A. Henrich, in constructing a Vassiliev invariant for virtual knots, defined the index of a classical crossing in a virtual knot diagram. The definition is combinatorial and has been used or modified to define several other invariants. Using the theory of virtual covers initiated by M. Chrisman we relate the index of a classical crossing to Milnor’s triple linking number of a suitably defined 3 component link. (Received August 10, 2015)