Dear Friends,

In 2016, we celebrated our first full year with the Carriage Association of America in our new offices here at the Kentucky Horse Park. The space and accommodations have allowed us to improve our library and share our treasures with the carriage-driving world. Halfway through the year, our Director of Operations and librarian of four years, Mindy Groff, informed us that she had decided to focus exclusively on her new family of four foster children. In 2016, Mindy brought our new website on line, acquired our new Zeta book scanner, coordinated publication with the CAA for the jointly published *Carriage Restoration: Here’s How* volume, provided research assistance for so many individuals and museums, and continued to be an outstanding ambassador of the CMA and its mission. Just before leaving, Mindy also worked with Director Dana Banfield to host “Carriages at Keeneland” at Keeneland Concours d’Elegance, which included horse-drawn vehicles with an obvious evolutionary connection to the automobile. This turned out to be so well received we will be doing it again this coming year. From our point, public outreach efforts such as this are just what our mission calls for. We will miss Mindy but salute her commitment to improving the lives of children and thank her for a job well done.

Then as one door closed, another opened. In August, we had the good fortune of Virginia Goodman accepting the role of Director of Operations. Virginia and her husband Jack have been members of the Carriage Association for many years. They own 2 half-Arabs and a full Arab, as well as more harness and carriages than they know what to do with! These days Virginia mostly trail rides with Taj.

Virginia recently retired from a career in environmental consulting. She quickly realized she was not ready to be fully retired and jumped at the opportunity to join the CMA. Each day in the stacks gives her more knowledge about carriages and their history, and she is enjoying sharing what she finds with all who ask for research assistance. She enjoys working closely with the CAA and with members of our extended carriage community. She spent much of her first 6 months becoming familiar with the library and archives and by the end of the year was fielding research questions from constituents all over the globe.

Perhaps of greatest excitement, the new Zeta scanner has proven itself a very worthwhile investment! Scanned files are saved as “optical character recognition” files and therefore are
searchable by keywords. Virginia has scanned several carriage catalogues that will be posted on Google Books as well as other manuscripts and photographs related to research requests. The CAA is also using it to scan all past issues of the Carriage Journal, opening the vast repertoire of knowledge contained within those covers. Both Linda Freeman (CAA’s intern) and Virginia have found this project distracting, as they are tempted to read each issue thus slowing down the scanning process considerably!

Other accomplishments in 2016 include 1) a continuation of the Facebook page that Mindy began, 2) production of the 2017 Calendar (still available), 3) development of a joint CMA-CAA strategy that brings the two organizations closer together, shares resources and improves efficiency, 4) support of the Carriage Journal through contributed articles, illustrations and material, 5) resurrecting the publication on Fire and Police Vehicles, and 6) finalizing policies on collection, lending, and accounting procedures.

The CMA offices are open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8-4 (or so). If you have questions about your vehicle, or would like to chat more with Virginia, please give the office a call! She can be reached at 859-259-2933, or email her at cmalibrary@windstream.net.

Looking for us online? Visit www.carriagemuseumlibrary.org. You can also follow our activities on Facebook, even if you don’t have an account. Virginia shares images and information from our collection, as well as updates about what’s going on around the office. www.facebook.com/carriagemuseumofamerica/.

We are sincerely grateful to all the donors who gave to the Carriage Museum of America in 2016 and acknowledge them here:

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Every effort has been made to acknowledge all donors. If we have made any errors or omissions, please accept our sincere apologies.

We look forward to working with you throughout the coming year.

Best Regards,

John Sowles
President of the CMA Board of Trustees