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Autumn 2020



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President's view

This is my last article for *Communicator* as ISTC President. The last three years have just flown by. I still remember standing at Cambridge train station on the phone to Alison Peck, my predecessor, discussing whether I would put my name in the hat to stand as President. There was lots to think about it and it wasn't a decision I made lightly. I took a few days to think about and discuss it with my husband. I knew it would have an impact on my life, both personally and professionally, and I needed to be sure that I could devote the time and energy needed to the role.

Over the last three years, many aspects of both my professional and personal life have changed. My work role has become more demanding as project work increases but the number in the documentation team remains the same. I've become a mom and most of my free time is spent with my daughter, playing ridiculous games that make us all laugh out loud, getting covered in paint, and one of my favourites jumping in muddy puddles! Life is going to become even more hectic this coming October when our second child arrives. These last few months in lockdown have been life-changing for me and us as a family. These changes have formed part of my decision to not re-stand as President for another three years.

The ISTC has accomplished a lot over the last three years. Our award-winning journal *Communicator* has celebrated 50 years. Like most of you, I always look forward to receiving my copy in the post. The articles are always interesting, on-trend, and of the highest quality. As someone who works as a lone technical writer, the resources available in *Communicator* are a chance for me to see what others in the industry are doing and if it is something that I could implement in my role.

In 2018, we published the 4th edition of Reginald Kapp's book 'The Presentation of Technical Information'. This edition was published to mark 70 years of the ISTC and it included commentaries from experienced technical communicators today, sharing their reflections and insights. It was a big collaborative effort from everyone involved. Alison Peck took the lead on collating this book and ensured contributors met the deadlines, etc. The book was officially launched at TCUK in 2018 and we were honoured to have Elinor Kapp, Reginald Kapp's daughter at the presentation.

Over the years TCUK has gone from strength to strength under the chairs of Paul Ballard, David Farbey, and Derek Cooper. TCUK is always a highlight in the technical communication calendar. Not only do we have a wide range of presentation topics over the three days, we also have a chance to meet many of our business affiliates during the conference. This is a great opportunity to find out more about a new product, discuss any issues you might be having with their product, or perhaps decide to apply for a new job with one of the recruitment companies present.

New ISTC website

A lot of work has gone on behind the scenes over the last few years to improve our website and I am so pleased to say that the hard work has paid off and the new website is finally live.

The new website has a new look and feel to it, an improved navigation structure and it is mobile friendly. There is a new discussion forum which should function better and allow for more lively discussions. A members' directory to help you track down fellow members, and a profile page where you can edit and maintain your own information.

Thanks to our webmaster, Gordon McLean, Tony Dzumaga, Ellis Pratt, and everyone who has worked on this new website. It has been a huge undertaking and it's great to see the final product working so well.

TCUK Metro

It is with a heavy heart that we have decided to cancel the face-face conference due to the coronavirus. The venue we have booked for the event has issued safety guidelines that they will be implementing once they are able to open. Their suggestions are extremely

reasonable, and they will do everything they can to ensure people are safe while attending events.


However, a big part of our conference is the networking and unfortunately this just would not be possible with the new guidelines. We have a responsibility to our members, and to those who would attend the conference, to ensure their safety and wellbeing and unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that in the current circumstances.

Needless to say, the team is disappointed, but all is not lost. We will have a mini online event on the day instead. The AGM will still go ahead as planned on Tuesday 29 September at 1pm. This will be followed by the UKTC Awards ceremony. Two of our confirmed speakers for TCUK Metro have agreed to present their talks as a webinar instead. These will kick off about 2:45pm. For full timings and information on the webinars, see the TCUK website.

Call for volunteers

The ISTC is always looking for members to volunteer to help run this organisation. There are lots of things we would love to do for our members, but we need volunteers to step forward and help out in various areas. I have been a volunteer for many years, and it is a great way to get some experience in an area that wouldn't necessarily form part of your day job. I never thought I would be a contributor to a published book, nor lead a society as great as the ISTC. If you are interested in volunteering, then please get in touch with the ISTC office.

Goodbye

Lastly, I wanted to say goodbye as President. It has been an honour to be President of the ISTC for the last few years. Thank you to my colleagues on the ISTC Council for your support. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as President. I will remain on the ISTC Council and I look forward to working with the new President. 

Carol

Reference

ISTC books <https://istc.org.uk/homepage/publications-and-resources/istc-books>

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