AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS
NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS
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Membership of the Society is open to persons and institutions engaged in indexing or interested in promoting the objects of the Society. The annual subscription, due on 1 January each year, is $20; a half-yearly subscription for entry after 1 July is $10.

Those wishing to know more about the Society should write to The Secretary of the Society at the above address or telephone a committee member.

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AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS
MEDAL 1990

The following is a slightly revised version of the Judge's report given by the panel's Chairman, John Arnold, at the Society's dinner held at Graduate House, University of Melbourne on 21 November 1990.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen. I have in front of me Lindy Chamberlain's recently published autobiography. It's a big book of some 768 pages. Kerryn Goldsworthy in a review in last week's *Sunday herald* stated that many males would be irritated by the amount of domestic trivia in the book. She went on to say:

> Those who judge the book by the standard of scholarly, legal or scientific documents will probably damn it for not meeting standards Chamberlain never set for herself. One reader, for example, has complained that there is no index – but since when was an index a standard feature of an autobiography.

I don't intend to comment on the domestic trivia question but I will on the index one. I have already stated that this is a big book. It is also in its own way an important one. The disappearance of Azaria Chamberlain in 1980, the subsequent trial of her parents for her murder, the conviction, jailing, and later release and acquittal of her mother, were sensational events in Australia in the 1980s. The legal implications and ramifications of the case are considerable.

Many of the readers of Lindy will simply be just that. They will want to read the book from cover to cover. However, there will also be users of the book, those who will want to find out about the trial, or conditions for women in prisons, or about the making of the film *Evil angels* and the author's comments on Meryl Streep. These users deserve an index and the book would have been more valuable as a document if it had one.

These comments are by way of an introduction to my role in the business part of this evening's function and that is to deliver the judge's report for the Australian Society of Indexer's Medal for 1990. I am sure you all know by now that no medal is being awarded this year and I will explain why in a minute or so. Before doing so I wish to briefly detail how the award is judged and outline some of the problems facing the panel.

Initially entries are sent to the Secretary of the Society and then weeded down to a manageable half dozen or so by members of the Committee. The chosen few are then forwarded to the judging panel which this year consisted of myself as Chairman, George Levick from CSIRO and Cheryl Schauder from the School of Information Services at RMIT, or more correctly, the Victoria University of Technology (RMIT campus). Due to work commitments Cheryl was forced to drop out so the task was left to George and myself.

Well, how did we go about assessing and comparing indexes. George and I judged the various entries from a two-fold approach. George looked at them from the viewpoint of a professional indexer, checking the overall structure, the subject headings, the subheadings and the like. I judge them as a professional user of books. I look for inconsistencies and read bits of the text and then check the index for appropriate references and so on.

After our independent assessment followed by collaborative discussion we decided not to award the medal this year. This was not an easy decision to make. It came down to the fact that although we believed that there were some good indexes submitted including two very good ones, there was no outstanding one amongst them. We were both of the opinion that the Australian Society of Indexers Medal is an award of some standing in the profession and one which should only be given to an outstanding index. Hence the decision not to award the medal this year.

I should stress that the difference between a very good index and an outstanding one is not great. Other judges may have decided differently and awarded the medal. We did not. However, we decided to give the two very good indexes a special commendation. The two in question are Elmar Zalums' index to *Australia's Commonwealth Parliament, 1901-1988: ten perspectives* and Max McMaster's index to the proceedings of the Fourth International Kimberlite Conference held in Perth in 1986, published in two volumes as *Kimberlites and related rocks*. Both indexers had to grapple with large multi-author books and their respective indexes make the texts and the information therein far more accessible to the books' potential users. This to me seems to be one of the basic functions of any index.

I now more than ever realize that these were judicious choices. Victor Prescott, the Chairman of the Board of Melbourne University Press, the publisher of the former, is sitting almost immediately to my left, and the compiler of the latter index, Max McMaster, who is also your current President, is sitting just to my right. Be that as it may, both indexers deserve honourable mentions for their work.

I will conclude by telling a story against myself. Beside judging this award I have been busy lately working on *GNAB*, or to give it its full title, *Guide to new Australian books*. Some of you may have already seen the first issue. *GNAB* is published jointly by D.W. Thorpe and my employer, the National Centre for Australian Studies at Monash University. It is an annotated bi-monthly guide to all new Australian books, or, more correctly, all new Australian books sent to the offices of D.W. Thorpe. Anyway, the first issue

lists and describes about 420 books and each book has two or three subject descriptors.

I proudly showed *GNAB* to many of my librarian friends, who, almost to a person, praised its contents but then asked, Where was the subject index? To avoid embarrassment I said that there was not time to produce one for the first number but we would be doing so for the second. This was stretching the truth. Although our production schedule was very tight, the main reason for the lack of a subject index was that it never occurred to us that one was necessary.

I have to admit that this is hardly a legitimate excuse for the Chairman of the judging panel for the Australian Society of Indexers Medal. Still, it does prove in a way what I stated at this same dinner two years ago which was that however hard you try you are never going to get it exactly right. But it is through the efforts of societies like yours that standards are set and writers, editors and publishers encouraged to adhere to them. For this you are to be commended. Thank you.

ARGUS INDEX 1860

The *Index to the Argus 1860*, published by the Council of the State Library of Victoria and indexed by Geraldine Suter, was launched at a function at the library on 12 December 1990.

The index represents the first stage of a project to index 50 years of the newspaper, from 1860 to 1909, filling the gap between the two existing indexes.

The project is largely dependent on the work of volunteer readers and is co-ordinated by Dr John Hirst, History Department, Latrobe University.

The index was compiled using the Index4 suite of programs and formatted for printing using WordPerfect 5.0.

Copies are available at a cost of $45.00 plus postage from:

Copy Centre
State Library of Victoria
328 Swanston Street
Melbourne Vic. 3000

PROPOSED CHANGES TO NEWSLETTER

We are planning to change the form and frequency of the *Newsletter* from the beginning of 1991.

It is planned to produce 11 monthly issues from February to December each year. Nine of these will be two to three page newsletters designed to keep members up-to-date with current events in all states. The other two issues will be more substantial, containing reports, book reviews and correspondence, together with the more topical items.

We are very interested in your views on the proposed changes. We are also looking for a correspondent in each state. If you have any opinions on the *Newsletter* or if you are interested in taking on the role of correspondent for your state, please write to Max

McMaster, Australian Society of Indexers, GPO Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3000, or telephone him on 418 7335 by 15 January 1991.

CINDEX, VERSION 4
by Linda K. Fetters

Although this program first appeared in 1986, it has undergone three major revisions in the last 2+ years. The look and feel are much the same, but Cindex now runs much faster and has many new features.

Hardware Requirements: IBM PC and compatibles with 256k memory and at least one floppy disk drive. Two floppy disk drives or one floppy drive and a hard disk are recommended.

Preparing Entries: Entries may be up to 2000 characters in length with up to 14 levels of subheadings. Indexes may contain 65,534 records.

Adding Records: The entry screen resembles a 3x5 card for the current entry, and the most recent entries are displayed at the top of the screen, each one as a single line with the subheadings separated by dashes for ease of reading.

Instead of using commas to separate parts of the entry, you create subheadings by pressing the $\boxed{\text{enter}}$ key. Any main heading and subheading can be flipped by pressing one key (or you can flip various levels of subheadings). Cindex automatically checks for mismatched print codes, sort codes, and missing page references each time you save a record.

While adding records, you can copy any record on the screen in its entirety, or you can copy any part of the most recent record. Once a record moves off the screen, you can retrieve it and copy it as described in the *Editing* section.

Cindex allows you to work on up to four indexes at one time. That is, you can have four indexes open and switch between them with one command without having to exit.

Macros: Twenty function key combinations are available for storing phrases or commands and can be changed at any time. In addition, you may store up to 600 abbreviations of 140 characters each. Abbreviations can be displayed individually on the screen, or you can display or print all abbreviations in alphabetical order. Abbreviations are saved automatically and can be used with any index.

Displaying the index: You can display any alphabetical group of entries by typing the first few letters of the first word (or words) in the entry or you can display all records in the index that contain a specified string of characters. You can also display all or part of the formatted index on the screen (with or without record numbers) or print all or part of the index.

Editing: Once you have located the record you want to edit by one of the methods described above, you can modify it or copy it for use as a new entry. In addition, Cindex provides for global search and replace of words or strings of characters anywhere in the index.

As an extension of the search and replace (SUBSTITUTE) command, the PATTERN command allows you to search (or search and replace) in very specific ways. For example, you can search for a string of characters that occur only at the beginning of a line, only at the end of a line, or you can use wildcard characters. These are only a few of the many types of patterns available for finding or replacing strings of text or page references.

The JOIN command looks for entries that have only one subheading and runs in the subheading with the main heading. If you have already joined entries and later add new subheadings, JOIN can 'unjoin' old entries as needed.

Cross-references: Cross-references may be placed immediately after the main heading, or as the first or last subheading for an entry. If you have entered more than one cross-reference for the same heading during the course of your work, Cindex combines them in the correct alphabetical order and punctuates them correctly. It also underlines (or italicizes) cross-references automatically without you having to insert print codes. A cross-references verification feature examines all cross-references for missing or questionable main headings.

Sorting and Cumulations: Cindex alphabetizes entries as soon as they scroll out of the work area. Normally, you work in 'raw' alphabetical order and choose one of the other sort orders (word-by-word, letter-by-letter, or page) before you print the final version. If you are working on a very large index, however, you may wish to choose the desired sort order when you create the index to avoid having to wait long periods of time for final sorting when you have finished editing the index.

Cindex automatically ignores most articles and prepositions, but you can add or delete words on the list. You may mark words that you wish to have printed in the index but you don't wish to sort by enclosing them in special characters (< >). You may force sorting of numbers or symbols by typing the spelled-out form of the word in braces ({ }). The words or letters inside the braces do not print.

For legal indexes, or other indexes where it may be necessary to sort by section numbers or some other numbers that are embedded in the text, Cindex sorts the entries numerically. For example:

Sec. 95 (d) (2) (B) Cited in . . .
Sec. 336 (d) (99) (A) Discussed by . . .
Sec. 336 (d) (100) (A) Discussed by . . .

Subheadings may be sorted in alphabetical or page number order. You may cumulate indexes that have been converted to comma/quote delimited records (similar to those produced by many database management programs).

Page References: In addition to the merging of page references, Cindex offers sophisticated methods for altering ranges of page numbers if they are changed after you have completed an index. Furthermore, it can conflate, abbreviate and suppress page references. That is, it can change a string of pages to a range of pages (34, 33, 35 becomes 33-5); abbreviate long forms of page references to shorter ones (1536-1538 becomes 1536-8); or suppress complex references that include volume numbers (XIV 55:10, XIV 55:62, XIV 55:79 becomes XIV:55:10; 62; 79) and so on.

The SQUEEZE command removes deleted records, merges page references (if desired), and can also re-sort the index at the same time. It can also unmerge page references if you want to sort into page number order.

Formatting: Indented and run-in formats are available. You may set top, bottom, left and right margins, line spacing, indentations, runover indentation, number of columns, etc. You may also specify a fixed indentation for the lowest level of subheading, which has been provided especially for journal, magazine, or newspaper indexes, as well as right-justified page numbers as shown in the following example:

SCHOOLS
    Declining enrolment   6/24
  HIGH SCHOOL
    Wins chess tournament   3/18
    Fire at   4/22
  MIDDLE SCHOOL
    New principal appointed   5/4
  TOWN BOARD
    Discusses new swimming pool   3/17

Style sheets: You can set up formats for use with specific indexes, or for specific purposes. For example, you might keep a PRINTER.FMT file with double spaced lines and the proper margins for your printer, a FILE.FMT file for creating text files to use with your word processor or to send to your publisher, or any other kind of format required by different publishers. These format files can be recalled for use with any index.

Summary or Thesaurus Format: If you want to print just your main headings with cross-references, you may do so with the SUMMARY command. This is useful for large indexing projects with several indexers working together who need an authority list in order to keep the subject headings consistent. In addition to the main heading and its cross-references, the summary version of the index also indicates in brackets cross-references made from other headings.

Printing Effects: Cindex supports any printing effect available in your printer or word processor, such as boldface, underlining, and italic. You may store codes for your printer, your word processor, as well as typesetting codes. The program includes several code tables set up for common printers, word processors,

page makeup programs (desktop publishing) and typesetting codes. In addition, you can print foreign or other characters from the extended character set by including the ASCII code for the symbol.

File Conversion: Cindex can create comma/quote delimited files or standard data format files (tab-delimited) that can be read by many database management programs. It can also read 'MBK' files created by MACREX and convert them to Cindex files. Indexing Research also offers a service for converting formatted indexes stored as word processor files into Cindex files.

Manual: The manual contains complete instructions for using the program, along with abundant examples, illustrations, and a thorough index.

Recommendation: Packed with features, Cindex is an excellent choice for creating any kind of index. Improved formatting capabilities make it even better for handling periodical indexes. Making use of all its options can be a complex process, but new users can produce standard indexes without having to change any of the 'default' settings. As with any powerful program, you can learn new features as the need arises.

Because it is command-driven rather than menu-driven, you can perform any function without having to load a new menu into memory. While this speeds up work, it can also be intimidating for inexperienced computer users. Online help would be a welcome addition to the program.

Although it would be hard to pick out just one outstanding feature of this versatile program, one of the best things about Cindex is its capacity to display the index in a variety of ways. As you work on the index, you can monitor its development at any time without first having to run an alphabetizing or formatting module. You can display any part of the index in its final format and immediately edit any problem records. This feature alone saves you from printing the index until it is just short of completion.

Frequent upgrades to both the program and the manual have maintained Cindex's status as a top-flight indexing program. It is highly recommended for any type of indexing, but it is designed especially for professional indexers who must produce a large number of indexes on a regular basis.

For more information contact:
Indexing Research
P.O. Box 27687 River Station
Rochester NY 14627-7687

GUIDE TO NEW AUSTRALIAN BOOKS (GNAB)

D.W. Thorpe in conjunction with the National Centre for Australian Studies at Monash University is now publishing a bi-monthly annotated guide to new Australian books. Known by its acronym, *GNAB*, the first issue was published in October and the second

number will be release in December.

GNAB covers the full spectrum of Australian publishing, including text, reference, children's, academic and general books. In addition to giving the full bibliographic details for every new title, there is a 40-50 word descriptive annotation for each entry, subject descriptors, and, from the second issue onwards, a full subject index.

The criteria for including books in *GNAB* is fairly simple. All books sent to Thorpe, whether published in Australia or overseas, are eligible for inclusion providing they have Australian content or are written by an Australian (who may or may not be resident in the country). Australian issues of overseas titles will not be included unless the above criteria are met. The first issue of *GNAB* carried about 420 titles, the second will have over 600.

On average, over 100 books are published every week in Australia. With the advent of *GNAB* librarians and booksellers will now have a simple and authoritative guide to current and forthcoming titles. The first two numbers of the magazine are being distributed gratis, future issues will be available by subscription from Thorpe's at $50 for six issues.

John Arnold, Co-editor, *Guide to New Australian Books*

NEXT MEETING OF NSW BRANCH

A meeting of NSW members will be held on Wednesday 13 March 1991 in Seminar Room 1, Level 11, State Library of New South Wales. The meeting time is 6 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.

Garry Cousins, President of the NSW Branch, will speak on costing and quoting for an index.

A pertinent subject for all indexers, discussion of the topic will be invited so we look forward to seeing all interested people on this occasion.

If you plan to attend, please ring Garry Cousins on (02) 955 1525 or leave a message on his machine. A small donation will be requested to cover costs.

NEW MEMBERS

Mrs C. Drummond
Price Waterhouse Library
GPO Box 2798Y
Melbourne 3000

Dr M.G. Erwee
65/6 Stanley Street
East Sydney 2000

Ms A. McCormack
218 Cowper Street
Goulburn 2580

CHRONICLE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

British edition. London, Chronicle/Longman, 1988. Australasian edition. Melbourne, Chronicle/Penguin, 1990.

These large books – 1360 pages and 1392 pages respectively – are a month-by-month account of world events since January 1900. The editions are the same as to about 85% of their contents. The remaining 15% of different articles covers subjects of interest to their British or Australasian readers.

The majority of the material has been compiled from contemporary news media. Topics which continue over time are followed by a forward arrow indication. Backward arrows to find the beginning of a topic would have been helpful.

As these books are significant sources of reference, complete indexes should have been provided if the contents are to be fully exploited. The indexes fall far short of comprehensive. The fact that they occupy 61 six-column pages has probably led the publishers into thinking that they must be all right. Even so, the editor of the Australasian edition admits that his index is 'by no means complete'.

At first glance the indexes look similar. Indeed their structure and layout are the same but it is clear that their unacknowledged compilers worked independently.

Some subjects are differently named, eg. Racing in the British, Horse racing in the Australasian; in neither case is there a cross reference. Some subjects appear in one and not in the other, eg. Jews and Judaism in the Australasian edition occupies 2 columns; the subject is not listed in the British edition under any heading. Motor sports occupies one column in the British edition but does not appear in the Australasian.

There is a lack of many of the obvious cross references, eg. Cars is used in both editions, in neither case with references from Motor cars or Automobiles. The few cross references which occur are oddly chosen, eg. in the Australasian edition there is 'Melbourne Cup see Horse racing' while in the British edition there is 'Grand National see Racing' but no reference from Derby although under Racing there are references 'Racing see Derby winner (May-June most years) National winner (March-April)'.

Apart from the incompleteness and inconsistencies of the indexes their usefulness is reduced by their use of chronological listing under the subjects some of which run to 3 or more columns. Remember that the text of the volumes is also in chronological order!

All in all these indexes lead one to conclude that the publishers did not have a true appreciation of the value of the volumes nor a clear idea of how their contents could best be exploited. The indexes are reminiscent of those found in some encyclopaedic works of the 19th century. Perhaps the explanation is that the original work on which these are based was in French. (There is a French imprint on the verso of the title pages). If my assumption is correct, and if this original influence extended to the instructions to the indexers, then they tend to confirm my belief that user-oriented indexing is, as yet, only practised in the English-speaking world and that we have a lot to teach the rest of the world!

John E. Simkin

INDEX4

Copies of the Index4 indexing program, which has been placed on the public domain, are available at a cost of $15.00 plus postage from Australian Society of Indexers, GPO Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3000.

The program will run on an IBM compatible PC with 640k RAM, preferably with a hard disk. The publishers have stated that they are no longer providing technical support for the program, nor are they planning any future upgrades.

NEWSLETTER – NEXT 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, GPO Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3001, by 15 January 1991.

Advertisements for publication in the *Newsletter* are now being accepted at the following rates:
   1/2 inch block $5
   1 inch block $10

To place an advertisement please forward text and appropriate cheque to:
   The Editor
   Australian Society of Indexers
   GPO Box 1251L
   Melbourne, Vic. 3001

Closing date for next issue – 15 January 1991