

Bulletin



ITHACAN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

1 (2023)



Bulletin of the Ithacan Historical Society

Επετηρίδα της Ιστορικής Εταιρείας της Ιθάκης

ISSN: 2981-9806 (Online)

Volume 1 (2023)

Editor

K. Nikias

Publication

The Bulletin (or BIHS) is published each year by the Ithacan Historical Society. It publishes articles, reviews and notes relating to the history of Ithaca and its region, from antiquity to the recent past, and provides a report of activities of the Society during the previous year.

Submissions should be directed to the Editor before 1 October of each year for the next volume. Please consult the Authors' Guidelines available at ithacanhistorical.org/publications

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ITHACAN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

**Report of Activities
(2022–2023)**



ITHACAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Committee

Peter Raftopoulos
PRESIDENT

Kyriaco Nikias
VICE PRESIDENT

Athena Connock
SECRETARY

James Morris
TREASURER

Greg Deftereos
Nick Galatis
Christine Georgopoulos
Leah Koutsounis
John Paizes
Andrew Raftopoulos

Mission

The Ithacan Historical Society was established in Melbourne by members of the Ithacan Philanthropic Society (founded in 1916) and is an affiliate society of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. The Society aims to promote the history of the island of Ithaca in the Ionian Sea, its region, and its people, from antiquity to modern times.

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President's Message

This report of the activities of the Ithacan Historical Society in the years 2022–2023 allows us to reflect upon the great accomplishments and contributions the Society has made towards its various causes over the past two years, and to look forward to increasing and improving our activity and reach over the next years. It fills me with immense pride to present the report for the inaugural volume of the *Bulletin of the Ithacan Historical Society*, which will stand as a testament to our commitment to promoting the history of Ithaca across all periods of time, and the stories of Ithacans everywhere in the world.

In the years 2022–2023, our Society embarked on numerous projects of historical and cultural significance, both in Australia and in Greece. From promoting conservation through support provided to the reopened state archives of Ithaca, to fascinating lectures presented by expert historians and writers on topics from ancient Ithaca to the island's modern maritime heritage, to launching our online bookstore and embarking on a new genealogy project, these years have been particularly busy for the Society and our members. Our efforts have shed light on the profound connections between our homeland and the diaspora, enriching our understanding of Ithacan identity and heritage.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all members whose dedication and passion have propelled our Society forward. Your unwavering support and enthusiasm have been instrumental in our success, and will continue to be.

As we look to the future, let us continue to embrace our shared history with pride and purpose, to see it preserved for future generations, and better appreciated through research and study. Together, we will explore new avenues of exploration, forge lasting partnerships, and ensure that the legacy of the Ithacan people endures for generations to come.

Peter Raftopoulos
PRESIDENT

Kyriaco Nikias
VICE PRESIDENT

Acknowledgement of Donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, the Ithacan Historical Society relies on our generous members to support our activities to promote Ithaca's history, and to conserve its heritage.

Your gift can help preserve Ithaca's history for future generations.

We express our profound appreciation to the following donors for their generous support for the Society during the year 2023.

Ithacan Archive Fund

\$15,000 (over 3 years)	Ithacan Philanthropic Society
\$2,065	Proceeds from film night (Lucy Kostos), <i>In memory of Katina Kostos</i>
\$1,000	Prof. Nicholas Patricios
\$1,000	Nick Galatis, <i>In memory of his parents Christogerasimos and Elly</i>
\$1,000	Paulette Galatis, <i>In memory of Angeliki Galati née Moraiti (1926–2022)</i>
\$600	Peter and Isabel Raftopoulos
\$500	George Florence
\$500	Elly Symons
\$500	Robert & Denise Cappai, <i>In memory of Nikolaos and Manti Galatis of Anoghi</i>
\$450	Andrew and Kay Raftopoulos
\$300	Peter Paxinos, <i>In memory of Dr Anastasios Paxinos</i>
\$300	Katherine Biazos (née Comninos)

\$200	Dracoulis family
\$100	Barbara Vasdekis, <i>In memory of her parents Ioakeim (Jack) and Mary Lecatsas</i>
\$100	Ken Brownrigg
\$100	Danae Paxinos
\$100	<i>Anonymous donor from Queensland</i>
\$50	George Pangalis
\$50	Vera Black
\$50	Georgia Defteros
\$50	James Morris
\$25	Athena Connock

We also thank several other anonymous donors for their generous support.

Other donations

\$400	Debbie Argyropoulos, <i>Towards the launch of a new IHS website</i>
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Calendar of Activities

The following events and activities were hosted or supported by the Ithacan Historical Society during the years 2021–2023.

2021

11 October. **‘The Ithacan *libro d’oro* of 1803’**, online lecture given by K. Nikias, University of Vienna.

15 November. **‘Brigandry and piracy in Ithaca during Venetian rule, with particular focus on the 17th century’**, online lecture given by Dr Romina N. Tsakiri, Historian, National Library of Greece, Athens.

29 November. **‘Ithaca and the British protectorate (1815–1864) Between local and colonial history’**, online lecture given by Prof Sakis Gekas, Associate Professor, Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History, York University, Canada.

2022

4 April. **‘The O. Stathatos Nautical School of Ithaca (1907–1914): A pioneering donation to Ithacan and Greek society’**, online lecture given by Prof. em. Machi Paizi-Apostolopoulou of the National Hellenic Research Foundation.

9 May. **‘The 1807 Census of Ithaca’**, online lecture given by Prof Ioanna Athanasopoulou of the Ionian University, Corfu.

19 June. **‘Homeric sites on Ithaki’**, lecture given at Ithaca House, Melbourne, by Jonathan Brown, author.

4 July. **‘Wild Colonial Greeks: The prominence of Ionian Islanders among Australia’s early Greek settlers’**, online lecture given by Peter Prineas, author.

21 August. ‘**Ancient Greek large-scale bronze masterpieces at the National Archaeological Museum of Athens: conservation, elemental analysis and mounting for display**’, lecture given at Ithaca House, Melbourne, by Dr Georgianna Moraitou, Head of the Conservation, Physical- Chemical Research & Archaeometry Department of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens.

5 September. ‘**Towards an archaeology of Venetian Ithaca**’, online lecture given by Gerasimos Livitsanis, archaeologist.

16 October. Screening of *Beautiful Journey: An Ithacan personal documentary* (Fionn Skiotis) at Ithaca House, Melbourne.

2023

5 March. **Book launch for *Passage of Ithaca (2nd edition)***, by George Paxinos at Ithaca House, Melbourne. A presentation by the author was followed by a lively discussion.

20 March. ‘**In the footsteps of Odysseus on Ithaca**’, online talk by Jane Cochrane, conservation architect and author.

27 August. ‘**Gods and heroes around Troy: Mt Ida, Odysseus’ camp, and the tomb of Achilles**’, lecture given at Ithaca House, Melbourne, by Jonathan Brown.

25 September. *Μια συζήτηση για το Αρχείο της Ιθάκης*, seminar at the Μορφωτικό Κέντρο Ιθάκης, Vathy, Ithaca. Hosted together with the Centre of Maritime History of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies, and the General State Archives of Ithaca. Guest speakers Dr Theodora Zafeiratou (Director, General State Archives of Ithaca), Prof Gelina Harlaftis (Centre of Maritime History, IMS-FORTH & University of Crete), Dr Kalliopi Vasilaki (Centre of Maritime History, IMS-FORTH), Kyriaco Nikias (University of Vienna), Gerasimos Livitsanis (Archaeologist), Dimitris Prevezianos (University of Athens).

26 November. *A forum on the Archive of Ithaca*, online seminar hosted together with the Centre of Maritime History of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies, and the General State Archives of Ithaca. Guest speakers Prof Gelina Harlaftis (Centre of Maritime History, IMS-FORTH & University of Crete), Dr Kalliopi Vasilaki (Centre of Maritime History, IMS-FORTH), Kyriaco Nikias (University of Vienna), Gerasimos Livitsanis (Archaeologist).

Summary of Activities (2022)

After the disruptive lockdown periods of the previous two years, the Ithacan Historical Society was able to return to our monthly in-house working sessions at Ithaca House and to continue building our online presence.

Several informative and well-received online historical seminars were held on both YouTube and Zoom and then uploaded to our IHS YouTube channel for our members and the general public to view at their leisure. The question-and-answer discussion segments following these seminars enabled attendees to delve deeper into the history of Ithaca, creating a forum for our members and international scholars to share their knowledge and engage with like-minded academics.

The IHS held three in-house lectures at Ithaca House, which attracted new and current members, built valuable relationships with external cultural organisations and authors, and attracted interest in the current projects that the committee is pursuing.

A resolution was passed by the IHS committee to establish our own publishing series to publish works relating to Ithaca, its history and the story of its people. We propose to translate previously published Greek texts, out-of-print publications and new works by authors according to the IHS's criteria. The most recent book published by the IHS is George Paxinos's 2nd edition of *Passage to Ithaca*, which is on sale through the IHS and available locally and internationally.

The most significant initiative of the IHS was the continued support of the re-opened archive in Vathi. We continue to liaise with the archive

manager and assist with the significant work that has been undertaken to preserve centuries-old valuable, though uncatalogued, documents. The committee provided \$6,000 worth of archival supplies, which have been used to protect these documents, drawing interest from various academics and institutions to catalogue and study them.

The committee also decided to purchase the residual stock of Jonathan Brown's two books, 'Homeric Ithaca' and 'Homeric Troy', and be their sole distributor. These books are available via the IHS and now feature on the new online bookstore that the committee resolved to establish on the website.

Our library collection continues to grow, and we hope that the collection's catalogue will soon be available online for members, researchers and the wider public.

The IHS committee looks forward to continuing to broaden its activities and offerings to members with the support of the IPS executive and our Ithacan community.

Peter Raftopoulos
PRESIDENT

Summary of Activities (2023)

The Ithacan Historical Society's activities continued to gain momentum and widened in scope during 2023, as more members of all ages joined our committee meetings, attended our monthly working days held at Ithaca House and contributed their thoughts and ideas for future projects. To focus on our key initiatives, the *Cultural Heritage* and *Funding* sub-committees were established to operate alongside our *Archive* sub-committee.

The decision to build a new IHS website was unanimously approved by the committee late in the year and seeks to provide a modern platform to attract and engage both Ithacans and the broader global community in our history and cultural activities, whether held in Australia, Greece or online.

The IHS held two in-house lectures at Ithaca House and one online, which were all well received. In March, George Paxinos presented his 2nd edition of *Passage to Ithaca* and vividly described his painstaking research

to create this unique academic work of Ithacan history. Jonathan Brown also returned to Ithaca House and presented his lecture, *Gods and Heroes Around Troy*, based on his first book entitled *Homeric Sites Around Troy*. Both books are available through the IHS's new online bookstore, which was established during the year. Jane Cochrane presented the online lecture, *In the Footsteps of Odysseus on Ithaca* and has received 500 subsequent views on YouTube.

A significant focus of the IHS centred on the continued support of the archive in Vathy on Ithaca. The Ithacan Archive Fund was established with a foundational donation of \$15,000 over three years from the IPS and numerous individual donations so far totalling more than \$10,000 including \$2,065 from a film night held by Lucy Kostos and hosted at Ithaca House in Melbourne on 7 May 2023. In further support of the Archive Fund, a well-publicised discussion forum was held in person in Ithaca at the Cultural Centre in Vathy on 25 September and an online English version of the forum on 26 November for an international audience. Both events were recorded on our YouTube channel. We continue to regularly liaise with the archive manager to support the significant work undertaken to preserve centuries-old valuable, though uncatalogued, documents and assist various academics and institutions eager to catalogue and study the archive's rich treasures.

After participating in the inaugural GCM Book Fair in November 2022, the Ithacan Historical Society again participated at the event over weekend of 25–26 November 2023, and raised over \$500 from book sales. Members of the Greek community expressed great appreciation for the IHS's work and commended the Ithacan community's continual record of fostering a greater understanding of the Greek-Australian migrant narrative.

The IHS committee looks forward to another exciting year of seminars, events and launches throughout the year for the enjoyment of all members of our broadening community.

Peter Raftopoulos
PRESIDENT

Project updates

Ithacan Archive Fund

Since early 2022, the IHS has been working to support the historical archive at Vathy, Ithaca (officially now known as the ΓΑΚ Ιθάκης, or General State Archives at Ithaca). Following the reopening of the archive in late 2021 after several years' closure, the IHS was keen to renew its relationship with the archive, having supported the archive in the past yet being unable to renew its support in recent years owing to the archive's long closure. The President of the IHS made contact with the newly appointed head of the archive Christos Miaritis, who welcomed the Society's offer to collaborate to improve the condition of historical records at Ithaca.

The Ithacan state archive is of great significance not only to islanders, but to all of Greece and the Mediterranean. Compared to the poor archival collections in other parts of Greece, the local Ionian archives contain an excellent record of the formation of modern societies in the Mediterranean under successive colonial regimes. The archive holds a large collection of official records from the Venetian administration dating to the early 1600s, and extensive records covering revolutionary French rule (1797–9), the Septinsular Republic (1800–7), French imperial rule (1807–9), and the British period (1809–64).

First tranches of support (May-Oct 2022)

During the first half of 2022, Kyriaco Nikias travelled to Ithaca as representative of the Society to work with Mr Miaritis in Vathy to identify areas of urgent need at the archive. Years of inadequate funding, together with the long-term closure of the archive, have left sections of the collection in need of intervention to ensure the preservation of documents. A proposal was made which emphasised the need to prioritise the oldest and most fragile sections of the archive — particularly the Venetian and early 19th century collections. In May 2022, the IHS Committee approved a first tranche of support to the value of almost \$5,000 AUD to purchase archival supplies consistent with professional standards. These supplies included boxes for safe storage, document sleeves and archival paper for interleaving,

and appropriate equipment for the public reading space. The materials have been sourced from professional archival suppliers on the advice of conservators. Mr Miaritis made prompt use of these materials which have allowed the archive to improve its conservation practices. The IHS was very proud to have made this first important contribution to the improvement of the archive at Ithaca, and looked forward to planning future initiatives to extend further support to the archive. In July, the President of the IHS Peter Raftopoulos visited the archive and was thrilled to see the fast and enthusiastic implementation of the first support package. Mr Miaritis was presented with copies of IHS publications for the archive's library. The IHS approved a second proposal for purchases of similar conservation materials in October 2022.

Over the course of 2022 the IHS had contributed support to the archive to the value of \$6,000 AUD. Most of these funds had been held by the IHS for several years with the anticipation that they could be directed to support the archive, something which had been impossible faced with the long-time closure of the archive by the Greek authorities. With the reopening of the archive, the IHS welcomed the opportunity to finally make a contribution through the first tranches of support made during 2022. In late 2022 the IHS identified the need to make a new appeal to raise funds for further initiatives in support of the archive into the future.

Subcommittee for the Archive

In late 2022 the IHS formed a subcommittee which would be dedicated to discuss further possibilities to assist the archive not only to preserve its invaluable collection, but to promote public interest in these unique records of life in centuries past. The members of the subcommittee are the President of the IHS, Peter Raftopoulos, the Vice President, Kyriaco Nikias, and George Paxinos, who brings several decades of experience with the historical archive at Ithaca, having built a relationship with the late archivist Ms Eleni Griva during the 1990s. The Subcommittee for the Archive recognised the need for a framework to guide the IHS in supporting the archive over the next years. The Subcommittee proposed that the IHS establish a dedicated fundraising scheme, to be called the Ithacan Archive Fund.

The Ithacan Archive Fund

The Ithacan Archive Fund was launched by the IHS in late April 2023 with an appeal for contributions which would allow the IHS to support the archive into the future. The Fund is a perpetual project of the IHS and welcomes individual contributions from all who are interested in the history of Ithaca and its region. It also welcomes corporate contributions and bequests.

The strategy for disbursing money from the Fund to support the archive is guided by four main objectives:

Conservation and preservation of documents

- Provision of appropriate professional-standard, acid-free conservation materials to preserve records currently conserved inappropriately

Improvement of the archive environment

- Modern digitisation equipment for fragile documents
- Exhibition cabinets for the safe public display of selected documents
- Climate, fire-safety and humidity controls

Classification of the collections

- Support for the classification of documents, and the publication of catalogues to the archive's collections

Support for research

- Support for researchers to publish primary sources (notarial registers, ecclesiastical/civil registry records, etc) and related studies

In response to the launch of the Ithacan Archive Fund, the Ithacan Philanthropic Society (IPS) generously committed to providing \$15,000 in annual instalments over three years, to ensure the longevity of the Fund's ability to support the archive into the future. Over the course of 2023 the Fund received several generous private contributions from members of the Ithacan community in Australia, Europe, and America. These proceeds

have been received by the IHS with great appreciation and awareness that the support provided to the archive is only possible with the generosity of the community.

The IHS welcomes further donations to the perpetual fund in support of the Ithacan archive.

Third tranche of support (mid-2023)

The Subcommittee for the Archive made an extensive proposal for a third package of purchases of conservation material and other support for the archive, which was accepted by the IHS Committee in early September 2023. This was the largest package of support sent to the archive to date, to a value of more than \$7,000 AUD.

The proposal was guided by the four objectives of the Ithacan Archive Fund. As in 2022, the proposal was formed following extensive and detailed conversations with the responsible archivist to determine the most suitable supplies which could make the most difference to improving the conditions of the archive. Most of the support took the form of conservation supplies (acid-free boxes, sleeves, and paper) sourced from the main industry conservation supplier (InSitu) in Greece on the advice of expert conservators. This included 600 acid-free archival boxes, for the proper conservation of historical documents which have been improperly kept in the archive until now. Among other smaller purchases of materials to improve the conditions of the archival store-room, support was also provided to a group of researchers from the Institute for Mediterranean Studies from Crete in the form of a small per-diem allowance during their stay for work at the archive in Ithaca.

Seminars on the archive

The Ithacan Archive Fund has also sought to promote the awareness of the public, in Ithaca, elsewhere in Greece, and across the world, about the richness of the historical archive of Ithaca. As part of this ongoing initiative, the IHS hosted two very successful events on the archive in late 2023. A seminar titled 'A forum on the Archive of Ithaca' was held on Ithaca on 25 September 2023 with presentations in Greek by six guest speakers. This was followed by an English-language version of the seminar, hosted online for

an international audience on 26 November 2023. The events were organised together with the Centre of Maritime History of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies and the Ithacan branch of the General State Archives (ΓΑΚ Ιθάκης). The forums sought to contribute to improving the Ithacan public's understanding of the great value of the historical collections of the island's archive.

Dozens of Ithacans attended the forum at the theatre of the Morfotiko Kentro Ithakis in Vathy on Monday 25 September at 7 p.m., including the current mayor Dionysios Stanitsas and former mayor Spyros Arsenis, and other distinguished and familiar figures on the island. Six speakers presented on their work at the Archive of Ithaca. The Head of the Archives of Ithaca and Cephalonia, Dr Theodora Zafeiratou, began the forum with a presentation on the role of the archive today in its modern administrative context as a working public service. The second and third speakers were invited from the Centre of Maritime History. Professor Gelina Harlaftis gave an introduction to the role of Ithaca in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, and placed the collections of the local archive in Ithaca in the context of other relevant collections for research which are kept in state and private archives across Europe. Dr Kalliopi Vassilaki, postdoctoral researcher at the Centre of Maritime History, spoke about the maritime documents held in the Archive of Ithaca. Three further presentations were given by researchers on other collections held at the archive. Kyriaco Nikias of the University of Vienna (and Vice President of the IHS) gave a survey of the documents of the Venetian administration of Ithaca (1638–1797). Gerasimos Livitsanis, archaeologist and researcher, presented some highlights from the unclassified archives of the post-Venetian administrations which span the period 1797–1817. Finally, Dimitrios Prevezianos, student at the University of Athens and former intern at the Archive, surveyed the ecclesiastical documents. The forum in Vathy also took place with the presence of several members of the Centre of Maritime History, who have been conducting a survey of unclassified documents in the archive under the supervision of the Director of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies and Professor of the University of Crete, Gelina Harlaftis. The forum was repeated in English in an online format on 26 November 2023, in order to reach an international audience. The recording is available online.

The Ithacan Historical Society extended its thanks to the organisers and speakers at the event and expressed its interest to continue this collaboration into the future. The forums organised by the IHS seek to promote public awareness of the riches held at the Archive, being a key objective of the Ithacan Archive Fund.

Support us

The IHS continues to hold discussions with researchers, conservators, and the relevant authorities in Greece, in order to plan further initiatives to support the archive into 2024 and beyond. The support provided by the IHS through the Ithacan Archive Fund relies on the generosity of the community.

If you would like to donate to support the Archive, see ithacanhistorical.org/projects/ithacan-archive-fund

G. Paxinos, K. Nikias, P. Raftopoulos

Ithacan Family Tree

The IHS Family Tree Project arose out of discussion amongst our members about creating a family tree that would map the connection between different families and be a vehicle for discovering previously unknown ties. This had the aim of helping us to better answer that question perpetually asked in cafes, churches, and taverns all around the world, “I think we’re related, aren’t we?”. Importantly, the project will provide a way to preserve the knowledge of our ancestors, and to enrich our sense of identity.

Our vision is to create a comprehensive online family tree available to all Ithacans which can be used as a social history resource for generations to come. Launching in early 2024, the project is designed to be collaborative, giving IHS members the opportunity to be actively involved in documenting our history and strengthening our sense of identity and community.

The IHS is partnering with MyHeritage.com to provide an online platform where members can explore their family history. There are some useful features including a family tree builder, easy-to-use Greek language setting, ability to print customised family tree posters, and the largest European historical records database in the world.

Members can participate in the project in two ways:

- Explore and curate their own family history and build their individual family trees.
- Collaborate with the IHS committee to combine their individual tree to help grow the single Ithacan family tree.

The IHS was fortunate to be gifted a large family tree created by the late Nicholas Sikiotis, which has been kindly provided to us as a contribution towards the project by his daughter Eleana Sikiotis and family. This tree will kick-start the project, becoming the ‘foundation tree’, to which our members can add their own family branches. The tree will be an inspiration to others, demonstrating just how much a tree can grow when you begin to explore your own family ancestry.

The IHS committee acknowledges and thanks the family of the late Nicholas Sikiotis for permission to publish and build on his genealogical

work as part of the Ithacan family tree. We recognise Nick's invaluable research and documentation of his ancestors and the people he so loved. In Nick's own words, the Ithacan family tree is 'για μάς'.

A. Connock

Bookstore

IHS represented at the GCM Bookfairs (2022–2023)

After participating in the inaugural GCM (Greek Community of Melbourne) Book Fair in November 2022, the Ithacan Historical Society again participated in the book fair over the weekend of November 25th and 26th, 2023, which was organised in collaboration with the Greek-Australian Cultural League and the Hellenic Writers Association of Australia.

Held on the mezzanine level of the GCM Centre, Dr Nikos Dallas, GCM Head of Educational Programs, welcomed all. Professor Nikos Papastergiadis and Greek Consul General Emmanuel Kakavelakis officially opened the event. Over thirty exhibitors, including Greek-Australian authors, publishers, bookshops, and organisations, were represented, and the program included casual talks, book launches, book signings and literature awards.

The IHS was represented by Peter Raftopoulos (President), James Morris (Treasurer) and committee members Nick Galatis and Andrew Raftopoulos, who helped raise over \$500 from book sales over the weekend. Many members of the Greek community expressed appreciation for the work of the IHS. They commended the Ithacan community for continuing to record and foster a greater understanding of the Greek-Australian migrant narrative that extends back to the Gold Rush period of the 1850s.

President of the GCM, Mr Bill Papasteriadis, was especially thankful for our work and expressed an eagerness to foster a closer relationship going forward with the IHS, noting that the Ithacan community was pivotal in the formation of the GCM and its early years, as noted in Georgia (Juliana) Charpantidou's, *The Embodiment of a Distant Homeland: the history of the GOCMV from its founding to 1972*, launched in Greek in 2023 and will be translated into English in 2024.



Formation of Cultural Heritage Subcommittee

The Cultural Heritage subcommittee of the Ithacan Historical Society was formed in 2023. It responds to the perception that protection, preservation and academic research into the cultural heritage of the island has fallen into neglect in recent times. It aims to address the problem of this stagnation particularly in light of the fact that there is presently no overarching heritage strategy in place to support its reinvigoration.

Such a strategy is especially important on an island whose very identity, perhaps more than any other in the Mediterranean, has been so shaped by readings of its cultural heritage. In recent years the Greek financial crisis certainly had an impact on all of Greece's many heritage commitments, however the country's ongoing recovery presents an opportunity to reinvigorate interest in the island's cultural heritage as well as to support, encourage, and work together with the relevant authorities to address these issues.

Objectives

The Cultural Heritage subcommittee is guided by the following objectives:

- To be inclusive of both the community of the island and the diaspora to discuss what heritage means to them, and how they would like it developed.
- To promote the archaeology and heritage of the island through public initiatives, including publications, seminars, exhibitions.
- To preserve the archaeology and heritage of the island through initiatives such as prudent political advocacy, a suitable Management Plan within the legal frameworks
- To formulate a coherent overarching heritage strategy.
- To further protect the archaeology and heritage of the island on a local level with continuing site preservation strategies, heritage interpretation where viable, and appropriate registration and status of all archaeological sites and areas of potential heritage sensitivity.
- To promote academic archaeological and historical research on the island, including in the local archives and museums.

- To promote sustainable tourism and harness technology strategically (AR/VR).
- To manage potential negative aspects/social impacts of heritage tourism.
- To secure funding to achieve these ends.

Engagement

The Cultural Heritage subcommittee will engage with a wide group of experts and stakeholders. There are currently several different individuals and bodies actively involved with the promotion of the island in non-convergent ways. We will engage with these entities to harness their knowledge and viewpoints with regards to community involvement and the politics of the past, in order to use the past to inform a strategy for the future. In doing so the Cultural Heritage subcommittee will encourage wide community involvement and advocacy.

The Cultural Heritage subcommittee will be inclusive and broad in scope, promoting the rich heritage of the island from pre-historic antiquity to the recent past. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw a particular focus on the classical history of the island through the lens of Homer, which continues to define and perhaps confine the conception of Ithacan history and public interest in the island. Remaining central to our mission, we will seek to engage with institutions like the British School at Athens which has long been involved in the archaeology of the island.

We shall also promote the island's heritage from lesser-studied and perhaps neglected periods which are becoming more familiar through recent ground breaking research. While the Homeric epics continue to frame and inform the island's identity, we will also seek to raise other voices from the past, through a promotion of heritage from the Venetian period, and other foreign colonial periods during the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. While forming a varied fabric, each is an intriguing historical period in itself, with its own material culture and signature left on the landscape and the community. In particular, the reopening of the local and invaluable State Archives offers an opportunity for new research to provide further context into periods previously overshadowed by selective readings of the past, each a reflection of a particular present.

In its mission, the Cultural Heritage subcommittee seeks both to reinvigorate our perceptions of Ithaca's long cultural history and to revive engagement with its heritage into the future.

Greg Deftereos