

## International Small Islands Studies Association (ISISA)

### General Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> *Islands of the World* Conference

Leeuwarden & Terschelling, The Netherlands, 14 June 2018

#### President's Report

*Dear Islophiles,*

It is my pleasure to present to you this presidential report, covering four years of activity since the election of the ISISA Executive Council at our 13<sup>th</sup> 'Islands of the World' (**IoW**) conference in Penghu, Taiwan, in September 2014.

Here is a photo of the Outgoing Executive Council (2014-2018):



Since then, we have endeavoured to provide our members with an assorted flow of information using a diversity of data and media. Our most notable investment has been in our own dedicated website – [www.isisa.org](http://www.isisa.org) – launched on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. This contains a rich depository of ISISA's history and activity, and including details about previous **IoW** conferences and relevant documents. The website also includes a Blog which would benefit from some activity: <http://isisa.org/isisablog.php?ac=post&id=12&p=1&m=2&y=2017>

We have maintained a healthy traffic of news, comments, Q&As, and other information via our Twitter Handle - <https://twitter.com/IntSISA> - our Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/Isisa-International-Small-Islands-Studies-Association-126009170815354/> - our twice-yearly *ISISA Newsletter* for members – and our email group list-serve, [ISISA@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ISISA@yahoogroups.com). ISISA has continued its endorsement of [Island Studies Journal](#), the flagship academic journal in island studies, running uninterruptedly since May 2006, now capably edited by Adam Grydehøj.

One important change since 2014 has been a stronger push by ISISA to partner with our conference hosts in offering part scholarships to *bona fide* students wishing to present their work at our events. This is now our main financial outlay, and I for one have no regrets in seeing our funds being spent in this way, while maintaining a healthy balance sheet. The women and men who are our scholarship beneficiaries bring colour, zest and passion to our events, and – who knows – they may also be, or become, quite intrepid island scholars and ISISA members. We have managed to offer **15** scholarships of 500 euros (or equivalent) each during the Lesvos, KI and Terschelling **IoWs**, along with one additional generous donation of 500 euros from an ISISA member. These scholarships are often matched by our hosts, so our tangible student support has never been as strong.

Additionally, we are also considering extending our financial support to other, like-minded organisations involved in island studies by offering, without obligation, part scholarships to students attending such non-ISISA events, during those years when we do NOT organise an IoW Conference. (There is an amendment to our Charter being proposed with this in mind.)

To support our cash flow, and to offer an unbeatable deal to our members, we are also encouraging these to consider taking out a life membership in ISISA for 200 USD. We have over 20 such lifetime supporters now, and I encourage more to join.

We have held conferences in Lesvos, Greece in 2016, Kangaroo Island, Australia, in 2017 and now Leeuwarden and Terschelling, the Netherlands, in 2018. At each event, ISISA partners with our hosts to advertise the conference, receive and adjudicate abstracts, propose keynote speakers, rank student scholarship applications, and discuss and finalise the programme. The 2017 KI event, and the close encounters with nature and community it afforded, broke the ‘one-year on, one-year off’ sequence that had been the hallmark of the ISISA Conference schedule. After a review with the membership, it has been decided to revert to the biennial format, since this is more likely to generate regular attendance and participation by our core membership. Thus we will not have an ISISA conference in 2019, or 2021.

This year, ISISA has also registered officially as a ‘friend’ of GLISPA, the [Global Islands Partnership](#) which promotes and supports initiatives that build, reinforce or express island resilience in its many forms. Looking forward, I would like to see ISISA partner with GLISPA more proactively, possibly in the running of our **IoW** conferences.

I would also like to see a broader representation in the ISISA membership, with a stronger interest by island scholars and practitioners from other parts of our ‘world of islands’. A stronger involvement from South-East Asia is encouraged.

I would like to thank the members of the outgoing executive for their continuous support over the years. Special mention to Dr Huei-Min Tsai (organiser of the Penghu conference), Dr Ioannis

Spilanis, Dr Thanasis Kizos and (now Dr) Sophia Karampela (organisers of the Lesvos Conference); Bob and Jennie Teasdale, Jane Bates and Peter Clements (organisers of the KI Conference) who have served their term as co-opted members of the Executive. I would also like to thank outgoing Executive members Dana Lewis Ambrose, Marina Karides and Clyde Sakamoto. A special mention to our long-time ISISA Secretary Graeme Robertson and former ISISA Treasurer Stephen Royle: they have resolutely kept our organisation going through thick and thin for so many years. It is volunteers like these who keep our association going strong.

My final words of thanks are to the organisers of the 16<sup>th</sup> **IoW** Conference, led by Dr Jouke van Dijk, Dr Gerard Persoon and Mr Klaas Deen. The Waddenacademie has done a terrific job to plan this unique ISISA conference, combining a European Capital of Culture 2018 experience with the serenity and fun of this magical island. Planning has been meticulous, and involved meetings in Australia and Malta.

Here is a photo memento of an ISISA, delicious ‘business lunch’ in Pelican Lagoon, at the Teasdale Residence, Kangaroo Island, Australia, on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2017:



I hope I am also speaking on your behalf when I express our profound appreciation to our wonderful Dutch hosts: **DANK U WELL.**

Bedankt allemaal en tot ziens in Canada in 2020.

**Godfrey Baldacchino**  
**President, ISISA (2014-2018)**