



INTERSTENO ENEWS **116** | JULY 2026

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President's message



My dear Intersteno Friends,

It's almost time, our congress in Liverpool will take place in less than three weeks. I'm looking forward to it! Here is the link to the program:

<https://www.intersteno2026.org/program.php>

In this e-newsletter, among other topics, there are two reports: from the CAS Stenography Association of Korea about the Belt and Road & BRICS Competition of Skills Development and Technology Innovation in Guangzhou (China), and a report from the 10th national convention of the Association of Court Reporters of the Philippines COSTRAPHIL in Davao.

There is also an interview with Anita Dobos, our national representative from Hungary, who unfortunately cannot attend the congress.

Last but not least, I want to point out Monika Dissler's initiative to visit the Chetham Library in Manchester on the day after the congress in Liverpool, Friday, July 31.

The next e-news will appear in October 2026. The deadline for submitting articles is at the end of September, to be sent to marlenerijkse@intersteno.org.

Rian Schwarz-van Poppel

Intersteno president



Visit to Chetham's Library, Manchester (Organized by German Shorthand Research Institute) on Friday, 31 July 2026



The day after the congress in Liverpool, the German Shorthand Research offers the participants of the Intersteno Congress an additional post-congress excursion.

A short note about Chetham's Library:

John Byrom - the founder of the outstanding shorthand collection in the Chetham's Library - is a central figure in shorthand history and science.

Byrom was chairman of the world's first stenographers' club (1726 ff.), which means he started the stenographic association movement. The members of his "Societas tachygraphica" met regularly in a London pub where they received shorthand lessons from Byrom himself.

But Byrom's most important achievement was his own system from 1720: It is the first neo-geometric shorthand system (following countless English systems we characterize as early geometric, dating back to 1588). It is to this system that Byrom owes the honorary title "Father of Rational Shorthand" among scholars.

But even without these shorthand treasures, Chetham's Library in Manchester would still be a gem. Not only is it the oldest public library in the entire English-speaking world, but it is also a place of unique beauty. During a previous visit to Manchester, we had the opportunity to browse through some of the works. We would like to offer such an experience for "bookworms" to the esteemed participants of the Intersteno Congress as well.

Far from Liverpool

By Marlene Rijkse

Anita Dobos has always been a loyal contributor of articles for the e-news over the years. That came to an abrupt end when she was hospitalized in December 2024 after a car accident (which was not her fault, but unfortunately the case has not been closed yet). The damages proved to be relatively minor (cracked ribs, hip bone damage, wounds, bruises; at that time several people told her that she was 'made of steel'), but after various examinations, it turned out that she had a serious illness, which she is being treated for up to this day. Anita regularly lets us know how she is doing. So fortunately, she is not an 'absent' sick person.



Anita was unfortunately unable to attend the Council meeting in Córdoba. She will also be absent in Liverpool. That will feel strange, as she is such a familiar face at our congresses. Reason enough to pose a few questions to her for this e-news.

Since your accident – more than 18 months – also Intersteno misses you. What do you miss most in your current, illness-affected life?

In addition to health, there is 'freedom' which I really miss. Unfortunately, I can't practically plan anything (I'm also afraid to plan, because I'm afraid that – as has unfortunately happened several times – some difficulty will always come in the way). Of course, I miss my 'previous' life, e.g. together with friends, programs, theater, cinema, concerts, and my former job with my students, which I practically lost because of my illness. And although many people say that I am very strong, I sometimes feel that I need more strength, endurance and especially patience.

You have bad and good days. Can you describe what a good day looks like?

On a good day, I wake up rested, without the side effects caused by the treatments. Kind messages are coming, which I will be happy to answer. Breakfast on the terrace with birds chirping (this is often heard where I live). It's nice weather, I'm going for a walk, maybe I'll have an ice cream. I have time to read after medical gymnastics. I like to read books on lighter and more serious subjects. I follow the news. I play with my relatives' children. These 'simple' things matter a lot. It is very interesting, after one of the long stays in the hospital, how many things I became aware of in a 'different way': the sunshine, the flowers, the tranquility of a park. Sooner or later we learn what is really important.

Can you give an outline of your activities in the context of Intersteno?

Since I was in high school, I competed in shorthand and typing, and later also in Note Taking and Reporting. Over the years, I slowly moved to the 'other side' and learned the organizational work related to competitions, first the Hungarian competitions, later the preparation for international competitions and the world championships. I have attended thirteen times continuously every Intersteno congress since Lausanne. As a competitor, later as the leader of the Hungarian group, as an international jury member, and since 2022 I have been leading the Note Taking and Reporting competition. I participated in international competitions as a leader of the Hungarian group (Leipzig, Hodonín, Vienna, Neukirchen, Olomouc). I was the Hungarian representative at the Intersteno Council meetings (Tychy, Prague, Shanghai, Zagreb, Istanbul, Bordeaux). I was one of the hosts of the Budapest Council meeting in 2010 and participated at the Board meeting in Budapest in 2014. I was a member of the international organizing committee of the Intersteno congress in Budapest (2015). I gave a presentation with my colleague Bernadett Berencsi at an international conference on shorthand in Vienna (2018).

Who will do your work at the congress in Liverpool?

It was a very difficult decision that I can't participate at the Intersteno congress this year. But now I had to prioritize my health and focus on healing. With my colleague Bernadett we had a hard time with my decision. We have worked together at Intersteno for many years and this year she was left 'alone'. Of course, I pay attention to the information, as my condition allows, but unfortunately I cannot participate in the work as before; now Bernadett will take care of the tasks related to the Hungarian group.

Do you have any tips for the participants in Liverpool?

I'm sure that everyone had prepared/trained for competitions based on their own tips. If I could say something, I would say it is what I learned from a friend's little son: always fight, never give up (when I was in a really bad situation, the little boy sent me the key ring of his favorite football team with these words on it. It was very touching and I've been trying to keep these words ever since)! Take part in the competition with complete calmness (I know, it's easy to say that) and don't forget that the biggest 'fight' is with yourself!

How can we make sure that you still feel somewhat involved in Liverpool?

Oh, I feel like a part of it! With so many Intersteno friends writing/messaging me, I actually feel like I'm 'there'. I'm sure that it will be a great congress. I know you all are always with me! After the council meeting in Argentina, I was really touched when I received a very kind and beautiful gift from Intersteno friends! I hope that I can participate in the next Intersteno event and that we can meet in person! I wish everyone good luck and nice days in Liverpool!

Here, I would also like to express my gratitude to everyone who helped/is helping me during this difficult time: my family, doctors, nurses, friends in Hungary and abroad, including at Intersteno. Without them, I couldn't fight like this! Thank you very much!



The great opportunity to meet Intersteno in China

(Report on Intersteno Participation in the Belt and Road & BRICS Competition of Skills Development and Technology Innovation, Guangzhou (China) by CAS Stenography Association of Korea)

By Choi Koangsuk

CAS Stenography Association of Korea (Choi Koangsuk, Chairman) attended the International Friendship Exchange of 2nd Information Processing Competition (Direction of Clerk) of '2025 Belt & Road and BRICS Skills Development and Technological Innovation' in China with the support of Koreasteno (Shon Seokyeon, CEO) in January. The association has continued to engage in exchanges with the national group of China since the 2009 Intersteno Congress in Beijing. Following last year's participation in the event, the association also participated in this year's event as an international team.

In Korea, including this association, tends to regard only real-time high-speed input methods as stenography. The TP (Text Production) and NT (Note Taking and Reporting) competition of this event were unfamiliar to us. In contrast to RT (Real-Time Speech Capturing) competition, in which Korean stenographers have had good results, our three students didn't obtain satisfying results in TP and NT. I thought it was necessary to change the stenography education and qualification system in line with the diversification of our business.

In addition, this event was an opportunity for us to exchange close to Seoul with delegations from countries—Italy, United Kingdom, Poland, Croatia, Czech Republic, and Philippines—that have occasionally exchanged through Intersteno events in Europe and the Americas. We also learned what each country's stenographers do and how they do it, and we were able to think about what we could do in the competition at the Intersteno Congress in Liverpool.

We thank the Organizing Committee of this event for inviting us, and the friendship between the two countries' stenography industry will continue. Korean stenography is trying to develop further to meet world-class standards. We hope that there will be a day when such an international event will be held in Korea to invite stenographers from all over the world as well as from the old friend Chinese delegation.



Dinner with all participants from abroad



Beer time with Tang Teng and Korean members

Charles Dickens: before the writer, the shorthand reporter

By Marcela Kobe, Tucumán, Argentina.

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) was a celebrated British novelist of the Victorian era, famous for his social criticism and memorable characters, as seen in works such as *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol*. His difficult childhood —marked by child labour in a factory after his father’s imprisonment— deeply shaped his writing, which denounced poverty and inequality.

Long before becoming Charles Dickens, one of the great storytellers of world literature, there was a self-taught young man who trained himself with effort and patience in a largely invisible discipline: shorthand.

Around 1827, while still very young, he began to study the Gurney system. It was not an easy process. He describes it himself in his autobiographical novel, *David Copperfield*, as an almost obsessive experience: signs that changed meaning depending on their position, minimal strokes that could completely alter a sentence, poorly placed curves capable of ruining an entire phrase. These marks — which he compared to “fly’s legs” — occupied not only his days but also followed him into his dreams.

Yet within that difficulty there was more than a technical challenge. There was, perhaps without his fully realizing it, a first deep encounter with language as a living substance. The combination of signs, their variations, and their unpredictable effects already suggested a particular sensitivity: that of someone who would later work with words that could be, at the same time, both allies and rebels.

In November 1828, he began working as a shorthand reporter at the ecclesiastical court. For four years, this environment allowed him to practice his craft, but it also left a lasting impression: direct contact with the slowness and complexity of the English judicial system. This experience would not remain there; years later, it would reappear, transformed, in his work.

Around 1832, he took a further step and became a parliamentary reporter. He worked for *The Mirror of Parliament* and contributed to *The True Sun*, in a context where speed and accuracy were not optional virtues but essential conditions. Dickens stood out: his speed, his constant availability, and his adaptability distinguished him. He was especially noted for his accurate transcription of long and complex speeches.

However, this recognition did not bring satisfaction. There was a deeper tension within him. Personal experiences, frustrations, and a certain disillusionment with his surroundings gradually pushed him toward another field. Little by little and with growing intensity, he turned to writing.

By 1836, this process had become evident. Dickens had found his style. But that style did not emerge out of nowhere. Behind that voice were years of silent training: attentive listening, the ability to grasp what was essential, and the precision to put into words what others could barely express.

Did shorthand prepare the writer?

It is not an exaggeration to think that the shorthand reporter had prepared the writer. Some studies even suggest that part of the strength of his work —especially the vitality of his dialogues and the diversity of voices he creates— has its roots in that earlier, almost invisible exercise of recording other people’s words in real time.

Years later, his work would travel the world and be read with admiration far beyond England. Among those who recognized his talent were, among others, Friedrich Engels, Leo Tolstoy, and Fyodor Dostoevsky.

But behind that international recognition lies an earlier story —less visible and deeply meaningful: that of a young man who, faced with difficult signs and tiny strokes, learned to listen, to interpret, and to shape words, a story in which shorthand was not only a profession but also a starting point.

This article is mainly based on the book *Charles Dickens*, by Jean-Pierre Ohl (published by El Ateneo).



Report on the 10th National COSTRAPHIL Conference – Davao, 23-24 April 2026

By Carlo Eugeni

On April 23 and 24 April, the association of Court Reporters of the Philippines COSTRAPHIL held their 10th national convention in Davao. After last year's successful Intersteno attendance at the 1st Luzon regional convention of Philippine court reporters, COSTRAPHIL invited Intersteno to attend as guest speakers. Intersteno answered with a delegation led by the chairman of the scientific committee Dr. Carlo Eugeni (UK) and made of council members Deliza Ridoloso (the Philippines), Francesca Marchionne (Italy), and Tang Ji (China), and general assembly members D'Arcy McPherson (Canada), Yeonhwan Choi (Korea), Teng Tang and Yimeng Li (China).



The event and the delegates' personal agenda was organised by GV Romero and supervised by COSTRAPHIL national president Cesar Saloma, whom many of us have met and appreciated in

Katowice (Poland) during the 54th Intersteno Congress and in Córdoba (Argentina) during the last Council meeting.

After journeys that ranged between 2 hours (Deliza) and 32 hours (Francesca), the Intersteno delegation was warmly welcomed by the usual Philippine hospitality, with COSTRAPHIL vice president Rona Almarvez generously leading the security team (a driver, a body guard, 4 policemen and two Davao based court reporters), who drove the delegates from the airport to the Radisson Hotel where they lodged, and escorted them for the duration of their respective stays.





On 20 April, Carlo met the Dean of the Davao-based School of Law of the University of Southern Philippines, with whom he discussed possible career paths for Law students as court stenographers, as well as the judges of the local court, in the framework of the recently approved reform of the justice system whereby Automatic Speech Recognition technology (ASR) was introduced in the court reporting workflow.

On 20 April, in Manila, D'Arcy and Deliza met with the parliamentary reporters of the Senate of the Philippines. On 21 April, they met with David Hartman, the Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines; and Mr. Christopher Ilagan, the President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines (CanCham).



On 22 April, the delegates were invited for a welcome dinner in the presence of Justice Raúl Villanueva of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court's Assistant Court Administrator Maria Regina Adoracion Filomena M. Ignacio.

On 23 April, the convention began. After processing while holding the flags of the Philippines, the Supreme court, COSTRAPHIL, and Intersteno, a military band played the National anthem of the Philippines, the anthem of the Philippine Supreme Court, and the Intersteno Anthem.



After opening remarks from the President of COSTRAPHIL, Cesar Saloma, the attendees were welcomed to Davao City by the Acting Vice Mayor of Davao City, Rodrigo "Rigo" Sangkola Duterte II.

On behalf of the Intersteno delegation, Carlo delivered an opening speech illustrating Intersteno and its activities to the 2,300 attendees, while Deliza explained what the Intersteno Philippine delegation has done since they became a national group in 2023 and the importance of being an Intersteno member for the internationalisation of reporters. Both Carlo and Deliza invited all attendees to participate in future Intersteno activities!



A gift exchange followed between COSTRAPHIL, the Supreme Court of the Philippines, and each Intersteno delegate.

In the afternoon, the resource speeches began. Carlo gave the keynote speech about *The Changing Role of the Reporter in Interaction with the Machine*, while D’Arcy talked of *The Integrity of the Official Record in the face of AI – and other challenges*.



On the second day Yeonhwan spoke about *The Stenographer Profession in Korea*, Francesca spoke about *Beyond Barriers: Accessibility and Communication for Everyone*, and Ji spoke about *China's Court Clerk Stenographic Skills Assessment and Evaluation System*.



The two days have also been characterised by entertainment provided by the regional groups and lots of photo opportunities with each of the delegates.

After the resource speeches, the COSTRAPHIL national assembly took place, during which Cesar illustrated the activities carried out during his mandate, especially the fight for better working conditions and pay raises, and the internationalisation of the Philippine court reporters. Cesar was re-elected for a second mandate, hopefully culminating with a council meeting in the Philippines by the end of his second mandate.

The Intersteno delegates' stay officially ended with the farewell dinner at the Salome's Garden by Chippens, where delegates could enjoy not just the generous local cuisine – particularly the lechon – but also karaoke entertainment provided by each of the attendees.



Aside the official programme, delegates also enjoyed social activities including a visit to the mount Apo's tribes, foot massages, a chocolate making workshop at the Malagos Chocolate Museum, a visit to the crocodile park, and many more that delegates might be happy to share with everyone in Liverpool!