



THIS HAND-ADZED SQUARE-LOG HOUSE WAS BUILT IN 1886 BY EARLY FLAGSTAFF SETTLER THOMAS FORSYTHE McMILLAN AS PART OF AN ORIGINAL 160-ACRE HOMESTEAD. AFTER HIS MARRIAGE IN 1888, McMILLAN COVERED THE LOGS WITH SIDING AND BUILT A LEAN-TO AT THE BACK OF THE HOUSE. WHEN THE COLTONS PURCHASED THE PROPERTY IN 1927, THE HOUSE WAS IN DISREPAIR, SO THE COLTONS RESTORED IT AND USED IT AS HOUSING FOR SUMMER VISITORS AND, LATER, AS THE BIOLOGY LAB AND COLLECTIONS AREA. ONCE COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH WERE MOVED TO THE RESEARCH CENTER, IT BECAME HOUSING FOR MNA ASSISTANT DIRECTORS. THE MUSEUM RECEIVED A MATCHING GRANT FROM THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE IN 1976 TO AGAIN REFURBISH THE HOME AND NEARBY SAN FRANCISCO SPRING. NOW KNOWN AS THE "HOMESTEAD," THE BUILDING IS LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES. PHOTO BY MARK MIDDLETON, 1976, (MNA COLLECTIONS N15C.68)

Research Center upon Mrs. Colton's closure of the Antelope Valley Ranch and donation of the buildings to NASSA. The farm buildings were converted into research offices, laboratory space, and collections storage. New buildings were also constructed for the constantly expanding Museum complex. This conversion took several years to achieve, but by 1953 the Research Center was operating. MNA collections, research areas, and administration moved across the road from the Museum into separate quarters at the Research Center.

Colton hired archaeologist Dr. Edward B. (Ned) Danson as Assistant Director in 1956 in preparation for his moving into the MNA Directorship upon Colton's retirement at the close of 1958. Danson was familiar with MNA and its unique role as interpreter of the Colorado Plateau. Danson's challenge was to build on MNA's reputation as an influential regional center of scientific and artistic endeavors. Field schools designed to encourage students' training blossomed. The campus was active year-round, but the summers, with visiting scholars and students crowding all of the facilities, were especially lively.

Graduate students eagerly sought summer assignments at MNA, and many now say that those summer experiences were far better than any classroom. The opportunity to work with well-known researchers, and participate in discussions in informal settings gave the students knowledge and inspiration they would otherwise have missed. The summer pay was nil and housing was minimal, but the students didn't mind—they wanted the experience.

To encourage discussion and further learning amongst the scholars and students of various disciplines, weekly seminars were scheduled. These informal talks gave researchers the opportunity to lecture on their studies, as well as offered a stimulating atmosphere for the researchers and students. Other interested people (from NAU, USGS, Fort Valley Experiment Station, and Lowell Observatory) were invited and all would mingle afterward while enjoying tea served from a sterling silver teapot.