

Editorial

It has been a pleasure to edit this issue. And something of a relief to see an issue emerge while we are still unarguably in the season to which it claims to relate.

There are three identifiable themes covered. One relates to career and professional development. Sue Hill, Tamsin Amos and Ann Hemming give valuable insights from their particular perspectives. The lesson which I have drawn is that the future for legal information professionals can be rosy, but it requires a good deal of work to make those roses bloom.

The second theme is largely of my own invention in that we have a run of articles which stand entirely independently but share the function of being technical and allowing the interested to be better informed about the particular technical area concerned. So if you are always looking over your shoulder while discussing XML, information audits or information architecture, for fear that someone who actually knows what they are talking about might be listening in – these articles are for you.

The third theme has been given the rather pretentious group title ‘Law Librarians and the World’ (of which I am a little ashamed). This covers a series of articles about law librarians reared in one jurisdiction working in a foreign jurisdiction or, in Susan Doe’s case, a foreign culture. One article does not fit this category – Mark Stiebel compares his South African library experience with his experience of London practice. These articles, especially John Miller’s more entertaining exploits, include some memorable light relief. But they are informative too – it may be as well, however, to avert your eyes from the picture of Emma Wright in Thailand if you are reading this issue on a grey, wet wintery day when her protestations about the lack of glamour in her role may seem to carry little conviction.

As ever, we have articles which stand outside any of the themes and Ruth Martin’s account of her experience in a local Law Society library particularly appealed to me. I was tempted to place it along with the third theme but the suggestion that she works in another world let alone another country proved on a closer reading to be far from the truth.

I must thank all the authors for their valuable contributions but special thanks go to two members of the Editorial Board. Michelle Çelik and Jennie Yeomans have done an excellent job in co-ordinating the issue and ensured high standards for the content.

Contributions

The journal relies on BIALL members for most of its material. The fund of expertise within BIALL is awesome. While I fully understand that busy members find it hard to take time out to write articles, I would like to make a special plea for those of you with a recent experience which could usefully be shared with fellow members to make time to turn that experience into an article. The experience does not have to be on the frontiers of KM to be of use – I probably had as much positive feedback on an article some years ago on ‘How to Buy Shelving’ as I have received in respect of any article.

That plea is a familiar one to many members but it would also always be helpful if you could let us know what you would like to see covered and which we have neglected. That sort of feedback is especially helpful if you can add the name of someone you think capable of filling the breach. Feel free to e-mail me with your suggestions at lseastham@aol.com.

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