Conferences

Of the four overseas conferences taking place in 2009, I already know of members who will be attending the South African, American (Portland, Oregon) and UK (York) events. Next week Council will be considering the appointment of representatives to these and the Canadian (Toronto) conference. Whether as an official representative or not, it is interesting to have personal accounts of the experience in visiting colleagues in other countries. In other words, if you intend to go to any of these conferences let the secretary know and, perhaps send the newsletter editor an account, with photographs, of the adventure. And, when you get back to this region, you can mingle with local colleagues with words of wisdom from abroad by attending our own Sydney conference in October.

Education

Members will be aware that the review of the mentoring scheme has taken longer than anticipated. We found that in some cases the process works smoothly and as planned, in others a number of difficulties have appeared. These are aggravated by the comparatively small number and spread of our membership, the relatively small number of experienced indexers and the range of types of indexing work in which members are engaged.

The subject was discussed at the January meeting of Council. There was also consideration of mentoring as it has been developed and coaching which would normally be associated with a defined course of study meeting course guidelines, with a syllabus, defined outcomes, progress reporting and continual guidance.

The discussion led to the conclusion that mentoring needs to be reviewed in the context of the whole system of education and training for indexing. Thus it was resolved to form an Education Policy committee to be chaired by Michael Ramsden. Michael is in the process of compiling terms of reference for this committee.

I am interested in this approach having written over the years on the need to move the education of indexers from the short courses and self-education which depends on a kind of osmosis, to a more formalised scheme. Sometime in the early 1980s Jean Hagger and I approached the head of RMIT's newly-created Editing and Publishing course to suggest the establishment of indexing, either as a part of the course or as a separate course. The worthy publisher who filled the role looked at us blankly and showed an almost total unawareness of indexing as part of the publishing process. Since then, and for the last ten or so years, the course has included a session or two on indexing intended to make editors aware of what they should expect in their dealings with indexers.

Grants

Since William Frederick Poole began his pioneering work as an indexer in 1882 there have been many projects large and small. These days there is a misconception that all the information which is available in digital form is already searchable so does not need to be indexed. We all know the frustrations of using keyword searching on any material which does not have a very strictly controlled vocabulary. Even a very experienced searcher using all the tricks of the trade will often end up with an unmanageable number of hits. If the information is to be accessible it must be indexed. Without the investment of effort and usually money, it is virtually locked up. So, how to persuade granting bodies that indexing projects are suitable targets for funding?

A well-known case of such a worthy cause is the Argus index project, the results of which are used by academics, writers, reference librarians, historians, students and others.

This project has been going through lean times

(continued at foot of page 2)
ACT Region Branch
Thesaurus Development Workshop
Monday 30 March 2009

ACT Region Branch is pleased to offer a Thesaurus Development Workshop for those involved in developing thesauri and taxonomies for intranets, websites or information services. The presenter, Lynn Farkas, is an experienced thesaurus developer and indexer who will take you through the theory and practice of thesaurus work.

The workshop covers basic terminology, thesaurus components and structure, rules and standards for thesaurus construction, an afternoon of practice in developing a thesaurus. The emphasis is on practical hands-on work in small teams, with plenty of time for discussion and questions. A workbook will be provided. Morning and afternoon tea are provided, but participants are responsible for their own lunch (the National Museum has a cafeteria).

**Date:** Monday 30 March 2009, from 9.15 am to 4.30 pm.

**Venue:** Training Room, National Museum of Australia Annex, Lawson Cres., Canberra, ACT.

**Cost:** ANZSI and affiliated society members $190.00; nonmembers $250.00.

**Contact person:** Lynn Farkas, ph (02) 6286 4818 or email <lynn.farkas@webone.com.au>.

**Booking information:** Cancellations will be accepted free of penalty until Thursday 26 March. Cancellations after this time will incur a 50% fee. Invoices will be emailed to government departments or organisations on request. Individuals should email <lynn.farkas@webone.com.au> to confirm their intention to attend by Monday 23 March.

**Registration details:** Please send payment with registration details – name, phone and/or email, organisation (if applicable), society affiliation for discount (ANZSI, Society of Editors, ASTC) – to ANZSI, ACT Region Branch, GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601.

Cheques should be made payable to ‘ANZSI, ACT Region Branch’. Also, please state whether an invoice is required (institutions only) and provide any special details needed on invoices, e.g. organisation’s mailing address or email.

(From the President, concluded)

throughout much of its more than 20-year life. Adequately funded it would have been completed some time ago. However, the project has now reached the 1880s and 1890s, decades of expansion and political activity which have inevitably resulted in more pages to be indexed.

I hesitate to mention other projects that need funding while this one moves too slowly.

John E. Simkin, ANZSI President
Conference Update

The deadline for the Call for Papers (28 February) has come and gone and the Committee is busy finalising the program. At this stage we are anticipating either papers, panels, workshops or Round Table discussions on indexing software, the Parliamentary Library, history of indexing, thesaurus evaluation, practical indexing issues, cookbook indexing (always popular!), indexing personal names, indexing indigenous names and legal indexing issues. The 2009 ANZSI AGM will be held during the conference.

An initial draft program will be posted online by early March together with the registration form. The venue for both the workshops and the conference will be the Citigate Central Sydney – close to Chinatown and Darling Harbour and to all public transport.

All conference details will be posted on the ANZSI website at <www.anzsi.org/site/2009_conference.asp>, so check back regularly for updates.

The Committee is also pondering whether to organise a day (or half day) trip or tour on the Sunday (18 October) after the conference. It gives us all (international guests, interstate delegates and NSW members whom we don’t see very often) an opportunity to socialise without having to rush off to a session etc. I welcome any feedback on this idea and any suggestions for a tour or visit. Please email me at <conference@anzsi.org> with your thoughts.

Madeleine Davis
Conference Convenor

Branch activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date &amp; time</th>
<th>Organiser</th>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10 March 9.00–4.45 pm</td>
<td>Victorian Branch</td>
<td>Basic Book Indexing Part 1 – full day course</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone</td>
<td>Details on &lt;www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=61&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 11 March 9.00–4.45 pm</td>
<td>Victorian Branch</td>
<td>Basic Book Indexing Part 2 – full day course</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone</td>
<td>Details on &lt;www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=62&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 12 March 9.00–12.30 pm</td>
<td>Victorian Branch</td>
<td>Legal Indexing half day course</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone</td>
<td>Details on &lt;www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=63&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 12 March 1.30–5.00 pm</td>
<td>Victorian Branch</td>
<td>Annual Report Indexing – half day course</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone</td>
<td>Details on &lt;www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=64&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 13 March 9.00–12.30 pm</td>
<td>Victorian Branch</td>
<td>Database Indexing – half day course</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone</td>
<td>Details on &lt;www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=65&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 13 March 1.30–5.00 pm</td>
<td>Victorian Branch</td>
<td>Journal Indexing – half day course</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE Chadstone</td>
<td>Details on &lt;www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=66&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 14 March 9.30–4.00 pm</td>
<td>NSW Branch</td>
<td>Basic book indexing Part 1</td>
<td>Thomson Legal &amp; Regulatory, 100 Harris Street, Pyrmont, Sydney</td>
<td>Enquiries to Glenda Browne: +61 2 4739 8199 or <a href="mailto:webindexing@optusnet.com.au">webindexing@optusnet.com.au</a> Details on p. 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 21 March 9.30–4.00 pm</td>
<td>NSW Branch</td>
<td>Basic book indexing Part 2</td>
<td>Thomson Legal &amp; Regulatory, 100 Harris Street, Pyrmont, Sydney</td>
<td>Enquiries to Glenda Browne: +61 2 4739 8199 or <a href="mailto:webindexing@optusnet.com.au">webindexing@optusnet.com.au</a> Details on p. 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 21 April</td>
<td>Queensland Branch</td>
<td>General meeting</td>
<td>Toowong Library, 9 Sherwood Road, Toowong, Brisbane</td>
<td>Moira Brown <a href="mailto:brownsmoira@yahoo.com.au">brownsmoira@yahoo.com.au</a> Ph +61 7 3893 1252 or 0416 097 629</td>
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 Queensland Branch

The first meeting of 2009 on Tuesday 17 February at the Toowong Library Meeting Room, saw two new attendees from the publishing fraternity. It was a delight to meet new faces with new ideas.

Wendy Sargeant, editor, poet, speaker, writer and mentor, was our guest speaker for the evening. Wendy had us enthralled with her grasp of the detail required to write her newly published, very intriguing historical novel called As the Eagle Flies the King. Book 1 in her Redemption Coming series. Wendy McNeice (her pseudonym) has written a book aimed at teenagers, which adults too cannot put down.

From left: Mei Yen Chua, Franz Pinz, Beryl Macdonald, Moira Brown, Guest Speaker Wendy Sargeant

Tips and hints: tackling indexer’s block

You are having trouble progressing an index, what do you do?
Give up! — Well that is one alternative! However, obvious answers involve food such as chocolate, coffee, wine, or cake. Other answers involve sudden urges to do things you don’t normally like doing such as cleaning the house, pulling weeds or tidying your desk. Useful answers involve exercise. Get up and stretch or go for a walk. Sometimes it is useful to recognise you are not progressing and take a deliberate break, or even give it up for the day. The focus on other activities can help you get over Indexer’s block, but what are some more practical alternatives?

Index a section that is ‘easier’ — Who said you had to start indexing at page one and progress page after page to the end. If a particular chapter looks ‘easier’ to index do that first. Sometimes it is useful to leave the introductory chapters until you finish the rest as you can then see what ideas need indexing.

Index the illustrations — Go through the text and index the illustrations. This helps you to remember to have all the page numbers in bold (or italics).

Create a sense of achievement — Convince yourself you are progressing by ticking off sections as you go. This could be when you complete a set number of pages or finish a chapter, or have edited entries under a particular letter.

Set a daily number of pages — Set yourself a target of X pages each day to finish the job in good time. As you learn your indexing rate for the project, translate this into indexing time required each day. Include weekends or not according to your preference. I have found this helps me plan my days and I’m then able to enjoy a social outing, for example, without feeling guilty.

Based in the Holy Lands and today’s trouble spots like Iraq, Wendy has minutely researched her background to the delight of an indexer’s heart. If only all authors could be so dedicated to their craft.

As we indexes prise the minute detail from each book which we index so as to present it to the reader on behalf of the author, so too did Wendy McNeice minutely extract historical detail from numerous primary sources, to better educate her young audience. How fascinating to be able to bring the drama of ancient Israelites, Persians, Bedouins and Marsh Arabs to life on a page.

Book 2 of the Redemption Coming series is in the making and we all wish Wendy McNeice best of luck with her next creation. (Anyone interested in this novel may contact the President Moira Brown at her email).

Queensland Branch workshops and indexing training sessions emails will be sent separately as soon as details are arranged; also see Qld Branch page on ANZSI website for details. Next Branch General meeting will be Tuesday 21 April 2009 at 7pm Toowong Library Meeting Room.

Moira Brown, President, Queensland Branch
New Zealand Branch

The branch plans to send book publishers in New Zealand a list of members available for indexing work, with details of their specialities. The document will also point publishers to ‘Indexers Available’ on the ANZSI website, encouraging them to bookmark it, but we hope a file they can keep on their computers or a printout in their filing cabinets will be useful too.

So, when branch members receive an email from our secretary, please reply saying whether you are available for freelance work and wish to be on the list, give your specialities, and check your contact details.

Victorian Branch: The Melbourne Printing Museum

Victorian Branch members were recently treated to a fascinating tour of this museum, guided by honorary curator Michael Isaachsen. Michael’s purchase of a small piece of printing machinery, at the tender age of nine, was the spark that started his lifelong love affair with printing. His in-depth knowledge and passion for the trade are quite extraordinary, resulting in a riveting two hour walk through the history of printing.

Beginning with hand composition, Michael explained the origins of ‘upper case’ and ‘lower case’. Quite simply, these terms refer to the positioning of the cases in which the individual letters are stored. Capital letters being used less frequently, are kept in the upper case on a shelf above the compositor's desk, while the lower case containing the small letters, is positioned on the compositor’s desk itself. We also learnt the recipe for ‘printer’s pie’ – simply knock a case over to create a monumental stack of mixed-up letters!

These days we tend to use the terms ‘font’ and ‘typeface’ interchangeably, but originally ‘font’ referred to the hardware used in printing process while ‘typeface’ referred to the design of the letters. We all handled the museum’s considerable collection of fonts and, armed with the knowledge of their lead and other nasty contents, handwashing was the first activity on conclusion of the tour.

Of the various pieces of printing equipment on display, perhaps the most popular was the working Victorian-era linotype machine. While it might seem obvious, not all of us were aware that the word ‘linotype’ began as ‘line o’ type’. Michael demonstrated this by typing text on the keyboard to produce a ‘matrice’, which is a mould for the letters that ultimately form an assembled line of type. He then showed us a casting machine, which he used to cast the assembled line or ‘slug’ into type metal. Printing has its hazards – we all stood well back from the open tub of bubbling molten lead attached to the machine. Equally fascinating, we stood behind the machine to watch and listen to the tingling sound as the machine returned the matrices to their various positions in the machine’s type magazine.

The museum will soon have its own Facebook page, but in the meantime you can visit its jam-packed website at <www.printingmuseums.com/museum/>.

Nikki Davis
Small claims courts

There was some discussion on Index-L recently about non-payment for indexing work. Some correspondents were daunted by the cost of court judgements and the small chance of collecting based on them. But one indexer had successful cases in the Small Claims Court. One case cost her US$50 and resulted in payment a few years later when the client's house was sold. The payment was triple that originally owed because of an interest clause in the contract (well worth considering).

This example was from the US, but we also have small claims courts in Australia, <www.abio.org.au/ABIOWeb/ABIOWebSite.nsf/35f1d54074f36f08ca256bce00094be3/77d81e601100bb8eca256d56004279d9?OpenDocument>. I have used them to fight for return of a rental bond (partially successful) and for return of a deposit for guttering that was delivered but not installed for over a month (successful).

The Arts Law Centre has information about debt recovery using letters of demand, <www.artslaw.com.au/LegalInformation/DebtRecovery/default.asp>. This URL and other practical information are in the Members area of the ANZSI website at <www.anzsi.org/site/employment.asp>.

Liability and disclaimers

I wrote in the last issue about the legal duty of care. Thanks to Maureen MacGlashan for reminding me about Bella Weinberg's article on 'Disclaimers in indexes and databases' (The Indexer vol. 25 no. 2 October 2006 pp.114–18).

Info-Entrepreneur tip of the month

Mary Ellen Bates writes a monthly emailed service called 'Info-entrepreneur tip of the month.' In November 2008 the topic was 'Thoughts on Negotiation'. You can subscribe to the service and see back issues of tips at <www.batesinfo.com/ib-tip.html>.

In this tip she discusses a book called 'Ask For It: how women can use the power of negotiation to get what they really want', and says that 'it has plenty of useful advice for both women and men about bulking up your negotiation muscles'. Ideas include:

- Identifying your bargaining strengths from the point of view of the other person. Find out the most important thing that your service is offering them.
- Aim for more and you'll get more. Bates says that if you never find resistance to your proposed budgets you 'haven't found the high end of your market'.

Social networking for indexers

The best networking for self-promotion that I know of for indexers is meeting people face-to-face. ANZSI seminars, conferences and committee meetings are important because much indexing work is passed on between experienced indexers. Meetings of other professionals, including editors and information architects, are important because they are often the employers of indexers, and many people would rather give a job to someone they have met than to a stranger.

On the web, the best place to hang out your shingle is Indexers Available on the ANZSI website. Other useful web venues parallel the places to go in real life – meetings of indexers, and meetings of related professionals. These include all of the indexing mailing lists, as well as the Indexers Network on Ning discussed last month.

What about more general networking sites? I am on Linked In, and often accept invitations to link, and sometimes make them. But I don't pursue it as a source of contacts, and I don't think employers of indexers are doing so either. I haven't had any work through it.

Many people and organisations are using Facebook to give themselves an online presence, but, again, it is hard to picture work flowing from this source. Nonetheless, a quick search for 'indexing' at <www.facebook.com> found a range of groups with 'indexing' in the Description. A few had some relevance, especially in specialised areas such as family history indexing. Others had nothing to do with us, e.g. 'Computer Scienceish Type Persons Against One-Indexing' (it currently has one member, and no content). I had to browse through over 90 groups until I came to 'We love Thesaurus for Graphic Materials' (an appreciation group for the infamous controlled vocabulary), <www.loc.gov/rt/print/tgm1/>, and then the American Society for Indexing (a closed group). Once you get into the 100s, there are quite a few links for individual indexers, in which the search term had matched the Job field. A search for 'indexers' brings many fewer hits and some different ones, including plain old 'Indexers', and 'Indexers for Index (Washington)' – the town that was saved through community donations.

What SKY can't do

Recently there was a discussion on the SKY Index mailing list about what SKY can and can't help with. Judi noted: 'One thing that SKY cannot do is fire up the woodstove and warm up my office and the rest of the house. Yesterday I didn't bother to light the woodstove ... but by the end of the day the house was chilly. This morning I kept lying in bed wishing that SKY could light the woodstove and get my office warm. Major shortcoming, Kamm, what can we do? :) :)'

To which Donna replied: 'Judi that is a shortcoming common to all indexing software ... no more little white cards and shoeboxes to light the fire with. :-('}

Glenda Browne
NSW Branch: Introduction to book indexing course

NSW Branch will hold a basic book indexing training course run by Glenda Browne over two days on Saturday, 14 March and Saturday, 21 March, from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm, with a half-hour lunch break. It will be held at Thomson Legal & Regulatory, 100 Harris Street, Pyrmont, Sydney. Parking is available onsite if you provide your registration number in advance. The building is near the John's Square tram station and bus stops on Harris Street. Lunch and morning and afternoon tea are included in the cost, and a workbook will be provided.

Course description:
This is a two day introduction to the principles of book indexing. It includes:

- Useful references
- Indexing context (working with editors)
- Indexing processes (reading, highlighting, indexing, editing)
- Approaches to project planning, analysis of text, selection of indexable concepts, and indexing to the appropriate length
- Principles of indexing, including the wording of entries, and creation of cross-references
- Types of entries (subjects and names), elements of entries (headings, subheadings, locators)
- Names – special issues in the indexing of people, places, and organisations
- Alphabetical order, and other filing conventions
- Style of entries
- Editing and evaluating entries
- Indexing software – a brief introduction.

The course is presented using lecture format, class discussions and exercises, and take-home exercises. Students receive a substantial workbook. At the end of this course you will be able to index a straightforward document. Most people find they need more practice before becoming professional indexers. The course includes discussions about the next steps to take, and hints on finding work.

Payment in advance is required: $565 for ANZSI members, $600 for nonmembers (no GST involved). There is a 40% discount for travellers requiring an overnight stay. Half year ANZSI membership is available for $35 – you will have to pay the membership fee separately to the ANZSI Treasurer (details at <www.aussi.org/membership/index.html>).

Course enquiries to Glenda Browne on +61 2 4739 8199 or <webindexing@optusnet.com.au>. Your venue and parking enquiries to Lorraine Doyle on +61 2 8587 7229 or <Lorraine.Doyle@thomson.com> after 28 February.

Bookings and payments to Sue Flaxman: +61 2 4861 3589 or 0423 197 044. Payment can be made by cheque to ANZSI NSW or by direct deposit to account no. 2640 1017 0440 at the Commonwealth Bank, Blaxland Branch – BSB 062-640. Applicants should ask for their name and ‘ANZSI COURSE’ to be put as the reference number (if the bank won’t do this, just put a 4-digit number and let us know what it is. This allows us to track the deposits). Cheques should be posted to Sue Flaxman at 4 Loris St, East Bowral NSW 2576.

Glenda Browne