

Report by the Director of Communications 2018

IIC's role in communicating about conservation matters with the profession and a wider interested public remains core to our operations. Whilst *Studies in Conservation* provides the state of the art technical papers, and *News in Conservation* tells the stories behind many of these technical papers as well as reporting on broader issues of relevance and interest, it is the website and our social media platforms that maintain the regular and often daily process of communication with our members. We therefore continue to expend significant resources and energy in ensuring these communication vehicles are fit for purpose, and that we are devoting to them the appropriate support.

As IIC Director of Communications, I co-ordinate this process working closely with the IIC office. The IIC Communications Team meets by Skype every six weeks to review progress and ensure that IIC's output in this area remains a coordinated one. The actual sourcing, editing, writing and reviewing of content both for the web site and social media relies on a dedicated band of volunteers, which includes Amber Kerr, Sharra Grow, Kristin deGhetaldi, Sagita Sunara, Kate Stonor, Clare Finn and Heather Ravenberg (the full list is given at the end of this Annual Review). During the year Sharra very substantially expanded her contribution by also taking on the editorship of *News in Conservation* from Barbara Borghese. Whilst this role is partly remunerated, this does not truly reflect the very considerable amount of time required to deliver *News* in an ongoing, informative and readable fashion. We thank Barbara for the dedication and passion she brought to the role and her service to IIC in this way, and are similarly grateful to Sharra for the enthusiasm and ideas that she has already brought to ensuring this key part of our communications is regularly and attractively produced. The results of their work can be seen in the number of page views and downloads of the latest issues of *News in Conservation* throughout the year.

Our social networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn) are available to and accessed by a very large and international audience. IIC's social media presence has continued to grow with over 41,000 Facebook followers and 1,200 LinkedIn Group members, thus enabling IIC to distribute news on its work and on important heritage conservation work very widely. Facebook statistics tirelessly supplied by Amber Kerr reveal that links, photos and shared video postings were found particularly interesting and that a great many followers are based in India, Mexico and other countries where membership of conventional heritage conservation bodies is low, but the interest in heritage is high. The freely accessible information provided by IIC through its various channels thus plays a very important role. The number of Facebook fans is highest in the USA, but is increasing in Italy (with the second-highest number), perhaps in anticipation of the forthcoming Turin Congress, and in Spanish-speaking countries. As IIC has a long relationship with the French conservation profession and French is the other official language of IIC, it is very pleasing that there is a notable increase in the number of fans in France, particularly in Paris. Statistics also reveal that, as last year, about 63% of our followers are women. About 61% are aged between 25 and 44, with a further 15% aged between 45 and 54.

During the year we added Instagram as a further platform to our social media (<https://www.instagram.com/iiconservation/>) and are very grateful to Isa Von Lenthe, who headed the Local Organising Committee for the Bern Student and Emerging Conservator conference, for initiating and running with this.

In keeping with the rebranding of IIC, the web site was refreshed during the year to provide a more contemporary look and importantly to provide more intuitive navigation to the wealth of material available on it. As it also serves as the platform through which membership information and renewals occur and for managing the submission and review of Congress papers, it is critical that it operates efficiently and seamlessly. The refreshment process was not without its problems, but the end result has been well received, and further features and ongoing upgrades will now be part of the way it is maintained and grown. Web master Athanasios Velios after many years of service to IIC way beyond the call of duty finally found the pressures of work too great to allow servicing of the site, and after a short period of management when assistant webmaster Tsegaselassie Tadesse kindly stepped into the breach, it was decided to use a commercial provider for this service, and IIC now has under contract Adaptive Web Limited to maintain the website; additionally, Kate Smith, of Goosegrass Culture, is under contract to IIC to support our digital communications. Eike Friedrich, who has in the background quietly monitored the IIC e-mail system over many years was also unable to continue and to him too we give our thanks.

Julian Bickersteth, Director of Communications