



May 2023

# SUIHAA Newsletter

## A Message from the SUIHAA Committee Executive

Welcome to the Summer/Winter SUIHAA Newsletter, depending on the hemisphere where you live. It has been a busy three months for the SUIHAA Committee as it plans for a number of alumni activities in the months ahead:

1. The Biennial De Graff-Elms Roundtable will be held on 11 June at 4.00pm (Sydney time) via Zoom. We hope that alumni from around the world will join us for this event and invite family and friends, too. Please find a flyer advertising this event attached to the Newsletter.
2. IH alumna Birute Don has offer to organize and facilitate a Zoom session to share photos and discuss photography techniques. See more detail in the Newsletter below.
3. The deadline for the 2023 Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition is now set, so get your cameras out and have your photos ready to submit by **28 August 2023**.

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*Message from the  
SUIHAA  
Committee  
Executive*

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The SUIHAA Committee is also working to restart the Walter Westman Lecture on Science, Humanity and the Environment. It will probably be held virtually in August or September. Stay tuned for updates on this event from the Committee.

We hope you will join us for these opportunities during the coming months.

Best wishes,

Dennis Schatz (*SUIHAA President*)  
James Kane (*SUIHAA Secretary*)  
Louise Trott (*SUIHAA Treasurer*)

## SUIHAA Committee Update

SUIHAA held its most recent Committee meeting via Zoom on 29 April 2023.

Discussions at this meeting primarily revolved around upcoming events (as detailed above) and the redevelopment of IH (about which you can see an update below).

In accordance with the SUIHAA Constitution (Section 5b), up to **four** additional alumni may join the SUIHAA Committee as General Committee Members. Please contact the Secretary, James Kane, at [iamkane2@gmail.com](mailto:iamkane2@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining the Committee. We would welcome your involvement!

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## *SUIHAA*

*Committee  
update (including  
AGM date)*

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**Please note that the 2023 SUIHAA Annual General Meeting will be held via Zoom on 16 September (time TBA). Further information about the AGM will be provided to all alumni one month ahead of the date.**

## **IH Redevelopment Update**

There is little to report since the last Newsletter regarding the redevelopment of IH. IH Council and the Project Control Group (PCG) at the University of Sydney that leads the effort to redevelop IH have not met recently, but the IH Council has new leadership. Greg Houseman is the new Chair, and Craig Collie is the Deputy Chair. Both of them are IH alumni and sit on the PCG. This means individuals who thoroughly understand the mission and needs of IH will be “at the table” as IH redevelopment moves forward.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the SUIHAA Committee will be revisiting the recommendations that alumni made to the University in 2019. The goal is to revise and/or reiterate the recommendations to emphasize the characteristics required to have an effective IH in the future that serves IH’s mission to promote the aims and ideals of international understanding within the University of Sydney and the wider community. Later this year, all alumni will receive a draft of the revised recommendations, so that you can provide input into what is conveyed to the University.

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*IH Council  
update, SUIHAA  
recommendations  
regarding future  
IH, progress on IH  
Log Cabin*

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Slow progress is occurring with regard to the IH Log Cabin in the Belanglo State Forest. The two alumni who have agreed to act as caretakers of the cabin are now in the process of seeking the insurance coverage they need to apply to the Forestry Corporation for permission to be caretakers. We hope to have more information to share about this in the next Newsletter.

## **Bo Children’s Hospital Update (January–April 2023)**

*Margaret Lemoh (SUIHAA Bo Convenor)*

The hospital continues to serve the community of Bo and the surrounding district. The number of patients is increasing as the hospital is now well-known. The cost of living is steadily rising and there is more need than ever for low cost medical services.

### **STAFF**

The hospital has engaged more qualified staff. There are now 3 Community Health Officers (CHO) One of them, the Hospital Superintendent, Francis Bangalie recently completed a training course in surgery run by CAPACARE, an NGO based in Norway and the Netherlands which trains healthcare workers to perform common surgical procedures. Participants in the program do supervised rotations at rural hospitals in Sierra Leone to gain practical

experience. He hopes his expertise will address the problem of patients with common conditions like umbilical hernias who present at the hospital but fail to follow up if referred on to the Government Hospital. We would like to improve our facilities for surgery.

A well-qualified Head Nurse as also been employed and seems to be working well with the nursing staff. We would like to see our nursing staff receive more training and are exploring a paediatric nursing course offered online.

A pharmacist with a degree in Allied Health Sciences is now in charge of the hospital pharmacy to monitor the quality and quantity of medications available for patients.

Our specialist paediatrician, based in Freetown, continues to visit the hospital regularly and is always available for consultations with the CHOs in the hospital.

We are still seeking a full-time qualified medical doctor to lead the clinical team.

### **INTERNET**

Setting up an internet connection for the hospital with all its potential advantages has been difficult. Negotiations with another local provider seem promising.

### **POWER SUPPLY**

Power is a constant problem, but there is a glimmer of hope that the hospital will soon be linked up to the town electricity grid. A power pole has been placed in the hospital grounds but is not yet connected.

Meanwhile the solar batteries which provide power for lighting need replacing and the diesel generator is frequently needed as a back-up. Fuel continues to be one of the biggest expenses in the operation of the hospital.

### **FUNDING**

The hospital continues to be totally reliant on donations, mainly from Australia. Negotiations with the Ministry of Health for nursing staff to be paid by Government are still beset by bureaucratic obstacles. The need to find more donors and funding from other philanthropic sources is becoming more urgent.

**IH alumni can keep up their long tradition of generous support for the Bo Children's Hospital by donating via the following link:**

**<https://www.bochildrenshospital.org.au/donation.php>**

## **Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition**

### **Honourable Mentions**

As was mentioned in the February Newsletter, the three judges were sorry they had to choose just four winners from the many outstanding submissions to the 2022 Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition. We featured three photos in the last Newsletter that the judges thought deserved recognition. In this Newsletter, we share three more photos that the judges rated highly. We hope you enjoy seeing these beautiful worldwide images from your fellow IH alumni.



**Harry Bergsteiner** stayed in IH from 1967 through the first half 1970 (he was the first ever applicant to IH). He studied architecture (BArch) and town planning (DipTCP) at Sydney University and PhD (Mgnt) at Macquarie University. He lives in Pymble, a northern suburb of Sydney with easy access to a lot of natural 'bushland', which actually includes some quite mature and tall forests. As a founding co-director of the Institute for Sustainable Leadership, he researches, writes about and teaches leadership that produces sustainable economic, environmental and social outcomes. It is for these reasons that he is opposed to the demolition of International House. You can contact Harry at [harrybergsteiner@internode.on.net](mailto:harrybergsteiner@internode.on.net).

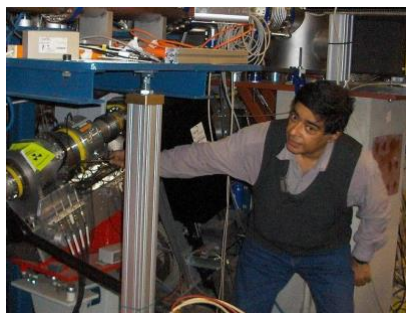
**Photo: *Sphinx Walk***  
**(21 March 2022 - Ku-ring-gai National Park, NSW)**



Photo taken on the so-called Sphinx Walk in the Ku-ring-gai National Park. It's a somewhat rough bush track starting at the Sphinx sandstone sculpture (made by a returned service man after his return from the war in Egypt) and descending to Cackle's Creek from whence you follow the creek to finish up at Bobbin Head.

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**Bhaskar Mukherjee** stayed at IH from June 1987 to December 1989. He then worked as a Research Scientist at National Medical Cyclotron Facility within Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (University of Sydney). During 2000 - 2018 he served as Lead Physicist of the Accelerator Radiation Protection Group of DESY (Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron), one of the largest particle accelerator laboratories in the world located in Hamburg Germany. Bhaskar is an Alumni of Hamburg



University. He currently holds the position of senior research fellow of the Physics School of Sydney University working on Cosmic Ray measurements in Australian outback using High Altitude Balloons (HAB). Bhaskar lives in Woollahra suburb of Sydney. Bhaskar can be contacted at: [mukherjee@ieee.org](mailto:mukherjee@ieee.org)

**Photo: A view through the window of a North German Farm House (22 June 2017 – Molfsee, Germany)**

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*Rosemary Berrick*

*Photo  
Competition  
(2022): more  
honourable  
mentions*

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Photo taken at the open air museum at Molfsee near Hamburg in the Schleswig-Holstein district of North Germany about 85 km north of Hamburg. It is now preserved as a heritage village. Since 1770 the area flourished as a vibrant farming community with rustic farmhouses, windmills and country chapels. In summer 2017 we had our annual excursion to Molfsee. While strolling around the courtyards we came across a sparsely lit small room with a single thick glass window a plain wooden bed and a beautifully painted baby-cradle. Our tourist guide spoke softly “in a bright summer afternoon in June the young farmer-wife passed away during her first childbirth”. I took the above snapshot to reinstate the very moment the young woman closed her eyes forever gazing through that window.

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**Rami Tageldin** stayed at IH for the whole of 2010 and the first half of 2011 working on his undergraduate degree, graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce (liberal studies) with a double major in Economics and Business Law. He currently lives in Switzerland (near Aarau) where he works in Zurich at a local branch of an international French bank. He works in Anti Money Laundering (AML), with

expertise in quality assurance and the associated development of technical solutions. He needs to design these with the aim to facilitate the efficient implementation of sanctions and the consistent identification of politically exposed persons, whilst simultaneously ensuring adherence to the strict Swiss confidentiality and banking secrecy regulations. He is currently on sabbatical leave. He and his partner just returned from a holiday spent exploring a large part of Australia. During their short stay in Sydney, they took the picture commemorating the fond memories that he has of IH and the community there. You can contact Rami at [rami.tageldin@gmail.com](mailto:rami.tageldin@gmail.com)

**Photo: *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*  
(7 November 2020 – Seelisberg, Switzerland)**



The photo was named after the 19th century romantic painting by Casper David Friedrich. We shot the photo on the “Niederbauen” mountain in Seelisberg, which is situated just above the meadow where the mythological “Rütli Oath” is said to have taken place in 1307, calling into being the first Swiss Confederacy at the Lake Lucerne. [I had to translate the names from German, and there might therefore be differing accounts] We spent the day hiking, embracing the Swiss seasonal tradition of escaping the constant fog that settles below at that time of year. But it also marked a moment of peace and gratitude to be able to cherish this freedom (still), despite November marking the end of a summer of lax COVID measures and the beginning of the second major restrictions in Switzerland (and a grey winter ahead).

**[Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition: 2023 Deadline](#)**

Last year's Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition was a great success, so we are looking forward to seeing more quality submissions from IH alumni this year.

Please see the flyer attached to this Newsletter for information on the 2023 competition rules and prizes. The best of the photos will be featured on the SUIHAA Facebook page and in future SUIHAA Newsletters.

**The submission deadline is 28 August 2023.** The winners will be announced by late October.

We look forward to seeing your photos!

## **Photo sharing Zoom session for SUIHAA members**

SUIHAA encourages members to join a photo sharing Zoom session on Saturday 15 July at 4.00 pm Sydney time – facilitated by SUIHAA alumni member and amateur photographer Birute Don. You are welcome to share your four best photos from 2023 with other former International House residents.

The purpose of this Zoom session is to view and discuss recent photos and to learn about ways to improve our photography. We also hope to encourage members to get “out and about” and get their best photos ready for the Rosemary Barrick Photography Competition later this year.

All members who submitted photos for the previous Rosemary Berrick Photography Competition in 2022 are especially encouraged to participate in the Zoom session. Any former International House residents are welcome to attend the Zoom session even if they do not want to share any photos.

**Please advise Birute Don ([birute@bigpond.net.au](mailto:birute@bigpond.net.au)) before 21 June 2023 if you would like to attend the photo sharing Zoom session on Saturday 15 July 2023.**

## **Alumni News: recent Sydney reunions**

*Birute Don (formerly Leveris)*

A primary goal of International House is to create friendships which endured over space and time. This has been true for me. Between 1971 and 1973, I had the privilege of living in International House where I made many lifelong friends. Fortunately, I have been able to continue these friendships over the last 50 years. These friendships have continued through my visits to Sydney or visits to friends' places overseas.

My visit to Sydney in January this year was primarily to visit family and to attend the Lithuanian Festival and the Sydney Festival. It also proved to be a wonderful opportunity to share a lunch with Graeme de Graaff and Roger Westcombe (two former staff of International House) with their partners Lauris Elms and Christabel. We lunched at a delightful café on the banks of the Parramatta River near Sydney's Olympic Wharf.

My trip was also memorable for the opera “Sun and Sea”. It was written and created by Lithuanian artists and a winner of the Golden Lion at the 2019

Venice Biennale. This English-language opera performance on sand, was viewed from the balcony with a constantly moving audience. It was an amazing transformation of Sydney Town Hall with the stage a sandy beach upon which scantily clad holidaymakers sunbathed and sang about their lives. See the following link to the video of the Sydney event, including photos of other unusual venues overseas that were used to stage opera performances: <https://www.sydneyfestival.org.au/events/sun-and-sea>

My trip was soon followed by another trip to Sydney in March 2023. I returned to Sydney mainly for my mother's 99th birthday celebrations at the Lithuanian Club. I was again fortunate to be able to catch up with former International House residents at a restaurant in an idyllic marina setting at Roseville. Afterwards, we all experienced the delightful hospitality of Graham and Lyn Grant (formerly Woodger) with cakes and drinks at their home.

I will forever be grateful to former International House residents (Colin Morris, John Gascoigne and Kathy Bock) who helped me find the best nursing home for my mother in Sydney. Recently, Sydney Health prepared a video of mum and the volunteers and staff who treat mum like family (see following web site <https://slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/sydneyconnect/news/friendship-makes-difference>). The friends I made at International House are like a family to me.

### **IH reunion – January 2023**



**Left to right:** Roger Wescombe, Christabel Wescombe, Graeme de Graaff, Lauris Elms, Birute Don, Peter Don

### **IH reunion – March 2023**





**Standing:** Roger Wescombe, Graham Grant, Hilary Gray, Lyn Grant  
**Seated:** Harry Bergsteiner, Colin Morris, Sid Gray, John Gascoigne