



ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Let's make history!



2015 Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

As executive director, it is my privilege to build on a 150-year legacy of collecting and preserving Arizona history, to proselytize about the importance of the Arizona Historical Society's mission, and to educate citizens and lawmakers on the immeasurable benefits AHS brings to our state.

Our reach is far and deep. We are a full-service, statewide cultural institution dedicated to collecting, educating, and publishing. In this we are unique. Virtually everything the world wants to know about Arizona can be found in our collections. Our regional museums express the State's identity, from territorial days to the present, for a wide and diverse audience. We provide global access to the images, documents, film, voices, and artifacts of Arizona history. Our exhibits, programs, and events are integral to fostering cultural tourism.

AHS helps define communities. We document Arizona's urban and rural cultures, organizations, industries, businesses, families, and individuals. Our unique collections provide the cultural and historical foundations for all corners of the State. AHS serves as a memory hub, where citizens share their stories, research their families, advance their education, and literally touch the past. Through grants and on-site consultation, we connect with local museums and repositories, large and small. Our active membership in the Museum Association of Arizona, the Arizona Library Association, the American Association for State and Local History, and the Society of American Archivists provides staff with the latest professional resources to enhance our public service.

We are a statewide laboratory for students of public history, museum studies, library science, and education. We are a research destination for K-12 students; undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate college programs; faculty members; visiting scholars; city, county, and state officials; lawmakers; authors; service providers; genealogists; architects; attorneys; and ordinary citizens. We are proud sponsors of Arizona's National History Day, where this year more than 500 students competed in projects ranging from interactive websites to live performances. Fifty-two finalists went on to compete at the national competition in Maryland. Arizona claimed first place in the Junior Individual Website category and came away with six awards for Outstanding State Entries.

The Arizona History Convention is a seminal outreach event, where professional and avocational historians share the fruits of their research, much of it conducted in the AHS library, archives, and three-dimensional collections. The convention also provides the opportunity to recognize scholarship and the contributions of those who further the cause of Arizona history.

For fifty-six years, our award-winning *Journal of Arizona History* has been a venue in which avocational historians publish alongside academic historians. The *Journal* is one of our most frequently requested resources.

In this, my fourteenth letter to you, I can't help but reflect on my own learning curve. In making the transition from AHS board member to executive director, I worked to educate myself in the AHS archives and at the University of Arizona law library. The history of this institution, like that of Arizona itself, is both fascinating and surprising. Few people know the meaning of the massive



prominently displayed on our Tucson and Tempe museums. In the 1950s, this alchemist's symbol for copper was adapted by legendary book designer Lawton Kennedy for AHS publications. It eventually became the Society's timeless logo.

AHS stands at a watershed moment as it transitions from a membership-elected to a governor-appointed board of directors. It is important to remember that change is nothing new. From its inception, through changes in leadership and several reorganizations, AHS's commitment to preserving the history of our state and its people has been unwavering. We look forward to the future with optimism.

With warm regards,

Anne I. Woosley, Ph.D.
Executive Director