

# 40 years

## Marking our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Our members' memories and words of advice for the future

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# Sue Leschen FITI

## MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

Becoming an ITI Fellow was an honour in a profession that has given me so much over the years - this was the icing on my cake!

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Being an interpreter and/ or translator is good but being an entrepreneurial interpreter and/ or translator is even better! It's not enough to be a language professional - you need to be able to make your business pay and stay.

**About** Member since 2005 · Fellow of ITI since 2023 · Entrepreneurial lawyer - linguist and Director of Manchester based niche market company Advocate Legal and Business French Services Ltd

## Dominik Kreuzer MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

Writing articles for the Bulletin -- the first, and to date only, print publication for which I have done so. With Radhika's expert guidance I learned a lot in the process.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

We already get plenty of advice from experienced translators, educators and business people. My tuppence worth would be this: Listen to what they have to say, take onboard what makes sense to you and then follow your gut. There is never just one right way. I've lost count of how much best-practise advice I've ignored, and I have hardly ever been short of work and happy customers for over 30 years now. Fingers crossed it continues for another few years until I can draw a pension :)

**About** Translating since 1995 and an MITI since 2008. Back in my native Austria since 2000 after growing up in the UK from age 12. Having read engineering, tech was my initial specialisation. As I am also a musician and, until recently, ran a music venue, I gradually branched out into the arts, which now makes up about 1/3 of my work. (There's one old adage ignored: never mix business and pleasure.)

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## Paul Appleyard FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

My happiest memory is lobbing awards across the stage at the conference in Sheffield. Memories like that last a lifetime.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Work hard, and you'll reap the rewards, and don't expect to be a millionaire overnight - it takes a little bit longer than that.

## Pamela Mayorcas FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

I was a member of the committee that worked to establish ITI in the mid-80s. After emailing hundreds of co-professionals, we organised a meeting at The Royal Horticultural Halls, in April 1986. Following discussion from the floor and a show of hands, the Institute of Translation became the Institute of Translation & Interpreting. We also voted to include translation companies, so that 'both sides of industry' would be represented. Subsequently, I 'ran' the Institute from my sitting room, served as ITI's first Executive Secretary, Deputy Editor of ITI News, organised several conferences, set up an Education & Training Committee, persuaded Council to employ an Education Officer, created the CPD Booklet, organised several conferences.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Ensure you have first-class knowledge of your mother tongue and source language(s). Read widely around and create contacts in your area of subject specialisation, attend subject specific conferences and events, read SL and TL national and specialist press in your subject area. Attend courses on tax, business management, promoting your business, including a website, join your ITI language and subject networks. Keep abreast of current and political affairs in your SL and TL countries.

**About** I have been a member of ITI since the very beginning, was a member of the Committee that helped establish ITI, in April 1986 and ran the ITI office, from my sitting room, then from free premises acquired through my professional contacts, was a FR/IT>EN staff translator at the Commission of the EU, originally specialising in Iron & Steel and Nuclear Energy.

## Mike Hanson FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

Attending my first ITI conference in 1992, when I'd just finished my MA course in translation and interpreting. It was held at Stratford-on-Avon, at a conference hotel next to the river. The weather was sunny and everyone was in a good mood. Someone had thought up a clever title for the conference: "Language and our profit on't", a quotation from Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, which perfectly summed up the reason we'd come to his birthplace. A memorable two days, and the start of my involvement with ITI, which has lasted 35 years.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Colleagues are one of your best resources. Most of them are willing to offer their help if you go about it the right way. I felt very intimidated at Stratford to be surrounded by all these distinguished-looking colleagues older but they were reassuringly helpful when approached, and I'm still in touch with some of them 34 years later! Networking with colleagues is a vital part of your life as a freelance translator or interpreter. My three biggest clients during my career all came from colleague referrals.

**About** Joined as AITI in 1991, passed exam to become MITI in 1998 but didn't upgrade to FITI until 2023 (naughty - don't leave it that long!). Translating from French to English, mainly in the legal and business fields but now 2/3 retired and not looking for new clients.

## Dean Evans MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

The main thing that sticks in my head has to be dancing and partying with colleagues at conferences. The amazing band in Brighton, then the ceilidh in Edinburgh followed by música latina until the sun came up!

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Get out there and talk to people – whether online or in person, and both within T&I and in your specialist areas. Having a strong network has always been important, but now more than ever. You never know where a conversation might lead.

**About** I've been a member since 2017 and MITI since 2018. Working with patents in mechanical/electrical engineering, my main language pair is German to English, but I also translate from French and Spanish. I've been on the French Network committee since 2019 and on the ITI board since 2024.

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## Simon Wiles FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

In the early days ITI headquarters was essentially a basement somewhere in North London, so my memories are of some fairly important decisions being taken in stygian gloom.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

If I had been asked this even ten years ago, I would have been enthusiastic. Today, I would be very pessimistic. Interpreting certainly has a future; translation I think is doubtful.

**About** I am a Founder Member and Fellow of the Institute. I am ITI approved to work into English from German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Turkish, I never accept work about cookery.



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## Laurence Bisot FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

My highlights since 2015 have been the ITI conferences, I couldn't miss one! The sense of community is at its best, and I always feel proud of being part of it.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Network and engage with the community. Exchanging with other linguists during events and inside networks is priceless and crucial to boost confidence and find support.

**About** I have been a member since 2011, passed the MITI assessment in 2019 and am now a Fellow member. I am a French translator based in the North-West of England, and have been Chair of the North-West Translators' Network (NWTN) for 6 years.

## Charlotte Couchman FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

I think the weekend workshops would have to be my highlight, though they died out long ago. They were the best possible opportunity for a young, inexperienced translator to sit alongside translators with decades of experience and learn their craft in hands-on workshops. Since they were much smaller events than the conferences, they were also a really good way of getting to know colleagues. The translation profession is poorer for their absence.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Stick at it, it can take 3 years to get properly established in any freelance profession, so don't be quickly discouraged.

**About** I've been a member since the very beginning. I work from French, German and Spanish into English, translating intellectual property and other technical and scientific texts.

## Paul Clarke FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

The weekend workshops were outstanding highlights - a great opportunity for a then young and rather green translator to meet seasoned professionals and work on texts with them. My fondest memory is an afternoon working on a page of Asterix with Anthea Bell, one of the translators, together with Derek Hockridge, of the published English versions.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Establishing a freelance business takes time and I suspect, sadly, rather longer now than when I went freelance in the early 1990s.

**About** I've been a member of ITI since the very start and translate from French, German and Italian, focusing on intellectual property and technical publications.

## Roz Howarth MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

My favourite ITI moment was the dinner at the Sheffield ITI Conference in 2019. It was held in the beautiful and historic Cutler's Hall. I remember that I kept looking around, marvelling at the hall we were in. I was sitting with the NWTN, who won a well-deserved award that night and the mood was cheerful. Performing with the Singing Translators was also memorable.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Choose one area to focus on in your marketing, that you can offer as a specialist service. This doesn't mean you can't offer other services, but it will make it easier to gain results and find clients.

**About** I have been a member for over 15 years now, and an MITI since 2014. I am a French to English translator and French>English interpreter, working in the legal, business, HR and education fields. I also run events for the ITI's Parent and Carer Network!

## Cate Avery FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

Too many to choose from! Some of the most fun I had was at Weekend Translation Workshops back in the 1990s. We would be grouped into language pairs and work ad hoc and very informally on a text for translation - just for fun, and to learn from each other. A particular highlight was having a go at a couple of pages from (the original French) Asterix and Cleopatra, with everyone suggesting punning English names for the characters.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Join ITI networks - for your language, your region, your subject field or all three! They are a great way to get to know colleagues, and a safe space to ask questions and sometimes answer them. Over time, people get to know who you are, and can recommend you to others.

**About** I've been a translator since 1986. I specialise in patents, translating from German and Italian into English. I joined ITI in 1989.

## Sandra Mouton AITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

A real strong point of the ITI for me is its networks. My beloved regional network the Western Regional Group (ITI WRG rules!) helped me build a professional and personal network when I was starting out in a new profession and a new, adopted country, and it's by serving on its committee that I caught the bug of volunteering for professional associations. And the subject networks I'm part of (MAT, BFL, Food & Drink, the sadly defunct Sailing & Boating Network) have brought so much in terms of contacts, knowledge, CPD opportunities and human warmth.

Another highlight is the 2019 ITI Conference in Sheffield: the quality of the content, the beautiful venue, the general good vibes (and the knees-up on the gala night) make it a happy memory.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Network and engage! Both with your colleagues through joining a professional association (or two or three), and with the real world of your potential clients, by attending business events and joining business networks local to you and/or international (doing the "international stuff" is what we do as translators and interpreters).

**About** I'm a French translator working on translations from English, Russian and Latin, for business and for academia. I've been an Associate of the ITI since 2012. I'm originally from Paris, France, and currently based in Bristol, UK.

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## Graham Cross FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

One of our earliest weekend workshops in Durham, when I heard the Northumbrian pipes for the first time, and a Scottish weekend workshop in Orkney.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Never miss a deadline, never say no - always offer an alternative delivery

**About** Member since the very beginning, technical and legal translator from the Latin languages, former Chairman

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## Yelena McCafferty MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

Winning an ITI Award. It's such a shame the ITI Awards were discontinued. They were a wonderful way to celebrate member successes and to encourage others to strive to be one of the best.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Talk to experienced translators and interpreters before you make your decision to try it out.

**About** MITI since 2012 as a translator although I also do a lot of interpreting, between English and Russian.



## Aletta Stevens MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

My happiest memory is coming out of the Extraordinary General Meeting in London in 1986, realising I had been part of a historic moment: the founding of ITI. This was the year when three things came together to make my dream of setting up as a full-time freelance translator come true: moving out of London; the launch of the Amstrad PC; and a new institute to support my professional practice. Thanks to the Dutch Network and the Western Regional Group I was able to work out of a provincial town and yet feel part of a local and a national community. Thank you, ITI, for everything you have done over the past 40 years!

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Always be willing to learn new developments in technology, but never forget the immeasurable value of networking in person.

**About** I have been a member since ITI started. I am a freelance translator working from and into Dutch, specialising in medical and non-fiction.

## Alanah Reynor AITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

My ITI highlights have been the in-person events organised by the ITI French Network that I've been able to attend. The blend of networking and CPD in a small group of about 40 colleagues has proved to be invaluable experience, and made the ITI feel more personable.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Don't hesitate to volunteer your time with the ITI networks! Volunteering is a rewarding experience that brings you much closer to colleagues and creates a small support network around you. You're also able to help shape the future of the networks!

**About** I've been an ITI member since 2020, living and working in Belgium. I translate from French and Dutch into English and am coordinator of the ITI French Network.

## Mireille Bord

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

Finding the existence of ITI in 1987 by chance, and soon after becoming a member. After 5 years of solitary translating, being able to meet other translators.

A few years later, helping at a conference in Harrogate was very rewarding.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Do a degree in something other than languages, such as medical or law.

**About** I was a member for about 35 years, now semi-retired but still love discussions that only translators understand about research and choices.

## Philippe Galinier MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

My fondest memory of all ITI conferences was being awarded the John Hayes Award for best MITI qualifying translation exam at the conference dinner, in the beautiful city of Newcastle upon Tyne in 2015. A moment of recognition I am still very proud of today and that has stayed with me.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

It is well worth investing in ITI events such as the Conference. The costs involved will be more than repaid as you will find out more about the industry and meet supportive ITI staff and colleagues.

**About** I've been a member since 2009 - the first ITI conference I attended was at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on Birdcage Walk in London. I translate from English into French and I also teach translation (mostly to non-linguists) at university.

## Ulrike Nichols FITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

When I joined ITI companies like Trados and MemoQ had just started to conquer the profession. There seemed to be a lot of confusion and fear and the older generation felt sorry for the younger one. Within the last year with the establishment of AI, I feel a similar pattern emerging. BUT - on a far more positive side - my highlight was winning the seal at the conference in Brighton - because I knew its name was Hugo. And I knew that. Still don't know how but he just seemed to tell me. What a happy moment that was when he came home with me. And he's been my office companion ever since.

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Listen to many people but do what works for you. Translation has always been a rather insecure sector that required time and specialization. Currently, not just our industry is changing but seemingly the entire professional world from medicine, law, publishing to packaging etc. Everyone is confused and a bit worried. It's easy to get carried away there. So, find out what your strengths are and run with those. (And pick up any help you can get along the way.)

**About** I joined ITI nearly 20 years ago. I was new in the country, I was new in the profession, I had just had my first daughter - and I needed to find a place or a group of people to get oriented. So, in addition to the mothership, I "boarded" my regional group (ITI West Midlands), my language group (German) and the medical network because that was what my specialism eventually became. The workshops and social get-togethers of these groups have been invaluable as they helped me understand the seasonal changes of the market, set-backs in work offers, but also provided expertise from esteemed colleagues, wonderful hikes in beautiful setting and a good laugh.

## Nathalie Clergues MITI

### MY ITI HIGHLIGHT

In the spring of 1995, as a young and recent member of ITI, I was invited to attend a French Network meeting by the then coordinator Judith Hayward. This was certainly my own pivotal ITI moment. It was there that I met the talented English to French translator, editor and reviser Elizabeth Ganne, who was instrumental in contributing to ITI, the French Network and other professional translation bodies. Visibly amused by my late arrival and shaggy appearance in full motorcycle gear, and intrigued by the English into French short story translation I had just completed for my MA, she invited me to meet again and subsequently took me under her wing as a fledgling translator until her untimely death in 1998. I experienced first-hand the mutual help, support, resourcefulness and sharing of experience and advice that, to me, has defined ITI as a whole and its French Network in particular. I wish Elizabeth could have been around when I was awarded an ITI Translation Award in 2019. I know that this was an award I owed to the high standards, generosity and convictions passed on by all those who, like Elizabeth, contributed to ITI and made it an organisation built by and for translators and interpreters. Long may it continue. Happy Anniversary, ITI!

### ADVICE FOR THOSE STARTING OUT

Joining regional, language and specialism networks, and acting professionally at all times.

**About** I'm an English into French transcreator, translator and copywriter. I specialise in writing attractive, impactful French copy for the advertising and marketing sector, as well as for French and UK publishers. I've been a member of ITI (MITI) since 1994 and started my career in the UK, where I was based for 12 years before relocating to France some 20 years ago.

# Built by and for the ITI community.

With thanks to every member who shared a  
memory and a word of advice.