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## EXHIBITION ON POMO INDIAN WEAVERS AND BASKETRY

This special issue of *Expedition* is devoted to Pomo Indian ethnohistory and basketry and accompanies the University of Pennsylvania Museum's traveling exhibition, "Pomo Indian Basket Weavers, Their Baskets and the Art Market." Curated by anthropologists Dr. Sally McLendon and Dr. Judith Berman, the exhibition focuses on a group of Native weavers in California who made and sold their exceptional baskets in the emerging Indian art market of the early 20th century. The exhibition builds on the Museum's well-documented Pomo Indian basket collections and makes use of the memories, research, and perspectives of Pomoan consultants: Delvin Holder is a descendant of some of the weavers featured in the exhibition; Sherrie Smith-Ferri, Acting Director of the Grace Hudson Museum, Ukiah, California, is an anthropologist specializing in the marketing of Pomo baskets; and Susan Billy is a contemporary basket weaver. Dr. Victoria Patterson, a specialist in Pomo ethnohistory, contributed to the exhibition's educational programming. Development, production, and public programming for the exhibition were made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The idea for this exhibition grew from years of research on the part of the curators. McLendon, a specialist in Pomoan languages and cultures, began investigating the ethnohistory of several Pomoan communities in the 1960s. In the late 1970s she began studying their baskets in various museum collections including the University of Pennsylvania Museum's. Berman, as Keeper of the Museum's American Section in 1989-1990, had been working on a catalogue of the Section's basketry collections, including the over 300 Pomo pieces. Most of the baskets the two studied were from the Henry K. Deisher and Patty Stuart Jewett collections. Associated with them and contributing to the present exhibition is unique documentation that places the baskets, their makers, and their production and sale within a rich social, cultural, and historical context.

From the exhibition's inception, we always had the commitment to make it available to the Pomoan peoples living in communities in northern California. The exhibition's Pomo consultants felt that among contemporary Pomoan peoples there is a strong desire to know more about their history. Descendants of many of the weavers featured in the exhibition had never had the opportunity to see their relatives' baskets. Once it was established that the fragile baskets could safely travel, we decided that the exhibition premiere would be at the Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House in Ukiah, centrally located to the Pomo communities. The exhibit

will then continue to the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC, the National Museum of the American Indian's George Gustav Heye Center in New York City, and finally to the University of Pennsylvania Museum.

*Pamela Hearne Jardine*  
Assistant Director



The Museum exhibition staff working on "Pomo Indian Basket Weavers"; (l. to r.) Howard Clemenko, Jack Murray, and Renwei Huang.

*Photograph by F. Sarin*