Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI)

ANZSI NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, number 5, June 2005

From the President

Very few indexers in Australia derive a full-time income from our profession—most of us (myself included) supplement our income from indexing with our fees from work in related professions, or from investments or retirement payments, or from other 'day jobs'. So when a successful full-time indexer comments on making a living from indexing I, for one, sit up and take notice.

This was the case recently when I met with the ANZSI Registration Committee, and over dinner our conversation turned to general indexing topics. Our Registration Chairperson, Michael Harrington, made the point that, while potential clients valued the fact that an indexer had been through a peer review process and attained registration, it was just as important to them (and often more important) that the indexer had sound business skills and a professional approach to the business aspects of their dealings.

Michael feels that indexers in business must focus just as much on their business acumen as they do on their indexing skills. If you can't manage your business, says Michael, it doesn't matter how great an indexer you are—the clients just won't be back.

So how do you handle this aspect of indexing? I've compiled a checklist that may help. I should note that these are my thoughts and opinions only; perhaps other members of the Society might like to add their best tips for future Newsletter issues.

Before you begin, get some general background. There are lots of excellent publications, in print and online, about starting a small business. A good starting point is the Australian government-sponsored website, Business Entry Point <www.business.gov.au>. This website provides information on setting up, managing, and expanding your business as well as getting financial assistance, advice and support from various public agencies.

You can find information specifically on the business aspects of indexing, too.

> **… as well as registration, it is just as important to the client that the indexer has sound business skills and a professional approach …**

Glenda Browne and Max McMaster gave excellent presentations on costing indexing services as early as our Marysville Conference in 1995, which are available in the published Proceedings of that Conference[1]. The British Society of Indexers has an entire module in its training package on running an indexing business. While some aspects focus very much on the British situation (taxation etc), the general approach is still applicable.

Our international journal, *The Indexer,* sometimes contains articles on business aspects of indexing, and the American Society of Indexers published a book on running an indexing business a few years ago, which was reviewed in this *Newsletter* in 2002[2].

The British Society of Indexers website contains a range of useful information, from a self-assessment test of your suitability for indexing to advice on how to negotiate contracts. Similarly, the American Society's website provides a sample indexing contract and details in their Frequently Asked Questions section on how to price a job. Our Society, ANZSI, regularly re-visits the question of the business side of indexing through Branch discussions and activities. Recently, for example, the Victorian Branch held one of its regular meetings devoted to the topic.

Once you are ready to apply these business tips to yourself, make sure you have:

- a business structure (business name, ABN number, GST registration if required, etc);
- a marketing plan—how will you let prospective clients know you are available? This can range from telephone book advertising to networking at conferences, or from writing papers on indexing for your local historical society to writing to publishers in your subject specialty. Choose a marketing strategy you feel comfortable with, but be proactive in devising a way to get your face known;
- business cards, letterhead, phone, and email address;

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Deadline for July issue: 24 June
… for August issue: 22 July

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It is *your* newsletter, and we are totally dependent on contributions, both large and small, from members. Please contact the editor if you have any questions about the suitability of items for publication. The editor reserves the right to edit or abridge contributions.

Please send files via email in MS Word Rich Text Format or plain text (ASCII). Do not embed footnotes in Word files.

Next deadline
24 June for the July issue.

Graphics
Image files can be accepted in most common formats. Do not embed images in text files. Camera-ready art and photos can be scanned by the editor. Note that photos need to be clear, sharp and contrasty if they are to copy well in black and white.

Advertising charges
Full page A$175; half page A$90; quarter page A$35; full year 10 for the price of 8.

Membership charges
A$55 per year, A$28 half year (July to Dec). Subscriptions to the Newsletter: $40 p.a.

The Indexer
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Indexers Available
<www.aussi.org/IndexersAvailable>

Would *you* like to edit your

ANZSI NEWSLETTER

???

Peter Judge will be away for 4 weeks at the end of August and unable to produce the September issue. A volunteer (or volunteers) is/are needed to take over just for this month—receiving the copy, editing and laying it out, getting it printed and then mailing it. Peter will provide templates and a set of mailing labels and the Treasurer will give you a cheque for the post. How about it? Sounds fun? Contact Peter by phone at (02) 6296 6211 or email <newsletter@aussi.org>.

News and coming events

ACT Region Branch activities

Wednesday, 22 June, 5.30–7.30 pm. 'A Day in the Life of a Back-of-Book Indexer'—a panel session with Jean Norman, Michael Harrington and Barry Howarth, in the Friends' Room of the National Library of Australia.

Edyth Binkowski, Secretary

Victorian Branch: button up your overcoat …

Wednesday, 8 June, 6.00 for 6.30 pm. Exhibition of buttons collected over a period of 20 years by a retired school teacher and craftsperson who goes by the unofficial name of Sally Buttons. The venue is ACER, 19 Prospect Hill Rd, Camberwell, and there were lots more details in the two previous newsletters.

Sally will join us for dinner at a nearby restaurant after the meeting, and we would love to have your company also. We will ask for a $5 donation in aid of Camberwell North Disabled Scouts Troop. RSVP to:

Jenny Restarick, phone (03) 9528 2539, email <cliffres@connexus.net.au>.

(Yes, we're running this notice yet again, but the event is getting ever closer! There may just be time for you to see this once more...)

Jenny Restarick, Vice President

Indexing courses in New Zealand

The New Zealand branch of ANZSI is seeking expressions of interest for a variety of indexing courses to be run 30 August – 2 September 2005 by Max McMaster. Venues are likely to be in Auckland, Hamilton and Nelson. The following courses are being suggested:

- Introductory Back-of-Book Indexing;
- Introductory Historical/Genealogical Indexing;
- Advanced Back-of-Book Indexing (an Introductory Indexing course or equivalent experience is a pre-requisite);
- Advanced Back-of-Book Indexing—with an emphasis on genealogy/history sources (an Introductory Indexing course or equivalent experience is a pre-requisite);
- Newspaper & Magazine Indexing;
- Database & Image Indexing.

Which courses will run and where will depend on the levels of interest shown. The call for interest has been widely distributed and is also available on the ANZSI website.

For further information and/or to register interest please contact either Kathryn Mercer: <catchwords@clear.net.nz>, phone 07-823-4560, or David Mitchell: <david.mitchell@mapua.gen.nz>. The deadline for registering interest is 10 June.

(from the President, continued from page 1)

- An entry in *Indexers Available*
- A standard 'contract' letter confirming what you have agreed to do for the client, what you charge, what and when you will deliver, and how you expect to be paid;
- an invoice form to keep your invoices consistent and recognisable as your own;
- a standard letter in the event that you need to follow up outstanding payment (it happens to all of us).

You might also want to consider:

- a business entry in the phone book, especially if your business name differs from your personal name;
- an answering machine, answering service or call diversion service so you can be contacted;
- your own website (check out the sites of some of our members, e.g. www.indexat.com.au, www.masterindexing.com, www.webindexing.biz);
- and of course, some accounting software to keep the tax man happy (the ATO is so anxious for your custom they produce small business software which they distribute for free. It might help you through that transition period of coping with BAS before investing in a commercial package. Check details on Business Entry Point or the Tax Office website.)

This will help you acquire the professional approach your clients will seek. The rest, like your indexing skills, comes with practice and experience.

Lynn Farkas, President

[1] Max McMaster, ed. *Indexers: partners in publishing.* Proceedings of the first international conference, Friday, 31 March to Sunday, 2 April, 1995, Marysville, Victoria, Australia. Australian Society of Indexers, 1995. ISBN 0646250507.

[2] Janet Perlman, ed. *Running an indexing business.* Medford, NJ : Information Today in association with the American Society of Indexers, 2001. ISBN 1-57387-112-5 list price US$31.25).

News from the Society of Indexers, May 2005

Conference 2005

The Society's Conference will take place from 8–10 July 2005 at the University of Exeter, around the theme of *Connections: Working in the Present – Learning from the Past.* This year's programme of lectures, workshops and other sessions focuses on problems in practical indexing with topics including gardening, defence, images and databases. This is always an enjoyable and useful gathering, with opportunities for learning, socialising and networking, located this year in a glorious Devon setting with fine views. Further details are available from the Society's office and website (see below).

The Indexer

The current issue of the international journal *The Indexer*, under its new editor Maureen MacGlashan, contains articles on indexing in a wide variety of fields. These include the construction of a specialized lexicon to examine the attitudes of the Roman upper classes to the emergence of the Roman Empire, producing the online catalogue for the Scottish Screen Archive, creating the indexes for world atlases and the development of a controlled vocabulary in law indexing.

The journal also remembers Bernard Levin with some of his contributions to *The Indexer* and his correspondence with its former editor Hazel Bell, as well as extracts from his long correspondence with his own indexer Oula Jones. He was a great champion of indexers and indexing and wrote eloquently on the subject.

Betty Moys Prize

The Betty Moys Prize for an outstanding newly-accredited indexer will be presented at the Exeter conference. This year the Prize will be awarded jointly to three new indexers, reflecting the quality of newly-qualified entrants to the profession. Betty Moys was well-known as a distinguished indexer and former Treasurer of the Society of Indexers who always took a particular interest in the encouragement and support of new indexers.

Workshops in 2005 now include online

The Society is now introducing its first online workshop for trainees at all levels, to run between 1 August and 10 October 2005. This will enable trainees anywhere in the world to take part in indexing training.

The workshops currently on offer are:

7 July. *Names* (half-day). Exeter. Book by 7 June.

8 July. *Towards Professional Indexing.* Exeter. Book by 8 June.

11 July. *Embedded Indexing.* Exeter. Book by 8 June.

1 Aug.–10 Oct. *Getting to Grips with the Index.* Online.

6 Oct. *Beginners.* London. Book by 6 Sept.

12 Oct. *Beginners.* Leeds. Book by 12 Sept.

2 Nov. *Editing the Index (half-day).* London. Book by 2 Oct.

8 Nov. *Process of Indexing.* Bristol. Book by 8 Oct.

15 Nov. *Building a New Business.* London. Book by 15 Oct.

16 Nov. *Towards Professional Indexing.* London. Book by 16 Oct.

1 Dec. *The User-friendly Index (half-day).* London. Book by 1 Nov.

Full-day workshops for beginners cost £105 (£75 for members of the Society of Indexers, SI, and the Society for Editors and Proofreaders, SfEP); more advanced workshops cost £120 (£90 for members of SI and SfEP). Half-day workshops cost £70 (£50 for members of SI and SfEP).

Specialised and online workshops are priced individually. Please check the detailed information on each workshop (on the website at <www.indexers.org.uk>) for confirmation of the price.

For further information and bookings, contact:

Society of Indexers
Blades Enterprise Centre
John Street, SHEFFIELD S2 4 SU
ENGLAND
<www.indexers.org.uk>

From the literature and other thoughts

Offpress, August 2004

Justin Radomyski reports on a talk by Col Bruce, manager of Print on Demand at the University of Queensland (p. 3, 2). Students select a digital manuscript, pay for it, and send it to print on a digital printer with binding as requested. It takes 6 minutes and costs about $30 for an average-sized textbook.

For a self-publisher a print-ready PDF version of the manuscript is supplied, and 25 perfect-bound books could cost less than $400. The bookshop is currently producing 300 to 500 books each day, with between 40 and 70 pages each. This sounds as if they are doing more lecture-note-type material than textbooks.

Offpress, October 2004

Robert Doolan (pp. 1–2) writes on 'Why it's important to edit the small stuff', saying that people rarely use an editor [or even seek a second opinion] on short pieces of writing. I work in a school canteen with an externally created sign saying that you need a fire extinguisher when using a certain 'compliance', and Westmead Hospital has a sign directing people to the Millenium Institute.

Caval has recently run a conference with the theme 'Integrating electronic plagiarism into academic curricula'. The website <www.caval.edu.au/prs/eprod/pd/> notes that the conference 'focused on the impact of the detection systems into academic programs', but surely this is not what the title says.

IASC/SCAD Bulletin, v.28 n.1 Spring 2005

Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada/Société canadienne pour l'analyse de documents (IASC/SCAD) is a bit of a mouthful, and the Canadian indexing society is therefore considering a name change to something snappier (pp. 1–2). Two suggestions are 'Index Canada' (which works in French and English) and 'Indexers Canada Indexeurs'.

Cheryl Lemmens (pp. 2–3) has written on the revitalisation of the ASI Web Indexing SIG at <www.web-indexing.org> and its associated mailing list <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/web-indexing>.

Copper Harding gives good advice on indexing Japanese names (pp. 4–5). As with Chinese names, traditional names have surname first, while some modern names use 'Western style' and need to be inverted. There are only about 100 common family names, which makes it easier to distinguish parts of names. Some family names are listed at <http://kanjidict.stc.cx/japnames.php> and <www.rootsweb.com/~jpnwgw/Names.html>.

Online Currents v.20 n.4 May 2005

Dianne Tillotson has written about online dictionaries (pp. 2–4). Websites mentioned include AskOxford, which provides a free resource that searches the *Compact Oxford English Dictionary* <www.askoxford.com>, the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* <http://dictionary.cambridge.org> and *Merriam-Webster Online* <www.m-w.com> as well as *OneLook Dictionary Search* which is a search engine that covers free dictionaries on the web <www.onelook.com>.

Liz Edols has written on 'Web page savers' for organising web resources (pp. 7–10), I wrote a report on the ANZSI conference (pp. 13–14, 19–20) and Jon Jermey has written reviews of some programs that allow you to control another computer by remote control (pp. 23–25). (These are the programs used by help desk staff to work on client's computers.)

The Sydney Morning Herald, 16–17 April 2005, News Review, p. 44

Three Massachusetts Institute of Technology students wrote a computer program to generate research papers with nonsensical text, charts and diagrams. One of their papers, titled 'Rooter: a methodology for the typical unification of access points and redundancy' was accepted for presentation at a scientific conference.

SIdelights

I've been catching up on old issues of SIdelights, and promised to share them with you last month but space didn't permit. Here they are now.

Winter 2003

Winter 2003 issue notes in 'Council digest' on p. 3 the progress of an organizational review. One of the issues is the progression from being largely volunteer-run to having paid administrative services.

This issue also has an ad for a research co-ordinator (p. 16), whose role is to identify research projects involved with indexing and liaise with project controllers, to liaise with research institutions and funding providers where research topics are suggested by the Society, and to keep the membership informed about research initiatives.

Spring 2004

Spring 2004 issue starts with handy hints from Anne McCarthy on hazards in medical indexing (pp. 1–2), including overlapping but not identical terms (e.g. hereditary/familial; cancer/carcinoma), words used differently by the general public and health professionals (e.g. abortion) and adjectives as entry words (e.g. human papillomavirus; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease).

Society news in this issue (p. 3) notes an enquiry from the Scottish Parliament about the availability of indexers, and says that SI has joined the affiliate programs of four online retailers—they get a commission for all links from their site that result in sales. (A later report about SIdeline discussions (p. 4) notes that these programs 'did not meet with everybody's agreement'.) They also published the results of a survey of the age at which indexers' first index was published. They conclude 'Young people are definitely attracted to indexing,

with nearly 60% of respondents publishing their first index by the time they are 40, and only 17% after the age of 50'.

Britain seems to have a few small indexing companies—one successful one is Merrall-Ross International. Lisa Virgo, from Merrall-Ross International, won the Wheatley medal for 2003 (p. 7) while Jan Ross was commended for indexes to two books. Jan has previously won the medal, in 1993 and 1997. At the SI conference in Cheltenham I had an interesting talk with Richard Raper on the perils and pleasures of running an indexing business with a number of employees. Our latest ANZSI medal winner, Tordis Flath from New Zealand, started her indexing career working for Richard in England.

Summer 2004

June Morrison addresses some problems in biological sciences indexing (pp. 1–3), starting with issues to do with Latin and common names in headings and subdivisions. Her list of environmental terms indicates a different wetland environment to our own, with terms including: bogs, fens, mires, saltings and water-meadows.

Terry Miller (p. 3), membership secretary of SI in the early 1960s, probably had one of the most unusual introductions to indexing. He reminisces that he was hospitalised at the same time as Norman Knight: 'a solitary but not insular man; direct but most proper…Within minutes of our meeting he had introduced me to the 'wonders' of indexing, and in the few days before we both left hospital I was well and truly hooked.'

Society news (p. 4) notes that the Finance Committee is revising the honorarium system, with a view to making it simpler and more transparent. The Wheatley Medal has been temporarily suspended following withdrawal of support from CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals). SI marketing has been targeting academic authors, with leaflets being distributed through university libraries, and advertising being done at conferences. SI also produces its own Christmas cards.

Autumn 2004

Philip Hensher's novel about an indexer, *The Fit*, has increased public understanding about indexers and indexing (p. 3). The need for greater understanding is highlighted by Germaine Greer's comment that we no longer need indexers as computers can do it all for us. (Radio 4's *Start the Week*, 5 July 2004). (Despite this area of ignorance, Greer got the third most votes when 100 people were asked to nominate Australia's top ten public intellectuals. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12–13 March 2005. *Spectrum* p. 9)

Society news notes the increase in hours of SI's paid office staff, to enable them to take on some of the work previously done by committee members. The next issue of *The Indexer* will be the first to be edited by Maureen McGlashan, who has taken over from Christine Shuttleworth. Maureen finished her diplomatic career as ambassador to the Holy See. On the way she had to index some tribunal reports, and found a career to carry over into her retirement (p. 5). Frank Merrett is someone else who was kept busy in retirement—he took on the SI Treasurer's position five years ago at the age of 75, and has just retired from the position. (p. 7) Since reading this I heard the news that Frank had died, suddenly and unexpectedly, but peacefully, at home.

Glenda Browne

Looking at connections: indexers and editors

Three members of ANZSI in Queensland attended the 4 May joint meeting with the Queensland branch of the Society of Editors: Margaret Shand from the Gold Coast and Michael Kuter and Moira Brown from Brisbane. Ian Odgers, ANZSI's Queensland contact, was unfortunately unable to attend.

There were about twenty editors at the meeting, all with varied experience in the indexing field. These were working editors who were keen to meet indexers, fellow professionals, with a view to providing work for us. In fact, Margaret Shand finally met the editor to whom she had recently provided an index online (Margaret McDonell) and was rewarded with a copy of the published book.

The meeting was an opportunity to look at the connections between editors and indexers in Queensland and, by exploring the links and practices, work out how we could best support each other professionally. The facilitator for the evening was Margaret McDonell, with on-call 'on-mic' support from Michael Kuter, Robin Bennett (Acting President SocEdsQ) and Jennifer Wright (Past President), all well-known editors and indexers in Brisbane.

There were seven topics put forward for the two professions to consider.

- building our professional links;
- strategies for mutual support;
- promoting our professions;
- regular meeting invitations / ANZSI liaison;
- newsletter contributions;
- accreditation issues / experiences;
- professional ethics concerns.

The point was made early on that when information density is high there is an absolute need for an index—it is simply the easiest way for a reader to find sought-after information. There is currently a Federal government requirement that all of its '50 pages plus' publications must have an index. Can other publishers (state governments, corporations, publishing houses, etc.) be made to think the same way? And can editors help with this necessary change in thinking?

Both professions are often part of an invisible workforce, but editors have seemingly always been better placed to

(continued overleaf)

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promote their skills and push for professional recognition and appreciation. For any headway to be made here more of the people who allocate publication budget monies need to start factoring the cost of an index into the plan at the outset. As a sign of professional awareness, an editor retained for a sizeable publishing project should enquire if an indexer has also been retained (if the project warrants it) and push for this to be changed if the answer is no.

Successful publishing houses understand the importance of a second set of eyes, that of the indexer, looking at the text with a fresh perspective, to the usefulness, accuracy and quality of the book.

If an editor points out to an indexer any issues that they should be aware of as they create the index, the indexer, in turn, can and should point out to the editor any problems that make the preparation of an index difficult, such as inconsistent references to the same person, so that the editor can fix these problems. This mutual support strategy is the natural flow on from editors pushing for an index in all non-fiction publications over 50 pages, and also from indexers promoting themselves and their skills more widely to the publishing community.

As 'infomediaries' in the communication industry, we understand the importance of each other's skills; we just need to promote ourselves more. Perhaps in a short, punchy slogan, we could market ourselves and our specialties to our mutual benefit. (Ideas anyone?) [Suggestion: 'a publication is only as good as its usefulness … it needs to be properly edited and indexed, not just beautifully formatted'].

Indexers need to spend time networking as much as possible. Editors who have an ample supply of work need indexers. The Society of Editors meets on the first Wednesday of each month (except January), at The Coffee Club, Stones Corner for a 6.30 pm start. The cost is $3.00 for members, $5.00 for guests. Speakers from the world of publishing add an informative, stimulating highlight to the evening.

It was a casual and friendly gathering at the cafe on meeting night. Members of ANZSI in Queensland are most welcome to attend any Society of Editors' meetings in Brisbane as a means of networking and improving our professional links in this state. The coming years are full of opportunity for editors and indexers in Queensland.

Kim Manning, Speaker Secretary (SocEdsQ)
Moira Brown (ANZSI) <brown5moira@yahoo.com.au>

Mining the archives: researching a shadowy figure from a variety of sources

A public meeting on 10 May, held by the Victorian Branch of ANZSI

Last month Wendy Dick, a Research Fellow at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), addressed a public meeting organised by ANZSI Victorian Branch. Wendy gave us a most interesting and informative presentation, generating a lively discussion.

Wendy joined the humanities team at ACER in 1995. She is an experienced teacher and educational administrator, and has taught a range of subjects at all levels from Prep to Year 12, including some experience overseas. Outside ACER, Wendy is chair of the council of a girls' college and also chair of the Anglican Diocesan Historical Society. She is currently researching a woman teacher, unionist and activist who lived during the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. Wendy's experiences in 'mining the archives' for information on this 'shadowy figure' formed the basis for her presentation.

The subject of Wendy's research is Miss Ellen Mulcahy, a woman who had worked as a teacher in Victoria in the last quarter of the 19th century, was an ardent trade unionist, and had gone on to become one of the first women to stand as a candidate for a Federal parliamentary seat. At the outset of her talk, Wendy stressed the important role indexes had played in her research into this woman's life, how crucial such secondary sources are when carrying out historical research, and commended indexers for the valuable work that they perform.

Wendy noted that the best place to begin when trying to uncover the details of someone's life is to start with their death. Death notices and obituaries carry valuable biographical details and provide valuable indicators for where to search for further information. In the course of her research into the life of Ellen Mulcahy, Wendy has used shipping records (such as the Assisted Immigrants Index, the Shipping Picture Index, and the Marine Register of Deaths), diaries, private letters, formal correspondence, teacher registers, political records, genealogical databases, newspaper indexes (such as the *Argus* Index), cemetery registers and many others. Wendy reports that the indexes to these resources were extremely valuable but all quite different, and her search proved to be a fascinating game of hide and seek trying to locate these varied resources and following the leads and links to other obscure sources of this historical material.

The Victorian Branch Committee has received many compliments on the evening from those who attended. Not only did they listen to an absorbing talk from an engaging speaker, but they were able to enjoy the customary opportunity to nibble on some 'little cheesy bits' and network over a glass of wine. Our thanks to all for helping to make the evening such a success. In particular, we would like to thank Margaret Findlay for suggesting Wendy as a possible speaker and to express our appreciation to ACER for providing such an accessible and comfortable venue at its Camberwell office.

Karen Gillen, Secretary, Vic. Branch

The Proceedings of the ANZSI Conference, Melbourne, 18–19 March, 2005 will be available in September 2005 for $50.00

Discount price for prepublication orders received by 1 September 2005 is only $40.00

For Australian orders, this price includes GST and postage; for orders outside Australia, add $10.00 for postage

ORDER FORM

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