

President's letter

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Dear Members,

Greetings, and happy new year! 2014 is the Year of the Horse: a celebration of energy and ability. Let's hope that means WAAC has a year of success and exciting activity ahead.

The WAAC annual meeting 2013 was a huge success! I'd like to thank outgoing WAAC President Nick Dorman for the fantastic meeting in Seattle. The talks were insightful, the Seattle Art Museum welcoming, and the weather hot and sunny. I particularly enjoyed the tour of the Olympic Sculpture Park, team-led by Nick and Liz Brown. The beautiful

waterfront site offers a sublime backdrop to world-class monumental artworks and brings with it a range of challenging conservation problems (not to mention some interesting security videos).

Kudos to the great team who helped bring the meeting together, including Nick, Liz, Lauren Barach, and all our hosts at SAM. One of WAAC's greatest strengths is its ability to offer insight across a range of specialties, and this meeting was no exception. Nancy Odegaard started the meeting with an eye-opening keynote address on the Kennewick Man, coming to grips with a complex, long-term collaboration involving numerous stakeholders and agendas— something that is more and more common in conservation today. Subsequent presentations ranged widely in subject -- from needle felting to condition reporting, from Florentine paintings to public art complexes—but maintained the same high standard of ethics, scholarship, and polish. I left Seattle with a freshly renewed respect for conservators, a better understanding of the compromises and difficulties that arise daily in our field, and vast admiration for the amazing, creative solutions we manage to find every time.

Our outgoing WAAC Board also deserves a round of thanks. Members-at-large Pam Skiles and Sean Charette have completed their terms, and will be replaced by newly-elected MALs Sue Ann Chui and Yadin Laroquette. Claire Gerhard has also wrapped up her term as Secretary; she is being replaced by Denise Migdail. Welcome Denise! Members-at-Large Susi Friend and Elizabeth Homberger will continue in their positions for a second year. Chris Stavroudis (Membership Secretary), Carolyn Tallent (*Newsletter* Editor), Walter Henry (Web Editor), and Donna Williams (Publication Fulfillments) will continue in their appointments. Thanks, everyone, and welcome to the newly elected.

Coming attractions: Annual Meeting 2014

I'm looking forward to serving as your President this year, and wondering what I can bring to WAAC. An annual meeting in San Francisco is one thing, of course, hosted at the Asian Art Museum in the Civic Center Plaza. The proposed dates are September 8-12, 2014, so please mark your calendars now! The last WAAC meeting in San Francisco was held in 1999, so it is definitely time for another. This is a wonderful city in which to gather, with stellar scenery, good weather, and a really great bridge (two, actually). Bring your walking shoes, though, and prepare for some daunting hills. Details are still being worked out, but count on some really good restaurants, an angels' project, and of course, a boat ride!

So it's the Year of the Horse?

Immersed in an Asian museum as I am, it seems like a good idea to share a little bit of Chinese culture. What can we expect in 2014, astrologically speaking?

Historically, the horse provided fast, effective transportation and had a military function, so the Chinese horse is a symbol of travel and speedy success. Riding on horseback also indicated that the rider was from a noble or high ranking family, so people born in the Horse year are considered to care about dress, appearance, and speech.

Horses are social, and like to compete and even show off. The horse is also connected to heat, fire, and the color red. Since red is also connected to love, the horse sign is treated as a romantic sign in the Chinese horoscope. So expect busy, goal-oriented schedules in the year of Horse, and pursue those goals with leadership and passion!

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