

# Newsletter

The National Archive

## 'Bringing Them Home' database project

Jim Stokes

*Workshop given by Ronald Briggs of AIATSIS and Jim Stokes from the National Archives of Australia at the 'Partnerships in Knowledge' Conference, Canberra, April 2001 hosted by AusSI ACT Branch and the Canberra Society of Editors.*

*The 'Bringing Them Home' indexing project is part of the Commonwealth Government's response to the Bringing Them Home report. The project aims to assist Indigenous people in family and community reunion by indexing hundreds of thousands of occurrences of personal names and other relevant information. The names are compiled in an Access computer database which is used by National Archives of Australia reference staff working with individuals and family link-up organisations.*

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**M**y first substantial experience of records issues relating to Indigenous people was when I worked on the Australian Law Reform Commission's review of the Commonwealth Archives Act in 1996-98. We looked at a range of problems relating to the accessibility and preservation of records of significance in land claims and family and community reunion, and made series of recommendations which I hope will be gradually implemented.

Matthew Storey of the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, who was one of our honorary consultants, said something, which I think summarises the whole issue very well: 'Aboriginal people, especially ... the Stolen Generations, are surely the most regulated and recorded population in Australian history.'

Yet within this there is a paradox. On the one hand, written records relating to Indigenous people often seem at best intrusive and patronising and at worst cruel and misleading. Furthermore, many Indigenous people see the records of the various

levels of government as insufficiently accessible to themselves, but in some case too widely accessible to others.

On the other hand, for communities with oral rather than written traditions and subject to fierce external pressures the European records—whatever their failings—often contain vital information.

A further complication is that the records which governments compiled about Indigenous people also tell important stories about European society and the way in which it interacted with the Indigenous population. So they are part of all our stories. Yet

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# Noticeboard

## STC Australia competitions — call for entries and judges

STC Australia is accepting entries for two competitions—a Technical Publications competition (with 16 categories) and a student competition (for attendance at the ASTC conference in Sydney). Additionally, we are seeking judges for the Technical Publications competition. If you would like more information or entry/judging forms, visit the web site at <http://www.stc-aus.org.au> (Competitions) or contact Ann Backhaus at [competitions@stc-aus.org.au](mailto:competitions@stc-aus.org.au). You do not have to be a member of STC to enter or judge the competition. Distinguished entries from the Technical Publications competition are eligible to go on to international competition.

The STC (Society for Technical Communications) sponsors competitions for technical communications professionals and students interested in the field. These competitions recognise excellence in technical communication, provide valuable peer feedback and raise awareness of the profession. Thanks and hope to hear from you!

*Ann Backhaus, Competitions Manager*

## AusSI Conference Papers Archived at National Library

The National Library of Australia has set up an electronic facility called the PANDORA (Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia) Archive, which enables the archiving and provision of long-term access to online Australian publications. Additional information about PANDORA can be found on the Library's server at <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pandora/>. The Papers section of the AusSI website is to be archived at <http://www.aussi.org/conferences/conferencepapers.htm> in the PANDORA Archive.

## Journal indexing course

AusSI Victorian Branch presents a Half Day Journal Indexing Course Monday 12 November 2001, with Max McMaster, at ACER (Australian Council for Education Research), 19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. For more information please contact Max McMaster, Course Co-ordinator, phone/fax (03) 9500 8715, email [mindexer@interconnect.com.au](mailto:mindexer@interconnect.com.au)

## Victorian Branch meeting

I am delighted to announce that our next site visit will be to the Exhibition and Collection Management offices of the National Gallery of Victoria.

Date: Thursday October 25, 2001

Time: 12 noon to approx. 2 pm.

Address: 112 Macaulay Road, North Melbourne (adequate visitor parking available) (Melways 2A, A5; UBD 30, M 11).

We shall be hosted by Helen Puckey and Janine Bofill of the Data Management System, together with David Belzycki of the Cataloguing Department.

We look forward to seeing how their manual or electronic recording systems can address the following scenarios:

- ☐ When an item (painting, object etc.) comes in for identification, preservation, collection etc., what is involved in searching for prior examples, searching catalogues of other galleries for description, provenance etc.?
- ☐ How are the items stored, labelled, recorded, boxed, displayed etc.?
- ☐ If another gallery wanted to enquire as to whether or not you held a particular item, how do you search out that information?
- ☐ What database(s) do you use?
- ☐ Is the entire collection recorded on a database or are early years still on cards/folders/books etc.?
- ☐ What about photographs/reference books etc.?
- ☐ Did you purchase a commercially available software package on which to record your information or is it a home-made/in-house inspired program?

Plus any other queries you might like to pose.

Our numbers are limited to 15 — please respond to me as soon as convenient.

*Jenny Restarick, President, Vic Branch  
Information Officer, CSIRO Enquiries  
ph 61 3 9545 2178 fax 61 3 9545 2175  
email [Jenny.Restarick@enquiries.csiro.au](mailto:Jenny.Restarick@enquiries.csiro.au)*

## New member

We warmly welcome the following new member:  
Ms Cheryl Woodward, NSW.



# Dates for your Diary

**Oct 18-19** Indexing Skills Workshops for Technical Communicators with Lori Lathrop, at Mincom Limited, Brisbane. Discounts for AusSI members. For more information go to <http://www.indexingskills.com>.

**Oct 25** AusSI Victorian Branch Tour of Exhibition and Collection Management offices of the National Gallery of Victoria. Time: 12 noon-approx. 2 pm. Address: 112 Macaulay Road, North Melbourne (adequate visitor parking available) (Melways 2A, A5; UBD 30, M 11).

**Nov 1** ASI 34th Annual Conference deadlines for submissions. See their website at <http://www.asindexing.org> and click on 'annual meetings', or contact Kate Mertes at [kmertes@hotmail.com](mailto:kmertes@hotmail.com).

STC Australia competitions closing date for entries. See Noticeboard for further details.

**Nov 6** Society of Editors (NSW) monthly meeting at Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney (between Park & Bathurst near Pitt Street Uniting Church). RSVP to 02 9294 4999 (voicemail) or email [mmripear@ozemail.com.au](mailto:mmripear@ozemail.com.au).

**Nov 9-10** ASTC (NSW) Conference at Carlton Crest Hotel, Haymarket, Sydney. Presenters at the two-day conference are seasoned, known professionals who will highlight developments in the field. Details at <http://www.stc-aus.org.au>.

**Nov 12** AusSI Victorian Branch Journal Indexing Course with Max McMaster, half-day course at ACER. Registrations Max McMaster on phone/fax 03 9500 8715 or email [mindexer@interconnect.com.au](mailto:mindexer@interconnect.com.au).

# Indexers' Medal 2001

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. The presentations will take place at a Society dinner.

To be eligible for the award, the index must be in print and must have been first published after 1998. 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/periodical (which will be returned), to: The Secretary, Australian Society of Indexers, PO Box 1251, Melbourne Vic 3001 as soon as possible, but no later than Friday 10 December 2001. For further information, please contact Jenny Restarick, telephone/fax 61 3 9528 2539 email [jenny.restarick@enquiries.csiro.au](mailto:jenny.restarick@enquiries.csiro.au).

## From the Editor

Our September issue includes two papers from the AusSI Canberra Conference as well as some welcome contributions from Glenda Browne, one on Elearning and Indexing, and a new regular column from Glenda called From the Literature. We would also like a volunteer to take over indexing the website from next year. This is a good opportunity for someone who wants to develop skills in website indexing so please give it some thought.

All the best,  
Frances Paterson

# AusSI Website indexes

For the last three or four years we have had a back-of-book-style index on the AusSI website. The aim of this index is to allow users to search for specific information, and to go directly to the webpages of interest to them. The index complements the basic information architecture of the site, which allows people to search for information grouped in broad categories, for example membership.

The content and wording of the index follow much the same principles as traditional book indexes. The structure is, of course, very different, as index entries are links that take users straight to the information they require. The other big difference is that the website is a moving target, and the index needs to be constantly updated.

## HTML Indexer

Initially, the site was indexed using straight HTML coding. Now, however, HTML Indexer software is used, which has been designed specifically to allow easy indexing of websites. HTML Indexer saves the indexer from having to type URLs, automates filing, adds alpha bars, and so on. HTML Indexer

embeds index entries in the webpages to which they refer. This means that if a webpage is removed from the website, the index entries leading to that webpage are also removed (when the index is next built). Similarly, if a webpage is moved, the index entries move with it, and the updated URL will be used in the link the next time the index is built. The only downside of this is that the indexer has to work with the 'live' files for the project, and the webpages that the indexer has worked with have to be reloaded on the site. That is, the web manager and

*Continued on page 83*

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# Ethics

## The role of societies in maintaining professional integrity

John E Simkin, AusSI

Paper given at the 'Partnerships in Knowledge' Conference, Canberra, April 2001 hosted by AusSI ACT Branch and the Canberra Society of Editors

**E**thics involves decisions related to a matter in hand. There must be an objective to be reached. Ethics consists of the decisions which are made to reach the objective with the optimum result—that is, with the greatest good for the greatest number.

Ethical decisions are based on knowledge; the greater the knowledge of the factors involved, the better the decision can be. Thus it follows that there may never be a perfect answer, i.e. one in which everyone involved gains equally or all together. However, greater knowledge and better 'ethical' planning can achieve a better result. By contrast, moral codes, prescribing as they do rights and wrongs, blacks and whites, thou shalt and thou shalt nots, assume no process of thinking or planning; merely follow the rules and the answer will be 'right'. For knowledge professions like editing and indexing, rules will not do. Ethics must be applied.

To put it another way, morals have codes, ethics have principles. The result of the application of a moral precept is always the same. 'Thou shalt not play sport on the Sabbath' always gives the same answer. The ethical consideration: 'Let's find the best day for our cricket match giving regard to all the factors involved—the weather, the availability of venues, the freedom of participants to attend, may provide a range of answers from which we will take the one which gives the optimum result.

Editors and indexers have at least one common objective in their work: to represent accurately the communications of the author. If an editor or indexer finds that they are too close to the subject in hand or have opinions which will stand in the way of them

handling the author's work objectively it would be as well to withdraw from the job. The training of editors and indexers in formal studies and on the job should encourage the development of objectivity in handling the ideas and opinions of others and especially those ideas and opinions which are in the category of the editor.

As to the role of professional societies in maintaining professional integrity, there are problems. After the event, when the job is done and the work published, it is usually not possible to identify the editor's work while the indexer's, as a separate element, is more visible. Thus the indexer's work can be subject to criticism but the editors may not be. Many indexes are reviewed and the reviews abstracted and published in *The Indexer*. However, since most publishers do not record the indexer as part of the team, it is not easy for the professional societies to take any action where an indexer is seen to be doing the job poorly and 'unethically'. In the case of editors there can be a mechanism for complaints where an author feels his work has been improperly handled by the editor. The professional society might take on itself, for the good of the profession, to assess the situation through the inspection of working documents through the various stages of the work. (Work on line or on disc, does not leave much of a trail in most cases; how to follow the editor's work, good or bad?).

There are two other constraints which need to be taken into consideration when assessing the work of editors or indexers.

□ Limitations of budget or space. To the indexer: We can allow you four pages for the index. Indexer thinks: But this book requires at least a six-page index; but they'll get what they pay for. To the editor: I know the proofs need a further read but the budget won't stand it, the book will have to go to press as is.

□ Bad timing. Different publishers have different practices as to when they bring editors and proofreaders to the job. Indexers are almost always bought on at the last minute and with a deadline of yesterday. In all cases where these professionals are not included in the team from the beginning a publisher is wasting expertise. A good example of this is demonstrated in the book which won this year's Australian Society of Indexers medal. While the indexer (one of the most experienced in Australia) did an excellent job within the constraints of an unusual structure, if he had been engaged at an earlier stage, he would have insisted on producing an index which would have given access to much information which is now hidden within the book.

The difference between 'unethical' work and work which is limited by some arbitrary criteria is apparent. Do professional societies have the time and/or manpower to keep an eye on the work which may enhance or besmirch the profession?



another complication is that records relating to Indigenous people are spread over a wide range of jurisdictions, government and private. This is illustrated by the fragmented nature even of National Archives' holdings.

### **Canberra**

We hold a mixture of national policy records and old NT administration records. They include records relating to government expeditions; relations with missions and institutions; land administration (mining and pastoral leases); education; fishing; prisons; social security; Royal Commission on British Nuclear Tests; and Commonwealth initiatives in Indigenous affairs.

### **Darwin**

The records of the pre-self-government NT Administration, in particular:

- F1 main correspondence files of NT Admin 1915–78 (918 shelf m)
- D4082 NT Welfare Branch case files 1963–72 (6 m)
- E742 Native Affairs Branch staff files 1954–69 (2 m)
- E155 Tennant Creek welfare files 1957–date (17 m).

### **Melbourne**

The former colonial/state Aboriginal Affairs records, which were transferred to the Commonwealth in 1975 (following the 1967 referendum):

- Case and correspondence files for the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines 1869–1968 (B318, B337)
- Name index cards for Aboriginal Welfare Board 1965 (B2016)
- Lake Tyers correspondence files 1865–1968 (B356)
- Lake Tyers population statistics 1922–64 (B2023).

As in many other areas of government administration, the survival of records has been patchy. It is certain that some records were destroyed that should not have been destroyed—some because their value was not appreciated, some perhaps deliberately to bury the past. For example, most of the NT Welfare Branch's so-called half caste files were destroyed in the 1970s.

NAA has addressed this problem by imposing a freeze on the disposal of records which might assist family or

community reunion. This was applied to records in NAA custody in 1996 and to records in the custody of all Commonwealth agencies in 2000. It is important to note that it does not apply to all records relating to Indigenous people, but only to those which might reasonably be expected to assist reunion.

However, the problem with disposal freezes is that they are often too late — the damage was done many years ago.

## **The 'Bringing Them Home' indexing project**

Giving effective community access to Commonwealth government records has always been a challenge. Only a few per cent of Commonwealth records survive to be transferred to NAA, but even so we hold around 250 shelf km of records designated for long-term retention. These records were created by hundreds of agencies using a wide range of systems of organisation. We have acquired with them a range of indexes and lists and we have applied our own descriptive standards to them.

Traditionally, it was necessary to approach records from the top down, through administrative histories and series registrations to index cards and transfer lists. Even then individual file titles are not necessarily an accurate or complete guide to what is actually in the file.

Over the past decade NAA has developed the RecordSearch electronic database (now available though the NAA website) which includes all agency and series registrations and around three million individual items. But this is only a small percentage of the total number of items in NAA. In any case in a complex area like family reunion even a complete list of item titles is of only limited use—a detailed index of the contents of each item is necessary.

As part of the Commonwealth government's response to the HREOC *Bringing Them Home* report in December 1997 NAA was given \$2 million over four years to index, copy and preserve thousands of files relevant to family and community reunion. Indexing began in July 1998 and will continue until June 2002. So far we have examined more than 15,000 files, about half of which proved to be worth indexing. We have searched nearly 550,000 individual folios and

made around 170,000 entries on the database (including multiple occurrences of references to the same people).

## **Indexing strategies**

These are not easy records to index. In the main Commonwealth case management records series (e.g. Welfare, Tax, Defence personnel, Veterans Affairs) you would expect to find personal details recorded completely and consistently. You would expect at the very least to have full names and date and place of birth and death recorded. But in many records relating to Indigenous people, particularly in the nineteenth and earlier twentieth century, the only identifiable reference may be a single name imposed by Europeans, together with a geographical location. In consequence the same person may have multiple index entries which can not be definitely linked at the time of indexing.

We had to design an indexing standard which could capture whatever information existed in a way that would help researchers as far as possible to link a range of very embryonic references to the same person. Our indexing sheets (from which data is later entered to the database) provide for surname and given names (including alternative forms), a primary/secondary/tertiary relevance code, birth and death information, sex, an events date range and age of subject at the time of the event and any place names associated with the reference. We also have open and closed comments fields.

Some of the issues we had to consider were:

### **The database**

We are using an Access database and all data entry is done by a single DPO in Canberra. The Access database was adopted as a simple solution to get the project up and running. It was intended that within six months the BTH database would be integrated with the RecordSearch database. For various technical and sensitivity reasons this was not done and we have had problems with slow operating speeds as the volume of data increases. We are in the final stages of converting the database to Access 2000 and transferring it to an SQL serve, which should improve its performance considerably. Our next project is to develop more sophisticated search strategies.

Another issue, which we need to face, is who can use it.

The database is basically an index to records rather than record itself. Even so it contains information which the subjects and their communities might well consider sensitive, especially in aggregation.

NAA's position is that the database is intended to facilitate family and community reunion, not to be a general guide to records relating to Indigenous people. People generally seek information from the database through the Link Up groups, for whom NAA staff run searches on the database. Access to the records themselves is granted under the Memoranda of Understanding between NAA and Indigenous groups, which were signed in 1997 in the Northern Territory and 2000 in Victoria. Anyone else seeking access to the records must do so under the normal public access provisions of the Archives Act. The records we index are listed at item level on the RecordSearch database, but members of the public would not be able to access the BTH database as a finding aid. Some of the records would certainly be subject to 33(1)(g)

unreasonable disclosure of personal affairs exemptions.

If Indigenous groups were generally agreeable, we would probably incorporate the database into RecordSearch and make it generally available via the Internet. However, it is clear that the Indigenous advisory groups, particularly in the Northern Territory, would not be prepared to accept this at this stage.

### Indexing priorities

We are working our way through the relevant records in the NT, Canberra and Melbourne. We know there are some relevant records in our other offices and we will move into these later this year. We have not indexed the big Commonwealth personal case file series. Examples of these are armed service personnel records and Commonwealth public service and Australian National Railways staff files. The problem is not only that there are tens of thousands of shelf kilometres of them, but that in many cases it is not possible to reliably identify Indigenous people. We might consider indexing some service personnel files if Indigenous soldiers

have been identified through other research.

## Accountability

We are very much aware that we were given this money for a specific humanitarian purpose. We made a detailed submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee's inquiry last year into the Bringing Them Home response and we appeared before them. Both from the hearing and the subsequent written report we formed the impression that the Committee was aware of what we are doing and did not have any specific concerns about it. The Committee was obviously concerned about the fragmentation of records between jurisdictions and from their questioning we thought they might be inclined to recommend the development of a single national database, which would certainly be an interesting challenge. However, somewhat to our relief, they did not take this up in the written report. The committee did strongly urge that there should be more accountability and scrutiny of Bringing Them Home response projects and no doubt we shall be involved in this.

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# Elearning and Indexing

Six months ago a UTS Certificate IV course in elearning started at one of my workplaces. Since I got a discounted price, and I was on the spot, I decided to enrol. (Ironically, in doing so I went against one of the major trends in elearning which is to focus on just-in-time training, ie, not learning anything until you absolutely have to).

Interestingly, I have gone from never having heard of the concept, to reading about elearning all the time. And, importantly, there are potential roles for indexers in the field.

## What is elearning?

Elearning has been defined as 'utilising information technology and telecommunications to enable learning' (definition used by Serena Joyner from Standards Australia at a One Umbrella Executive Briefing). It goes beyond traditional computer-based training in that it also includes online communication. Thus a course with online delivery of content, plus group sessions using discussion groups and/or online chat sessions, would be an example of elearning. The current trend seems to be in favour of blended learning—that is, incorporating elearning concepts with traditional classroom meetings. In its worst implementations elearning is looked on as a way of removing workplace responsibility for training, for example, by expecting workers to take all their learning home with them. I have also heard the astounding suggestion that people could absorb their elearning audio *while* doing their normal work!

## Metadata enables modularity

Another important concept in elearning is the use of modular courses that can be brought together to include all the learning a person needs. Typically progression through courses in a workplace would be managed using a Learner Management

System (costing in the \$100,000s) which would track user training needs, assessment results and completion of modules.

Many of the modules used in organisational training are purchased from outside providers. The modularity of these courses means that courses from a number of different providers can be strung together according to organisational needs. So, to get the best in web page design training, a learner might choose an HTML course from Trainer A and a course on graphic elements in web pages from Trainer B. The issue now is to make it as easy as possible for people to select course modules on appropriate subjects. The answer is to use quality, consistent labelling, specifically the application of metadata to all training modules. See, for example, the article 'An introduction to metadata tagging' at [http://www.learningcircuits.org/dec2000/dec2000\\_tools.html](http://www.learningcircuits.org/dec2000/dec2000_tools.html).

Modularity is crucial to the concept of 'just-in-time learning'. The idea is that you learn things only when you need them. For example, when you start using LotusNotes for email you might just learn how to send, save, and delete messages. Later when someone asks you to schedule a meeting you quickly organise for your 'just-in-time training' on the use of the Calendar, and half an hour later, you're working like an expert. This could work for very limited skills-based courses, but depends on you having the time and access to courses when you need them. It also depends very heavily on the ability of the system, or someone, to identify

the courses you need. If you haven't done a LotusNotes overview course, for example, you might never know that the capacity for scheduling exists. And again, metadata can help in keeping track of the courses done and needed, and related courses that might fit together.

## Indexers and elearning metadata

So, how do we get involved? Sorry, here comes a flat ending – I don't know. The elearning environment and the information management environment seem to be very separate, perhaps because so much elearning development is being done overseas. As always, keep your ears to the ground, and stay in touch with developments in any companies you work for.

I do know that edNA (Education Network Australia) has been involved with metatagging thousands of elearning documents, so their website would be a good place to start (<http://www.edna.edu.au> and <http://standards.edna.edu.au/metadata/>).

You could also identify elearning content providers and aggregators, and market your services to them. Check websites and join mailing lists of organisations such as learning circuits (<http://www.learningcircuits.org>) and Educause (<http://www.educause.edu>), and identify likely clients from these.

If you are interested in elearning in general, check the September issue of *Online Currents*, for which I have written an article on elearning and a report on the One Umbrella executive briefing on 'Elearning—What's in it for Information Management Professionals'.

Glenda Browne



# From the literature

## **NFAIS Newsletter** vol. 43 number 8, August 2001, pp. 99-102

NFAIS reported on the Tasini case in which the US Supreme Court ruled in favour of freelance writers retaining rights to electronic versions of their print works. It appears to have been a bit of a Pyrrhic victory, however, as the response has been to remove freelance articles from databases, rather than to pay the freelancers.

Most contracts now address ownership of online rights, and concerned indexers might like to list explicitly all rights for indexes they create that may be reproduced in other formats. (Disclaimer: This is not legal advice, and I don't know how this applies in Australia).

The June NFAIS Newsletter also reported on the case — interestingly, NFAIS (National Federation of Abstracting and Information Societies) and some publishers supported the publishers position, while the American Library Association supported the freelancers. The Special Libraries Association 'called for a harmonious resolution of the issue'.

## **...the word** newsletter of the Society of Editors (SA) July-August 2001

### **TADAA**

...the word reviews *The Australian Dictionary of Acronyms and Abbreviations* by David Jones, noting obscure abbreviations such as 'DE' for 'Double Elephant' (a paper size). All good books that we index should define the abbreviations they use, so I don't envisage it being much used by an indexer, although you might be 'enthralled' as one reviewer was. I also wonder whether the Internet might make the book obsolete.

### **Professional Indemnity Insurance**

Another useful snippet is about Professional Indemnity Insurance. Many government agencies automatically

require that contractors have professional indemnity insurance. Kathy Stove recommends that if a government agency insists that you have professional indemnity insurance you ask them to consult SAICORP (South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation). They will do a risk assessment to determine whether there is a financial risk to the project. If there is, professional indemnity will be required. I don't know whether there are similar organisations in other states.

All contracts should be negotiable if changes are appropriate to the specific situation you are in. If a client won't discuss alterations think very carefully before signing.

### **Editalk**

To subscribe to the Editalk mailing list, send a blank email message to [editalk-subscribe@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:editalk-subscribe@editors-sa.org.au). You'll receive an automatic response asking for confirmation of your subscription, and then a set of instructions.

### **Offpress** Newsletter of the Society of Editors (Queensland) Inc.

Offpress notes a talk by Barbara Nichol, of the Australian Pen Retailers Association. Now that's a specific field to be in!

### **NewsEdge**

*Taxonomies: The Value of Organized Business Knowledge*, is a white paper prepared for NewsEdge (to promote their services), available in PDF format from <http://www.newsedge.com/materials/whitepapers/taxonomies.pdf>. It discusses the importance of structure and classification in finding business information online. See also articles such as 'An intro to metadata tagging' ([http://www.learningcircuits.org/dec2000/dec2000\\_tools.html](http://www.learningcircuits.org/dec2000/dec2000_tools.html)) for examples of the ways nonindexers are busily promoting traditional indexing skills.

Glenda Browne

### *AusSI Website indexes*

*Continued from page 78*

indexer can't both work on the webpages at the same time. The transfer and reloading of files has to be well managed for the project to be successful.

### **Other AusSI indexes**

A UTS student, Helen Skewes, is working on an index to the AusSI Newsletter online as a final year project. This index will complement an index to the earlier print issues of the newsletter that have never been online, being worked on by Jennifer Csorba (to update an earlier index created by Kingsley Siebel). As much as possible we are using consistent indexing for all these documents.

### **Who'll index the website next year?**

Next year when we have a new web manager, Glenda Browne would be happy to pass on the task of indexing the AusSI website. There is not much work involved, but it is an ongoing job needing regular input. The volunteer for this job would need:

- ☐ good indexing skills
- ☐ understanding of website structure and function
- ☐ understanding of HTML Indexer software, or willingness to learn (or ability to create the index in another way)
- ☐ discipline to maintain an updating schedule
- ☐ ability to communicate with the web manager regarding transfer of files
- ☐ email access.

AusSI owns a copy of HTML Indexer which you could use (kindly donated by David Brown). If you are interested, download the demo version of the software from [www.html-indexer.com](http://www.html-indexer.com) and try the tutorial. Please contact Alan Walker if you are interested in volunteering for this job (details on back of newsletter), or contact Glenda Browne ([glenda.browne@optusnet.com.au](mailto:glenda.browne@optusnet.com.au); 02 47398199) for more information.

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Dept AS, Society of Indexers  
Globe Centre, Penistone  
Road  
Sheffield S6 3AE  
UK

Tel: +44 114 281 3060  
Fax: +44 114 281 3061  
Email:  
admin@socind.demon.co.uk

Visit our website at  
<http://www.socind.demon.co.uk>

## Newsletter, Webmaster and Registration contacts

### Editor

Frances Paterson  
email: [newsletter@aussi.org](mailto:newsletter@aussi.org)

### Webmaster

Website: <http://www.aussi.org>  
Jonathan Jermy  
email: [webmaster@aussi.org](mailto:webmaster@aussi.org)

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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.

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(international indexing journal)  
Christine Shuttleworth, Executive Editor  
Flat 1, 25 St Stephen's Avenue  
London W12 8JB  
United Kingdom  
email: [cshuttle@dircon.co.uk](mailto:cshuttle@dircon.co.uk)  
Corresponding Editor Aust/NZ:  
Frances Paterson  
ph (02) 4268 5335  
email: [francespaterson@bigpond.com](mailto:francespaterson@bigpond.com)  
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### Registration

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

### Indexers Available

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Typeset by Keyword Editorial Services  
email: [michael.wyatt@keyword.com.au](mailto: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](mailto:president@aussi.org)  
Vice President: Michael Wyatt  
ph 0500 539 973 (w); fax (02) 9225 9114  
email: [vicepres@aussi.org](mailto:vicepres@aussi.org)  
Secretary: Lorraine Doyle  
ph (02) 8587 7229 (w); (02) 9876 4218 (h);  
fax (02) 9888 2229  
email: [secretary@aussi.org](mailto:secretary@aussi.org)  
Treasurer: Penny Whitten  
ph (02) 6241 4289  
email: [treasurer@aussi.org](mailto:treasurer@aussi.org)  
Membership secretary: Michael Wyatt  
email: [memsec@aussi.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:vicbranch@aussi.org)  
President: Jenny Restarick  
ph/fax (03) 9528 2539 (h)  
email: [jenny.restarick@enquiries.csiro.au](mailto:jenny.restarick@enquiries.csiro.au)  
Vice President: Margaret Findlay  
ph (03) 9277 5549  
email: [findlay@acer.edu.au](mailto:findlay@acer.edu.au)  
Secretary: Jennifer Csorba  
email: [jennifer@tdm.com.au](mailto:jennifer@tdm.com.au)  
Treasurer: Ann Philpott  
ph/fax (03) 9830 0494  
email: [annp@mydesk.net.au](mailto:annp@mydesk.net.au)  
Committee members: E Wood-Ellem,  
J Simkin, M McMaster, J Scorba

### ACT Region Branch

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

### WA contact

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

Website: <http://www.aussi.org>