



Australian Society of Indexers NEWSLETTER

Volume 17, Number 8, September 1993

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New Ideas, suggestions, comments !

Well folks, your editor is guilty of a gross misdemeanour, Yep! A typographical error was spotted in last month's issue of *AusSI*. Well actually....I purposely included it to keep our indexers alert, active and on the ball!!! What's an indexer if he or she can't spot a typo? Well....that's my story and I'm sticking to it!!!

Onto other matters.....What does this editor do in her spare time? I bury myself in the library, fossick through past issues of *AusSI*, related journals and newsletters looking for relevant topics for discussion in our Newsletter. Well, I'm stuck ! Most topics such as: freelance work, pricing policy, quality control, negotiating contracts and reviews of indexing packages have been covered quite extensively and comprehensively in various earlier issues. Perhaps I'm missing something? Have the readers got any ideas or issues that they'd like to know more about? What do the new members think? Would they like information on topics that they've missed out on? I'd like to hear from you. Heck!!! My job's on the line!!!

In this month's issue I've included Garry Cousin's report on his visit to the American Society of Indexers' 25th Annual Conference, regional news, and information on various local conferences.



Corrigendum: Readers, please adjust August's issue number to read 17(7). It was incorrectly shown as 17(8).

ACT News

Details for the next ACT Region Meeting are as follows;

Date: Tuesday 19 October
Venue: Room 1, Griffin Centre
Time: 5pm - 7pm
Theme: 'Indexing Videos'

Refreshments will be served.

Speakers are Bill Pym, from National Film and Sound Archive and Janet Wardman, from The Australian Institute of Sport.

Contact:

Geraldine Triffitt (06) 2461177

NSW News

The next meeting of the New South Wales Branch will be a general meeting on the theme of 'NUTS AND BOLTS - REVISITED'

At a meeting last year, there was considerable interest and discussion when we had a 'nuts and bolts' session, and it was decided that we should schedule another one.

Each of the Committee members will raise a practical indexing matter of interest to him/her, and members are encouraged to discuss their own most worrying dilemmas or to ride their own favourite hobbyhorses. So if you feel the need to talk about Aboriginal personal names or Tables of Statutes or dangling prepositons or other knotty indexing problems, come along to:

Venue: The Jean Garling Room,
Mitchell Wing
The State Library of NSW
Macquarie Street, Sydney
Time: 6.00pm for 6.30pm
Date: Tuesday 16 November
Cost: Donations of \$5.00
Contact: Alan Walker (02)380 5875

VIC News

Law of the Land: Legal Indexing meeting

A reminder to all members intending to attend the legal indexing meeting, the RSPV date is Monday 27th September.

Date: 29th September 1993

Venue: RMIT Function Room
Building 8, Level 2 (street level)

Time: 5.30pm for 6.00pm - 7.30pm

Contact:

Max McMaster: (03) 571 6341

Ian Odgers: (03) 418 7275

Australian Newspaper and Journal Indexes Survey

The National Library of Australia is seeking assistance from members of the Society of Indexers in identifying the location of indexes of Australian newspapers and journals.

Recommendation TC7 of the *Towards Federation 2001 Conference* in 1992 recognised the need for a study to determine whether in-house indexing of Australian newspapers and journals by State, Territory, Parliamentary and Local libraries could be effectively integrated to provide better national access and improved cost-benefit of operations.

The first step in this process is to identify the location of indexes, both those currently being created and those which may now be closed. A two stage project is currently underway.

Stage 1 surveyed a limited number of libraries/archives to find which newspaper and journal indexes are created in-house and their associated indexing practice. Questionnaires were sent out to relevant libraries, with a August 31st. deadline.

Stage 2 will extend the survey to other libraries or other organisations which are known to have newspaper and journal indexes.

For the purpose of this survey, an index is defined as a system which provides

bibliographic access to details of author, title, serial citation and subject. Examples would include APAIS, current awareness bulletins or clippings files of material which is retained for a long time(as opposed to vertical files in public libraries which are regularly updated and weeded). The emphasis is on Australian materials, but indexes with a substantial Australian content are also of interest.

The creation of a list of indexes, both current and closed, may then allow for rationalisation of indexing in the case of duplication, as well as making better known those indexes which are held.

For those who would like a questionnaire to be sent out to them, please contact:

Margaret Henty:

National Library of Australia
Canberra 2600.

Phone: (06) 262 1157

Fax: (06) 257 1705

email: m.henty@nla.gov.au.

Women in Publishing Conference...A report

Women in Publishing (NSW) recently held their second extremely successful conference. On Saturday 10 July at the Australian Museum, approximately 150 women met for an entertaining and thought-provoking keynote address from author Siobhan McHugh. Delegates, having previously nominated which sessions they would be attending, then moved around the Museum to seminars and workshops. Topics covered were 'Trends in the Marketplace', 'Time management', 'Personal finance', 'Personal Skills, Career Skills', 'Uncovering the Cover' and 'Is There a Glass Ceiling?' The final session saw all conference-goers together again for an introduction to the concept of an organised mentoring program. A short AGM followed at which the 1993/94 committee were elected and as the grand (but relaxing) finale, drinks, nibbles and conversation were indulged in, in the ghostly Skeleton Gallery.

Feedback questionnaires indicated that generally the conference had fulfilled expectations and members were happy

with both the program offered and organisation on the day.

WiP welcomes further enquires from women involved in any aspect of the publishing industry. Our address:

Women in Publishing
PO Box 1515, North Sydney
NSW 2059

Annette Barlow



International Indexing Events

Report on the American Society of Indexers' 25th Annual Conference, 19-21 May 1993, Alexandria, Virginia

By Garry Cousins

Gary also presented a paper titled 'Survey of Publishers: some preliminary results' details of which will be printed in next month's issue.

In May this year I was lucky enough to be able to accept the invitation extended to AusSI by the American Society of Indexers to attend their 25th annual conference. The conference was held in Alexandria, just outside Washington D.C., from May 19 to May 21. I was met at Washington's Dulles airport the evening before the conference by Jeanne Moody, who, along with Victoria Agee and Jane Maddocks from the Washington chapter of the ASI, treated me to dinner that night.

Day 1: Professional development workshops

On Thursday 19 May four professional development workshops were held, two run concurrently in the morning and two in the afternoon. The topics these workshops covered were: bidding and scheduling in the business of indexing, thesaurus management, contracting with the federal government, and working as an indexer in the database industry.

I attended the first on bidding and scheduling, which started, appropriately, at the early hour of 8:30am. It was run by Frances Lennie and Alexandra Nickerson.

This was a useful nuts and bolts discussion of matters like how to prepare

estimates, costing your time, keeping track of current and future projects and coping

with unexpected contingencies. The latter part of the session was spent in groups, each wrestling with a different hypothetical problem, and then reporting to the seminar as a whole with our conclusions. My group was given this problem to discuss:

... an editor calls to let you know that she has sent a project to you by courier today. It will arrive tomorrow, and she needs it by the end of next week. You had pencilled in the project some time ago, but without firm dates. You now have to decide whether the project will fit into your current work load. What do you need to know about this project to help you decide? What should you have done prior to this call? What would persuade you to accept or decline the project?

The unanimous answer to the last question, by the way, was money.

On Thursday evening a reception and award presentation was held for the past presidents of the American Society.

Day 2: Database indexing

The next day, Friday, was the first day of the plenary sessions and concentrated on database indexing and computer-assisted indexing; the sessions on Saturday concentrated more on the profession of indexing and back-of-the-book indexing. Rather than try to give an abstract of each session, I'll just mention each briefly and then expand on one or two points which interested me, or which generated some controversy in the audience.

The first session was presented by two indexers from the Bureau of National Affairs in Washington. Much of their paper described the trials and tribulations, and dramatic improvements in productivity and quality, which were involved in moving from indexing on a mainframe to using PC software, in this case Cindex, on a local area network.

This was followed by a panel on database indexing and database retrieval. Speakers from the Public Affairs Information Service, the Modern Language Association, the American Psychological Association and the American Petroleum Institute outlined their in-house methods in each of these diverse environments. Strategies for vocabulary control were a common theme.

The day's keynote speaker, Christopher Locke, was next, with a very philosophical paper entitled: Weaving the social fabric: illuminating manuscripts. Locke is the Editor-in-Chief of Internet Business Magazine. He made some interesting points about the loss of skills which can accompany the automation of indexing, and on the distinction between automation and tools. Several indexers objected strenuously when they construed him as saying indexers should rise to the challenge of working with automated indexing systems, rather than bemoan employment opportunities lost through them. One in particular described how he had lost work indexing technical documents for CD-ROMs as a result of a company's decision to forego a humanly compiled index and merely let users search the CD-ROM using Boolean retrieval. The company believed that "our users should be able to find 60-80 percent of what they're looking for using Boolean retrieval". It was an interesting and provocative talk.

At the buffet lunch which followed I met David Ream, from Leverage Technologies. Leverage Technologies⁽¹⁾ produces several utility programs for Cindex, Macrex and plain ASCII files, which will do things like create authority lists for large projects (SumDex), reverse the names of parties in legal cases, so that, for instance, Smith v Jones becomes Jones v Smith (CaseRev), and allow headings in an index to be validated against a predefined master heading list stored in another file (H/Check).

Computer-assisted indexing

The afternoon sessions dealt with computer-assisted database indexing and standards for indexing. The papers on computer-assisted indexing in particular were technical and demanding, and I would direct interested persons to the Proceeding⁽²⁾ of the conference for full information, rather than try to describe them "in a nutshell" here. Susanne Humphrey's paper on the prototype of an expert indexing system, MedIndEx, which she is developing at the National Library of Medicine was as fascinating as it was impenetrable. The project is a combination of artificial intelligence and information retrieval principles and aims to develop an interactive computer-assisted indexing system for the MEDLINE database.

Standards in Indexing

In the final session on standards that afternoon, James Anderson, a professor at Rutgers University who is on the committee revising the American standard on indexing, revealed that work on the revised standard has been in progress for four years now, and may continue for another two years.

Cindex and Macrex

A reception was held afterwards for users of the program Cindex⁽³⁾. The programmer of Cindex, Peter Lennie, told of plans to introduce a Macintosh and a Windows version of Cindex early in 1994. These programs will have cut and paste and other features not presently in the DOS version. Hilary Calvert was also at the conference with a new version of Macrex⁽⁴⁾, version 6.

Day 3: Various Topics

Day three of the conference focused more, though not exclusively, on book indexing. The day began with an international panel on the profession of indexing. Tom McFadden, the new president of ASI, talked about some of the historical problems and technological advances which make electronic publishing so attractive as an alternative to print. I talked next about professional indexing in Australia; in particular about the survey of publishers which AusSI conducted last year, and about the first tentative steps being taken to establish some form of accreditation for indexers in Australia. I also took the opportunity to invite all present to our own conference in Marysville in 1995.

Indexers in the U.K

Elizabeth Wallis followed me and talked about the accreditation of indexers and vocational training in Britain. At one stage in her paper she mentioned that, although there are honourable exceptions "it is a curious feature of indexing in England that for the most part indexers themselves are more concerned with standards of published indexes than the great majority of publishers" (5). I thought this rang true for Australia too.

Indexers in Canada

Michele Hudon from the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada followed and spoke about professional indexing in Canada, mentioning that back-of-the-book indexers are a minority in the Canadian society, which is composed mostly of database indexers. She told us how the society in Canada has such a low profile that a colleague had once accused her of being the president of a secret society.

For the next session armchairs were put up on stage and Dorothy Thomas interviewed a number of leading lights of the American Society of Indexers in an informal and interesting way. These oral histories were recorded for ASI archives and featured Alan Greengrass, Barbara Preschel, BevAnne Ross, Hans Wellisch, Ben-Ami Lipetz, Jessica Milstead, Jeanne Moody, Nancy Mulvany and Linda Feters.

At lunch on this final day a giant birthday cake was brought out to celebrate ASI's 25th birthday.

Non-specialist indexing

Hazel Bell spoke next, calling her paper *Vive la Difference! The Survival of the Softest*. She made a case for the non-specialist indexer, the indexer of that

... central core of published books ... covering so many areas of life, as to be unclassifiable as a subject specialism; though it includes genres as biography, popular history, travel, how-to books at a popular level: any texts that are not dry and disciplined, but to use the dictionary opposite, do contain 'warmth and emotion'.

this sort of indexing, saying that

... many of the standards, rules and conventions that our craft has adopted in accordance with the major developments in technology and scale since the founding of the SI, do not apply to us surviving back-of-the-book soft indexers. We are different(6).

She gave a delightful example of soft indexing which illustrated well how individually chosen subheadings don't always conform to the British Standard injunctions to use "terminology employed in the document" for headings, and to only use prepositions "if their absence might cause ambiguity" but can be very effective, thoroughly enjoyable entries to read. The entry was from F.A. Pottle's index of 1950 to Boswell's London Journal:

Lewis, Mrs (Louisa), actress. JB to call Louisa in journal; receives JB; JB visits; JB's increased feeling for; JB discusses love with; JB anticipates delight with; JB lends two guineas to; disregards opinion of world; discusses religion with JB; JB entreats to be kind; uneasiness of discourages JB; JB declares passion for; promises to make JB blessed;... makes assignation with JB; consummation with JB interrupted; ... JB likes better and better; JB's felicity delayed; ... JB afraid of a rival; JB feels coolness for; ... JB incredulous at infection from; JB enraged at perfidy of; ... JB asks for his two guineas back; ... (7)

Book Indexing research

Elizabeth Liddy and Corinne Jorgensen from Syracuse University were next and presented the results of some very interesting research which they have been doing on "book index characteristics which facilitate information access". They concluded that several of the most important assumptions upon which indexers base their work may be incorrect, namely the assumptions that:

- 1) *a typical back-of-the-book index is an intuitive structure which most people readily grasp*
- 2) *the user of a back-of-the-book index thinks about accessing information in similar ways as a professional indexer organizes that information for access*

- 3) *syndetic and classificatory structures are the most important means for indicating relationships among concepts in an index; format is secondary*(8)

Many subjects in their research "did not understand the basic structure of a back-of-the-book index, nor the formatting conventions typically used in them". For example, some subjects asked why no page numbers appeared after see and see also references. They also found that "...users do not seem to read introductions to indexes". The subjects were Master of Library Science students. Although members of the audience disagreed with Liddy's and Jorgensen's methodology, this paper generated a lot of interest and its authors were commended for taking some first steps in an area that all agreed needs more research. Liddy and Jorgensen are continuing with their research.

Ira Kleinberg from Rutgers University followed with a paper on the importance of research, reviewing key pieces of research to date, and identifying areas worthy of further research.

Freelance Indexing

The final session of the day featured a panel of freelancers in a freewheeling discussion on aspects of life as a professional freelance indexer. Panellists Nancy Mulvany, Babs Klein, Frances Lennie, Elinor Lindheimer, Jane Maddocks and Alexandra Nickerson presented prepared answers to several questions on various issues like appropriate computer equipment for the freelancer, scheduling one's time, essential reference books, and that old chestnut, costing and charging. The floor was then thrown open for questions. This was another useful nuts and bolts session.

The end !

That session brought the conference to a close. Nancy Mulvany's sense of humour made her a good conference coordinator, and I felt the three days had been very well planned and conducted. In addition to the main sessions, a publications desk had been set up next to the conference hall selling ASI publications; another was selling T-shirts. Information about and demonstrations of indexing software (Macrex, Cindex and Leverage Technologies) were also available.

The conference was not my only indexing experience while I was away. Two law indexers I had met at the conference, Joseph Oliansky and Manjit Misra from Matthew Bender & Company Inc., publishers of law, invited me to visit their office in New York which I did the following week. They both work as indexing managers, coordinating the work of both in-house and freelance indexers. The trend in this company, incidentally, is towards the use of more freelance indexers. Matthew Bender & Company are using Cindex on a network in-house and many of their freelancers also use it at home, which makes file transfer easy.

Notes

1. David Ream, Leverage Technologies, 9519 Greystone Parkway, Cleveland, Ohio 44141-2939, USA Tel (216) 838-1203
2. *Indexing, Providing Access to Information: Looking Back, Looking Ahead*. The Proceedings of the 25th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Indexers, 1993. Available from the Publications Sales Office, American Society of Indexers, PO Box 386, Port Aransas, Texas 78373, USA. Tel (512) 749-4052
3. Available from Frances S. Lennie, Indexing Research, Box 18609, Rochester NY 14618-0609, USA. Tel (716) 461-5530
4. Available from Hilary and Drusilla Calvert, 38 Rochester Road, London NW1 9JJ, England, UK. Tel (01) 267-3793
5. The Proceedings, p. 112
6. Ibid, p. 116
7. Ibid, p. 120
8. Ibid, p. 134

SEMINARS, Etc.

When is a freelancer not a freelancer?

A seminar has been organised, by the ABPA and the Society of Editors, for individuals who rely on freelance editors, designers and freelance contractors as an effective way to meet their varying labour requirements. Topics discussed will be; PAYE tax installments, Superannuation Guarantee Levy, Payroll tax, Health and safety issues, Contracting ex-employees and Autonomy of freelancers.

The seminar is designed to examine these issues and to provide guidelines and practical ways to deal with the problem both from the freelancer's and employer's perspective.

Qualified legal and accounting personnel will provide general information on the issues including an interpretation of the current law and how it works in practice.

Contact:

Robyn Lowe, ABPA: (02) 281 9788

Sydney

Date: Tuesday 19 October 1993
Time: 9am-12noon
Venue: The Terrace, Level 4
The Australian Museum,
William Street, Sydney

Melbourne

Date: Friday 22 October 1993
Time: 9am-12noon
Venue: Hilton on the Park
192 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne

Warana Writers' Week

This is a celebration of Australian writers and their craft. It will be a week of readings, presentations, panel discussions, book launches, awards, and evening entertainment. This year's theme, 'Drawing the Lines', reflects changing perceptions about the cultural, social and forma boundaries of writing.

Dates: 24-30 September 1993
Venue: Queensland Cultural Centre
Auditorium
Cost: Workshops are \$5.00

Booking forms are available from:

- * Schools in the Brisbane area
- * BCC libraries
- * QWC: 95 William Street, City
or by sending a SSAE to QWC
PO Box 12059, Elizabeth Street
Q 4002.

More bibliographic details....

In last month's issue I included a review article titled *Automated Support to Indexing* by Gail M Hodge. For those of you who are interested in purchasing a copy here are further details;

ISBN number 942 308 360

measurement: 28cm

Availability: NFAIS

The Publications Coordinator
1429 Walnut Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Phone: 215/563-2406

Fax: 215/563-2848

Cost: US \$100.00 (nonmembers)
US \$ 80.00 (members)

Indexers Available

A special note to members who were sent out a form with the August issue of AusSI. The deadline has now passed (Sept 10), however The Society is willing to deal with any last minute urgent responses or anyone who requires another form to be sent out. Please contact The Society Secretary as soon as possible.

Contact: Ian Odgers (03) 418 7275

Note: *Changes of address, phone number and registration status can be made until the proofs are sent to the printers.*

New Members....Welcome!

Ms A Fitzgerald, Kirribilli, NSW
Ms Liane Forster Knight, Caulfield, VIC
Ms G Giopoulos, Narrabundah, ACT
Mr J Jerney, Blaxland, NSW
Ms R Missingham, Kambah, ACT
Mrs Deirdre Ward, Strathfield, NSW

An Acrostic Puzzle!!!

The acrostic was a popular word puzzle in Victorian times. Usually in verse the clues are presented in the form of a rhyming couplet. The initial letters of the one word answers, read in order, form a word themselves; in a double acrostic, the final letters on the answer-words also form a word.

In this particular version of double acrostic the clues are in rhyme and the first and last letters of the answers form two vertical words. The first couplet refers to the complete solution. The answer to the second couplet is 'Salem'. Can you work out the solution to each rhyme? Answers next month.

Abhorred by witches, frowned upon in school
On advertising billboards they seem to be the rule.

Fire burn and cauldron bubble
Witches here were in big trouble.

Persians believed in this fairy so good
Perhaps in Iran they still wish they could.

He shoots his arrows but doesn't stay
For his wings ensure a fast getaway.

A swift traveller reached this spot
And found little there but of that quite a lot.

Mother-in-law of Menelaus
her daughter caused tremendous chaos.

This tyrolean city is very old
And in the winter extremely cold.

The Greeks referred to him as Poseidon,
Seafarers hoped he could be relied on.

there were twelve if you were Norse,
Balder was one of them of course.

Compiled by Marilyn Buchanan

Next Deadline - October 14, 1993



News, views and reviews are always welcome. Floppy disks will be appreciated where articles are longer than one A4 page (preferably 3.5" Macintosh disks; Microsoft Word software; IBM is also OK).

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