

Pennsylvania whose zest for knowledge went far beyond that field and who would be forever excited by the many research opportunities in northern Arizona. Mrs. Colton was equally intrigued by the native peoples and scenic grandeur of the region, and she spent many hours sketching and painting them. After numerous visits to the region, they moved to Flagstaff in 1926 to pursue their mutual and individual interests.

The Coltons became involved in efforts to create a local museum that would display the natural and human wonders of the area. Combining their skills and benevolence, and in response to the urging of prominent citizens of both Flagstaff and Tucson, they helped the community found the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) in 1928. The Museum is a regionally based institution that researches, collects, and exhibits all that represents the Colorado Plateau. Dr. Colton became MNA Director and Mrs. Colton the Curator of Art and Ethnology, allowing them to follow and explore

their respective interests in science and art, and making MNA the spirited, multifaceted institution we enjoy today. With its unique blend of science and art, MNA stands alone. At MNA, research and public exhibits intertwine with collections to present a rich, composite view of northern Arizona and the Colorado Plateau.

The Museum of Northern Arizona offers its visitors many opportunities to become familiar with the area through public exhibits and programs. At the same time, its staff and researchers continue their studies, because science, like life, is not static—it is ever-evolving. MNA continually explores ways to preserve this distinctive region and ensure that its uniqueness endures.

MNA's three components—public programs, research, and collections—complement one another in a continual circle. Scientists study the data, utilize the collections, and develop public exhibits designed to introduce the Colorado Plateau. Museum visitors, after this introduction, often seek

further knowledge, stimulating the scientists to reconsider the data and to reexamine the collections. This ongoing cycle is considered optimal for a museum, as each component is dependent upon the other. MNA is a private, nonprofit organization supported by its members and by supplemental funding. Its exhibit areas have grown from two rooms in the Flagstaff Woman's Club in 1928 to today's 24,700-square-foot Exhibits building that hosted over 91,000 visitors in

1996. On an adjacent part of the campus are its research and collections facilities.

The Museum of Northern Arizona's story follows—it deserves to be told.



MEN OF THE RAINBOW BRIDGE/MONUMENT VALLEY EXPEDITION MARVEL AT THE VIEW OF TSEGI CANYON ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION. NAVAJO MOUNTAIN IS SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND. PHOTO BY ROBERT B. BRANSTEAD, 1933. (MNA COLLECTIONS MS 122-20)