

Editorial

While BIALL has hundreds of members it remains a close-knit organisation. People know each other and they help each other, many enjoy not only professional relationships but also close friendships with other members. And Catherine McArdle, who died in January, had very many friends indeed in BIALL. Because of this we felt it was fitting to devote some pages to her memory in this first issue of 2024, and such was her popularity and the respect others held for her we had no problem at all in finding people to write these pieces. Some of these are moving, and some even funny, but all reveal what a huge hole has been left in the profession. One notable thing that is mentioned is that Catherine attended Conference 34 times and was proud of never missing it. It's she who will be missed when we all arrive in Leeds in June.

Turn to page 10 to read the first of these tributes, which are introduced by BIALL President Julie Christmas. In this issue there's also an interview with Julie, who reveals that she tried Geography and Hotel and Catering management courses before finally finding librarianship. She's never looked back, although she is not so sure the term 'law librarian' is quite right for the profession these days. To find out why, turn to page 10.

Whether you call yourself a law librarian or not, our evaluation of the 2023 BIALL Salary Survey is sure to be of interest to you, for who doesn't want to know what others in the same game are earning? It's much more than this, though, as it also deals with remote and flexible working arrangements, benefits and other aspects of the modern workplace. Julie Christmas (we really would have been lost without her help this issue!), Claire Mazer and the team from CB Resourcing go over the data on page 15.

One thing that is common across all organisations in the legal sector is the importance of the written word. And yet few would disagree that legal writing can be hard to grasp, and even difficult to read. This, as Emily Allbon says in her article on page 21, is where legal information professionals can help. But she goes a step further here, showing how the growing field of legal design can make the law more understandable, accessible, and usable, for just about everyone. Which has to be a good thing.

People who do spend a great deal of time reading law – you would hope – are trainee solicitors. With the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination in 2021 there have been changes in the training of solicitors, which includes the legal research assessment. On page 32 Greg Bennett considers what impact this might have on these students' ability to do research when they begin their careers. It's an interesting and illuminating piece, and a great example of how changes for the very best of reasons might sometimes have unfortunate consequences.

Meanwhile, on page 36 Anne O'Connor and Joanna Morris of Thomson Reuters take a detailed look at the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023

(REUL Act 2023), especially those aspects of it that are likely to be of interest to the legal information community. It's a reminder of just how complex Brexit has been, and continues to be, when it comes to the law.

While the Winter 2023 issue was, as is traditional, dedicated to papers from the Conference, such was the response that we did not quite have the room to fit all of them in. Because we had featured the BIALL Sustainability Working Group relatively recently (see the Spring 2023 issue, Vol 23, No 1) we decided to hold on to Christine Baird's second piece on this, based on her paper from Belfast, until this edition – though there is plenty in it that is new and interesting, especially the point around 'cathedral thinking', which is a quite wonderful notion which might just change the way you think about your impact on the environment. Turn to page 42 to find out more.

REGULAR FEATURES

Our resource guides have proven a hit with readers, which is perhaps not surprising, as anything that makes your job easier has to be good thing. In this edition LIM Co-Editor Jas Breslin, also the Head of Research and Information Services at Charles Russell Speechlys, looks at the sort of work that is undertaken by a corporate lawyer, and then walks us through some of the main resources that are used to support them.

Meanwhile, our Product Showcase for this edition has been supplied by Penny Bailey of Bailey Solutions. This focusses on its KnowAll Matrix product, which is used by large law firms, barristers' chambers, government libraries, European agencies, a European parliament and other organisations, we're told.

Of course, it would hardly be LIM if there was no mention of AI these days, so it's great that on page 61 Sara Berry has done a fine job in breaking down the arguments and points contained in the anthology, *AI and the Legal Profession: transforming the future of law*, for this issue's book review.

Fifty years ago, Artificial Intelligence was still stuck in the pages of science fiction, but as our retrospective for 1974 shows, computers were very much a talking point in the legal information sector – as were sausages – while elsewhere people were speaking about the 'Rumble in the Jungle' and seismic changes in the world of politics. Turn to Raiders of the Lost Archive on page 64 to find out more, including some fascinating facts about Gray's Inn Library.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As always, our thanks go to Katherine Read and Heather Memess for their work in compiling the Current Awareness section at the back of the journal. Also, LIM would be nothing without our contributors, so a big

Editorial

thanks to each and every one of you who has supplied us with copy for this edition, especially the moving tributes to Catherine McArdle; it's obvious she was a great friend to many, a wonderful person, and a very good law librarian indeed. She will be missed.

We would also like to thank our team of proofreaders for their diligent work, this publication would be a good deal poorer without them. The help of Craig Baxter and Jamie Davidson at Cambridge University Press is also greatly appreciated.

This is also the place to remind you that this is your journal, and what better way of celebrating that fact than having something published within its pages? So, if there is something you would dearly love to write about, then please contact us on limeditor@biall.org.uk. It will do wonders for your professional profile and look great on your CV, and you might be surprised at just how enjoyable writing up your thoughts, ideas and experiences can be. Honest; I'm writing this with a massive grin on my face!

One last thing, in last month's Editorial we mentioned that we were so inspired by the piece by Laura Griffiths and Alice Tyson of the IALS library on Kanban that we decided to set up a board for LIM. Happy to report this

has been a great success, quite life changing in fact. If you're having a little trouble keeping track and controlling your workflow, in general or for certain projects, we would highly recommend it.

Jas Breslin and Mike Breslin
Co-Editors in chief



Jas Breslin



Mike Breslin