British Institute of Verbatim Reporters (BIVR)

“How do you do that?”  “How do you write those words so fast?” “But there’s no letters on the keyboard AND you’re not even looking at it?”

With the advent of machine shorthand for verbatim reporting, these are just some of the questions our members have been asked. Back in 1853 when the Institute was established, querying minds would have been more likely to ask stenographers about the light and dark squiggles above, on or below the line, which was representative of Pitman shorthand, and other versions of its ilk.

BIVR exists to provide verbatim stenographers with ongoing training, guidance and continuing professional development, whilst at the same time promoting members’ services and protecting their interests. Known as shorthand writers, stenographers, palantypists (particularly in the STTR field), shorthand typists, court reporters, captioners, speech-to-text reporters, our members cover assignments in a wide range of forums, from producing a verbatim transcript in a legal proceeding to providing communication support for the D/deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Speech-to-Text Reporters have been accredited by us since the 1990s and they have been assisting deafened people to participate fully in meetings, hearings, conferences, and at events, including Deaf Awareness Day recently held at City Lit on 27 April 2019.  Many of the Institute’s members are proficient in realtime, with a good number who are practising STTRs and/or have passed our Qualified Realtime Reporter examinations (QRR1, 2 and 3) at speeds averaging 180, 200 and 220 wpm respectively, with no editing allowed!

Many in our field, clients and organisations included, will have had the pleasure of knowing and working with the late Elisabeth “Betty” Willett who was a forerunner in the world of Speech-to-Text, an avid advocate of the profession and a stalwart of the Institute. Upon Betty’s passing in February 2017, the Institute paid tribute to her by way of The Betty Willett Award, presenting the lady herself with the inaugural award posthumously. 2018 saw the Institute bestow the award on member Claire Hill. Having been nominated by her peers and being highly respected by members, clients and industry-related organisations, Claire strives to go above and beyond for the profession as well as the D/deaf and HoH community, and is the only member so far to receive 100% on our QRR exams.

To promote our members, our profession and the Institute, this year’s BIVR Awareness Week (BAW) will be taking place 9-11 July 2019 at 61 LIF, 61 Lincoln’s Inn Fields – full details [http://bivr.org.uk/baw-2019/.](http://bivr.org.uk/baw-2019/. %20) Member Amanda Bavin will be providing access via live captions at the event on 10/11 July, as well as mentoring two trainee verbatim reporters.  Amanda is another of our members who goes above and beyond, assisting both students and seasoned reporters in their professional development.

We are delighted to be sponsoring UKCoD for their Deaf Awareness Week and we trust the campaign will be a huge success!