

SOCIETY OF INDEXERS IN AUSTRALIA

All correspondence regarding The Society of Indexers (England), The Society of Indexers in Australia and the *Newsletter* should be addressed to H. Godfrey Green, 35 Rosedale Road, Glen Iris, Victoria 3146. Phone: 25 3314.

*Absente auxilio perquirimus undique frustra,
Sed nobis ingene indicis auxilium est.*

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER ELEVEN

FREE TO MEMBERS

FEBRUARY, 1975

NEXT MEETING

THE reference library of a big metropolitan newspaper has been likened to "memory" of the organization. The indexing problems faced by such a library are unlike those experienced in any other type of special library. Mr. Keith Sandford, the Chief Librarian in *The Age* Newspaper Reference Library will outline some of these indexing problems at the next meeting of the Society, in the Conference Room of the Library of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, first floor, 368 Swanston Street, Melbourne, on Tuesday, 25th February 1975, beginning at 7.45 p.m. ✓

This follows the interesting explanation of the role of the C.S.I.R.O. in the dissemination of information by Mr. P.H. Dawe, the Chief Librarian of C.S.I.R.O. at the last meeting of the Society in December. His talk forms the supplement to this *Newsletter*. ✓

NEW MEMBER

A CORDIAL WELCOME is extended to Mr. Colin Boreham, the Chief Librarian for Research Registration in the National Library of Australia, Canberra, A.C.T. ✓

THE INDEXER

MEMBERS are again asked to advise me if they are not receiving their copies of *The Indexer* within a reasonable time after publication date in April and October.

To Members in Victoria

You are cordially invited to come and to bring a friend to hear Mr. Sandford, and to share in the discussion, coffee, biscuits and fellowship that follows. Please say you will come.

FILL IN AND RETURN THIS SLIP ON OR BEFORE 18th February, 1975.

Mr. H. Godfrey Green, 35 Rosedale Road, GLEN IRIS, VIC. 3146.

will*
I will not* be attending the meeting of the Society of Indexers in Australia on Tuesday, 25th February, 1975.

will*
I will not* be bringing a guest to this meeting.

(Signed)

* strike word(s) which are not applicable.

"HOW DO I OBTAIN INDEXING WORK?"

A NUMBER of members have asked me this question in recent months, especially those who have completed or who are just completing the correspondence course on the principles of indexing.

Publishers ask me from time to time to submit the name or names of members who have a specialized knowledge of the subject of a forth-coming book. This I can do from the panel of members I maintain arranged in subject order. This is sometimes nullified when I find I have not been supplied with latest telephone number or address.

However, it is recommended that members should make their own approach to publishers, setting out their qualifications, specialized knowledge and interests. Some publishers, of course, still choose to employ their own staff or expect the author to supply the index. But fortunately there are many enlightened publishers now who value the work of the expert freelance.

Many reference books give lists of publishers. One such is 'The Far East and Australasia 1974', 6th edition, a Europa publication, which has a good Australian section. It can be seen in most reference libraries.

Members in Melbourne may be interested to learn that the C.S.I.R.O. requires the help of an indexer with typing ability to assist with the compilation of Australian Science Index. Miss F.B. South can supply further particulars: Telephone 419 1333. ✓

REVIEWER'S BOUQUET

OLFACTION AND TASTE IV - PROCEEDINGS OF THE 4TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM,
D. Schneider (ed), 400 pp. ✓

The reports are supported by a name index which includes even those mentioned in the references, author index, names and addresses of all participants at the Symposium. An extremely detailed subject index is also included which one considers unusual for a text which is not really a reference work but rather a collection of papers.

THE ROLE OF C.S.I.R.O. IN THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

NOTES on a talk by Mr. P.H. Dawe, Chief Librarian of C.S.I.R.O., to the Society of Indexers in Australia in the R.M.I.T., Council Dining Room on Thursday, 12th December, 1974. ✓

MR. DAWE began by outlining the historical development of C.S.I.R. and its successor, C.S.I.R.O., from the days of the formation in 1916 of the Advisory Council of Science and Industry. C.S.I.R., from its establishment in 1916 until the war years, had been predominantly orientated towards the agricultural sciences, but, following the impetus of the war effort, it moved steadily into the secondary industry field. From its origins, C.S.I.R.O. was structured on a system of co-ordinated decentralization, with an Executive responsible for broad policy matters but with individual Specialist Divisions, geographically dispersed throughout Australia, promoting and developing the specific research activities of the Organization.

The Library system of C.S.I.R.O. was a microcosm of the Organization as a whole, the co-ordination of the system being effected through the through the Central Library and Information Service in East Melbourne.

The founding fathers of C.S.I.R. had been far-sighted enough to include in its Act "the dissemination of scientific and technical information". C.S.I.R.O. did this in a number of ways, and, in particular, through the preparation and publication of a wide variety of publications. Mr. Dawe tabled examples of the scientific journals, the books, technical papers, periodicals, bulletins, brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, and films; its lectures, seminars, conferences, press releases, circulars and house journals, special purpose reports and publications, in particular those publications produced within the Library and Information Service. The last of these included Australian Science Index, C.S.I.R.O. Abstracts, "Scientific and Technical Research Centres in Australia", "Australian Scientific Societies and Professional Associations", "Serial Publications, Monographs and Pamphlets issued by C.S.I.R.O." several substantial bibliographies; C.S.I.R.O. Published Papers; Subject Index 1916/1968; and also spoke of the major catalogue "Scientific Serials in Australian Libraries".

He then went on to speak about the C.S.I.R.O. Index collection and its associated records. This collection is a complete file not only of all the Organization's publications but also that of its officers. The key to this collection until 1968 had been a divided alphabetic catalogue; from 1969, all entries for the C.S.I.R.O. Index had been converted to machine-readable form. In its earlier years, the subject index of the C.S.I.R.O. Index had been essentially an alphabetic-classed catalogue which over the years became increasingly difficult to use. Miss Dunstone, the senior scientific officer responsible for the compilation of the monthly publication C.S.I.R.O. Abstracts until her recent retirement, had, for the purposes of producing the monthly and annual subject indexes, built up a subject authority file on essentially a book index type principle. Meanwhile, the Editor of Australian Science Index, Miss Beth South, was similarly producing a subject authority list for the ✓

purposes of this monthly publication and there was, of course, constant consultation on the development of these indexes.

Based largely on the former, the Central Library and Information Services, as it was then known, began to develop the C.S.I.R.O. Thesaurus, which now numbers some 40,000 terms. Mr. Dawe tabled a copy of the Thesaurus and, in discussing its structure, explained that it was essentially an in-house document subject to considerable amendment and growth as the authority file for the subject description of papers and publications added to the C.S.I.R.O. Index collection. He explained that attempts had been made to obtain as many other thesauri as were available to assist in the generation of new terms and the building of the C.S.I.R.O. Thesaurus.

THE CO-ORDINATE INDEX

MR. DAWE then went on to discuss the concepts of pre- and post-co-ordination of terms, suggesting that perhaps more attention should be given to the principles espoused by such people as Mortimer Taube, who had sought, in the conception of the "uniterm", to allow for the description of a technical article or subject by its discrete "unitary" concepts. ✓

It was argued from this that it should be possible to allow the enquirer to approach a subject from any point of view and ensure that the required citation was retrieved. 'As we all know' Mr. Dawe said, 'there were numerous problems and pitfalls associated with this, perhaps an overly simplistic, method of approach, and that certain refinements such as "links" and "roles" had subsequently been introduced in an attempt to avoid these problems. Nevertheless, it was possible to produce a co-ordinate index even for a book, and the possibility of using such systems of post co-ordination and thus, among other things, lifting the considerable burden of cost and time at the point of indexing, could be considered in appropriate cases as an alternative to the more commonly accepted system of pre co-ordination.'

Returning finally to C.S.I.R.O.'s role in the dissemination of information Mr. Dawe referred to the computer-based selective dissemination of information (S.D.I.) services being provided by the Central Information Service. These were available to non-C.S.I.R.O. as well as C.S.I.R.O. users, and currently included services based on C.A. Condensates (the machine-readable version of Chemical Abstracts), B.I.O.S.I.S. (the machine-readable version of Biological Abstracts), I.N.S.P.E.C. (the machine-readable version of Physics Abstracts), and a number of other either about to be introduced or in the advanced planning stages.

THE PLACE OF THE COMPUTER IN INDEXING

MR. DAWE concluded his talk with a discussion on the place of the computer in indexing and referred to work going on in other parts of the world by such people as Dr. Karen Sparke-Jones, in the U.K., and Dr. Hood Roberts in the U.S.A. He mentioned also the interest of the International Federation for Documentation (F.I.D.) in this area through its Committee "Linguistics in Documentation". ✓ ✓

Reference was also made to the PRECIS system of indexing, a seminar on which had recently been held at the National Library of Australia. It was his view that the machine might very well provide assistance to the indexer, but would never entirely replace "the discerning eye linked to the discriminating brain".

.....