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FOURTH MEETING IN 1982

Tuesday, 16th November: 5.30 for 6.00 p.m.  
 at CSIRO, 314 Albert Street, East Melbourne  
 Committee Room, Third Floor

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NOVEMBER MEETING

The November meeting will take the form of presentation of indexes of various types - good, bad, amusing, or otherwise noteworthy, as mentioned in the September Newsletter. Members are asked to bring along as many examples as possible. It would also be appreciated if members who are unable to attend the meeting could send or telephone the Secretary references to anything appropriate.

\* \* \* \* \*

INDEXING COURSE

After the success of the indexing course conducted in June of this year, agreement has been reached with the RMIT Department of Librarianship to conduct another course in June of 1983. Anyone interested in enrolling in the course is asked to contact the Secretary (AusSI). An expression of interest only is required at this stage.

\* \* \* \* \*

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following new members :-

- Mrs. S. BLACK : 11 Narelle Avenue, Pymble, NSW, 2073
- Ms. G. NORTON : C/o Medical Journal of Australia,  
P.O. Box 116, Glebe, NSW, 2037

\* \* \* \* \*

LOOKING AHEAD : MEETINGS AND THE NEWSLETTER IN 1983

Following acceptance of the revised Constitution, the November meeting will NOT be the Annual General Meeting. The AGM will be held on 17 February, 1983.

Again next year, as an aide-memoire, the four meetings will be held on the same date - the 17th - in February, May, August and November - although the day of the week varies.

To allow adequate notice of meetings, the dates of the quarterly issues of the Newsletter will also change. Volume 7, Number 1 will be dated February. The closing date for copy will be 14 January, 1983.

\* \* \* \* \*

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\*  
\* NEWSLETTER EDITOR \*  
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\* Vera Wicks and Joyce Korn are still compiling the \*  
\* Newsletter as regrettably Coryl Muntz is not yet \*  
\* well enough to resume editorship. \*  
\* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

REPORT OF A TALK BY MAURICE DOWNER, EDITOR OF INDEX TO NEW ZEALAND PERIODICALS,  
TO THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS ON 16 SEPTEMBER 1982

Mr. Downer, who is a librarian at the National Library of New Zealand in Wellington, began by saying that he had been six years in reference work before becoming Editor of *Index to New Zealand Periodicals*. At the time the position of Editor became vacant, he would not have applied, but it was offered to him after his predecessor had left at short notice, and he accepted. Because the purpose of the *Index* influences his indexing, and his experience is restricted to it alone, he has obtained special leave in addition to the holiday he is spending here, to see how indexing is done in Australia. He has spent two days in Canberra looking at *Australian Public Affairs Information Service* (APAIS) and in Melbourne has talked with George Levick, Editor of *Australian Science Index* and with Margaret Findlay, Editor of *Australian Education Index* : all are doing a similar job, but the similarity ends there.

Mr. Downer's outline of the INZP's beginnings led to an explanation of the formation of New Zealand's National Library; the fame of its scattered buildings is such that it is said that the best way to find it is to wait on a street corner for it to go past on the back of a bus. The institution was formed under the National Library Act of 1965 from three existing libraries, the Alexander Turnbull Library, a private library given to the people of New Zealand in 1919, the Parliamentary Library, and the National Library Service. The latter, formed in 1938 with its headquarters at Wellington, provides a "subsidy in kind" to public libraries, and took over the three Country Library Services which still exist, in Hamilton, Palmerston North and Christchurch. The service continues but without its title, as part of the Extension Service. The Alexander Turnbull Library is a research library and now receives all New Zealand publications under the compulsory deposit provision of the Copyright Act. The INZP is a part of the New Zealand Bibliographic Unit which also prepares the *New Zealand National Bibliography* and the retrospective *New Zealand Bibliography to 1960*. Of the latter, Mr. Downer said that it is about to "self destruct" with the publication of its fifth and final volume. The INZP was begun in 1940 by the Otago Branch of the New Zealand Library Association; in 1948 the National Library Service took over the work with NZLA as publisher.

The indexing staff of INZP consists of Maurice Downer alone, and some delay in indexing periodicals is inevitable. He has clerical assistance, but now that the *Index* is being published three times a year, there is pressure on a manual system of production, and he hopes that production can be computerised at some not too distant date. Mr. Downer, who types the cards himself using a golfball typewriter with special characters recently acquired for this purpose, has been able to speed production by devising a plastic board to hold these cards so that they need not be retyped for printing.

The list of periodicals indexed (in the 1981 cumulation over 200) is decided by the National Library, additions being made from the new periodicals which are listed in *Part 3* of the *National Bibliography*; suggestions for inclusion are also received from members of the public. Subject headings used are kept on file, but unlike *Australian Public Affairs Information Service* (APAIS), INZP has no published thesaurus. The file is kept up to date by weeding and new additions, and *see* and *see also* references are included. Mr. Downer commented that some headings undergo "kiwi-isation" to make them more appropriate for New Zealand readers, and that the Library of Congress list of subject headings, although used as a guide, is not always useful.

Mr. Downer mentioned that there is no classified list of New Zealand serials, and that he had started to compile one, but had had to put it aside.

Another lack in New Zealand at present is a newspaper index : a substitute might be a current register of when events took place, as the New Zealand Press Association ensures that most items appear in all papers. It is the INZP's policy, decided by the National Library, not to include newspaper articles. (This contrasts with APAIS, which does index Australia's more important newspapers although only selectively). This policy has led to difficulties for Mr. Downer, who used the tragic Air New Zealand crash in which all lives were lost, as a recent example. Almost all the coverage of the crash was in newspapers, and only one periodical article, on identification of victims from their dental records, appeared and could be indexed. Excerpts of the two official reports have appeared in periodicals, but could not be indexed because they were reprints and there is a policy of not including reprints in the *Index*. Nearly everyone in the country knew, or knew of someone involved with the crash. (More comment on this problem follows in discussion after the talk).

Mr. Downer is fairly optimistic that computer methods will be used soon for production of the *Index*, because the National Library has now bought the Australian version of the Washington Library Network, the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN), and all entries in the *New Zealand National Bibliography* are to be included, from 1982. Mr. Downer had recently visited Canberra, where work on this project has begun.

A data base recently begun in New Zealand is *New Zealand Science Abstracts*, which at present consists mainly of publications of the New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. This means that there are disadvantages, as abstracts are sent in from the Divisions with widespread geographical locations and covering numerous disciplines; a library editor, in addition to a computer editor, would be able to overcome these problems. A further difficulty is delay in publication; the 1980 edition appeared in March this year, and the 1981 edition has yet to appear. It is hoped that it will appear quarterly but so far the manually produced INZP is more up to date. However, Mr. Downer hopes that it will be possible to use the DSIR computer for production of the INZP.

Mr. Downer then spoke of attempts to form an indexing group in New Zealand. A meeting, held the week before he left, had been publicised, but mainly within the library profession, through its journal, *Library Life*, as the group would be formed within the New Zealand Library Association. Not enough people had attended the meeting to form a viable group. Although seventeen people had expressed interest, they were from widely scattered geographical areas. (The problem of distance is shared by the Australian Society of Indexers, which in fact has two New Zealand members). Interest in forming an indexing group was also expressed by representatives of the Victoria University Press, and the publishing world seems an area where further contact could be made. Books are being published in New Zealand, with indexes, so that people must be compiling them, and they would benefit from some training. He himself had received some guidance from his predecessor, but many had received none at all. It is the habit of publishers to leave until the last minute the finding of an indexer.

Mr. Downer is still hopeful that an indexing group will be formed, and does not feel that efforts so far, in which he was involved although not the instigator, have been wasted.

#### DISCUSSION :

Peter DAWE asked how many current serials are included in the *Index* ?

The annual list of serials indexed excludes any not indexed during that year and they vary from 200 to 250 of the 400 received on legal deposit, many of which are newsletters of small societies, with little indexable content.

Basil WARBY inquired about criteria for the inclusion of articles from issues scanned for the *Index*.

These are subjective, and influenced by the length of the article, which is not likely to be included if under one page, and by whether the article is signed, the importance of the subject, and availability of information on it. Rarity of information may lead him to include an article even though it may tell very little; articles from the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* are sometimes included for this reason.

Peter DAWE took up the inclusion or otherwise of reprints from official reports of the Air New Zealand crash.

They were reprints of extracts only, and as extracts, excluded by the *Index* criteria.

Peter then asked whether thought had been given to broadening these to include the more important government reports ?

There would be reluctance to change from the established title even if including reports made it less appropriate, but conference proceedings could be included.

Ruth ANDREWS referring to the Air New Zealand entries, suggested that the *Law Journal* would direct inquirers to legal proceedings.

Mr. Downer agreed, and noted that the Royal Commission had differed from the Chippendale Report, which was the report by the Chief Commissioner of Air Accidents. It was Mr. Mahon, the Chairman of the Royal Commission, who had used the now famous phrase, "an orchestrated litany of lies" about the evidence of witnesses and is now appealing to the Privy Council as to his right to use it.

Jean HAGGER commented that the phrase in question is a very indexable one, and that Mr. Downer had used a very indexable word : "kiwi-isation" which brought out the importance of using local terminology. She said she had found the index to the yellow pages of the local telephone directory a very useful guide.

Mr. Downer appreciated this suggestion, and asked if there could be such a term as "Aussification" ?

John SIMKIN, while wondering whether the New Zealand network comparable to *AUSINET* should have the title "*NZINET*", suggested that to include the existing *INZP* on the data base would be insufficient : a completely new one would need to be created. He added that having the network handled by a non-commercial interest removes the danger of elimination of unprofitable data bases.

Mr. Downer, agreeing, said that the monthly seminars being held on "neutral ground" by interested bodies include representatives from the Post Office and from commercial interests. So far the network is small, and includes only five data bases.

The discussion was concluded by thanks from the President on behalf of members for an informative and interesting talk on a subject most of which was new to him, and for an entertaining evening.

\* \* \* \* \*

BOOK REVIEWS - INDEXES MENTIONED

"The Age" 31 July 1982. *THIEVES' KITCHEN* : the Regency Underworld, by Donald A. Low (J. M. Dent) reviewed by Peter Ryan. "It is a short book which would have been shorter still if not set in large type. They have printed it pleasantly with less than today's normal allowance of misprints : the index is only mildly disgraceful. (Try the entry for 'Burke and Hare' ; try to find 'Hare' at all)". (Contributed by Jean Hagger).

11 September 1982. *RIGHTEOUS GENTILE* : the story of Raoul Wallenberg, missing hero of the holocaust, by John Bierman (Allen Lane) reviewed by Rita Erlich. "The book does not answer all the questions it raises, and it lacks a full bibliography and an index".

16 October 1982. *THE LIFE AND TIMES OF GRIGORII RASPUTIN* by Alex de Jonge (Collins) reviewed by Peter Ryan. "The index? Middling to rotten, which is about par for the course these days. Not many reviewers test an index, or if they do they rarely tell us their verdict. That is why inferior indexes are now the rule - because publishers, correctly, think they can get away with them". (The above is perhaps a salutary reminder that we should be trying to improve our public image. - Eds.)

*Australian Accountant* 52(9) October 1982. *KEEPING EMPLOYEES INFORMED* by Russell Craig and Roger Hussey (Butterworths) reviewed by Lee D. Parker. "A comprehensive author and subject index is also provided".

*The Tasmanian Naturalist* No. 69 April 1982. *A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF TASMANIA* by Michael Sharland (Drinkwater Publishing, Hobart) reviewed by David Rounsevell. "... an attractive little book which will interest the casual bird lover. It is not an accurate nor authoritative reference for the student of Tasmanian ornithology .... The editing is of good standard and typographical errors are few but the bound index had to be replaced by a corrected version which is provided as an insert (watch for this when buying)".

Contributor's note : The "corrected" version is still not a satisfactory index. Certainly it takes care of the two page discrepancy which had crept in half way through the text, but in the rewriting, several errors and inconsistencies have been perpetuated ... and a few more introduced. In order to produce a four page insert from the original five and a half pages of index, the number of entries was reduced and a smaller type size used. The result is unnecessarily crowded and not well planned.

*Nature* Vol 296, 22 April 1982. *MECHANISMS OF SEX DIFFERENTIATION IN ANIMALS AND MAN* : edited by C. R. Austin and R. G. Edwards (Academic Press) reviewed by W. K. Whitten. "... This volume of 12 chapters written by specialists is intended as a text for advanced students and researchers .... Reviewing this book has been difficult because many of the references cited, including books, are recent and not freely available in libraries with restricted budgets. There is no author index and the inadequate subject index appears to have been compiled from the table of contents. An editorial policy of giving the specific name when a species is first mentioned would have ensured entries for "man" and "mouse",

at least in the species index, and eliminated some redundant ones. Surely textbooks warrant the services of professional indexers?"

*Lancet* December 19-26, 1981. The same book reviewed by R. V. Short.  
"... Many chapters in Prof. Austin's and Dr. Edwards' up-to-date and informative book ... have a strong clinical flavour ... other topics covered in the book, which is well referenced and well indexed, are the present status of the H-Y antigen in gonadal differentiation ... the book is one specialists, biologists and clinicians will find worth buying".

Contributor's note : The first reviewer, working in Australia, may not have had as ready access to reference materials as did the second reviewer, working in UK, but he did have the advantage of almost daily exposure to indexing literature as a result of being espoused to an index enthusiast!

(The last three items were contributed by Beth Whitten, Sandy Bay, Tasmania).

Contributions by any other members of items from book reviews which mention indexes will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### QUOTABLE QUOTES

The following review appeared in *R&DM Digest* - August 1982 :

" INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY : HIGH POTENTIAL-LOW  
USE AMONG BENCH-LINE ENGINEERS

The Futures Group reports on a survey of information transfer among engineers in 89 firms employing 15,000 engineers. Results are presented in three sectors : Engineering Information Needs and Outputs, Value of Information Sources, and Patents and Information Transfer.

The study concludes : 1. "... most engineers are still relying on a very narrow band of information despite public focus on means and measures of expanding the technologists' information world;" 2. Internal sources of information rank very important overall, with textbooks following closely; 3. Engineers are not using patents as a source of information.

The report concludes with a discussion of the social and political implications of engineering information.

There is no index to this document." (No doubt the author is an engineer! (CG) )

Hedvah L. Shuchman. *Information Transfer in Engineering*. The Futures Group. 76 Eastern Boulevard, Glastonbury, CT 06033. 1981.  
265 pp. ISBN 0-9655196-0-2.

On the subject of reviews and indexing, Eugene Garfield's editorial in *Current Comments* September 27, 1982, which discusses ISI's "new" Index to Scientific Reviews is interesting. He begins by considering the word "review" and points out that there is a two cultures problem here. To the humanist "review" implies an appraisal of the aesthetic quality of an artistic work, while to the scientist a "review" is "an annotated summary or critical digest of the literature of a given topic".

Garfield then goes on to consider the fate of ISI's "Index to Book Reviews in the Sciences" which was killed some months ago. Apparently they are considering a metamorphosis of IBRS into on-line format. Which raises the question, is there a need/market or interest in setting up an on-line "Index to Australian Book Reviews"?

(Contributed by Clyde Garrow).

\* \* \* \* \*

#### GOVERNMENT GAZETTE INDEXES

The structure of government gazette indexes is the theme of "Government Publications Grapevine" by Michael Harrington in *The Australian Library Journal* 31(3) August 1982. An outline is given of the system of indexing of various State government gazettes and of the index to the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette. The latter index has been changed in structure several times over the years, but is still unsatisfactory. Another simplified method of indexing is to be used from 1982, and details of this new method are set out.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### NEW HORIZONS IN INDEXING

This is the theme of the 1983 Weekend Conference of The Society of Indexers to be held in Bristol from Friday to Sunday, July 8-10, mentioned previously in the June Newsletter at page 13.

In a recent letter from the Chairman mention was made that the organizers are very keen to involve members of the affiliated societies in the program - to the extent of having those willing to chair sessions.

We know of two of our Melbourne members who are planning to attend, so if any other members would be interested in becoming involved, please contact the Secretary, Mrs. Jennifer Challis, as soon as possible.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE INDEXER

Under the terms of our Society's affiliation in 1977 with The Society of Indexers, their journal has since then been our Official Journal also.

In practical terms this means that we are able to use two pages in each issue for publication of reports, announcements and other Official AusSI matters.

Just as importantly, The Indexer provides a vehicle for our members to publish to a wider audience than our Society can provide. On behalf of the President we urge as many members as possible to submit articles for consideration by the Editorial Board.

If you do not already subscribe to The Indexer the Treasurer, Mrs. Joyce Korn will be glad to arrange for you to be added to the mailing list. Copies are bulk airmailed to Australia so speedy receipt of each issue is assured. The present subscription rate is \$13 per annum.

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\* Advertisements for publication in the Newsletter are now  
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