EDITORIAL

Mad scrabble for the editorship! Well no, actually. This being my final issue, I am glad to report that the recruitment process was more civilised, and ended with the welcome arrival of Steve Sunter, who is in fact, the former Australian Scrabble Champion. I am just telling you this in case rather a lot of words with the letters Z and X etc. happen to pop up in the next issue.

Steve is the Managing Editor of the CSIRO Index, and has considerable knowledge of database indexing. He was officially welcomed to the fold at the very enjoyable **AusSI AGM and Dinner, which was held on 26 February** at the Spring Park Tea Rooms in Melbourne. Outgoing President, Max McMaster was away on interstate business, and so the evening's proceedings were charged to Vice-president, George Levick, who did a marvellous job.

The full Annual Report of 1991 will be published in the April issue, along with the Treasurer's Report and results of the election. I will mention however, that we have a **new President, Isabelle Mentha**, also a CSIRO Editor on the Research in Progress Databases. No doubt, members will be hearing from Isabelle in the near future. Good luck to Isabelle, Steve, and to the new and continuing members of the National/Victorian Committee.

Members will find the form for _Indexers Available 1992_ enclosed with this issue. Please complete and return the form by the due date. Late forms cannot be guaranteed inclusion in the directory.

By the way, if anyone has any suggestions for the next edition of _Indexers Available_, now is the time to make them. Phone or write to the Secretary, or send your comment in with the above-mentioned form.

Sydney members should note that the **New South Wales Branch is having a meeting on the topic of 'Indexing Pictures' on 8 April** (see notice below), so support your local branch and attend what promises to be an interesting evening.

Helen Kinniburgh

APRIL MEETING OF THE NSW BRANCH

The next meeting of the New South Wales Branch will be held on Thursday 8 April, 1992, in Seminar Room 1, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney at 6.30pm (room open from 6pm).

The **topic of the meeting is 'Indexing Pictures'**. Alan Walker will speak on indexing the Mitchell Library's Hood Collection of twentieth-century photographs, and will demonstrate retrieval from the new videodisc holding this collection. Members are also urged to visit (at another time) the Library's excellent exhibition 'Sydney Exposures: through the eyes of Sam Hood and his studio 1925-1950' to which the videodisc indexing project is related.

Other members with experience of indexing pictures will be invited to contribute accounts of their experiences.

A donation of $5 is requested, to cover the cost of room hire and other meeting expenses.

SOFTWARE REVIEW — MACREX VERSION 5

Introduction

To mark the 10th anniversary of Macrex, Hilary and Drusilla Calvert produced V.5 in the Summer of 1991. This computer aided indexing program is designed to assist indexers working from manuscript, proofs or completed documents of any kind. It is a straightforward package written for IBM and compatibles, and is so designed that a newcomer can begin to use it within a few hours. The program is now used internationally by indexers and by some large corporations. The originators keep in touch with users to respond to their needs. Many of the enhancements in the new version are in response to user needs and suggestions.

For those not familiar with the system you choose a file name and record length,[1] and then begin to make entries[2] on the _add_ screen. These are automatically merged and can be viewed at any time on the _edit_ screen. A wide range of time saving features speed up the input process. Frequently

occurring headings and subs. can be automatically copied from the previous line; headings and subs. can be inverted (flip); a main heading can be made from the previous sub. (half flip); several levels of subs. can be interchanged (rotate) and any heading or sub. visible on the screen can be appended (yank). Sorting[3] takes about 0.5 seconds.

New and improved features
The program has been revised so as to increase the speed of all functions and utilities (comprising over 50 files). Installation takes about 5 minutes or less and actual response times is extremely efficient.

* you can select automatic SAVE to take place at any period you choose, e.g. every 10 minutes;

* once you can chosen a format for your particular index a default file is loaded, but can be altered at any time;

* layout (on the *edit* screen) can be viewed in set-out or in run-on format;

* optional coloured or shaded blocks indicate headings, to separate them from subs.;

* can be run on Microsoft Windows 3;

* scroll up/down, entry/screen, one at a time;

* go to beginning or end of the index with a key stroke;

* make an ASCII file or files in standard language such as Ventura;

* choose one of several punctuation marks to denote separation of volumes from page numbers (or paras);

* reminder beep if you have forgotten to insert a location reference;

* choice of position of cross references — at top, bottom or three other styles;

* beeps if you exceed record length for an entry;

* 100,000 keywords available;

* single key to delete text from one comma to the next (which indicate subs. or sub-subs. and which are used for sorting);

* temporary files to enable an increased capacity to about 1 million entries;

* search with 'wild cards';

* combine two or more indexes e.g. list of names with subject index — automatically sorted and merged;

* new features added regularly even between Versions;

* you can print any part of your index at any time or use continuous print whilst you are indexing.

There are many other attributes of this program which are too numerous to mention here but Macrex is so significantly designed that it provides options to suit any special type of index or document.

A demonstration disk and Manual[4] of Version 5 is available which will give you up to 75 lines. This can be used to learn the program and run a trial index, before you decide to purchase the system.

Macrex is menu driven and the central point of reference is the Main Menu[5] from which you select other sub-programs, each giving a list of options for you to create your own default style to suit your requirements or a particular type of index. The print subprogram will, for example, allow you to make a word processor file, view the entire index on screen, change or check layout, add or edit printing features. At this point you can make an ASCII disk file for your publisher or transfer the index from Macrex to Ventura.

Altogether a sophisticated, versatile and complete program which will enable you to concentrate on making yourself a better indexer whilst Macrex[6] takes charge of all the chores and acts as your obedient servant.

[1]. A record is the total number of characters you think will make up the layout of your entries — heading, sub., sub-sub. etc., plus location reference. You can go up to 1000 characters, including spaces.

[2]. About twenty numbered entry lines (which comprise the record) are seen on screen.

[3]. Sorting is based on BS3700 and BS1749, but can be altered to suit any convention.

[4]. A comprehensive manual of 31 chapters is supplied with trial disk.

[5]. A brief summary:
Main Menu
    Index style options
        Colour settings

Sort subprogram
    Sort options
Merge subprogram
    Merge options
Print subprogram
    Print layouts 1,2
    Volume/page (para.) number options
    Optional printing features
 Pagination subprogram

6. If you are interested to have more details please phone (043) 845970.

Kingsley Siebel

NEW MEMBERS
The Society welcomes the following new members:

Ms C Colton
70 Cross Street
DOUBLE BAY NSW 2028

Mr P Cotton
2 Megalone Street
KATOOMBA NSW 2780

Mr L Garland
15 Duff Street
SANDRINGHAM VIC 3191

Mr I Knight
13 Kyla Street
ALSTONVILLE NSW 2477

Ms S Quinn
Online Information Resources P/L
PO Box 476
DONCASTER VIC 3108

A FICTION-INDEXER WRITES (from NZ)

[Gerald Fowler wrote to us wondering if we could put other fiction-indexers in touch. We suspect that the F.I. is a rare bird, but if there are any of you out there, his address is below. The following are exerpts from two letters.]

I will be pleased to hear from indexers who have had experiences with end-of-novel indexing.
    Book publishing in New Zealand seems to be in a parlous state; so, therefore, is end-of-book indexing.

Last year, I decided I must try indexing fiction. Usually monthly, I send leaflets to publishers in New Zealand. I was wondering what to write in a leaflet about indexing of fiction, when Keri Hulme telephoned and asked me to compile an index to *The Bone People*. Naturally, I agreed.
    I have read, of course, the articles in *The Indexer* [Hazel Bell wrote two articles in *The Indexer*, Oct. 1991, vol. 17 no. 4].

Indexing *The Bone People* called for gear changes, and I got writer's block — artist's block? indexer's block? — twice. By coincidence, I am reading a book published in 1991, a definitive academic work, *Writer's Block* by Zachary Leader, which helped to convince me that being in hospital twice for coronary care when compiling the index had nothing to do with my indexer's block. I was in fact reading, studying and writing as actively as ever. Certainly, one tends to get into the mind of the author, to participate in the creativity, to appreciate the depth of the characterisation and of the settings. I found too that the style and syntax needed to be softer and consistent with the imaginative nuances of a work of fiction. At first, I found the violence anathematic, but my dislike was tempered with tolerance, due, probably, to the philosophical theme and the poetical style.

Gerald Fowler
140 The Ridgeway
Mornington, Wellington
New Zealand

DEADLINE: APRIL ISSUE
Contributions should reach the Editor at the address below by 20 March 1992. Contributions on 3.5" Mac disk (Microsoft Word) will be appreciated.

REMINDER — EXPANDED ISSUES
Longer articles, book reviews, and other suitable pieces are wanted for the 'expanded'' issues of the Newsletter. If you have an idea for an article, but would like to discuss it first, please telephone or write to the Editor (contact number and address overpage). p.s.: Articles can be faxed to : (03) 4190459 (they should be addressed *clearly* to the Australian Society of Indexers).

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY
OF INDEXERS:
GPO BOX 1251L,
MELBOURNE, VICTORIA
3001

President: Isabelle Mentha
Phone: 03) 4187222

Secretary: Ian Odgers
Phone: 03) 418 7275

Editor: Helen Kinniburgh *
Phone: 03) 418 7320

* (From April onwards, Steve
Sunter will be the Newsletter
Editor — Phone (03) 4187253)

NEW SOUTH WALES
BRANCH
PO BOX R598,
ROYAL EXCHANGE,
SYDNEY, NSW 2001

President: Garry Cousins
Phone: 02) 955 1525

Secretary: Christine Winning
Phone: 02) 793 0793

Assistant
Secretary: Alan Walker
Phone: 02) 380 5875