THE FUTURE OF ARIZONA

ANNUAL REPORT
2023
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<td>Certified Historical Institutions</td>
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### MISSION STATEMENT

Connecting people through the power of Arizona’s history.
Reflecting on this past year, there has been an overwhelming amount of growth and connections made at the Arizona Historical Society (AHS). AHS has had the opportunity to host wonderful events and programs, preserve unique artifacts, and share the future of Arizona history with YOU. The National History Day students who traveled across the state and country to present their projects are the future of Arizona history. The researchers who came to our libraries to expand their knowledge are the future of Arizona history. The volunteers who spent their days at AHS museums welcoming and helping visitors are the future of Arizona history. The members and students who toured AHS collections to feel inspired are the future of Arizona history. YOU are the future of Arizona history, and through sharing your stories and experiences, AHS has been able to fulfill its mission to connect people through the power of Arizona’s history.
Reflections and Recognitions

The impact of COVID-19 is not in our rearview mirror. It will be studied and analyzed for years to come. At its height, Arizona had over 600 museums. The Museum Association of Arizona reports there are now 350 museums in Arizona of which 108 are active members of MAA. Simply stated, there are fewer cultural organizations doing the work. Yet here we are. Changed, but doing the work. All credit to a diverse, talented staff and Board of Directors for their level of engagement and enduring work ethic. We have moved well beyond mere survival.

One measure of success is the work done at the committee level. No one could ask for better due diligence in fulfilling their oversight roles. One committee with an impactful service record is the Community Outreach Committee. It logged many hours working with and providing grants to small institutions around the state. The staff, Board and community members serving on this committee deserve special recognition for their enthusiastic support of local groups preserving their cultural identities. This committee is also responsible for planning the 50th Anniversary of the Al Merito Award. They set a high bar!

AHS staff and Board members have been asked repeatedly to make tough decisions and to work long hours in the face of uncertainty. They had to innovate and take risks with no guarantee of success. Riding rollercoaster budgets and navigating the hiring market present challenges for any cultural institution, let alone one that is both a state agency and a nonprofit. Having said that, AHS staff and Board members have come out the other side tested and better prepared for whatever happens next. By the time you read this, we will have submitted our responses to the Sunset Review Committee. The ultimate test will be a Senate hearing in the 2024 Legislative Session.

I would be remiss if I did not publicly acknowledge two behind-the-scenes individuals for their time, wisdom, and abiding belief in AHS. Len Marcisz, former President of the AHS Board of Directors, was instrumental in documenting compliance with Sunset recommendations. If I could point to one person who set us on the “righteous” Sunset path, it would be Len. His diligence, political savvy, and attention to detail are beyond measure. Bill Ponder, “retired” AHS Chief Financial Officer, has repeatedly answered the call to fill gaps in our institutional history, to connect staff to hidden resources, and to set the stage for a promising future. His knowledge, guidance, and connections to state and local officials have proven invaluable. I owe both men more than I can ever repay. What binds us is a belief that AHS is worth the effort.

Linda Whitaker
AHS Board President
2021 - 2023
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Friends,

It has been a busy and varied year at the Arizona Historical Society. It was one defined by tough decisions on property divestments and annual budgets, by staffing vacancies and facility closures, but also one with victories through new outreach and engagement. Whether with gubernatorial, legislative, inter-agency, or community leaders, this outreach defined the last year and holds the promise of something far greater to come.

2023 Sunset Report
This year, AHS submitted its written response to the Legislature’s Committee of Reference for its decennial agency audit. Through the efforts of past Board and staff members, the agency was prepared. We have resolved all of the concerns identified in the 2013 Sunset Report. We anticipate new recommendations will ensue from this year’s report, and AHS will be proactive in addressing them.

Budgets & Outreach
The AHS budget continues to be a work in progress. 2023 was a year of rate hikes and a number of facilities repairs and renovations, but also lower-than-expected income from traditionally mainstay revenue sources. The continued closure of the Pioneer Museum hurt total income and outreach efforts, while staff vacancies limited total capacity. These are priorities for the year ahead, and new postings and hiring efforts are already underway.

Looking ahead, AHS knows the cost of doing business, knows its limitations, and knows what’s required to grow to meet the mission. For our 2025 budget, AHS is seeking an annual increase of $1.45M – and developing a coordinated outreach strategy to leverage the agency’s Board, members, and resources across the state to affirm that legislative support. When the time comes, your help in this effort will be essential.

Strategic Plan, Strategic Vision
This last year, AHS staff and Board worked with our support groups and chapters to develop an interim update to its FY21-26 Strategic Plan. Planned projects include construction of a new outdoor exhibit in Yuma, rehabilitation of AHS’ historic sites and properties, construction to resolve storage issues, and much more. This new plan resets the agency’s goals in the years immediately ahead. It is based on lessons learned through a year of experimenting with new exhibits, new partnerships, and new programs. This review shows what we are capable of and what we have to look ahead to. It is what AHS needs to do to honor all current Arizonans and those generations of Society members and staff who’ve come before. I encourage its review as we, together, step into the new year and put these plans into action.

Dr. David Breeckner
AHS Executive Director

Scan to view
Strategic Plan
CONNECTING ARIZONA

OUR MUSEUMS
- Pioneer Museum, Flagstaff
- Arizona Heritage Center at Papago Park, Tempe/Phoenix
- Sanguinetti House Museum & Gardens and the Molina Block, Yuma
- Arizona History Museum, Tucson

OUR HISTORIC SITES
1. Strawberry Schoolhouse, Strawberry
2. Charles O. Brown House, Tucson
3. Douglas-Williams House, Douglas

RENTALS
Our museums offer unique venues to hold your special event. For facility rentals and event planning, email confirmation@azhs.gov.
### BY THE NUMBERS

#### VISITOR COUNT

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tucson</td>
<td>8,943</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yuma</td>
<td>7,847</td>
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<td>Flagstaff</td>
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#### SOCIAL MEDIA

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<td>36,659</td>
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<td>YouTube</td>
<td>11,500</td>
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Rebuilding Home Plate - Baseball in Arizona’s Japanese American Incarceration Camps

Rebuilding Home Plate - Baseball in Arizona’s Japanese American Incarceration Camps examined how “America’s National Pastime” was a means of enduring imprisonment for some of the over 30,000 Japanese Americans stripped of their constitutional rights and confined in the Arizona desert during World War II. Centering on Gila River and Poston, the two incarceration camps located in Arizona, the exhibit was honored with the 2023 Charles Redd Center for Western Studies Award for Exhibition Excellence.
I AM: A Document of the Black Lives Matter Movement in Phoenix

I AM brought visitors face to face with some of the activists and allies of the Black Lives Matter movement in Phoenix. Using intimate portraits and statements of reflection, artist Eric Elmore captured how Black Arizonans see themselves and experience daily life. The opening on February 3, 2023 drew in over 100 people to enjoy live performances and a panel discussion.

AHS Received $25,000 Grant from the Arizona Architecture Foundation

In December of 2022, AHS was the chosen recipient of a $25,000 grant awarded by the Arizona Architecture Foundation. This award supported the AHS Library and Archives in its preservation of statewide architectural drawings, which collectively document the buildings and notable sites that served as iconic backdrops in Arizona’s growth. This grant further brought funding to support an Archives Specialist to assist in the preservation of these materials while also mentoring the next generation of history professionals.

From left to right, Doug Sydnor (Architecture Archives Committee, Past Chair), Lyndsay Hertzig (Contract Archivist), James Trahan (Architectural Archives Committee), Dr. David Breeckner, (AHS Executive Director), John Czamecki (AIA Executive Director), Robert Burgheimer (Rio Salado Foundation, President), Rebekah Tabah-Percival (AHS Assistant Director), Isabel Cazares (AHS Librarian and Archivist), Brandon Benzing (Architecture Archives Committee, Chair).
Night at the Museum: Halloween Family Event

We welcomed a little over 200 people to the Arizona History Museum for the AHS Halloween Family Event on October 22, 2022. Guests were dressed in their best costumes while they went on ghost tours and searched for hidden clues to complete a scavenger hunt throughout the decorated museum. Families were able to trick or treat, get their faces painted, participate in pumpkin carving contests, and engage with live actors as they walked through the museum.

Smithsonian Day

The Arizona History Museum participated in Smithsonian Day and offered free admission to the public on September 17, 2022. More than 370 people spent the day exploring exhibits, learning about AHS archives and collections, and interacting with Arizona history.
Drinking Local: A Toast to the Southwest

On April 19, 2023, the Arizona History Museum hosted a cheerful evening for the opening of Drinking Local: A Toast to the Southwest, with over 290 guests. This exhibit focused on the history of alcohol in Arizona, as well as the southern Arizona alcohol industry of today and the importance of local distillers, brewers, and winemakers within the state.
In partnership with the Sanguinetti House Museum and Gardens, the Yuma County Historical Society celebrated, preserved, and promoted Yuma’s long and unique history with the very popular and prestigious Annual Redondo Dinner and Auction on February 4, 2023.

Yanna Kruse
AHS said goodbye to several staff members in 2023, but perhaps none had more of an impact on their area of the organization than Yanna Kruse, who left her post as Vice President of Guest Experience and Historic Sites in March. For over eight years, Yanna served as the guiding light for the Sanguinetti House Museum and Gardens, where she worked tirelessly to make the museum fun and welcoming for visitors from all walks of life. She truly never met a stranger. In more recent years, Yanna also oversaw the statewide Guest Experience team, working with front desk staff at other AHS locations to ensure all visitors felt welcomed as they entered our four museums. Although AHS will miss Yanna, we look forward to working with her on many new Yuma projects in her new role with the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area.
Exploration Party at Colorado River Park

The Colorado River Park invited AHS to join them at their summer “Exploration Parties” in June and July. These events were free to the public and offered a wide range of activities and telescope viewing. Over 180 people gathered at the “Ready to Launch: Arizona’s Place in Space” themed table, where photos from AHS collections were showcased, and children could partake in space exploration activities.

Museum Educator Jenny Pennington hosted an educational arts and crafts table.

Garden Talks

The Sanguinetti House Museum held its annual Garden Talks Lecture Series featuring lectures by local historians and history enthusiasts. Their presentations included topics such as “Arizona Outlaws”, “Captain Jack Mellon”, and the “History of the Yuma Fire Department”. Guests mingled with the speakers after the lectures and toured the Sanguinetti House Museum and Gardens.
Free Public Open Days

AHS opened the Pioneer Museum for free public days throughout the year. These open days were a great way for staff to connect with northern Arizonans, as well as encourage new people to wander the museum. Averaging about 30 visitors per day, guests were able to enjoy the beautiful Flagstaff atmosphere, while also exploring Arizona history.

PIONEER MUSEUM

Highlights

Wool & Fiber Festival
The Wool & Fiber Festival was held on the grounds of the Pioneer Museum in June 2023. AHS staff welcomed over 300 visitors into the museum. Throughout the weekend guests participated in activities and workshops, spoke to vendors, and observed live-animal demonstrations.
Over 30 students gathered at the Arizona Heritage Center on May 6, 2023, to practice and prepare their final projects for the national competition. Throughout the day, students worked with AHS staff and volunteers to improve their projects and met with Museum Educator Allison Avery to prepare for their trip to Washington, D.C. After a unique tour of AHS Collections Storage with Statewide Collections Manager, Nathan Samoriski, and Collections Registrar, Rachael O’Hara, students enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by the Historical League, explored exhibits, and went home with this year’s AHS NHD button to trade at nationals.

This year, the national competition for National History Day (NHD) was held in person in Washington, D.C. for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Forty-four Arizona students qualified to compete in this exciting event. They were able to meet other students from all 50 states, U.S. territories, and international schools across the globe. Arizona students showcased their projects, met with U.S. Senators, attended a fun dance party with other NHD participants, and had opportunities to explore the Smithsonian museums and monuments throughout Washington, D.C.

- Four projects were awarded with an honorable mention at the award ceremony.
- Two projects were showcased at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.
- One project was showcased at the National Museum of American History.
- One project was showcased at the White House.
Celebrating 50 Years

Fifty years ago, the Arizona Historical Society established the Al Merito Award to recognize those who have contributed significantly to preserving and promoting Arizona history. Named for the nineteenth-century award bestowed by a newly independent government of Mexico for meritorious service to the Republic, al merito literally translates to “for merit.” Today, the Arizona Historical Society’s highest honor acknowledges meritorious service for those who preserve and celebrate Arizona history.

2022
Arizona Contractor & Community Magazine
Cindy Hayostek
Dr. Bruce Dinges

2021
Tom Foster

2020
Delia Muñoz
Superstition Mountain Historical Society

2019
Janeen Trevillyan
Desert Caballeros Western Museum

2018
Vernelda J. Grant
Dr. James Klein

2017
James E. Babbitt
Sulphur Springs Valley Historical Society

2016
Charles Flynn

2015
Shaw Kinsley

2014
Patrick Foley
Dr. Bernard “Bunny” Fontana
Dr. James “Big Jim” Griffith

2013
Arizona Military Museum

2012
Dan Messersmith
George Dvorak and the Fort Verde Volunteers

2011
Marshall Trimble

2010
Malcolm Mackey
[(502x767)50 YEARS AL MERITO AWARD]

2009
John C. Lacy

2008
William (Bill) Porter

2007
Daniel J. (Jim) Patterson

2006
Victor M. Linoff

2005
Melvin Van Vorst
Melissa Ruffner

2004
Carol Cribbet-Bell
Hazel "Billie" Thiesen

2003
Betty Grounds
Edith Denton

2002
Nan and Harry Ames

2001
Della Meadows
Mary L. Hunt

2000
Fred W. Jones

1999
H. Tom Thompson
Pine-Strawberry Archaeological and Historical Society

1998
Dr. Wilbur A. Haak

1997
Mary Kukal

1996
Barry M. Goldwater

1995
Marguerite Noble

1994
Karin Goudy

1993
Donald H. Bufkin

1992
Billy Earley

1991
Howard P. Henlin

1990
City of Yuma

1989
Jerome Historical Society
1988  
Carrillo School  
Pat Callahan  

1987  
Las Senoras de Socorro  
Robert Werley  
Arizona Humanities Council  
Dr. C.L. Sonnichsen  

1985  
John W. and Helen Murphey  
Herb and Dorothy McLaughlin  
Clay P. Bedford  
Dr. Arthur Woodward  

1984  
Madeline Ferrin Paré  
Arthur J. (Jim) and Mary Faul  
Elizabeth F. Ruffner  
Elizabeth Garretson  

1983  
Garnett Franklin  
William E. Negus  
Eleanor B. Sloan  
Dr. John (Jack)  
Alexander Carroll  

1982  
Tucson Festival Society  
Constance Wynn Altsheuler  
Joe and Vada C. Rodríguez  

1980  
Library Learning Center,  
Arizona Western College  
Paul V. Long  
Pimeria Alta  
Historical Society  

1979  
Billy and Lynn Earley  
Prescott Courier  
Al Hubbard  

1978  
Southwest Studies Institute,  
Maricopa County  
Community College  
District  
Elizabeth Brownell  
Colonel Eugene Murphy  
5th Calvary Memorial  
Regiment  

1977  
Casa Grande Valley  
Historical Society  
Elaine Fontein Saba  
Dorothy Hall  
Daughters of Mojave County  
Pioneers  

1976  
Ruth Adams  
Platt Cline  
Bert M. Fireman  
Junior League of Tucson, Inc.  
Lester W. Ruffner  

1975  
Kelley Rollings  
Otis Chidester  
Doris K. Seibold  
Harry Montgomery  
Tempe Historical Society  

1974  
George and Mary Alice Bradt  
Dewey Farr  
Northland Press  
Elizabeth S. Oldaker  
Edward Soza  

1973  
John D. Driggs  
First National Bank  
of Arizona  
George W. Chambers  
Ann-Eve Mansfeld Johnson  
Sunnyside High School  
Associated Press,  
Arizona Bureau  
Roscoe G. Willson  
Thelma Keickhefer  
Sharlot Hall Historical Society  
Yuma County  
Historical Society  
Gail Irwin Gardner  
Eleazar Dias Herreras  
Tucson Daily Citizen  

From left to right, AHS Board Member Tom Foster,  
Al Merito recipients Arizona Contractor & Community  
Magazine Publisher Billy Horner, Production Manager  
Laura Horner, and Editor Douglas Towne.
Mim Walsh Diary

This past winter, the Journal of Arizona History published a very unique issue featuring the 1916–1923 diaries of Irish immigrant Mim Walsh. Mim and her husband, Paddy, moved from Ireland to Arizona not long after Paddy was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Mim was an avid diarist, usually filling one diary every two to three years. All of her diaries are housed in the AHS archives in Tucson, which is where University of Arizona professor Judy Nolte Temple pored over them, ultimately transcribing significant portions of the original diaries. While preparing to publish the 1916–1923 diaries, the Journal of Arizona History staff helped Professor Temple annotate the diary entries, meaning they tried to identify all people, places, and events Mim wrote about. It was a massive undertaking, but the end result made it all worth it.

Mim’s diary entries from the late 1910s and early 1920s touch on a number of interesting and important events, many of which seem eerily relevant to our lives: among other things, there were quarantines, a shortage of affordable housing, and a war raging in Europe. Beyond those large national and global events, Mim also wrote fascinating entries about daily life in Bisbee and later Tucson. At first she wasn’t impressed with their new home. For her first entry in Arizona (March 7, 1916), Mim wrote, “Woke up in Arizona, bleak enough scenery, not so bad as the [southern California] desert, though.” She and Paddy lived in Bisbee for about three years, but when Paddy’s employment with a mining company ended, the couple decided to move to Tucson. Although they had hoped to one day return to Ireland, eventually they came to view Tucson as their home. In fact, by 1923, Mim wrote a poem—a love letter of sorts—about her new home, which was published in a local paper:

"I, too, have dwelt within the mist
Fishlike until the desert kissed
The blood within my veins to fire"

The Winter 2022 Journal of Arizona History featuring the Mim Walsh diaries is available in both print and online on Project MUSE, https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/49131.
Research Fellowship Program
The new-and-improved AHS Research Fellowship is now in its second year and continues to bring in impressive scholars from around the country—and the globe—to research Arizona history in AHS archives. The new class of fellows includes scholars from James Madison University, Purdue University, UNLV, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, University of Arizona, Southeast Missouri State University, University of Toronto, Western Colorado University, as well as independent scholars from Washington, D.C., and southern Arizona. AHS hopes to see their exciting research in future editions of the Journal of Arizona History or possibly as a book in the new book series, Arizona Crossroads, co-published by AHS and the University of Arizona Press.

2022 Sonnichsen Award For Best Article in the Journal of Arizona History
William F. Stoutamire, “‘Every Yard Boasted a Metate’: Pothunting, Archaeology, and the Creation of the Museum of Northern Arizona,” Vol. 63, No. 2 (Summer 2022)
## FINANCIALS
Fiscal Year 2022 - 2023

### EXPENDITURES

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### REVENUE

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<td>Donations - Restricted</td>
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<td>Donations With Membership Dues</td>
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**Total Expenditures**

$3,920,449.43

**Total Revenue**

$4,402,225.72
DONORS

$50,000+
C. R. Krimminger Fund

$10,000+
Estate of Robert M. Smelick
Victor W. Kramer Charitable Trust
Surprise Historical Society

$5,000 - $9,999
David and Susan Berman

$1,000 - $4,999
Arizona State University
Harry and Sandra Carson
Annemarie and Richard Zimmerman
BF Foundation / Katherin Chase
Marianne Ayres
Viola Steinfeld O’Neil First Family Fund held at the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona

$250 - $999
Arizona REALTORS – Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Committee
Bell Bank Mortgage
Renewal by Andersen
Valley of the Sun YMCA
Fiesta Bowl Charities
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Arizona History Convention
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Friends of AHS is a 501(C)3 organization that supports the mission of the Arizona Historical Society. As the main fundraising partner of the agency, Friends of AHS works statewide to help the organization achieve its strategic plan and goals. In 2022-2023, Friends participated in AHS’ efforts to launch its Capital Campaign and supported the agency’s decision to defer its immediate pursuit. Friends of AHS continues to serve as a trusted manager of public and private donations for the benefit of the Society.

TRIBUTES

In Honor of
Ikeda Family of Mesa, AZ
Caroline Jessen
National History Day Students
Linda Whitaker
BFGHS: Juneteenth 2023
Carmen Goldstein
Mikel Toresdahl

In Memory of
George Fletcher
Mary Helen and Val Smelick, and Dorothy and Walter Sterling
Richard D. Call
Andrew Rutter
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Victoria S. Thompson
Eben Lane Family & Lawrence and Virginia Lane Burke
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Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West
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This past fiscal year, AHS sold 26% more license plates compared to last fiscal year. Through these sales, a portion of each AHS license plate purchased goes directly into supporting AHS museums. Thank you for supporting museums and continuing to spread the AHS message far and wide during your travels!