

Docent Dates

Council Meetings start at 10 AM, Coffee at 9:15

January 11

Book Group 10 AM
Sue Billig's Home

January 20

Curators Julie Joyce and Susan Tai on the 75th Anniversary Exhibition: *Permanent Collection Highlights* opening Jan 29th in the newly-installed Ridley-Tree Gallery.

February 3 [TBA]

February 6

Bus Trip: Long Beach Art Museum

February 17 [TBA]

March 2 [TBA]

March 16 [TBA]

April 6 & April 20

Meeting or Bus

April 24-29

New York City Trip

May 4 [TBA]

May 18 [TBA]

June 3

Graduation/Recognition Ceremony



Percy Wyndham Lewis, English, 1884-1957, *Portrait of Ezra Pound* (detail), ca. 1920
Charcoal and black, grease pencil on paper; 11 1/2 x 9"; Gift of Wright Ludington. INTERNAL USE ONLY

Dear Docents,

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!

2016 will be a PIVOTAL year in the life of our beloved Museum. The massive renovation project, now officially underway, brings change and challenge and all the noise and dust that accompany the creative "art" of construction. This is also the year that our museum will be 75 years old, a mighty milestone and one that will be celebrated with special events throughout 2016.

The first of these begins January 3rd with the closure of the Ridley-Tree Gallery for a new and exciting installation of works from our permanent collection selected in honor of the Museum's 75th Anniversary. Opening date is scheduled for January 29th. This special exhibition means all *European* tours have been cancelled. Adult Touring will be challenged during this time, but hopefully *Highlights* and *Focus Tours* will continue with the added flexibility of abbreviated 30-minute tours.

The Ridley-Tree exhibit will have an extensive run during this Anniversary year, offering a well-earned celebration focus for all visitors and touring docents in the upcoming months.

The IMAGINE MORE—CAPITAL CAMPAIGN takes center stage now in addressing the critical physical as well as financial needs of our aging Museum. Each one of us becomes a pivot—a person on which something depends---when we donate to the




Joan Dewhirst,
President

Capital Fund. **Please remember no gift is unimportant.....no amount is too small.** Our main goal is 100% participation of Docent Council Active Members.

It will take several years for the Museum's transformation to be accomplished. But it will become a strong and innovative structure properly outfitted for the 21st century. Among the many important features for us will be a special gathering place for docents in the new Education Office Suite. This is a future worthy of our support.

This issue of *La Muse* is a fitting segue into our Anniversary year. In addition to the second part of Dale and Judy Seborg's fabulous trip, it is chock-full of photos from year-end celebrations, including our Holiday Party and our farewell hurrah for Heather. We all enjoy these images...reminders of the joy we share as a docent community and balance for the more difficult moments that go hand-in-hand with participating in any dynamic organization. I'm looking forward to this new year with all the up-and-down moments I'll share with each one of you. Altogether it will be a fun ride.....just wait and see!

Joan 

From Our Vice President



Gail Stichler

Our Holiday Party was a great success. We had perfect weather to enjoy being outside in the garden of Andrea and Ron Gallo's beautiful home. Many thanks go to the Gallos for hosting this wonderful event.

Our program included meeting five members of our new provisional class, introduced by instructors Ralph Wilson, Mary Ellen Hoffman and Wendi Hunter. The bookend to meeting our future docents was honoring Active docents with service award pins to those who were not able to attend the ceremony last June: Faith Henkin (30 years), Ricki Morse (25 years), and Kathy Eastman (5 years). We always appreciate an opportunity to acknowledge loyal service in our Council in meeting the Museum's mission of bringing art to the community. We also honored good friends from the staff who are retiring. Joan Dewhirst gave thanks to Heather Brodhead, Jill Finsten and Barbara Ben-Horin for their invaluable support for so many years. We will miss them.

Thanks go to everyone who brought delicious food to the party. Big kudos also to members of our Social Committee—Nicola Gherson, Wendi Hunter, Denise Klassen, Sheila Prendiville, Mike Ramey, Geri Servi, Kathy Eastman and Mei Chih Ho—who came early and stayed late to set up, greet docents and guests, serve the savories and sweets, and clean up when it was over. The beautiful flower arrangements were created by Denise Klassen, adding a flourish to the celebration of good friends, milestone accomplishments, future fellow docents and those leaving us. And celebrate we did.

Our bus trip to Long Beach on Saturday, February 6, is set to go. We will depart at 8:00 am from Santa Barbara, and after our day of art, talking with artists, lunch, and a Museum Director-led tour of the Sculpture Garden, we'll depart Long Beach at 4:15 with an expected return home between 6:00 and 6:30 pm. Artist John Hills Sanders and our own Pma Tregenza have handled all the arrangements at the museums

and the restaurant. Many thanks go to them for this opportunity to learn more about the rich world of art in Long Beach. If you are interested in joining us on the bus trip and haven't signed up yet, please email me at gmstichler@aol.com.

New York City, here we come! We still have over 40 people interested in joining our group from April 24 to 29, 2016. Everyone who is on the sign-up list received an email in December with instructions on how to confirm reservations at the Wellington Hotel. A broad outline of our activities includes going to a museum per day: The Metropolitan, MoMA, The Whitney, and The Frick. Other ideas include a visit to The Asia Society and Christie's Auction House as a group.

In January, I will be sending a survey to travelers to help determine what other activities everyone is most interested in. It is still possible to join us in NYC; just let me know.



From our Student Teams



Students are loving the *Halley* and *Ferrer* exhibitions. One third grader observed that all of the fragments in Ludington could be put together to form one ancient building! Could it be he has incorporated signs of renovation into his perception of the art? It's always a wonder seeing the world through their eyes.

In November Docents had eight tours totaling 286 students from five schools. The kids seem oblivious to the idea of limitations or gallery closures. They're just so excited being here.

Karen Brill, Student Teams Chair

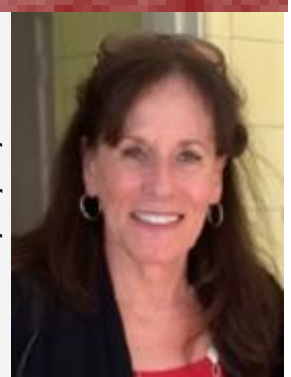
From our Adult Teams



Despite physical upheaval and gallery closures, in November Docents successfully toured 321 visitors on 48 tours. Six scheduled tours had no visitors, and on November 11 and 26, tours were cancelled for holidays. In addition, our Community Speakers Program offered two presentations for a total of 103 attendees.

Touring flexibility will be again be our strong suit in January when *European* and other tours are cancelled as Ridley-Tree is prepared for the 75th Anniversary exhibition.

Christine Holland



Teda Pilcher

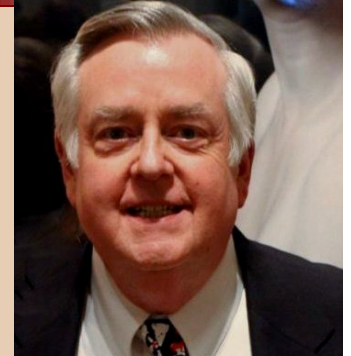
This show will feature some of the "greatest hits" from all departments, wonderful works well worth waiting for that we'll all want to include on our tours. That show also marks the beginning of a new year of rich exhibitions, including *Puja & Piety* opening in April.

I send Happy New Year wishes to all fellow Docents with warmth and great affection.

Christine

Christine Holland, Co-chair with Teda Pilcher

Mary Ellen Hoffman, Wendi Hunter, Ralph Wilson



The members of the provisional class had nothing but praise for the wonderful holiday party. They were excited about the number of docents they met, and they commented on what an interesting group of people we are. Those who spoke with the provisionals can certainly say the same about them.

One of the class members decided following the 3-minute presentation that she simply did not have the time in her schedule necessary for successfully completing the course, and she regrettfully withdrew from the class. Over the holiday break the remaining six members are working on their research papers. During the next term we will be looking at art history as well as the fundamentals of touring adults and structuring a *Highlights* tour.

Mary Ellen Hoffman, Ralph Wilson, and Wendi Hunter 🍷
Co-Provisional Chairs



Erika Budig



Anne Miller



David Reichert



Gloria Richman



Patricia Santiago



Joanne



Holiday Lunch with the Class of 1994: Steve Hiatt, Kitti Peri, and Michele Yeadon, who is visiting from Chicago. Of the 17 graduates in '94, only Steve and Kitti are still members of the Council.

Photo submitted by Ricki Morse

From Our Book Group



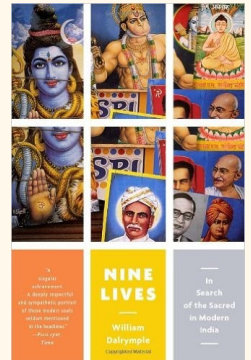
Laura DePaoli

Come to book club! Our first book club meeting of the New Year is **Monday, January 11th at 10 am** at the home of Susan Billig, 1693 Francheschi Road, Santa Barbara. We will be discussing *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India* by William Dalrymple. Susan Tsai recommended this book to the *Puja and Piety* touring team and it is really a must read for anyone touring *Highlights* or children this spring and summer.

It's a "mesmerizing" book that illuminates the lives and religious practices of nine remarkable contemporary Indians. The first story, "A Nun's Tale" about Mataji, a Jain nun has haunted me ever since I read it several months ago. It's a remarkable story of a religious life. Please rsvp to Susan Billig or to Laura DePaoli.

suebillig@gmail.com

Ldepaoli@verizon.net



Laura 🍷

Farewell, Heather

Photos submitted by Joan Dewhirst



Patricia Dillon Bliss, 1945 – December 3, 2015 (Docent Council President 1975-76)

“What I remember about Patty is that she had sparkle. She had a let’s-get-things-done approach, to the point of scheduling school tours herself when the Museum temporarily could not. She was an organizer extraordinaire, a talent she used to benefit many nonprofits in Santa Barbara.” Ellen Lawson, Class of 1973

Part 2: Prehistoric Cave Art of Spain & France

By Judy and Dale Seborg



Fig. 3 With our local guide in the Cantabria region of Spain

On September 24, 2015, we met 18 fellow passengers in Bilbao for an Archaeological Institute of America {AIA} tour of the prehistoric cave art of northern Spain and southern France. Our appetites for this type of art had been whetted by previous visits to the facsimile caves of Lascaux and Altamira. The tour was led by British Ice Age art expert, Paul Bahn, and managed by Concihita Garcia; both did a superb job. We were guided through ten original caves, two rock shelter sites, an important archaeological dig, and two famous facsimile caves, those of Altamira and Lascaux. The facsimile caves are spectacular and fully deserve the acclaim they have received. The ten original caves we visited also have beautiful images on curving cave walls that have survived in place for tens of thousands of years.

It was humbling to realize that we were standing a few feet away from art that was painted 14,000 to 25,000 years earlier! Seeing these beautiful paintings and engravings gave us an appreciation of the technical skill and artistic achievements that our long ago human ancestors used to achieve these sensitively depicted likenesses of mammals.

We boarded our full size bus and drove a couple of hours to Santillana del Mar, near Altamira, where we were welcomed in the lovely Parador de Santillana Gil Blas in time for a stroll among the 14th-16th Century towers in one of Europe's most perfectly preserved medieval villages. The next day we began visiting nearby caves, beginning with the facsimile cave of Altamira, a masterfully faithful reproduction of cave surfaces, images, and pigments dating back 15,000 years, and its excellent museum focusing on Cantabrian prehistory and cave art. We also visited the Las Monedas Caves and Cueva del Castillo where 180 images of eight different mammal species date from 12,000 to 14,000



Fig. 2 Ceiling detail at Altimira II: bison

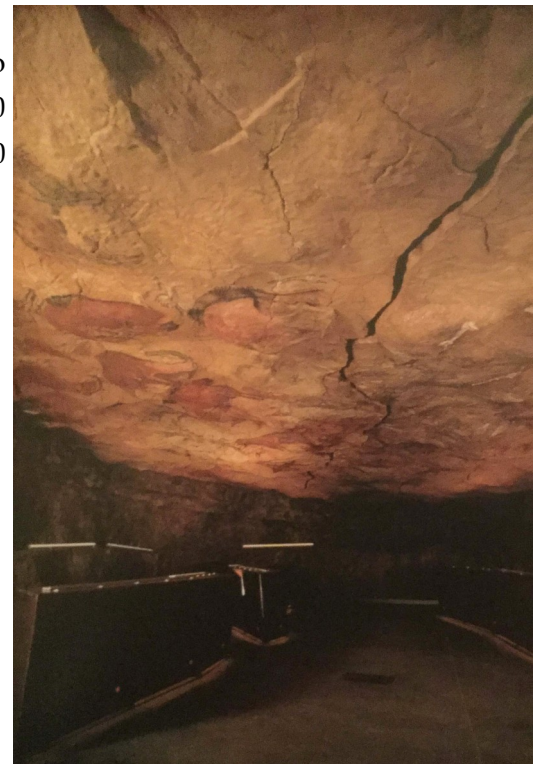


Fig. 1 Ceiling in Polychrome Chamber at Altimira II (best viewed lying on your back)



Fig. 4. Atapuerca archaeological site : replica of the nearly one million year old skull that was found there. (Photo by Catherine Camp.)

years ago {see Figs. 1,2 & 3}. Judy had visited the original Altamira Cave in 1986 by appointment. She actually saw the art better in the facsimile cave because the lighting is much better and she didn't have to lie down in a cave with a low ceiling.

On the way from Santillana del Mar to Bilbao, we visited a smaller cave, Covalanas, where some of the drawings were created from dots of red pigment.

We checked in at our Bilbao hotel, with views to the nearby Guggenheim Bilbao and Jeff Koons' glorious flower festooned "Puppy Dog" in the Guggenheim plaza, in time for our guided museum tour. The group had dinner together and discussed the exquisite cave

images we had seen. The following day we

toured the UNESCO World Heritage site, Atapuerca, one of the largest and most important archaeological sites in Western Europe where large numbers of human ancestor bones and skeletons dating from 450,000 to 1.3 million years ago have been discovered {see Fig. 4}. In the afternoon we also visited the fine Museum of Human Evolution in Burgos.

Our first stop in France was Bordeaux, where we enjoyed a late afternoon walk in the old district near our hotel. This area is one of the largest protected architectural neighborhoods in France. We visited the Museum of Aquitaine, a museum of history and archaeology exhibiting prehistoric artifacts to present day art of the Aquitaine region. A star attraction is the famous Ice Age bas relief of the Venus of Laussel {see Fig. 5}. The excellent museum gave us an opportunity to absorb more background information about prehistory and its art, and provided us with a better understanding of what we had already seen, as well as prepared us for the treasures ahead in the Perigord region.

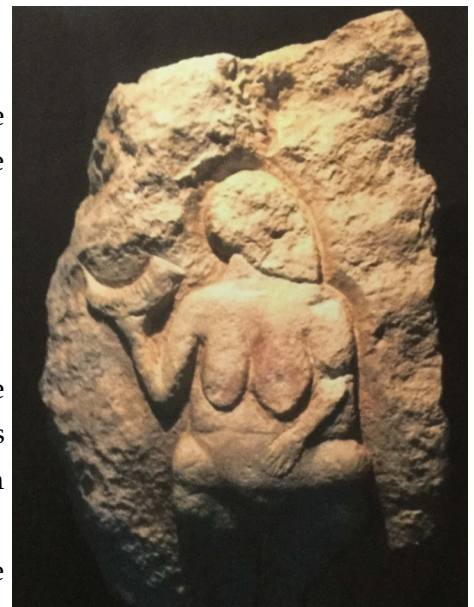


Fig. 5. Venus of Laussel (~23,000 B.C., Musée d' Aquitaine, Bordeaux).

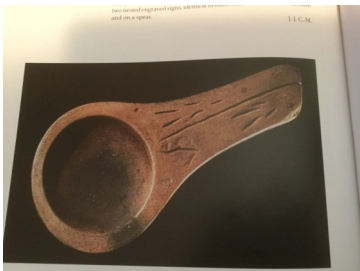


Fig. 6. Lamp burner made from pink limestone (~16,000 B.C., National Museum of Prehistory in Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil)



Fig. 8. Spear thrower extension made of antler showing a doe with a fawn being born (or possibly with an emerging turd) on which two birds are perched (~12,000 B.C., National Museum of Prehistory).

We stayed at the Hotel Cro-Magnon in Les Eyzies during our four days in the Perigord. This quaint hotel was built into a steep cliff and is very near the National Museum of Prehistory,

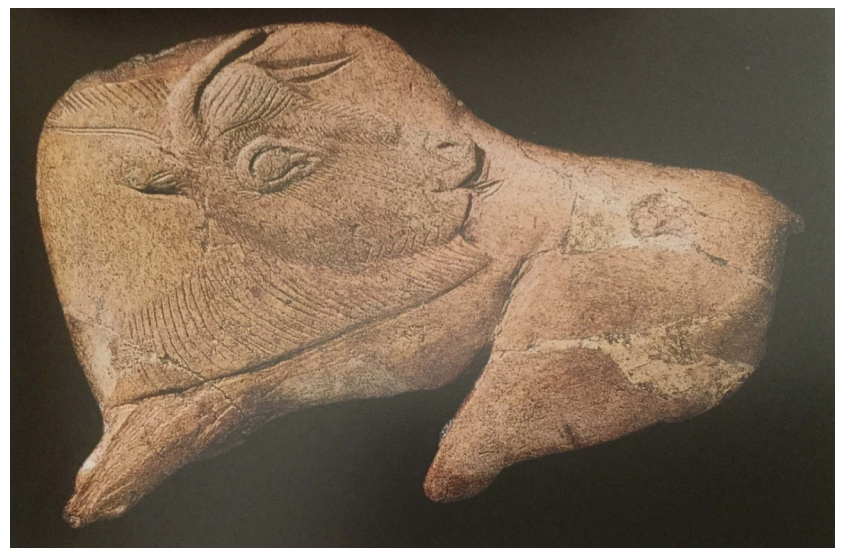


Fig. 7. A bison licking itself, carved from a reindeer antler (~16,000 B.C., National Museum of Prehistory)



Fig. 9. Bison is a single file (~ 16,000 B.C., Lascaux)

a prehistoric site.

The Grotte de Niaux was the final cave art site included on this marvelous tour, and the WOW factor was not lost on our group! This cave system is perched high above the Ariège River and located among beautiful rock-walled mountains. The vast network of galleries extends over a mile and includes exquisite paintings representing bison, horses, and ibex. This was a worthy climax to a trip we will savor for many years!



Fig. 10. Rhinos (~30,000-35,000 B.C., Chauvet Pont d' Arc Cave)

than 1,000 animal paintings} than those of either Altamira or Lascaux. {see Figs. 10, 11 & 12}. The art is also reported to be much older: preliminary dating indicates it was made 30,000 years ago! Incidentally, a well-done documentary film by Werner Herzog, "Cave of Forgotten Dreams", was made in the original cave network.

Fig. 12. Bears (~30,000-35,000 B.C., Chauvet)

a modern, first rate museum, with many important artifacts and interesting displays {see Figs. 6, 7, & 8}. We began our tour sites in the Perigod with original caves, Pair-non-Pair, Font-de-Gaume, Rouffignac, Cougnac and Pech Merle. The original caves are quite individual and the art is both interesting and artistic. The facsimile, Lascaux II, is painstakingly accurate and the paintings are simply spectacular. We were especially impressed throughout the tour by the artists' clever use of the cave wall bulges and curves to create three dimensional effects for the animals' bodies {see Fig. 9}. Nearby, Le Thot animal park featured living present day descendants of some of the animals depicted in cave art. The archaeological site of Abri Pataud and the rock shelter of Cap Blanc allowed our guides to further enlighten us with how archaeologists and scholars are able to gain knowledge as they research



Fig. 11. Lions (~30,000-35,000 B.C., Chauvet)

After the tour finished, we rented a car in order to visit the newest facsimile cave, Caverne du Pont d'Arc, in Ardeche, which opened in April, 2015, after years of development. The beautiful site includes an excellent museum in addition to the facsimile cave. The cave paintings are simply exquisite, and more extensive {more



Holiday Party 2015

Photos by Pma Tregenza and Lori Mohr







THE LAST PAGE



Winter in Santa Barbara

Photo by Laura DePaoli submitted by request

Lori Mohr, Editor
Mohrojai@aol.com

