

A pair of pictographs that traveled a circuitous route have found their way back home to the Saint Joseph Museums and are on view to the public at the Museum's 3406 Frederick Avenue Site. The pictographs were part of a group of 17 works lent by the Saint Joseph Museums to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art for an exhibition in 1961. The works were returned in 1962, but the two pictographs remained in the care of the Nelson-Atkins until recently.

"I am delighted that these pictographs will return to St. Joseph," said Julián Zugazagoitia, Menefee D. and Mary Louise Blackwell CEO & Director of the Nelson-Atkins. "This is a testament to the friendship shared by our institutions, and an excellent example of museum collegiality."



The pictographs show scenes of Native American life and were included in the seminal exhibition *Sacred Circles: Two Thousand Years of North American Indian Art*, which was on view at the Nelson-Atkins in 1977. The *Sacred Circles* catalogue described the works as "fine examples of crowded narrative style of later Plains painting, as it developed after trader's muslin became available. Traders sometimes hung these works in their cabins, and others were retained as personal recorders."

Dr. Robert Corder, Past President of the St. Joseph Museums and a volunteer researcher on the Harry L. George Collection, was instrumental in identifying the importance of returning the pictograph for display in St. Joseph. The George Collection is one of the best documented collections of Native American artifacts in the world. George's collecting correspondence is preserved in two large ledgers at the Saint Joseph Museums and is available digitally to researchers online.

The pictographs were originally acquired in 1915 by George, who passed away in 1923. His collection was lent to the Missouri State Resources Museum in 1924 and subsequently purchased by William L. Goetz and donated to the Saint Joseph Museums.

"We are delighted that after 60 years, the piece, which has been so well taken care of by the Nelson-Atkins, will return to the Saint Joseph Museum to be displayed and enjoyed by our visitors. We are also grateful for volunteers like Dr. Corder, who are doing important and meaningful work at the Museum."

-Sara Wilson, Executive Director of the Saint Joseph Museums