From the President

June has arrived, and for self-employed indexers that means a count down to the end of the financial year, and all the paperwork it entails. For ANZSI, it now also means membership renewal time. You may recall that our membership year has now changed to align with the financial year, from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007.

This year, we have changed our procedures slightly for renewal notices. You will not be sent renewal forms in the post; instead, our Membership Secretary Joanna McLachlan will be sending a reminder email to you, which will include the URL link to the Membership Renewal form on our Society's website. Please print out this form and return it with your renewal payment. As in the past, you can pay by credit card or cheque, but please note that we aren't yet able to accept secure online renewals or payments, so you will have to mail your renewal form to us.

Why the change? In the past, our Membership Secretary had to extract individual details for each member of ANZSI from our membership database, and print personalised forms so that you could check your details and notify us of any changes. It took quite some time to collate responses and make changes to all our internal records, and to Indexers Available. Now, thanks to the work of our Web Manager Jon Jermey, you can make your own changes directly online, using the passwords Jon sent each of you earlier this year. You can change phone numbers, addresses and other details, as well as ensure that your entry in Indexers Available is up to date and includes recent indexed works. So the process of membership renewal is streamlined, and much quicker.

At this point, I normally write about the benefits of Society membership and urge you to re-join, and to become active in the Society. This year, I think the benefits speak for themselves: a new self-maintaining membership database, easier access to Indexers Available, an imminent website overhaul providing more opportunities for exchange of information including a discussion forum, special Branch pages, online payment facilities, events calendars, etc, and better administrative processes. Therefore watch for your renewal email, and if you haven't updated your membership details online yet why not check out the new arrangements. If you have misplaced your password, contact the Membership Secretary.

Our changes to renewal notices is part of a wider range of changes to administrative procedures which the ANZSI Committee has been working on this year, and which was the focus of our Committee's recent GAMES (Guidelines, Archives, Mentoring for the Society) meeting. ANZSI's Committee convened for a two-day working bee where we examined and in many cases codified our administrative guidelines and procedures for the Society to ensure that our operations are fair, transparent and accountable. Some of the new developments to come out of the meeting include moves to extend the Mentoring Scheme to a Society-wide service, new procedures for archiving our records (after all, we have been operating for 30 years!), changes to our registration procedures, and newly-defined roles for some of our Executive and Committee positions. We will be reporting back to you, in the next few newsletters, with more details of many of these developments.

In two weeks time, I will be on my way overseas to attend the triennial International Meeting of Indexing Societies

GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601

Membership renewal

Members are reminded that the ANZSI financial year is now July–June so your membership subscriptions are now due.

This year we will not be sending renewal notices by post. Instead members are being notified by email and directed to the membership renewal form on the website at <www.aussi.org/membership/index.html>.

This form can be downloaded, completed and returned with your renewal payment to the Membership Secretary at the address indicated on the form. Only members without email or those with bounced emails will be posted a renewal form.

Email notifications have now been sent out. If you have any questions about the renewal process, please feel free to contact the Membership Secretary, Joanna McLachlan, at <memsec@aussi.org>.

Lynn Farkas thanks Sherrey Quinn for chairing the GAMES Meeting held in Canberra, 27–28 May. Present were: Geraldine Triffitt, Lynn Farkas, Tracy Harwood, John Simkin, Alan Walker, Sherrey Quinn, Jon Jermey, Glenda Browne, Max McMaster, Penny Whitten, Tordis Flath, Shirley Campbell, Barry Howarth. More about GAMES next month!

(*From the President*, continued from p.1)

which will take place at the joint American and Canadian indexing conference in Toronto. I will also attend the British indexing conference in Durham in early July. I hope to return with lots of inspirations that can be incorporated into our Society's operations. In the meantime, I wish all of you well with end of financial year recordkeeping, and don't forget to renew your ANZSI membership!

Lynn Farkas
ANZI President

ANZSI calendar of forthcoming activities

Are these really all the forthcoming activities that are fit to print? Branch secretaries, please take notice!!

Branch activities

Date of activity	Organiser	Name of activity	Venue & time	Contact details
21 June 2006	Vic Branch	Bell ringing visit	St Paul's Cathedral, cnr Swanston and Flinders Sts, Melbourne	RSVP: by 18 June to Jenny Restarick ph/fax 03 9528 2539 or <cliffres@connexus.net.au>
24 June 2006	ACT Region Branch	Annual Reports Indexing training	Griffin Centre, 9.00–4.00 pm	Edyth Binkowski <geoffb@webone.com.au>
8 July 2006	Qld regional contact	ANZSI 30th Birthday lunch	Augustines on George, Brisbane, 12 noon	Moira Brown. Ph 07 3893 1252 0416 097 629 or <brown5moira@yahoo.com.au>
26 July 2006	Vic Branch	Visit to Sensis	222 Lonsdale Street, Queen Vic Centre, Melbourne	RSVP: by 24 July to Jenny Restarick ph/fax 03 9528 2539 or <cliffres@connexus.net.au>
15 and 22 July 2006	NSW Branch	Book Indexing training course	Thomson Legal & Regulatory, 100 Harris Street, Pyrmont, Sydney	Lorraine Doyle <lorraine.doyle@thomson.com>
2 August 2006	ACT Region Branch	What's in a name?	Friends Room, National Library, 5.30-7.30 pm	Geraldine Triffitt <gtriffitt@netspeed.com.au>

National/international activities of interest

Date of activity	Organiser	Name of activity	Venue & time	Contact details
16–17 March 2007	ANZSI Vic Branch	ANZSI Conference	Rydge's Riverwalk, Richmond, Melbourne	Margaret Findlay <mafind@bigpond.net.au>

The bells are ringing for me and my gal...

Vic Branch explores the mysteries of campanology

Bell-ringing (change ringing) is a traditional English folk-art that originated in the early seventeenth-century when it was discovered that bells could be rung using a scientific system of mathematical permutations.

Change ringing was first introduced into Australia in Sydney after the arrival of the first ring of eight bells in 1795. During the nineteenth century the practice spread to other colonies, with installations of bells in Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland.

St Paul's Cathedral has a magnificent ring of 13 bells donated by Mr Thomas Dyer Edwardes, whose father had been a landowner in Victoria. The bells were cast in 1889 by the Mears and Stainbank foundry at Whitechapel, London. The total weight of 7 tons 3 cwt made them the heaviest ring from that foundry in the 19th Century and is the world's second oldest complete ring of 12 bells.

Come and watch the campanologists practice their swings and peals and stops – find out how they memorise the ups and downs, how they file and store and record and INDEX the mathematical formulae used to denote the wonderful music they produce

Date: Wednesday, 21 June 21 from 6.00 pm – we are meeting before the practice session begins so we can hear (!!) the Tower Captain (Andrew Chin) tell us all about this craft before his team starts rehearsing. Practice runs from 6.30 – 8.30 pm, after which we have invited the team to join us at La Porchetta.

Where: St. Paul's Cathedral, on the corner of Swanston and Flinders Streets, Melbourne. As soon as you arrive at the tower (east side of the Cathedral) you should find the big doors open, and just inside and behind the big doors is the small tower door. As soon as our group has gathered downstairs we will head right on up.

Numbers limited (for space reasons)
RSVP: by Monday 18 June to
Jenny Restarick ph/fax 03 9528 2539
Email cliffres@connexus.net.au
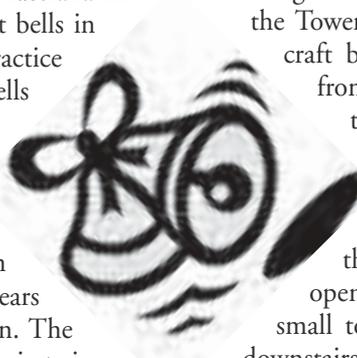
From the literature and other thoughts

Open Road May/June 2006

In 'Meet our experts' Col Chambers, who runs NRMA's Motoring & Technical Library says: 'A librarian couldn't do this job, you need to have the inherent motoring knowledge. If someone says "my wheel goes 'wonka wonka'", I know exactly where to look for books on wheels that go 'wonka wonka'."

Under 'wo' I expect.

Key Words v.14 n.2 April-June 2006

Harry Diakoff has written a review of the proceedings of a conference on the history of scientific information systems. The publication is available in print, and also on the web. It covers both the history and the current state of a wide range of bibliographic databases, with one article covering the management of raw data in fields such as genetics and meteorology. Michael Middleton contributed one article: 'Drops in the ocean: the development of scientific and technological information services in Australia'.

Details are: Rayward, W Boyd and Bowden, Mary Ellen 2004. *The history and heritage of scientific and technological information systems*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc, on behalf of the American Society for Information Science and Technology and the Chemical Heritage Foundation, available free at www.chemheritage.org/pubs/pub-nav3.htm (22 May 2006).

Web Indexing SIG and IAI

The **Web Indexing SIG** of the **American Society of Indexers** has established a partnership with the Information Architecture Institute (formerly known as the Asilomar Institute for Information Architecture; iainstitute.org/pg/partners.php).

This partnership gives web indexing a higher profile among those in the profession that make decisions about website organisation and design. Web Indexing SIG members gain specific benefits, including reduced/member rates to IA Institute events and the right to join the IA Institute members-only mailing discussion list.

Libraries Australia via Scholar

Searches for book titles in Google Scholar done in Australia now return a link to the record in Libraries Australia. At this stage the link is provided if the book is already in Google Scholar (scholar.google.com, try 'Indexing Books'), but this will be extended to cover all holdings from Libraries Australia.

This means you can use Google Scholar to find libraries within Australia that hold the book you are interested in, as well as other mentions of the book. And if you want to find only the holdings you can go direct to Libraries Australia (www.librariesaustralia.nla.gov.au).

The Publisher Issue 91 May 2006

In 'A plea for indexes' (reprinted below), Kathryn Mercer estimates that 14% of non-fiction books published in New Zealand and listed in the National Bibliography have indexes, compared to 40% in Australia (which is better, but still too low). This is especially surprising as most of the publishing in New Zealand is educational.

Gene indexing

In the *NLM technical bulletin* (March – April 2005: 343, <www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/ma05/ma05_gene.html>), Janice Ward wrote on the linking of articles in PubMed to information about genes and nucleotides in Entrez Gene. More than 1800 organisms, including mammals, vertebrates, invertebrates, microorganisms and plants, are represented. In PubMed citations, users can click on 'Links' then select 'Gene' to view the Entrez Gene record for the gene or protein. Try it out at PubMed <www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi> using the examples in the article.

Thomson Derwent also provides information on nucleic acid and amino acid sequences from patents (GENESEQ, thomsonderwent.com/products/patentresearch/geneseq).

Glenda Browne

A plea for indexes

Indexing is about providing rapid access to ideas and information, both to browsers and those wanting to return to a particular place in the text. Without an index, only the most time-rich researchers can work their way through books to find relevant information. A search of the published literature on back-of-the-book indexing reveals many complaints about the lack of indexes, something to which many publishers seem oblivious.

In 2003 one New Zealand indexer estimated that just 10 per cent of New Zealand non-fiction was published with an index. A quick survey of the October 2005 New Zealand National Bibliography for printed non-fiction monographs of more than 20 pages (excluding dictionaries and unpaged books) produced only marginally less dismal results: of just

under 300 titles, approximately 14 per cent had indexes – and this despite the bulk of our publishing being broadly described as educational! This lack was commented on by the Montana New Zealand Book Awards 2005 judges:

> We were concerned by the number of non-fiction books, especially reference works, lacking indices and the apparatus of scholarly documentation, and we'd like to suggest that publishers should pay more attention to these. The effectiveness of some excellent books is greatly diminished without them.

By comparison, approximately 40 per cent of Australian nonfiction is indexed; a level that many librarians and the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI) feel is too low. Libraries take into consideration the existence and

ACT Region Branch celebrates the founding of AusSI

The ACT Region Branch celebrated the 30th anniversary of the inaugural meeting in Melbourne of the Australian Society of Indexers with a Chinese banquet at the Asian Cafe in Canberra on Saturday 27May. Forty-three people attended – half the Branch members, with their partners and friends, and members of the Canberra Society of Editors.

We were fortunate that visiting members of the ANZSI Committee, who were attending the GAMES meeting, could also be present at the dinner. They were John Simkin and Max McMaster from Victoria, Alan Walker, Glenda Browne and Jon Jermey from New South Wales and Tordis Flath from New Zealand.

Lynn Farkas proposed the toast to the Society. Tordis introduced the speaker, John Simkin, who had been present at the inaugural meeting on 27 April 1976. Alan Walker, a former National President of the Australian Society of Indexers, cut the cake.

John Simkin's speech had two connected themes: he considered the need for indexers to have imagination and a flexible mind, and he discussed the contributions of individuals to the growth of indexing in Australia, including the contributions of CSIRO staff to the formation of AusSI. Our next newlstter will give a more extensive account of John's address.

Judging by the lively conversations at the tables, people really enjoyed the social occasion and the chance to meet their

Alan Walker cuts the cake, watched by Tordis Flath and Lynn Farkas

colleagues. The twelve courses provided a variety of tasty dishes served by pleasant, competent staff.

Geraldine Triffitt

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*(**A plea for indexes**, continued from previous page)*

quality of an index when evaluating non-fiction materials for purchase and awards. Further research may reveal whether this is a significant factor with other potential purchasers. Even if bookshops, libraries or readers complain about a particular book, few New Zealand books run to a second edition where this could be remedied. The BPANZ Survey of Book Publishing in New Zealand found that 16 per cent of publishing last year (including fiction, pictorial works, etc.) was of revised titles (436 books), although the sample appears to have been skewed somewhat towards medium-large publishers. Another estimate based on Nielsen BookData information found that of the 16,623 non-fiction titles published in New Zealand since 1995 and listed on their database, only 227 went into a second or revised edition, i.e. about one per cent.

Professional indexers within the English-speaking world generally view retrospectively produced book indexes as uneconomic, so where such indexes are produced at all they tend to be compiled on a voluntary basis or as part of a broader

job by people such as librarians and curators, who don't always have appropriate training. Such indexing appears to be rare and is uncoordinated, resulting in some duplication of effort.

Publishers, please note: not all of your readers have the luxury of reading your books from cover to cover over a glass of wine. I am frustrated both as a librarian who helps researchers to identify relevant information and as a researcher myself: please, please save the time of your readers by providing good quality indexes in your non-fiction books.

Further information about indexing training is available on the ANZSI website, as are basic guidelines for engaging indexers (see <www.aussi.org/profissues/clients>). Publishers are welcome to attend ANZSI branch meetings to meet local indexers. Information is available from Tordis Flath, President of the New Zealand Branch, at <indexing@paradise.net.nz>.

Kathryn Mercer
(excerpted from *The Publisher*, Issue 91, May 2006)

Vic Branch visit to the National Herbarium of Victoria

On a damp Thursday afternoon in April, a group of eleven ANZSI members and friends visited the National Herbarium of Victoria. The Herbarium is part of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, located on Birdwood Avenue, near the Shrine of Remembrance. It is the oldest herbarium in Australia, established in 1853 by Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller, the first Government Botanist of the Colony of Victoria. With an estimated 1.2 million specimens, it houses one of the largest reference collections of dried plant material (including algae, lichens, fungi and mosses) in Australia.

While the main focus is on Victorian plants, the collection includes specimens of nearly all known Australian flowering plants as well as major groups from many regions around the world. The specimens are a primary source of information on the classification and distribution of plants, algae and fungi and are the working tools of scientists who contribute to our knowledge and understanding of biodiversity and conservation through the discovery, classification and description of plant species.

The tour was led by Alison Vaughan, with assistance from her colleagues Helen Rommelaar and Judy Ryan. Alison started the tour with a brief history of the Herbarium and then took us to meet the volunteers who mount the specimens. Here, Judy Ryan explained how the dried and pressed specimens and labels are mounted on sheets of archival card, labelled and stored flat in folders or packets. We were particularly impressed with the fine hand-sewing of some specimens which cannot be glued onto the herbarium card. The volunteers mount some 16,000 specimens each year and are an integral part of the workings of the Herbarium.

We then moved into the Collections area, where Helen Rommelaar showed us a selection of the many notable specimens from the Collections, including one of the oldest specimens in the Collections, collected by Samuel Brown in Madras in 1696; specimens collected by Sir Joseph Banks, the botanist on Captain Cook's voyage, at Botany Bay in 1770, and a specimen and associated watercolour illustration of an alga.

The collections are stored flat on shelves in metal locker-style cupboards, and are filed according to family (or major group), then alphabetically according to genus and species. Australian material and foreign material are generally filed separately. Specimens are routinely exchanged between herbaria, through both exchange of duplicate specimens and loans (similar to interlibrary loans). All incoming specimens, as well as all materials, spend a week in the freezer at -23 degrees C to kill insects and other pests. As part of their Integrated Pest Management strategy, herbarium staff systematically rotate the entire collection through the freezer; it takes over three years to treat the entire collection.

As part of the Australia's Virtual Herbarium (AVH) Project, herbarium staff are databasing the Australian collections. The AVH project is a national project to database the six million scientific plant specimens held in Australia's major government-funded herbaria and make the information globally accessible via the web. When the National Herbarium of Victoria commenced work on the AVH in 2001, only 30% of the 800,000 Australian plant specimens held in the Herbarium were on the database. Now, nearing the end of the project, over 90% of the Australian collection has been entered.

Each record on the database includes the specimen's unique accession number, the name of the plant, when and where the specimen was collected and by whom, the latitude and longitude co-ordinates and any other information recorded on the specimen label, such as a description of features of the plant, the habitat in which it was found and what other species were growing nearby.

Entering specimen details into the database often requires a bit of detective work, as the older handwritten labels can be difficult to decipher and are often don't indicate who collected the material. With experience, the handwriting of specific collectors is recognized and deciphered and the database record is completed with information from other sources.

Information from each herbarium is uploaded to Australia's Virtual Herbarium (the AVH), at <www.rbg.vic.gov.au/research_and_ conservation/plant_information/avh>, where the data from participating herbaria is combined. A search using the map search interface, for *Correa reflexa,* for example, displays a map of Australia with the location of specific collections of *Correa reflexa* and which herbarium holds the specimens. Some restrictions are placed on the information that is made available, such as that for vulnerable, rare or threatened species. For example, the exact location of Wollemi pine collections is not disclosed. Further funding is required to add images to the AVH.

The AVH and the Herbarium database itself are powerful research tools. It is possible not only to map where specimens of a particular species have been collected, but also track down when and where a particular collector collected specimens, or produce a list of species that grew in a particular region over a specified period.

This was an extremely interesting session with Herbarium staff and volunteers showing obvious enthusiasm and love of their work. If you would like further information on the National Herbarium of Victoria, go to:

<www.rbg.vic.gov.au/research_and_conservation/herbarium>

Mary Russell

ACT Region Branch
Indexing Annual Reports workshop

Saturday 24 June, in Room 10, New Griffin Centre, Genge St, Civic, from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm (morning tea provided).

The cost to members of ANZSI, the Canberra Society of Editors and ALIA is $100, to others $130. This workshop will be conducted by Michael Harrington, Chairman of the ANZSI Registration Subcommittee. Numbers are limited to 15 participants.

Following the morning workshop, from 1.30 to 4.30 pm, there will be a free afternoon discussion session for your questions, with tips and suggestions from the panellists.

Contact: Edyth Binkowski at geoffb@webone.com.au or phone +61 2 6281 2484.

Visit to AIATSIS

Last month librarians and indexers in the Canberra region had the opportunity to visit the library of AIATSIS, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, situated next to the National Museum, on Acton Peninsula. Our guide around the Library and its resources was the library manager, Rod Stroud.

Rod described the language thesaurus, covering about 250 Indigenous languages, which has been developed over many years, and the Horton Map showing where each Indigenous language is spoken. This map and others are available from the Aboriginal Studies Press. The language bibliographies listed on the AIATSIS website at <www.aiatsis.gov.au> give the relevant map series references.

Each record takes about 15 minutes to prepare, using Multites, thesaurus software which also acts as a webserver, and is easy to browse. They can be downloaded, and are updated every three months.

Judith Cannon told us about the Aboriginal Biographical Index, a personal name index to published material in the Library. Sensitivity to the culture is important when producing the index. You can obtain more information from the Family History Unit, at <family@aiatsis.gov.au>.

We concluded with a visit to the Library, at the back of the building and almost on the banks of Lake Burley Griffin. The reading room has floor to ceiling windows with a spectacular view. We saw it on a windy evening, and the usually placid lake had waves that would have pleased a surfer.

This was a really useful and interesting visit.

Edyth Binkowski

What I have learnt from indexing

I have worked for the Australian Federal Police library for a year. The database I am helping to compile, the Australian Federal Police Digest, is designed to give easy access to information for AFP librarians, and their clients. It is marketed to external clients by RMIT Publishing through Informit (AUSTROM online).

Selection of published and unpublished material is based on the needs of AFP recruits, counter-terrorist officers, forensics, intelligence analysts, and the International Deployment Group.

The work of the AFP is valued by local, national and international police and civilian communities. Its areas of research range from disaster relief to domestic violence, and paedophilia to narcotics smuggling.

Library staff select most of the articles for digitising, indexing and abstracting. These consist mainly of current 'hot' topics such as community policing, criminology, law enforcement, and police management and leadership. Current awareness is balanced with long term archival usefulness.

As an indexer, I do proof reading of bibliographic citations, crafting succinct abstracts with subject access using Library of Congress Subject Headings and free terms, and quality control. And I really enjoy skimming documents to find and record the salient points, facilitating access to information on social, political, religious, economic and regional security issues.

Joanne Seccombe

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