



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Jesse L. Nusbaum negatives
and photographs, 1910-1928

2011

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Jesse L. Nusbaum negatives and photographs
Date:	1910-1928
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.001.012
Creator:	Nusbaum, Jesse L. (Jesse Logan)
Extent:	205 Acetate negatives 25 Albumen prints
Language:	English .
Summary:	Includes images from the excavations at Hawikku near Zuni Pueblo and Basketmaker's Cave in Kane County, Utah, as well as objects found at Cave Lakes, also in Kane County, Utah. Also included are views of Zuni Pueblo, Santa Clara Pueblo, Jemez Pueblo, Puye cliff dwellings, Pecos Mission and other views of Arizona and New Mexico.

Administrative Information

Processing Information

NMAIA Review

Preferred Citation

Jesse L. Nusbaum negatives and photographs, 1910-1928, National Museum of the American Indian Archives, Smithsonian Institution (negative, slide or catalog number).

Restrictions

Access is by appointment only, Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Please contact the archives to make an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Restricted: Cultural Sensitivity

Biographical Note

Jesse L. Nusbaum, a long-time archaeologist and administrator for the National Park Service and recipient of the Distinguished Service award from the Department of the Interior (1954), began his career as a teacher, attending Colorado Teachers College in Greeley, where he received his Bachelor of Pedagogy in 1907. He then moved to Las Vegas to teach science and manual arts at New Mexico State Normal School. Later that year, he made his first connection with Mesa Verde as a photographer and archeological assistant to A. V. Kidder; Nusbaum spent the next year working as an assistant to the archeologist. In June of 1909 he became the first employee of the School of American Archeology and Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe under Dr. Edgar L. Hewett. Nusbaum

traveled to Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Colorado, and New Mexico where he undertook archeological surveys, investigations, excavations, and ruins stabilization.

Nusbaum's work at the museum brought him back to Mesa Verde for the excavation, repair, and stabilization of the Balcony House, a project which extended into the winter of 1910. In 1913, he supervised the completion of the New Mexico Palace of Governors in Santa Fe and worked in the Mayan ruins of the Yucatan with Dr. S. G. Morley. He then supervised the construction of the state art museum from 1916 to 1918. Nusbaum enlisted during World War I in the hopes of becoming an aviator, but instead he became an engineer and served in France until his discharge in 1919. After the war, Nusbaum moved to New York City and worked at the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. While Nusbaum was working in New York he took part in several expeditions to the Southwest, including those at Hawikku (Hawikuh) Pueblo and Basketmaker Cave.

In 1921, while still in New York, he was selected by Stephen Mather and Arno Cammerer to become superintendent at Mesa Verde National Park. Director Mather had become disgusted with the conditions that had developed there under a political superintendent. Nusbaum was a very effective superintendent, advancing the development of the park and preserving the archeological resources. He discontinued grazing, built a museum and developed good interpretive programs, especially ones designed to explain the Antiquities Act. His involvement with the Act led to his designation in 1927 as the lead archeologist and prime enforcer of the Act for the Southwest (while remaining Mesa Verde superintendent).

Nusbaum continued this dual capacity until 1930, when he took a leave of absence to organize and direct the Laboratory of Anthropology at Santa Fe, New Mexico. He continued as director of the laboratory until 1935, having earlier returned to the Park Service and resumed his dual duties as Mesa Verde superintendent and Department of the Interior archeologist enforcing the Antiquities Act. Nusbaum continued this dual position for many years. In 1946 he left Mesa Verde and his dual role for Santa Fe. At the National Park Service office there, he took up increased duties as the senior archeologist of the National Park Service. In this capacity, Nusbaum began one of the first salvage archeology projects when he persuaded El Paso Natural Gas Company to allow archeological excavation along their pipelines. After a year's extension Nusbaum was forced to retire from the NPS at the age of 71 in 1957. However, he continued to do consulting work for many years. He died in Santa Fe in December 1975, at the age of 88.

Arrangement

Negatives: organized in individual sleeves; arranged by negative number

Prints: organized in folders; arranged by print number

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- A:shiwi (Zuni)
- Jemez Pueblo
- Kaibab Paiute
- Kewa (Santo Domingo Pueblo)
- Laguna Pueblo
- Puye Pueblo

Cultures:

- A:shiwi (Zuni)
- Jemez Pueblo

Kaibab Paiute
Kewa (Santo Domingo Pueblo)
Laguna Pueblo
Puye Pueblo

Types of Materials:

Negatives
Photographic prints
Photographs

Places:

Arizona
Hawikuh (N. M.)
New Mexico
Pecos National Historical Park (N.M.)
Santa Clara Pueblo (N.M.)
Utah
Zuni (N.M.)