

President's Letter

Teresa Moreno

Dear WAAC,

As this is my last letter to you as WAAC president, I want to take this moment to offer my sincerest thanks to all the members who helped to make this year's WAAC meeting in Tucson a happy success! Each of you who attended, through your mere presence and participation, played an integral part in this success. Without you, the annual meeting is nothing. Without you, WAAC would be nothing. Your on-going commitment and eagerness to come together to engage with your colleagues and to share your ideas and scholarship is what makes WAAC thrive.

This year's WAAC meeting was held in the iconic Old Main building in the heart of the University of Arizona campus in Tucson. It was a real pleasure for me especially to host you all here in my home town and at my alma mater. It was a fitting place for such a scholarly exchange. Thank you all for your dedication to this truly wonderful and spirited organization!

I owe many thanks to Jae Gutierrez, the Arthur J. Bell Senior Photograph Conservator at the Center for Creative Photography, and to Dana Senge, Objects Conservator, and her awesome staff at the Western Archaeological and Conservation Center, for opening up their labs for pre-conference tours. Thanks also are due to all my colleagues at the Arizona State Museum who helped with many details for the opening reception, especially Nancy Odegaard, Gina Watkinson, Skylar Jenkins, Betsy Burr, and Leah Bright who facilitated the tours of the ASM conservation lab as part of the reception. Visitors to these three labs were able to get a glimpse at the wide range of conservation activities and expertise that we have here in the Old Pueblo.

All in all, the opening reception was a fun and casual evening spent catching up with old friends and making new ones! In addition to fun finger foods and flowing libations, and the behind-the-scenes peek at the ASM conservation lab, a highlight of the opening reception was that WAAC members were welcomed to ASM and to the U of A by R. Brooks Jeffery, Associate Vice President for Research and Professor of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture. As an architect whose work has focused significantly on historic preservation, Brooks has been a long-time ally to ASM conservators. With his recent appointment to the U of A administration, with oversight of the university's three largest museums, Brooks is a stalwart and steadfast advocate for conservation and preservation initiatives within the University of Arizona community and the region. He was thrilled by the fact that the U of A was the host for this year's annual WAAC meeting, and jumped at the opportunity to welcome the members as he, in particular, recognizes the importance of promoting the valuable work and research that conservators do. While his greeting to the membership was brief, it carried a great deal of significance.

The meeting presentations kicked off with a fabulous keynote by notable local architect, Corky Poster, Principal at Poster Frost Mirto, on some of the challenges faced in the preservation of a number of historic properties in the southern Arizona region, including the conference venue itself, the original 1891 University of Arizona building, lovingly referred to as Old Main. Corky's talk served as a nice welcome and introduction to some of the larger scale preservation projects in the area.

The talks that followed over the course of the next few days were really fantastic! We had contributions on a range of topics by many of our local conservators and museum professionals as well as by conservators from the greater western region and even beyond! Several talks focused on successful collaborative projects with American Indian communities, and other talks highlighted innovative treatments and methods of analyzing significant American Indian objects. In addition to talks focused on object conservation, we also had a wonderful selection of talks

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President's letter, continued

related to the conservation of paper documents and photographic materials, some challenges of emergency preparedness and response, and various materials used for treatments. There was a little something for everyone's interest!

The final day of the conference was a real treat, even for us locals. A panel made up of local professionals from a range of fields including architecture, historic preservation and art conservation came together to offer WAAC members a unique view into the overarching effort to preserve one of Arizona's most notable historic landmarks, the Mission San Xavier del Bac!

Bob Vint, historic preservation architect, provided a brief history of the Mission and its preservation. Daniel Morales, Sr. and his son Vincent Morales, Morales Restoration & Builders, Inc., told their story of their family's involvement in the restoration of the Mission's exterior masonry over the course of five generations. Conservators, Suzanne Morris and Aneta Zebala, presented a summary of the assessment and maintenance plan that they developed for the Mission, which has served as a guide for work currently ducted by Mathilde Rubio and Tim Lewis, Tohono Restoration.

Miles Green, Executive Director of Patronato San Xavier, followed by giving an enlightening talk about the challenges of managing a restoration project that is both an historic landmark and a working church within a tribal community. He also presented the history of the establishment of the Patronato and its continuous efforts to fund the on-going preservation of the Mission.

These talks were followed by a field trip out to the Mission where the morning's speakers lead WAAC members on intimate tours of the Mission's interior and exterior. This special panel and the tours of the Mission San Xavier del Bac were coordinated to provide WAAC members with a special look at one of the largest continuous preservation projects in the Southwest. Likewise, the WAAC meeting provided the perfect venue to bring all of these contributors together in a professional forum.

While the meeting proper ended with the tours at San Xavier Mission, the WAAC Angels Project, which took place the following day, was a real demonstration of the spirit and passion of WAAC conservators! In short it was a huge success! The beneficiary of this year's project was the Old Pascua Museum & Yaqui Culture Center, a small tribal museum led by a one-man staff and volunteer director, Guillermo Quiroga.

WAAC participants gathered at the Old Pascua Museum at 9:00 a.m, and Mr. Quiroga gave a brief history and tour of the museum and the Yaqui church and ceremony grounds before the group headed to the Yaqui Resource Center. A team of made up of seventeen conservators, conservation graduate students and conservation intern was joined by at least sixteen members of the Yaqui community and other community volunteers, and together we accomplished most of what we had hoped for the project.

Angels formed teams to work on various projects. Paintings conservators tackled the onerous task of documenting the condition of three large murals (two murals and one nativity scene; each composed of three sheets of plywood.) Objects and textile conservators worked on the condition assessment of various items from the museum collection. Jae Gutierrez from CCP set up a station to teach the Knowledge River students and community members how to carefully remove community photos from old magnetic photo albums. This was a huge help in facilitating the on-going photo archiving project at the museum.

Last but not least, a group of Angels worked tirelessly to design and fabricate an upright storage support for the 9 mural panels. This required serious strategizing with limited time for error, not to mention hours of cutting and hot gluing foam

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Deadline

Contributions for the January *Newsletter* should be received by the Editor before **January 30, 2017**.

Western Association for Art Conservation

The Western Association for Art Conservation (formerly, the Western Association of Art Conservators), also known as WAAC, was founded in 1974 to bring together conservators practicing in the western United States to exchange ideas, information, and regional news, and to discuss national and international matters of common interest.

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and blue-board. This team worked to the bitter end, helping to transport the finished storage racks back to the storage unit at the Yaqui Senior Center and then carefully loaded the mural panels onto the racks. We finally wrapped things up around 6:30 pm after the sun had gone down. There was a social event being held in the Senior Center and the music from the party was loud and festive! It was a great end to the day and everyone was able to walk away with a great feeling of accomplishment!

A million thanks to the WAAC Angels (Jae Gutierrez, Susanne Friend, Anetta Zebala, Morgan Hayes, Yadin Larochette, Gina Watkinson, Betsy Burr, Skyler Jenkins, Leah Bright, Megan Salas, Madeline Corona, Christiana Ginatta, Mathilde Rubio, Tim Lewis, Terrence Encinas, Jennifer Rainey) and to members of the Yaqui community and other volunteers (Guillermo Quiroga, Kari Quiballo, Ofelia Zepeda, Maria Cuello, Ernesto Quiroga, Ricardo Escalante, Roman Perez, Augustin Molina, Jennifer Flores, Mario Humo, Eddie Frias, Lucia Martinez, Irma Acuña, Peter Acuña, Veronica Acuna, and Alicia Acuña) whose combined efforts helped to make the Angels Project a success!

This year's Angels Project was funded by a grant from FAIC. Both WAAC and the Pascua Yaqui Museum are extremely grateful for this support. Likewise support for the project was offered by the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Special thanks to Irma and Peter Acuña and their daughters for the traditional Yaqui food that they prepared for our lunch!

In addition to the generous support from FAIC and the Yaqui tribe for the Angel's Project, WAAC also received funds to support the annual meeting from Tru Vue, Ota House Fine Art Framing, and the Arizona State Museum. On behalf and the WAAC board and the membership, I thank all of our sponsors for their support!

Before I end, special heartfelt thanks go to the deeply dedicated WAAC board members for all of their patience, moral support and hard work in planning and facilitating the annual meeting and all that it entails. Even after having previously served as WAAC Secretary for several years from 2005 to 2009, there was still much for me to learn about WAAC as an organization and what makes it tick!

The rotating Members-at-large bring new voices and identity to the board — we say good bye to out-going MALs Sarah Melching and Susi Friend, and welcome incoming Jennifer McGlinchey Sexton and Samantha Springer and the new VP Mark MacKenzie — while the standing board members play an incomprehensible and absolutely invaluable role in keeping the organization running. Your guidance and tutelage was greatly appreciated, and now after the dust has settled, I have a newfound respect for this organization and the people behind it! I can't speak highly enough of our colleagues who keep this organization running, and I hope that each of you will consider serving on the WAAC board in one capacity or another!

With that, I turn over the presidency to my dear friend and colleague, Randy Silverman, and I look forward to seeing you all next year at the WAAC meeting in Salt Lake City!

Sincerely,

Terri