



February 2026

# SUIHAA Newsletter

## A Message from the SUIHAA Committee Executive

Welcome to the February 2026 SUIHAA Newsletter. As usual, there is an abundance of news to convey. We continue to have a Table of Contents, so you can start with the articles that most interest you.

No matter where you start in the Newsletter, you won't want to miss:

- **SAVE THE DATE** for this year's Walter Westman lecture on the application of AI and automation in marine science and environment conservation
- **SAVE THE DATE** for the upcoming March SUIH alumni reunion
- Report on a visit to International House (I-House) New York City
- Report from the latest meeting of the SUIHAA Book Club
- Runners-up for the 2025 Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition

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Message from  
the SUIHAA  
Executive

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We welcome comments and inquiries regarding items in the SUIHAA Newsletter, plus encourage suggestions for content. Please send your correspondence to the SUIHAA Newsletter editor, Dennis Schatz, at [schatz@pacsci.org](mailto:schatz@pacsci.org).

As always, we want to thank the other members of the SUIHAA Committee, who keep the IH vision and mission alive, and organize the different SUIHAA-supported events:

Ian Gutierrez	Margaret Lemoh
Anne Gotsis	Ros Madden
Sen Ganbaatar	Taz Rahman
Michael Hirschhorn	Liz Wong

Enjoy the various articles in this issue of the SUIHAA Newsletter.

On behalf of the SUIHAA Committee,

Dennis Schatz (SUIHAA President)  
Louise Trott (SUIHAA Secretary)  
Joshua Lee (SUIHAA Treasurer)

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## SAVE THE DATE: 2026 Walter Westman Lecture on Science, Humanity and the Environment

*from Ian Guitierrez*

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**Walter  
Westman  
Lecture 2026**

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A reminder that the 2026 Walter Westman Lecture will be on Saturday, 17 March 2026 from 2:00pm to 3:30pm AEDT (Sydney time).

Our speaker is a brilliant young marine scientist from Griffith University's Global Wetlands Project, Diego Gloria, who will be speaking about the application of AI and automation in marine science and environment conservation.

**You can watch the 2026 Walter Westman lecture online at:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87389759681>



*Photo: Diego Gloria, speaker for the 2026 Walter Westman Lecture*

## SAVE THE DATE: March 2026 SUIH Alumni Reunion

from Taz Rahman

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March 2026  
Alumni  
Reunion

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Dear IH alumni,

Happy New Year. We hope your 2026 is off to a good start. Please join us for our annual SUIH alumni autumn reunion:

**Date:** Saturday, 28 March 2026

**Time:** 4:00pm to ???

**Location:** The Duck Inn, 74 Rose St. Chippendale NSW



We have reserved part of the Beer Garden space for our use, plus there is additional room in the front bar space.



Be sure to contact your IH friends and encourage them to meet up on 28 March. We hope to see you there!

## International House Log Cabin update

*from Iqbal Qureshi*



### **Rediscover the IH Cabin: Your Perfect Weekend Escape**

It has been some time since we featured the International House Cabin in the SUIHAA Newsletter. As we move into the new year, we wanted to remind our community of alumni about this fantastic resource available to alumni.

Nestled away from the hustle of university life and the city grind, the IH Cabin remains the ultimate spot for alumni and their families to bond, unwind, and create lasting memories. Whether it's a study retreat, a hiking weekend, or just a chance to sit around a fire with friends and family, the cabin offers a unique rustic charm that defines the IH experience for many.

### **Memories from the Bush**

The true value of the cabin is found in the experiences of those who stay there. Myself and my family and friends have been going to the log cabin since 1984. We have always enjoyed the stay there. Just last year my two sisters came from overseas and we went and had a fantastic time.

## A Touch of "Hollywood" History

Did you know the cabin has its own claim to Hollywood history? I can now confirm that the cabin is going to serve as a filming location for an Australian film "Crash Out" featuring a young Australian actor Nick Annas, and director Helen Tucks. The shooting is scheduled between 23rd February to 23rd March and the cabin is booked for the whole month.



## Fresh Updates and Improvements

We are committed to keeping the cabin comfortable and ready for guests. We are pleased to report that in preparation for the upcoming seasons, we have made several improvements.

Most recently, the bunk rooms have been fitted with **brand new curtains**. These additions not only freshen up the decor but ensure a cosier night's sleep—essential after a long day of bushwalking or socializing.

## Ready to Book Your Stay?

The cabin is currently open for bookings for the upcoming months. It is the perfect destination for a group getaway, accommodating a **maximum of 12 people**.

The booking process is simple. Please reach out to either Iqbal Qureshi or Sean Kristofferson to secure your dates.

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IH  
Log Cabin  
update

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To book, please send an SMS or Email with:

- The exact dates you require.
- The total number of people in your group (Max. 12)

Contact Details:

Email: [iaqureshia1234@gmail.com](mailto:iaqureshia1234@gmail.com) or [seank@gmp.usyd.edu.au](mailto:seank@gmp.usyd.edu.au)

SMS: Iqbal +61 410 489 972 or Sean +61 428 416 977

We look forward to seeing more Housie's enjoying the cabin this year!

## Report on a Visit to International House (I-House) New York

*from Sen Ganbaatar*

**March 2026**  
**Alumni**  
**Reunion**

I had the opportunity at the end of November to tour the International House (I-House) in New York City, USA. My visit occurred during the house's 101st anniversary year, a milestone marking over a century of its vision to foster global peace and understanding.

I was incredibly fortunate to be guided by John A. Wells, the Senior Advisor and Director of Alumni Relations, who has been dedicated to the mission of I-House for nearly three decades. His deep institutional knowledge brought the Hall of History to life, showcasing a century of global community and leadership.



**Photo:** Hall of History, I-House New York

Situated in the Morningside Heights neighborhood of Manhattan near Columbia University, the house overlooks the beautiful Sakura Park, a serene setting that serves as the heart of a global village for 790 residents. Today's residents include graduate students from various universities and schools throughout the city such as Columbia University, Juilliard School, Actors Studio Drama School, NYU, and the Manhattan School of Music. The community also extends to early-career professionals, including interns at institutions like The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History.

The story of I-House began in 1909 when YMCA official Harry Edmonds met a Chinese student on the steps of Columbia University's library. Upon hearing that Edmonds was the first person to speak to him in three weeks, Edmonds' wife, Florence, insisted they "do something about it," leading to the house's founding in 1924 with the help of funding from John D. Rockefeller, Jr.



L-R: Sakura Park connects to I-House; food service area in I-House

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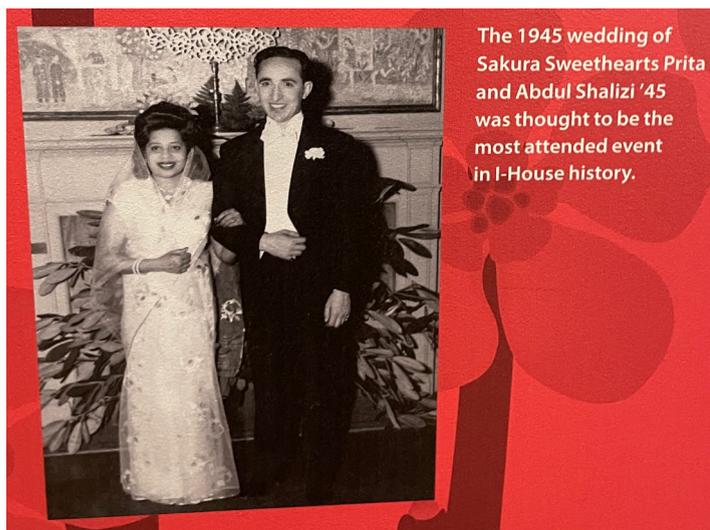
## A visit to I-House New York

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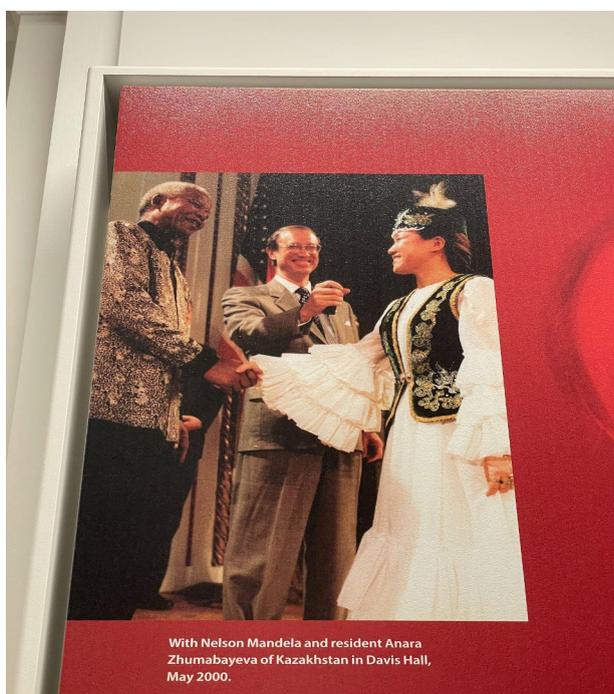
The connection to the outdoors is part of the house's most cherished romantic lore. Sakura Park is named for the Japanese cherry trees planted in 1912. This park is the namesake for "Sakura Sweethearts," which refers to residents who meet at I-House and later marry. During my visit, John mentioned that they are planning the annual Valentine's Ball. This event specifically commemorates these couples, celebrating a century of lifelong bonds formed within these walls. One of the most famous examples captured in the archives was the 1945 wedding of Sakura Sweethearts Prita and Abdul Shalizi.

The Hall of History revealed I-House NYC as a prestigious meeting place for the 20th century's greatest minds:

- **Civil Rights & Leadership:** The house has welcomed giants such as Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Benjamin E. Mays.
- **Science & Arts:** I was fascinated to learn that Robert Oppenheimer spoke with residents in 1960, and the legendary soprano Leontyne Price lived here from 1949 to 1952, practicing her arias in the Home Room.
- **Women's Leadership:** Since 1924, the house has promoted women's careers, hosting speakers like Eleanor Roosevelt, Shirley Chisholm, and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

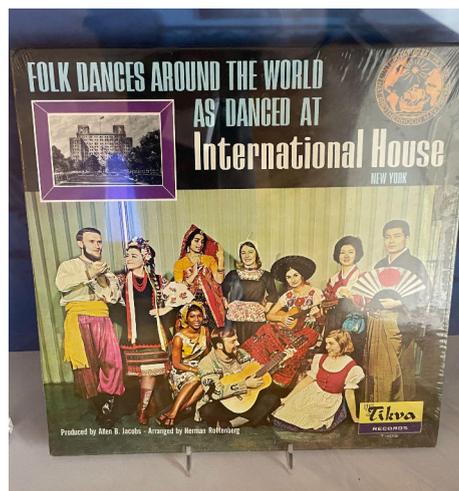
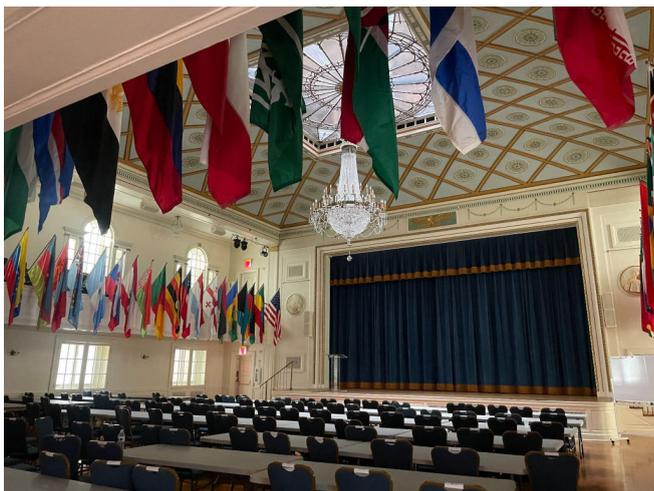


*Photo: Wedding of Sakura Sweethearts*



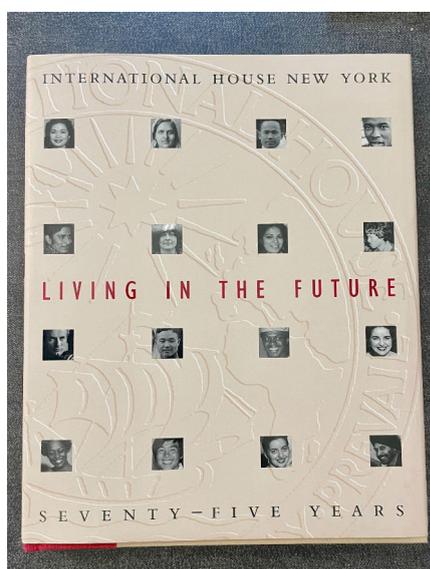
*L-R: Nelson Mandela and Robert Oppenheimer visit I-House*

For SUIHAA members, the most heartening discovery was how much I-House NYC's traditions mirror those at IH Sydney. Their Night of Nationals is a massive celebration of music and culture, just like our I-Night. Other pillars of house life include the Candlelight Sunday Suppers, a tradition since 1922, and Salon Nights, where residents perform music and dance.



*Left: I-House New York auditorium where resident programs are held  
Right: Salon Nights feature music and dance from around the world*

As a memento of this visit, I was kindly gifted a book published for the 75th anniversary titled *Living in the Future*. As I-House NYC enters its second century, it remains a powerful testament to its mission: "Cultivate the individual, change the world". It was a privilege to represent SUIHAA at such a storied institution and to see that the spirit of international friendship we cherish in Sydney is thriving in the heart of Manhattan.



*Photos: Book celebrating 75th anniversary of I-House*

*I-House: A place where they "Cultivate the individual, change the world".*

## 2025 Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition Runners-Up

*from Dennis Schatz*

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### Rosemary Berrick Photo Competition

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The last SUIHAA Newsletter featured the top two awards in the 2025 photo competition. We get to feature the two runner-up awards in this newsletter. As in the past, there were additional photos submitted that deserved recognition. We will feature them in future newsletters.



**Photo:** 'Moonlift' - Sydney, Australia, 11 July 2025 - Davy Cheung



**Davy Cheung** lived in IH during 1987-1989 while he studied for a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. He currently lives in Sydney where he enjoys a relaxed and fulfilling life in Australia, working part-time as a school crossing supervisor and staying active through marathon running, cycling, and bushwalking. Photography remains a rewarding creative pursuit that helps me notice and capture moments of quiet beauty in everyday life.

This photo was taken on the coastline in Sydney, Australia. I'd planned to capture the full moon just as it rose above the horizon, glowing a deep orange over the sea. Then, quite unexpectedly, a cargo ship crossed right in front of the moon, everything aligned perfectly for just a few seconds. The ship appeared to lift the moon from the ocean's edge, a fleeting and beautiful coincidence that reminded me how unplanned moments often create the most lasting impressions.

You can contact Davy at [davyinoz@yahoo.com](mailto:davyinoz@yahoo.com).



**Alvena Yu** lived in IH during 2020 while studying for a Bachelor of Veterinary Biology (BCM) and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM). She currently lives in Sydney where she is in her Final Year of DVM, balancing life and placements, with a main focus on life.

You can contact Alvena at [alvena.yns@gmail.com](mailto:alvena.yns@gmail.com).

*Photo: 'Frames' - Stanley Market, Hong Kong  
23 December 2024 - Alvena Yu*

A model being portrayed by an artist, an artist portrayed by a photographer. One frame, 2 stories. Who knows if there's anything more in the bigger picture?

## IH Redevelopment

*from Dennis Schatz*

### IH Redevelopment update

Sydney University's IH Council, which advises the University regarding IH redevelopment, has not met since the last SUIHAA Newsletter, so there is little new information to provide. The Program Control Group that oversees IH redevelopment, followed by an IH Council meeting, will occur in March, so we hope to provide more IH redevelopment information in the next SUIHAA Newsletter.

We continue to be encouraged by the University's increased attention to the redevelopment of IH and look forward to when we can share more details with you.

## SUIHAA Book Club update

from Anne and Eleni Gotsis

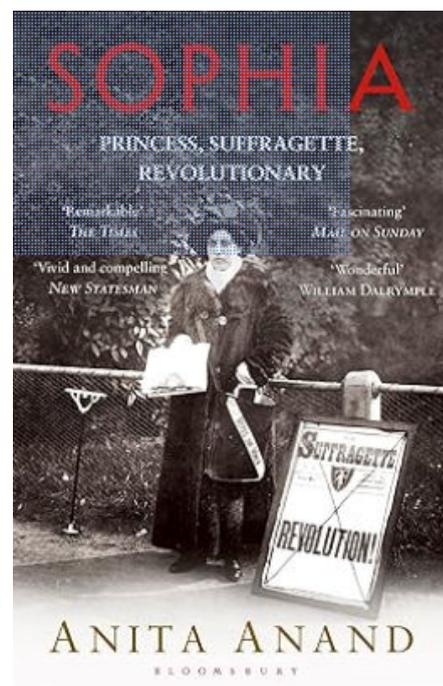
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### SUIHAA book club update

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The SUIHAA Book Club continues to meet every two months and gained a couple new participants to build from the original number of members. We still have space for a few more people. If you would like to join the group, please contact Liz Wong at [wongoonoo@hotmail.com](mailto:wongoonoo@hotmail.com).

At our most recent Book Club (February 2026), we read *Sophia: Princess, Suffragette, Revolutionary* by Anita Anand. It was an intriguing account of the remarkable life of Princess Sophia Duleep Singh, daughter of the last Maharaja of the Sikh Empire in India, her interesting family, and the unique circumstances in which they lived. We follow Sophia's (aptly pronounced so-feye-a) life, from Indian royalty & goddaughter of Queen Victoria to a woman who defied expectations and attempts to silence her voice. She fought for Indian independence, women's rights in the British suffragette movement, and became a nurse to injured Indian soldiers in World War I (to their great surprise!).



Although it was a dense read (a fairly chunky book at nearly 450 pages), we were able to gain a much greater appreciation and knowledge of a sweep of significant historical events! One of our favourite aspects of the book was that, as it was told in story form—through the lens of Sophia's life—these events were much more engaging and memorable than they would have been in a purely academic text. (No dry history here!) It is Anita Anand's powerful storytelling that has made the book such a compelling and fascinating read for us all.

We discussed events such as:

**The colonisation of India by the English** – With the exception of a few individuals mentioned, the book told of their arrogance, complete disregard for the lives of those they colonised, and cruelty—it was a brutal campaign, typical of English colonial rulers and enforcers of that era, it seems. Unsurprising for all of us, but still hard to read and learn about in detail.

**The British suffragette movement** – To our dismay, the book neglected to mention the Australian or New Zealand suffragette movements. In contrast to the British movement, they were gradual and on the whole non-violent, and more politically strategic. New Zealand was, in fact, the first country to grant women the vote in 1893, followed by Australia in 1902. England only granted equal voting rights to all women in 1928.

## SUIHAA book club update

**Black Friday** – A march by the suffragettes to the Houses of Parliament on 18 November 1910. It was a dark day, the suffragettes were met with violence and in the weeks that followed, great disrespect, neglect and contempt. They however, remained determined and courageous.

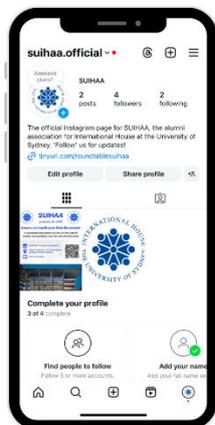
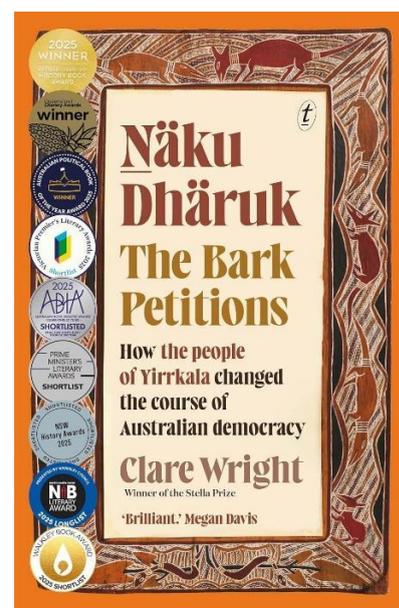
**And the lives of some significant historical figures** – Sophia, her father the Maharaja, Queen Victoria, and others.

This all made for an interesting & engaging discussion. We all thoroughly enjoyed it!

Our next Zoom meeting will take place on **Saturday, 21 March 2026**, when we'll discuss *Bark Petitions* by Clare Wright.

### Future Book Club titles and meeting dates:

- 23 May 2026: *No Way But This: In search of Paul Robeson* by Jeff Sparrow
- 25 July 2026: *Land Power, Who has it, Who doesn't and How that Determines the Fate of Societies* by Michael Albertus
- 26 September 2026: *Truganini: Journey Through the Apocalypse* by Cassandra Pybus - winner of the National Biography Award 2021
- 28 November 2026 – *Patriot* by Alexei Navalny



Follow our new  
Instagram page!



@suihaa.official

## REMINDER: Connect with SUIHAA via Social Media

We're making it easier than ever for you to stay connected with the International House community. SUIHAA has launched an official Instagram account and would love for you to join us!

Follow us on @suihaa.official on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/suihaa.official>) and on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/suihaa>) to catch up on alumni news, find out about upcoming events, and relive some of your favourite IH moments. Additionally, we are seeking stories from our community. If you would like to share your updates or memories from your time at IH, please send them to [suihaasocial@gmail.com](mailto:suihaasocial@gmail.com).

## Bo Children's Hospital Update

from Margaret Lemoh

### Bo Children's Hospital update

Bo Hospital still has a steady stream of patients coming as outpatients with respiratory diseases, fevers and infections, wounds, etc. Most have malaria of varying degrees of severity. Malaria is endemic. We have yet to see the impact of the new anti-malaria vaccine. Meanwhile routine vaccination against major diseases such as measles, polio and tetanus is effective and cases are rare. Neonatal tetanus is still seen but is now much less common with traditional birth attendants now trained to use more hygienic practices.



**Photo:** Nurse checking her notes before going out to village to provide vaccinations  
The nurses go out on motorbikes carrying the vaccines in an insulated pack



**Photo:** Mothers feeding their severely malnourished children

The 25 beds for inpatients are frequently full, and we proudly maintain our policy of treating all in need whatever their economic circumstances.

The feeding program is going well. Twenty-two severely malnourished children were treated and fed at the hospital this month.

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## Bo Children's Hospital update

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Thank you all for your support of the hospital. Donations can be made through PayPal, bank transfer or card. Rotary Australia now handles our donations, so every cent of the amount goes to the Hospital. For detailed information about how to donate please go to our new website and click on the donate tab.

Please note that our website address has changed. It is now [www.bochildrenshospital.com](http://www.bochildrenshospital.com)

### In Memoriam - Dr. Keith Suter AM (1948-2025)

*from Ros Madden*

For someone who lived only briefly in International House, Keith Suter is remembered and appreciated by many alumni because of his regular participation in IH events and his devotion to its mission of international understanding and friendship. He retained a long-standing interest in IH activities. He is a Fellow of International House, elected 2008. This brief article is sourced from a longer obituary, published in the Sydney Morning Herald (19 December 2025), written by Michael Kirby (also an IH Fellow) and informed by Keith's partner, Jane Phelan. In their words:



Foreign affairs commentator, human rights advocate and futurist Dr Keith Suter was once called "the peace campaigner in a three-piece suit". His life was devoted to helping those people who turned to him to understand the world we live in, finding solutions to resolve conflict peacefully, and improving the human condition.

After a 'disastrous' early education in England, he pursued a political science degree at the University of Sussex. He later joined a range of societies including the UK's United Nations Association and the Anti-Slavery Society.

He came to Australia in 1973 to write his first doctorate on the international law of guerilla warfare; he later completed two more PhDs. He published 12 books. Temporary work at the Central Methodist Mission (lasting 32 years) allowed him to pursue social responsibility activities in earnest. His platforms ranged from justice for Indigenous Australians, banning uranium mining, and campaigning for peace and disarmament, to seeking justice for the long-term unemployed. He communicated vigorously, on a range of media and public platforms.

Keith served many years as chair or president on Committees such as the International Commission of Jurists (NSW), the Australian Red Cross, the International Humanitarian Law Committee, the UN Association of Australia at national and state levels. He participated as a member of the Australian Foreign Minister's National Consultative Committee on International Security issues. In 1986 he received the Australian Peace Medal. Suter was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2019.

This busy and committed man found time to help IH alumni in 2017, when we were celebrating the 50th anniversary of the opening of IH and also campaigning for its long-term future in the face of its 'temporary' closure. Keith assisted greatly with the 'future' section of our [50th anniversary booklet](#), with the alumni vision of the future role and features of IH.

Thank you, Keith, for your many contributions to a better world.