Letter from the President

Dear Members and Friends!

As I conclude my term as AHS President and also on the AHS Board of Directors, I would like to thank all the AHS staff and AHS Board members for all their hard work during this past year! The AHS staff and AHS Board have worked closely together to continue to support and pursue the AHS mission to collect, preserve, interpret, and disseminate the history of Arizona and the West.



It has been a very eventful year with the retirement of our AHS Executive Director Dr. Anne Woosley in June of this year after serving as Executive Director since 2001. We thank Anne for her professionalism and her guidance of the AHS museums during a rapidly changing and challenging time in the history of the state of Arizona and we wish her well in her new adventures. The AHS Board voted to give Dr. Woosley the title of AHS Director Emeritus in recognition of her many positive contributions to AHS and the state of Arizona.

I also would like to thank Mr. William Ponder for agreeing to serve as Interim AHS Executive Director while a nationwide search for the new AHS Executive Director gets underway. Mr. Ponder will work with the AHS staff to continue moving the work of AHS forward while this nationwide Executive Director search is in progress.

I would like to conclude by noting that the next several years will be very critical to the future of AHS. It is my belief that AHS is at a significant point in its history in which it needs to focus on growing membership, growing income and searching for the next generation of AHS Board members to continue to carry on our mission.

It is also my belief that the next AHS Executive Director must focus on friend raising, fund raising, membership growth, forging strategic partnerships and leading the AHS family of museums into the 21st century while taking the strategic actions required to bring our populace back to our museums. The next AHS Executive Director needs to provide the leadership to make the AHS museums as attractive as all the other cultural experiences that the AHS museums compete with in the state of Arizona. Without this being achieved I am afraid our museums may become not much more than historical archives.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your 2017 AHS President!

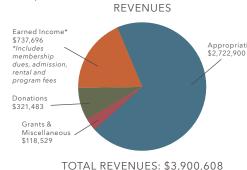


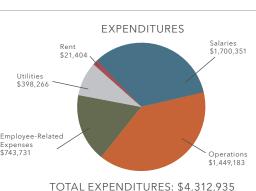
President, AHS Board of Directors

Financial Overview

While the adjusted income over expenditures for AHS was flat, the cause of the adjustments had a significant impact on AHS. The 2016 Arizona legislature transferred all the assets of the former Mining and Mineral Museum from the Arizona Historical Society to the Arizona State Geological Services and the University of Arizona. Accordingly, AHS revenues were impacted. We no longer received the \$428,300 in appropriations for Natural History or the \$182,502 in sales from Natural History related merchandise that was received in prior years.

From an expenditure perspective, there were also significant impacts. While there was no expenditure for rent of the Mining and Mineral facility, there was the one time transfer to the University of Arizona of all unexpended funds (\$384,886). These factors led to expenditures exceeding revenues by \$412,327.





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AHS celebrates and is deeply appreciative to its members, donors and volunteers who so generously support us.

Below we give special recognition and thanks to those who have contributed a total of \$100 or more in gifts and/or through membership between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. For a complete online list of members, donors, and volunteers, visit: www.azhs.gov/2017AnnualReport

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Letter from the Interim Executive Director 2016–2017: A Year of Change

Dear Friends.

The Arizona Historical Society's stock-in-trade is memorializing the changes evidenced through time. We typically focus on events and people outside of our own institution. But we are not impervious to change inside of our agency. We constantly change. And this most recent year is reflective of the change.

We changed our collections through accessions as well as de-accessions. The Arizona Heritage Center in Tempe accessioned over 250 artifacts into their collections. Likewise hundreds of artifacts, vetted by the AHS State Board Collections Committee, were de-accessioned. The Arizona History Museum in Tucson likewise added to its collections through a donation from the January 8th Memorial Foundation. The Foundation held the artifacts that resulted from the tragic shootings of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, her staff and citizens in 2011. The Arizona History Museum will use the collection to help foster civic engagement.

We changed our museums by replacing old exhibits with new. After a very successful remodel of the Sanguinetti House Museum exhibits in Yuma last year, the Rio Colorado Division has recently reopened the Sanguinetti House with a new exhibit: River Lore - Tales from the Narrows. According to Yanna Kruse, Rio Colorado Division Director, the River Lore exhibit is "a product of cooperation among AHS staff." Staff from our other divisions willingly and generously brought their talents together with the local staff and volunteers in Yuma to make this exhibit a success. Earlier this year, Flagstaff Mayor Coral Evans successfully opened Todos Unidos: The Hispanic Experience in Flagstaff for the Pioneer Museum, and Todos Unidos: Los Chantes opened at Riordan Mansion. Also in 2017, History Lab opened at the Arizona History Museum, and Footprints on the Desert: Frank Lloyd Wright in Arizona was one of several exhibits that opened at the Arizona Heritage Center.

We changed our programming to enlighten and entertain our audiences. In Yuma, AHS Board member Bruce Gwynn and Yuma Archivist Laurie Boone created a lecture series focusing on Arizona history and heritage. The series featured Board members Greg Scott and Doug Hocking, as well as AHS Archivist Rebekah Tabah Percival. Library and Archives Director Susan Irwin coordinated Arizona's National History Day competitors to their best showing ever, a multiple award-winning effort. Los Amigos, a volunteer support organization of the Arizona

History Museum, held a very successful "History on Tap" evening fundraiser. The Pioneer Museum debuted Cuseum, their new mobile app, and Rio Colorado's Ghost Trolley Tour was named one of the top ten things to do in Arizona. The Arizona Heritage Center offered multiple lecture series associated with each of their changing exhibits, with topics ranging from geology to sustainable architecture to the early history of Phoenix.

That's just a small cross section of the many changes that we've undergone this past year. But the biggest changes may have come in our staff. Library and Archives lost three key members; Lizeth Zepeda, Caitlin Lampman, and former Division Director Linda Whitaker all moved on to other life opportunities. Liz and Caitlin went to University positions and Linda to retirement. Linda's contributions during her time with us were extraordinary. We thank her.

Like Linda, the lure of retirement was irresistible to other key members of our family. Yolanda South, our Human Resource Officer, was with AHS for almost 40 years. She was an extremely invaluable team member that guided us through the everchanging structure of personnel policies. Yolanda's first position was in Publications, which is where our next retiree resided for 31 years. As Director of AHS Publications, Bruce Dinges published award-winning books and 125 issues of The Journal of Arizona History, and was the Executive Director of the Arizona History Convention, all while balancing his work life with cycling excursions around Tucson and the world. Bruce was our resident historian and voice of considered reason. No one appreciated Bruce more than Anne Woosley, our recently retired Executive Director who is now our Director Emeritus; a title of distinction the Board of Directors bestowed on her to acknowledge her 16 years of unparalleled service. She made us more professional. She made us better. She made us change.

This has been a year of change on all levels. But change is inevitable. As our former colleagues have left our everyday lives, we look forward to the new colleagues that will take AHS into the future. We will embrace the change and become better.

William L. Ponder

Interim Executive Director

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