



# HOW THE WEST WAS REALLY WON

Welcome to Scottsdale's new cowboy museum

**B**EFORE RESORTS AND RETAIL centers rose up in the Sonoran Desert, it was actually ranchers who shaped Scottsdale's development. Hitching posts, saloons and frontier-era storefronts still line some streets in this

central-Arizona city. Now, that frontier heritage is manifest in "Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West," which will open with eight galleries exploring the cowboy way in a two-story building in the downtown arts district.

The museum will house everything from art to John Wayne artifacts.

Thirty years after city leaders conceived of the idea, the \$20 million museum, which spotlights a 19-state region from Hawaii to Wyoming to Texas, became a reality.

"The American West is a huge topic," says Tricia Loscher, who curates the museum's rotating exhibits with items sourced from noted artists and collectors. "That is part of the engagement and the theme that weaves throughout. We want viewers to really question, 'What is the American West?'"

Guests enter the exhibition halls through a gallery that traces the travels of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The Spirit of the West gallery presents spurs, sheriff badges and pioneer trappings, plus John Wayne items and

other Hollywood memorabilia. Other displays showcase Native American artifacts and the works of established and emerging Western artists. Several children's

activities entertain little cowboys and cowgirls, while all ages can learn to braid ropes and read about historical figures through other media offering in-depth information.

"Scottsdale has been known as 'The West's most Western town' since the 1950s," says city tourism spokesperson Stephanie Pressler. "In recent years, that motto has been challenged by some who see Scottsdale becoming sleeker, but there is still that sense of Western pride. Scottsdale's Museum of the West is honoring that history." —RENEE BRINCKS