**AIIA Tasmania Branch: President’s Report 2022**

2022 has been a year for consolidation for AIIA in Tasmania. As we have emerged from the worst of the COVID challenges there has been, and continues to be, a need to work through the changes brought upon us by the COVID years, particularly because we no longer can enjoy those halcyon days of events at the University of Tasmania where catering was provided and there was time to meet, talk and discuss issues before and after our in-person events.

While there have been benefits in online and Zoom events, both here and interstate, in that we have been able to access a wider range of interstate and international speakers, there is still a real need for social interactions at some events, and we will be focussing on that mix when we plan for 2023.

But, looking back on 2022, it has been a year of mixed fortune and some special opportunities. Firstly, the extraordinary coincidence of our Ambassador for Cyber Security, Dr Tobias Feakin, who was due to present a webinar to us on his role; on that very afternoon the whole of the Tasmanian internet infrastructure collapsed through roadworks in two states cutting the cables! Postponed and not even from a cyber attack! Then, after working with Russian and Putin specialist Dr Julie Fedor during 2021 to try to get her to Tasmania, we finally managed it in April and I missed the gig through having COVID!

 We needed to work our way through new arrangements with the University of Tasmania, with an agreed four joint events with the College of Arts, Law and Education (CALE) through the year. I thank the CALE team of Greg Marshall, Prof Nicholas Farrelly, Dr Catherine Goetze and our own Prof James Chin in working so hard to make this work. The highlights of this teamwork were our event with former Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, our discussion event on perspectives of Asia, India and Australia on the Quad and AUKUS, and our recent event on Myanmar with Prof Farrelly and former Ambassador to Myanmar Nicholas Coppel.

The full list of events and speakers for the year, from the last AGM to now, are attached, and it is good to reflect on the diversity we were able to present, from women in Afghanistan to former ambassador Sue Boyd on cutting through the glass ceiling in diplomacy, from the Canadian High Commissioner reflecting on their near neighbour the United States to the relationship between local government and international affairs. And the joint event with IMAS and RUSI on security and Antarctica was a standout.

We still have our two flagship events to look forward to before the year ends. Hon Warwick Smith AO will give the Government House lecture, and Dr Heather Smith PSM will give the annual Plimsoll Lecture. Both will be presented with Fellowships of the AIIA at these events and our National President Allan Gyngell and Vice President Zara Kimpton will be at the Government House event, and Executive Director Bryce Wakefield will be at the Plimsoll.

As we plan for 2023, we will be jointly reviewing with CALE our efforts this year, and what we can do better. For AIIA Tasmania we need to juggle

* in person only events with social interaction
* those events which are in person and also Zoomed live (hybrids)
* events which are in person and recorded for later viewing on the national AIIA channel (vodcasts) and
* webinar only events.

We have been really happy to share old and new partnerships in 2022, particularly with DFAT (thank you Tim Ault and Elisa Cusick), IMAS (thank you to Tony Press and Marcus Haward) and with the Media School for the David Brill film showing. Links with the New Colombo Plan (NCP) ambassador Sanjana Bideareal and International Law Discussion Group have been enlightening and fruitful.

We are really proud that one of our special partner/supporters, Dr Tony Press, has been made a Fellow of the AIIA. Congratulations Tony.

Administratively, we moved to a new IT platform, GlueUp, during the year, and this hasn’t turned out quite as anticipated. A few very valid member complaints have been received here and in other states. We expect further review during 2023.

I have recently attended the AIIA National Conference in Canberra, the first for three years. It was a standout success and augurs well for the future of AIIA. Papers and videos from the conference will be available for all members later this year, and I would encourage interested members to consider attending next year.

The AIIA Council in Tasmania has again demonstrated how talented, supportive and enthusiastic they are. They are a great team, they step up and fill gaps in managing our affairs seamlessly, and they serve the organisation and its members brilliantly!

Thank you to them, and to our loyal band of members.

Kim Boyer

October 26, 2022