



Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers – New Zealand Branch

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2009

Welcome to the fifth annual general meeting of the branch.

In several ways we've had a good year. Membership of the branch rose from 19 to 24 in the past 12 months.

We have held an advanced training course, have virtually completed a register of available indexers to send to New Zealand publishers, have reinstated a mentoring programme in the absence of the overall society one, and have contributed to debate on various issues at council level and with other branches of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers.

One of our committee members, Jill Gallop, set up the Index Club – a means of critiquing indexes and learning from others' experience.

The freelance register is complete and ready to send to publishers except for possible entries from new members, which we will discuss later. Our thanks to Jill Mellanby, Tordis Flath and Julie Daymond-King for their work on this.

The branch's mentoring programme is ready to go and simply awaits applications. Susan Brookes is co-ordinating the scheme and Tordis will be the mentor.

We had good publicity when the *Dominion-Post* ran a feature article on Tordis and indexing in a jobs supplement. This led to several new indexers joining the branch, three of whom attended an ANZSI training course in Melbourne last month. Thanks to Jill Gallop for initiating this and to Tordis for being the subject, and for handling the response positively and fruitfully.

In April the ANZSI council decided to make a grant of 500 Australian dollars to help compensate for the loss on our South Island training course last year. In relation to our budget, this was of great assistance.

Largely because the branch's finances remain marginal, the committee drew up procedures for some training courses to be run independently, with a small percentage of any profit to go to the branch. We are grateful to Tordis for organising the advanced course on this basis.

The ANZSI website became ever more comprehensive during the year, and any member who has not yet done so would find it worth exploring for information and resources. The branch contributed to both the website and the newsletter, so news of our activities had good coverage.

The website has a new section for council members including branch presidents, most of whom are unable to attend monthly council meetings. The 'council area' is intended to improve communication between the executive and branches. It is still in its early stages but has good potential.

We did have some negative issues during the year, as when the ANZSI council in January, without asking what happens on the ground, told branches to submit audited financial reports as a prerequisite for receiving the branches' per-head share of subscriptions.

Most branches, including our own, opposed this requirement. The cost of auditing would have been more than the income from the per capita payment via ANZSI. The council eventually relented and decided that a scrutineer would be sufficient.

The ANZSI council asked what we thought of hosting the society's 2011 conference, and said, in effect, that much of the organisation of the event could be done from Australia. However, after discussion by the committee it was clear that we did not have enough active members in a major centre to commit the branch to be responsible for hosting the event, so we declined with more than a little regret. These conferences are held every two years and we should keep in mind the possibility of hosting the 2013 conference.

A few months ago the New South Wales branch proposed that the council provide financial support for branch representatives to attend conferences or AGMs, and this branch supported the proposal. The council is not enthusiastic about it, however.

The Australians have continued, off and on, to investigate and discuss incorporation of the society across the Tasman. They seem to have found it impractical at present but it is still on the long-term agenda. The New Zealand situation remains distinct. We discussed this at our AGM a year ago and decided not to take immediate action. Becoming an incorporated society seems out of our reach as well as of doubtful value. An alternative may be the status of a charitable trust, which has a lower level of eligibility in New Zealand law. The process includes bodies with educational purposes.

I conclude by thanking the branch's outgoing committee members – in some sort of alphabetical order Susan Brookes, Julie Daymond-King, Tordis Flath, Jill Gallop and Jill Mellanby – for their support and contribution to the branch during the year.