

President's Letter

Beverly Perkins

After 11 years as a WAAC member, it is such a thrill to have the opportunity to serve as President for the next year. The big task, of course, is the annual meeting. I have been thinking about trying to get the annual meeting to come to Cody, Wyoming for years now – this is my lucky break! About ten years ago, I left the Brooklyn Museum to work as Chief Conservator at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. When my husband and I left Wyoming and moved to California people used to ask us, “Don’t you miss New York?” Well, of course, but what we really missed was Wyoming. The expansive vistas, the dramatic mountains, the threatening skies – there are no words to explain it; one just has to experience it firsthand.

Take it from Debbie Hess Norris, an avowed city dweller who needs cafes and internet connections. Her family had planned a trip to Yellowstone and Cody. She grabbed me in a panic - how would she survive in the wilds of Wyoming for a week? Turns out she loved Yellowstone and Cody. She raved about the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Conservators who have been to Cody are already thinking of topics to present just so they can have an excuse to go back.

EARLY ANNUAL MEETING IN 2005

As you may have guessed, next year’s annual meeting will be held on August 27-29 at the **Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming**. The meeting will take place a little earlier than usual so we can be sure that the East Gate to **Yellowstone National Park** will be open.



Yellowstone, the largest national park in the lower 48 states is only an hour’s drive from Cody. The road goes over a dramatic, high pass that closes early in the year for safety reasons. Yellowstone is filled with geothermal geysers, hot springs, steam vents, mud-pots, and historic structures. An abundance of wildlife live in this area that encompasses 2.2 million acres. The Grand Canyon of Yellowstone is famous for its colors, shapes, and waterfalls. For more information about the park, visit the official website at <http://www.nps.gov/yell/home.htm>.

In addition to all of the wonderful things to do in Yellowstone, there will also be many activities available for children and partner-grownups at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center and in Cody. We are working on providing children’s activities at the museum. In the surrounding area there are plenty of outdoor activities, including hiking, rafting, horseback riding, and geyser gazing.

Cody represents the Eastern Gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Named after “Buffalo Bill” Cody, the town has long been a symbol of the old American West and is a great launching point for outdoor adventure. The town is full of western-themed shops, restaurants, and a world-renown rodeo. The view from the town is all sky and mountains.

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center is home to five major museums, a great library, and a wonderful gift shop.

The **Plains Indian Museum** features one of the country’s largest and finest collections of Plains Indian art and artifacts. Explore the cultural histories, artistry, and living traditions of Plains Indian peoples, including the Arapaho, Crow, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, Blackfeet, Sioux, Gros Ventre, Shoshone, and Pawnee.

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President's letter, continued

The **Whitney Gallery of Western Art** presents an outstanding collection of masterworks of the American West. Original paintings, sculptures, and prints trace the artistic interpretations of the West from the early 19th century to today.

The **Draper Museum of Natural History** integrates the humanities with natural sciences to interpret the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and adjacent intermountain basins.

The **Cody Firearms Museum** contains the world's most comprehensive assemblage of American arms, as well as European arms dating to the 16th century.

The **Buffalo Bill Museum** examines both the personal and public lives of W.F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, and seeks to interpret his story in the context of the history and myth of the American West.

We are looking forward to the meeting in Wyoming. Please consider joining us and even presenting a talk

New WAAC Board Members

We would like to thank outgoing President Molly Lambert for all of her hard work throughout the year and for putting together a truly memorable annual meeting. And thank you to Nancy Odegaard and Donna Williams for serving as Members-at-Large. Pam Skiles did a wonderful job as Secretary. Tania Collas and Chris Stavroudis have done amazing work as Treasurer and Membership Secretary, respectively. The *WAAC Newsletter* is a gem among newsletters. Thank you, Carolyn Tallent for your tireless work as editor. Thank you also to the Regional Reporters and the many other contributors who make it such a fine publication.

Laura Downey Staneff was elected as this year's Vice-President. The new Member-at-Large officers are Scott Carrlee and Nicholas Dorman. Alexis Miller has agreed to serve as Secretary for the coming year. The election was incredibly close so remember to vote when your ballot arrives in next year's meeting packet! And please agree to run for office should you get a call from the nominating committee. The aim is to have board members from different parts of the West, from museums and private studios, and of differing specialties.

Santa Fe Meeting

Molly and Maureen Russell, local arrangements chair, made sure that the sessions at this year's annual meeting were interesting and the events fun. The Bandelier National Monument tour was led by Angelyn Bass Rivera, NPS Vanishing Treasures Conservator. The open house tour in Chimayo gave conservators the chance to visit the Cruz Lopez Studio, the Patricio Chavez Retablo Shop, Ortega's Weaving Shop, the Chimayo Museum, and Chimayo Trading and Mercantile.

We would like to thank the Museum of International Folk Art for providing space for the meeting and reception. We would also like to thank the Museum of Fine Arts for providing the St. Francis auditorium for one of the sessions.

Thank you also to all of the wonderful people who made the banquet so outstanding! The venue was beautiful Hyde Park Lodge among the yellow aspen trees. Rex Hobart and the Misery Boys made excellent music by the camp fire. Their classical country CD can be ordered online at www.rexhobart.com. (Rex is married to the Museum of New Mexico's third year intern, Paula Hobart.) Emily and Kam O'Brien provided the s'mores and other goodies that were enjoyed by the campfire, which glowed thanks to wood provided by Robert Rivera.

If you missed the meeting in Santa Fe, you missed a wonderful time. Start planning now to join us in Wyoming.

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Deadline

Contributions for the *May* Newsletter should be received by the Editor before **March 15, 2005**.