

# ARLIS *focus*

NEW  
ENGLAND *Spring 2003*  
*vol.16, No 1*

## From the President

The first half of my tenure has flown by. I'm sure that the last six months will feel the same. Fortunately, I know that Anne Haas is already planning her year as president and is prepared to hit the ground running. She is catching her breath right now by spending a few weeks in Italy.

I want to thank Rachel Beckwith for her diligent and prompt work in preparing and distributing the current ARLIS/NE directory and announcements for the May meeting at Smith. I also appreciate Susan Myerson's assistance as my partner in collecting and recording the meeting fees at Smith. Members from three chapters flew through the registration process, but the "Two Susans" managed to balance the budget!

### Spring meeting, May 9, 2003, Smith College, Hillyer Art Library, Brown Fine Arts Center

Though brief, the business meeting included several points that should be considered by members. Of primary concern is the general reduction in institutional support for attendance at ARLIS and other professional meetings. This is of particular concern in the case of chapter officers. One of the topics for the mid-summer ARLIS/NE board meeting is conceiving of a fair and reasonable way in which the chapter might offer financial support to chapter officers so that they may attend the annual national meeting. I will be talking with Carol Graney, the Northeast regional representative about this problem prior to the meeting on July 11. Please contact any chapter officer before the meeting to express your views on the subject.

Of course, the stars of the show at Smith were Barbara Polowy, Hillyer art librarian, and Elisa Lanzi, director of image collections, who organized an excellent program that showed off the extent of the thoughtfully programmed new Brown Fine Arts Center. The building, a renovation and expansion by Polshek Partnership Architects, combines beauty and function. ARLIS/NE, ARLIS/Western New York, and VRA/Upstate New York members were fortunate to see it on one of the few lovely days this spring. (For those members who could not attend the meeting, enjoy the building by looking

through the online press kit for the Fine Arts Center at <http://www.smith.edu/bfac>.)

After welcoming remarks by John Davis, chair of the Art Department, Suzannah Fabing, director and chief curator of the Smith College Art Museum, introduced the scope of the project. Barbara Polowy and Elisa Lanzi then recounted the careful planning process and discussed their work with the architects. After a convivial lunch at a local café, the attendees enjoyed the visual perfection of a fabulous facility. Small group tours allowed us to see every detail, including the artist-designed rest rooms in the Art Museum. Tours of the digital imaging lab, with special emphasis on the Luna Insight project, gave members an opportunity to see first-hand an application which many of them are considering for their own libraries. Over sixty ARLIS members combined learning and pleasure thanks to our hosts, Barbara and Elisa. Freitag Award and Seibel Scholarship Committees

I would like to thank Stephen Nonack, chair of the Elmar Seibel Scholarship Committee, Don Millikin, chair of the Wolfgang Freitag Professional Development Award, and committee member Robert Garzullo for their hard work and success in soliciting applicants and selecting worthy winners of these two honors in 2003.

The first fall meeting will likely be in Maine at Bowdoin and the Maine College of Art. We hope to hold the second fall meeting at the newly renovated Boston Athenaeum. Dates and details of these meetings will be posted on the listserv and the web site.

*Susan Lewis*

## Treasurer's report as of May 22, 2003:

### *Susan Myerson*

These are the assets and expenditures of the chapter, as of May 22, 2003:

Checking account at Cambridgeport Bank:  
\$3,807.58

Two CD's at South Adams Savings Bank:  
\$4,404.76; \$2,718.02

Freitag Awards: \$450.00 to Betsy Peck Learned;  
\$250.00 to Shawn Waldron

Seibel Scholarship: \$500.00 to Andrea Frank

## Report from Freitag Award Winner

Betsy Peck Learned is one of this year's winners of the Wolfgang Freitag Professional Development Award. She was unable to attend the spring meeting at Smith but submitted the following report:

I wanted to say thank you to committee for the award. Could you convey my sincere gratitude to all members who contributed to the Freitag award and to the committee for selecting me?

My thesis is for a master's degree in art and architectural history through the ALM program (master of liberal arts) at Harvard Extension School, and the subject is Ernest Fenollosa and the Kano School of Japanese Art. Fenollosa was a Harvard graduate who went to Japan to teach philosophy in the 1860s. While there he became enthralled with Japanese art and was instrumental in uncovering art from their past and encouraging the Japanese to preserve their treasures. He became so knowledgeable that he was made an "ambassador" of Japanese art by the Japanese government and returned to the US to educate the west. He believed that the Kano School of Japanese art was the foundation on which all painters should be trained and eschewed modernists who deviated from the traditional style. This caused great controversy.

## From the Members

**Andrea Frank** reports: My news is that I began working on my MLIS at Simmons a year ago. I'm going part-time, taking one course a semester. It still seems like a long road ahead, but I'm enjoying it more than I expected (though it's also more work than I expected). I was thrilled to be selected as the recipient of the Elmar Seibel Scholarship this year. I'm very grateful to the award committee, chaired by Stephen Nonack, and to the chapter members who made donations to the award fund, as well as to Elmar for being so supportive of our chapter for so many years. Many chapter members have served as an inspiration to me in my return to school at this advanced age. Here's hoping this old slide curator can still learn a few new tricks!

From **Robert Garzillo**: I spent the first two and a half weeks this past February working in the library at RISD's European Honors Program (EHP) in Rome. RISD's EHP began in 1961 and is housed in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Palazzo Cenci located in central Rome a short walk away from the Forum. Thirty fortunate RISD students spend an entire academic year at EHP. The EHP library is housed in a single room in the palazzo with a

very high ceiling that is crowned around the top of the walls with 16<sup>th</sup>-century frescos. I previously spent two weeks at the EHP Library in February 2000. The EHP Library is overseen by the program coordinator and maintained during the academic year by student assistants. My project has involved adding the EHP titles to our catalog in an effort to better maintain and support the collection from at home in Providence. The EHP Library consists of approximately 3000 titles with a concentration in art and architectural history. During my stay I was living just off of the Campo d'Fiori and managed to make a weekend visit to Villa d'Este and Villa Adriana in Tivoli. Before returning I also spent several days in Florence including a day trip to San Gimignano.

**Debra Kruse** reports: I received a FDG (faculty development grant) from RISD for my sabbatical project in 03-04. I will be working with Professor Emeritus Byron Burford in his studio at the University of Iowa, the objective being a complete inventory of his work and papers. Debra will also take the opportunity to paint in her studio in Providence.

Thanks to John A Woods Appraisers for underwriting the cost of mailing this issue of *Focus*.