



AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

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(Indexes for assessment to be directed to the Honorary Secretary.)

The 20th Biennial Conference of the Library Association of Australia was held in Canberra from August 26 to 30. The Australian Society of Indexers contributed by staging a special study programme. A report of this study will appear in our next issue.

The general theme of the Conference was *Alternative futures*. In exploring the future of libraries and information handling in the 1980s and beyond there were many implications for indexers. Several speakers predicted the 'publication' of much information by its entry into computer data banks for retrieval through the visible display unit and facsimile transmission in libraries or indeed, in the home, office, classroom or laboratory.

The present era which has been distinguished by the development of the national and international computerized indexes has alerted us to the role of effective indexing in rapid access to citations. In the future there will be similarly rapid 'document retrieval' from immense data banks, e.g. the whole of the contents of the British Library 'on line' for direct access through a cheap unit attached to the home television set. Without effective indexing the system will not work. The challenge of the future for indexing is tremendously exciting.

CHANGES TO THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION

The Secretary has received a proposal to amend various sections of the Constitution. This will be sent to members with the notice calling the Annual General Meeting in October and will be put as a series of motions to that meeting. Arrangements for postal voting will be made.

The changes are largely of a *tidying-up* nature, dealing with verbal infelicities and suggesting a more logical arrangement of the clauses and sections. The major changes proposed are as follows:

- . New members joining the Society after June 30 shall be eligible for full membership rights on payment of half the prescribed fee for that year.
- . Subscriptions shall fall due on January 1. (If this is accepted, it is proposed that subscriptions paid for the financial year October 1978 to September 1979 be extended to expire on December 31, 1979).
- . The financial year shall end on December 31.
- . Elections for all offices shall be conducted at each annual general meeting. Those elected shall hold office for one year beginning January 1. (If this amendment is accepted, it is proposed that the present Executive shall continue in office until December 31, 1979, office bearers elected at the AGM taking office on January 1, 1980. The present provision that no member of the Executive may serve more than three consecutive years in one office will be retained, except that it is proposed that this restriction should not apply to the Treasurer).

Members are reminded that proposals to amend the Constitution of the Society must be submitted in writing to the Honorary Secretary not less than 28 days before the general meeting at which they are to be considered. The next general meeting will be the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, October 17.

DRAFT CHRONOLOGY FOR A STUDY OF INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING  
IN CANADA

*Draft Chronology for a Study of Indexing and Abstracting in Canada* (Ottawa: IASC/SCAD, 1977 (for 1978). 18p.) was prepared by Peter Greig for distribution at the June 1978 annual meeting of the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada in Edmonton. The initial printing of the document was made possible through the generosity of the University of Alberta Faculty of Library Science. For the earliest period of Canadian publishing, 1751 to 1800, every indexed or abstracted work contained in Marie Tremaine's *A Bibliography of Canadian Imprints 1751-1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952; reprinted 1971) has been listed. The earliest Canadian index identified to date appeared in Jean Baptiste de la Brosse's *Nehiro-iriniwi aiamihe massinahigan ...* (Quebec: Brown and Gilmore, 1767; Tremaine 105). From 1800 to the present the *Draft Chronology* includes separately published indexes and abstracts only, with annotations on notable articles, events and activities relating to indexing and abstracting. A revised and enlarged edition is being prepared by Peter Greig. Copies of the *Draft Chronology* may still be obtained free of charge from the Secretariat, Committee on Bibliographical Services for Canada, National Library of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa (ON) K1A 0N4.

Extracts from:

THE INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING SOCIETY OF CANADA:

a *night flight* presentation delivered at the  
Sixth Annual Canadian Association for Information  
Science Conference, by Peter E. Greig. Montreal:  
11 May 1978

The Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada is a new society and still less than a year old. Tonight I would like to outline the events which led to the establishment of the society, detail some of its accomplishments during the past eleven months and suggest some of its immediate concerns for the future.

The Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada owes its inception to a recommendation proposed at the Canadian abstracting and indexing services workshop convened by the Committee on Bibliographical Services for Canada in March 1977.

The Committee on Bibliographical Services for Canada was established in 1975 as a committee of the National Library Advisory Board in response to the main resolution of the National Conference on the State of Canadian Bibliography (Vancouver, 1974). The committee chairman is a member of the National Library Advisory Board and committee members include invited representatives from Canadian agencies, associations and institutions concerned with bibliographical activity in the academic, professional and public sectors. A permanent secretariat is provided for the committee by the National Library of Canada.

The committee's terms of reference include the responsibility to determine the needs of bibliographical activity, where such activity is defined as the identification, description and dissemination of recorded information. The members of the committee, from their first meeting, have emphasized that this definition of bibliographical activity includes both indexing and abstracting.

The committee began to investigate the Canadian indexing and abstracting situation following its October 1975 meeting. A survey of Canadian indexing and abstracting services with publicly available products was undertaken in February 1976. As a result of this survey, and at the invitation of the National Librarian, the committee convened a workshop with representatives from eighteen Canadian indexing and abstracting services in March 1977. Summary reports on the workshop and its recommendations appeared in the March-April 1977 and May-June 1977 issues of National Library News. The full proceedings of the workshop is available on request from the committee secretariat.

.....While the society has achieved not a little in its first eleven months of existence, it must concentrate in the coming year on creating that awareness of indexers and abstracters, and of the crucial value of their work, which is so clearly stated in the constitution and bylaws as a major objective of the society. At the same time there must be a greater effort on the part of members of the Society to use the society as a forum for their communication. The Society's executive can assist this at both the national and the regional level by planning practical and theoretical workshops similar to those which have been so successful in the Ottawa region. Finally, because of the difficulties inherent in holding frequent national meetings in Canada, more emphasis must be placed on the development and encouragement of the regional groups to ensure the vitality of the society as a national association.

## READING LIST ON INDEXING

*A Select Reading List on Indexing* (Foreword by K.G.B. Bakewell. London: Society of Indexers, 1978. 36p.) was compiled and prepared for publication by Anne Hoffmann at the suggestion of Robert Collison and with the assistance of members of the Society of Indexers. The publication of the reading list is intended to celebrate the twenty-first anniversary of the Society of Indexers while meeting an obvious and immediate need.

The reading list contains ninety-eight numbered items (books, pamphlets, periodical titles and periodical articles) published between 1875 (n. 24) and 1978 (nos. 4, expected in the Autumn of 1978; 17; and 28). While the foreword notes that a *comprehensive* bibliography on indexing is being compiled by Hans Wellisch, professor at the College of Library and Information Services of the University of Maryland and a member of the American Society of Indexers, there remains a hurried and stop gap flavour about Hoffman's work.

The items included in the reading list are devoted for the most part to the indexing of books and single periodical titles. *A Select Reading List on Indexing* excludes items dealing with specific indexing techniques, items not readily available in British libraries and, with two exceptions (nos. 28 and 33), individual articles in *The Indexer* (no. 16). Even within these narrowed confines the choice of material for inclusion in the reading list contains some curious omissions. This may reflect the reviewer's closer acquaintance with North American sources on indexing, particularly where periodical articles are concerned. While the IASC's *I & A Reference Shelf* (*IASC/SCAD Newsletter*, v. 1, no. 1, February 1978, p.8-14; v.1, n. 3, May 1978, p.33-43) admittedly ranges outside the limits set by Hoffmann, it still contains a number of items which one would have expected to find in *A Select Reading List on Indexing* and in British libraries (for instance: the various ISO standards such as ISO 999, *Index of a publication*; the *ALA Rules for Filing Catalog Cards*; the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* for indexing names; and if Lawler's study of the H.W. Wilson Company can be included as n. 59, why is there no reference to Poole and to the articles on his equally *great* periodical index from the *Library Journal*?).

The items in the reading list are arranged alphabetically by author under a series of alphabetized headings ranging from *General Studies* (see also *Style Manuals*), through *'Fringe' Material, Historical, Humorous Studies* (which includes Leacock's *The Perfect Index: There Is No Index, and Why* - no. 51), *Indexing Novels, Indexing Specific Subject Fields, Training for Indexing, to Transliteration*. Some of the twenty-two headings only serve to create artificial diversions, or seem excessively ambiguous (*'Fringe' Material on both counts*). In any case, without a table of contents, the broad arrangement of the reading list by the assigned headings is not readily apparent. Fortunately, this defect is offset by the presence of an author index and a detailed subject index (why does the entry *humour in indexing* omit any reference to Wheatley's *How to Make an Index*, n. 32, which includes a chapter on *Amusing and Satirical Indexes*?). Since the text is not paged the compiler has used the more precise item numbers as references in the indexes.

Citations for items in the reading list are provided in accordance with BSI 1629:1976, *Recommendations: Bibliographic References* (no. 47 in the list - one of the four items entered under *'Fringe' Material*). Generally, previous editions of individual items are not noted; one notable and inexplicable exception in Leacock's humorous study (and the compiler should have noted that the title of the essay changes in typical Transatlantic style depending on whether the British or the American publication source is consulted). Some advantage beyond the merely historical would be derived from a full listing of all editions of a cited item (for instance: Clarke's *Manual of Practical Indexing ...*, no. 7. and Collison's *Indexes and Indexing*, no.9) with the significant changes between editions succinctly noted.

The annotations for the cited items are the least useful aspect of *A Select Reading List on Indexing*. Too frequently they indicate information which can be found in the cited title and occasionally they provide totally irrelevant information - why, for item no. 62, Sarah St. John's *Periodical Indexes and How They Are Made*, is it necessary to note that the item is a *Summary of a paper by the editor of 'Art Index' at a convention of the Special Libraries Association?* The detailed subject index is of some benefit here, but proper annotations or abstracts (as in Jean Wayne's *Indexing with Emphasis on Its Technique: An Annotated Bibliography, 1939-1954*. NY: Special Libraries Association, 1955 - another omission from the list) would have been more helpful to the user of Hoffmann's work.

Despite criticisms of selection, organization and annotation, some of which may simply be due to Transatlantic differences of opinion, *A Select Reading List on Indexing* is a convenient and useful source for back-of-the-book and single periodical title indexers. Until the appearance of a more authoritative bibliography on the subject, possibly that of Hans Wellisch, it is likely to remain so. The foreword hints at the possibility of future, revised editions. If *A Select Reading List on Indexing* is to take its proper place as a guide for indexers, future editions would benefit from a table of contents and the annotations should be strictly revised. In line with Elizabeth Wallis' suggestion that neophyte indexers should study authoritative index models (see *Indexing as a Career for Women* elsewhere in this issue) it would be worthwhile to cite good index models under the relevant headings in the reading list.

#### COMMENT FROM THE PANEL OF ASSESSORS

Indexes submitted for assessment and/or registration of compilers have included a wide and interesting variety of treatments and topics. They are providing the basis for establishment of a scheme of appraisal within several categories. In the interest of reasonable uniformity, progress has depended upon the material received, we regret the time lapse in providing responses.

However the Panel has been surprised at the number of examples forwarded without the text to which the index is supposed to point the way. While it is not difficult to discern the general structure, many terms and levels of expression can remain cryptic without reference to the context. This can lead to unwarranted adverse judgement. *It is essential for the Panel to be supplied either with the complete work or information about where it may be consulted - hopefully a location in Melbourne.*

It is common knowledge that an indexer does not always receive a copy of the final production, or even have the opportunity to check proofs. Nevertheless previous liaison with editors should be sufficient at least for the indexer to be supplied with all page proofs at some stage, and be informed of when and where distribution of the work occurs. The Panel is also aware that startling changes may arise between manuscript and printed version. Some remark on amendments of this nature is a vital aid to assessment. Authors' requirements, editorial constraints of time and space can alter the end result completely.

The Society is seeking to improve the standard of the art by offering this assessment facility. The Panel reiterates that comments on an index received from any diffident *beginner* (as distinct from professional registration) are given willingly, constructively and with understanding of those who work alone. Applicants for registration should send two complete works for consideration, while all should have reference to the recommendations of BS 3700 (1976).

The Spring 1978 issue (no.24) of the National Housewives Register *Newsletter* contains two excellent articles on indexing as a part-time career for women, contributed by Society of Indexers' members Elizabeth Wallis and Hazel Bell. Under the title *Indexing: Skill and Contacts Needed* (p.27-28), Elizabeth Wallis, Registrar of the Society of Indexers, outlines the nature of a good index, explains how a knowledge of indexing may be acquired and discusses the current rates of pay for indexing in Great Britain. Good indexing is essentially a question of experience, but a useful beginning can be made by taking the correspondence course offered by the Rapid Results College (apply to: The Careers Adviser, Rapid Results College, Department FS1, Tuition House, London, SW19 4DS, Great Britain) under the supervision of the Society of Indexers, by reading other manuals on the subject, by studying authoritative indexes and by joining the Society of Indexers or one of its affiliates.

Employment will come through personal contacts with publishers, through the indexer's own advertisement of her services or (in Great Britain specifically) through the Register maintained by the Society of Indexers. Pay varies according to the publisher involved, ranging from approximately \$5.00 to \$7.50 an hour (the Society of Indexers recommends a minimum of about \$5.65 an hour). Job opportunities have diminished as publishers attempt to reduce their budgets but good specialized indexers who offer fast, reliable and competent service should always find work. Hazel Bell, editor of both *The Indexer* and the *National Housewives Register Newsletter*, has contributed *Quiet, Darling, Mummy's Working* (p.28-30) which realistically illustrates how a part-time career in indexing can be maintained *in the grip of the classic domesticity-stifling syndrome*. Time can be snatched from, or adjusted to, domestic schedules (sample: *simple advance - or proof-reading worked on while breast-feeding*) and children accustomed to mother's alternate occupation. From Hazel Bell's account, it is evident that there is less of a problem in finding time to index than there is in recording the snippets of indexing time found to calculate the publisher's bill.

#### STATUS OF THE ART?

##### an invitation to indexers

Rochfoucauld commented that *frequently our virtues are but our vices concealed*. Is this the way of indexing in Australia? Within this Society, the Panel of Assessors is surprised at the lack of response to one of the benefits of membership - registration of indexers for formal recommendation. It is a pity that we can only reply to requests for indexers with particular subject knowledge by saying that we believe an indexer works in a given field.....

Assessment is based upon accord with the British Standards Institute Publication B.S.3700: 1976. Copies (price \$7.40) are obtainable from the Standards Association of Australia, which has offices in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide and Perth.

The Society has applied to S.A.A. requesting adoption of the recommendations as an Australian standard. The process takes time for consultation by those concerned with the subject and the possible need for local amendments. Meanwhile, as part of our constitutional commitment, we need to develop authors', editors' and publishers' appreciation. This document sets out general principles and practice very clearly. The mutual value of a professional approach by means of a definitive statement is obvious.

Applicants for registration should send a copy of two indexed works to the office of the Honorary Secretary for submission to the assessors. These, of course, will be returned. *Publication is by no means a requirement*. We hope particularly to encourage those who feel diffident about revealing their early efforts. Even if you live from one publication deadline to the next, please let us see some action. Vices and virtues are two faces of the same coin.

## INDEXING A SECOND EDITION

by Jean Uhl

Has any other member had the experience of indexing a second edition of a text book - the second edition being published after five years? If not, perhaps they have missed a rare experience! It challenges an indexer's staying powers and frustration complexes. Firstly, when the proofs arrived and were read it was as clear as a newly cleaned window that besides being given a copy of the first index I should also have been given a copy of the 1st. edition of the book, which I was not. I learned on enquiry that the person who asked me to index had not seen the book, was not the editor and that one of the co-authors was no longer in Melbourne but had been the compiler of the original index.

I also learned, an interesting point, that apparently freelance editors are now being used by publishing houses and I wondered in this case what an editor who was engaged in child welfare - or something vaguely connected - had to do with a book on Economics in the Australian scene for tertiary students.

I was asked only to use the same headings as in the 1st edition and to repaginate in accordance with the proofs supplied. Personally, I thought the original index was wholly inadequate for a textbook of 267 pages - a point on which the other author diplomatically agreed when I managed to contact him! Considering the book was to be used by students it seemed to me that the entries were scarcely enlightening and would certainly not have passed the test for the Register! However, theirs not to reason why when asked to repaginate only.

As the Society is trying its level best to raise the standard of indexing generally by adhering to the British Standards Institute's Recommendations, I felt I could at least tidy up the index a little, starting by removing a G from the C's - viz.

Cellulose Australia  
chain stores  
chemist shops  
Chrysler  
Clark, Colin  
! G.J. Coles & Co. !  
Collins House Group etc. etc.

and by alphabetizing all the subheadings under certain entries, one of which contained 23 subheadings; these had originally been indexing by simply adhering to the references in the text (which were hard to follow in any case), a practice easier for the indexer but not recommended for the user thereof as being time consuming and unnecessarily frustrating when looking for a quick reference. For example, under Paper Industry, entries in subheadings started with t and continued with the run-on into m, h, a, w, etc. almost through the whole alphabet backwards and sideways.

As I had not been informed to what extent the book had been rewritten or whether whole chapters had been added, some entries were impossible to trace without a copy of the 1st edition (and unless I was to spend xxx hours) so by the good offices of a young neighbour who had taken Economics at Monash University he borrowed a copy from the University Library for the maximum three days. My *modus operandi* was then speeded up by being able to refer to the original page of the text instead of having to search through the proofs for such vague references as *countervailing power*, *hedging* (which had nothing to do with dodging the issue), *monospony*, *x-efficiency*, etc., besides proper names scattered throughout the text. For the sake of speed, when alphabetising the subheadings, which were 98 all told, I typed out the entries as given in the original index on foolscap paper and cut them up into strips and played alphabets, being careful to keep each strip with their page numbers clipped underneath their main headings. It was then comparatively easy and quick to type them up when it came to the final typing of the whole index.

I felt it was necessary to comment to the publishers that it seemed rather a fauxpas to have allowed a reference to a certain gentleman who had been the Managing Director of a well-known industrial firm as *having said yesterday* ..... - the date in the notes on chapters was given but as he is now deceased it would have been rather better to have added *the late*. As I have commented before, should an indexer be expected to be a proof reader and editor as well? This assignment had to be paid for by the author who, being an economist seemed more concerned with the cost than that the index should be a good and adequate one - truly the indexer's lot is not a happy one!

