

Ankara, November 2021

Dear Members,

As elsewhere, Covid-19 has kept a firm grip on the BIAA over the past year. The premises in Ankara remained closed until the beginning of October 2021, but readers have returned to the library now. Most of us have been back at our desks for quite a while, although we continue to wear masks at the office. Such precautions seem to have had a positive impact on keeping the numbers of Covid-19 cases low, and I am really pleased to report that the few of us who did succumb all came off lightly. The BIAA London Manager, Laura Paterson, however, was badly affected. Thankfully, she is better now and I hope that you and those close to you are all in good health too.

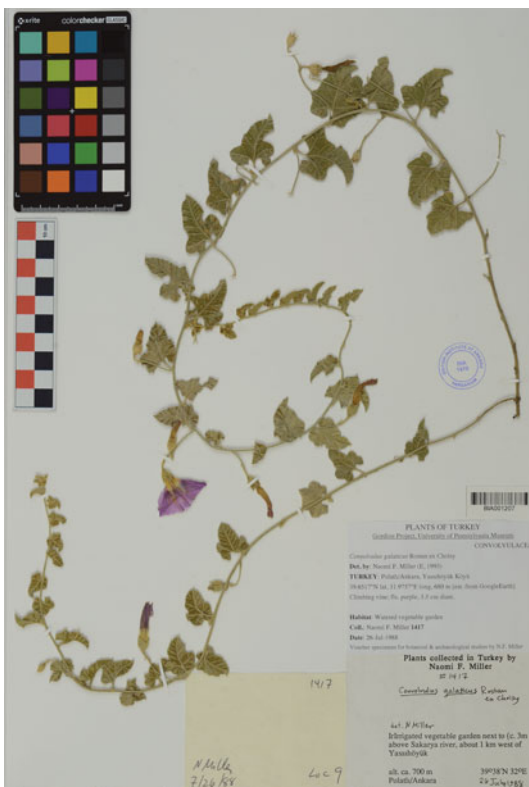
Although the premises have been closed to the public, the Institute itself has been doing rather well. Two 2021–2022 BIAA Postdoctoral Fellows have been appointed. The research of Gizem Pilavci (University of Oxford) is focused on the Manases (an influential Catholic Armenian family in the service of the Ottoman court in the 18th and 19th centuries) and Bradley Jordan (also University of Oxford) works on the development of Roman provincial rule in western Anatolia during the transition from the Republic to the Principate. The start date of Brad’s fellowship had to be postponed, but he will be joining us in January 2022. Işıl Gürsü continues her work on heritage management and has completed the Turkish version of the edited volume *Public Archaeology* (BIAA Monograph 52), which is now available as an open-access publication on the BIAA’s website. The guidebook to the Pisidia Heritage Trail will be published early in 2022 (see page 7), and I suggest that all of you who love hiking keep an eye out for BIAA announcements about when it will be available. By buying a copy, you will not only be investing in the safeguarding of the wonderful archaeological sites in the Taurus mountains, but you will also be helping the BIAA. As a charity, we rely heavily on contributions from members and sponsors – and every penny counts!

The Institute has also been successful in its funding applications, not least thanks to the input of Martyn Weeds, the BIAA Senior Development Manager. Since April 2021, the BIAA has led a British Academy Knowledge Frontiers 2021 project, entitled *Water in Istanbul: Rising to the Challenge?* This 24-month project is a collaboration with UK and Turkish higher-education institutions and provides funding for a postdoctoral fellow focused on the social sciences aspect of the project. This has enabled us to employ Ender Peker, who, as a contributor to *Heritage Turkey* in recent years, will be familiar to many of you.

An application to the Cultural Protection Fund was also successful and we are now working on the Safeguarding and Rescuing Archaeological Assets (SARAA) project in partnership with BILADI, a Lebanese NGO. Gül Pulhan is once again BIAA Coordinator of the project and Özlem Başdoğan is dividing her time between SARAA and *Water in Istanbul*. Reports on both projects are included in this edition of *Heritage Turkey*.

Martyn also secured funding to continue the digitisation of the herbarium. This project is progressing really well, and the finished samples look beautiful! A professional photographer (G. Görkay) has just spent a whole week recording the prepared specimens. İlgin Deniz Can and Barış Necdet Uğurman are continuing work on the project and have chosen a favourite specimen (see left) for us to admire!

Thinking of the herbarium brings me to the work on the digital repository, where the digital version of the herbarium will be held. The repository will serve as a digital hub for the research community to organise, manage and preserve digital data, and it is with pride that I report how Nurdan Atalan Çayirezmez and her assistant, Gonca Özger, have pushed on with preparation of the available data for the newly set-up Islandora 8 platform and that ingestion of data has started. Since the beginning of October 2021, the team has been reinforced by archivist Orhun Uğur, who is involved in data validation, policy set-up and more.



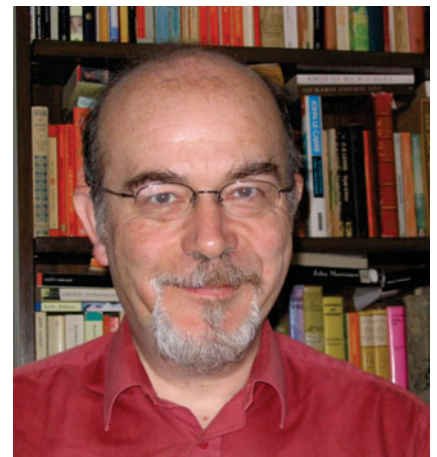
Although I've mentioned only Nurdan, Gonca and Orhun by name, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the many interns and volunteers who have made such a difference to the work and helped enormously to take the task in hand forward.

The changes being made simultaneously to the online library catalogue will be less obvious to the public, but the move from a custom-made platform to KOHA will make the BIAA library more easily findable internationally. Both the BIAA resource manager, Burçak Delikan, and the library assistant, Nihal Uzun, have been working hard to resolve problems following the transfer of data from the previous system.

The recent and current BIAA Research Scholars, Liam Devlin (UCL/SOAS) and Burcu Şahin (University of Durham), as well as the BIAA Research Assistant, Eloise Jones (University of Durham), should not be overlooked in this context. Their contributions to a variety of ongoing projects, including the digital repository, the library, the herbarium project and website development, have been immense and should be honoured. Many thanks to you all!

I would like to take this opportunity to turn the spotlight onto the BIAA's honorary officers. Last year, the Institute's long-term Honorary Secretary, Shahina Farid, retired and was succeeded by Warren Eastwood, a biogeographer and palaeoecologist with long-standing ties to the BIAA. Shahina did a fantastic job and somehow managed to combine a demanding full-time job with this equally demanding volunteer position.

This year will see more big changes to the Institute's governing personnel. Both the Chair, Stephen Mitchell, and the Honorary Treasurer, Anthony Sheppard, are retiring. I have no doubt that I speak for all committee members and BIAA staff when I say that the contributions of Stephen and Anthony cannot be overestimated. They have seen the Institute through some very difficult and uncertain times, and have remained staunch supporters of the BIAA and its staff as new challenges have arisen and tough decisions have needed to be taken. It has been a pleasure and an honour to work with them, and I would like to thank both from the bottom of my heart for all their efforts over many years. Stephen will serve on the Council for another year, and I very much hope that he, Anthony and Shahina will not be strangers in the future!



The outgoing Officers of the BIAA (left to right): Shahina Farid, Stephen Mitchell and Anthony Sheppard.

The BIAA is lucky to have found excellent successors. Jim Crow, our incoming Chair, is Professor of Classical Archaeology and Roman and Byzantine Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh and has been associated with the Institute for many years, as both a project director and a trustee. Kamran Hashemi, who will take on the position of Honorary Treasurer, worked in investment banking in London for over 30 years and has been a long-standing supporter of educational and charitable organisations serving the community at large. Kamran has been shadowing Anthony for over a year and is fully up-to-date on all things financial related to the BIAA. We are all looking forward to working with them. If you would like to learn more about the incoming officers, please check out the BIAA's website.

Mention of the website reminds me to ask you to keep an eye out for the updated version which will be launched soon!

As always, I hope you enjoy reading about the work of the BIAA and the projects it funds in this edition of *Heritage Turkey*. Although the pandemic made it impossible for some of the planned BIAA-funded research projects to take place, the results of those that were able to go ahead are truly impressive!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lutgarde Vandeput'.

Lutgarde Vandeput, Director of the British Institute at Ankara