

# President's Report for 2000

## National Committee

The National Committee, based in Sydney, met eight times in the last twelve months. Although the majority of members live in Sydney, members often travelled from the Blue Mountains and Canberra to attend.

## Membership

At the end of 2000 the Society had 196 financial members, compared to 194 at the end of 1999. The breakdown is as follows:

ACT	41	SA	7
NSW	52	Tas	4
NT	3	Vic	58
NZ	5	WA	6
Qld	20		

## Medals and Awards

The AusSI Medal for the year 2000 was won by Max McMaster. Max now has the distinction of being a three-time winner of the Medal, and I congratulate him on this achievement. The Society's Web Indexing Prize for 2000 was awarded to Patricia Kennedy for her Subject Guide to the Queensland Environment and Protection Agency. Congratulations also to Patricia.

## Newsletter

Glenda Browne continued as the Society's editor throughout 2000, and continued to produce a professional, timely and informative newsletter. Glenda resigned at the end of the year and we are sorry to lose her. We are, however, now lucky enough to have Frances Paterson as our new editor, and the newsletter is

continuing to evolve in her capable hands.

## Website

Jonathan Jermy continued to fine-tune and improve our website throughout 2000. In mid-2000 AusSI contracted with Westpac to allow for credit card payment of membership and other fees, and Jonathan set up several forms for these transactions on a secure server linked to the site.

## Indexers Available

Michael Wyatt has maintained *Indexers Available* in 2000 and has produced a very user-friendly resource. Ninety-three, or nearly half, of our members now take advantage of this opportunity to advertise their services online, and I know from personal experience that publishers and authors alike find it a very useful resource.

## Registration

Michael Harrington (Chair), Hilary Kent and Robert Hyslop have continued to serve as the Society's Panel of Assessors for Registration. My thanks to each of them for the many hours of work which they have contributed to this very important task.

## Amendments

Delay in the assessment of indexes submitted for registration has been a problem for many years, and this year the National Committee introduced some measures which it hopes will reduce such delay, as well as underline the stature of the registration process. It is now necessary for applicants to have had at least two indexes published, in addition

to the index being submitted for consideration. As well, if an index has not been assessed, for whatever reason, after a period of three months, the National Committee will now arrange for an alternative assessor, so that no applicant will have to wait more than four months for a result.

## Registration for database indexers

Early in 2000 the Society established a subcommittee with a brief to look into the feasibility of establishing a process of registration for database indexers. That committee, comprising Margaret Findlay, Max McMaster, Sandra Henderson and myself, workshopped a set of proposals which have been examined by the National Committee and returned, with suggestions, to the sub-

*Continued on page 26*

## What's inside

24 Noticeboard

27 Dates for your diary

28 Annual reports

30 International Agreement

31 Web indexing prize

# Notice

## AusSI Publicity Officer

### Duties

AusSI has appointed its first Publicity Officer, Jon Jermey, whose duties on your behalf are to:

- ☐ Establish mailing list for AusSI (print and online)
- ☐ Manage advertising of Indexers Available
- ☐ Advertise Indexers Medal and Web Indexing Competition each year including posting/publicity of results on AusSI website, newsletter, ALIA Indexers, Index-L, overseas indexing newsletters, etc.
- ☐ Liaise with individual Branches about conference and workshop/seminars publicity
- ☐ Be responsible for all AusSI national publicity, including advertising registration of indexers, and one-off 'advertorials' in relevant journals and newspapers
- ☐ Advise the Webmaster of links that may be of benefit to the website.

### Advertisements

An advertisement has been placed in the following publications for a trial period of three months as a test advertising campaign to see if it helps to generate more work for members:

- ☐ Society of Editors (Vic) *Newsletter*
- ☐ Society of Editors (SA) *Newsletter*
- ☐ *The Genealogist*
- ☐ *Weekly Book Newsletter* ('Blue Newsletter')
- ☐ *ASA Bulletin* (Australian Society of Archivists)
- ☐ *Blue Pencil* (Society of Editors NSW).

It will also be included in:

- ☐ *Australian Author*
- ☐ *NewsWrite* (NSW Writers' Centre).

### Survey of Members

AusSI wants members to let us know if these advertisements have helped generate work to see if we should establish such advertising as an ongoing budget item. We're asking you to keep track of your sources of work, other than regular clients, for the next three months, at the end of which time we'll survey you, probably through the *Newsletter*, to find out the results.

### Feedback from Members

In order to direct our marketing to achieve the best results, we need to know how our members find work and — just as importantly — where they think they could find work, but don't. As Publicity Officer I am trying to increase awareness of the Society among potential clients. Any feedback on how a member obtained (or failed to obtain) a particular job will help me enormously. I would also like to know of any areas where new members for AusSI might be found. Please write to me directly at [webmaster@aussi.org](mailto:webmaster@aussi.org).

Jon Jermey

## From the Webmaster

Where AusSI officials have changed positions or taken on new positions, please let me know your email addresses so that I can change the redirection on the website accordingly.

## Chinese Indexers at Canberra Conference



With the help of a generous grant from the Australia-China Council, two Chinese indexers were funded to attend the 'Partnerships in Knowledge' conference in Canberra on 20–23 April.

The two distinguished Chinese indexers who accepted the invitation to attend were Mr Ge Yong-qing, from Shanghai, Managing President of the China Society of Indexers, and Mr Wei Haisheng, Director of the Library of the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau in Beijing.

'I will be delighted to welcome our Chinese colleagues to Canberra', said Alan Walker, the President of the Australian Society of Indexers. 'It will be a high point of the conference to have the participation of two representatives of the world's largest indexing society. It will also give me a personal opportunity to repay some of the warm hospitality I received when I attended the China Society of Indexers conference in Dalian in 1999.'

Alan Walker  
President

Australian Society of Indexers



# board

## Training

Jonathan Jermy has added a new directory 'Training' <http://www.aussi.org/training/index.htm> to the AusSI website which details ongoing indexing training in Australia and by correspondence or video. In particular the University of NSW is currently offering the following courses:

- ☐ Introduction to Book Indexing
- ☐ Indexing Web Pages and Documents Indexing Technical Material
- ☐ Computer-aided Indexing
- ☐ Analysing, abstracting and indexing documents for databases
- ☐ Indexing Photographs Indexing Moving Images
- ☐ Synonyms and taxonomies: thesaurus design for information architects.

Information about these courses and other web design/navigation courses can be found at <http://www.silas.unsw.edu.au/silas/cesched.htm> #Indexing or at the new UNSW website 'Continuous Professional Development' at <http://cpd.sistm.unsw.edu.au/index.html>.

## National Treasurer

The new national Treasurer is Susan White in Canberra, whose details are included on the back page of the newsletter. Susan is the Intranet Editor at the ACT Government and Assembly Library in the Legislative Assembly Building. Her phone is (02) 6205 0391, fax (02) 6205 0392, and email [treasurer@aussi.org](mailto:treasurer@aussi.org). The Committee thanks Tricia Waters for her sterling work and gratefully welcomes Susan.

## 14th National Cataloguing Conference

Geelong Waterfront Campus, Deakin University  
7-9 November 2001

### Seachange: cataloguing in a dot com world

On behalf of the Conference organising committee I wish to invite you to join us at Geelong for the 14th National Cataloguing Conference.

Our theme is 'Seachange: cataloguing in a dot com world', which was chosen to convey the transformation, if not radical change, in cataloguing at the end of the century. The committee would especially like to extend an invitation to our colleagues in other areas of resource description. Cross-fertilisation of ideas, especially in times of change, makes all of us stronger.

We look forward to seeing as many people as possible in November. Come to the Melbourne Cup and then join us at the Conference! Afterwards there is the opportunity to explore the Great Ocean Road, visit the local wineries and even see Barwon Heads, the home of *Seachange*.

Ebe Kartus  
Convenor

## Conference Secretariat

14th National Cataloguing Conference  
c/o Lynne Lucas Event Management Services  
Deakin University  
Telephone: (03) 5227 8121 Facsimile: (03) 5227 8188  
Email: [luco@deakin.edu.au](mailto:luco@deakin.edu.au)

## Develop your editing skills

The NSW Writers' Centre is holding an 8-9 day workshop *Develop Your Editing Skills* over consecutive Sundays in late April, May and June. The workshop aims to develop participants' knowledge in all aspects of the editorial process; and is suitable for those contemplating employment in publishing, those newly employed in publishing, and those in the publishing industry who wish to acquire additional skills and a broader overview of the publishing process.

For further information telephone (02) 9555 9757; or email [workshops@nswwriterscentre.org.au](mailto:workshops@nswwriterscentre.org.au); or visit the Centre's website at [www.nswwriterscentre.org.au](http://www.nswwriterscentre.org.au).

## Questionnaire

Taking advantage of the first joint national conference of indexers and editors, the conference organising committee decided to collect information that would be useful for participants and participating professional societies, and in organising the next conference.

The survey asks you about your professional priorities, your educational and employment background, and, in the case of freelance and self-employed indexers, your current rates. If you decide to fill it in, but choose not to answer all of the questions, the information that you do give will still be very useful. If you find any part of the questionnaire intrusive, there is no need to fill it in.

The organising committee's aim in undertaking the survey is to provide useful data to publicise the levels and skills of indexers and editors, and to gather information that can be a basis for future advocacy work. The committee will compile the information and will make the results available to the professional bodies to circulate through their respective societies and branches. You can be assured that the information gathered about rates charged by freelancers will not be used as a basis for setting charges. It is included to provide information for practitioners about the professions, to discern any national differences in rates and, ultimately, to map trends.

Please return the completed questionnaire by 20 May to:  
Conference Organising Committee  
6 Logan Street  
Narrabundah ACT 2604

*President's Report*  
*Continued from page 1*

committee for the preparation of some final recommendations.

## Courses

The Society continued to hold courses in Melbourne and Sydney in book indexing and web indexing.

## Introduction of the GST

The National Committee spent some time ascertaining the appropriateness of AusSI registering for the GST (eventually deciding not to), and also published guidelines for freelancers affected by the introduction of the tax.

## Advertising & publicity

The National Committee also devoted time to considering ways in which we might market the society, and the skills of its members, better. We introduced an advertising budget, prepared by Madeleine Davis, appointed a Publicity

Officer, Jonathan Jerney, and wrote to organisations similar to ours, offering them reciprocal membership. We have yet to see the results of these initiatives, but the committee feels it is appropriate for the Society to take a more proactive role in promoting itself and its members.

## Recommended rates for indexing

On 26 October 2000 the National Committee voted unanimously to raise the hourly rate from \$39.50 to \$42, in line with CPI rises of 6.1%. The rise was effective immediately.

## Members' library

Alan Walker was appointed as the Society's inaugural Librarian. Alan developed a collection development plan, and the National Committee established an annual budget for acquisitions.

## International relations

Alan Walker continued as our International Representative and attended the international meeting held in Cambridge in mid-2000. By December 2000 all six indexing societies (Australia, Britain, Canada, China, South Africa, United States) had signed their first international agreement, and I would like to thank Alan for his contribution in helping to make this happen.

## Appreciations

In addition to thanking the people whose specific contribution I have mentioned above, I would also like to thank deeply those members of the National Committee whose work in many ways constitutes the engine room of the Society: the Treasurer, Tricia Waters, the Secretary, Lorraine Doyle, the Minutes Secretary, Carolyn Kearney, and the Membership Secretary, Michael Wyatt. Thank you all.

*Garry Cousins*  
*President March 2001*

# Treasurer's Report

Balance brought forward from 1999	\$12,178.15
Total income	\$16,697.05
Total expenditure	\$12,998.43
Total balance for year ending 31/12/00	\$15,876.77
St George Bank term deposit	\$5,000.00
Westpac Money Market	\$5,000.00
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>\$25,876.77</b>

Anticipated expenses for 2001 are mainly for the newsletter, website, publicity (advertising the services of indexers in relevant societies' magazines) and providing a credit card facility for members.

*Tricia Waters*  
*Treasurer*

## Vale Josephine Mc Govern

Our dear friend and colleague, Josephine McGovern passed away suddenly on Monday 2 April 2001.

We pay tribute to her longstanding dedication to the professions of both librarianship and indexing in Australia, particularly in Victoria, where she resided and worked.

The Victorian Branch Committee expresses its sincere sorrow and sympathy to Josephine's family and we know that, in future, we too shall miss her warm and gracious company and support at our committee meetings, public workshops and both local and international conferences.

*Jenny Restarick*  
*Victorian Branch*



# Dates for your Diary

## Apr 27-29

Style Council, Sydney 2001  
'From Local to Global English'  
Conference website:  
<http://www.shirc.mq.edu.au/style/styleconf.html>

## May 1

'Professionalism in Editing'  
What are the responsibilities of the editor, and the Society, to employers of editorial services?  
Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts,  
280 Pitt Street, Sydney  
6.30 pm for 7.00 pm

## Jun 29-Jul 1

Sheffield (UK) Society of Indexers Conference 2001  
'Indexing at the Cutting Edge'

## From the Editor

In this issue of the newsletter, we have the Annual Reports from the National Committee, and the NSW and Victorian Branches, as well as the first ever International Agreement between indexing societies, and the second part of the report on the AusSI Web Indexing Prize. The contacts on the back page have largely been updated, although not greatly changed. As Glenda Browne pointed out last year, there has been tireless dedication from a number of people in the Society for many years. Anyone who would like to get involved in the work of one of the committees will always be welcome, so do give it some thought.

All the best,

Frances Paterson

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# Branch Annual

## Victorian Branch

During 2000, the Victorian Branch focussed its attention on activities for the members. A continuous program of events reflected this focus and included the AGM and annual dinner in March, three general meetings and five indexing workshops.

At our annual meeting on March 21 held in the popular and charming Graduate House, University of Melbourne, the reports from the President and Treasurer were presented. Joyce Gillespie was farewelled from the Committee after serving as Treasurer for 25 years. Max McMaster was awarded the Highly Commended Certificate of Merit (Australian Society of Indexers Medal Award 1999) by the Chair of the Medal Judging Panel, Geraldine Suter. The meeting concluded with a lively talk by Deborah Doyle of Living Proof on her experiences of book editing and conducting courses in writing and editing.

### General meetings

During the year, we held three ordinary general meetings with excellent guest speakers.

#### GST: Be ready for July 1 2000.

On May 16, Wayne Dawes, Chief Finance Officer of Australian Council for Educational Research spoke on the components of the new tax system to be introduced into Australia on July 1 2000 and the implications for self-employed professions, such as indexers.

#### Where did you find that? Two electronic versions of letting your fingers do the walking!

On July 20, two city guide products were showcased. Neil Spiers demonstrated CITYSCOPE, a CD-ROM guide to commercial properties in Australian capital cities. Bernadette Vaughan talked about CITYSEARCH, which provides city-based lifestyle guides and online business directories.

### Case studies and challenges for indexers

On 31 October, the first ever restaurant dinner meeting of the Branch was held at Da Vinci's Bistro in South Yarra. The panel of three dinner speakers discussed their own experiences and challenges in indexing. Geraldine Suter provided an overview of the *Argus* Indexing Project, mainly concentrating on how the first ten volumes were marketed to both Australian and overseas libraries. Max McMaster followed with a discussion of the challenges and problems he faced when indexing books on Aboriginal issues. Jenny Restarick spoke about biographical indexing, pointing out the differences between autobiographies, biographies and histories.

### Workshops

Five workshops were held during 2000. In March and again in October, three-day 'Back of Book Indexing' workshops were conducted by Max McMaster. Also in March, Max conducted the one-day 'Abstracting and Indexing for Databases / Pictorial Indexing' course. In July, a one-day workshop on 'Web Indexing' was attended by 13 people and conducted by Gavan McCarthy, Helen Morgan and Joanne Evans of the Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre (ASTHEC). This is the first course for web indexing held by the Victorian Branch.

### Hobart Conference

The papers presented at the Conference held in August 1999 in Hobart were collected and published in order to form a permanent record. Copies have been distributed throughout Australia and overseas.

### Committee

The committee for the year 2000 consisted of Margaret Findlay (President); Max McMaster (Vice President); Jenny Restarick (Secretary); Ann Philpott (Treasurer); John Simkin; Josephine McGovern; Elizabeth Wood-Ellem, Geraldine Suter and Rose Mary Serong. This small and committed group worked consistently throughout the year in planning and organising meetings and workshops as well as coping with membership issues and responding to other matters raised by members and the National Committee. In addition,

□ Max McMaster and Margaret Findlay worked as a sub-committee with the National President and a representative from the ACT Branch, on the proposed *Registration of Database Indexers* which is now with the National Committee for consideration.

□ The President and Vice-President are members of the National Committee during their terms of office.

□ John Simkin, Geraldine Suter, Pam Jonas and Anne Bentley formed the panel for the judging of the Society's Medal. The Secretary provides administrative support to the panel.

We welcomed three new members to the Branch Committee – Geraldine Suter, Ann Philpott and Rose Mary Serong.

On behalf of the Victorian Branch, I thank the members of the Branch Committee for their support, especially our Secretary, Jenny Restarick. I would also like to thank my employer, Australian Council for Educational Research for the use of its meeting rooms for Committee meetings, workshops and general meetings.

Margaret Findlay  
President, 2000

# Reports

## New South Wales Branch

The NSW Branch Committee continued to meet monthly in conjunction with the National Executive Committee's meetings held at the same time. The Blue Mountains group also met informally to mail out the newsletter each month and discuss various indexing issues.

### Workshops

The NSW Branch held two workshops during last year.

#### HTML Indexer

The Branch organised a one-day workshop on HTML Indexer on Saturday 15 April 2000. The course was pre-

sented by Glenda Browne and was held in the brand new Computer Laboratory, Level 8, Law School Building, University of Sydney. The rate for hiring the venue was very reasonable and it is well worth using in the future.

#### Indexing annual reports

The NSW Branch also held a half-day workshop on indexing annual reports on Saturday 5 August. Michael Harrington who has had many years' experience in the area, including indexing the 4th and 5th editions of the *AGPS Style Manual*, presented the course. The training was held in the Board Room, Thomson Legal Regulatory Group,

100 Harris Street Ultimo. The venue was once again generously provided by Thomsons free of charge.

Both workshops were well attended.

### Christmas lunch

The Branch Christmas Lunch was combined with that of the National Executive and held on Tuesday 12 December at Pymont's Restaurant located in Star City Casino with views overlooking Darling Harbour.

*Madeleine Davis*  
NSW Branch President

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# International Agreement

**Agreement between the Society of Indexers, the American Society of Indexers, the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada, the Australian Society of Indexers, the Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers, and the China Society of Indexers (1999, Amended 2000)**

All mention of Societies refers to Societies listed in Schedule A

- 1 This agreement between the Societies promotes the aims and objectives of the Societies and their members, and supersedes all previous affiliation agreements between the Societies.
- 2 The members of each Society shall enjoy the right to attend meetings and conferences of the other Societies and to purchase publications at the member rate. Members shall not have reciprocal rights to vote or hold office. Services specific to a Society, such as certification and registers of indexers, are not included in the reciprocal rights.
- 3 Societies shall refrain from actively seeking members in areas covered by other Societies, but each Society may accept membership applications from individuals outside their own area.
- 4 Each Society agrees to nominate an international delegate to represent its interests on matters of international import and to act as liaison with the other Societies. Each Society shall offer a discounted place at its conference to an authorised representative from each of the other societies.
- 5 Each Society shall circulate an agreed number of copies of its newsletter to the other Societies. Individual members may subscribe to the newsletters of other societies at a special rate.
- 6 The [British] Society of Indexers shall publish *The Indexer* on behalf of all the Societies. It shall remain the

property of the [British] Society of Indexers.

- 7 The appointment of the editor(s) of *The Indexer* shall remain the responsibility of the [British] Society of Indexers. The management of *The Indexer* shall be the responsibility of the Editorial Board of *The Indexer*.
- 8 The editor(s) of *The Indexer* shall maintain the right to accept or reject contributions from whatever source, at their discretion.
- 9 Each Society shall make *The Indexer* available to its members according to its own rules and procedures.
- 10 The price of *The Indexer* for the members of the Societies shall be at a reduced rate as established by agreement of all the Societies. Price changes shall be notified by the beginning of July of the year before they take effect.
- 11 This agreement may be amended at any time by common consent. Review of the agreement will take place every third year, commencing in the year 2000.
- 12 The triennial International meeting shall take place at the conference of one of the societies. At each meeting the host Society for the next meeting shall be nominated.
- 13 Any Society may withdraw from the agreement on giving 12 months notice to the other Societies.
- 14 This agreement shall come into effect on its approval by the respective Societies, according to their constitutional procedures.

## Schedule A

- ☐ American Society of Indexers
- ☐ Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers
- ☐ Australian Society of Indexers
- ☐ China Society of Indexers
- ☐ Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada/Société canadienne pour l'analyse de documents
- ☐ Society of Indexers (referred to as [British] Society of Indexers)

3 December 2000

## Thesaurus

*From aliaINDEXERS-ALIA net-based and AusSI-supported indexing issues e-list*

I am the Research Assistant on the High-Level Thesaurus Project based at the Centre for Digital Library Research. I have noticed your discussion on thesauri.

Someone mentioned starting a 'registry for thesauri/terminals'. I can't say we're there yet, or that we are nearly there; however, we are aiming to put together a list of thesauri. At the moment it is alphabetically accessible: <http://hilt.cdrl.strath.ac.uk/Sources/thesauri.htm>

We hope to organise it according to subject in the near future with a brief description of what each thesaurus is. We do have a page of lists to other thesauri sites: <http://hilt.cdrl.strath.ac.uk/Sources/resources.html>

In case you were wondering, HILT is researching the problem of cross-searching and browsing by subject between communities (e.g. archives, libraries, museums, clumps projects etc). It is a very large task; however, at the end of it, we do hope to be able to put forward some recommendations as to how this may be facilitated. If you wish any further info please consult: <http://hilt.cdrl.strath.ac.uk/>

Additionally, if you are interested and have any experience in the field we would be delighted to hear from you.

Regards,  
Susannah Wake  
HILT Research Assistant  
Strathclyde University Library  
Email: [Susannah.wake@strath.ac.uk](mailto:Susannah.wake@strath.ac.uk)  
<http://hilt.cdrl.strath.ac.uk>



# Report on the AusSI Web Indexing Prize 2000

Jonathan Jermeý, Judge

Five entries were received for the 2000 Web Indexing Prize, won by the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency site index. The report covering three of the entries was published in the January/February issue of the AusSI Newsletter and here is the report on the remaining two.

## History and Cultural Site for Milton Ulladulla

<http://www.shoalhaven.net.au/~cathyd>

Submitted by: Cathy Dunn

This is a large collection of links to pages relating to Milton Ulladulla, generally from a historical point of view. Most of the pages are on Cathy's own site, and taken together they represent a great deal of time and effort spent on accumulating material and working it up into Web pages. The home page links to at least 60 other pages, and while the layout is somewhat cluttered, the choice of colours and graphics works reasonably well.

However, it is not an index. Indexes don't just have a random jumble of headings, they have a logical sequence accessible to users; and *sequence* is lacking here. The main headings – 'Local History', 'Genealogy Research', 'Local Cemeteries', 'Convicts', 'Milton Ulladulla & Surrounds', 'Servicemen & Women' and 'Links' – are in no discernible order, and the entries within them are unordered too. Why are 'Budawang Aborigines' at the bottom of the Local History section? Why is 'Ulladulla Lighthouse' at the top and 'Tabourie Museum' in the middle?

There are inconsistencies here too: there are no fewer than five retrieval systems (two drop-down lists, a table of

headings, a collection of 'latest additions to site' and a list of links grouped under headings) and the links in one system often don't match the links given in another. Neither do the links always match the title of the pages linked to. Material at the bottom left of the page doesn't seem to fit into any of these systems; it is a mix of awards, message boards and links to other material of local interest.

To quote the Prize Guidelines: *The order of locators in a Web index need not be alphabetical, but it must be a rational and systematic sequence which caters to the users of the site.* Given the historical slant here it might have been interesting to try a historical sequence for the home page; but alphabetical would have been fine. Just to step back and consider things from the users' perspective would have made a big difference.

## Therapeutic Guidelines

<http://www.tg.com.au/demos/anti/5cec58f.htm>

Submitted by: James Reeve

Part of the spirit of the Web Indexing Prize is that readers of this report should be able to visit sites and make their own decisions about them. For that reason and for ease of judging, I have ruled out sites with restricted ac-

cess requiring payment, subscriptions or passwords. Therapeutic Guidelines is a site displaying drug treatments for various conditions, but the non-paying public is only allowed access to a demonstration section where a fraction of the 'real' information is available. The real index may be large and impressive, but since I can't get to it I have to judge on the tiny demonstration index that I can get to.

Unfortunately I couldn't at first get to this either. Using the site index on a Windows PC involves downloading plug-in software for the browser – at 500kb this takes about two minutes – and the net result was that the browser displayed the index in a side panel and then crashed, over and over again, any time I made an attempt to use it. (Many plug-ins do this, making it hard for me to look favourably on any site that uses them.)

The second time around it worked, but I found the high-tech plug-in index no improvement over a simple framed alphabetical list of links. To find and get to 'endocarditis' from a linked list requires a) scrolling down; b) clicking on 'endocarditis'. Here it requires a) clicking on the 'index' tab at the bottom left; b) scrolling down; c) double-clicking on 'endocarditis'; d) clicking on 'prevention of endocarditis'. So the result of our 500kb download is that it takes two more clicks to get where I want to go, and another click to get back again. What's the advantage?

Finally, a third attempt to access the site resulted in a repeat of the browser crashing problems. This seems like a classic case of technology outstripping usefulness. But I should add that there were no obvious flaws in the index itself – when it worked.

## Machiavelli, son of an indexer

*Thanks to Helen Kinniburgh, a former member, for this snippet.*

We were planning a trip to Europe last year and Florence was on the 'wish list' ... that was my excuse for rereading some of *The Portable Machiavelli*. The first page of the introduction notes that Niccolo Machiavelli was born in Florence on 3 May 1469. Further:

The Machiavelli were an established middle-class family from the Oltrarno district of Florence, and its members had held an impressive number of offices in the city's government ... Niccolo's father, Bernardo, however, was not one of the more prosperous members of the clan, and Machiavelli could never hope to rival the wealth or influence of the greater patrician families of Florence ... But if Bernardo's means were insufficient to guarantee his son instant access to economic and political power, his great interest in books, particularly the Latin classics, was perhaps a more valuable legacy. We know that he obtained [amongst others] a prized copy of Livy's history of republican Rome in return for laboriously compiling for the printer an index of Livy's place-names.

It seems indexing was not a path to material riches in the fifteenth century. And, in case you are interested, the editors Bondanella & Musa cast doubt on the popular conception of Machiavelli as a deceitful, unscrupulous, political opportunist. My view is that the son of an indexer couldn't be all bad.

## Newsletter, Webmaster and Registration contacts

### Editor

Frances Paterson  
email: newsletter@aussi.org

### Webmaster

Jonathan Jermey  
email: webmaster@aussi.org

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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).

### 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.

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Frances Paterson  
ph (02) 9560 3818  
email: newsletter@aussi.org

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\$52 per year \$26 half year (July to December)

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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:  
Glenda Browne  
ph (02) 4739 8199  
email: glendabrowne@optusnet.com.au  
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### Registration

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

### Indexers Available

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) 9331 7785  
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: Susan White  
ph (02) 6205 0391 (w); fax (02) 6205 0392  
email: treasurer@aussi.org  
Membership secretary: Michael Wyatt  
email: memsec@aussi.org  
Committee members: G. Browne, 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 5555  
email: findlay@acer.edu.au  
Secretary: Position vacant  
Treasurer: Ann Philpott  
ph/fax (03) 9830 0494  
email: annp@mydesk.net.au  
Committee members: E Wood-Ellem,  
J McGovern, J Simkin, M McMaster, J Scorba

### ACT Region Branch

GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601  
email: actbranch@aussi.org  
President: Lynn Farkas  
ph (02) 6286 3259; fax (2) 6286 6570  
email: lfarkas@pcug.org.au  
Immediate Past President: Geraldine Triffitt  
ph (02) 6231 4975  
email: gtriffitt@interact.net.au  
Secretary: Shirley Campbell  
ph (02) 6285 1006  
email: shirley.campbell@alianet.alia.org.au  
Treasurer: Penny Whitten  
ph (02) 6241 4289  
email: pwhitten@interact.net.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