

**Short News****25 May 2015**

Dear members,

Five months have passed since the last Short News issue. In this time the E.C.C.O. committee has met five times online which reflects a change in approach. It speeds up communication and saves money in a commitment to work within budget. I think, we are getting more efficient in the virtual meeting room every time we use it.

The first physical committee meeting took place before the actual E.C.C.O. General Assembly, located in Bratislava City Gallery on 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2015. The committee used the chance to prepare for the GA and also to meet with Wolfgang Baatz, President of ENCoRE to discuss the delivery of practice within education and the development of PhD studies. The view from us - the active professionals was sought.

There were 18 delegates with voting rights at the GA representing ICRI(IR), ACB(BG), SKR/SCR(CH), VDR(GE), KR(SK), NKF-DK, NKF-FI, NKF-N, NKF-S, DRS(SLO), APROA-BRK(B), FFCR(F), MRE(HU), ORV(AT), VRKS-ARCA(IT), ARP(PT). Present was also our associate member AMG-KKR(CZ). Two delegates from CRAC and ACRE sent their proxy to be able to take part in the votes. Guests present included Wolfgang Baatz, President of ENCoRE and Presidents from organisations in neighbouring Hungary and the Czech Republic.

A highlight in the programme was the announcement that on 25.4. 2015 in Rome, a Memorandum of Mutual Understanding (MoU) between E.C.C.O. and ICCROM was signed by the organisations' Presidents, Susan Corr and Stefano De Caro with the cooperation of Vincent Negri and Catherine Antomarchi. Also present to witness the occasion was David Aguilera Cueco and Sebastian Dobrusskin. Silvia Borghini our Italian delegate had hosted an earlier meeting of the working group. The actual text can be found on our website.

In the area of publishing, the E.C.C.O. Strategic Plan and the Strategic Plan Implementation booklets were presented and given out to the delegates.



The legal Questionnaire was officially launched. The Questionnaire aims to collect information on the legal frameworks in place at national level for the protection of cultural heritage. Such laws may affect or constrain the practice of conservation-restoration and the Questionnaire hopes to elicit this information. It has been designed in consultation with our lawyer on cultural heritage, Vincent Negri and developed online by Sebastian Dobrusskin. The Questionnaire had been distributed by e-mail to the delegates of E.C.C.O. a month prior to the GA in order that delegates might have time to assess it and bring any questions for discussion to the GA. We also used the platform of the GA to ask our members to pay attention to this Questionnaire. Answering it may require help from a lawyer in case members are not so familiar with the specific laws. The deadline for returning the Questionnaire to the committee is September 2015. The collected data will be processed by Vincent Negri and his result is scheduled for January 2016.

Good news is also signing the contract for a new web design and hosting with a German company found and chosen thanks to our WG Website.

The presentation of National Reports was a very interesting source of information on situations in some of our member organisations. On this occasion E.C.C.O. members received an invitation to the Finish congress on Monumental Treasures in Helsinki over 3 days in October.

Ana Galán from ACRE has invited E.C.C.O. to Najara, Spain on 16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> July, 2015 for a 'Meeting for the Spanish Development of E.C.C.O.'s Strategic Plan' which will take place in the Spanish Institute for Cultural Heritage.

Our colleague David Aguilera Cueco reported on the current development in France and the running discussion with the Ministry of Culture about the categorisation of conservation-restoration as a craftsmen activity. Thorben Ernst(DK) proposed that a declaration recognising the specificity of the Conservator-Restorer should be endorsed by the GA and sent to FFCR in support. The Bratislava Declaration 2015 was ratified and members can find it on our website.

After the elections the new committee members voted into the executive positions Susan Corr as President, Sebastian Dobrusskin and Stefan Belishki as Vice- Presidents, Barbara



Davidson as General Secretary, Anja Romanovski as Vice-General Secretary, Eilis Marçel as Treasurer and Peter de Groof as Vice-Treasurer.

The Slovak Komora reštaurátorov organised a parallel Seminar on Restoration, where some of the E.C.C.O. delegates took part in a bus trip to projects in situ and some of them even gave lectures to the Slovak audience.

Following the GA a group of E.C.C.O. representatives (Susan Corr, Sebastian Dobrusskin, Stefan Belishki and David Aguilera Cueco) continued their travel to the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of Ministers responsible for Cultural Heritage in Namur, Belgium. The attendance of E.C.C.O. at this conference was a very important step towards E.C.C.O.s visibility and recognition and resulted in gathering important contacts for our future activities. The signed Namur Declaration can be found on our web site.

Subsequent to this meeting E.C.C.O. reapplied for Observer Status to the Council of Europe and at the most recent meeting of the Steering Committee for Culture Heritage and Landscape CDCPP 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015, we have been informed that our application was approved. Congratulations to all who have worked so hard to make this possible!

Finally, the committee has met once on-line since the GA in Slovakia. The next physical meeting place for autumn is not set yet, but a hot candidate is Warsaw, Poland in October to coincide with the IIC Student and Emerging Conservator Conference and to advance the cause of E.C.C.O. in Poland.

Barbara Davidson and Susan Corr