The Retirement of Professor Alexander Cambitoglou

The first half of this year saw major developments at the Institute. Foremost among these was the retirement of the founding Director, Emeritus Professor Alexander Cambitoglou. As most of you well know Alexander Cambitoglou was the moving force behind the conception and establishment of the Institute, though he would always emphasise the contributions made by others, primarily the late Professor John Atherton Young.

Alexander Cambitoglou arrived in Sydney in 1961 and in 1962 was appointed to the University Chair in Archaeology; in 1978 he became the first Arthur and Renée George Professor of Classical Archaeology. In addition to teaching undergraduate courses and supervising graduate students, he also initiated excavations at two important sites in Greece: Zagora on Andros, and Torone in the Chalkidike.

In his many years of teaching in Sydney and directing the excavations, he became acutely aware of the need to found a formal Australian presence in Greece that would allow self-standing Australian field projects. Determination and hard work by Professor Cambitoglou and supporters of his vision saw the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens recognised by the Greek Ministry of Culture in 1980. For his unflinching service to the Institute over so many decades, the Executive Board and the Council of the Institute in early 2016 decided to award Professor Cambitoglou the title of Emeritus Director.

Since its foundation the Institute has promoted Greek studies throughout Australia and underlined their importance, regardless of period, to the broader understanding of history in the Mediterranean, Europe and the world beyond. Currently 12 Australian universities are Institutional Members of the Institute, as are five high schools. There are active Friends groups in most Australian capital cities as well as in Athens. The emphasis of the Institute's work has focused to date on the archaeology and history of the ancient Greek world, but its remit is far broader as all Greek studies fall within its purview.

In addition to the renewed excavations at Zagora (AAIA and the University of Sydney) and the continuing research at Torone (AAIA and Macquarie University), other field projects are being initiated such as the Mycenaean-focused archaeological survey at Vapheio in Laconia (University of Melbourne) and the Australian Paliochora Kythera Survey (AAIA and Professor Timothy E. Gregroy, Ohio State University). The Institute is very happy to contribute to the Paphos Theatre Project on Cyprus (Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney).

The constructive exposure of Australian students to Greece is high on the Institute's list of priorities, and so it is very proud of its track record in hosting intensive Summer Schools in Greece, as well as facilitating and contributing to similar educational programmes conducted by the Australian National University, the University of Western Australia, and the University of Queensland.

The Institute has made its mark since it was founded under Professor Cambitoglou's guidance in 1980, and in 2020 it will celebrate its fortieth anniversary. The Institute's success has been thanks to its ever-growing field of supporters and, of course, to its staff members who regularly offer far more of themselves than would be expected in most other fields of work. Its mission of promoting Greek cultural studies and underlining their relevance to contemporary Australia continues undiminished. Everybody at the Institute looks forward to many more anniversary celebrations beyond 2020.
University of Wollongong Becomes an Institutional Member

As of 2016, the University of Wollongong (UoW) is now our 24th Institutional Member.

The moving force behind UoW’s membership is Emeritus Professor Diana Wood Conroy, former Professor of Visual Arts. Diana has had a long relationship with Greece that dates back to her participation in the Zagora team during the 1960’s, and she maintains an active interest in the archaeology of Cyprus, Greece and the wider Mediterranean.

Owing to her vision, a major feature of UoW’s membership is an annual Creative Artist's Residency in Athens for students and recent graduates of UoW awarded through the Institute. The first awardee, Hannah Gee, whose work is featured on the back of our most recent Bulletin, spent a productive period in Athens during which she discovered what the many facets of the city had to offer to her artistic practice.

We look forward to hosting many more.

The Archaeology of Kythera

By Timothy E. Gregory and Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory

Meditarch Publications with support from the Aroney Trust

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purl.library.usyd.edu.au/meditarch/kythera

Appointment of the Acting Director

On Professor Cambitoglou’s retirement as Director of the Institute the Executive Board and Council approved the appointment of Dr Stavros Paspalas as the Acting Director until such time as a Director is nominated.

Dr Paspalas received his Bachelor and Masters degrees from the University of Sydney, and undertook his doctoral thesis at the University of Oxford. He has been a member of the excavation team at Torone, and is a co-director of the Zagora Archaeological Project and the Australian Paliochora Kythera Archaeoogical Survey.

He has published on a range of topics including ancient iconography, Greek and Lydian ceramic studies, and Macedonian-Achaemenid interactions, as well as having written numerous archaeological field reports. Dr Paspalas is well-known and respected at the Institute, having been appointed Deputy Director in 1996 and in 2013 Co-Director. In 2012 he received the honour of being admitted as a member to the Archaeological Society of Athens. We welcome Stavros in his new role at the AAIA in this exciting and critical time as we move forward into a new era.

Staff Changes at the Sydney Office

Two of the Institute's staff members, known to many of you either personally or through the Institute's various print and online publications, have in past months moved on: Dr Wayne Mullen and Ms Theodora Gianniotis.

Wayne Mullen's association with the Institute started in the mid-1990s. He contributed widely to its operations in a variety of positions, most recently as its Chief Operating Officer. Dr Mullen played a leading role in seeing the Institute through a number of fundamental changes, including the move from our initial premises at Darlington to the offices at the Old Teachers College. He was a guiding force in the foundation of the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia (CCANESA) accommodated in the Madsen Building, University of Sydney where the Institute is currently housed. His fundraising and extensive promotion of the AAIA was of enormous importance to the Institute's operations over the last 20 years and he was instrumental in introducing numerous new projects and initiatives, including, in recent years, the Resident Artists programmes in Athens, Language for Archaeologists courses in Sydney and the highly popular Travel Tours to Greece. The Institute is indeed grateful for Wayne's many years of good service. His fierce intellect, ceaseless energy and quick wit will be sorely missed.

Theodora Gianniotis joined the Institute in 2012 as its Development Officer and left at the end of 2015 to resume her career in environmental law. Given the relatively brief period of time that Theodora was with us, her contribution was simply phenomenal. She raised the Institute’s profile in numerous quarters and introduced individuals and groups who were otherwise unaware of our activities and contribution to Greek and ancient studies in Australia. Her innovative approaches resulted in a most effective out-reach programme.

The Institute wishes both Wayne and Theodora every future success.
AAIA staff at the British Schools

Two long-standing Sydney staff members, Ms Beatrice McLoughlin and Dr Camilla Norman, took long-service leave earlier this year, Beatrice to attend the Fitch Laboratory’s Ceramic Petrology course at the British School in Athens and carry out research towards her PhD, and Camilla to take up a 6-month post at the British School in Rome as the Coleman Hilton Scholar. Both have returned invigorated from their experiences, with fresh ideas and a host of new friends and collaborators.

The Fitch Petrology course was a perfect fit for Beatrice, who studies the ‘Potters of Zagora’, using the ceramic technology of coarse and cooking wares as an indicator of the social lives and consumption habits of everyday people. She is now armed with a far deeper understanding of geology and the raw materials potters use.

Camilla spent her time at the BSR transforming her doctoral thesis on the Iron Age statue-stelae of Daunia into a book-ready manuscript, and extending her studies of cultural identity, expression and interaction in northern Apulia down into the Roman era. She also embraced the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to soak up all the Eternal City has to offer, attending conferences, visiting museums and sites, and exploring its every nook and cranny. Most valuable, she reports, were the many wonderful people she met at the BSR—staff, scholars and artists alike—whose wide range of interests informed her own learning, and whose society meant for never a dull moment!

2016 Visiting Professor – Professor Katja Sporn

Professor Katja Sporn, Director of the German Archaeological Institute at Athens and Honorary Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Munich, is currently touring Australia as the AAIA’s 2016 Visiting Professor. She comes to us directly after wrapping up her 2016 season at the sanctuary of Apollo at Kalapodi and is presenting on, among other subjects, her recent findings at this fascinating site, thought by many to be ancient Albai.

Professor Sporn has directed archaeological work also at Kolonna (Aigina) and has published widely on a range of topics relating to the history and archaeology of the ancient Greek world, particularly on Classical and Hellenistic Crete, Greek cultic practice and funerary sculpture. It is a pleasure to have her with us, and to have the opportunity to share in her expertise.

For a full listing of Professor Sporn’s public lectures around the country see: sydney.edu.au/arts/aaia/research/visitors.shtml

2016 Apollo Fellow

This year the AAIA was responsible for awarding the Apollo Fellowship, an award funded by the Alumni of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the collaborating parties within the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Sydney. The Fellowship is awarded to a recent post-doctoral researcher from overseas so that the awardee can spend time at Sydney furthering his or her research and interacting with the local academic community.

The AAIA awarded the fellowship to Dr Ilaria Orsi from the University of Neuchâtel. Dr Orsi specialises in the study of ancient Greek religion during the transitional period from the Late Bronze Age into the Early Iron Age.

While the particular focus of her doctoral dissertation lies in the Peloponnese and central Greece, her research is of interest to many in the AAIA, the Zagora Archaeological Project team and the wider scholarly community that focuses on the ancient world.

Dr Orsi used her time in Australia well: she discussed a range of issues involved in the study of ancient religion with archaeologists and historians associated with CCANESA, both those involved with the Classical world as well as those with the Near East, igniting in many a deeper interest regarding religious landscapes in their own fields of study. She also delivered a well-attended seminar entitled “Worship Space in Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Greece” at which she highlighted aspects of her most recent research to a very appreciative audience.

2016 Olwen Tudor Jones Scholar

The OTJ Scholarship for Archaeological Fieldwork, awarded by SoMA (Sydney University Friends of the AAIA), was this year given to Ellen Campbell, a 3rd year undergraduate majoring in archaeology and ancient history. Ellen’s passion lies in the Bronze Age Aegean and, assisted by the OTJ scholarship, she is currently living her dream, excavating on the Cycladic island of Keros with the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research (Cambridge University). Keros, a large and important settlement site, hosts also what is understood to be the world’s earlist maritime sanctuary.
The Athens Summer School 2016

In what has become a very welcome tradition, the fourth Athens Summer School took place in January. This highly successful collaborative undertaking between the AAIA and the Department of Archaeology at the University of Sydney was organised by Dr Stavros Paspalas and Associate Professor Lesley Beaumont, with Ms Gina Scheer acting as Summer School Manager.

It is very gratifying to note that this year’s Summer School was well subscribed. In 2016 we had 23 participants, of which 22 were undergraduate students. The majority of these came from the University of Sydney, but two joined us from the University of New England, one from the University of Auckland, and one from the Beijing University of Technology. Our 23rd participant was an Ancient History high school teacher from Victoria. The AAIA Hostel housed some of the participants and also provided the venue for the formal lectures.

The Summer School offers a very full programme which focuses on the archaeology of Archaic and Classical-period Athens and Attica. Some of the highlights of the many daily excursions to sites and museums were visiting the interior of the Parthenon on the Acropolis, handling ancient Greek coins in the numismatic collection of the Alpha Bank and ancient Greek pots in the museum collection of the British School at Athens, and climbing down into the ancient cave sanctuary of Pan at Vari in the pouring rain!

Both the AAIA and the Department of Archaeology are proud that they can offer such a high standard educational programme which has received highly positive feedback from the participants.

The Art and Archaeology of Athens Tour

The Institute’s first “Art and Archaeology of Athens” tour, held from 3–13 May 2016, was a resounding success.

A dedicated group of participants from Australia and the United States spent their time learning about the history and archaeology of Athens throughout the ages while enjoying numerous opportunities to further develop their drawing skills in some truly sublime locations, such as Sounion, the Acropolis and Kaisariani.

This is the first of such ventures co-organised by the Institute and Ohio State University. Thanks must be given to the organisers Dr Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory, Professor Timothy Gregory, Ms Cindy Davis and Professor Bob Davis.

Seminars and Lectures in Athens

This year began very well in Athens as the Institute had the pleasure of hosting Dr Alexandra Villing from the Greek and Roman Department of the British Museum. Dr Villing delivered a lecture entitled “Naukratis: New Research on the Greeks in Egypt.” Naukratis was a settlement where in the 7th century BC the Egyptians allowed Greeks to trade and which developed into an important Greek centre.

Dr Villing directs the current excavations at Naukratis, which is situated in the western Nile Delta, and presented the most recent findings from this site which was an important link between the Greek world and Egypt.

The Institute’s Director’s Report and Annual Lecture in Athens was held on April 21. This annual event was attended by members of the archaeological community and supporters of the Institute.

This year’s guest lecturer was Dr Ted Robinson whose paper, “Myth, History and Identity in South Italian Red-Figure”, was the ideal introduction to current research into the peoples of Southern Italy.

In May the Institute hosted Associate Professor Ken Sheedy, director of the Australian Centre for Ancient Numismatics at Macquarie University. He spoke on “The early coinage of the Chersonesians—without Miltiades,” and so from Southern Italy we travelled to the northeastern Aegean and the Gallipoli Peninsula where we examined the intricacies of local coin production and political allegiances. A great insight was given into the history of this region which drew the attention of many premier league players throughout Antiquity.
Wine Tasting Event co-hosted by the Consulate General of Greece and the AAIA

On 14 June a special wine tasting event was organised by the AAIA in conjunction with the Consulate General of Greece in Sydney and held at the CCANESA boardroom.

The evening opened with addresses by co-hosts Dr Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory (AAIA Executive Officer in Athens), Dr Stavros Kyrimis (Consul General of Greece, Sydney) and Mrs Maria Triantafyllou (National Inter-Professional Organization of Vine and Wine).

The event was an opportunity for the National Inter-Professional Organization of Vine and Wine to showcase some of Greece’s finest wines. Ms Eleni Blouchou of the World of Greek Wine Program presented five wines in the tasting, which was attended by 24 supporters of the AAIA and members of the Consulate of Greece in Sydney.

The participants also benefited from an informative and entertaining lecture by Dr Craig Barker of Sydney University Museums, titled “Wine in the Ancient World”.

The evening was a great success with participants learning about ancient and modern Greek wine production while enjoying a variety of wines and delicious accompaniments. It was the most recent in a series of such events hosted and co-hosted by the AAIA that has seen us drink wine made in ancient-style clay pithoi, eat chocolate-coated locusts, and hear of the Roman’s penchant for flavouring their food with rotting fish. Such are the popularity of these nights, that it will not be the last!

An Iranian Surprise

Life can take odd turns. It was recently brought to the attention of the Acting Director, Dr Stavros Paspalas, that one of his academic papers had been translated into Farsi and published in 2013 in Bastanpazhuhi, one of Iran’s leading archaeological journals. This unexpected news was relayed to Stavros by an Iranian doctoral student at the University of Athens’ Archaeology Department. The translation of Stavros’ paper, “The Achaemenid Empire and the north-western Aegean,” was published alongside translations of studies by other “western” researchers that focus on the reach of the Achaemenid Empire beyond Iranian lands. The paper details the nature of the relationship between the Empire and Macedonia and neighbouring regions prior to Alexander’s Asian campaign.

Vale Zoe Kominatos

Late August brought the sad news of the passing of Mrs Zoe Kominatos, a longtime supporter of the Institute’s vision and activities. Mrs Kominatos’ interest in, and love for, Greece and its past was deeply entrenched. From its inception in 1967, she was an active member of The Association (later Foundation) for Classical Archaeology, and a strong force within ‘The Ladies Committee’ which aided it’s fund-raising activities, the most notable being the Nicholson Museum Concerts. Her interest in Professor Alexander Cambitoglou’s endeavours to further establish and promote Greek archaeological studies in Australia by establishing the Institute continued through the years and she actively supported them. She readily made generous donations to the Institute once it was founded, and quickly became one of its first Governors. The Institute gratefully acknowledges her generosity and encouragement. Her memory is greatly valued.

AAIA Tour 2017

Crete & Kythera

Join expert guides Helen Nicholson, Dr Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory and Dr Archondia Thanos on a journey across these two amazing islands which hold such a special place in Greek-Australian history.

Explore ancient and Mediaeval archaeological sites, walk in the footsteps of WWII soldiers, and discover the natural beauty, modern-day charms and cuisine of Crete and Kythera.

April 16 to May 5

For more info: arts.aaia@sydney.edu.au
Vale Milton Lalas

It is with deep regret that we report on the passing of one of the Institute's greatest supporters, Milton Lalas. Milton served as Secretary of the Sydney Friends and of the Institute for many terms. He and his wife, Mary, gave years of their lives to fund-raising for the Institute and to widely promoting its activities. Both were true believers who took great satisfaction in working with staff members and other supporters of the Institute. Mary passed away in 2000, and Milton in April this year.

Milton possessed an indomitable spirit and an enquiring mind that never stopped seeking out new information. Always open to new ideas and suggestions, he was on a continual quest to broaden his horizons. It was no surprise to those who knew him that he passed away while enjoying an overseas trip in search of the new.

Milton, an aeronautical engineer by profession, was born into a Greek family from Bulgaria. His family history may go a long way to explain his wide intellectual horizons—he was firmly planted in Australia but equally he was well aware of the role the wider world played in our country and that which Australia could play internationally.

Most of the Institute's members who have stayed at the Athens Hostel would have read the plaque which pays tribute to those who helped make the purchase of such a prized property in central Athens possible. Milton and Mary Lalas figure prominently in the plaque's text as they also most generously covered the cost of furnishing the apartment. Be it in Sydney or in Greece Milton took his support of the Institute seriously. He dedicated his energy as a committee member, a frequent attendee to lectures and events, and as a participant on visits to archaeological sites.

To his children, grandchildren and other family members the Institute extends its sincerest condolences, along with its fond memories of Milton.