninterpreted experience, which is generally why people

find it intriguing. Even though hundreds of people are curious enough to stop, for the most part they are confused by what they see. The permanent on-site exhibition we are planning would provide a non-intrusive way to help visitors interpret and interact with the vast space and experience the artists' original vision.

Maintaining the integrity of the visual experience of each sculpture in the landscape is critical to this vision. So, rather than mar the visitors' experience with unnecessary information posted at each sculpture, the exhibition will transform an existing house on the site into both an interactive experience and an eighth sculptural element in its own right. Installations in shallow, lighted interior boxes behind each of the seven windows of the historic frame house will encourage visitors to physically explore the landscape, view each sculpture in its environment, and contemplate what the artist's original experience in this setting might have been. Some windows will feature photographs, drawings, and anecdotes from the artists to better familiarize visitors with the works' origins. Other windows will pose open-ended questions, such as "**How about a cold Bud?**", or suggest activities, *such as actually having one*, to help visitors achieve their own unique experience of the land.

Make plans to join us in April 2002 for the Rhyolite Jamboree!

*A Sponsored Event by Beta Sigma Phi Nevada Beta Mu Chapter
APRIL 5TH, 6TH AND 7TH OF 2002*

In the ghost town of Rhyolite there stands a wonderful, beautiful, old Railroad Depot. Built in 1909, the Depot is badly in need of repair. The hopes of the Bureau of Land Management and the Volunteers in Rhyolite, are to rehabilitate the Depot and reopen it to the public as an Information center and Museum. It may even be the site of future Goldwell Open Air Museum workshops. The purpose of the Jamboree is to both raise awareness of the rehabilitation project and provide a weekend of FREE family fun! There will be music all day long, a government employee dunk tank, cowboy poetry, gold panning contests, campfire strumming, a Railroad Symposium, food and craft vendors, and general desert springtime hijinks! Don't expect **Burning Man**, but a fun weekend in the Old West. Goldwell is a participating partner in the Jamboree and will be debuting its new interpretive display at the event.

For more information: <http://www.rhyolitejamboree.com>

Goldwell launches Sand Dune Press!

We recently acquired a nearly brand spanking **new 30" x 60" Takach etching press** with many fine accessories! This piece of equipment is a vital part of the vision for our **future artist in residence program**, as well as our own artistic exploration of Goldwell and the surrounding desert areas. We would like to thank Valerie King of Portland, Oregon for her generous contribution of a large hot plate and other supplies and materials for this new press. We are having a fun time getting the print studio set up and are looking forward to producing our first limited edition images later on this year (when Suzanne can be around toxic chemicals again...see below).

Upcoming projects...Desert Gossip

A first meeting of the group involved in planning the production of a **new video documentary** on Goldwell is meeting in July to begin working on the application for a National Endowment for the Humanities Consultation Grant due in September...Goldwell is waiting to hear the result of its application to the **Gunk Foundation** for its exhibition project...**Riley and Suzy McCoy**, caretakers at the Rhyolite Bottle House, were recently honored in Washington D.C. as BLM volunteers of the year...Charles and Suzanne are in month six of their **baby making project**--suggestions for a male name are greatly appreciated (no "B" names please, and Suzanne has already provided several rejected "dog" and "truck" names, such as "Ranger," "Duke," and "Jethro.")

From El Presidente...

Receiving the advance ruling from the Internal Revenue Service on our tax-exempt status is great since we are now able to apply for funding from private and public sources to support our work. But to receive our permanent tax-exempt status, it also means we only have until 2004 to prove our viability as a publicly supported organization. While the majority of the Goldwell Open Air Museum's funding is expected to come from grants and earned income, being able to show the Internal Revenue Service support from individual contributors, besides ourselves, is critically important.

We recently mailed out **letters to our family and friends** to help us with this important next step, which asked them to consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Goldwell Open Air Museum sometime during this advance ruling period. The size of any gifts we receive is not as important as the early show of support from many people. Any funds pledged by you will be used to directly support projects such as the conservation and maintenance of the seven existing sculptures and the development of new exhibitions at the site.

If you would like to help by making a tax-deductible gift of cash, goods, or services, please contact us at goldwell@fundraiserx.com, or by mail to:

Goldwell Open Air Museum
4593 Carriage Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89119

It was the vision from the beginning to make Goldwell an international project where artists from all over the world would come to the desert and make work. As artists ourselves, this is also our dream. We look forward to sharing our progress with you.

Charles Morgan & Suzanne Hackett
Goldwell Open Air Museum

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