

**CHINESE NEW YEAR 2014
THE YEAR OF THE WOOD HORSE
“THE HORSE IN THE CLOUDS”**

31 Jan 2014

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Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 10 yin water	Stem: 9 Yang Water	Stem: 3 Yang Fire	Stem: 1 Yang Wood
Branch: IV Wood Rabbit <i>Rabbit Leaving the Forest</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger Crossing the Forest</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger in the Forest</i>	Branch: VII Fire Horse <i>Horse in the Clouds</i>
Combined Metal <i>Bronze Mirror</i>	Combined Metal <i>Bronze Mirror</i>	Combined Fire <i>Fiery Furnace</i>	Combined Metal <i>Excavated Metal</i>

Lunar New Year: 31 Jan 2014 5:38 am (CCT -8:00)

Li Ch'un (Start of the Chinese Solar Year): 4 Feb 2013 0:13 am (CCT -8:00)

The Horse in the Clouds - All things are possible under the Sun, and the Sun warms the hearts of your detractors. With sufficient and determined action all things can become realities. Wealth is achieved through hard work.

Wood: 4 - Inventive, very creative, very artistic

Fire: 3 - Active, stimulating

Earth: 0 - Too flexible, yielding

Metal: 3 - Sportive, astute

Water: 2 - Talkative, clear, bright

31 Jan (Nighttime): Wrong starts bring with them a winding path.¹

Gong Hey Fat Choy, Everyone!

It takes a remarkable person to change the course of world events. To be first, to be daring, to have a superlative vision, and to have the energy needed to push changes through to their fulfillment—these are the marks of the noble and valiant Wood Horse, or ‘Horse in the Clouds’. The Horse is one of the most respected of the Chinese animal signs, notable for their persistence, strength, indomitable spirit and their ability to inspire others, rallying them to the Horse’s cause. Wood Horses are especially notable for their flair and bold expression in all types of media, especially in the visual arts. While other types of Horses are noted for their political and military abilities and persuasions, the Wood Horse changes the trends of the times through the media. They write large the stories that shape society’s perception. And of all the five types of Horses, the Wood Horse is in many ways the most beloved, because they have a way of touching the hearts of people that stirs one to action, inspires reflection and creates an impression that does not fade as does the passing fad

or latest trend. The Wood Horse carves the paths that set the benchmarks toward which others aspire.

It has been quite a year, and so many things have taken place, often behind the scenes—what else would we expect from a Snake year?—that I have found it necessary to write this letter in two parts. In this first installment we will look at the general qualities of the Horse, and in the second, we will have a look at the year that was and the year to come, as well as a look at the list of accomplishments upon which we will build this year. The sixty year cycle of the Chinese zodiac appears to be particularly linked with social movements, and the sign of the year in which we are born makes a unique statement both about the society in which we live and to how we are linked to that society through the action of the other Pillars in our chart. Horse years mark high points in the 60 year cycle, and thus times of shifting public awareness, as well the public display of what we have done in the years preceding. The Horse marks culminations. Before we get into what to expect from this year, it would pay us to get a feel for what the Horse represents. In considering the general qualities of the Horse, then, the following paragraphs will eventually appear in book form, and are representative of my observations of Horses through the years.

“I think we’re going to the moon because it’s in the nature of the human being to face challenges. It’s by the nature of his deep inner soul... we’re required to do these things just as salmon swim upstream.”

“This is one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.”

“Yeah, I wasn’t chosen to be first. I was just chosen to command that flight. Circumstance put me in that particular role. That wasn’t planned by anyone.”

Neil Armstrong, astronaut, Year Horse

There is something always strong and uncompromising about the Horse, wherever it is found in a chart. Usually possessed of a powerful persona, especially in the outer Pillars (Month and Year), the Horse is a natural leader and probably one of the expressive types for leadership material (at least on the face of things) in the Chinese zodiac. For all their presence and commanding qualities, the Horse is generally an affable soul, full of good fun and humor unless faced by a challenge, sociable, friendly and large-minded. They are naturals as organizers, especially female Horses, and one can always depend upon the Horse to see a project through to the end. They are independent and able to take the rein of situations and people in order to get things done. Horses are self-starters and you do not have to ask twice if they sense a good challenge and they know they are needed.

The Horse likes to range far and wide. They hate feeling restricted in any way and this is one of the keys to successful relations with Horses – treat them with an ‘open hand’. If you are in a group situation with a Horse you are in their element and they will be the first to step up if something is needed. If you are a strong persona yourself, expect the Horse to have a go at you—to challenge you in some way. It is likely to start off friendly enough, but the Horse is one of the signs that will not back down in a power play and they generally come out on top unless their opponent is a strong Ox type. The Ox will win by attrition in such a contest, generally speaking, or by their gift of careful, patient, methodical planning. (Oxen are great strategists. Barack Obama is an Ox by year.)

Horses do well in any sort of outdoor activity and the military and sports are their playground. The Horse is a team player and does especially well with people of their own gender. They are quite competitive, though with members of their own team or squad they will form lasting associations,

alliances and many friendships. They are the ones one wants on the front line, as it were, spearheading an attack, business deal, sports strategy or organization. Leave them alone and they will produce works of greatness. Try to control them and they are a disaster waiting to happen, largely for the person trying to exert the control over the Horse.

At work the Horse is conscientious, independent, motivated and goal-oriented – an admirable sort of employee to have and a demanding, though fair, boss. Above all, though, the one thing a Horse must feel in order to succeed in any occupation is a sense of inspiration and movement forward, otherwise they will either leave or wither. The Horse suffers if there is nothing to inspire them. Fire, being its native Element, is an Element in constant motion and ‘moves upward’. As a result, the Horse is ‘upwardly mobile’. All spiritual pursuits also have a great appeal to the Horse’s nature, though it tends to come out mainly in being able to inspire people around them, but it also shows through in their art. The Horse can be deeply spiritual in their own way. The Horse makes a good chief executive and has produced many statesmen throughout the world as well as many US presidents. The Horse has also produced some despots, though not to the degree that some works on Chinese astrology might lead one to believe. I have not found dictators any more prevalent among Horses than I have with any other sign and, by Year, the sign that seems to produce the most of them is the Ox.

In love and family the male Horse holds to traditional and clearly defined gender roles - the woman’s place is the home as mother of his children and keeper of the house and the man is the breadwinner. The female Horse has other ideas, though. To the female Horse, gender roles and household chores are to be shared equally, with women getting equal remuneration and recognition to men. The male partner to a female Horse is often made to toe the line and is told, often in no uncertain terms, what the roles in the relationship are to be. For this reason, prospective in-laws of a potential Horse bride-to-be in China would warn the son away from such a match because she would tend to undermine the traditional male role in the house. Female Horses as partners are the epitome of the old statement ‘Behind every great man is a great woman’, and female Horses are champions of their gender. Horses can be very bossy, especially in the home.

Horse children are often born into family circumstances where a great deal of the cares of the world are removed from them. Horse style tends toward staying current with fashion trends but without making too much of a statement. The lines and colors lean toward the more conservative, though they can be bold if the Dragon or Monkey appears in one of the other Pillars. Horses are not slaves to fashion, though they will always put on a good presentation when stepping out. Around the home or with friends they will be much more casual. Children of Horse parents will be well-presented and well-mannered. Partners of Horses will, in some manner, bear the stamp of the Horse and female Horses especially are known to ‘dress’ their partners. Horse homes tend to be spacious, either with large grounds or open plan. Horses need their space in the home, and they claim the home as their space. The garden will often be a feature and Horses like to get their hands dirty with gardening and work around the house, especially Wood and Earth Horses. There will always be some project on the go, either at home or at work. You can always tell when a Horse is unhappy or bored at work. They will make changes around the house.

Horses are basically conservative in their views, tending to the center/right politically. The same is true in their personal relations. It takes a Pillar like the Snake, Dragon or Monkey to take them out of their conservatism, although the Horse Pillar can produce enduring, strongly expressive and authentic work when teamed with those other Pillars. As an artist, the Horse tends toward ‘manual art’ – print-making, woodcuts and sculptures although as painters their technique is very sound and makes quite an impact on the viewer. As a writer the Horse is confronting. Most writers with Horse Pillars are pioneers of the genre in some fashion or they tend to be social critics, or both. Jules

Verne, said to be the pioneer of science fiction writing, was a double Horse (Day and Hour) and he is said to be the second-most translated author of all time behind Agatha Christie (Tiger).

In finances the Horse is usually careful with money, but under the impress of stress or other factors they can spend rashly and foolishly, marking the one lesson that all Horses need to learn – to act calmly and decisively in times of stress instead of under the impress of panic, peer pressure or ‘flutters of the heart’. The Horse has a big heart and can be magnanimous and giving to a fault, but that trait often works against them in affairs of the heart and they can give themselves over to people who are less than deserving or who know how to play on their affections. The Horse can be heedless of advice when they are put under pressure, in the thrall of a relationship or under the perceived loss of a loved one and they rival Dragons in the way they can bolt and engage in self-destructive behavior when impatience takes over or under the influence of some prejudice, for which the Horse is sometimes known.

For all their bossiness and occasional contrary behavior, the Horse is still a lovable sort and they have a way about them that wins people around. Whether an ‘old lug’ (for the Horse is also known as that at times) or a hero, it is hard to go past a Horse for a faithful and stalwart companion. They are amiable traveling mates, true to the bitter end (and it often is a bitter end if it comes to that). They can be very forgiving and giving and will motivate those close to them to be the best they can be. If you want to get moving on a project or just simply want to get out of a funk, call on your Horse friends and family. You will soon be out and about, free of the troubles that had beset you and renewed with the zest for living that only a Horse can convey.

With this year we are in the domain of the Wood Horse. The Wood Horse inclines itself especially to the following areas: exploration and entrepreneurship, media and art, and the establishment of new initiatives, and the quest for freedom. It produces iconic people in media and art, especially, and can indeed in any area of life. Yang produces structure and gives an intimate understanding of form and its uses. Horses understand very well the nature and structure of space, excel in the science of astronomy, and in general, have a real love of space and all that populates it. Albert Einstein was a ‘Horse in the Clouds’ in his hour Pillar, same as this year. His mind certainly ranged far and wide, and he was a great exponent of the use of imagination. Isaac Newton was a Horse by year (what I call a ‘Year Horse’). In addition, Fred Hoyle (Month Horse), Alexander Friedmann (Month and Day), Giovanni Cassini (Month), Charles Messier (Month), William Herschel (Year), Giuseppe Piazzi (Month) and Karl Jansky (Day) were all either astronomers or astrophysicists or contributed greatly to the advancement of astronomy, and all of them profoundly influenced our understanding of the materials that make up the universe and the very nature of space itself.

This love of structure lends itself to the arts as well as science, and the Horse can produce excellent painters and workers in visual media. The Wood Horse is particularly inclined to artistic expression. As artists all Year Horses can be eccentric, though the general conservative characteristics of the Horse still show through. Rockwell Kent (Black Horse) illustrates the typical Horse artist— independent, holding strong opinions, traveling to progress the art, living in natural settings, possessed of superior and bold technique. The artist Edgar Degas (Wood Horse) was profoundly conservative in his views and opposed all social reforms. He kept to himself and deliberately cultivated the image of himself as a misanthropic bachelor. He was also intensely anti-Semitic. Yet, the work of those two men is acknowledged as some of the finest in the world. It is particularly noted for its superb line and meticulous attention to detail. Horse art tends either to depict movement, as with Degas, a love of the outdoors, as with Kent, or both. Both men were superb draftsmen. The Horse produces excellent illustrators and draftsmen. They will be quite manual with their art and they lean toward sculpture and printmaking when they are not painting. Their work has

boldness to it, often with strong use of colors and daring brush strokes, with Kent's brush style being described as 'athletic'.

In music the Year Horse wields wide influence and changes the scenery, as it were. In classical music they will lean toward conducting, although they are very fine performers, too. The Horse has to lead in some capacity and they will take the lead on stage. In popular music they are trendsetters and icons. As with the visual artists, their work makes a big statement and they are usually particularly technically gifted, especially if the Monkey appears in one of the other Pillars. If the Dragon appears in one of the other Pillars their lives can be the subject of much controversy (Leonard Bernstein, Barbra Streisand, Janis Joplin—all of whom had the 'Dragon in the Whirlpool' as one of their Pillars, as well as being Year Horses) but that Dragon 'edge' makes their performances all the more unforgettable. The usual love of the outdoors is tempered in Horse musicians because an artist's life tends to be sequestered for much of the day, but the love of travel the Horse has is amply fed in the road life of most professional musicians.

Year Horses are imposing presences and, as a result, quite unforgettable. On the stage they leave an indelible mark. The Horse, said to be the most yang of all the Animals, has to set firm boundaries and create space or constructs for itself. All Year Horse actors are notable either for the power of their performances or for the unique quality of their characters. Many of them are also noted for their love of the outdoors and sport. Sean Connery (White Horse) was a footballer. James Dean (White Horse) was active in motor racing and had an interest in bullfighting, which is particularly interesting because he had the Ox in two of his four Pillars. William Holden (Yellow Horse) was heavily involved in wildlife conservation and was a managing partner of a wildlife preserve in Kenya. Bela Lugosi (Black Horse) was a captain in the ski patrol of the Austro-Hungarian army before he started acting.

The Wood Horse, in distinction to the other four Horses, does not incline itself particularly to politics, although it has produced a few famous politicians and military leaders (see the listing at the end of the letter). Politically, the Horse ranges from the center to the conservative. Horses can be deeply religious when they are in politics. They can also display deep-seated prejudices, for which Horses can occasionally be known. Cronyism is often a problem in Horse administrations. The Grant and Hayes (both Black Horses) presidencies in the US were strongly tinged with it, with Grant's administration being particularly rocked with scandals linked to nepotism. This cronyism goes back to the Horse's penchant for preferring the company of their own kind. This trait was strongly marked in J. Edgar Hoover (Wood Horse and long-time director of the FBI) who spent his entire life as a bachelor and nearly all of his spare time with his associate director and heir, Clyde Tolson. A marked suspicion can arise in Horses who are at the top politically. As commanders in the field they make fine strategists and are known for their strength, determination and unbending will. Consider the following:

A Few Famous Wood Horses: [1954] Ron Howard (TV star and film producer), the Rev. Al Sharpton, Stevie Ray Vaughan (guitarist), Gina Reinhart and Clive Palmer (Australian mining magnates), Jackie Chan (talk about movement!), Dennis Quaid (actor), Jerry Seinfeld (comedian), Pauline Hanson (Australian political figure), Jim Belushi, Kathleen Turner (actors), Matt Groening (cartoonist), Angela Merkel, Hugo Chavez (politicians), Pat Metheny (jazz guitarist), Gen. Stanley McChrystal (during the recent US wars), Elvis Costello (angels want to wear your red shoes), David Lee Roth (lead singer for Van Halen), Condoleezza Rice (political figure), Adam Ant (singer), Yanni (singer), Bruce Hornsby (singer) Annie Lennox (singer) and Denzel Washington (actor). [1894] J. Edgar Hoover (FBI director), Aldous Huxley (author), EE Cummings (poet), George Meany (1st president of the AFL-CIO union), John Ford (one of Hollywood's greatest film producers), Jack Benny (one of America's best-loved entertainers), Meher Baba (spiritual leader),

'Moms' Mabley (first black comedienne of renown), Bessie Smith (the great jazz singer), Nikita Krushev, Alfred Kinsey (sex researcher), Baron von Richtofen (WWI German flying ace), James Thurber (author), Arthur Fiedler (conductor for the Boston Pops orchestra), Robert Menzies (Australian PM) [1834] Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi (sculptor, Statue of Liberty), Edgar Degas (painter), Dmitri Mendeleev (known for the periodic table of the elements), James Whistler and William Morris (painters) [1774] Meriwether Lewis (explorer), Kaspar David Friedrich (painter), Matthew Flinders (explorer) and 'Johnny Appleseed' (John Chapman—missionary and pioneer nurseryman).

Keeping the preceding in mind, let us have a look at the year that was, the year to come, and what we can expect from the Wood Horse—a year that has produced giants in art and media, a year that has expanded our horizons and stirred our imaginations.

Horse Years: 2014, 2002, 1990, 1978, 1966, 1954, 1942, 1930, 1918, 1906

Wood Horse Years: 2014, 1954, 1894, 1834, 1774, 1714, 1654, 1594, 1534

End Part I

THE YEAR OF THE WOOD HORSE Pt. 2

The Chinese have several types of horses in their mythology—a 'dragon horse', a 'thousand-*li* horse' and a 'heavenly horse'. Each of these horses is said to be able to perform stupendous feats of various sorts. The dragon horse is the largest of the three, at heights of up to eight feet tall, has wings and scales like a dragon and can cover a distance of 300 miles in a single day. It can walk on the water without sinking, and it heralds a holy man on the throne. On the whole, it is a signifier of eminent people. It is difficult to tame and of a fierce nature. The thousand-mile horse is also a winged horse and is too swift and elegant to be mounted by any mortal, and is able to cover a distance of 400 miles in a single day (1000 *li* = 400 miles). This horse is representative of geniuses in obscurity who have yet to be mentored to greatness, or of rulers who gather around themselves very talented people and scholars. The heavenly horse is also known as the 'sweats blood horse', and there is literally a type of horse from central Asia that is known to 'sweat' blood under sustained hard gallop²—the Ferghana horse. They were the finest mounts known in ancient China. Of the three types of horse, the latter one most closely fits the description of the Wood Horse (see the Wood Horse key phrases at the start of Part 1), although the three types just mentioned can apply equally to any of the Horses of the five elements. As we read the following paragraphs, though, we should keep those key phrases in mind. The Wood Horse is one of the hardest-working types in the Chinese zodiac, and because of that fact, they can produce legendary results.

Past Wood Horse years have produced a litany of firsts: the first mass vaccinations against polio, the first H-bomb test, the first color TV, the first atomic power station, the first nuclear sub, the first Burger King restaurant (Hungry Jack's in Australia), the first successful kidney transplant, the first battery-operated switchboard, the first minimum wage law (New Zealand), the discovery of the first noble gas, the TV dinner, Coca-cola in bottles, the first Godzilla film (the 1st of 22), Sports Illustrated magazine, the First Continental Congress, the first Birkenstock sandals, one of the first electric cars, and the birth of South Australia. Now, some of these firsts are of great moment, some are tongue-in-cheek, and others are of passing interest, but they were 'firsts'. Remembering that Wood starts the cycle of the elements, representing new growth and the start of the creative process, and that the Horse is the most yang of the signs, yang producing structure, it is not surprising that we would see firsts in Wood Horse years. It is also perhaps not surprising that some very artistic people are born in those years, Wood being the element that rules artistic creativity.

There were also some other notable events that took place in Wood Horse years: the Dreyfus Affair (spying scandal which divided France—1894), the May Day riots of 1894 (Ohio, US), the Pullman strike (US, 1894), the founding of the international Olympic committee (1894), the patent for motion picture films, the formation of the Bilderberg Group (1954), the unveiling of a Soviet spy ring in Australia (1954), the abolition of slavery in the British Empire (1834), the foundation of the Office of Indian Affairs (1834), the first publication of “New Yorker” (forerunner of “The New Yorker” magazine—1834), the first US dental society, the establishment of Britain’s poorhouses (1834), the isolation of oxygen from air, Labor Day was established as a holiday in the US, the first graduated income tax law (US), a vaccine for diphtheria, the US began keeping records on the weather, Nasser seized power in Egypt (1954), plans were announced to build Disneyland (California), school desegregation began in the US, the European Convention on Human Rights went into effect, “Rock Around the Clock” was released, Elvis Presley’s first commercial recordings were made, the Tonight! Show was debuted, Hurricane Hazel occurred (US), and the V8 engine was introduced, to name a few events.

To get an idea of what is to come this year, we need to take a look back at last year so we have an idea of the most probable outcomes. So, from last year’s Chinese New Year letter, what eventuated out of the predictions made?

- **I expect this year to produce some real landmarks in film.** *Twelve Years a Slave, Fruitvale Station, Blue is the Warmest Color, La Grande Bellezza (The Great Beauty), Gravity, Table No. 21, Ender’s Game* This was a year in film that confronted people psychologically, as we would expect from the Snake. They are only a few from the many that came out this year. While the listed films may not be landmarks in their own right, they are notable for their reflections of happenings in the public domain and for their addressing of unresolved public consciousness. There is a quote from one of them that is quite striking, and which is reflective of the Snake: “To travel is very useful, it makes the imagination work, the rest is just delusion and pain. Our journey is entirely imaginary, which is its strength.”³ The films in 2013 confronted people’s sense of entitlement, the theme of survivorship in a hostile world, LGBT relations (which were big political and social issues in 2013), and what we imagine our lives to be, in distinction to the realities of our lives.
- **In politics I expect to see legislation that reflects more the will of the people. It will be a year of statesmanship rather than brinkmanship and brute force.** One of the clearest examples of this is the handling of the Syrian civil war, along with the Iranian nuclear issue. Statesmanship prevailed in both of these instances over the use of military force. In another instance, and considering the empowerment of women, India began to overhaul its sexual offences laws after public outcry over several high-profile rape cases in that country. There are ongoing debates over gay marriage laws in US states and other countries. Egypt has just ratified a new constitution, which speaks of equality and secularism, but it is still being debated.
- **In religion, it will be fascinating to see what happens with the Catholic Church, now that the Pope is resigning.** We all know what happened there—Pope Francis. He is stressing the need for the Church to focus more upon the need for tenderness, humility and compassion, encouraging interfaith dialog, rather than the Church’s past over-focus on abortion, contraception and homosexual acts. Francis is a champion of the poor and the needy.
- **In science I expect to see some cures for some of our more dreaded diseases, like cancer and AIDS.** We saw the development of lab-grown organs, cures for HIV, Usher Syndrome, leukemia, and leukodystrophy, as well as a cure for the scourge of malaria.

- **...a resultant lessening of the health care burden we face in the West, especially in the US.** See the comments about ‘big pharma’ below.

- **Now, the biggest revolutions I see will come in the form science and technology, as well as economic legislation.** The Year of the Black Snake was a bumper year in that regard. Consider the following: Our ability to begin investigating ‘negative temperatures’ (below absolute zero), the first-ever brain-to-brain interface, the discovery of the Higgs boson, the ‘transcriptor’, a robotic ant colony, a new lithium-ion battery thousands of times more powerful than current battery technologies, the multi-lens digital camera (gigapixels, not megapixels), a form of magnetic graphene that could revolutionize the electronics industry, the “cheetah-cub robot” as well as some amazing advances in robotics on the whole, microscopic batteries, a table-top particle accelerator, optical fiber using ‘twisted light’ (with data transfer rates of 1 Tb/sec), a hand-held X-ray vision device enabling us to see through walls, 3D printing of liquid metal that retains its shape, flexible sensitive electronic skin, new physics beyond the standard model, computational quantum teleportation, Ununpentium 115—a new element, the fastest-spinning man-made object (600 million rpm—that’s a rotation rate of 10 million times a *second*), major breakthroughs in nano-sensing, a mind-controlled prosthetic leg, the first fusion reaction that produced more energy than it used, the finding of a fundamental reason for sleep (brain detox), the discovery of the thousandth known exoplanet, a method that shrinks nuclear waste by 90%, the world’s smallest FM radio, a battery electrode that heals itself, the discovery of undersea regions that can store huge volumes of CO₂, a self-regulating artificial heart, water vapor on the dwarf planet Ceres, and the naming of a new dwarf planet—Varda, as well as the autonomous (driverless) car. As for legislation, we saw the economic sequester in the US, as well as a deal that ended it, the rollout of Obamacare, which affects people financially, and ongoing debate in the US over the minimum wage.

- **The power of women will be increased...**2013 was a year of record enrollment of women in the halls of power, even though the numbers are still far below being representative of the world populace. For instance, in the US, there are now 98 female members of congress, but that is still only roughly 18% of the total number of members of congress. There is now a woman in charge of the US Federal Reserve (Janet Yellen), there are several female heads of state in South America, and we may well see a woman as the next president of the US. There are a number of prominent US cities where women have taken mayoral postings. Still, the US lags behind other countries in the political empowerment of women. Forty-seven countries have had a female head of state in the past 50 years, while the US has yet to elect one. Australia ranks 43rd in the percentage of women in parliament, ahead of the US at 79th place, which is tied with Albania at 79th. It may be of interest to note that, of the world rankings in this regard, African and Nordic nations are the clear leaders, taking the top ten spots, along with Cuba and Nicaragua. Rwanda tops the list at 64% in their lower house of parliament. It should be noted, though, that these were not big increases. The US did not make any real overall progress in electing women to national office, for example. There is still a long way to go with gender equality in politics.⁴

- **We may well see the beginning of the waning of influence in ‘big pharma’ with a resultant lessening of the health care burden we face in the West, especially in the US. Again, this too will take years, but a beginning will be made this year.** This year began the rollout of the Affordable Care Act, or ‘Obamacare’ as it is called in the US, amidst much controversy. America still chafes at the idea of universal health care for its citizens, with people there still under the illusion that it would somehow wreck the country and introduce socialism, or that it would lessen the quality of health care. I hear this again and again in conversations with people there. Still, a step in the direction indicated has been taken, whether it goes the distance or

not. This is going to be a painful process in the US. Specialists' fees are astronomical, and people get outrageous bills for procedures that should only cost a fraction of what they are, and which in many cases are needlessly performed. Insurance often does not kick in until a large deductible has been paid out, and even after that, the payments made by the patient can be crippling. I have seen this firsthand. People in the US may think things are bad now with regard to health care, but the real storm has yet to come. This will be one of the prime areas where labor and capital will see equilibration in coming years, but it will be a rocky path. Still, a small step has been taken, which may well begin inroads into the huge costs associated with medicine, especially in the US.

- **The major advances in technology will come through the realm of media and in medicine.** I should have qualified this statement at the time with the word 'some', but in that regard: the 3D printing of a living artificial ear from collagen, a 'protein passport' able to bypass the body's immune system, the 'spider sense' body suit, discovery of the mechanism by which certain brain cells can survive being starved of oxygen, the discovery that sleep loss can alter the behavior of genes, the discovery of genetic links to autism, ADHD, bipolar disorder, depression and schizophrenia, the release of the details of the Human Connectome Project, development of a breathalyzer-style test that can quickly and easily test for stomach cancer, a pioneering cloning technique that eliminates the short-lived nature of clones, development of the 'smelling screen', the ability to illuminate up to 100 biomarkers (very useful for detection of cancers and other diseases), reduction of the Down syndrome phenotype in mice, a potential cure for gray hair, the first cloning of human embryonic stem cells, the curing of blindness in mice using stem cells, the use of DNA to assemble a transistor from graphene, the first artificial pancreas, the discovery of a chemical that prevents the death of brain cells from prion disease—and, for the top 10 from MIT —computers that learn (artificial intelligence is finally getting smart), self-destructing text messaging (privacy), prenatal DNA sequencing, 'additive manufacturing' (3D printing), interactive robotics, memory implants, smart watches, ultra-efficient solar power, big data from cheap phones, and supergrids (power transmission). These are but a few.

- **...we will still see some amazing things this year – mysteries revealed.** As if the preceding is not amazing enough. The discovery of fragments of the ancient 'lost' supercontinent of Rodinia under the Indian Ocean, discovery of the lost city of Ciudad Blanca in Honduras, the discovery that there were European settlers in America as far back as 400-600 CE (1000 years before Columbus), a giant circular stone structure in the Sea of Galilee (where did *that* come from?).

The past forms the foundation upon which the future is built. Given all the preceding, then, what do I see coming in 2014? What inferences could we take from the above? To begin with, it is typical that scientific discovery leads to commercial application, at least eventually. For instance, I expect to see our understanding of matter to change fundamentally this year in some ways. Now that we can produce temperatures below absolute zero, now that the Higgs boson has been discovered (although there is still some discussion about that), now that we are on the verge of having commercially viable quantum computers, now that we are well on the way to having computers that can think for themselves rather than needing our laborious input, now that fusion reactors are another step closer to reality, now that we are just on the verge of verifying the existence—of actually being able to sense—dark matter in the universe, now that the CERN accelerator is getting ready for a major amp-up—all of this coupled with amazing advances in robotics, what will all this reveal to us? It will only take a brilliant mind or two to put all of this together somehow, and who knows what can eventuate?

A door into the mysteries of the very fabric of our universe was cracked open last year, if we could realize it. We have peeked into the box, in a manner of speaking. Whether that box will turn out to be a Pandora's box or a treasure chest is up to us. It will probably be a little of both. I have talked about it before, but nearly every technology that we used to marvel at in the old Star Trek TV series is now within our grasp. We have quantum tractor beams now, quantum cloaking technology, machines that can print whatever we want—food included—mind transfer, medical tricorders, antimatter, a whole plethora of extra-solar planets to investigate, phasers, 'photon torpedoes', voice-activated computers with which we can converse, computers that can compute for themselves—the only thing really not yet within our grasp scientifically is the warp drive, but we will get there. We have to have some fundamental shifts in our understanding of matter, energy and space itself before we can make inroads there, but we are quickly headed in that direction. Are we moving too fast with our technology? I don't think so. I think it has followed a natural progression. Finances are a big determining factor in whether a technology becomes viable or not, and the public is the major determining factor of finance. If not for public demand, we would not even have the computing technology we have now, for instance. And in these days, it is increasingly difficult to keep a secret, so what was once only the domain of secret installations are quickly becoming public domain.

Watch the media for the coming technologies, for future trends. If 2013 produced powerful films, then 2014 will produce powerful performances in film. The film itself may not be iconic, but the performers will shine. *On the Waterfront* (1954) was such a film, for instance, and helped to make Marlon Brando a cultural icon, and for which he won an Oscar. I expect this to be another big year in film and media. It will be the 60th birth year for the Wood Horse actors listed in Part 1. The 60th year is a sort of coming-of-age year with regard to one's place in society, and begins the time of mentoring, the time when one begins to pass along the wisdom of one's years to the upcoming generations and to society at large.

In politics this will be a big year for immigration reforms. Migration remains a contentious issue in many countries, but it is a simple fact of human life as people seek better lives for themselves and their families. The Horse loves movement, and in the last Wood Horse year we saw the full implementation of the International Organization for Migration, initially established in 1951 to help resettle people after WWII, but it was fully empowered in 1954. There are fights brewing in the US congress over immigration reform, which will come to a head this year, especially now that Obama is making noises about using executive orders to get things moving and possibly sidestepping a deadlocked congress. Europe and Australia have ongoing public debate over the issue, but I expect to see legislation in many countries this year on the topic of immigration reform, or perhaps of the hardening of boundaries.

The topic of spying will receive larger attention this year, too, as Wood Horse years have produced several high profile spying scandals. Whereas the Snowden incident in the US has highlighted the antics of the NSA in recent years, we are likely to find similar scandals in other countries, or concerning them. These events will bring about strong public reactions and possibly legislation to shore up privacy. Don't expect to see moves toward more transparency in government, though. Horses look after their own, and the personal dynamics of a sign are reflected in the events of the associated year. The Petrov Affair (Australia) of 1954 is a case in point, which caused violent anti-communist demonstrations at Sydney Airport and lingering conspiracy theories as to the alleged involvement of the Menzies government in the affair, although it was later concluded that Menzies (who was a Liberal) had told the truth through the entire episode. Some of the records in that case were sealed away, and the Labour government did not win power again until 1972. What the Snake likes to conceal or conduct behind the scenes, the Horse will bring to light. The Horse and the Sheep are polarizing signs, and strong ones at that, and we will see some culminating and deciding

influences in political and social polarization in the next two years, as well as public displays of prejudices and us-and-them attitudes.

Expect to see start-ups of new enterprises this year based upon the discoveries made in the years immediately passed. Robotics should get a boost this year, as well as materials technologies. The middle classes should benefit out of the next two years, too, with further legislation on wages and labor rights. It is a curiosity of Wood Horse years that, although they can produce strong rulers and tend toward the conservative in politics, they do introduce legislation that favors worker's rights and wage laws. Perhaps it is a subconscious recognition of the hard-working nature of the populace that moves politicians to act on those areas. More to the point, perhaps it is also because this will be an election year in many countries, with congressional elections taking place in the US in particular.

Media icons will be born this year, and some long-lasting series will debut in the media. The Wood Horse was born for the camera and visual arts of all sorts will benefit from this year. Conservation movements and all outdoor activities are favored this year and next. People will be able to exert their influence more this year than in recent years. Expect some strong leadership actions to take place this year, as well as strong people stepping forward. It should be a year of strong growth and decisive action, so whatever your sphere of influence, step up and be heard. Put forward a new initiative, be enthusiastic and be prepared to work hard on it. Gather clever people around you, whether you are clever yourself or not. If you do, then success should be yours. Your enthusiasm will win over the nay-sayers. So, whether you are a Dragon Horse, a Thousand-mile Horse or a Heavenly Horse—whether you are larger than life, able to do extraordinary feats, or able to sweat blood in the pursuit of your goals—this is your year, and it will be a year in which hard work and communion with like minds have the capacity to produce great works. Those works will go into the pages of history.

This is a year to act courageously. Take the reins of this year and ride off into the history books. You can do it, you know? Let this year inspire the indomitable spirit that you are, and let your effort be your joy. I look forward to hearing about your exploits and your projects. I have a few in mind for myself. May we all inspire each other this year to great things and noble ambitions!

Happy New Year, Everyone!

Malvin

30 Jan 2014

These letters are sent as a service. If you wish to be added to or deleted from the mailing list, please let me know. If you feel so inspired, feel free to pass them along, but please do so without charge or alteration.

References can be furnished on request. Scientific and technological references can be found on the science subheadings on the Wikipedia 2013 page.

¹ Graphic and bolded text from *The Imperial Astrologer* software, Esoteric Technologies, www.esotech.com.au

² The blood sweating is believed to be caused by a parasite, a type of nematode, that would cause blood to get mixed with the sweat of the horse. See: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferghana_horse

³ From *La Grande Bellezza*, a quote from *Journey to the End of the Night* (*Voyage au bout de la nuit*), by Louis-Ferdinand Céline (1934).

⁴ www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm