Summary of 2013 Activity of the Society

This report covers my term as President from April 28, 2013 when I was installed as President at the Membership Meeting at the 41st Annual Conference in Pasadena, to May 4, 2014 when my term ended at the Membership Meeting in Washington, DC.

The role of President of ARLIS/NA is just as much as a facilitator as it is as leader. In order to keep the Society moving forward on its mission of excellence in art information management, the President must make it easy for people to meet and exchange ideas, and then to be able to work to turn ideas into action. The accomplishments of a President during his term of office are not really his - but are the accomplishment of many hard working people who have the best intentions of the Society at heart. I am grateful to each and every member of the Society, who though dedication and hard work have made 2013 a year of great accomplishments for the Art Libraries Society of North America.

I am happy to report that the Society has had a very good year on many levels. We have slightly increased individual membership and have seen a modest increase in donations. The records of the Society have been carefully managed and administrative documents have been updated or are in review. The Society continue to take a proactive stance regarding many issues crucial to the art information field, including the retention and staffing of art libraries in museums. Information on membership, meetings, documents, public policy, and our financial status can be found among the reports of the Treasurer, Secretary, and the EB liaisons to the Membership, Development, and Public Policy Committees. My thanks to the Board liaisons and our committees for their continuing dedication to the goals of the Society.

Association Management

In August 2013, the Society entered into a new contract with Technical Enterprises, Inc. (TEI) for a period of two years. In March 2013, TEI hired a new association Manager for the Society, Robert Kopchinski, who was quickly exposed to ARLIS/NA in the three weeks before the Pasadena conference and who has subsequently done an exceptional job in his first full year with TEI and the Society. TEI also hired a new advertising manager, Jill Tucker, who handled with relative ease the myriad of details relating to exhibits and conference advertising. We also
thank other staff members at TEI, especially Karen Olson and Deanna Wroblewski, who have made this a relatively smooth year of operation.

Executive Board

I was blessed to have congenial and hard working members of the Executive Board. We met monthly with the exception of June, by conference call, and in-person at the mid-year meeting held in Washington at the National Gallery of Art on September 26-27, 2013. We had experimented with using a system of written reports from the liaisons during the presidency of Deborah Kempe in order to speed the process of discussing agenda items. This practice was formalized in my year. While it did not shorten our meetings, it did mean that, with one exception, we were able to discuss all items on our very full and more ambitious agendas. Individual reports of the Executive Board can be found on the AWS.

Structure of the Society: Chapters, Divisions, Sections, and Special Interest Groups

This year, the Executive Board asked all chapters to review their bylaws. The Board wanted to ensure clarity of the relationship between the chapters and the parent organization by including “NA” into the chapter bylaws, documents, and websites. In order to protect chapters and ARLIS/NA from legal action, chapter membership categories were re-described using the designation “friend” versus “affiliate.”

Division and Section activity are listed in the Vice-President’s report. Two new Special Interest Groups were added this year: Cinema and Media Studies (coordinated by Nedda Ahmed and Lea Whittington) and Stimulating Creativity in Practice (coordinated by Annette Haines).

Travel and Meetings

The President did not need to travel for CPAC since it was held in Washington but was delighted to host other members of CPAC in his hometown. While I had great hopes to attend chapter meetings other than my local chapter, I was unable to given the time constraints of my work, Society business, and conference planning. I did meet sporadically with Past President Kempe and Vice-President Fabian in New York while in New York for business. Vice-President Fabian and incoming VP Kristen Regina met in Washington to review the Joint Conference Task Force Report and discuss other Society business.

I was fortunate to join the IRC on the ARLIS/NA Study Tour to Russia. It was an extraordinary trip and we were able to see the impressive libraries of our Russian Colleagues, who were incredibly hospitable and kind. Preceding that trip was a study tour and colloquium in Berlin and Dessau under the auspices of the Initiative Fortbildung für wissenschaftliche Spezialbibliotheken und verwandte Einrichtungen e.V. that concluded with a colloquium From Wunderkammer to e-Resource: Promoting Art Information Across Borders in the 21st Century.
Both trips helped foster the exchange of ideas and promote better cooperation amongst members of our profession. It had the added bonus of cementing strong bonds of friendship with members of the Society for which I will always be grateful. My thanks to the IRC and members of the Society who helped promote ARLIS/NA overseas.

In December, the President met with former President Jon Evans to discuss his writing a history of the first forty years of the Society for the ARLIS/NA web site. In August, Past President Kempe and I met with staff of the Institute of Museum and Library Services to discuss the feasibility of a grant to promote diversity within the Society by providing internships. The information gleaned from the meeting was relayed to the Diversity Committee.

**ARLIS/NA Website, Communications, and Publications**

One of the principal tasks that has been carried over from my predecessors was moving the ARLIS/NA website (AWS) to a new platform and giving it a new look. The beta site was released early this spring with the full launch in mid April. By all accounts the years of hard work have paid off with a cleanly organized web site with a crisp look. Thanks are due to the Communications and Publications Committee for this impressive achievement. In addition, a new graphic identity for the Society, incorporating the color scheme of the new AWS, was created by Christopher Hibben Graphic Design of Richmond, VA. It was introduced to the membership in the beta version and is slowly being incorporated into all Society publications, social media, and letterhead.

The publication of *Art Documentation* through the University of Chicago Press has continued to run smoothly with slightly increasing royalties. We are currently negotiating a contract with EBSCO for the electronic distribution of our occasional papers.

The Society has started a new electronic publication – the *ARLIS/NA Media and Technology Reviews*. The first issue was released on April 15th. The M&T Reviews are edited by Hannah Bennett, Emilee Mathews, and Elizabeth Shaub. The Board appointed Elizabeth Berenz as Media Relations Coordinator as a means of centralizing incoming and outgoing media queries and information about the Society. Special thanks are due to Melanie Emerson in her role as EB liaison to this busy committee.

**2014 Conference**

The Conference Planning Advisory Committee meeting was held in Washington at the National Gallery of Art on July 11-12, 2013. Venues, program, tours, and events were reviewed and the budget approved. For the first time, the conference fundraiser was brought to CPAC to attend the meetings and offer input.

The 42nd Annual Conference of the Society was held in Washington, DC from May 1-5. This is the first time the conference has been held in the city of a sitting president. The conference had record attendance with over 793 registrants from the US, Canada, Mexico, and thirteen other countries. Due the hard work of Kathryn Wayne, Conference fundraiser, and Ann Roll,
Development Committee Chair, we also have raised a record $77,030.00 to help defray the costs of producing the conference and its events. There were a wide variety of sessions, workshops, events, and tours that will make this our most successful conferences ever. The Convocation was held at the Library of Congress and was an elegant event with a stirring keynote address by Susan Stamberg of National Public Radio. This is the result of years of dedicated work by the Washington Conference Committee and its Co-Chairs Megan Halsband, Roger Lawson, Anne Simmons, and Kathy Woodrell. My most deep and sincere gratitude to everyone who made the 2014 Washington such a great success.

Four sessions were recorded at the Annual Conference and will be the first step in the Society’s Virtual Conference initiative. These sessions will be made available to conference participants and the membership at no cost and will be offered at a reasonable fee to other interested parties. In the future, conference sessions and webinars will be made available to members and registered users to help promote the Society’s education mission. Special thanks are due to the Educational Technology subcommittee and the EB liaisons, Sarah Carter and Sarah Falls.

**Goals and Duties as Past President**

As Past President, I serve as liaison to the Diversity Committee and will help guide them in the process of obtaining a planning grant from IMLS. I have agreed to serve on a joint ARLIS/NA - VRA task force reviewing the College Art Association’s criteria for hiring and retaining visual resources professionals.

During my tenure as President, I enforced an existing policy that prohibits commercial activity on the Society’s listserve. This caused considerable discussion and debate on ARLIS-L, via email, and in telephone and in-person discussions. What was revealed was a larger issue of membership, commerce, and policy that needs substantial review. I have agreed to take on a review of various aspects of the Society’s structure where the policy and commerce intersect in order to provide a reasonable and equitable place for commercial and educational posting can be made using the Society’s communication platforms.

I wish to thank the Society for a fascinating and educational year as President.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory P. J. Most
2013-14 President, ARLIS/NA

May 22, 2014