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## ANNUAL REPORT

Membership of the Society increased by 10 during the year, the total now standing at 157. This does not give an adequate picture of the intake of new members, an increase of 5 in N.S.W. and 18 in Victoria. The large increase in Victorian numbers can be explained partly by the fact that participants in the short courses in indexing are required to be members of the Society. However, many of them are members before they join the courses; a gratifying number of new members are joining simply because of their interest in the Society. There was a 'drop-out' of 13 members, one due to resignation and 12 due to non-payment of dues. The Society is concerned about those who notify their intention to resign and a letter from the President is sent to express regret and to encourage the former member to keep his or her interest in indexing.

Membership figures are as follows:

A.C.T.	11	Tas.	4	W.A.	1
N.S.W.	28	Qld	4		
S.A.	6	Vic.	100	New Zealand	3

The *Newsletter* continues to be the 'tie that binds'. Our Editor, Geraldine Suter, has produced four stimulating issues, giving accounts of the quarterly meetings, notice of other activities and short but interesting papers from members about unusual aspects of indexing. She would welcome much more of the latter type of contribution.

Quarterly meetings have shown a slight increase in attendance during the year. The A.G.M. in February took the form of an informal dinner, at which members were able to get to know each other. In May, members flocked to what was then AgriData to hear Robert Utter talk about the complex information system and to have 'hands on' experience with the computerised database. In August, the inaugural Medal presentation was a joyous occasion, enhanced by the reading (in his unavoidable absence) of a brief paper by Dietrich Borchardt. The November meeting was advertised as 'a great opportunity for members to hear about the indexing of *The Argus*', and indeed it proved to be such, with historian John Hirst describing the organization of the team of volunteers and member Frances O'Neill describing the input of the information gathered by them into the computer-based index file.

A short course in indexing was conducted in March-April and 24 members attended. The Committee is investigating the possibility of a change in format for 1986, offering a weekend residential course rather than the series of weekly classes. Such a course is planned for Canberra in April, to be offered jointly by the Society and the A.C.T. Group of the Cataloguers' Section of the Library Association of Australia. The Society demonstrated further its concern with education for indexing when it expressed interest in a proposal by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, for a Graduate Diploma in Editing and Publishing, offering assistance with the content of any segments of the course concerned with indexing.

Two applications for registration were approved during the year. The status of Registered Indexer is shown in the list *Indexers Available* (see below) and this has assisted those using the list to find suitable indexers of an accepted standard.

As stated earlier, the inaugural presentation of the Australian Society of Indexers Medal was made at the August meeting to Jeremy Fisher, for his index



to the 4th edition of the *Australian Encyclopaedia*. The Medal, featuring the Society's new logo, was designed by the engraver Tony Kellock. Fourteen nominations were received, mainly from publishers, only one coming from a Society member. The selection panel, consisting of Michael Ramsden (Convenor), Margot Hyslop, Susan Priestley and Jean Uhl undertook the onerous task of assessing these indexes and the Society is most grateful to them for their contributions to this segment of its activities.

Another 'first' was the publication of *Indexers Available*, 1985. With the assistance of our former Secretary, Heather Cameron, and Stephen Lansdown, the list was finally compiled, printed and distributed. It was sent initially to all members included in the list, 37 leading publishers and six relevant organizations. Responses received to date have been generally enthusiastic - in spite of errors (mainly in matters such as changed addresses and telephone numbers) which appeared, due to the length of time it took to bring the project to fruition. An updated edition is planned for 1986.

The Society has been asked by other organizations to participate in relevant activities in their programs. As reported in the *Newsletter*, Sue Harvey spoke to a meeting of the Geelong Regional Group, Library Association of Australia, Sue and Jean Hagger conducted a workshop for the Australian Book Trade Committee Seminar and Jean took part in the 1985 Weekend Conference of the Society of Indexers. The Australian Government Publishing Service is proposing to update its *Style Manual* and has asked the Society for assistance with sections relating to indexing. A sub-committee with George Levick as Convenor will plan the Society's contribution. An American indexer, Bev-Anne Ross, requested a contribution relating to the Society for inclusion in her forthcoming book on indexing and the President prepared a short article.

Relations with the affiliated societies continue to be cordial, especially with the Society of Indexers with its regular feature in *The Indexer* of matters relating to our Society and with the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada from whom we receive regularly their informative newsletter. During a brief visit to New York in August 1985, the President contacted an officer of the American Society of Indexers and exchanged news and views of our two societies.

Judging from the number of requests received by the Secretary from publishers, authors, organisations etc. for assistance with finding suitable indexers, the Society is making its mark as a responsible professional organization. The Executive Committee is responsible for planning the activities of the Society and met eight times during the year. All members have contributed in a manner most gratifying to the President, taking charge of the execution of various aspects of the program. Appeals made to the membership at large for participation in the program, for example the investigation into freelance indexing and tax deductions, have met with very little response. Should the Committee conclude that the membership is quite satisfied with its conduct of the Society's affairs? Let us have more input from members, especially in the form of contributions to the *Newsletter*, telling fellow members of indexing activities and suggesting new initiatives for the Society to undertake.

Jean Hagger  
President

# AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

JANUARY - DECEMBER 1985

<u>Expenditure</u>	\$	<u>Income</u>	\$
AACOBS membership	33.00	Membership subscriptions	2,764.00
National Book Council membership	35.00	Registration fees	90.00
Hon. Sec. expenses	79.33	Newsletter -	
Hon. Treasurer expenses	88.52	sales	265.00
<i>The Indexer</i> subscriptions	1,132.85	advertisements	5.00
Newsletter		<i>The Indexer</i>	
Envelopes (5 issues)	176.65	subscriptions	1,146.00
Printing) (4 issues)	1527.00	Indexing course	1,800.00
Postage )	442.60	Bank interest	53.09
	2,146.25	Indexers available	10.00
Stationery	92.00	RESI interest	
Bank charges	12.69	at call account	15.65
Meeting expenses	266.77	fixed Term	72.55
Medal dinner	659.07	Colonial Mutual fixed	
Medal panel	45.00	term	34.94
G.P.O. box rental	60.00	Medal dinner	207.80
Indexing course	1,106.36		<u>\$6,464.03</u>
Indexers available	329.43		
	<u>6,086.27</u>		
Operating surplus	377.76		
	<u>\$6,464.03</u>		

\* \* \* \* \*

## BALANCE SHEET

## ASSETS

Cash in bank 1 January 1985	631.85	Cash in bank 31 December 1985	460.28
On call RESI	203.06	On call with RESI	218.71
Fixed term	563.10	Fixed term RESI	596.78
	<u>1,398.01</u>	Fixed term Colonial Mutual	500.00
Plus income	6,464.03		<u>\$1,775.77</u>
	<u>7,862.04</u>		
Less expenditure	6,086.27		
	<u>\$1,775.77</u>		
Assets as at 31 December 1985	<u>\$1,775.77</u>		

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## GRAB-BAG INDEXES

The OED defines 'grab-bag' as a bag containing various articles into which one may dip on payment of a certain sum; the last part of the definition refers to the use of grab-bags as fund raisers and is not relevant in the context of this article. Recently, I have come across two indexes which could well be described as 'grab-bags', one much more so than the other.\*

Certainly both indexers have defined the scope of their indexes in preliminary notes. The Pepys indexer states: 'The index is intended both as a guide to the text ... and as a means of conveying information which might otherwise have been given in footnotes'. The following entry is a good example: 'Cinque ports (orig. Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich; also Winchester and Rye): barons, 132'.

The Pym index is more far-ranging in content; the indexer states: 'The index contains biographical information ... identification of places and vocabulary definitions'. The identification of places is represented by entries such as 'Ilfracombe, Devon' and is not of much interest. The other two elements, biographical information and vocabulary definitions, are worthy of comment.

As would be expected in an autobiographical work of this kind, the text is absolutely bristling with names of people. However, not all have 'biographical information' added to their index entries. The user of the index is expected to be able to place in their category the names of literary people, both ancient and modern; for example, there are no designations added to the entries for John Keats and Paul Scott. Designations are added when the categories of the persons are not obvious from their mention in the text; for example, the entry 'Whitely, Professor William (sic) (Africanist)' refers to the text 'Wilfred Whiteley's memorial service'. Another example caught my fancy; the entry for

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\* Samuel Pepys, *The shorter Pepys*, selected and edited by Robert Latham, Bell & Hyman, London, 1985.  
Barbara Pym, *A very private eye: the diaries, letters and notebooks of Barbara Pym*, edited by Hazel Holt & Hilary Pym, Panther Books, Granada, London, 1985.

'Bayley, John (Thomas Wharton Professor of English Literature, husband of Iris Murdoch)' refers mainly to information such as 'Iris Murdoch and John Bayley called in for a drink'. Clearly, the indexer is at pains to show that there is nothing irregular in the relationship between Iris and John. However, the same courtesy is not extended to Iris; the designation 'wife of John Bayley' does not follow the entry for Iris Murdoch!

It is with the 'vocabulary definition' that the index provides the user with a veritable feast of stories to dine out on. Each user will have favourites; mine are 'Eno's (Fruit salt: a fizzy medicinal drink to cure indigestion)' and 'Kestos (a make of brassiere favoured in the thirties)'. Certainly, the note stating that the index contains vocabulary definitions appears before the beginning of the text, so that the diligent reader, i.e. the rare bird who reads all the prelims before starting on the text, may well turn to the index pages to find out what Barbara meant when she wrote about 'half a bottle of Drene'; index entry: 'Drene (shampoo)'. The same reader would be disappointed if he tried to make sense of the statement 'rubbed Nivea on myself'; there is no entry for Nivea which, as most female readers will know, is a widely used beauty cream. Discrimination - against male readers!

The two indexes provide interesting examples of the type of indexing known as 'indexing by narration' that is, the provision of so much information in the index that there is scarcely any need to read the text. This occurs frequently in biographies where the index entry for the subject of the work recounts pretty well the whole story. The Pym index is a prime example, the entry for Barbara Pym occupying one and three-quarter pages of information arranged in page order and using a run-on format. If one wants to find a reference to some facet of Barbara's life, one must start at the beginning of the entry and read on until one finds (or does not find) the necessary reference. Knowing of Barbara's interest in indexing and indexers (from the series of articles in *The Indexer*), I looked for the term in the index but found no entry. However, in browsing through the long Barbara Pym entry, I came on the following: 'She is advised to retire from the Institute, recovers completely and does odd of indexing for them, 392-3'. Turning to the text, I was disappointed to find that this referred to the sentence: 'I am still doing a little mild work, e.g. the African tribal index for the journal and the odd bibliography'.

The Pepys index, on the other hand, has a mere ten lines of entries for Samuel Pepys, these in an index covering some fifty pages. The indexer makes the reason for this situation quite clear: 'Pepys himself is understood to be the subject of the whole diary. A small number of entries have been gathered under his name, covering events before the diary period ... Elizabeth Pepys [Samuel's wife] is similarly treated, the reference under her name being restricted to principal events and activities'.

The indexer of the Pepys book is C.S. Knighton; the indexer of the Pym book is not named.

Jean Hagger

\* \* \* \* \*

### NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following new members:

Ms T. De Mel	4/88 Victoria Road, Hawthorn East, Vic. 3123
Ms L. Johnson	P.O. Box 601, Murwillumbah, N.S.W. 2484
Mr C. Nelson	36 St Michael Terrace, Mt Pleasant, W.A. 6153
Ms M. Potter	P.O. Box 399, Coogee, N.S.W. 2034
Ms K. Smith	14 Walter Street, Leichhardt, N.S.W. 2040
Mr M. Wood	26 Cameron Street, Reservoir, Vic. 3073
Mr R. Wright	7 Hillcrest Avenue, Kew, Vic. 3101
Ms A. Young	3 Rae Street, Hasthorn, Vic. 3122

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### SHORT COURSE IN INDEXING

The Australian Society of Indexers, in conjunction with the A.C.T. Group of the Cataloguers' Section, Library Association of Australia, will offer a short course in indexing in Canberra, during the weekend, 4-6 April, 1986. The course will be taught by members of the Department of Librarianship, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

All enquiries about the course should be sent to:

John Mason  
Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies  
G.P.P. Box 553  
Canberra, A.C.T. 2601



BOOK REVIEWS - INDEXES MENTIONED

ADAMS, Mignon S. & MORRIS, Jacquelyn M. *Teaching library skills for academic credit*. Oryx. Reviewed by Carole Duffill, *Australasian college libraries* vol. 3, no. 4, December 1985.

'The book is well indexed.'

*Circulation systems for school library media centres: manual to microcomputer*. Nevada Wallis Thomason. Reviewed by Ann Hughes, *Australasian college libraries* vol. 3, no. 4 December 1985.

'There is a comprehensive bibliography and index.'

DDC, *Dewey decimal classification 004-006 data processing and computer science and changes in related disciplines*. Rev. ed. NY Forest Press. Reviewed by Ed Willis, *Australasian college libraries* vol. 3, no. 4, December 1985.

'There is an index to the new schedules and related numbers in the 19th edition (pp 19-28). Classifiers will be pleased to find index entries for topics such as barcode readers, CAD/CAM, COM devices, joysticks, video disks and VSLI. However, while there is an index entry for word processing (652.5) there is no entry for electronic spreadsheets (005.329).'

*Directory of library schools and lecturers in librarianship in Australia and New Zealand*. Auslib. Reviewed by Roderick Cave, *Australasian college libraries* vol. 3, no. 4, December 1985.

'Certainly index entries grouping together those whose teaching or research interests are in a particular field would be an advantage.'

Mallett, Ashley. *Thumper: the illustrated biography*. Macmillan. Reviewed by Eric Lord, *Australian book review* no. 77, December 1985/January 1986.

'Mallett's text ... isn't improved, either, by a liberal sprinkling of typographical errors. The worst example ... concerns the name of the Manager of the Australian team to tour England in 1912. On page 122 he is six times referred to as Mr Grouch, seven pages later he changes to Mr Crouch (three times no less). On page 144 he reverts to his former identity of Grouch. And on page 193 he reaches the climax of his identity crisis by changing back to Crouch. And as if this isn't confusing enough, the mistakes are blindly transferred to the index. Yes, both names are enshrined there, with three references alongside Crouch, Mr G.S. and two alongside Crouch, G.S.'

Shennan, M. Rosalyn. *Silver threads and golden needles: the early history of Silver Creek, Beechworth*. Reviewed by Helen Harris, *The genealogist* vol. 4, no. 12, December 1985.

'There are biographies of some 13 local families and some interesting appendices, as well as a bibliography and comprehensive index.'

Spector, Ronald H. *Eagle against the sun: the American war with Japan*. Viking. Reviewed by Peter Ryan, *The Australian* 15 February, 1985.

'The index is poor. Mount Suribachi (where the marines erecting "old Glory" made the war's most famous photograph) is discussed by the author on pages 494, 500, and 501, but doesn't make the index.'

Webster, Judy. *Specialist indexes in Australasia: a genealogist's guide*. Reviewed by Helen Harris, *The genealogist* vol. 4, no. 12, December 1985.

'It even has an index to the Indexes.'

Wynar, Bohdan S. *Recommended reference books for small and medium sized libraries and media centres 1985*. Libraries Unlimited. Reviewed by Claire Clark, *Australasian college libraries* vol. 3, no. 4, December 1985.

'A very clear index has author, title and subject entries in one alphabetical sequence with subject entries in bold type. There are specific subject headings and a broader approach: *botany* is a heading in its own right but also appears as a subheading under biological sciences.'

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#### NOTES AND NEWS

We are still looking for contributions to the 'Book reviews - indexes mentioned' section of the *Newsletter*. The reviews or the material reviewed should be published in Australia and/or written by an Australian. If you come across any items suitable for inclusion, please send the details to the Editor, Australian Society of Indexers *Newsletter*, G.P.O. Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3000.

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Members may be interested in 'A guide to seven indexing programs ... plus a review of the "Professional bibliographic system" by Linda K. Fetters in *Database*, December 1985, pp. 31-8. Ms Fetters evaluates seven indexing programs in terms of formatting, entering and editing, entries, sorting, printing effects and cumulation or merging entries

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The American standard Z39.4 - 1984: *Basic criteria for indexes* is currently being considered for reaffirmation or revision.

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## NEWSLETTER - MAY 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 April 1986.

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