Valuing your services

Having your services valued

Pamela Hewitt, Canberra Society of Editors

'Partnerships in Knowledge' Conference held Canberra 20–23 April 2001

Editors and indexers, on the whole, are highly skilled, combining generalist and specialist knowledge; highly qualified, usually with a first degree, often with one or more postgraduate qualifications; highly experienced, often with a track record of ten or twenty years in the industry; and working in industries at the forefront of technological change, at the very heart of the information revolution.

This is looking promising. Surely here we have the cream of the knowledge society, highly prized specialists for the industries of the future. It should go without saying that, as employees, we should command high salaries, a company car and generous executive packages. As freelancers, the sky should be the limit. What wouldn't a corporate client pay for the services of such people?

But wait. There are some other characteristics of the editing and indexing trades that I haven't yet mentioned. Consider these: a lack of specialised, accredited higher education courses; and a predominantly female, underorganised workforce.

Even more damning, our work is to do with words. And, difficult as it is to measure, I would suggest that there is another killer factor at play here. As a rule, we love our work. We find it stimulating, fulfilling, varied, creative, engrossing.

When all these factors are combined, it turns out that we have a couple of professions where the work is bound to be grossly underpaid.

This doesn't mean that we should remain underpaid. The purpose of this paper is to explore our options to

see if we can't think of ways that we can ensure that our services are adequately valued. I mean valued in both senses of the word.

There is a range of options that we can explore as individuals and as members of professional societies to improve the standing of the professions in the industry and in society. These include professional association or trade union membership and activism, improving our technological skills, promoting educational pathways for initial training and ongoing, professional development, AND showcasing our skills to business, clients and the public through the activities of professional societies, through partnerships with other professionals. The list could go on.

Many of these options are being explored in other forums at this conference, and I hope that they prove fruitful. I hope that in years to come, people will recall this conference as the starting point of many positive professional partnerships.

My focus is a little more inward looking. While the activities that I have just outlined are vital, there is also a place for taking a step back and looking at how we think about

ourselves. At the risk of sounding overly self-analytical, I suppose I am talking about the importance of professional self-esteem.

I called this paper 'Valuing your services, having your services valued', in the belief that the first will lead to the second. In order to value ourselves and our services properly, it might be helpful to remind ourselves why our services are valuable.

Why should we value our services?

Here is one good reason, to begin with. You are good at what you do. You have to be. We all know that in the

Notice

News from the ACT Region Branch

By the time you read this, ACT indexers will have enjoyed their Christmas barbecue brunch on Sunday 9 December, our last function for the year.

We have already planned some of our functions for 2002, most importantly our Annual General Meeting, which will be held at The New Great Wall Chinese Restaurant, 113 Marcus Clarke St. Canberra City at 7.00 for 7.30 on Tuesday 26 February 2002. Our speakers will be three members who are studying correspondence courses in indexing, one English, one American. We are seeking nominations for the committee, particularly for the position of treasurer, and would welcome offers from any members interested.

We are also planning a professional development weekend in April 2002, to be held at Ranelagh House, Robertson, NSW. Final details have still to be arranged, and will be mailed out to members in the new year.

Edyth Binkowski
AusSI ACT Region Branch

EdLib — the e-list for education libraries

This e-list has been established for library staff working in the field of Education, to facilitate discussion within this subject area. This electronic list is operated by the Australian Council for Educational Research and is administered by Tamara Kowarsky (kowarsky@acer.edu.au). All interested parties are welcome to subscribe. This is an unmoderated discussion list. To join EdLib send an e-mail to mailserv@acer.edu.au with the words subscribe EdLib

AusSI Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting/ Dinner 2002

The Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Branch will be held at Graduate House, 224 Leicester St., Carlton on Tuesday 19 February, 2002.

Sherry and nibbles at 7 pm prior to the commencement of dinner at 7.30 pm.

Cost, including wines, soft drinks, fruit juices and coffee is $25 per head for members, and $30 for

guests. Please let us know of any dietary considerations when you RSVP. Dress: smart casual.

During the evening there will be a brief AGM, consisting of the President's Report, Treasurer's Report and Election of Office Bearers. A highlight of the evening will be the presentation of the Indexers Medal awards and a Guest Speaker.

RSVP by 12 February to Margaret Findlay tel. 03 9277 5549, or email to findlay@acer.edu.au.

Indexing journals

The Australian Institute of Family Studies provides a free current awareness service of journal citations and abstracts selected from its Australian Family & Society Abstracts (Family) database, http://www.aifs.org.au/institute/info/jcurrent.html.

A new list is posted at the beginning of each week (Mon/Tues) and people can be notified of when it's available by signing up to the Institute's aifs-alert — email 'what's new' service, http://www.aifs.org.au/institute/lists/aifs-alert.html.

Family Database indexes more than 200 Australian journals plus Australian authors and Australian content in overseas journals. The legal journals we index cover family law, civil law and social issues. 'Policing' is not a core theme but the police role in juvenile justice, child abuse, sexual assault, mental health, domestic violence etc are some of the issues covered. The database also indexes research reports, government reports, books, other print forms and audiovisual materials which make up 50% of the database, and journals the other 50%.

The CINCH database produced by the Australian Institute of Criminology and AGIS (Attorney-General's database) are the most comprehensive sources of journal literature on law and policing. They are both on the Informit Online system as is Family database, and all available on the AUSTROM CD-ROM; consult http://www.informit.com.au/.

Deborah Whithear
Manager, Online Information
Australian Institute of Family Studies
deborah@aifs.org.au
http://www.aifs.org.au/

board

The Design Manual

The Design Manual is the first comprehensive reference guide to the design and production of documents. Written as a companion volume to the Commonwealth *Style Manual* by David Whitbread, *The Design Manual* is an indispensable reference for traditional and digital publishing. Cost $49.95 plus handling fee of $10.00 plus postage.

Available from Access Bookshop, phone (02) 6280 4699, fax (02) 6280 4687, email information@accessap.com.au.

Articles for SI Genealogical Group newsletter

I am always looking for suitable articles to be published in the (UK) Society of Indexers Genealogical Group newsletter (SIGGnl).

These may be on any aspect of record indexing or transcription. The Group began as a group for genealogical indexers, both professional and amateur, with the aim of raising the standards of genealogical indexing. It was particularly noticeable that genealogical and family history journals were not as well indexed as they should have been, which raises questions about the standards of record indexing and transcription carried out by family history societies.

It is a pity that RF Hunnisett's *Indexing for Editors* (1972, reprinted in 1997) and *Editing Records for Publication* (1977, still in print), published by the British Records Association in their 'Archives and the User' series, were not revised in the light of changes to indexing and cataloguing standards and practice over the last thirty years. I don't suggest that record indexing practice has to be the same as book indexing practice, just that the latter should be taken into account.

The Genealogical Group felt that it should branch out into local history, and related fields such as heraldry, oral history, etc. Any articles on indexing and transcription in these fields would be most welcome, as would advice on the use of computers and the internet for indexing.

I shall post later items on more detailed suggestions which Group members and readers of the Newsletter have made on possible articles for the Newsletter.

Colin Mills
cdjmills@hotmail.com

Society of Indexers Conferences

The Society held a successful conference at Sheffield Hallam University, 29 June to 1 July. Entitled 'Indexing at the Cutting Edge', it provided many thought-provoking presentations and a series of hands-on workshops which were both enjoyable and useful. The next conference will be in Cheltenham 16–18 July 2002, a midweek gathering for the first time. Going under the name of 'The Cotswold Wayzgoose' it takes as its theme the publishing process. More details, plus a booking form will be available on the Society web site soon.

Workshops: Business aspects of indexing in London at the Quaker International Centre, on 23 January 2002, run by Derek Copson. Beginners workshop in Bristol at the Travel Inn on 27 February 2002, run by Sue Lightfoot. Newly-qualified indexers workshop in London in March, run by Ann Hudson.

Virus transmission and Microsoft

(from INDEX-L 2 December 2001)

In a discussion of the Badtrans virus which has been doing the rounds lately, Larry Harrison of ASI posted the following:

'The more people who use Outlook, the faster these worms/viruses spread and the more damage they do. That is what encourages the criminals. The more people who use Eudora or other email readers, thus inoculating themselves against the Outlook attacks, the more limited the success of the attacks.

'Eudora is not vulnerable to this attack because it does not have a scripting capability. The sad part is, I'll bet most people never use the scripting feature of Outlook; they encounter it only when being infected by Outlook worms. Scripting per se is not bad, but unfortunately, the Microsoft implementation opens up pretty much the whole machine to the script. It doesn't have to be that way, which is why I blame Microsoft for the severity of the attacks we suffer several times a year. They could correct it. They haven't.

'Without getting too detailed, scripting in Outlook refers to a programming language which allows instructions to be embedded in an email attachment; the instructions will be carried out on your computer when you open the attachment (or preview the email, in some cases, I believe); instructions such as 'send a message to everyone in your address book', or 'erase your hard disk'.'

Dates *for your* Diary

From the Editor

2002

Feb 5 Society of Editors (NSW) Monthly Meeting, Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney, 6.30 for 7.00 pm.

Feb 19 AusSI Victorian Branch AGM/Dinner, Graduate House, 224 Leicester Street, Carlton, 7.00 for 7.30 pm.

Feb 26 AussSI ACT Region Branch AGM, The New Great Wall Chinese Restaurant, 113 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra, 7.00 for 7.30 pm.

Merry Christmas everyone and best wishes for the New Year

Frances Paterson
Michael Wyatt

commercial world, you are only as good as your last job. If you are getting work, especially repeat work or work that comes via personal recommendation, then by definition you must be offering a valuable service.

Secondly, when we offer our services routinely in the workplace, or in the form of a quote or a tender, editors and indexers offer a great many skills. We bring our knowledge of the trade, of course. In addition, we often bring knowledge of specialist fields (languages, academic disciplines and subject areas, technology), knowledge of the publication process, the ability to meet punishing deadlines, specific negotiation skills for working with authors, designers, illustrators, printers, typesetters, management or editorial boards, high levels of speed and accuracy, and many years' experience. Paragons like us would do well not to undersell such virtues.

By this stage, I hope you are all feeling worthy of respect and recognition. But of what practical use is this knowledge, you might ask yourself, if the marketplace holds your skills in low regard. In what follows, I propose some ways that we might put this 'professional self-esteem' to use.

Next time you provide a quote, or you find yourself negotiating with a client, think of it also as a platform to demonstrate the calibre of your professional skills. The next time you are working with colleagues, think of these activities as a way of increasing your knowledge of the profession. And if you are pressured to undermine your own worth by selling yourself short, think of the effects on your fellow indexers and editors.

Here are five ways to consider as avenues to augment the value you attribute to your own services.

Solidarity

My first proposal for considering the merit of your own work can be summarised by the word *solidarity*. This is a quaint old-fashioned word that I think retains contemporary meaning. If I undercut my colleagues, in the long run I undercut myself. If I sell myself short, I sell my colleagues short. If I don't value my own services, I undervalue the services of my colleagues. I prefer not to do any of these things. I would rather that my colleagues did-

n't behave this way towards me. Solidarity forever.

Networking

A second way of improving your position in the industry at the same time as providing benefits to others is a simple one — *networking*.

There are advantages to being part of most groups. Networking through professional societies, at conferences such as this one and through more informal groups can increase your professional awareness and increase the real value of your work. How? You might find out about new technological developments. You could hear about professional opportunities. A well connected indexer or editor can direct a client to an appropriate colleague who has specific expertise for a particular job. This might be experience with a certain kind of software, the ability to understand Russian, a background in astrophysics or expertise in literary editing. That colleague could be you, this time or next time. All of these forms of networking can help us to provide better services or add value, to use the management jargon of our age.

Most of us have had the experience of people asking us to help find work or to help find someone with the right skills for a particular job. It helps everyone to put the right team together. As well as letting you know about opportunities, networking can also alert you to problems in your local industry. Networking might let you know about a client who pays late or not at all or about the disadvantages of a new contract under offer. Information like this can stop you from wasting your time and help you to target your services, which is another way of valuing your time and effort.

Our professional societies are networks, as are our personal links with other professionals. In addition, there is room for formal and informal groups of editors and indexers to join together to put forward tenders requiring specific combinations of skills and also to balance better the times of flood and famine that we often experience. No one wants to recommend a client whose work is not up to scratch and the best way to find out the calibre of your colleagues is to work with them.

Negotiating

Third, knowing your own worth is crucial when you are *negotiating*.

Your services will be valued and you will be taken more seriously if you start any negotiation from a position of strength. By this I mean working out your bottom line and deciding your position in advance. In the negotiating room, don't be tempted to shift from this position unless you are offered some additional element that might make a new deal worthwhile. Put simply, this is another way of valuing your services. It means that in any negotiation you are clear about how far you are prepared to go, and it means that you will never walk out of the negotiating room empty handed. Even if you don't get the contract, you walk out with your professional standards undiminished. You know that you have not undersold yourself (or your colleagues).

Discounting

This leads me to my fourth area, and it is a vexed issue. People don't talk about it much in my experience, but it doesn't mean that it doesn't happen. Can I be the only person here who has been asked to lower my rates for some special reason? Yes, I'm talking about the dreaded D word, *discounting*.

I don't think that bakers or mechanics are routinely asked if they will bake bread or fix cars for less than their advertised prices, but I know that editors are. Clients sometimes ask for discounts, we sometimes give them. In fact I am not opposed to discounting under any circumstances (although I know that some editors say they are). What I am opposed to is random discounting. An explicit discount for work you consider to be in a good cause or because the job is intrinsically interesting is very different from a discount because the client is trying it on, or because you feel sorry for the person asking for a discount or because you find it hard to say no. If you make a point of letting clients know that you are providing your services at a discount rate for particular purposes, they shouldn't expect it from you or any other colleague as a matter of course in the future.

If a client genuinely has only so much in the budget for editing, instead of working for less money, it might be possible to negotiate performing a different service that does not involve underselling your skills. (This can happen when the client is an individual, paying out of their private

resources. It might be possible to offer a manuscript assessment or a chapter edit, instead of the full edit originally discussed.)

Quoting

Finally, *quoting*. Quoting is a very public way in which we tell the world what we think we are worth, by offering to do a particular set of tasks for a specific sum.

Many of you will be familiar with the following scenario: your quote for a specific job is accepted. When you begin, or part of the way through, you find that the specifications have changed. The job is bigger than the one you quoted on or there are endless meetings that you were not told about or you are asked to incorporate author changes that were not part of the original quotation. Again, bakers are not expected to throw in extra cream buns, much less to double the amount of bread they agreed to bake for a certain price. Mechanics will charge you more if you bring the car back with a new problem. I have known them to charge twice for the

same problem! This is not the place for a detailed discussion of quoting protocols. But I would say two things about quotes or tenders if you want others to value your services.

The first is to make sure your original paperwork is very clear about precisely what your quote covers and what it does not. This can save a lot of heartache. It clarifies your position in the event of any later differences in interpretation of words and phrases in the written quotation such as 'editing' or 'compiling an index'.

The second is to suggest that you resist client requests to perform extra tasks for no extra payment. It sounds so simple, and yet if all the editors in Australia did this, we would find we were not taken so much for granted and our services were valued a great deal more. Overnight, perhaps.

When clients place us under pressure to lower our rates, or to do extra work for no extra payment (which comes to the same thing) remember that behind an hourly rate lurk many hidden costs. In particular, remember that a freelance editor or indexer is paid by the hour, by the job, by the page, or, the ultimate in piecework, by the word. Time is certainly money,

but time is not our only cost. Freelancers are not paid when they are sick, they do not receive superannuation benefits, recreation leave, long service leave, professional development, they are not paid for the time spent in administration, coping with IT problems, preparing quotations, or for the costs of running a car and upgrading equipment. When the government 'reforms' the taxation system so that small businesses collect a new consumption tax on its behalf, it does not pay those businesses for their efforts, even when the number of tax returns increases from one a year to five a year. So when you fail to incorporate those costs in your services, you are giving them away, as well as your time and your skills.

Before I finish, you are entitled to wonder whether I have ever been guilty of any of the practices I have just cautioned you about? I confess that that in preparing this paper, I have dosed myself with the medicine I now dispense. Much of this paper has concentrated on outlining the problems we face in ensuring that our services are adequately valued.

Conference Workshops

Website indexing with HTML Indexer

The workshop, presented by Glenda Browne, consisted of two sections. First, Glenda introduced the principles of indexing in a web environment, highlighting ways in which web indexing is different from print indexing, and citing examples of websites that illustrated web indexing principles. The basic principles of indexing in print were reviewed as they are equally applicable to web indexing. The second section consisted of a demonstration of one web indexing tool, HTML Indexer, in which workshop participants worked on a trial exercise indexing the December 2000 issue of the AusSI Newsletter. A set of course notes summarised the presentation and demonstration.

The workshop was based on material in the book *Website Indexing: Enhancing Access to Information within Websites*, by Glenda Browne and Jonathan Jermey. Further information from the book is available at http://www.optusnet.com.au/~webindexing/Webbook, and further information about Web indexing is available at http://www.optusnet.com. au/ ~webindexing/webnet. Additional references cited were *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web* by Louis Rosenfeld and Peter Morville, and a chapter in *Beyond Book Indexing* by Seth Maislin.

A number of tools provide access to information on the web, each with their strengths and limitations. Search engines, metadata, and library-style categorisation and classification of websites are useful for searching the whole web, or for constructing subject gateways, while back-of-book style indexes are best suited to individual websites and documents within websites.

Presented in a familiar book-style format, back-of-book style indexes have advantages over other information access tools at a website level because they provide immediate access to selected and specific information through multiple entry points, sub-divisions and cross-references, and are browsable, thereby overcoming

problems of misspelling and inexact matches. Their disadvantages are the cost of using skilled indexers, the need for updating and for large sites or groups of sites, for coordination and quality control, as well as the time delay between creation of the resource and its addition to the index.

Basic policies of print indexing apply equally to web indexing. Issues of consistency of usage, user audience, purpose of index, depth of indexing, selection of material, format, filing order, whether multiple indexes or single index, type of entries to include, use of cross-references must all be considered in web indexing. Additional policy issues for web indexes include format in which index will be supplied, responsibility for loading, and updating and archiving schedules and arrangements.

Web indexing has some important differences from print indexing. Using the power of Internet technology, website indexes provide links instead of the page references of print indexes, and those links can be to a wide range of material both internal and external to the website, including documents (University of Texas Policies & Procedures at http://www. utexas.edu/policies/hopm/), periodicals, multimedia collections (Online & Ondisc Conference '99 at http://olod99.cadre.com.au/htm/toc.html) and databases.s

Decisions need to be made on what level to index to, where the link will point to — top of article, section or paragraph, how much material will download with each link, the use of frames, and whether external links will be included or not, considering the issue of checking their currency.

The web offers the facility for innovative ways of organising indexes — geographic instead of, or as well as, the traditional alphabetical (e.g. Australian Libraries Gateway). There are also various options available for display which need to be considered in index design.

Features of a good website index were covered. The loss of context in a

web index compared with print means that extra sign-posting and navigational features are required. In an alphabetical index, the alphabet bar is always displayed, and major headings may also be displayed in a highly structured index. Fonts, colour and explanatory text should be used to distinguish types of links — whether to a major piece of information, just a passing reference, or to an image. Ideally multiple locators should be avoided. The index should be linked to and from the home page, and to other main areas of the website. Introductory and searching notes are important, and a feedback link useful. For a well-designed index see the AusSI website.

A number of web indexing tools are available, including plain HTML, WinHelp–style programs, databases (e.g. http://www.ca.com), CINDEX plus HTML /Prep, and HTML Indexer (http://www.html-indexer. com).

HTML Indexer automates some aspects of website indexing on IBM-compatible machines. The program creates default index entries for all selected files, and for all named anchors within those files. The defaults can be edited or overwritten, and must be saved if required. The index entries are stored in the source HTML files, so the index can be refreshed when files are added or moved. As the index entries are included in metadata tags they can be found by search engines.

The workshop exercise demonstrated the basic features of HTML Indexer, including selection and viewing of source material, blocking non-content files, building the default index, deleting and editing default entries, adding entries, setting filing order, cutting and pasting text sections from the source file, creating subdivisions and cross references, using Preferences to set style settings, and selecting output browser for output.

Colleen Mock

Indexing for editors

Max McMaster gave a thorough and helpful description of the 'nuts and bolts' of indexing in the Indexing for Editors workshop on the Monday of our conference. A panel of three took us through three software packages in the afternoon, especially relating to sorting and layout. The presentations essentially dealt with lists of 'names' – of people, places and ideas. Whether or not we are now tempted to make an index ourselves, these sessions would help us to assess those provided to us for editing.

I was also hoping for discussion, or at least a reference to follow up, on what I call 'conceptual indexing' – thinking about how to categorise sections of text beyond the actual words used. I can generate some ideas of how to do that, but was keen to not only reinvent the wheel. I didn't get that in the talk, and would welcome any information on this readers could pass on to me.

Just as editors say that nobody should do the final edit on their own work, indexers are adamant that dedicated software should be used for editing. This was convincing for those doing many indexes, but it seems to me that the software is particularly useful for indexing done after a manuscript is completed with only occasional page number changes to follow. For a writer doing an occasional index, the benefits of automatic linking of inserted index tags to page numbers in word processors would be great.

Alexa McLaughlin

Multiple index publications: some case studies

This workshop, presented by David K. Ream of Leverage Technologies Inc, Cleveland, Ohio USA, described and compared five different models for gathering data for and generating multiple indexes to publications.

The focus was on recurring publishing situations involving larger reference works, not on stand-alone indexes as in back-of-book indexing. These recurring publications can be abstracts, directories, reports, e.g. newsletters, debates, for example Hansard and websites of articles. The citations include article titles, article numbers, page numbers and weblinks. The technology to produce these multiple indexes includes database software, SGML, dedicated indexing software such as CINDEX, composition software and HTML.

The use of technology has allowed indexers to produce multiple indexes quickly and accurately with an enormous saving of time and person dollars.

The Philosopher's Index is an international index to philosophical periodicals and books and is published quarterly. The index is published in print and now through Silver Platter on CD-ROM. This is a large database and includes a subject index: main heading, citations, abstracts and some see and see also references; an author index: name, citation, and abstract but no cross-referencing; and a book review index not tied to the subject and author indexes and which includes author and citation details and

where the book has been reviewed. This index is produced using database software and interestingly does not include page numbers.

The Courts Directory: BNA's Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges and Clerks is published in print annually and on the web monthly. The indexes produced are a federal courts index, state courts index, geographical federal index, county/city index and a name index. Database software and CINDEX indexing software are used to produce this index.

There are various legal and business reports produced, one of which is The Tax Management Weekly Report. This report is published bi-weekly and cumulative indexes are published quarterly in print and monthly on the web. The data files include topics, cases and tax regulations and this index is produced using SGML and CINDEX indexing software.

The Hansard Assembly Debates is published at the end of the assembly session and two separate indexes are produced from one database of information: a subject index and a speaker index.

The Case in Point Index is to case studies, reports, and a newsletter, all on consumer and business information. Only the previous year's content is provided on the website but a cumulative file is kept on an intranet.

Shirley Campbell

Valuing your services

You might ask 'If it's all so hard and so poorly recognised, why do it? Why not be a baker or a mechanic?' It has been said that doing the work you want to do is worth $100,000 a year (a comment attributed to Isaiah Berlin). Add that to whatever you earn, and indexing or editing starts to look pretty attractive. It's heartening to know that what you do is creative, worthwhile, skilled and absorbing. It's wonderful indeed to find your work satisfying. It's great to be happy with your work. But you might as well be happy *and* valued.

In writing this paper, I tried to get useful data on editors and indexers.

As I expected, meaningful information is hard to come by. The terms editor and indexer cover a multitude of sins. They are both at once too specific and too general to collect information about.

This is why I decided to conduct a survey, handing out a questionnaire at the conference. This captive audience seemed too good an opportunity to miss. The survey asks you about your professional priorities, your educational and employment background, your special skills and your current rates. Filling it in is of course completely optional.

Our aim in undertaking such a survey is to provide some useful data for the societies to use in publicising the

levels of skill and expertise of indexers and editors, and to gather information that can be a basis for further advocacy work. As well as the issue of rates, the survey briefly covers a few other areas — education and training needs, your ideas on the implications of technology in your field and your views about appropriate roles for professional societies. The organising committee for this conference will undertake to compile the information that comes out of the conference survey.

We hope that the professional bodies and future conferences will circulate it through their respective societies and branches, creating a useful national database.

literature
From the

'ASI News: Hines Award presentation to Linda Fetters, June 2001, ASI Conference, Boston', by Bella Hass Weinberg, pp.106–108

Long service to ASI, including corresponding secretary and president, and author of five editions of the Guide to Indexing Software (1986–1995). A second letter of nomination adds: 'Today the personal computer market is relatively homogenized. It is easy to forget what confusion reigned during the 1980s as indexers started to computerize their businesses. There were competing operating systems — C/PM, MS-DOS, PC-DOS, TRS-80. In the early 80s there were several indexing programs available ... Linda Fetters established a consistent and fair manner of reviewing indexing software.' In Linda's acceptance speech she mentions that she was the president who initiated the Hines Award. She also worked as ASI's administrator when they set up their first permanent office.

'H.W. Wilson Award: ASI/ H.W. Wilson Award for excellence in indexing, 2000,' presentation speech by L. Pilar Wyman, Chair, ASI/H.W. Wilson Committee, pp. 111–112.

The winner was the *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, containing 23,000 letters written by delegates to the early continental congresses in the US. Each of the 25 volumes of letters is indexed separately, with a cumulative index provided as volume 26. A lot of work was done separating people and boats with the same name. For example, there were eight boats called *Peggy*, and dozens of John Browns and William Smiths. The indexes were created by manuscript historians Paul Smith and Ron Gephart, while technical support for the cumulation was provided by Vicky Agee and Gail Rhoades from Macrex. (Interestingly, the first software package used was a documentary history program called CINDEX — not the indexing program we all know and love).

Recognition was also given to Susan Karpuk, who created an index to Samuel Richardson's novel, *Clarissa*. (Those who complain that awards are usually given to books on 'hard' topics such as the sciences should be pleased).

Offpress
September 2001

This issue quotes an article by Helen Bethune Moore from the April 2000 newsletter of the Victorian Society of Editors, in which she contrasts the use of film and broadcast media in the 20th century, for the enjoyment of which literacy might be helpful, but not essential, to the prevalence of the Internet now, for which the ability to read is crucial. It is interesting to reflect on the way a new technology has increased the importance of reading (we often feel the importance is diminishing), and it is important to consider also the implications for those people who can't read well. (Of course, further technological developments may again reduce the need to read, as speech recognition and other systems do the job for us).

Ancestor
Quarterly Journal of the Genealogical Society of Victoria Vol. 25, No. 7, September 2001

All issues of *Ancestor*, and journals of other genealogical societies, are full of information about indexes and indexing. Many of the projects involve volunteer effort, particularly related to data entry and proofreading of thousands of records, whether they be for ship's passengers, burials, or cemetery records. This issue of *Ancestor* discusses the new two-CD set of the National Burial Index for England and Wales. This Index contains over five million names, covering burial records from 1538 to 2000. Search defaults to 'All spelling variants', presumably because there was so much variation in the ways names were written that an exact search would nearly always miss out on lots of information (exact search is an option).

Australian Author
August 2001

'The gutter: notes and news from the margins' (pp.4–5) notes the formation of the Australian Literary Agents Association which will establish standards of practice and other criteria that will give authors confidence that they are hiring a professional. For example, agents will agree not to charge fees for reading manuscripts, and to pass on advances and royalties promptly.

The Australian's Review of Books ceased publication in June. The review was funded by the Australia Council until two years ago. A new 'magazine for book lovers' has been launched. *goodreading* (how my traditional heart longs for titles to start with capital letters — so does Word's autocorrect) is targeted at the mid-range rather than the literary market.

Australian Author (pp.8–15) also has an article on 'Book deals: the new Aussie rules' which discusses the use of auctions and multiple submissions in finding a publisher for a book, and one on the implementation of ELR (Educational Lending Right). ELR is the educational equivalent of Public Lending Right, and offers some recompense from the government to writers and other creators whose works are commonly used in school and university libraries. The Australian Society of Authors has been fighting for ELR for 24 years, and were finally successful because the government is trying to compensate the publishing industry for the disadvantages brought by the GST (while not being willing to make books GST-exempt). The largest payment was $60,000, and half of all recipients earned less than $310. The future of ELR is in doubt.

Glenda Browne

Newsletter, Webmaster and Registration contacts

Editor
Frances Paterson
email: newsletter@aussi.org

Webmaster
Website: http://www.aussi.org
Jonathan Jermey
email: webmaster@aussi.org

ISSN
paper: 0314-3767
electronic: 1326-2718

This newsletter is sent free to all members of the Australian Society of Indexers. It is published 11 times a year, with a combined issue for Jan/Feb. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Society.

Copy should be sent to the editor by the last day of each month for publication in the middle of the next month. We are delighted to receive contributions, both large and small, from members. Please contact us if you have any questions about suitable items for publication. The editor reserves the right to cut and edit material. If greater than one A4 page, please send files on a disk or via email in Rich Text Format, Word for Windows, or plain text (ASCII). Do *not* embed footnotes in Word files.

Graphics
Image files can be accepted in most common formats. Do not embed images in text files. If possible, submit line drawings in a vector format or as an EPS file. Camera-ready art and photographs can be scanned by the editor.

Advertising charges
Full page: $90; Half page: $50;
Quarter page: $25.
Full year: 11 for the price of 9.

Send copy to:
Frances Paterson
ph (02) 4268 5335
email: newsletter@aussi.org

Membership charges
$52 per year $26 half year (July to December)
Subscription to the *Newsletter*: $40 per annum

The Indexer
(international indexing journal)
Christine Shuttleworth, Executive Editor
Flat 1, 25 St Stephen's Avenue
London W12 8JB
United Kingdom
email: cshuttle@dircon.co.uk
Corresponding Editor Aust/NZ:
Frances Paterson
ph (02) 4268 5335
email: francespaterson@bigpond.com
Cost: $28 for AusSI members

Registration
Michael Harrington
ph (02) 6248 8297 (w)
www.aussi.org/profissues/registration.htm

Indexers Available
http://www.aussi.org/Indexers Available

Typeset by Keyword Editorial Services
email: michael.wyatt@keyword.com.au

National and Branch Committee contacts

National Committee
ABN 38 610 719 006
PO Box R598, Royal Exchange NSW 1225
ph 0500 525 005 (nationwide)
President: Alan Walker
ph (02) 9368 0174; fax (02) 9358 5593
email: president@aussi.org
Vice President: Michael Wyatt
ph 0500 539 973 (w); fax (02) 9225 9114
email: vicepres@aussi.org
Secretary: Lorraine Doyle
ph (02) 8587 7229 (w), (02) 9876 4218 (h);
fax (02) 9888 2229
email: secretary@aussi.org
Treasurer: Penny Whitten
ph (02) 6241 4289
email: treasurer@aussi.org
Membership secretary: Michael Wyatt
email: memsec@aussi.org
Committee members: G Frowne, C Kearney,
T Matthews, D Ward

New South Wales Branch
PO Box R598, Royal Exchange NSW 1225
email: nswbranch@aussi.org
President: Alan Walker, details above
Vice President: Michael Wyatt, details above
Secretary: Lorraine Doyle, details above
Treasurer: Glenda Browne
ph (02) 4739 8199
email: glendabrowne@optusnet.com.au
Committee members: G Browne, C Kearney,
T Matthews, D Ward

Victorian Branch
ABN 58 867 106 986
GPO Box 1251, Melbourne Vic 3000
email: vicbranch@aussi.org
President: Jenny Restarick
ph/fax (03) 9528 2539 (h)
email: jenny.restarick@enquiries.csiro.au
Vice President: Margaret Findlay
ph (03) 9277 5549
email: findlay@acer.edu.au
Secretary: Jennifer Csorba
email: jennifer@tdm.com.au
Treasurer: Ann Philpott
ph/fax (03) 9830 0494
email: annp@mydesk.net.au
Committee members: E Wood-Ellem,
J Simkin, M McMaster, J Csorba

ACT Region Branch
GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601
email: actbranch@aussi.org
President: Lynn Farkas
ph (02) 6286 3259; fax (02) 6286 6570
email: lfarkas@pcug.org.au
Immediate Past President: Geraldine Triffitt
ph (02) 6231 4975
email: geraldine.triffitt@alianet.alia.org.au
Secretary: Shirley Campbell
ph (02) 6285 1006
email: shirley.campbell@alianet.alia.org.au
Treasurer: Penny Whitten
ph (02) 6241 4289
email: pwhitten@ozemail.com.au
Committee members: E Binkowski,
S Goodenough, R Hyslop, P Stone, L Tunks,
S White

Qld group with SocEd(Qld)
Contact: Position vacant

SA Group with SocEd (SA)
Contact: Susan Rintoul
ph 08 8235 1535 (h); fax (08) 8235 9144
email: seaview@seaviewpress.com.au

WA contact
Contact: Ling Heang
ph 0418 941 861 (h); fax (08) 9358 3896
email: HEANGSL@bigfoot.com

Website: http://www.aussi.org