

# GHOST RANCH



EDUCATION & RETREAT CENTER

## What's Up with Ghost Ranch and NMPCA?

Before answering the question . . . a fast-forward history of NMPCA, Ghost Ranch, and the relationship between the organizations.

“Rancho de los Brujos” (Ranch of the Witches) became known as Ghost Ranch during time of owner Carol Stanley, who sold to Arthur Pack in 1936. Georgia O’Keeffe’s visits evolved into purchasing 7 of 21,000 acres and sketching the ox skull placed on fence-post at Ghost Ranch turnoff to Arthur Pack, who adopted it as Ghost Ranch’s logo. In 1955, Arthur Pack gifted Ghost Ranch to the Presbyterian Church and Chimney Rock became the logo. In 1971, with Georgia O’Keeffe’s encouragement, the familiar skull design became Ghost Ranch’s official logo. In 2016, Ghost Ranch was restructured as a new corporation, with the Presbyterian Church retaining ownership of property and buildings and the National Ghost Ranch Foundation having responsibility for legal and financial oversight and policies. This means that Ghost Ranch is now responsible for financial sustainability of its operations and risk management. In addition to operating as a new corporation, Ghost Ranch was challenged by the 2015 flash flood that destroyed property and buildings, including the clay studio facility in “Pot Hollow.”

With a genesis beginning in the 1960’s, New Mexico Potters and Clay Artists was incorporated in 1977 as a 501c3 nonprofit organization. The initial goal of getting together to share information about pottery methods and order materials in bulk has expanded to what NMPCA is today.



From its beginnings, NMPCA has had a close working, symbiotic relationship with Ghost Ranch. Since 1973, there have been 53 workshops presented by NMPCA at Ghost Ranch, including presenters of national and historical renown - Peter Voulkos, Rudio Autio, and Juan Quezada. Through NMPCA, over \$20,000 in equipment and supply donations have

been passed through to Ghost Ranch over the years. An NMPCA Ghost Ranch Liaison position, filled by Barbara Campbell for many years, and countless hours of NMPCA members at Volunteer Work Camps have benefitted Ghost Ranch.

The 2015 flash flood at Ghost Ranch and its 2016 restructuring as a new corporation are resulting in changes to the over 40-year relationship between NMPCA and Ghost Ranch. Like Georgia O’Keeffe, after years of NMPCA’s stewardship of Pot Hollow and countless hours rebuilding the Ceramic Art Studio at Ghost Ranch, it’s understandable and justified for NMPCA members to feel an “ownership.” Of course there is still more to accomplish in the effort to fulfill the vision of a first-class ceramic workshop facility.

In an effort to clearly define in writing the relationship between NMPCA and Ghost Ranch, NMPCA made a proposal to Ghost Ranch for an agreement regarding stewardship of the ceramic art facility. Simultaneously, Ghost Ranch is working on initiation of an “Open Studio” format and initiation of a Community Committee for all arts studios.

Communications between the Ranch and NMPCA are still in progress regarding these initiatives.

While Ghost Ranch remains a fabulous venue for workshops, NMPCA has an opportunity to look beyond Ghost Ranch, creating new relationships and reaching out for broader state-wide membership involvement. By serving on NMPCA’s Workshop Committee, as well as joining the Board of Directors, you can help steer NMPCA toward healthy future viability and its mission to “promote excellence and creativity in clay arts and to further understanding and appreciation of clay arts throughout New Mexico.”

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