

# Archaeological Institute of America – Los Angeles Society



Founded in 1903 the AIA – LA society is one of the oldest AIA chapters in the USA.

## **Member Spotlight**

This is part of an ongoing series of profiles presenting the many talented and diverse members of AIA-LA.

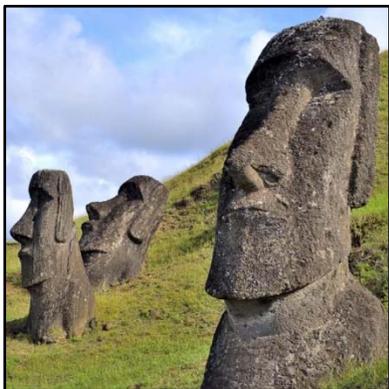
### **Charlie Steinmetz**

Charlie is our vice-president, but more than that he is a foundation stone of our LA Society. He is known to all of us for tirelessly bringing people together, opening his home to host our meetings, and raising funds to sponsor our programs.



In a well-deserved honor, the AIA will present Charlie with its Joukowsky Distinguished Service Award at the 2024 annual meeting. His years on the AIA Governing Board and his generosity to so many community programs have certainly earned this. Charlie said his great respect for the previous recipients of this award makes him grateful for the honor of being counted among them.

His ability to do all these things dates from 1977 when he earned an MBA from UCLA and went into the family business. When that was sold in 1999 he began real estate investing and did very well. That freed him to do more with his first love: archaeology. Charlie was very young when his mother took him to the King Tutankhamun exhibit in 1962. Seeing the display of treasure from more than 3000 years ago was irresistibly fascinating. That helps to explain why he later endowed the Steinmetz Chair of Classical Archaeology and Material Culture at UCLA. And why he has given years of service to archaeological boards ranging from the AIA to the Cotsen Institute at UCLA, the Ocean Institute at Dana Point and the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.



Charlie also created the Steinmetz Foundation to build literacy and love of learning among kids. He credits the outgoing nature of his wife Ellen (Weezie) and her love of music with helping him bring people together in different ways to do these good things. They were happy to discover that getting kids curious about things makes them *want* to learn and to read. And the rest follows.

One of his most memorable moments? Going to Easter Island to work with Jo Anne Van Tilburg (PhD, UCLA) and others in developing and testing a polymer coating for the huge stone heads to keep them from deteriorating in the outdoor exposure. Never in his wildest dreams...but there he was.

— Interview by Sanford Holst