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Alcatraz Occupation Flag Flies High at Auction

Rosemary McKittrick brings history to life in her weekly art, antique and collectibles column. Visit [LiveAuctionTalk.com](#) and sign up for a free subscription.

/24-7PressRelease/ - SANTA FE, NM, April 19, 2008 -- The occupation of Alcatraz on Nov. 9, 1969, was the biggest stand Native Americans had taken against Anglos since the Battle of Little Big Horn. They were trespassing on federal property and they didn't care.

Elliott Leighton, the attorney for the American Indian Council opened his briefcase that Sunday afternoon and began reading. He explained how the Sioux were laying claims to surplus property under terms of the 1868 Black Hills Treaty.

In short, they were taking over the vacant prison.

Assistant warden, A.L. Aylworth looked around at the crowd of some 14 Indians, some in full headdresses of eagle feathers. Others were wrapped in shawls or blankets sheltering themselves from the ocean's chill.

Aylworth scratched his head, seemed confused and said; "Well, I guess if you want it, you can have it."

It was barely a year after the last federal prisoner was removed from the small, rocky island in San Francisco Bay. Alcatraz was about to host its new residents.

The Indians threatened no one. But there was an air of confidence about their stand that made it clear, they meant business.

The Native Americans willingly left the following day. But on Nov. 20, 92 Indians crossed the Bay, landed on the island, and held it for 19 more months.

Ironically, Native Americans were among the first federal prisoners brought to the dungeons on Fort Alcatraz during the Civil War. Their time on the island had come full circle in what would become the longest occupation of a federal facility by Native Americans to date.

Alcatraz had become a symbol of Native American resistance.

Sometime during the 19 months, a flag nicknamed "Old Glory's Helper" flew from one of the island's guard towers. No one knows for sure just how long the tepee-emblazoned banner was actually there. It sold at PBA Galleries on Jan. 24 for \$69,000..

Read the entire article at <http://www.LiveAuctionTalk.com>

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LiveAuctionTalk.com is devoted to the rare, weird and wonderful objects people love to collect.

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Rosemary has provided auction coverage and analysis on thousands-and-thousands of antiques and collectibles sold since the column started 18-years ago. She includes auction sale results to give readers a feel for what their treasures are worth because the power of auctions is simple.

When the bidding stops and the hammer falls, the value of an item is set. The buyer, not the seller, sets the price, and this simple distinction cuts through all the chitchat about what art, antiques and collectibles are really worth. The emphasis is on today's values, not yesterday's wishful thinking.

Each week another new article is posted featuring a particular area of collecting.

- Every article showcases an auction item and how it fits into the big picture.
- A compelling, historical context is provided for the treasures people collect.
- Collecting tips are offered.
- Current "prices realized" are listed.

Rosemary is the co-author of The Official Price Guide to Fine Art published by Random House and received her training in the trenches working as a professional appraiser and weekly columnist.

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