

# Museum Happenings

## Showcasing the local legacy of Uranium this November

by Moab Museum Staff

For several years leading up to the exhibition, *U92: Moab's Uranium Legacy*, and all throughout 2025, the team has undertaken an effort to record a series of oral history interviews highlighting the stories of miners, mill workers, business owners in downtown Moab, and a growing representation of the many thousands of folks who witnessed Moab's uranium booms and busts. We're excited to display these stories and objects that did not find a home in the exhibition space at the Grand County Public Library this November! **The Uranium Memories Project Showcase** will share those stories with the community, presenting pre-recorded oral histories, new additions to the Museum's collections, as well as interactive opportunities for individuals with their own uranium memories to share their experience. Join us on November 18th at 6:30 PM. This event will be free and open to the public. We look forward to seeing you there.

### What does it mean to share a story from our local community in the form of an exhibition?

It involves tens to hundreds of conversations, formal oral histories, personal reminiscences, object collections, and discussions with donors or lenders about the context of these objects. It involves consultation with folks with expertise in the subject or timeline in order to piece together those individual experiences, stories, opinions, recollections, and artifacts to build a cohesive and understandable representation that we then call an exhibition. U92: Moab's Uranium Legacy has been the

Museum's biggest undertaking in years, both in in-gallery format and in the stories collected to tell this complicated one!

### How does the storytelling process pertain to the uranium boom and bust?

With each coming year, we move slowly further and further away from the uranium era of Moab. But this history altered the fabric of our town forever, and stories from the era come in so many shapes and sizes. It's our job here at the Museum to make sure that a complete record of our town's history is gathered. For as much as we operate as one town, we also have such distinct and heterogeneous stories to share. So, share yours today. Engrain your and your family's history in the canon of Moab, UT.

This event is made possible through an Oral History Grant from the Utah Humanities and Utah Historical Society. This funding is provided by both organizations to bolster the online collection of oral histories, Utah Revisited, where they will remain available to the public for research and educational purposes.



Black and white aerial photograph of Main Street from 100 South in Moab looking north via the Moab Museum & Utah Historical Society, Mariot Library, 1956.

For more information about sharing your stories, our efforts to continue to gather oral histories throughout the duration of this exhibition and beyond, contact Moab Museum Program Director, Megan Vickery, at [megan@moabmuseum.org](mailto:megan@moabmuseum.org).

## The Moab Museum Announces 2026 Exhibition Series:

## Voices of the Plateau, Commemorating America's 250th Anniversary

In 2026, the Moab Museum will participate in the nationwide commemoration of America's 250th anniversary with a year-long exhibition series titled *Voices of the Plateau: Commemorating America's Semiquincentennial*.

This special series will highlight the diverse stories of the Colorado Plateau region, offering artists, Tribal communities, local organizations, and residents—past and present—an opportunity to share their experiences of identity, culture, and home. Throughout the year, the Museum will serve as a platform to elevate these voices, with art as the central medium for expression and reflection.

### Semiquincentennial Timeline:

- *Breaking 100 Years of Silence*: 01/16/26
- *Lowrider Culture in the American Southwest / Cultura Lowrider en el suroeste estadounidense*: 04/24/26
- *Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Trail*: 07/28/26
- *How Did We Get Here? Stories of Migration and Home*: 10/23/26

### Breaking 100 Years of Silence

The series will launch with *Breaking 100 Years of Silence*, an art exhibition that promotes healing and remembrance by commemorating the 101st anniversary of the "Posey War," which began on March 19, 1923. Through the work of Ute Elders, storytellers, artists, and musicians, the exhibit shares the enduring spirit and legacy of the Ute Mountain Ute people—bringing to light a century of silence surrounding this historic event.

The "Posey War" led to the weeks-long forcible internment of approximately 80 Ute men, women, and children in a barbed-wire enclosure in the streets of Blanding; the deaths of two Ute men; the loss of traditional Ute lands in the Bears Ears region; and the coerced enrollment of Ute children in federal boarding schools. 100 Years of Silence aims to amplify the Ute perspective, foster understanding, and offer space for healing through the lens of art and storytelling.

### Lowrider Culture in the American Southwest / Cultura Lowrider en el suroeste estadounidense

Lowriding is a quintessential Chicano tradition started by Mexican American communities in the 1940s to assert their space and empower their lives. This unique car-making tradition is infused with Latino/a soul, entrepreneurship, and ingenuity. A mix of innovation and tradition, lowriding is an affirmation of identity and values that have reached beyond the United States to influence popular culture worldwide.

### Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Trail

The history of the Buffalo Soldiers is one of resilience, achievement, and lasting contribution to the United States. Beginning shortly after the Civil War, the story of the Buffalo Soldiers follows the country's westward

expansion; the struggle for racial equality; relationships and conflicts with Native Americans and non-native settlers; and perseverance. The Buffalo Soldier Heritage Trail links together all the unique pieces of this story and connects it to the places where it all happened.

Moab has a distinct and local connection to the Buffalo Soldiers via the 9th Cavalry. The 9th Cavalry's first expedition into Utah Territory took place in the fall of 1878, when Troop K, led by 2nd Lieutenant Ballard S. Humphrey, departed from Animas City, Colorado. They entered Utah south of Moab, traveled along the Old Spanish Trail through Spanish Valley, moved north to the southern base of the Book Cliffs, and then returned east to Fort Garland, Colorado.

During their 12-week patrol, the 9th Cavalry scouted for Ute Tribal members in and around the Abajo Mountains while extensively exploring eastern Utah. Their route was recorded in remarkable detail, documenting campsites,



geographical landmarks, and even man-made structures along the way. Notable locations included Kane Springs, a critical water source along the Old Spanish Trail, and the "Old Mormon Fort" at Elk Mountain Mission in present-day Moab.

### How Did We Get Here? Stories of Migration and Home

We will conclude the year with a community exhibition and invite artists and makers, both local and from afar, to submit work in any medium under the theme: "How Did We Get Here? Stories of Migration and Home."

We encourage you to explore themes of movement, connection across time, migration routes, and the idea of home. Consider drawing from your own family history—journeys to and from the Moab Valley, throughout Utah, across the United States, or around the world.

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**MOAB MUSEUM**  
SMALL MUSEUM. BIG STORIES.

**Hours:**  
9am-5pm  
Tuesday-Saturday

**118 E. Center Street**  
**Moab, Utah**

**435-259-7985**

The only spatial requirement for submitted works is that they must fit through the Museum's main entrance doors (70" x 78"). All submissions will be juried, and not all work will be selected for the exhibition.

About the Semiquincentennial in Utah: In 2026, Utahns will join with other states to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. Utahns will come together to reflect on our nation's past, build community, and look toward the future.

For nearly 250 years, Americans from all walks of life and every corner of the country have had a hand in shaping our nation's history. From time immemorial, the area now known as Utah was populated by Indigenous people. Today's eight federally recognized Tribal nations include the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the Navajo Nation. Spain claimed what is now Utah as part of New Spain from 1500 to 1821. In 1776, a group of Spanish Catholic priests, the Domínguez-Escalante Expedition, left Santa Fe, hoping to find a route to the California coast as they traveled through parts of Utah.

No two Americans began their journey in the same place. Except for Native Americans, our ancestors came to these lands from elsewhere. For many Utahns, the quest for statehood provides a lens to reflect upon the full sweep of our nation's past and a deeper understanding of integration and the meaning and promise of America.

The semiquincentennial is a chance for everyone to feel a part of this major milestone in our nation. We can celebrate courage, liberty, and sacrifice, while also reckoning with difficult truths. By fostering a sense of belonging and coming together with our local communities, we can ensure that Utahns of all ages and backgrounds see themselves in American history.

To learn more about state-wide programming, visit: <https://america250.utah.gov/programs/>