

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE DIGS GRAEBEL

250,000+ PRICELESS ARTIFACTS RELOCATED TO NEW FACILITY SAFELY

CASE STUDY



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Archaeological Resource Institute (ARI), a unit of Arizona State University (ASU), recently went through an archaeological dig of its own with a mission to relocate its entire collection of priceless artifacts and related materials and data. ARI refurbished one of its warehouses located five miles away from the current ASU campus location. With a plan to designate one entire floor to more than 250,000 individual and bulk archaeological items, Graebel was selected as the expert to properly handle the relocation.

THE CHALLENGE

According to ARI, material traces of past cultures and the information encoded in them are limited, fragile, and incomplete. It is the responsibility of the archaeological community to protect these remains, interpret their meaning, and to make this knowledge available to all who are interested.

For these reasons ARI chose to pack the items in-house, and extra precautionary methods were implemented by Graebel to move

everything from origin to destination to reduce the risk of damage during the relocation.

Identified as a U.S. federal agency relocation would demand additional extensive background checks for the workforce.

THE SOLUTION

Extensive background checks for high-level clearance were conducted on every Graebel crew member prior to the relocation.

(Solution continued and Results on next page)

THE CUSTOMER

The Archaeological Research Institute (ARI) was established in 1995 as a unit of Arizona State University to undertake the preservation of archaeological materials and related data, to pursue research activities associated with the archaeological record, and to conduct educational programs to disseminate knowledge of the past to Arizona's citizens.

ARI facilitates scientific research through access to the archaeological collections, archives, and through the use of its facilities. ARI participates in and initiates research activities based on its collections for the purpose of expanding the scientific value of these materials and the knowledge base of the past. In these activities, ARI endeavors to advance new, state-of-the-art methodology for materials research in archaeology and to make its facilities and collections available to other researchers.

www.archaeology.asu.edu

PROJECT SCOPE

To relocate more than 250,000 individual and bulk archaeological items to a new facility located five miles away and to secure each priceless item on the appropriate shelving.

PROJECT GOALS

To implement a custom proprietary chain-of-custody process so that all precious items could be relocated safely to the new facility within the four-day timeline.

WHY GRAEBEL

Graebel is no stranger to moving priceless, precious and high-value items. After participating in a walk-through bid, ARI selected Graebel for its thorough proposal that outlined how every step of the process would be professionally conducted. Plus, the creativity and extra precaution taken on previous projects by Graebel experts, unearthed the deal.

ARI Artifacts Collection



The client's required move plan allotted for a total of four days to complete the project. To streamline the process, two phases were spread over two weeks with two consecutive days of activity planned for each phase. 10 Graebel crew members were dedicated to the relocation with two trucks rotating daily, equaling approximately five truckloads each day.

Graebel created and strictly adhered to a proprietary chain-of-custody process for end-to-end success. This elaborate method was enacted so that all parties involved could easily track and have eyes on the artifacts while in transit. Chain-of-custody steps included:

- > Graebel supervisor and ARI contact sign-off checkpoint when items were loaded at the ARI campus origin location
- > Federal escort of the loaded Graebel trailer en route to the new facility
- > Final checkpoint of same Graebel supervisor and ARI contact as items were unloaded, unpacked and placed on shelving

This process was meticulously followed for each of the 20 round-trips that were required to complete the relocation.

As a precautionary measure, lift-gates were used during loading and unloading to eliminate tilting when transporting each item up and down the ramps.

The ARI historical collections that Graebel relocated were vast and in various conditions and preservation methods included:

- > Woven baskets, ceramics
- > Fauna, pollen, seeds
- > Non-human primates and fossil hominid casts
- > Whole pottery vessel collection
- > ASU Dental Anthropology Collection, featuring casts from many parts of the world
- > Osteological remains from the early Christian Era Nubian site of Semna South on the upper Nile River, Sudan

These archaeological materials curated at ARI are preserved in conformance with applicable governmental policies and procedures, and current professional standards. Therefore the relocation warranted the opportunity for ARI to build custom shelving at the new facility that would house the items.

Upon delivery, Graebel carefully unpacked and placed each item according to the pre-determined shelving plan.

THE RESULTS

The ARI collections that contained over 250,000 artifacts were professionally relocated by Graebel without incident and according to the detailed proposal. Now, in its new location, the Institute can continue its mission of providing the long-term care and curation of the archaeological materials for many years to come.

Click to read other successful treasured relocation projects performed by Graebel:

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- > [George W. Bush Library and Museum Materials Securely Transferred](#)
- > [The National Archives Trusts Graebel to Relocate Sensitive Federal Records](#)
- > [Final Phase of Largest National Archive Historical Move](#)

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