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From the Director

As I write this column, work on our new collections storage and research addition, the Mainwaring Wing, is moving along rapidly. Fortunately, I have a terrific view of the construction from my office window. It is absolutely fascinating to follow the complex activities of the construction workers, cement trucks, and crane operators and the systemic planning and teamwork that is part and parcel of the building of any large structure. I only wish that I had more time to keep track of the day-to-day progress of the building.

As many readers know, the Mainwaring Wing is the fulfillment of a long-term dream of the Museum and an answer to a host of pressing needs, the foremost of which has been the proper care and preservation of our superb collections. This building will mean so much to the Museum's future and will enable the curators and staff to maintain the trust placed in us to preserve our at-risk wood, textile, and basketry objects and provide proper spaces for them to be examined and studied. Hopefully, a number of our staff and more than 100,000 objects will move into the Mainwaring Wing by the spring of 2002. We also will be able to enjoy the beautiful urban green space of the Stoner Courtyard, which we trust will be widely used by students and the public alike, and will be able to welcome our visitors through our new entrance. We look forward to that time with gratitude to all our supporters who have made our dream a reality.

But the dream will not end here. We already are busy planning to significantly improve our infrastructure, especially in the realm of climate control. After the completion of the Mainwaring Wing, the Museum will turn its attention to bringing sorely needed air conditioning to our four original buildings, beginning with the 1899 wing. A new HVAC system will not only make our staff and visitors feel comfortable during the summer months, but will clearly improve the conditions for the collections in both the galleries and storage. Moreover, we will utilize the opportunity of air conditioning these buildings to also undertake important renovations that will, among other things, improve our research and conservation laboratories and increase our temporary exhibition space. More details on our new dreams will be forthcoming soon!

Jeremy A. Sabloff
The Williams Director

Be sure to visit the Museum's Web site: www.upenn.edu/museum