

## President's Letter

**Catherine Coueignoux**

Hello WAAC!

Our outgoing president, Katie Holbrow, has passed the baton to me, and I am looking forward to taking on the role this year. Katie certainly has set the bar high, as those of you who attended the annual meeting in San Francisco know.

It was my very first WAAC meeting, and I came away feeling invigorated by the WAAC conservation community. The talks were stimulating, diverse, and relevant; the atmosphere was

friendly and laid-back—not your typical ‘conference’ at all. How lucky we are that this meeting is annual and that in just a few months we will have another opportunity to gather together and share our experiences of the past year.

Before tantalizing you with a preview of the next meeting, I want to thank outgoing WAAC board members and welcome new ones. First of all, much appreciation is due to Katie for being such an excellent, organized, and practical president. Our two outgoing members-at-large, Liz Homberger and Susi Friend, were hugely helpful when it came to planning the annual meeting. We are fortunate that Susi will stay on as a permanent, non-voting member of the board. Thanks are also due to last year’s nominating committee, Jodie Utter and Sarah Kleiner, for helping with the election.

We are pleased to welcome three new board members. Teresa Moreno of the Arizona State Museum will be our Vice President this year and President next year. Two new MALs have signed on: Claire Barry of the Kimbell Art Museum and Sarah Melching of the Denver Art Museum. I am very much looking forward to working with them and to making the upcoming annual meeting worthy of WAAC.

The 2015 meeting will be held from Wednesday, September 30 through Friday, October 2 (with other events happening earlier that week) at the Asilomar Conference Grounds in Monterey Bay, CA. The timing isn’t a coincidence—this is a vacation destination and ideal for a long weekend with the family!

I recently visited Asilomar on a reconnoitering trip, and I cannot say enough about it. Some of you many remember that a WAAC conference was actually held at this very place about fifteen years ago. The grounds are literally on the beach—the sound of the waves and sweet salty air will lull you to sleep at night.

The Monterey Aquarium is nearby, as is lovely Carmel-by-the-Sea and the famous 17-mile drive along the Pacific Coast which runs right by the famous Pebble Beach. There is hiking and biking and surfing, whale watching and wine tasting, as well as historic houses and museums. Most importantly, the Asilomar breakfast muffins are to die for! There will be WAAC-organized trips to some of these places, but lots more to do for those who decide to stick around afterward. The conference’s theme of local history and conservation will tie the program to the location and make for a really special experience.

To stay for a moment on a local topic, many of you are probably aware of the vandalism that has taken place in national parks across the West. A quick Google search will update anyone who missed this story. The safe removal of this graffiti is an important issue that concerns all of us, not only as conservators but also as members of the earth. WAAC is investigating ways to unite those who are interested in contributing to a solution, as well as to discuss treatment options. Watch this space.

It will be an exciting year, and I’m honored to experience it alongside all of you.

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