Australian Society of Indexers
NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

Greetings! The new series Who's Who in Indexing has been kicked off by Jean Hagger one of the founding members of AusSI. Photos for the last two conferences provide a pictorial end to the issue. The 1996 Medal is announced by Alan Walker. Another first is Glenda Browne's article *Automatic indexing and abstracting* which begins the Indexing in the Electronic Age papers series. As mentioned it is on our Web site above, proving popular with over 59 readers already on the Web site worldwide. Finally, Garry Cousins writes more about typesetting with CINDEX.

That's all for this month. See you next month...

Dwight Walker, Editor and Webmaster

Meetings and Training:

Tuesday 23 July 1996 at 7.00pm, Canberra

Christmas in midwinter Dinner Meeting at Canberra International Hotel. Cost $25.00. Maurice Dunlevy, Lecturer at the University of Canberra and writer for the Canberra Times, will speak on "My acquaintance with indexers and indexing."

Tuesday 17 Sep 1996 at 6.00pm, Canberra

General Meeting at the Friends Room at the National Library of Australia. Michael Harrington of Australian Government Publishing Service will speak on "Evaluating an index." Refreshments will be served. Contact Shirley Campbell Ph (06)234 2225(W) (06)2851006(H)

Wednesday 27 Nov 1996 pm, Sydney

Combined Christmas Party / Medal Dinner.
Contact: Garry Cousins (02) 9955 1525

Nov 1996, Melbourne, Indexing Course

The Victorian Branch is planning a three-day Introduction to Book Indexing Course, to be held in Melbourne in early November 1996. A minimum number of ten people is needed for the course to be viable. People who would be interested in attending the course are asked to contact:
Max McMaster, ph/fax (03) 9571 6341, e-mail: mindexer@interconnect.com.au as soon as possible, so that a decision can be made on further planning.

Branch News

NSW Branch Meeting

The next meeting of the NSW Branch will be a joint meeting between: **Australian Society for Technical Communication** (NSW) Inc, and **Australian Society of Indexers** (NSW Branch)

TOPIC: Electronic Documents and Indexes

More and more documents are being produced and published electronically, or are being converted from print to electronic formats, such as CD-ROM and Internet publications. The role and format of indexes and other traditional tools which provide access to the content of documents is changing too. What are the implications of these changes for the work of indexers, writers, editors and designers of publications? How do hypertext links and automatic indexing affect the format and content of documents? How are quality of access and usability of documents affected by the new indexing techniques? These questions will be addressed by a panel with a variety of experience in computer-assisted publishing and indexing:

PANEL: Glenda Browne, indexer
Garry Cousins, indexer
Mary Montague, Managing Dir., Montague Design P/L
Shirley Keating, Director, Turn-Key Systems Pty Ltd, computer publishing systems & services

Date: 6pm for 6.30pm on **Wednesday 14 August 1996**
Location: The Gallery Room, Level 6, UTS Tower Block, **University of Technology, Sydney**, Broadway
Cost: $10 for members of ASTC or AusSI
$15 for non-members (Food and wine included.)

Please RSVP Jonica at the ASTC Office on (02) 211 6590 or paramor@ozemail.com.au

For information on the meeting contact Alan Walker on (02) 368 0174.

AusSI Victorian Branch General Meetings

Planning is underway for General Meetings to be held in Melbourne one suggestion being to hold a joint meeting with the Victorian Society of Editors. To keep meetings more in tune with needs, Victorian members are invited to contact/write/email their committee with topics and venues for future meetings by 30 July. → p.10

What's Inside

Who's Who in Indexing

The Happy Band of Indexers: a founding member's memoirs

by Jean Hagger

The Editor has asked me to share with readers some memories of my years of membership in AusSI. He implied that he was not about to hand over the whole issue to me, so I shall be brief.

My introduction to indexing came in a letter of 11 October 1973, from Harold Godfrey Green. I received from him a "sincere and cordial welcome to our happy band of indexers." The "happy band" were members of the Society of Indexers in Australia and Godfrey Green was the Corresponding Member of the Society of Indexers (UK), the organiser of the local group, its Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor and an inspiration to all members of the "happy band." Upon his resignation in November 1975, a group of the members convened a meeting to consider the future of the society; as a result; the Australian Society of Indexers (AusSI) was born.

One of its objectives was to "establish and maintain relationships between the Society and other bodies with related interests." The Executive Committee began negotiations with the Society of Indexers, with a view to affiliation with that body. There followed a most interesting exchange of views, led on 'our' side by Clyde Garrow and on 'theirs' by John Gordon, all recorded most meticulously by 'our' Secretary, Sylvia Ramsden. Agreement was reached in May 1976, when terms were put to members of both societies at general meetings. Thus we joined our colleagues in the Society of Indexers, the American Society of Indexers and the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada, becoming part of an even larger "happy band of indexers."

In December 1976, the first issue of the "Newsletter" appeared. This was the brainchild of John Simkin, its founding Editor and holding that position until December, 1979. In the 1985 Annual Report, the following statement was made: "The Newsletter has continued to serve as the main means of keeping the wide-flung membership in touch with both the Society's activities and with recent developments in indexing." Never were truer words spoken. Nice work, John.

In July 1978, I was privileged to attend, as the representative of AusSI, the First International Conference of the Society of Indexers, held in London and with participants from 17 countries. In my brief speech conveying the greetings of AusSI, I said that I hoped it would not be too long before we would be welcoming the delegates to a similar occasion in Australia. This was greeted with polite amusement by the audience; little did they know that 'many a true word is spoken in jest'! (See my concluding 'memory'.)

The officers responsible for arranging programs for meetings were diligent in trying to find interesting topics and speakers, choosing a suitable mix of the didactic and the unusual. I remember well the presentation by an officer from the Victorian Police concerned with the indexing of fingerprints! The presentation which had most influence on my life as an indexer was the one at the meeting in November 1991, when Stephen Lansdown described and demonstrated INDEX 4, his elegant computer-assisted indexing package. The title of his address was "It's No Longer On The Cards." It was not long before my collection of cards and my shoe-box were relegated to the cardboard waste recycling bin!

On what better note to conclude than that most enjoyable and stimulating First International Conference in Marysville in March/April 1995.

I look forward to contributions from some of the other founding members of that "happy band of indexers".

INDEXERS MEDAL 1996

The Australian Society of Indexers is again offering its annual Medal for the most outstanding index to a book or periodical compiled in Australia or New Zealand. The Medal will be presented to the indexer responsible for the best index submitted, if it is of sufficient quality, and the publisher of the winning index will be presented with a certificate.

To be eligible for the award, the index must be in print and must have been first published after 1993. It must have been compiled in Australia or New Zealand even though the text to which it refers may have originated elsewhere.

For the award, indexes are judged at the level of outstanding professional achievement, thus sufficient material is required, both in quality and quantity, for appraisal. The index should be substantial in size, the subject matter should be complex, and the language, form and structure of the index should demonstrate the indexer's expertise, as well as serving the needs of the text and the reader.

Publishers, indexers and all interested persons are invited to nominate indexes which meet the above criteria, and which they regard as worthy of consideration. Indexers are encouraged to nominate their own works.

Please send recommendations, with bibliographic details, and if possible together with a copy of the book (which will be returned), to:

The Secretary,
Australian Society of Indexers (NSW Branch),
PO Box R598,
Royal Exchange,
Sydney NSW 2000

as soon as possible,
but no later than Monday 30 September, 1996.

For further information, please contact Alan Walker, telephone (02) 368 0174, fax (02) 358 5593.

CINDEX Tip № 14

Making files for typesetters #2

Remember, these procedures produce separate files and do not affect the original index at all.

Making files for word processors

CINDEX can make files for WordPerfect, WordStar, XyWrite, Ventura Publisher, and programs which read Rich Text Format like Microsoft Word. The setting on the **File type** option of the **Typesetting** menu determines which sort of file CINDEX produces. You can bring the menu up with SET TYPE, if you just want to change the setting, or PRINT/FILE, if you want to actually make a file. Possible settings for **File type** are:

Rich Text Format	RTF
WordPerfect 4.x	WP4
WordPerfect 5.x	WP5
WordStar	WS
XyWrite	XYWRITE
Ventura	VENTURA

Making a WordPerfect 5.1 file

Type PRINT/FILE. This will bring up the **Typesetting** menu. Make the following settings:

- In **File type** type WP5
- **Insert tags?** to N
- **Use layout width?** to N, to ignore the line length imposed by the left and right margins set in SET LAYOUT
- **Use layout spacing?** to Y, so that formatting like blank lines between alphabetical groups is preserved
- **Use format indents?** to Y, to preserve indentations for subheadings

Now press <Enter>. CINDEX will write the new file, giving it the same name as the index, but with a .WP5 suffix.

If you have a tip for other CINDEX users, or a problem, write to the Newsletter Editor or contact Garry Cousins
Phone/fax (02) 9955 1525

Genealogy indexing contact in NSW:

Ms Liz Vincent, PO Box 111, Picton 2571, tel/fax (046) 772044

New Members

Ms A. Just, Westlake, Qld
Ms L. Raynes, Auckland, New Zealand
Dr R. Withycombe, Hughes, ACT.

Indexing in the Electronic Age Papers

AUTOMATIC INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING

Available on the Web:
http://www.zeta.org.au/~aussi/browneg.htm

by Glenda Browne

Introduction

This paper will examine developments in automatic indexing and abstracting in which the computer creates the index and abstract, with little or no human intervention. The emphasis is on practical applications, rather than theoretical studies. This paper does not cover computer-*aided* indexing, in which computers enhance the work of human indexers, or indexing of the Internet.

Research into automatic indexing and abstracting has been progressing since the late 1950's. Early reports claimed success, but practical applications have been limited. Computer indexing and abstracting are now being used commercially, with prospects for further use in the future. The history of automatic indexing and abstracting is well covered by Lancaster (1991).

Database indexing

Extraction indexing

The simplest method for indexing articles for bibliographic databases is extraction indexing, in which terms are extracted from the text of the article for inclusion in the index. The frequency of words in the article is determined, and the words which are found most often are included in the index. Alternatively, the words which occur most often in the article compared to their occurrence in the rest of the database, or in normal language, are included. This method can also take into account word stems (so that *run* and *running* are recognised as referring to the same concept), and can recognise phrases as well as single words.

Computer extraction indexing is more consistent than human extraction indexing. However, most human indexing is not simple extraction indexing, but is assignment indexing, in which the terms used in the index are not necessarily those found in the text.

Assignment indexing

For assignment indexing, the computer has a thesaurus, or controlled vocabulary, which lists all the subject headings which may be used in the index. For each of these subject headings it also has a list of profile words. These are words which, when found in the text of the article, indicate that the thesaurus term should be allocated.

For example, for the thesaurus term *childbirth*, the profile might include the words: *childbirth, birth, labor, labour, delivery, forceps, baby*, and *born*. As well as the profile, the computer also has criteria for inclusion – instructions as to how often, and in what combination, the profile words must be present for that thesaurus term to be allocated.

The criteria might say, for example, that if the word *childbirth* is found ten times in an article, then the thesaurus term *childbirth* will be allocated. However if the word *delivery* is found ten times in an article, this in itself is not enough to warrant allocation of the term *childbirth*, as delivery could be referring to other subjects such as mail delivery. The criteria in this case would specify that the term *delivery* must occur a certain number of times, along with one or more of the other terms in the profile.

Computer database indexing in practice

In practice in database indexing, there is a continuum of use of computers, from no computer at all to fully automatic indexing.

- No computer.
- Computer clerical support, e.g. for data entry.
- Computer quality control, e.g. checking that all index terms are valid thesaurus terms.
- Computer intellectual assistance, e.g. helping with term choice and weighting.
- Automatic indexing (Hodge 1994).

Most database producers use computers at a number of different steps along this continuum. At the moment, however, automatic indexing is only ever used for a part of a database, for example, for a specific subject, access point, or document type.

Automatic indexing is used by the Defense Technology Information Center (DTIC) for the management-related literature in its database; it is used by FIZ Karlsruhe for indexing chemical names; it was used until 1992 by the Russian International Centre for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI) for its Russian language materials; and it was used by INSPEC for the re-indexing of its backfiles to new standards (Hodge 1994).

BIOSIS (Biological Abstracts) uses computers at all steps on the continuum, and uses automatic indexing in a number of areas. Title keywords are mapped by computer to the Semantic Vocabulary of 15,000 words; the terms from the Semantic Vocabulary are then mapped to one of 600 Concept Headings (that is, subject headings which describe the broad subject area of a document; Lancaster 1991).

The version of BIOSIS Previews available on the database host STN International uses automatic index-

ing to allocate Chemical Abstracts Service Registry Numbers to articles to describe the chemicals, drugs, enzymes and biosequences discussed in the article. The codes are allocated without human review, but a human operator spends five hours per month maintaining authority files and rules (Hodge 1994).

Retrieval and ranking tools

There are two sides to the information retrieval process: documents must be indexed (by humans or computers) to describe their subject content; and documents must be retrieved using retrieval software and appropriate search statements. Retrieval and ranking tools include those used with bibliographic databases, the 'indexes' used on the Internet, and personal computer software packages such as Personal Librarian (Koll 1993). Some programs, such as ISYS, are specialised for the fast retrieval of search words.

In theory these are complementary approaches, and both are needed for optimal retrieval. In practice, however, especially with documents in full-text databases, indexing is often omitted, and the retrieval software is relied on instead.

For these documents, which will not be indexed, it is important to ensure the best possible access. To accomplish this, the authors of the documents must be aware of the searching methods which will be used to retrieve them. Authors must use appropriate keywords throughout the text, and ensure that keywords are included in the title and section headings, as these are often given priority by retrieval and ranking tools (Sunter 1995).

The process whereby the creators of documents structure them to enhance retrieval is known as bottom-up indexing. A role for professional indexers in bottom-up indexing is as guides and trainers to document authors (Locke 1993).

One reason that automatic indexing may be unsuited to book indexing is that book indexes are not usually available electronically, and cannot be used in conjunction with powerful search software (Mulvany and Milstead 1994).

Document abstracting

Computers abstract documents (that is, condense their text) by searching for high frequency words in the text, and then selecting sentences in which clusters of these high frequency words occur. These sentences are then used in the order in which they appear in the text to make up the abstract. Flow can be improved by adding extra sentences (for example, if a sentence begins with 'Hence' or 'However' the previous sentence can be included as well) but the abstract remains an awkward collection of grammatically unrelated sentences.

To try and show the subject content, weighting can be given to sentences from certain locations in the document (e.g. the introduction) and to sentences containing cue words (e.g. 'finally', which suggests that a conclusion is starting). In addition, an organisation can give a weighting to words which are important to them: a footwear producer, for example, could require that every sentence containing the words *foot* or *shoe* should be included in the abstract.

Computer abstracting works best for documents which are written formally and consistently. It has been used with some success for generating case summaries from the text of legal decisions (Lancaster 1991).

After recent developments in natural language processing by computers, it is now possible for a computer to generate a grammatically correct abstract, in which sentences are modified without loss of meaning.

For example, from the following sentence:

"The need to generate enormous additional amounts of electric power while at the same time protecting the environment is one of the major social and technological problems that our society must solve in the next (sic!) future"

the computer generated the condensed sentence:

"The society must solve in the future the problem of the need to generate power while protecting the environment" (Lancaster 1991).

Text summarisation experiments by British Telecom have resulted in useful, readable, abstracts (Farkas 1995).

Book indexing

There are a number of different types of microcomputer based software packages which are used for indexing.

The simplest are concordance generators, in which a list of the words found in the document, with the pages they are on, is generated. It is also possible to specify a list of words such that the concordance program will only include words from that list. This method was used to index drafts of the ISO999 indexing standard to help the committee members keep track of rules while the work was in progress (Shuter 1993).

Computer-aided indexing packages, such as Macrex and Cindex, are used by many professional indexers to enhance their work. They enable the indexer to view the index in alphabetical or page number order, can automatically produce various index styles, and save much typing.

Indexing in the Electronic Age Papers

Embedded indexing software is available with computer packages such as word processors, PageMaker, and Framemaker. With embedded indexing the document to be indexed is on disk, and the indexer inserts tags into the document to indicate which index terms should be allocated for that page. It does not matter if the document is then changed, as the index tags will move with the part of the document to which they refer. (So if twenty pages are added at the beginning of the document, all of the other text, including the index tags, will move 20 pages further on).

Disadvantages of embedded indexing are that it is time-consuming to do and awkward to edit (Mulvany 1994). Indexers who use embedded indexing often also use a program such as Macrex or Cindex to overcome these problems.

Embedded indexing is commonly used for documents such as computer software manuals which are published in many versions, and which allow very little time for the index to be created after the text has been finalised. With embedded indexing, indexing can start before the final page proofs are ready.

Embedded indexing will probably be used more in the future: for indexing works which are published in a number of formats; for indexing textbooks which are printed on request using only portions of the original textbook or using a combination of sources; and for indexing electronically published works which are continually adapted. In some of these applications the same person may do the work of the editor and indexer. The most recent development in microcomputer book indexing software is Indexicon (Version 2), an automatic indexing package.

Indexicon

Indexicon – How it works

Indexicon is published by Iconovex, and is available as an add-on program for MS-Word and WordPerfect on IBM-compatible computers, and for MS-Word on the Macintosh. All versions cost US$129. Indexicon 2.0 for MS-Word requires MS-Word for Windows 6.0 or above; a 386 or better CPU (486 recommended); Windows 3.1 and 8 MB RAM (Indexicon Spec Sheet 1996).

To use Indexicon, the book to be indexed must be available electronically in a word processing format. The user chooses from six levels of detail, and Indexicon creates an embedded index at that level using the indexing facility available with MS-Word or WordPerfect. The user can then edit the tagged entries in the original document. Indexicon indexes are subject to all the problems of embedded indexes, including the time-consuming editing process.

Indexicon comes with a primary lexicon containing about 55,000 words, and it allows the user to create specialised lexicons. The lexicons include index values for terms, which indicate how likely it is that a given term should be tagged as an index term. In general this depends on the degree of specialisation of the term, so that a commonly-used term is less likely to be indexed than a more specialised term.

The primary lexicon also includes compound terms, so that pairs of words such as *control tower*, or *remote control*, are always indexed as a pair.

All words in the lexicon also show what part of speech they are. Thus the word *lead* would have two parts indicating that it can mean the metal *lead* or the verb *lead*.

Indexicon will invert proper names if it recognises them, however if the surname carries another meaning (as with the names Brown, Miller, and Young) then the name is not recognised as such. Indexicon can also be set to omit proper names and geographic names if it can recognise them (Iconovex 1996).

Indexicon – Reviews

Indexicon has been reviewed a number of times. The Indexicon Spec Sheet (1996) on the Internet says: "Indexicon is a tool capable of handling everyone's indexing needs". PC Magazine (13/9/94; quoted on the Indexicon Spec Sheet 1996) says: "With Indexicon, creating an index is as quick and easy as spellchecking".

However, a review of Indexicon Version 1.00b by Mulvany and Milstead (1994) found that it did not live up to the promises on the packaging that it was the "Standard for Indexing" and could produce "professional quality indexes". In a response to this review, Steven Waldron, President of Iconovex, acknowledged many of the points raised, and stated "The purpose of INDEXICON ... is NOT to replace professional indexers" (Waldron 1994).

The Macintosh version of Indexicon was reviewed by Erfert Fenton (1996). He says: "Before I wrote this review I was skeptical of computer-based indexing programs. Having written it, I'm even more skeptical."

Fenton found that Indexicon missed many terms. When tested on a chapter on Macintosh fonts it missed the terms *pica, em dash*, and *leading* (pronounced *ledding*). It started many terms with adjectives (e.g. *slushy winter roads*) and it included many inappropriate entries (e.g. *Uncle Steve Yahoo*). The reviewer found much evidence of the fact that the computer did not understand what it was reading, and was therefore unable to make valid judgments.

In a test using Indexicon Version 2.0 to index a short article on the use of in vitro fertilization to save tigers from extinction, we identified the following problems:

Indexicon did not recognise and invert any of the names in the article. In one case this was because the person's surname had another meaning (*Ann Miller*); in the other two cases the name appeared in a string with other capitalised words and the whole string was indexed (e.g. *Leslie Johnston of National Zoo*).

Indexicon included some inappropriate entries (e.g. *Biologist's hopes*) and some strange constructions (e.g. *Reproductive tract, Nicole's* – Nicole is a tiger).

Bengal tiger cubs was indexed in direct order, but *Tigress, Siberian* was inverted. Presumably this is because *Bengal tigers* is included in the lexicon as a compound word.

Indexicon does not generate cross-references so these must be identified and added by the indexer at the editing stage.

Finally, Indexicon did not group terms, so that *Tiger* and *Tigers* were given as separate entries.

In this exercise Indexicon set to the highest level of indexing indexed all important terms; in other experiments which we did many important terms were omitted, while non-significant terms were included.

Indexicon – Potential uses

Iconovex states that Indexicon is suitable for use with documents which would not otherwise be indexed, and as a first step for professional indexers.
It is currently used to index manuals (e.g. corporate policy and procedure manuals), large contracts and large quantities of e-mail. Technical writers who index their own work have been using it as a first step in indexing.

Among indexers, Indexicon is most likely to be useful for specialists, who are more likely to take the time to create specialised lexicons, and to work with the program to enhance its efficacy in their special field.
For journal indexing, where the same indexer works with similar material, in a consistent format, year after year, it might be worth taking the trouble to set up a specialised lexicon, and use Indexicon as a first step.
But Indexicon is not good enough at picking key concepts and leaving out worthless ones, to be useful, in general, as an aid to indexing books.
If Indexicon improves, and if the embedded indexing software used in word processing programs improves, it may become more cost-effective to start indexing with Indexicon, and then enhance the index by editing.
As the ability of computer software to recognise personal names develops, it may also become useful as a tool for automatically generating name indexes (Feldman, Lawrence e-mail 15/03/96).

Effect of automatic methods on professionals

As computer programs become more sophisticated, and more information appears in electronic form, there will eventually be less 'traditional' indexing work available. This loss may be balanced in the short-term by an increase in the number of databases and an increase in the number of indexing and abstracting projects attempted. The proportion of freelance versus in-house work may also change.
Humans should still be used for important works, which perhaps can be identified by studying usage and citation patterns (Anderson 1993). Indexers and abstracters will have to become more selective, and decide on the quality of the works they might index and abstract, as well as the subject content.
If we remain better than computers we must show this, and indicate that there are economic returns (to the publisher) and academic returns (to the index or abstract user) from a quality index or abstract.
On the positive side, indexing and abstracting skills will be needed in the development of computer systems, and to check the output from computers. Indexers will be needed to set up and maintain thesauruses, and to train writers as 'bottom-up indexers' so that their work is readily retrievable.
Indexers will have to become entrepreneurial and computer literate. Indexers with skills in the related areas of computing, editing, librarianship and bibliography may be best suited to take advantage of new opportunities. We will have to be able to identify gaps in the organisation of knowledge and to fill those gaps in a commercially effective way. To do this we will have to be computer literate. Not only will we have to know how to use various computer tools for indexing; we will also have to know how information is organised and used electronically, so that we can best understand the needs and make our own contributions.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Terry Maguire, language director of Iconovex, the publisher of Indexicon, for a trial copy of the software, and prompt answers to all of my questions. I would also like to thank Jonathan Jermey and Bill Browne for their support and patience while I prepared this talk and paper.

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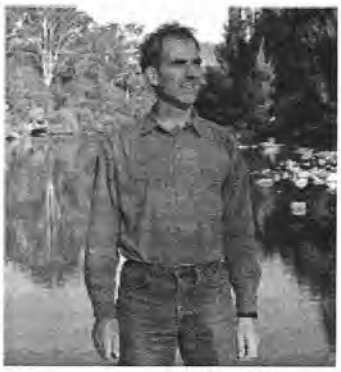
Indexing in the Electronic Age, Robertson, NSW, 1996



Steve Sunter, Kangaroo Valley (above)

Glenda Browne (below left) and Pamela Johnstone (below right) - highly commended

ACT Branch Committee 1996

NSW Branch Committee 1996

National / Victorian Branch Committee 1996

Robertson speakers

Automatic Indexing and Abstracting Cont'd

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Indexers Partners in Publishing, Marysville, Vic, 1995

AusSI 20th anniversary cake

Photo Credits: *Max McMaster, Dwight Walker, Steve Sunter*

Guests at the Cumberland Dinner

Irene Wormell cutting the Cake

Guests at the Cumberland Dinner

Automatic Indexing and Abstracting Cont'd

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[No spaces between slashes and words. Ed.]

Writing to the Editor

COPY DEADLINE: 1 August 1996

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fax: 02-4383729(w), 02-3986726(h)
email: dwight@zip.com.au

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Please provide images such as adverts in TIFF, WMF, CorelDraw or EPS format. Photographs can be scanned but not line-art.

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Full page:	$80	Full page:	£120
Half page:	$40	Half page:	£80
Quarter page:	$20	Quarter page:	£55
		Eighth page:	£35

There is a special order form to be completed when lodging advertisements in *The Indexer*. For order form and copy deadlines, please contact:
Janet Shuter, Hon. Editor, The Old Chapel, Kings Rd, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, UK. PO35 5NB
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p.1 → **Branch News from Ian Odgers (Sec.)**

AusSI Contribution to The Indexer

With the "new look" of The Indexer comes a suggestion to remodel the report which AusSI contributes as part of the regular "Network of Indexers" section.

The idea is to provide some news and views with an Australian flavour that would interest overseas readers of The Indexer. We are inviting short contributions from members anywhere throughout Australia, about anything related to indexing that they think might be suitable, be it an interesting or unusual project or experience, or whatever.

The **deadline is end of July**, so please put pen/printer/modem to work, and send your contribution to National Secretary, Ian Odgers, asap.

Update on AusSI Qld and SA Groups

At the National/Victorian Branch committee meeting on 18 June, a proposal by Helen Penridge was approved, which provides a grant of $150 to set up an informal Queensland Group of AusSI rather than a formal Branch. The Group will be part of a host arrangement with the Society of Editors (Queensland). The contact person for further information is Lesley Bryant, ph. (07) 3352 6869, fax (07) 3356 7171.

South Australia, with a similar number of AusSI members to Queensland, has also decided to operate as an informal Group, following a recent meeting of members in Adelaide which failed to reach the required quorum of six to form a formal AusSI Branch. The contact person for further information is Susan Rintoul, ph. (08) 235 1535.

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Indexing Rates

The 1996 recommended rate for freelance *back-of-book* indexers has been kept at **$35.00 per hour** in line with rates for freelance editors. Although the Society recommends this rate, individual indexers are at liberty to charge above or below this rate as they deem appropriate.
Database indexing rates are more variable, and are usually charged on a per record basis, so rates will vary depending on the complexity of the indexing required.