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AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS Postal Address: G.P.O. Box 1251L
Melbourne, Victoria 3001

OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1985

<u>PRESIDENT:</u>	Jean HAGGER	Phone 898 5780
<u>VICE PRESIDENT:</u>	Sue HARVEY	Phone 418 7269
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Karen BORCHARDT	Phone 846 1820
<u>TREASURER:</u>	Joyce KORN	Phone 606 9610
<u>COMMITTEE:</u>	Stephen LANSDOWN	Phone 580 2387
	John SIMKIN	Phone 557 2815

Ex Officio

Chairman, Panel of

Assessors: George LEVICK Phone 418 7333

Editor: Geraldine SUTER Phone 328 2230

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INDEXING AS A PROFESSION

The 1985 Australian Society of Indexers Medal for an outstanding index compiled and first published in Australia has been awarded to Jeremy Fisher for his index to *The Australian encyclopedia*, 4th edn, Grolier Society, Sydney, 1983.*

The Medal was presented to Mr Fisher by the President, Jean Hagger, at the Society's general meeting held in Melbourne on 21 August 1985.

Unfortunately, our invited speaker, Dietrich Borchardt, was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. The text of his speech, delivered on his behalf by his son Max, appears below.

Our perception of occupations and professions tends to be deeply affected by the persons whom we have met occupying or professing them. Indeed, there is a broad classification of our work force into blue collar workers and others (whose collars, though often disgustingly dirty, are rarely defined with reference to any hue) but those who pretend to be a little sophisticated also know white-coated workers who are assumed to be inferior to the pin-striped and bowler hatted brigade.

There is no proof, of course.

Getting a bit closer to home, we note that an accountant's sleeves have worn cuffs, and a lawyer wears an ill-fitting, long outmoded wig and narrow stove-pipe trousers, just a little too short. A librarian - invariably female - wears old fashioned glasses and clothes ten years behind the latest *Vogue* patterns - unless, of course, she is a seductive minx as shown in Mills & Boon novels. Of late, the image of the accountant and of the librarian has been enriched by the addition of a VDU, and their clothes and hairstyles have been updated. But an other-worldishness remains characteristic of their aura.

We have trouble with indexers not only because theirs is allegedly a new profession but more importantly because they are at present not 'first generation' professionals, i.e. persons who after completing their education enter directly into the work force as indexers and earn their living by indexing. Like librarians a few decades ago, indexers tend to become involved in their profession after having spent a while - a few years in some cases, in others half a lifetime - in some other profession, notably librarianship, but there are also several other professions which have generated indexers, e.g. accountants and engineers, and of course the current wave of computer operators.

* For details of the project see 'The Australian Encyclopedia,' AusSI Newsletter vol.8, no.3, August 1984, pp.29-34. This article is based on a talk given by Jeremy Fisher at the Society's general meeting in May 1984.

As for the belief that indexing is a new profession, it cannot be claimed that a full time indexer is a novelty: those who so busily listed titles on the *Index librorum prohibitorum* were at it full time, and with a vengeance. But then, it has also been claimed that that Index is not an index but a bibliography. Maybe. It is, obviously, an area where it is difficult to decide the right appellation or nomenclature.

More important is, probably, the question of how to identify an indexer in the first place. Leaving aside for the moment the problem of differentiating between good and not-so-good indexers, what qualification should an indexer have to claim genuine membership of the profession? There exists, as we all know, a correspondence course run from the U.K., and we have in our own fair city a short course organised by our Society and presented on its behalf by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The Society, however, has usurped the prerogative of determining who is an indexer by insisting on an assessment of practical work before admitting anyone to the rank of Registered Indexer.

While I fully support this move it should be seen as an interim step toward professionalism. In the long run two conditions must be established if indexers are to make a living as indexers and if they are to have pride in their profession. One is the establishment of professional courses at two or three (no more!) tertiary institutions in Australia.

The other is to protect the calling in some more efficient manner than has been done by the LAA for its professional members. This second condition can be achieved by persuading publishers that only professional indexers should be called upon to prepare an index to a book or journal for publication.

The establishment of such conditions for the profession may seem a tall order at the present time. I would warn you, however, that unless you espouse such a goal you will never attain a true professional status for indexers. Maybe some or even many of you do not see the need for it. Allow me to stress the similarity between the professions of librarianship and of indexers. Librarians are suffering to this day from the false vanity of the early founders of the profession who preferred to cling to the coat tails of lawyers and industrialists to attain standing in the community as professionals. The same will happen to indexers if they do not divorce themselves from the notion that a chemical engineer is, by virtue of his ability to organise the table of chemical elements into a systematic arrangement, capable of indexing anything else and of calling himself an indexer to boot.

The advent of the computer has further increased the difficulties for indexers to be recognised as a profession. We all know - even I! - that computers can arrange verbalised concepts in any order in which we wish to see them. Do remember, however, that you and I tell the computer what to do - it does not do anything of its own accord. But the innocent and ignorant public believes that anyone who can operate a computer terminal can compile an index. What rubbish - is about all I can say, and I don't know the front end of a computer from a donkey.

Indexing is a logical process, not a game of chance. The more complex the material to be indexed the more specific have to be the rules to be followed. For this reason and several others besides, it is not only desirable but indeed necessary that high level tertiary courses be established for graduate students to undertake a serious study of indexing. When that has been achieved, the consumer - authors and publishers - will soon come to recognise the difference between an amateur and a professional.

In the meantime, we are being greatly helped by the Society's latest endeavour to identify good indexers so that we may develop standards to be emulated. The creation of the Australian Society of Indexers Medal is a very important step towards the attainment of professionalism for indexers. The Medal is being conferred for the first time in this year. I understand that a number of publishers have submitted entries, and that while some were below minimum standards, there were enough good ones to make a choice difficult. I am sure the judges have made a wise decision and that the recipient of the first Australian Indexers Medal is worthy of the prize.

I hope the profession will benefit from this generous gesture by its dedicated President and Committee. I wish you luck - and hope that future awards of this Medal will be equally deserving.

* * * * *

INDEXING NOW - 1985 WEEKEND CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

The 1985 Weekend Conference of the Society of Indexers took place at Durham, 5-7 July 1985. There were 64 participants; 59 from the United Kingdom and one each from Australia, Canada, Eire, South Africa and USA. The theme of the Conference was 'Indexing Now' and it was presented in a series of three papers, a panel discussion and a computer workshop.

The first paper, 'Victorian children's periodicals', was given by Diana Dixon, Department of Librarianship and Information Studies, University of Loughborough. She outlined the development of the genre, from the didactic, published prior to the 1860s, through the lurid 'penny dreadfuls' of the 80s, and the more educational and recreational published at the end of the century. There are many problems for the bibliographer. Firstly, because of the use of cheap newsprint, there are few surviving copies and these are in isolated locations. Secondly, there were many amalgamations and title changes, the latter often closely resembling titles already in existence in order to cash in on their success. There was little indexing as such although many had detailed lists of contents, sometimes with subject groupings such as stamp collecting. The lack of author indexes is to be deplored as many eminent authors contributed to the quality papers, not always signing their contributions and often using pseudonyms.

The second paper was given by Dr Peter Mann, Centre for Library and Information Management, University of Loughborough. His topic was 'Using books' and he spoke about the reading habits of general readers, their preferences of format, the type of books being read and the sources of supply of these books.

The third paper was given by Dr Peter Wallis, Project for Historical Bio-Bibliography, University of Sheffield. He spoke about the Book Subscription Lists Project, outlining the problems of discovering the existence of lists, collecting copies and using the computer for editing and analysis. The data base will be used also to identify book trade personnel, prepare an author and subject catalogue and special interest groupings of subscribers, e.g. 18th century medics, mathematicians etc.

The theme of the Conference, 'Indexing Now', was very much to the fore in the other two sessions. The panel discussion was chaired by Ken Bakewell and questions from the audience were answered by a panel of four experienced indexers. Of most concern was the evergreen problem of negotiating with publishers and authors on the matters of contracts and payment. There was much discussion about methods of quoting for jobs. The practice adopted by some publishers of requiring the submission of a sample index by contenders for commissions was deplored. The role of the Society in all these matters was discussed, the suggestion being that it should be more aggressive!

The computer workshop, supervised by Ann and Gary Hall, gave participants an opportunity to see demonstrations of several indexing packages, ranging from the quite sophisticated to the rather simple.

Socially, the Conference was delightful. Accommodation in Hatfield College of the University of Durham was very pleasant, providing many opportunities for informal discussion at both programmed receptions and meal and coffee breaks. Provision was made in the program for opportunities to enjoy the rich culture of Durham, from its magnificent Cathedral to the Special Collection of the Library of the University. The official representatives of the affiliated societies were made most welcome as guests of the Society at the Conference and as chairmen of two of the sessions.

The Conference concluded with a session to discuss Society matters, particularly its publications. The most heartening item on the agenda was discussion about the next Conference. It is to be hoped that AusSI will be able again to take part in this most professionally rewarding and socially pleasant experience.

JEAN HAGGER

* * * * *

DRAFT STANDARD AGREEMENT: BACKGROUND REPORT

In our last issue, we included two documents recently released for comment by the Society of Editors (Melbourne):

- . draft standard agreement between freelance book editors and publishers
- . draft editorial work specification.

For this issue, Kerry Herbstreit has prepared a background report on these documents, which should be of interest to indexers.

We are still anxious to receive your views on the introduction of a draft contract for indexers. If you have any suggestions or comments, please send them to the Secretary, Australian Society of Indexers, G.P.O. Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3001, before our next Committee meeting on 2 October 1985.

For some time prior to mid-1984, several members of the Society of Editors had been drawing together material about a contract for freelance book editors. Some material came from the Australian Journalists' Association (AJA) Freelance Group, other ideas came from overseas groups, and more from documents drawn up for other types of freelancers working in publishing and media industries.

Late in 1984, I assumed the task of drawing this material into a coherent document that could be circulated for comment. The first draft was prepared in November 1984 and copies were circulated on a limited basis among freelance members of the Society of Editors in Melbourne. Some amendments were made in the light of a small number of comments received, and a revised draft was devised in May 1985.

The draft contract was submitted to the Committee of the Society of Editors in May 1985, seeking an opinion by a solicitor nominated by the Society, aiming at producing a document that the Society would be willing to endorse. It was hoped that, if necessary, the Society would provide backing to members who used it and had need of legal support in case of dispute.

The Committee replied that it was constitutionally unable to comply with these requests. At its suggestion, the Victorian Branch of the AJA was approached via the Victorian AJA's Freelance Group. The draft contract was presented at the Victorian Branch Committee meeting of 24 July. It was decided that the document be forwarded to the AJA's solicitors for an opinion and any necessary modification. It was emphasised that the document would be more readily accepted by both freelancers and publishers if written in straightforward, non-legal language. The few comments received from freelance editors have generally supported this view.

Once an acceptable document has been arrived at, it is envisaged that it could be published as a leaflet to be distributed or sold as required or as determined by the Society of Editors. These steps require further careful consideration.

Our objective is to produce an outline of a contract that can be adapted as necessary by freelancers working in editing or related fields, and used when she/he feels that some clarification or deliberate spelling-out of a commission is desirable, for instance in the case of a new publisher, a non-publishing organisation that may have vague ideas of the role of an editor, or in the rare (?) case of dealing with an organisation you know has a bad record of dealing with freelancers. Obviously, there will be many cases where a good professional relationship exists between the freelancer and the publisher and the use of a contract would be unnecessary. Most experienced freelancers would, however, support the writing of at least a simple letter confirming the acceptance of a commission discussed verbally.

We hope the contract, when endorsed, will be a genuine help to both freelancer and publisher.

* * * * *

INDEXING THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE'S RESEARCH REPORT

For many years the University of Melbourne has published an annual Research Report displaying the University's achievements and endeavours. The Report gives details of research staff, principal research fields, research in progress, publications, theses passed for higher degrees and theses in progress for each department in the University.

The readership is wide and varied. It includes research and teaching personnel, technologists and industrialists, both in Australia and overseas. However, because the Report was not indexed, the bulk of the information was not readily accessible.

Earlier this year, the University commissioned the CSIRO to produce name and subject indexes to the 1985 Report. The job will be done only once and will probably be a precursor to a computerised database containing the types of information mentioned above.

Initially, all sections of the Report were to have been indexed by both name and subject. However, as the subject index became far too long, its scope was restricted to research in progress and theses passed for higher degrees. Even so, the subject index is expected to yield 6000 entries and the name index another 3000 entries.

The real problem though was the subject matter. All the research areas are very specific and detailed. And the report covers every conceivable subject - and many inconceivable ones as well.

For this reason, it was decided to contract the initial indexing out to a number of indexers with specialised subject knowledge. (I might add that some skilled and sensible members of the Society turned the job down because of its complexity.) This initial indexing has been completed and is now being edited and hopefully made consistent.

Given the size of the job and a fairly tight time schedule, most of the indexing had to be done from the galley proofs. Converting the galley-sheet numbers to page numbers has resulted in a relatively small time increase for the subject index but, for the name index, the addition of page numbers is proving very slow.

The index has now been entered into the CSIRO computer system and, following the final edit, will be computer typeset and produced as bromides and microfiche.

All in all, it has been an interesting job, and a useful one. It is not, however, one which someone in her right mind would choose to do.

SUE HARVEY

* * * * *

WHITHER PUBLISHING? WHITHER INDEXING?

A growing concern of the Australian Society of Indexers would appear to be the question of indexers being loaded with uncorrected proofs from which to compile an index which must meet professional standards.

As one who is constantly working with words both in writing and indexing, it is distinctly frustrating and time consuming to meet on numerous pages of the script, misspelt words, reversed letters in words, letters omitted from words, which naturally make a difference to the length of the line and often to pagination.

If illustrations are to be included in the book and there is no indication of this on a proof page except perhaps, p.23 blank, or p.102 blank, and the next page is 104 one may well ask 'what happens on p.103?'. Does an indexer go gaily on hoping that all will come out right in the end, or does one take for gospel the answer from an editor 'Don't worry about that, I'll see to that.' This would of course be after the index has been completed and sent back to the publisher.

When pages are not aligned at top, bottom or both on uncorrected proofs, then p.201 of an entry in the index may well become p.202 or even p.199! The final result may appear to be the indexer's fault as proofs of an index being forwarded to the indexer appear to be a thing of the rosy past. As an example of current difficulties met with lately, the following errors were noted in the first 50 pages (four pages to a sheet of what were actually galleys, with galley numbers at the top and page numbers at the bottom!).

grams (twice) for Germans
burd for guard
board for broad
tgeir? - (and it wasn't tiger)
cam for came
ahving for having
Juan Is Pins for Juan les Pins
Boulogne sue Mer for Boulogne sur Mer
damant for adamant - (it took me a while to work out what a 'damant' was)
liquor for liqueur
wome for some
rick for risk
reember for remember
ans for and
die for due
pif for pig
ould for could
firing of for firing off

As an indexer is, ostensibly, supposed to index from the text and to understand what is in the author's mind, it is easy to see that nowadays one must have a continuous grasp of current spelling and of the changing English language, abused as it is becoming every day. I learn from the newspapers that animals are not 'spayed' these days but 'spade'.

The foregoing are perhaps extreme examples of what indexers have to contend with - let us hope so - but it nevertheless indicates the trend toward the acceptance of sloppy standards without the question WHY? Are word processors let loose on new machines without adequate training? What has happened to proof readers - are they becoming a lost race? Should we be charging 'danger money'?

After three successive disasters lately, I feel it is time to speak out! My worst experience was indexing a new constitution for a well-known males-only society. The corrected proofs were well-presented, the assignment completed and returned on time and I was then told that the page proofs had not yet been to the printer, that the pages 'would not be that size' and that therefore my page numbers as indicated would not be relevant. Luckily I do not suffer from high blood pressure otherwise my days of indexing would surely have been numbered. I know that I am the sort of person who always attracts difficulties - from an early age I have been one of those who, when purchasing a pair of anything, arrives home with two shoes for the left foot or two gloves for the right hand; but the current difficulties in indexing are certainly not of an indexer's choosing. One of the first considerations when the Society was founded, was to endeavour to raise the standards of indexing. Will it be possible in the future to stick to our noble principles or will we be forced to lower our standards to conform with the peculiarities of modern technology?

The recent dinner for the presentation of the Australian Society of Indexers Medal gave members an excellent opportunity to exchange news and views on indexing. It is clear that every indexer meets different challenges and contingencies. Some do not deal with publishers at all, but rather with individual authors or institutions; others perhaps deal with one individual publisher and so get to know the house style etc. intimately; others, freelancing, have a wide variety of books to deal with and a wide variety of publishers some of whom may have been 'taken-over' since the last assignment.

An index used to be the very last item which went to the printer but nowadays, publishers want every part of the book at the same time. This is hazardous for the indexer who has been told one has a week or a fortnight to complete the assignment and then has to produce it in much less time. If the publisher is interstate and the editor is in Melbourne, one can perhaps sympathise with the editor who has to keep to a deadline, but being requested by an author to produce an index to a 250-page book in three days 'in a fortnight's time' when I might get the proofs, seemed beyond the pale - fortunately, the 'fortnight's time' has now come and gone long since and silence has reigned in that direction. Perhaps the said gent realised that indexers are not machines (even if they use one), that they are human beings who do not get paid for holidays, or double or treble time for working at weekends, are not covered by workers' compensation, sickness pay etc. but that they wish to do a professional job in spite of difficulties. Whither indexing?

JEAN UHL

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following new members:

Mr D. Cunningham	48 Union Street Northcote, Vic. 3070
Mrs M. Hoo	Abtech Information Services 25 Mount Street Perth, W.A. 6000
Mrs L. Love	17 Napier Street St Lucia, Brisbane Qld 4067
Mr A. Ransley	9 Elaine Crescent West Hobart, Tas. 7000

* * * * *

REVIEW

Examining documents, determining their subjects and selecting indexing terms
(BS 6529). British Standards Institution, London, 1984.

Indexers should examine documents thoroughly, though not necessarily word by word. They should carefully identify the subject themes, though exercising judgment in the choice of those to be represented as index terms. Those selected should be indexed exhaustively, even to the extent of considering the needs of users beyond the immediate clientele of the indexing service. Indexing should also be specific, and any controlled language employed should be flexible enough to accommodate exact expression of unforeseen concepts. Indexing should be subject to quality control, especially as regards consistency, impartiality, and comprehension on the part of indexers.

This is the central model for the recommendations to indexers provided in BS 6529. It is reinforced by checklists that define, so to speak, the potentially vague adjectives 'thoroughly' and 'carefully' in the first two clauses. All of this - and it is the major part of the publication, obviously - represents a laudable achievement; I could easily cite hard-bound books that conspicuously fail to approach it.

That fact makes it all the more difficult to understand some conspicuous flaws. The model contains, as I have summarised it above, some qualifying phrases ('not necessarily word by word'), but these are matters of principle, not mere concessions to practical circumstance. It should not have been found acceptable, in standard recommendations, to say of non-print media that 'indexing is then carried out from a title and/or synopsis' merely because it is not always possible in practice to, say, view an entire film. It is not difficult to think of circumstances in which it may not be easy to obtain a complete text in print; but in that case we have the flat statement that titles and abstracts are unreliable.

Even worse, because I for one cannot imagine circumstances that would make it forgivable in practice, let alone precept, is: 'If the indexer considers that an idea is not fully developed, or is referred to only casually by authors, indexing at a more general level may be justified'. Surely a user may expect better, even of a general term, than that it should refer to something the author has not bothered to discuss!!

Another, smaller disappointment is the treatment of terminology. Most of us are generally happy to ignore some circularity in our working use of terms like 'concept' and 'subject' - these are what we index, our indexing terms refer to them, and that is their meaning, in context. It is easy to understand that compilers of a standard would be uncomfortable with this; but if in avoiding it they produce made-to-order definitions, then they should not let workaday usage slip back, or nonsense results. If a concept is a unit of thought, and a subject is a concept (or combination of concepts), then it is hard to conceive of an index as an alphabetical listing of subjects - do units of thought have initials? At this stage, we have not yet passed the list of definitions; 'concept' is made to serve several purposes, similarly inconsistent with its definition, in the main text; while 'theme' and 'idea' are employed without definition.

This is a valuable document, particularly as a complement to our old friend BS 3700. It will no doubt find wide use and many readers. It is a pity to have to hope that it is not used uncritically or read too literally.

G.R.T. LEVICK

* * * * *

INDEX FOR KOROIT HISTORY

Lack of an index has been a handicap to readers who wished to look up a particular point in Harry McCorkell's history of Koroit *A Green and Pleasant Land*.

That handicap has been overcome.

Two experienced local historians and indexers, Jean Uhl and Marlene Meadley have compiled free of charge an index to the book.

Jean Uhl is a former councillor of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and the author of several books of local history. She is now researching the history of Tower Hill Lake Common School.

Marlene Meadley is editor of *The Genealogist*.

During 12 months residence in Warrnambool she took a leading part in the establishment of the Warrnambool branch of the Institute of Genealogical Studies and has continued her interest in cataloguing the history of this district.

One of Harry McCorkell's contributions to the historical records of this district was the discovery, editing and printing of the diaries of Sarah Midgley and Richard Skilbeck of Yangery.

Marlene Meadley has compiled for the Warrnambool public library a more detailed index which students of the diaries will find useful.

Reprinted from *Warrnambool Standard*, 25 June 1985.

* * * * *

BOOK REVIEWS - INDEXES MENTIONED

ALISA, *Australian library and information science abstracts* 1983.

Australian Clearing House for Library and Information Science.

Reviewed by David J. Jones, *Incite*, 17 May 1985.

'I hope that in future issues of ALISA more attention is paid to the subject index which is the heart of this reference work. There are no *see* or *see also* references so that it is difficult to find articles on some topics and it is possible to miss others. For example, there are headings for both Library Networks and Networks. I suppose that when I wanted to check on what had been published on Posters I should have instinctively looked under Graphic Arts - I did eventually. There has been some revision of the subject headings used in the index from the 1982 issue. The heading *Local colour writing* has disappeared.'

AMBROSE, Stephen E. *Eisenhower the President 1953-1969. Vol.2.* George

Allen & Unwin. Reviewed by Peter Ryan, *The Age*, 22 June 1985.

"The publishers have produced the book very well; the index is a model which writers and publishers alike might adopt, to the infinite comfort of readers."

ARGAP 2 : *a second research guide to Australian politics and cognate subjects.* Compiled by Henry Mayer & Liz Kirby. Longman Cheshire.

Reviewed by David J. Jones, *Incite*, 17 May 1985.

"A most welcome feature of ARGAP 2 is the index, a combined author, title and subject index to the present volume and to the 1700 items and 150 notes in the previous volume. This index will help the hard-pressed reference worker find information quickly, reserving a ramble through chapters, pleasurable though that is, for more leisurely times."

ASFORD, Janet Isaacs. *The whole birth catalog.* Crossing Press. Reviewed by David J. Jones, *Incite*, 31 May 1985.

"It's all well indexed."

BELLAIR, John. *Amateur soldiers.* Spectrum. Reviewed by John Buckley, *MUFTI* vol.25,no.2, June 1985.

"At the outset I must mention that any book which does not include a suitable INDEX is most annoying to the reviewer. In analysing a book I use the Index as a very important tool in assisting to assess the story. This book has no Index!"

COLE, Jim E. & GRIFFIN, David E. *Notes worth noting : notes used in AACR2 serials cataloguing*. Pierian Press. Reviewed by Jean A. Conochie, *Australian Academic and Research Libraries*, vol.16, no.2, June 1985.

"The index refers to the Rule numbers and sections and has been originally compiled, not just culled from AACR2. However, since some sections of the text, e.g. 12.7B, occupy many pages, it might have been helpful to include the page number also."

Currier & Ives : a catalogue raisonne. Gale Research. Reviewed by David J. Jones, *Incite*, 31 May 1985.

"Indexes provide access to prints by site depicted, date, title, subject, and artist/lithographer."

Directory of Australian databases. Edited by Diana Killen and others. Australian Database Development Association. Reviewed by R. Choate, *Australian academic and research libraries* vol.16, no.2, June 1985.

"There are four indexes which provide access to both sections by database producer, database vendor, subject and database acronym where relevant. Perhaps future editors should consider an expanded subject index (why not use the subjects listed in each entry?)."

GIOVANELLI, Ronald. *Secrets of the sun*. Cambridge University Press. Reviewed by Max Marginson, *Australian book review* no.71, June 1985.

"There is no index, but most probably the publishers realized that the clear, short and unwearying text required none."

Libraries, information centres and databases in science and technology : a world guide. Saur. Reviewed by David J. Jones, *Incite*, 31 May 1985.

"... there are full name and subject indexes."

MEEK, V. Lynn. *Brown coal or Plato?* Australian Council for Educational Research. Reviewed by Robert Pascoe, *Australian book review* no.72, July 1985.

"The book lacks an index, a regrettable omission for a text composed on a Wang."

Moral order and the question of change : essays on Southeast Asian thought. Edited by David K. Wyatt & Alexander Woodside. Yale University. Reviewed by M. C. Ricklefs, *Australian book review* no.72, July 1985.

"And its value as a work of reference is substantially lessened by the absence of an index."

ROBERTSON, John. *Australia goes to war 1939-1945*. Doubleday. Reviewed by Peter Ryan, *Australian book review* no.71, June 1985.

"The index is unworthy. For example, significant references to J.V. Barry (page 168), Sir Frederick Shedden (page 79) and Eric Feldt (Page 18) are not to be located."

ROBINSON, Portia. *The hatch and brood of time : a study of the first generation of native-born white Australians 1788-1828*. Vol.1. Oxford University Press. Reviewed by Noel McLachlan, *The Age*, 22 June 1985.

"A fine index."

The Oxford anthology of Australian literature. Edited by Leonie Kramer & Adrian Mitchell. Oxford University Press. Reviewed by Adrian Rawlins, *Australian book review* no.71, June 1985

"Still, the genuine lover of our literature will enjoy being able to flit from commentary to dissertation to creative fiction all in the one book - even if some of the choices [and all of the index] are decidedly for the thicknosed and dull-eared."

TOYNE, Phillip & VACHON, Dan. *Growing up in the country.* Penguin. *Australian book review* no.70, May 1985.

"The book is not one that will have general and popular appeal, but is more a reference book for students of Aboriginal Studies and Social Science. It is here that some deficiencies become apparent, firstly in that it has no index. The book does not follow a time sequence through its chapters, so making it necessary to refer back many times to statements previously made."

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AND NOW FOR A LITTLE MENTAL EXERCISE...

An AusSI member has sent us this clerihew, referred to in G. Norman Knight's *Indexing, the art of*:

Sir Christopher Wren
Said, 'I am going to dine with some men.
If anybody calls
Say I am designing St Paul's'.

Can you index it - with an entry for each letter of the alphabet?

* * * * *

NOTES AND NEWS

Our May general meeting was held at the electronic publishing company, Agridata. Robert Utter gave an informal talk on his experiences with electronic publishing after which members of the audience were provided with hands-on experience with the system. Our thanks to Mr Utter and to Agridata for providing members with a most informative evening.

AusSI Vice-President, Sue Harvey, gave an introductory talk on indexing to a meeting of the Geelong Branch of the LAA on 24 July 1985. Her talk covered the purposes, methods and tools of indexing; book and database indexing; training for indexing etc.

The AusSI short course in indexing will not be offered for a second time in 1985. When finalised, details of the next course will be forwarded to all members.

The Information Management Consulting Association (IMCA) is organising a meeting of representatives of a number of information-related groups including the LAA, VALA and the Videotext Industry Association, to discuss the necessity of co-ordinating their activities. The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, 22 October 1985 at a venue yet to be decided. For further information contact the Secretary, Margaret Wanklyn, on (03) 819 8231.

The index of *The experts speak*, co-authored by Christopher Cerf and Victor Navasky, has been awarded the H.W. Wilson Company Award for Excellence in Indexing. The publisher, Pantheon, was also awarded a citation for its recognition of the importance of quality indexing. The index was compiled by Sydney Wolfe Cohen. *Publishers' weekly*, 24 May 1985, reports that the authors 'wanted an accurate but witty index, and one that in itself parodied "indexese" not to mention one that was funny enough to be read on its own'.

NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER ISSUE

We welcome contributions to the *Newsletter*. If you have any material you feel would be suitable for inclusion, please send it to the Editor, Australian Society of Indexers, G.P.O. Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3001, by Monday 28 October 1985.

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