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***History in the Desert* opens at Brown's Ranch Trailhead Nov. 18**

The public is invited to an opening reception for the new exhibit

A new exhibit opening Saturday, Nov. 18, at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead in Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve offers insights into the Arizona Historical Society's role in preserving the state's history and telling its unique story.

The exhibit, called *History in the Desert*, is the result of a partnership between the historical society and the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. It includes artifacts and photographs from the Arizona Historical Society collections showing historic ranching, mining, farming and other elements of Arizona history.

The exhibit also exposes visitors to the Arizona Historical Society's every day role as an educational and cultural connector by providing information about programs like National History Day – a competitive student history competition that welcomes hundreds of participants from around Arizona each year.

The public is invited to an opening reception that begins at 9 a.m. at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead, located at 30301 N. Alma School Parkway, Scottsdale. Free refreshments will be served and McDowell Sonoran Conservancy stewards and Arizona Historical Society staff will be on hand to answer questions.

Earlier this year *Sonoran Silver: Preserving Sonoran Desert Treasures* opened at the AZ Heritage Center at Papago Park in Tempe, the historical society's museum in central Arizona. That exhibit honors the 25th anniversary of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy by telling its history and celebrating its role in helping create and maintain the largest urban preserve in the United States.

“*Sonoran Silver* brought some of the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve to our museum,” said Tawn Downs, director of the AZ Heritage Center. “Now *History in the Desert* brings a little of our museum to the preserve. We are thrilled that our partnership with the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy is teaching more people in Arizona about the important work both our organizations are doing.”

History in the Desert will run through May 2018, and will be open whenever McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Pathfinder staff is present, generally 7 – 9 a.m. Monday through Friday and 7 – 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

To support the exhibit, the AZ Heritage Center (1300 N. College Ave., Tempe) will feature a series of related lectures and workshops including *Sonoran Desert Wildlife*, *Desert Photography*, *Ethnobotany in the Sonoran Desert*, *Central Arizona Geology*, and more.

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About the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

[\(https://www.mcdowellsonoran.org/\)](https://www.mcdowellsonoran.org/)

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy enters its twenty-sixth year as the primary nonprofit that protects and preserves over 30,500 acres of Scottsdale’s McDowell Sonoran Preserve. The Preserve is the largest, and one of the most beautiful, urban preserves in the U.S. and viewed as a leading model for ecological resource management. This Arizona treasure is visited by more than 750,000 residents and guests annually. Conservancy programs make an impact in advancing critical initiatives in Preserve conservation, sustainability and community education. Over 650 Steward volunteers serve as the lifeblood of the organization in maintaining and patrolling trails, guiding hikes and mountain bike rides, collaborating on leading-edge research studies and inspiring minds young and old with innovative citizen science programs.

About Arizona Heritage Center at Papago Park

[\(http://www.arizonahistoricalsociety.org/museums/tempe/\)](http://www.arizonahistoricalsociety.org/museums/tempe/)

The Arizona Historical Society is the oldest historical organization in Arizona, founded in 1864, and dedicated to collecting, preserving and sharing Arizona’s rich history. The stories of the people, places and events that have shaped Arizona – are told through museum exhibits, programs, events and outreach. The Arizona Historical Society informs and inspires people of all ages by reminding them of the boldness and daring that characterized countless individuals, past and present, who have made Arizona their home.

The Arizona Heritage Center at Papago Park in Tempe is one of the largest of eight museums operated by the Arizona Historical Society. Located at the base of beautiful Papago Park, the facility is home to the Centennial Museum, celebrating more than 100 years of Central Arizona, and Phoenix, history. Through stories of the early settlers, the construction of Roosevelt Dam; the bravery and struggles of the men and women of World War I and World War II; and the exciting post-war birth of the city of Phoenix – visitors will gain insight into the challenges of the past and greater understanding of contemporary issues such as water availability, immigration, free trade, mining, ranching and agribusiness, cultural diversity, and urban development and revitalization.

In addition to the Centennial Museum, the AZ Heritage Center is a cultural center where visitors can participate in a variety of educational and entertaining programming and events for adults and children. Guided and self-guided tours are available for school children and adult groups, and can be customized to meet individual needs.