

Editorial

Someone once jokingly suggested, during a discussion about the name 'BIALL' and its unfortunate association with digestive fluids, that the organisation should be renamed 'IBALL'. It's quite a nice idea, actually, giving how much 'eyeballing' is involved in legal research, while it also brings the Irish part of the icky acronym to the fore, which would be nice. And bringing the Irish side of BIALL into the limelight is something that we've also tried to do in this edition of LIM.

To that end, we've included three excellent features from Irish members at the very start of this issue, beginning with Renate Ní Uigín's fascinating profile of the Honorable Society of King's Inns Library in Dublin, where she is Librarian, which sketches its colourful history, talks us through the collection and also outlines the services it provides today (page 143).

The next Irish contribution is from Susan Brodigan, who provides a very useful guide to Irish case law, starting on page 153, which includes an explanation of research methods. Then, on page 157, BIALL President Elect Sinéad Curtin has provided a superb and most thorough piece on researching Irish legislation, which means in this issue we've covered off a pretty decent amount of legal information know-how from Ireland.

Moving from Ireland to Wales, this month's Interview subject (page 137) is Peter Clinch, a very well-known figure in the world of legal information, who spent much of his career as Law Librarian at Cardiff University. It's an illuminating piece, not only charting an exemplary career, the projects he was involved in and the many books he wrote, but also detailing the numerous changes, both technological and cultural, he witnessed over his long spell as a law librarian.

One thing Peter would have discussed endlessly during his time as an information professional would have been copyright, and this is still a major issue now, maybe even more so given recent technological advances. On page 162 Colin Hulme, head of intellectual property (IP) at Burness Paull, considers the impact of environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) programmes on the observance of copyright. It's an engaging piece, but think twice before photocopying it!

Another article you might be tempted to photocopy is Paul McGrath's contribution on how technology can support open justice and transparency, and how this has happened through history (page 165). To illustrate this Paul, who is the Head of Product Development and Online Content at ICLR (Incorporated Council of Law Reporting), runs through a series of key technological developments – including writing, printing, word processing and the internet – before finishing off with AI. It's a brilliant way of making a point, and an absorbing read.

Another good read (she made me write that!) is LIM Co-Editor Jas Breslin's piece on delivering excellent client service (page 170), which as well as revealing her penchant for pies and beer, also shows how an information

team needs to always be at the top of its game when it comes to interacting with those who use its services, who are, of course, its clients.

Meanwhile, we managed to get hold of an old hack to talk us through the best way – well, his way – of planning and writing an article (page 175). Even if you don't entirely agree with what he says, there are some tips which might prove useful if you have a piece to write and you're having trouble getting down to work.

This issue also includes a small report on the BIALL Conference (page 180), which was held in the Queens Hotel in Leeds back in June. If you were there, then you will know how much fun and also how useful this year's Conference was; if you weren't, then make sure you read this and then sign up for the next one in June 2025. Starting on page 184, we have also included a run-down on all the 2024 BIALL Award winners, which were announced at the Leeds Conference.

REGULAR FEATURES

Talking of winners, full marks to Margaret Watson for not only providing an entertaining review of *The Practical Handbook of Library Architecture: creating building spaces that work*, but also for managing to carry it around – it's 761 pages and 2kg, so we assume she didn't read it on the train! Margaret's pulled out some real gems from this work, which goes to show a big book is not always hard work. Go to page 201 to see if you're tempted to buy it – though be warned, at £140 the cover price is as substantial as the book itself.

Before the book review we have our regular International Perspective article (page 189), which in this edition is a very thoroughly researched piece on the history, the evolution and current standing of Islamic finance in the Central Asian region. There are some very interesting points made within this, especially when it comes to the ethical side of banking, and the strict prohibition of usury, gambling and uncertainty that is at the heart of the Islamic financial system.

Closer to home, this edition's Raiders of the Lost Archive is focussed on *The Law Librarian* from 1994 – covering canoodling in the library, what to do with dead bodies, and mayonnaise on the Domesday disc – but we have also included something about the very first issue to be entitled *Legal Information Management*, which is from 2001. This concerns a contributor who went on to much greater things (well, different thing at least, there's not much that's better than contributing to LIM). Who is this mystery writer? Turn to page 203 to find out.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

You're probably aware by now that LIM's publisher, Cambridge University Press (CUP) suffered a cyber-attack in June, and if you're reading this later than usual, well

that's the reason for the delay. But throughout what must have been a very stressful time for the company CUP has been nothing less than very helpful and wholly professional during our dealings with it. So, a very big thanks to Jamie Davidson and Craig Baxter, our contacts at CUP, for that.

Another big thanks goes out to all our proofreaders, who have, as always, pulled out all the stops to turn the pages around in record time, while Katherine Read and Heather Memess' work in putting together the Current Awareness section at the end of the journal is, as always, greatly appreciated.

We would also like to thank our contributors, who have provided us with some cracking pieces for this edition, which we think you will agree has a very broad spread of subjects. It could always be broader, though, so if you have an idea that you would like to develop into an article then get in touch, we're always happy to explore new themes or even a new angle on an old theme, and there's nothing like

publication in LIM to lift your profile within the profession. Look what it did for the bloke on page 207!



Jas Breslin



Mike Breslin

Jas Breslin and Mike Breslin
Co-Editors in chief

- In the last issue's article 'The legal information sector: designing and delivering a postgraduate LIS module', the author would like to make an addendum. The second "legal information professional" who co-taught the session at City, University of London and the University of Manchester was his line manager at Middle Temple, Renae Satterley. Dr Satterley was also the person who originally suggested a similar module to the University of Manchester in 2023.