



# AACA

FREE

## Authentic Artifact Collectors Association

*Established in 1998*

Volume 5, Issue 3

# NEWS LETTER



AACA Expo 2007

Show Floor at the London Hall



# FALL 2007



**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

The AACA is 3700 members strong and the association is continuing to grow at a steady pace. With this growth, we get new challenges to keep up with the increasing numbers and ideas that come with the new AACA collectors. New ideas are always welcomed from the members, especially if they can be implemented with help from the members themselves.

Recently, the Board of Directors has overseen the creation of guidelines for the formation of **AACA Regional Chapters**. This will make it possible for AACA members to form sub-groups which can meet and discuss issues and hold local shows under AACA rules. If you have an interest in creating a local chapter of the AACA, contact any AACA Director or email [president@theaaca.com](mailto:president@theaaca.com)

I might mention that if members need any more black AACA hats, they are almost of stock now. We will be ordering other AACA materials in the future but the black hats may be a limited edition item.



We would like to hear from any members that have ideas to make your Association better. We need input from all that can help to improve the AACA website, the Learning Center, our daily operations, the Newsletter and our relationship with the rest of the collecting public. This is YOUR Association based on the AACA Rules and we can accomplish even more by working together toward our goals.

**If you can help the AACA, please volunteer.**

Your AACA President

**Cliff Jackson**

**News Letter**

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**Message from the Editor** - Kim Radke

The fall season is now upon us once again. For those of us that are not able to surface hunt for artifacts all year long, we are now awaiting the harvesting of crops so we might be able to take one more walk through the fields before the ground freezes and the snow begins to fly. I have included in this newsletter a spring surface hunting trip of AACA member Chris Capley. Chris seems to be one of those guys that always has great luck in the field and is kind enough to share his hunting stories with his friends on the internet arrowhead chat boards. Thanks for the story, Chris.

I have also included an article in this issue concerning historic Native American beadwork in the hopes that it will help save someone thousands of dollars in costly mistakes. As we have seen in the past with the sale of modern artifacts that are portrayed as ancient, the same problem exists today with beadwork and other historic items. I can not stress enough how important education is when buying any artifact.

Not only has Janice ‘Osalita’ written eBay guides to help others avoid fraud, there are also scores of other sellers that have written guides on subjects which they feel they have enough knowledge on so as to offer advice to others. One of those guides was written by AACA member, Tony Lopez. His guide addresses the issue of the sale of reproduction Indian peace medals as authentic. Tony sells on eBay under the user id of rare-history and not only has he written a guide but he has had an article on the subject published in the April 2007 Numismatist magazine. A copy of Tony’s article can be viewed here on their website. Simply scroll down the page to the April issue and click on the link ‘Cover Story’. This article is a PDF file and for those on dial-up internet, the download time is long. I promise you it is worth the wait though because not only does Tony address the issue of fraud regarding Indian Peace Medals but the history lesson pertaining to authentic medals is fascinating. Tony has stated that he is more than willing to answer any questions and you can contact him through his eBay user id or contact me for his personal email address.

Our Founder of the AACA and current Director, Jim Bennett has put together another book to assist collectors in learning more about what traits determine an artifact to be modern or ancient. This book titled: Authenticating Ancient Indian Artifacts is due out in November and will be available at all major book stores, on Amazon.com and on Jim’s own website <http://www.oldrelics.com> This book is a combination of Jim’s first two books regarding this topic, Authenticating Ancient Indian Artifacts and Collecting Indian Artifacts Vol. 1. The text and photos of these two books has been updated and revised. As the owner of both of Jim’s first two books, I can honestly recommend Jim’s latest book, it contains a wealth of information and is one of those ‘must have’ books for all artifact collectors.

Malcolm T. McLaughlin has once again given us an editorial presenting his views on this hobby that we all love. I would like to state that Malcolm’s opinions are his and his alone and The AACA is in no way endorsing his views. If you have a rebuttal editorial you would like to contribute, please contact me at the-[aaca\\_kr@msn.com](mailto:aaca_kr@msn.com)

## Historic Native American Beadwork

**By: Janice ‘Osalita’**

I will tell you a little bit about myself. I am part Choctaw and part Cherokee Native American, part German and Irish also. I have been beading for a number of years, about 11 and have studied beading. When I first started beading, I had the opportunity to know a man and wife who made a living ‘aging’ beadwork and they had a group of beaders working for them in Kansas. This man and wife team would use old motor oil to rub onto the hide of items and would even use dirt to make the beadwork look old. To the untrained eye this might be believable. But if you want to learn to spot a fake, read on and I will tell you some of the ways to determine what is genuine and what is fake.

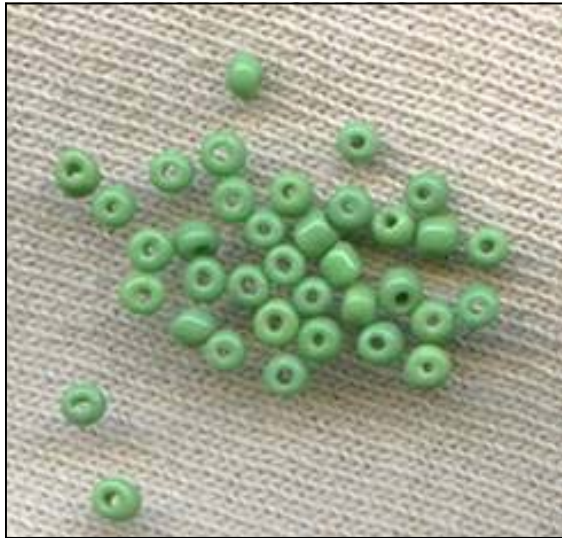
I have taken some photos of a seed bead that is called a rose white-heart. These are no longer made so these are old beads from my collection of beads that I keep on hand to do repairs on old beadwork. The white heart inside the bead give the bead a beautiful rose color not found in other beads. These are prized today because of their lovely rose color. I have placed a yellow tooth pick in the photo so you can see the size of the rose white-heart beads.



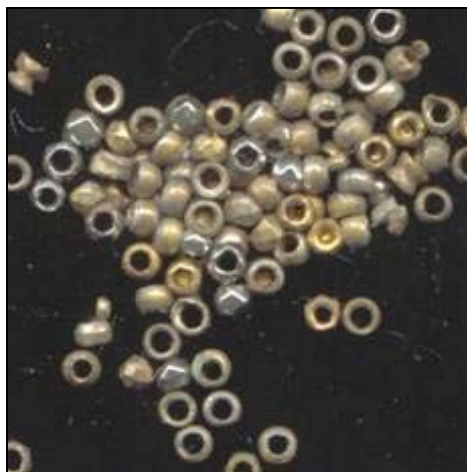
Another way to tell if beadwork is old or new is to judge the type of hide or leather used. Only brain tanned buckskin or other animal hides were used in the older days up until the 1930s or 40s when commercial tanning became popular. Brain tanning is a method used by the Native American people that involves using the brain of the animal. This method turns the hide very white. After smoking the hide over a wood fire, the hide will turn from golden brown to dark brown and some people believe this smoking process makes the hide waterproof as well.

I have often said that Native people are known for taking good care of their beaded items. Any time you see a beaded knife sheath or beaded pouch with beadwork that is grimy and caked with dirt, stay clear of it. This method of caking beadwork with dirt is a ruse to make you think it is old. Also watch for pipe bags that are dirty or stained. A pipe bag was used to carry a pipe which was and is considered to be sacred to the Native people. A pipe and its bag were never allowed to touch the ground.

Then why would you see a beaded pipe bag with dirt or stains on it? You wouldn't, an authentic pipe bag may be somewhat dusty but it will not have dirty stains on it.



Examples of old green beads and white seed beads. The white seed beads are in a glass tube with a cork. The tube is 3" tall and all original.



The photo above on the right is of metal cut beads, I believe these are brass. These beads came from an old purse dated in the 1920s. These are No. 12 or 13 in size and are a very soft metal. They look good on beaded items and were used sparingly by beaders in the early days. The term cut means that the bead has facets on the surface. The backside of the knife sheath in the last photo is an excellent example of brained tanned buckskin. My father made the coyote jaw knife pictures along side the sheath.

The best way to spot a fake is by checking the type of leather that is used; a genuine beaded item should be made from brain tanned hide. Also check the beads, their shape and color.

- New bead colors would be: turquoise, purple, tan, some brown shades, gold and silver lined beads, and light oranges.
- Old bead colors would be: chalk white, shades of reds, blues, green, pink, black, pumpkin, true orange, cranberry, red and rose white-hearts and greasy yellow.



These gauntlets were made of brain tanned elk and beaded with old beads in a style that was difficult to make and with a realistic pale blue background. Everything here points to originality. These are old beaded gauntlets but I have no idea what tribe they are from although someone told me these may be Blackfoot made.

Always look inside the beaded item, if it is a pair of moccasins or a pouch, look inside to see if there is a 'shiny' side to the leather, meaning it is commercially tanned hide and not old. Also, avoid very bright colors of beads, new colors, crazy fabric lining of pouches and new fabrics. I will not fake beadwork when I am asked; I simply tell people that I make modern beaded items. I specialize in beading knife sheaths and small pouches.

I know that you can smell 'Old English' scratch cover and motor oil on beaded items so don't hesitate to smell the leather before you decide to buy a beaded item. Genuine brain tanned smoked buckskin will have a mild smoked smell that is very pleasant.

I have written guides for eBay under the eBay selling names of "osalita" and "hidingoutjoe" and the guide titled, "How to Purchase a Good Reproduction" has received poor reviews, not because it is not a helpful guide, to the contrary is a very good guide but the fakers and schemers do not like someone to tell potential buyers how to spot a fake. I hope this article has been helpful to you. Before you decide to add a piece of old beadwork to your Native American collection, be sure to check it over carefully. Any sign of modern stitching, modern hides or bright beads will be a sure tip off that it is not an old genuine beaded item.

## **Artifacts: Hobby, Emerging Market or Regulated Industry?**

**By: Malcolm T. McLaughlin**

I doubt that the average collector thought much about the future of the hobby in the 1970s and the 1980s. Issues related to legality, taxation and profits were likely absent from the mindset of the vast majority of the collecting community. But the hobby we enjoy today is an evolutionary descendant of a simpler time when folks got together to look at arrowheads. The hobby is seeing unprecedented levels of buying, frequently at premium prices, as well as rampant ‘artifakery’ for profit (which I clearly differentiate from educational flint knapping, which has done so much to advance our knowledge of point technology). As is the case with other collectibles, our pastime has now become a hybrid of hobby, emerging marketplace and regulated industry. This evolution demands that collectors educate themselves on a wide variety of issues, from what types of flint and knapping techniques identify a point as authentic, all the way to whether one can be criminally prosecuted for picking up an arrowhead on the ‘wrong’ sandbar.

There are obviously many issues facing modern collectors but consideration must also be given to the future implications of our modern problems. Collecting was a ‘hobby’ when the largest collections belonged to those with the free time or the best land to hunt. As the sale of artifacts proliferated and prices for the best pieces soared, the hobby evolved into an emerging marketplace. That marketplace has matured significantly in recent years and it is my opinion that we are on the verge of moving into a third stage – regulated industry. Regulation will likely come in the forms of stricter taxation rules, applied sales taxes and an increase in the number of state regulations precluding the removal of in-situ artifacts.

Of course we are all aware of the recent proliferation of anti-collecting laws in Oregon, Florida and other states. But are you aware of the downstream implications of these laws as they apply to sellers and purchasers? For example, Florida law (Title XVIII, Chapter 267.13(1)(a-c)) appears to preclude removal of artifacts from state lands and rivers and the knowing sale or purchase of illegally removed artifacts, subject to criminal penalties. This raises many important questions for collectors. What standard of proof is required for the state to demonstrate ‘knowledge’? Can a buyer claim a lack of knowledge based on the word of the seller? Must a buyer see an artifact removed to have true knowledge? These and other questions could vex a concerned collector. And it is prudent to assume that state laws will become generally more restrictive in the future. Thus, such questions could directly affect buyers and sellers in many other states before too long.

In addition to the threat of legal consequences for uninformed collecting habits, there is also a potential for significant financial regulation of the hobby. There has been a recent increase in the amount of IRS agents attending shows and passing out 1099 Forms to the dealers. Some sellers have begun to charge sales tax and to report large sales revenues on their state and federal taxes. As with anything else, the infusion of the significant money will bring additional (maybe unwanted) attention to the hobby. We saw the development of an emerging marketplace, fueled by a rapid rise in prices, and state regulation may not be far behind. With the amount of money changing hands for high-grade pieces, collectors must be aware of financial and legal consequences looming on the horizon.

## Surface Hunting

By: Chris Capley

I got a new site to hunt on this week and it finally got some rain on it in the past couple of days. My hunting partner and I went by there after work tonight to test the waters and it was definitely worth the walk! Within 10 minutes of being on the site, my friend Rob spots a killed. I didn't take the camera in the field; I had forgotten it in the Jeep. He called me over to see it in-situ. Only about a two inch section of the blade edge was showing, so it was a cliffhanger. When he flipped it, we both let out a loud "Whoopee!" slapped high fives and hugged each other. Here is a look at both sides. It's going to display very nicely in a frame.



This is what dreams are made of! A Lost Lake made of Ft. Payne. Its 3 1/8<sup>th</sup> inches long with no modern damage. There is some ancient damage to the tip from use but it doesn't hurt it a bit, in my opinion. There are exactly 20 flakes taken off each blade edge to form the serrations.



Just another shot for size reference.

We're using the redneck ruler to size it up.

We found a lot of other stuff but nothing compares to this. Some really nice broken bases and tips and a couple of nearly complete points, all Archaic. I just know there's going to be some more killers in there when it gets washed down good. Hopefully 2007 is going to be a lucky year!

# Volunteers Needed

AACA Volunteers make a difference by contributing their time, energy, and talents to the association. As the AACA has grown, the need for volunteers has never been greater. The AACA needs you!

**Web Designers**

**Photography**

**Graphic Designers**

**Writers**

**Research**

**Public Relations**

**Forum Monitors**

**Legal**

**Artifact Identification & Typology**

**Are You Ready?**

**You Can Make A Difference!**

**The AACA Needs Your Support!**

To Volunteer

Please email your interests within the AACA, were you could help make a difference

[president@theaaca.com](mailto:president@theaaca.com)