

# ANZSI Newsletter

 Newsletter of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers Inc.  
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## ANZSI News

### The 2013 ANZSI Conference in New Zealand – 'Intrepid indexing: indexing without boundaries'



A group of over 70 intrepid people interested in indexing set out on a three-day voyage to explore all aspects of indexing. The voyage was led by Jan Wright with her keynote paper on intrepid indexing. Various excursions explored ebooks and EPUB3 indexes. Publishers, editors and typesetters were included in discussions on these aspects of book production. Excursions into database and electronic indexing explored *Index New Zealand*, archives of Samoa and Niue, as well as Indigenous collections.

Several excursions explored Asian and Māori names as well as Japanese indexing. There were excursions into the ethics of indexing, running an indexing business and plenty of tips and hints on how to use the various indexing software packages and how to prepare for accreditation, as well as how to cope with numbers in your index and exploring the metatopic. You could also learn how to index military histories, mystery fiction and a thesis on creative writing.

There were opportunities to take non-indexing excursions with an afternoon tour focusing on *Lord of the Rings* filming sites and a visit to Weta Cave where all the special effects were done. Dinner at the Roxy Cinema provided an opportunity to dust off 1920s clothing and to enjoy the theatre sports type entertainment followed by a seemingly never-ending flow of dishes piled high with tasty food.

The voyage concluded with a presentation on indexing without boundaries, the other part of the Conference title. This focused on visual indexes and how these can cope in the new world of user interfaces where linked magazines and books are being read on tablets and apps are presenting books, such as the *Oxford Dictionary of English* and simple databases, in very different and accessible ways.

Contrary to popular perception, Wellington is not always windy. In fact the sunny days in the low 20s were a very welcome relief from the record run of days in the 30s Melbourne was going for when I left.

Many of the papers, presentations and summaries of these excursions are already up on the website at <http://www.anzsi.org/site/2013Confpap.asp>. The rest will be added as they become available.

The leaders of this intrepid voyage were the organising committee of Tordis Flath, Elizabeth Fisher, Jill Gallop and Meredith Thatcher, with assistance from nearly all the members of the New Zealand Branch, who came together to assist in making sure the Conference ran smoothly and we were all made to feel very welcome. A VERY BIG THANK YOU to you all.

### Write, Edit, Index

This is the theme of the 2015 Conference to be held in Canberra, 6–9 May 2015, and jointly hosted by the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) and ANZSI. Lock these dates in for the next voyage into all aspects of indexing.

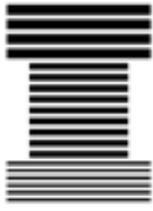
### ALIA ebook and elending

ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association) held a think tank at the Information Online 2013 Conference in Brisbane on ebooks and elending. They prepared an issues paper <http://www.alia.org.au/advocacy/Ebooks.and.Elending.Issues.Paper.v4.130107.pdf>. ANZSI Council Executive asked Glenda Browne for assistance to prepare a submission. This was prepared and submitted. ALIA will be adding the submission to their website. For ANZSI members the submission is available at:

[http://www.anzsi.org/site/council\\_mins.asp](http://www.anzsi.org/site/council_mins.asp).

Mary Russell





Australian and New Zealand  
Society of Indexers Inc.

## ANZSI Newsletter

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### About the newsletter

The newsletter is published monthly 11 times a year, with combined issues for January and February. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the society. For details about contributions and editorial matters, refer to the ANZSI website at <www.anzsi.org>.

### Advertising rates

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These are all per issue – the former annual rate has been discontinued.

### ANZSI contact information

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*Carol Dawber and Sandy Liddle were the two lucky people who ANZSI supported to go to the Conference. The downside for them was having to write reports on what they had experienced, but from the happy accounts that follow this wasn't too dreadful a chore ...*

## Carol Dawber's report on the Conference

The motif for this Conference was the Royal Albatross, *Diomedea epomophora*, whose giant three-metre wingspan lets them cross the southern oceans and soar the world without boundaries. We New Zealanders know the albatross as *toroa* and their only mainland breeding colony in this country is just across the harbour from where I live in Dunedin, one of our southernmost cities. For me therefore the motif had a special resonance, not least because like so many indexers I work alone and seldom have the opportunity to interface across geographical and cultural boundaries. It was inspirational to do so.

Jan Wright's opening address inspired on many levels. She used well-chosen examples of a sailing ship, an aircraft carrier and a spaceship, each called *Intrepid*, to emphasise the bold and adaptable yet logical and disciplined nature of the craft of indexing. She set the scene for the Conference by referring to paper as another interface, and carried on the voyaging and adventuring metaphor by discussing the potential of online navigation tools and information retrieval systems and the necessity for indexers to upskill and move forward. She made it clear that controlled vocabularies and standardised formats are essential to online indexing strategies, that the index has moved on from being useful to being essential, and that the time has come for indexers to step up and shine.

The theme of birds was carried through by Claire Stent and Trish O'Kane, 'outsiders' to indexing, whose presentation on digital technologies I particularly enjoyed, not least because of their analogy of IT workers as battery hens, barn dwellers or free-range chickens. I was interested in the number and nature of freelancers at the Conference, confirming my suspicions that we Australians and New Zealanders tend to multi-task more than most because our markets are small and our margins slim. Interesting too to realise that the 'number-8 wire' approach ('you can fix almost anything with 8-gauge fencing wire') we New Zealanders take for granted really does define us culturally and as indexers – it was very apparent that many conference attendees are equally comfortable in writing, editing, publishing or marketing roles and that we cut our cloth to suit.

As always, dual sessions make for difficult choices, and although the ill health of two presenters meant some last-minute reprogramming it was pleasing to note that concern for their well-being far outweighed any disappointment or frustration. Birds again – the organisers moved like serene and graceful swans with little sign of what must have been at times frantic paddling beneath the surface.



I chose to attend sessions with a multicultural focus. I was impressed with the work of Takashi Matsuura (*at left*) on Chinese classical poems, and awed by the manual effort involved in building an index with card and paper. Indexing across boundaries took on a new dimension as we discussed the German occupation of Samoa with archivist Uili Fecteau, learned about Japanese, Chinese and Korean names from Lai Lam and Nellie Bess, enjoyed

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*(Report on the Conference, continued from page 1)*

Margaret Pointer's discussion of Niue Island history and were fascinated by Judith Cannon and Jenny Wood's explanation of the careful protocols of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Index.

Frances Lennie's intermediate session on CINDEX was particularly helpful to me. It was good to focus on practical skills for an hour or so – and the pen in my goody bag is beautiful to write with, thanks. Once again the message was clear – upskill and get to grips with the process. Publisher Fergus Barrowman commented during a panel discussion that while we are concentrating on academic issues we should also be leading the technology change, and Glenda Browne and Jan Wright underlined that with their zippy and challenging session on 'The Matrix'. Mary Russell brought the Conference to an end very cleverly by reminding us that visual indexes have been around for a long time and touch-screen technology is simply a natural progression of a familiar process.

For me the highlight of the week was hearing Jan, David Ream and Pilar Wyman describe their pro-active work with

software designers and device manufacturers to ensure that indexes are not only fixed into the equation but also coming out from the backs of books to become critical marketing tools. New Zealand is a long way from the centre of things and we seldom hear directly from those in the front line, so it was exciting to feel included in cutting-edge technology.

Also on a parochial level, it was interesting to see Wellington through the eyes of international visitors and to realise that things we value, such as multiculturalism, bilingualism and stunning scenery, really do matter even if we are still naive about promoting ourselves. It was great to be part of a small, friendly group of highly skilled professionals, and I'm sure I wasn't the only one used to working alone who came home exhausted by the valuable interchange of information and ideas. The Conference was stimulating and challenging and I feel very privileged to have been part of it.

*Nga mihi ki a koutou* – my best regards to you all.

*Carol Dawber*

## Sandy Liddle's report on the Conference

With a Maori welcome and introduction, the first day of the 2013 ANZSI Conference began on a beautiful day in Wellington, New Zealand. The rest of the week was to see the beautiful weather continue.

Jan Wright's *Intrepid indexing: from the sea to the stars* presentation was a fabulous way to begin the Conference. Jan spoke about indexers being on a voyage of change and that to survive the change we need to ensure we are one step ahead. We therefore need to keep on top of new technology and tools and place ourselves in a position to provide input and act as advisers and educators to technology makers and publishers. Twitter is a valuable information tool for indexers to stay informed and keep up to date with current trends as well as opening up contact with publishers and others. Jan contends that it is unusual these days for indexers to just be undertaking simple back-of-the book projects. We therefore need to be 'brave' and adaptable and ready to take on the challenge of indexing in the new age. One piece of advice from Jan that rings true is to ask other indexers for advice and input. They may have already had to cross the bridge you are approaching. I would be remiss if I didn't use these great quotes from Jan:

'Go boldly where no indexer has gone before' and 'Be intrepid – the ship is sailing now and we are on board'.

Being a recent convert to ebooks (especially when travelling), I opted to learn more about the future of EPUB and ebook indexing. David Ream discussed the EPUB3 standard for publishing ebooks and the impact for indexers. The draft specifications for EPUB3 have been written and it is expected these will be open for comment later in 2013.

The EPUB3 platform will be a global platform and EPUB2 will be compatible with it. According to David, EPUB3 is expected to be better for non-fiction. Mention was made of current indexing software not being able to support EPUB3. David also believes that indexers should be asking publishers if they are intending to publish as an ebook and if there is any way they can help. This last question scared me as I do not know much about ebook publishing; however, David said that you should ask anyway, and if you have no idea then ask others within the indexing circle who may know.

Following on from David's EPUB presentation, Glenda Browne spoke about EPUB3 indexes and the future of indexing. As Glenda pointed out, ebook indexes to date have only provided the bare bones with bad links or no links at all. As I am familiar with coding, I am quite excited about the future of ebook indexing, although I can see I still have a lot to learn about it. The potential is there for greater usability for ebooks (non-fiction in particular) having searchable indexes that are able to take users straight to the information they are after. The cross-referencing and filtering capabilities are also exciting.

The *Metatopic Menace* or *Indexing in the age of search* presentation by Kay Schlembach resulted in some discussion and gave attendees something to think about. With my librarian's hat on, I found myself agreeing with Kay that indexers need to think like the user when creating an index and that sometimes indexers need to break the conventional indexing rules in order to meet the needs of the user. Who

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*(Report on the Conference, continued from page 1)*

is the user? Academics and non-academics tend to think differently. Kay's suggestions were to do a mind map before doing the index and to look at other indexes of similar genres as well as Wikipedia. Most importantly, always ask yourself what you would expect to see in an index if you were the user.

In his presentation, *Converting legacy books to ebooks with linked indexes*, David Ream discussed a project he worked on and described some of the issues to consider when relinking a print index to an ebook. A few of the issues David came across included page numbering, viewable text being smaller than in the print book, and page breaks landing further away from the index target.

Sadly, Madeleine Davis was ill and not able to present her paper on *Biography indexing: different approaches and challenges*. This is one session I had been very much looking forward to attending particularly following on from Kay Schlembach's presentation the previous day when she discussed biographies and her belief that metatopic is important for biographies. I am hoping Madeleine will make her paper available for us to read.

Mary Russell very ably filled in for Max McMaster for the *Roundtable – Numbers in indexing*. This session was a hands-on one. It was great to see how others deal with numbers (e.g. popes, kings, wars, telephone numbers) and the reasoning behind their decisions.

The *SKYIndex workshop* run by Jon Jerney provided some very handy tips and tricks that I was not aware

of. I am keen to experiment with some of the advanced functionality of Sky that until now I had not utilised such as swapping acronyms and creating reciprocals. Jon also pointed out some of the SkyIndex macros created by John Beale which are worth looking at purchasing as add-ons.

At lunch on Day 2, those of us booked on the *Lord of the Rings* tour, headed off on the bus for this – dare I say it – 'intrepid' adventure. We had a very knowledgeable tour guide/bus driver who took us to Helms Deep, Rivendell and Weta Cave. It was fabulous to see just where the filming took place and to hear some of the trivia behind the shooting of the *Lord of the Rings* movies.

*The Matrix: Indexing techniques and EPUB* was presented by Jan Wright and Glenda Browne. Once again electronic publishing (this is definitely something to bear in mind is happening) was discussed. Some of the indexing techniques described by Glenda are well worth noting and I would encourage members interested in ebook indexing to view the paper on the ANZSI website.

The Conference certainly challenged many perceptions I had about indexing and opened my eyes to some of the issues facing indexers in the 21st century. It was a shame I could not be in two places at once as it was hard to choose which presentation to attend. I had a wonderful time, met some great people and learnt so much. Thank you to ANZSI for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2013 Conference.

*Sandy Liddle*



*The 1920s–30s costume dinner at the Roxy Theatre saw some very imaginative outfits, but Tracy Harwood just danced away with the prize for the best costume. Here she is receiving her prize from President Mary Russell.*

*(Photos in this issue are by Denise Sutherland and Ray Price)*



... and some more from the dinner ...



*Jan Wright and Pilar Wyman en route in all their finery.*

*A pensive Tordis ... 'How is it all going?' But there was no need to worry – it was all going marvellously!*



*Nikki Davis and Glenda Browne having a great time!*



*Pilar Wyman, Sarah Lester and Tordis Flath.*

# Indexing Indaba

## The Most Beautiful Books – Australia and New Zealand



The winners of the inaugural 'Most Beautiful Books – Australia and New Zealand' ('MBBANZ') award have just been announced. Presented by Monash Art Design & Architecture, this biennial award program was established to recognise innovation and excellence in book design and publishing in Australia and New Zealand. Its

aim is to emphasise the most innovative contemporary book design and publishing activity, including titles from independent and small press publishers. The program also seeks to minimise barriers so there are no entry fees and nominations are welcome from readers and collectors in addition to those from designers and publishers.

Over 315 nominations were received for the 2013 awards and judges selected a shortlist of 37 books before narrowing this down to 11 winners. All the books were published in Australia and New Zealand during 2011 and 2012. The judging panel included architect Peter Corrigan, UK designer James Langdon, design lecturers Denise Whitehouse and Warren Taylor, and Auckland's split/fountain director Layla Tweedie-Cullen.

Take a bow if you had anything to do with the following books which are currently being exhibited at Monash University's MADA Gallery:

Anthology of New Zealand Literature (edited by Jane Stafford & Mark Williams, Auckland University Press); A Bell is a Cup (Matt Connors, Rainoff); Incomplete Discography (Karl Nawrot, Horizon Pages); Louise Menzies' Local Edition (Louise Menzies, DDMYY); Luminous: Celebrating 50 Years of the Australian Ballet (edited by Kate Scott & Lorelei Vashti, Australian Ballet); Form Next to Form Next to Form (Nova Paul, Gwynneth Porter & Karl Steven, Clouds and Dent-de-Leone); Owl Know How (Cat Rabbit & Isobelle Knowles, Thames & Hudson); Ildiko Kovacs: Down the Line 1980-2010 (edited by Daniel Mudie Cunningham & Terence Maloon, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery); The Anatomy of Business (Louis Porter, Twenty Shelves); Institute Zagreb 1986 & The Air Of Conquerors

(S T Lore, HRH Publishing); My Abuela's Table (Daniella Germain, Hardie Grant).

<http://www.artdes.monash.edu.au/gallery/>  
Books + Publishing Daily 21 March 2013

## Reviving an Australian tradition

The tradition of planting a memorial avenue of trees or 'Avenue of Honour' is an important part of Australian culture and has its origins in the Victorian Goldfields during the time of World War 1. Because soldiers were grouped according to the place where they were recruited, many Australian towns suffered tragic losses with entire populations of eligible men being killed in military defeats. A tree would be planted for each man lost and many avenues include metal plaques with the names of the victims.

Concerns about the disappearance of many of these avenues were raised at the Inaugural National Street Tree Symposium in Adelaide in 2000. It was clear that no comprehensive national survey of memorial Avenues had



*The entrance to the Avenue of Honour at Ballarat*

ever been undertaken, meaning that many had probably disappeared and that many more whose significance had been lost were also likely to follow.

In 2004, the Avenues of Honour 1915-2015 Project was launched as an initiative of Treenet, the not-for-profit national urban tree research and education organisation based at the Waite Arboretum, University of Adelaide. With principal researcher Sarah Cockerell at the helm and aided by the support of the community, the project has been working towards documenting, preserving and reinstating

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avenues where possible as well as establishing new Avenues of Honour by the centenary of Anzac in 2015.

A total of 567 avenues have been recorded - 2 in the ACT, 67 in NSW, 52 in Qld, 38 in SA, 69 in Tas, 312 in Vic and 27 in WA.

With large amounts of arboricultural and historical data being collected, Treenet is working on developing an interactive database that will allow anyone to access the research as well as to add to it. This one is definitely worth keeping an eye on as the centenary approaches.

<http://www.avenuesofhonour.org/>

*The photo of the memorial arch at the head of Ballarat's Avenue of Honour is from <http://kitger.deviantart.com/art/Avenue-of-Honour-256951097>*

## Planet ARCHI

Sometimes the thing that inspires someone to create a database is as interesting as the information in it. ARCHI, a database of the positions of more than 200,000 archaeological sites and worldwide landscape features is the culmination of eight years of work by a modest archaeologist known only as Chris. It grew out of the frustration he experienced as a university student.

A well presented assignment would require a knowledge of the distribution of UK archaeological sites and how the landscape/geology/availability of materials etc. could influence that distribution. However, one could not begin to discuss the latter without a knowledge of the former and as it was very difficult at the time to find precise site locations within the literature, it was necessary to create my own database holding this information.

This lack of information also contributed to a missed opportunity in my early youth to 'discover' archaeology. It was known that 'somewhere' on the moors was a Roman Fort. This notion obviously inspired all sorts of imaginings and was a distraction from the sometimes grim reality of life on a council estate in a Northern town. However, despite attempts to find its location from teachers, the local library etc, myself nor my equally inspired friends could find where it was. Hence, at least the opportunity to challenge the stereotypical view that a 'gang' of kids from the town could only be up to no good was missed.

The above are the initial reasons for ARCHI's conception, however, this initial concept became a labour of love and desire for completeness. Further, technological advances such as the rise of the internet and the ability to integrate information from different databases hosted by different web sites coupled with my passion for all things archaeological, presented a challenge which could not be resisted. Hence, the continued development of the database.'

[http://www.digital-documents.co.uk/archi/archi\\_search\\_world.html](http://www.digital-documents.co.uk/archi/archi_search_world.html)

## Beyoncé's 'crazy archive'

American singer Beyoncé Knowles caused an uproar earlier this year by lip-synching her way through 'The Star-Spangled Banner' at President Obama's inauguration. Here's another surprise...

Beyoncé employs a personal archivist to catalogue and maintain the 50,000 (and growing) hours of video footage that she has of herself. Her 'crazy archive', as she calls it, covers ten years and includes intimate private events, public appearances and interviews she has conducted.

The superstar is said to be very proud of the digital archive which is stored in a temperature-controlled room in Los Angeles, and delights in being able to locate items very quickly.

<http://www.noise11.com/news/beyonce-employs-video-archivist-20130204>

*Nikki Davis*

## ACT Region Branch Conference catch-up, Canberra, 22 April

ACT Region Branch members are cordially invited to attend a 'Conference catch-up' meeting in Woden Library meeting room, Monday 22 April, from 5.30 to 7.00 pm. Members who attended the Conference in Wellington will share information and opinions about its papers and proceedings. Please RSVP (for catering purposes) by close of business Thursday 18 April to [sherreyquinn@gmail.com](mailto:sherreyquinn@gmail.com).

See: [www.anzsi.org/site/calendar\\_details.asp?id=312](http://www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=312).

*Sherrey Quinn*



*Frances Lennie and Pilar Wyman at the  
Conference dinner*

## Quoting to a budget

*The March Newsletter reprinted a record of a discussion held by AusSI ACT in 2005, 'Consult a higher authority', which included a comment by Glenda Browne, 'Target indexes to the budget available.'*

It prompted this response from Don Jordan:

I was asked by an editor to quote for indexing of three books of a fairly solid nature, all of them pretty high-level textbooks, with one of them being a first edition. I had not indexed previous editions of the other two. I asked for, and got, a sample chapter from each book, marked them up, and guesstimated the likely size of what I thought would be suitable indexes. I went through my records of similar books I've done in the past and checked times taken for them, and worked out the number of indexable pages/hour I'd take for the jobs, calculated the resulting hours of work, multiplied that by \$65/hour going rate, and sent off my quotes.

My quote for the first edition book was accepted, but for the other two the editor said that my quotes exceeded the indexing budget for the books (by 17% in each case, quite fortuitously). I had some email discussion with the editor regarding the times I calculated to do a professional index and on what I'd based my calculations.

I've done a number of indexes for this publisher on a series of informational books that are very straightforward to index, and I told the editor what my average charge per indexable page for these tended to be. For some time now I've been working to a budget for these, which the editor of the series has, at least partly, been basing on figures I had given at one stage. When I told the editor of the textbooks what this page rate was, I was told that this sounded fine for estimation purposes. However, the number of words per page in the informational books is much less than for the textbooks and I checked my calculations for the quotes by proportionally increasing the rate/page according the number of words/page and got a similar result to my estimates based on a trial indexing of the chapters.

I communicated this to the editor, but my pleas for consideration of this were in vain. I stuck to my figures, and lost the jobs! Did I do right?

In 2005 Glenda Browne recommended readers to 'Target indexes to the budget available. A cheap index can often be OK if it is a good index to a more limited scope, rather than a quick index trying to cover everything.' Should I have accepted the jobs and only spent the hours on it that a division of \$65 into the budget figure would give? If this is thought to be OK, should I tell an editor that that's what I propose to do and that the index will not be as good or comprehensive as I would like for the book? I feel a bit out of my depth in trying to negotiate this sort of thing with an editor, particularly as I don't know on what the budget figure is based. Should I have asked that? I would appreciate some guidance here, please, and I imagine there might be a number of other indexers who feel the same way.

Should I now ask the editor to keep me on his list, as I still want to have the opportunity to index his books? How do I do this without grovelling, or letting down the rest of the indexing community? There's not so much work about that I can afford to lose jobs, so I'd love some guidance here, please.

There are other issues with respect to estimating and quoting that I'd appreciate some feedback on, also. In looking more closely at, for instance, the number of words per page I found there is a huge variation from book to book, largely due to page size, how much white space is left and, more importantly, what font size is used. The first edition book that I'm indexing is almost unreadable because of its tiny font. There are roughly 770 words/page – about twice the number in my informational books. The other two texts had around 550 words/page, so there's a huge range here that I hadn't fully appreciated before. I hadn't thought to estimate the words/page of books I've worked on in the past, so my database is lacking in that regard. Can I get some guidance from others as to what records they keep of their indexing work, and in what detail, so that they have ready access to reliable and useful data on which to base quotations for work?

*Glenda replied,*

I have no one approach, but deal with each situation as it arises. Quoting and negotiation depend on the nature of the book and the client. There are some books where I know I will be able to work quickly - usually because the book is well-structured, but sometimes because I have experience with the topic or approach. There are others where I know the work will take time; here I am unwilling to agree to a lower price for a quicker job because I know I won't be able to do it.

I have clients who I know will provide me with well-edited books, on time. I am more likely to agree to their proposals than I am to a client who is unreliable. Self-published authors might be treated more strictly or more gently than the average client, depending on circumstances. This is because they often have jobs that demand extra time (eg, in the discussion of requirements), but, on the other hand, they are usually driven by the desire to communicate and I am happy to share in that.

I have been surprised over the years to find that the depth of indexing I consider to be ideal is considered by some clients to be unnecessary. Discussions about expected depth of indexing sometimes show that for what they want, the client's price is reasonable. It's just that we were planning to give them so much more.

In my view the quality of the index with respect to the brief is my responsibility, but the quality of the brief (e.g. the depth being paid for) is up to the editor. I might suggest that I think the book needs more, but I leave it up to them.

Even after 25 years indexing I still struggle to quote at times. There are always new topics and new formats to consider. This, of course, is one of the things that make such a wonderful career. But it also means you never get to sit on your laurels and think you know everything. When I first quote for a new client I might give a range of quotes with a range of possible depths. Most easily defined are indexing just from section headings and indexing in full. I explain

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*(Quoting to a budget, continued from previous page)*

that 'from section headings' still involves analysis, rewording, multiple entries etc, but that it means specific concepts that can only be derived from a detailed reading of the text won't be indexed.

If I quote for an index and the client says it is too expensive, I might say 'for the money you are suggesting I can do a briefer index from section headings'. Or if they mention a price and give a sample from a previous edition, I might say 'I can index for that price but not for that detail.' When I can see a past index for an annual report, previous edition etc, I also use my rule of thumb of \$1 to \$2 per locator as a guide.

If the client insists on a low price for a detailed index, I'll say I'm sorry I can't do that but I am happy to suggest a beginner indexer who might be interested. While I don't want to promote the idea of beginner indexers undercharging, the first few jobs are crucial for building a business, and they can be hard to get. Some of the jobs I have recommended beginners for have been self-published local histories which are being written for love rather than money. These give a beginner the opportunity to get an index published, while also ensuring that a community book has a useful index. (These jobs can, of course, be more challenging than the average trade book index and newbies may find they have been thrown in the deep end.) If I feel a request for a cheap index is unreasonable, however, I might just decline with no offer of help.

I think editors sometimes apply inappropriate considerations when budgeting for a book. To be fair, I also think indexers are probably extremely inconsistent and editors must often be bewildered by the variation in quotes they get.

I have lost two jobs recently for over-quoting. I would rather say 'No' than do a bad job quickly or do a good job but be underpaid. But I'll always negotiate if there is a chance of a satisfactory compromise.

I try to be consistent, but if the job is wonderful (e.g. index 'snorkelling holidays in the South Pacific') I might negotiate less toughly.

If I have underquoted I accept that I only get paid what I quoted, but I might mention to the editor that I should have quoted more, so that my low figure doesn't go down in history as the appropriate price. Twice this has resulted in a \$100 increase (still didn't mean the job paid the ANZSI recommended rate, but a welcome gesture nonetheless).

*Max replied*

The principled approach you have taken with the editor is quite reasonable. However, Glenda's 2005 advice also makes good sense. Once you have been told that you are 17% over the production budget for the index (for example you may have quoted \$1500, but the publisher has only allowed \$1300), you have to decide whether you can do a competent indexing job for \$1300. Although this lower figure will mean a less than ideal level of detail within the index, providing you can live with slightly lower standards, then go with a lower quote. You also need to decide whether \$1300 is better in your pocket

than someone else's.

Negotiation over quoting in indexing involves swings and roundabouts. Sometimes you need to work at a lower rate, or include less detail, to secure a contract, but that is counterbalanced by other jobs where you can earn a higher rate for less effort, and hence boost your profit. What I am saying is be flexible in quoting. However, this does not mean taking jobs at say \$30/hour. As has been said many times before, 'if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys!' Leave these jobs for someone else. The publisher will be the loser in the long run, with poorer sales, and in many cases, a very disgruntled author.

*And a final word from Don*

Thanks, Glenda and Max,

I appreciate those comments very much, and they will be of great help to me in the future.

I'm gaining so much from this, and I've had further correspondence with the editor of the books that sparked all this, which I'll share at a future date. The basis for the budgets for the two books I didn't get to index (which were 2nd and 5th editions) was what the indexer of the previous editions charged, upgraded in line with inflation. It seems to me that's not a very good basis, as that puts later indexers at the mercy of what their peers have charged, and we don't know what standard those peers have edited to. I was sent indexes to the previous editions, together with a representative chapter of each, but I didn't take much notice of them as I prefer to index each book from scratch. I've had some bad experiences trying to update earlier indexes, even my own, so I tend not to use them. However, if editors are basing their budgets on these, then obviously I'll need to look at them at quoting time!!

*What do other members think? ... Join the discussion!*

## News from Queensland



Queensland Branch's recent general meeting welcomed palaeontologist Dr Susan Turner.

*At the meeting were (back row l to r): Teresa Hayward, Jane Douglas, Franz Pinz, Cate Seymour-Jones; (front): Moira Brown, Vicki Law, Dr Susan Turner, Graham Potts, Beryl Macdonald.*

## Quiet achievers in indexing – Nikki Davis

### Who has been the greatest influence on your career?

I definitely owe a lot to my former boss Christopher Walton, Managing Editor of the Book Editorial Department of Reader's Digest (South Africa) during the 1980s. Chris's idea to have a member of staff undertake an indexing course in order to have a trained indexer in-house propelled me down the path to an indexing career.

My husband Sid was responsible for revolutionising my method of working by tossing out my shoebox and replacing it with (to the best of my knowledge) the first custom-written indexing software program in South Africa.

I'm also very appreciative of the support I received from Max McMaster when I resumed the indexing career I'd given up in favour of part-time library work, while my sons Jared and Asher were growing up.

### How did you come to an indexing career?

I first discovered indexing while working at *Reader's Digest*. In those pre-internet days, the commissioning of an index always involved face-to-face contact between the indexer and in-house staff and I got to know Ethleen Lastovica, a librarian and SI Registered Indexer, who wrote most of our indexes.

Indexing always appealed to me. This is probably not surprising – I was working as an editorial researcher which, like indexing, requires a love of information and an ability to pay attention to detail.

At that time indexers were few and far between in South Africa and Ethleen was in high demand. This issue was the catalyst for our Managing Editor's idea that it would be useful to have a trained indexer in-house. It didn't grab my colleagues but I leapt at the opportunity. As training was not available in South Africa, I sought advice from SI and enrolled in Ann Hall's BIPT course. (An article about my experience of indexing in South Africa in the 1980s was published in the August 2010 edition of the *ANZSI Newsletter*.)

### What do you see as your greatest achievement?

Building up an indexing business is an achievement in itself and I've managed to do this twice on two different continents at two very different phases of my life. I'm a strong believer in the accreditation process and think that

it is something that all indexers should aim for, so I'm very pleased to have this under my belt. Serving on the Council of ANZSI has also been a privilege and is very rewarding.

### What has been your biggest challenge?

The earliest days of my career were definitely the hardest. As one of only a handful of indexers in South Africa in the 1980s and with no formal networks (ASAIB was yet to be formed) it was hard not to feel a little bit isolated. I got through sticky situations by reading lots of other published indexes and by consulting *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

### How do you try to achieve work-life balance?

I haven't always been able to avoid it, but I definitely don't like having more than one book on my desk at any one time. I'm very conscious of pacing myself, particularly because of my other busy life in peer support work with breast cancer patients and as a consumer advisor for two clinical trials groups.

To maintain balance in my life I need human contact, exercise, and a bit of time to dabble in yet more reading and hobbies. For human contact I make time for family and friends. For

exercise I do heaps of walking and I make the very most of living just a stone's chuck from Port Phillip Bay. My reading tastes are quite varied but one of my favourite areas of interest is Australia, especially books that help to fill in the gaps in my knowledge of Australian history and literature. I realise that I will probably never entirely catch up but I'm having fun along the way! I also have the sewing and knitting bug that seems to afflict so many indexers.

### What do you like most about your work?

#### What do you like least?

I enjoy being my own boss and having the ability to set my own working hours and leave entitlements, as well as a jeans and t-shirt dress code. I like that indexing can expose you to all sorts of areas that you might not otherwise have delved into. I also like the project nature of the job – you can see the results of your work very quickly. I still get a bit of a kick seeing a book that I have indexed in a bookshop.

Some of my best experiences have involved working directly with authors. Many of them like face-to-face contact (the demise of which I lament) and really do see you as part of their team.



*Nikki and Timmy, her indexing companion, who likes to put in an appearance at Vic Branch Committee meetings.*

*(continued on next page)*

*(Quiet achievers: Nikki Davis, continued from previous page)*

The things I dislike most are the long hours spent at the computer, and the often fluid nature of publishers' dates (in their favour) that can throw a spanner in the works.

### **What advice would you offer to indexers just starting out?**

Being a newbie indexer is a little bit like being a P-plate driver. You have the skills to manoeuvre your car but you have yet to confront all the hazards of being on the road. It takes time to develop good indexing skills and to do this you'll need to have the experience of indexing a few books with a variety of challenges.

Invest in a good library of indexing books. My most consulted books have been Glenda Browne and Jon Jermey's *The Indexing Companion* and *The Chicago Manual of Style* chapter on indexing.

I can't stress enough the value of being a member of an indexing society and the networking opportunities that it will offer you. Apart from being a great form of social contact, it's the best way to build on your knowledge about indexing and to keep informed of the changes happening in publishing.

Get involved with volunteer indexing projects as this is a very good way to kickstart your career. When offers of paid work do come your way, and this may be slow in happening in the beginning, be sure that you can manage the topic and the deadline. Something that my indexing teacher said has always stuck with me – you can't nibble at indexing in odd hours.

You also need to present yourself as an indexer right from the start. So avoid saying things like: 'I'm trying to get into indexing.' Be brave and call yourself **an indexer**.

### **If you could dine with a famous historical figure, who could it be?**

Thomas Hardy because it was through the *The Mayor of Casterbridge* that I experienced that first sense of wonder at how a book could transport me to an entirely different time and place.

I would talk to him about his self-education, his work as an architect, and his writing of course, especially his poetry which I discovered later. Despite the often hideous taste of the Victorians, it would be fun to learn more about Hardy's numerous visits to the Great Exhibition of 1851. I probably also wouldn't be able to resist asking him how he came to name one of his large troop of cats Kiddleywinkempoops-Trot.

### **If you were a letter of the alphabet, who would you be and why?**

The letter 'A' because it represents the beginning, with the promise of more to come. I'm an optimist. It's also the first letter in the names of the two continents where I've spent my life, Africa and Australia.

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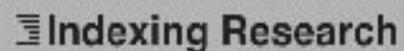


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## Branch events

Date and time	Organiser	Name of activity	Venue	Contact details
Mon 22 April 5.30–7.00 pm	ACT Region	Conference catch-up	Woden Library meeting room	Details on page 7 and at < <a href="http://www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=312">www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=312</a> >
Tues 23 April 6 for 7.00 pm	Qld Branch	5th birthday dinner party, with Jane Douglas speaking on the 2013 Conference	Venue is still to be confirmed.	RSVP by 22 April < <a href="mailto:brown5moira@yahoo.com.au">brown5moira@yahoo.com.au</a> > or 0416 097 629. Details at: < <a href="http://www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=316">www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=316</a> >
Sat 11 May 2.30 pm	Vic Branch	Indexing Asian names	State Library of Victoria	RSVP for catering via < <a href="http://www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=314">www.anzsi.org/site/calendar_details.asp?id=314</a> >

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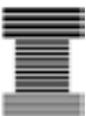
Opinions and statements expressed in the newsletter are those of the respective authors.

## Newsletter schedule

The next Newsletter will appear in May 2013.

The contribution deadline is Friday, 26 April.

The editor welcomes your contributions submitted by email to <[peter.judge@bigpond.com](mailto:peter.judge@bigpond.com)>



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