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of Archaeology and  
Anthropology

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## FROM THE NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS

I would like to introduce myself to the readers of *Expedition* and express my vision of museum work.

My career in museums was founded on my curiosity about the past, expressed initially in a desire to trace back in time the common things we see today. Older styles of American furniture, architecture, and photographs captivated me. My search to understand them began with books, then led to antique shops, collecting sojourns, and finally to museums. My innate interest in the past evolved into a 20+ year career in history and anthropology museums.

After receiving a master's degree in museum studies from the Cooperstown program (SUNY), I moved to Philadelphia in 1976 for my first professional position, at the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies. The Bicentennial was an exciting time to plan and implement a major museum exhibition with architects, designers, fabricators, film-makers, and research scholars. This experience served me well in later years when planning exhibits at Winterthur in Odessa, the Chester County Historical Society, and Valley Forge National Historical Park.

My transition into cultural anthropology came as part of my growing interest in non-Western histories preserved in oral traditions. That intellectual road led me across the country and to varied experiences in the Southwest. For the past ten years I have been engaged in fieldwork there, particularly with Pueblo communities in New Mexico. My future book, based upon my dissertation research at the University of Arizona, is on the fascinating career of the first Native American academic anthropologist, Dr. Edward P. Dozier (1916–1971), who personifies the blending of Pueblo values into traditions of anthropological research. Fieldwork for a tribal museum survey conducted with the Arizona State Museum led to a position on the Collections Committee of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian. As a faculty member in the anthropology department at New Mexico State University, I taught museum studies and gained administrative experience as the director of their university museum.

My vision for collections and exhibitions at the University of Pennsylvania Museum is based upon my diverse experiences as ethnographer, teacher, and administrator. Translated into everyday terms, my first responsibility is to listen well and learn from the faculty, staff, volunteers, and members who preserve the "institutional memory" of the museum. My second is to offer recommendations for structuring the complex process of coordinating a staff of over 130 people to plan exhibits and to manage collections. My third responsibility is to administer these programs in a financially responsible manner and in support of the educational mission of the museum and the university.

The lessons learned from ethnographic fieldwork and applied projects with the National Park Service and Southwestern Indian communities have formed who I am as an anthropologist, one with a keen awareness of the responsibility of museums in cultural representations.

Marilyn Norcini  
*Associate Director for Collections and Exhibitions*

Be sure to visit the Museum's Web site: [www.upenn.edu/museum](http://www.upenn.edu/museum)