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BIALL @ 50 Years: 2010 to date

Back in December 2009, I joined Arnold & Porter as an information professional. Working at a law firm that values and celebrates the contributions made by their support staff, has meant that this role has transformed into a very rewarding career. Reflecting on the last 10 years, the one word I would use to sum up law librarianship is expertise. As information professionals, we research and review areas and concepts that are unfamiliar but we are adept at not only pinpointing the key points and issues but conveying them with clarity, certainty and confidence. As well as providing this invaluable support, we guide, inform and advise. Over the past decade, BIALL has remained central to the law librarian community, helping us to navigate the ever changing landscape of the legal sector.

I studied law and already had 15 years of experience working in different legal support capacities. As an information professional newbie, BIALL enabled me to 'fill in the gaps' quickly. The BIALL JiscList has saved the day countless times and the BIALL 'How do I?' Wiki remains one of my key 'go to' resources (if you have not reviewed the Crown Court page, log on immediately!). With the Legal Foundations Course now available online and the launch of the BIALL Legal Information Literacy Statement in 2012, BIALL provides a wealth of knowledge and expertise to assist its members to improve on research skills and to aid professional development.

Should the BIALL Law Firm Library Survey be repeated, it will likely reveal a shift in the key issues that were identified in the first survey (conducted in 2015/2016). Over the past decade, we have seen law firms in particular adopting one extreme (outsourcing the library department) to the other (embedded librarian roles taking preference over maintaining a central library department). As law firms look to rebrand information teams and change job titles, BIALL - with the support of its members - continues as the 'British and Irish Association of Law Librarians' and has adopted a clear vision - BIALL "leads the way in legal information".

The 2015 Skills Framework provides a guiding hand with a detailed overview of the skills and experience which are deemed necessary whilst recognising that every role is different, each with its own challenges. BIALL echoes the values of its members, helping them meet the increasing demands on their time. Always seeking their insight, BIALL looks to assist members with the new or broadening scope of their information profession roles. A recent example is the BIALL Knowledge Management Group which for some may be a new responsibility and for others a growing area of focus.

The secret of BIALL's lasting success - and its driving force - lies firmly with its members who volunteer with such generosity, enthusiasm and passion for law librarianship.

I attended my first BIALL Conference in Newcastle and have fond memories of the animated social evenings (bowl food was a lively discussion topic!). It was a jovial atmosphere and I met many of the BIALL members and suppliers with whom I am still in regular contact today. I was encouraged by the collaboration and sharing of ideas and was invited to volunteer with the BIALL Committee that is now known as the Supplier Liaison Group. Working together, this collaborative effort between suppliers and BIALL continues to assist BIALL members with individual issues as well as leading to changes that benefit the BIALL community as a whole.

As we move forward, I believe engagement is the key, however large or small. If like me, a BIALL Committee piques your interest, do not hesitate to get involved. BIALL is made up of enthusiastic volunteers and there will always be room for another likeminded information professional! From completing the annual public, private and academic sector salary surveys to delivering seminars at the Annual Conference, your efforts all contribute to the success of BIALL and by extension benefit us all. As important as devoting your time, is sharing your expertise. Request access to edit the How Do I? Wiki or reply to a JiscList request for assistance. With a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, you can take your pick and be part of the conversation in an instant!

BIALL is more relevant now than it has ever been and together with input and assistance from its members, BIALL can reinforce and renew the law librarianship profession for decades to come.

Narinder Toor

Biographies

Barbara Tearle worked in the law libraries of the Board of Trade and University College London before becoming Bodleian Law Librarian in Oxford in 1988 until retirement in 2003. She was an active member of BIALL from 1970 to 2008, serving on several committees, contributing to publications and holding office as Editor of The Law Librarian (1984-1990), Chair (1995-1996) and President from 1999 to 2008.

Christine Miskin joined BIALL in 1970 and has acted as Treasurer; Editor of the Newsletter, Editor of both The Law Librarian and Legal Information Management and served on several committees. She was a founder member of

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the City Law Librarians Group. She founded Legal Information Resources (now part of Thomson Reuters) in 1986 and won the Wallace Breem Memorial Award in 1994 for Legal Journals Index. She was the Editorial Director of the Westlaw UK project (launched in 2000) and is a Life Member of BIALL.

Michael Maher is Head of Information Resources at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP. He is a former President, Hon Treasurer, Council Officer and Local Conference Organiser for BIALL. During his career he has spoken and written about many areas of law librarianship.

Fiona Fogden is Library Manager EMEA at Reed Smith LLP. Before that, Fiona combined freelance law librarianship with a role as head of customer relations at Linex Systems giving her experience from both the supplier and consumer sides. Her previous roles include managing the information, research and intranet teams at Baker Tilly; and the library and information centre at Baker & McKenzie.

Narinder Toor is an Information Manager at Arnold & Porter, working in the Research Services Department and is based in the London Office. Narinder works closely with her global Research Services colleagues to provide research support to attorneys and legal assistants (and staff as required) across all international offices. Narinder is one of the Research Analysts assigned to the Antitrust and Life Sciences & Healthcare practice groups, providing extensive research and support. Prior to joining Arnold & Porter in 2009, Narinder worked as a Legal Manager at Ashurst LLP and has held legal support roles at CMS and also in-house.

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The BIALL Conference 1970 to 2019

Abstract: In this article, the authors, Catherine Bowl, John Furlong and Caroline Mosley look at the direction the Association's Annual Conference has taken over the past 50 years since the first Conference in Liverpool in 1970. The emphasis is on the mid-1990s to the present day, during which period the authors served as Chairs of BIALL's Conference Committee[1].
Keywords: conferences; law librarianship; BIALL

INTRODUCTION

The first BIALL Conference, organised by Derek Way, was held at Liverpool University in September 1970. *"Thirty five delegates attended the first conference, the conference package which included all meals and two nights' accommodation was £10.00 and the conference made a £25.00 profit."*[2] The Conference was held on the university campus and accommodation was in the halls of residence.

The Liverpool Conference was not the first gathering of law librarians, however, as two workshops were held in Harrogate in 1968 and 1969. This is where the seeds were sown both for the Association and the 1970 Conference.

EVOLVEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE

The mid to late 1990s saw a lot of change with regards to the organisation of the Conference and venues. In 1994, the Conference moved from halls of residence to hotels. However, the biggest change was the one of timing, when in 1999 the Conference moved from September to June. This had a wider impact as it required the BIALL year to also change so that the AGM could be held at Conference. A Professional Conference Organiser (PCO) replaced the local organising committee in 2000. The Exhibition now forms a major part of the Conference and the importance of sponsorship has increased. Conferences have been held in all corners of the UK and Ireland. The

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