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MAY MEETING

Following the business of the meeting, John Simkin introduced Jeannie Campbell who had been invited by the Society to present a talk on the range of dictionaries published by Oxford University Press. In his introduction, John informed members that Jeannie was born and educated in Melbourne where she completed a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Education. After teaching music and drama in an inner-suburban Melbourne high school, Jeannie went to Greece where she taught English in a language school. Later she taught English to Greek civil servants for the British Council. A short stay in England was followed by two years of travelling in Greece as an Oxford University Press English Language Teaching representative.

Jeannie continued her involvement with Oxford University Press when, in 1981, she was appointed to the newly created position of Oxford Dictionary Specialist in Australia to deal with the marketing and promotion of OUP's vast dictionary range. Basically the job involves acting as an adviser and consultant on the entire range of Oxford dictionaries and ELT materials. Before taking up her appointment, Jeannie spent several months of intensive training in the Oxford Dictionary Department. Although continuing her consultancy role for Oxford University Press, Jeannie is about to open her own public relations agency.

OXFORD DICTIONARIES - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE*

Jeannie began her talk by briefly tracing the beginnings of the Oxford Dictionary with James Murray and the involvement of Oxford University Press. Elizabeth Murray's *Caught in the web of words* provides a useful introduction to these early years. This essentially family affair has now grown to the stage where OUP's Dictionary Department holds over three million word cards going back to James Murray's time and employs over 40 full time editors. These editors, under the direction of Robert Burchfield (editor of the Oxford dictionaries), are engaged in different projects and possess a variety of backgrounds. One of these editors is working on the two volumed *Shorter Oxford dictionary* and will take eight years to complete her work while the *Concise Oxford dictionary* is revised every six years. Those involved with these two dictionaries work from the OED and the Supplements. The latter records changes in words and new words and with the appearance of the fourth volume in 1985 will have taken 28 years to complete.

Jeannie pointed out that although there is a staff of 20 involved with the Supplements, a world wide network of individuals volunteer their services and send in details of possible new words. (One individual has forwarded over 175,000 words.) Approximately 450 new words are added each year. Every new word located by individuals is written on a card together with the source and forwarded to the Dictionary Department. Following receipt of the card, editors then check back through the files, add quotations and include the card in the card index. The editors, who naturally spend a large amount of their time reading, tend to specialise in certain areas which are often very esoteric - one for example is following up words associated with glue-sniffing.

The meeting noted with interest that to be included in the dictionaries a word needs to have been identified in the written language. Some words, therefore, do not appear in the dictionaries for five and maybe ten or twenty years after their first usage, e.g. "Rubik's cube" which was patented in 1975 did not appear in the written language until 1979.

Jeannie commented on the large number of letters which were received from purists who were annoyed by the inclusion or recommended pronunciation of certain words. Queries regarding spelling and pronunciation were received from a wide range of people - Gough Whitlam, for example, had written to Robert Burchfield concerning the pronunciation of "kilometre". It was also pointed out that words which were possibly being misused and which were marked with a "D" in the *Concise Oxford* seventh edition might be accepted in the future. This was often very frustrating for the purists. In this context, Jeannie mentioned how interesting it was to browse through the Supplements and to discover the changes in the accepted meaning, usage and pronunciation of words over the years.

Referring to developments with computerisation, Jeannie commented that the card file maintained by the Dictionary Department was more useful for their purposes than any computer-based data base. Steps had been taken, however, to include some of the smaller dictionaries such as school dictionaries on a computerised data base and plans were underway to make available the 13 OED volumes in this way. Such a project would take 30 to 50 years to complete.

In concluding her remarks, Jeannie advised that Robert Burchfield had initiated a monthly newsletter, which apart from containing details on current and future developments, often included requests for information on particular words or phrases. Those "discovering" new words or changes in the usage of words should add the word to a card, include full source details and forward it to the Dictionary Department at Oxford University Press.

* (This paper is based on notes taken at the Meeting).

DISCUSSION

In the lively discussion which followed, Jennifer Challis asked whether the newsletter to which Jeannie referred was generally available. It was noted that the possibility of drawing up a mailing list would be considered although there might be a small charge if this service were provided.

Replying to a query from Jean Hagger on whether Australian newspapers and in particular the letter columns were scanned in order to locate new words, Jeannie commented that they were monitored although it was impossible to undertake as much reading as she would like.

Jean Uhl raised the question of regional words and it was noted that these were not as common in Australia as in England. In fact, many words which were considered "Australian" have United Kingdom regional origins. In relation to this, Jeannie pointed out that although trends often started in the United States, Australia and South Africa and were noted by the editors, the words did not always find their way into print or general usage. Members were also informed that while once it was only necessary to monitor a handful of countries, now those involved with the dictionaries needed to look at the world as a whole.

Jeannie informed the meeting that the BBC had requested Robert Burchfield to compile a handbook which would serve as a guide to pronunciation. The resulting publication, *The spoken word*, illustrates changes in this facet of the English language and includes American spellings.

Pam Trier queried whether reports of speeches in newspapers count as written words for the purpose of the Dictionary Department. In reply,

Jeannie advised that they were but observed that many spoken words were often only short-lived, passed quickly out of usage and did not always appear in print.

Bemoaning the trend by many individuals not to use dictionaries, Dietrich Borchardt drew attention to the need for market research on the question of who actually uses dictionaries. He suggested it would be useful to contact individuals shortly after they purchase dictionaries in an attempt to identify their reasons for acquiring such a publication. Jean Hagger expanded on these points and referred to the need to encourage the use of dictionaries by school children. She commended Oxford University Press on the provision of a wide range of dictionaries for all ages and types of users. Jeannie pointed out that some booksellers queried stocking the complete range of dictionaries but that Oxford University Press attempted to cater for all groups.

Referring to the recent publication of a number of dictionaries which were prepared in Australia and which attempted to cover "Australian" words, John Simkin questioned the extent of reliance by these publishers on existing dictionaries. It was noted that the compilers of dictionaries naturally referred to the dictionaries published by competitors and that the OED was undoubtedly relied on heavily.

Responding to a question concerning the possible availability of the Supplements with the OED on a single data base, Jeannie confirmed that this was a long range goal. However, following the publication of the next Supplements it was planned that the OED would be made available as a data base first. To incorporate the Supplements with the OED would probably necessitate a change of format.

The discussion concluded with reference to various articles, by Onions and Laski, which outlined the principles underlying the compilation of dictionaries.

John Simkin closed the meeting by thanking Jeannie for making herself available to address the Society and for her interesting and entertaining talk.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following new members :-

Mrs V. Goldsworthy	23 Falconer Street, Glen Waverley, Vic. 3150
Ms S. Hartwell	Science & Information Services, Victoria, Department of Agriculture, GPO Box 4041, Melbourne, Vic. 3001
Mrs R. Hill	15 Vautier Street, North Geelong, Vic. 3215
Ms G. Hoysted	La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000
Mrs S. Hua	27 Sackville Street, Kew, Vic. 3101

Ms P. Johnstone	25 Wentworth Street, Paddington, N.S.W., 2021
Mr S. Kirby	GPO Box 1144K, Melbourne, Vic. 3001
Miss R. Lenan	17 Seascape Street, Clayton, Vic. 3168
Ms B. Moore	23 Curran Street, North Melbourne, Vic. 3051
Ms C. O'Brien	89 Woodland Street, North Essendon, Vic. 3041
Miss C. Paltridge	678 Canning Street, North Carlton, Vic. 3054
Mrs J. Restarick	54 Snowdon Avenue, Caulfield, Vic. 3162
Ms S. Sneddon	23 Palmer Street, Garran, A.C.T., 2605
Ms B. Stevenson	5/6 Mackie Court, Kew, Vic. 3103
Mrs H. Woodall	379 Mitcham Road, Mitcham, Vic. 3132

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MICROCOMPUTERS FOR PERSONAL INDEXING SYSTEMS

During 1982 Stephen Lansdowne demonstrated the use of a microcomputer system for producing indexes to his facsimile productions of historical books. This was a most impressive demonstration which lead many of us to wonder whether such a system could be used to help remove some of the tedious tasks from the indexing process. However, there were a number of reasons why using Stephen's system was not practical for most AusSI members. Now help may be at hand!

Microcomputers are revolutionising many every day human activities. It is possible that they will be able to do the same for indexers. However, there are many very confusing options available for microcomputer use and it is extremely difficult to decide which is the most satisfactory system for a particular application. There are, I would estimate, about twenty different microcomputers available off the shelf which would be suitable for indexing applications. Similarly there are many different software packages available which could help with the basically clerical tasks associated with indexing. CSIRO Central Information Service has recently decided to evaluate some of the packages which might be of some value in the information retrieval field and part of this work relates to indexing. I intend to evaluate a few packages to see which might be of particular value to the individual indexer undertaking smaller tasks than the ongoing computer based indexing systems normally associated with CSIRO.

But why bother with microcomputers?

Microcomputers are reasonably cheap. They range in price, depending on the configuration needed, from as little as \$500 to \$10,000. For a basic system suitable for indexing I estimate that about \$3-4,000 would

be realistic. But it does depend very much on the application involved. Presumably this could be considered a tax deduction as are other business investments. So the real cost would be marginally less than this. However, their major advantage must be that they can be used on an individual basis to do what is essentially the clerical work associated with indexing. In other words they should improve productivity, enable more work to be done and therefore permit more dollars to be earned.

But the real emphasis must be put on the individual nature of microcomputers. No longer is it necessary to use other larger systems designed to suit all possible applications so that none is done effectively. To use the jargon of today's youth, it is now possible to do your own thing. This is a major advantage. Any system which can pander to my idiosyncracies has to be better than pandering to someone else's idiosyncracies. In this article I intend to talk about the software packages which are suitable for indexing rather than the actual microcomputers themselves. As far as the machines are concerned, the more you spend the better the machine, so what you buy depends to a large extent on what your needs are and how much money you have available in the context of the extra large amounts which can be earned with all this increased productivity I mentioned. The software packages are much more of a problem because of the numbers which claim to do everything you ever wanted.

So to the packages.

There are a number of basic types of information management packages available for microcomputers. "The first type, the database management systems (DBMS), are numerous and utilise rigidly structured records. (DBMS) systems are normally intended for numerical handling with typical applications in stock control and accounting."(1) "There are very many (over 70) packages purporting to be database management systems available on microcomputers. Many of these are really data or file management systems which typically include modules for input, editing, sorting, selecting, simple processing and output of files of records. Usually these packages are designed to be used on their own and by non-programmers..."(2). CSIRO Central Information Service is currently evaluating one such DBMS package known as DBase II. The obvious fault in this system is the inflexibility of fixed field lengths and the limited number of fields in each record. It is difficult to fit a complete bibliographic record into the DBase II record structure. It is probable that for indexing of books, where the length of the file is relatively short and the record structure is not as complex as a complete bibliographic record, that a DBMS system would be applicable. During the course of the next few months this will be investigated. One study undertaken in the United Kingdom with a DBMS known as Maxi Manager came to the following conclusion after comparing bibliographic data, society membership lists and archaeological data...."the limitation imposed by by the number of characters allowed in each field (40), makes it unsuitable for most kinds of bibliographic data The package has been found ideal for handling records of society membership information and archaeological records"(1). The archaeological records consisted of six relatively short fields. This would be representative of the situation occurring in a book index.

Some DBMS systems are becoming more sophisticated and the need for fixed length fields is lessening. Notebook is a database management system with almost no restrictions on the amount of information entered or its format. Space does not have to be saved in each record...Categories may be altered at any time without modifying existing data... However, systems such as this are fairly new and there is no assessment available as yet.

There are a number of DBMS type systems which are specifically designed for textual data. These have an enormous potential for indexing. Two such packages are Cardbox and PFS:File. PFS:File operates on the principle that information is kept on forms, much like 3x5 cards. PFS:File enables the user to design the form and enter, retrieve, modify and print information of interest. It is designed to work with all kinds of information. Similarly Cardbox simulates an index card box filing system. CSIRO hopes to be able to evaluate Cardbox in the near future. The major disadvantage with these systems seems to be the size of file which can be handled. Just how important this is has yet to be determined.

There are a number of packages available which have been specifically designed for information retrieval which would be suitable for indexing purposes. These are "...free text systems which use variable length records consisting of fields mainly containing natural language text.... However, with a small potential market these packages are generally expensive."(1)

Of all the packages available on the market the one which appears to be most useful to the indexer is DocuMate/Plus. This is an indexing program that works with Wordstar to create an automatic text index or table of contents. DocuMate/Plus supports up to eight levels of sub-indexing, and you can choose to index either words or phrases. It would be very interesting to see how this works. It appears to have the potential to make the indexer redundant!

This is a brief discussion of an area which is changing so rapidly that it is very difficult to keep up to date, yet it is an area which is of vital interest to indexers. Given packages such as DocuMate/Plus if we do not keep up with the changes we could all be out of a job in a few years.

(1) Livesey, B. Information retrieval on a Tandy. In: *International On-line Meeting, 6th, London, 7-9 December 1982. Proceedings.* Oxford, Learned Information, 1983.

(2) Tedd, Lucy A. Software for microcomputers in libraries and information units. In: *International On-line Meeting, 6th, London 7-9 December 1982. Proceedings.* Oxford, Learned Information, 1983.

Sue HARVEY

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MICROCOMPUTERS - ANOTHER VIEW

Members of the Society will be interested to hear that the Society of Indexers' Technology Working Party has recently issued the first in a series of occasional newsletters which will be devoted to the use of microcomputers by indexers. The first issue of *The micro-INDEXER* appeared in January of this year and future issues will contain reports by members of the Society on their experience with microcomputers, news of relevant meetings, conferences etc., reports on computing programs which have been specifically designed for indexing purposes (and others which can be usefully adapted), news of new computer systems that seem

suitable for indexing purposes, and other related matters. The January issue of the newsletter contains a short article which refers briefly to some of the issues raised by Sue Harvey. It is reprinted here for the interest of members.

Will the computer make manual indexers redundant?

This question is apparently causing some concern within the Society, and it seems worthwhile to explain why the answer to it must be in the negative while emphasizing the potential value of microcomputers to the free-lance indexer.

The crucial point is that computers can be programmed only to perform tasks which can be specified in an explicit manner, such as the arrangement of entries into a specified alphabetical order, or the arrangement of sub-entries in set-out or run-on format. For such tasks the computer is ideally suited. However, the selection of entries for the index is another matter altogether. Even the compilation of an index containing all and only the proper names in a text would require considerably more gumption than can currently be fed into a microcomputer. How, for example, is the computer to know that it should index the first word in the sentence 'Green, on the otherhand, holds the opposite view', but not the first word in the sentence 'Green, unlike red, is a restful colour'; and if several persons by the name of 'Green' appear in the text how is the computer to know which initials are to go with which entry? If such questions can arise even in connection with a names index, how much more will they arise when it is the meaning of the words which determines whether they shall form index entries; when indeed the index entry may not itself appear on the page dealing with the concept indexed?

These questions are not purely rhetorical. Whatever rules are followed by human beings in selecting index entries could in principle be embodied in a computer program, but the important point is that such a computer program would be so far beyond anything which we have today that it is not really misleading to say that computers just cannot perform the 'intelligent' or 'creative' part of the indexing task. What they can do is to speed up quite considerably the mechanical parts of the process, thus allowing the indexer to spend more time on those aspects of the work which only he or she can do. It is hard to see how any of this is a threat to the indexer who prefers to stick to the manual method. An index compiled with the aid of a computer is not thereby either better or worse than a manually compiled index, it simply takes less time to compile.

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SHOCK AN INDEXER: NOTICE HIM*

"BUT I READ it in here *somewhere*" is a recurrent complaint from readers unable to refer back to a book because the index is insufficient or — horror! — non-existent.

Despite the strenuous efforts of the Australian Society of Indexers (AusSI) to improve the quality of indexing, many Australian publishers seem to think all readers are blessed with photographic memories.

The bigger the publisher, the less consistent the indexing — with the exception of Rigby-Lansdowne whose standard is consistently poor. The absence of an index in Don Dunstan's Cookbook has been a major cursing point since 1976, and other Rigby-Lansdowne cookbooks fare only slightly better for having one. Entries such as "grilled fish" are all too common.

Lansdowne's reference works are no better. Its Dictionary of Australian Folklore by W. Fearn-Wannan was reprinted for the fifth time last year with no revisions. Jack Lang still lives in this dictionary. (Of course, he always was greater than Lenin).

Angus and Robertson maintains unique standards of indexing. A. W. Barker's Dear Robertson is admirably indexed. However, the 1982 Arkon reprint of Frank Clune's Wild Colonial Boys doesn't have one at all.

Penguin generally publishes adequate indexes. Edmund Campion's Rockchoppers has an almost decent one (the fact that The Times and The Woolloomooloo Rag are entered under "the" while The New York Times is entered under "new" spoils it). The Prison Struggle by Zdenkowski and Brown has 14 pages of excellent index, unusual for a legal book. The index neatly overcomes the bias of the text (eg "violence *see* bashings"). There are also comprehensive sub-entries and useful and relevant cross references.

Hale and Iremonger and George Allen and Unwin both realise the value of indexes. Their indexes are often author-inspired, demonstrating that Australian authors can be remarkably skilled, and when they are not neither publisher balks at paying for a competent indexer.

It's a pity that the good example set by these two smaller publishers is not followed by others. Kibble Books' Nellie Melba, Ginger Meggs and Friends claims to contain an index. However, with entries such as "City/Bush (Urban/Rural) dichotomy", with no cross references to "bush", "urban" or "rural", pity the poor reader whose mental processes differ in even the slightest respect from those of the indexer.

Wild and Woolley's Katherine Susannah Prichard anthology, Straight Left, has no index. Since the essays cover 60 years of Australian politics and literature and mention many important people and events, this is regrettable. The few dollars Wild and Woolley would have had to spend on an index would have ensured reader satisfaction and increased the likelihood of similar books finding a receptive audience.

There are some good signs in indexing. Dick Appleton, the editor-in-chief of The Australian Encyclopedia (Grolier), has made up for the lack of an index in the third edition by devising a revolutionary index for the forthcoming fourth edition. This computer-sorted work will direct readers to particular paragraphs, thus making it unnecessary to search whole columns, which is now a problem with encyclopedias.

Computer-assisted indexing does not come cheap, but offers time and space benefits which appeal to firms such as CCH, Butterworth's and the Law Book Company. Butterworth's and CCH value indexes highly enough to employ in-house indexers. Their work, although subject to the peculiar restraints which keep the law inaccessible to most, represents a considerable investment by their employers — but still only a small fraction of the total cost of a book.

The cost of indexes is not exorbitant, so it is disappointing when publishers avoid them to print another colour plate. AusSI's base rate for indexing "low-density" information (a cookbook, for example) is \$1.50 per 1,000 words; for high-density information the base rate rises to \$4. These are the lowest rates — most indexers work at higher rates because of their experience or specialisation. However, even the smallest publisher could absorb these charges into the total budget for a book.

And wouldn't readers be glad! They would have smaller dentist's bills for fewer teeth gnashed, better sleep from less frustrating bedside reading and, perhaps, respect for the hard-pressed publisher — but more important they'd be able to *use* the books they'd spent spare (and rare) dollars on.

Readers should object if books are not well-indexed. If a book does not contain an index, write to the publishers and tell them to get it indexed. If the index is poor, check to see if an indexer is acknowledged. If one is, write to them. They'll probably die of shock when they receive your letter but will be glad of the feedback. When did you last read a review, good or bad, of an index?

Jeremy FISHER

*This article by Jeremy Fisher, a member of the Society, appeared in the *Sydney morning herald's* "Good weekend" on 15 January 1983. It is reprinted here with the permission of the publisher.

(Avid readers of the *Newsletter* will have, of course, noted that the minimum fee for contract indexing is now \$1.65 per 1000 words of low information density with a suggested upper limit of \$4.45 per 1000 words).

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BOOK REVIEWS AND NEWSPAPERS

The future of two projects involving indexes to Australian book reviews and Australian newspapers is in doubt and to some extent the viability of both depends upon the support of the Australian library community.

For economic reasons, the State Library of South Australia was forced to abandon production of the *Australian book review index*. The Western Australian Institute of Technology Library has been examining the possibility of continuing the index in some form and the following letter from G. Allen, Principal Librarian, WAIT, which appeared in *InCite* vol. 4, no.12 8 July 1983 may be of interest to members of the Society.

Since the State Library of South Australia was forced to discontinue the publication of the Australian Book Review Index, the WAIT Library has been investigating possible alternative methods of capturing information on reviews of Australian books. A pilot project has been conducted into the feasibility and costs of adding index entries for reviews from the journals formerly covered by Australian Book Review Index, to the Ausinet database WEST, which already includes reviews published in the National Times. The procedures for maintaining WEST have also been modified to permit the periodic output of a cumulated microfiche of the book review entries.

Whether or not we can contemplate re-establishing the Australian Book Review Index in this new format, ie on an on-line data base with or without a microfiche cumulative edition, will now depend on the level of interest among libraries. A first estimate of the cost of the operation indicates that it will be of the order of \$14,000 pa. Some revenue may be expected from use of the data base, but on present experience this is going to be relatively

small. Therefore, the project must depend on the sale of the microfiche version. It would assist our thinking on this project if interested librarians likely to purchase the service would write to me indicating the limits of their interest. Thus, I need to know how many copies of the microfiche might be purchased and at what price. Obviously the larger the number of sales the lower the price, and we might start thinking that the project is viable if 50 libraries were willing to pay \$250 pa. If this figure is too high for many libraries, I would welcome a nominated figure of the upper limit on the price, recognising that it would take 250 libraries to produce the necessary support at \$50 a time.

The future of the *Australian newspaper index* which was discussed in the previous issue of the *Newsletter* appears very uncertain.

The promoters of the project, Information Pathways, have received a discouraging response to their advertising campaign with only a handful of firm orders being received. The launching date of 1 July has therefore been postponed indefinitely. In the meantime, discussions have been held with State Librarians and the Australian Libraries Information Council (ALIC) has been approached to lend support. ALIC has requested a report from Stephen Lansdowne of Information Pathways and will consider giving their backing to the *Index* once this report has been examined.

It is disappointing that, for the time being, researchers and those involved in commerce, industry and politics will be denied ready access to the wealth of information which is contained in Australian newspapers. When one considers that their counterparts overseas take such access for granted and that vast sums of money are being ploughed into an Australian Bibliographic Network, the continued absence of a newspaper index is regrettable. Perhaps those librarians who decided against placing an order would care to comment on their reasons for not supporting this pioneering project. I am sure many of their users would be interested in their comments.

EDITOR

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AN INDEX FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?

Some members of the Society have raised the possibility of producing an index to the Society's organ. A quick search of the literature revealed that little has been written on the specific topic of indexing Society newsletters and it is perhaps useful to mention briefly some of the factors which need to be taken into account.

The first point which needs emphasizing is that an index should not be compiled and made publicly available solely because an individual or a group of people considers that it would be "nice" to have an index. Usually an index only becomes necessary with the existence of: 1) a significant body of information which is not easily accessible; and 2) a clearly identifiable body of people demanding or requiring access to that information.

Taking the first point, one could say that the main aim of the *Newsletter* over the years has been to keep the Society's members informed about its current activities. Its most regular contents include notices about

forthcoming meetings, reports from previous meetings, lists of members, financial statements and relevant extracts from book reviews. Much of the information it contains is only relevant for a short period and the purpose of indexing such material is therefore questionable.

An associated issue to be considered when contemplating the desirability of having an index to a periodical is whether its contents are already covered by established indexing services. Substantial articles in the *Newsletter* have been indexed by APAIS and more recently the publication has been abstracted and indexed by ACHLIS for AEI and LISA. It would therefore appear that major contributions to the subject of indexing in the *Newsletter* will be covered by some recognised and established reference tools.

The other prerequisite, referred to above, for an index was the existence of a clearly identifiable body of people requiring access to a body of information. The *Newsletter's* readership is difficult to define although it is fair to say that it would consist mainly of the Society's members. There has been no real demand from members for an index.

Because of the absence of the above prerequisites it is doubtful whether the preparation and publication of an index is warranted. If such a task were undertaken a considerable amount of work and expense would be involved since an index to our publication would need to be of the highest standard. It would also be an ongoing commitment.

The Committee would appreciate hearing from members with views on this issue.

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BOOK REVIEWS - INDEXES MENTIONED

BENCE-JONES, Mark. *The Viceroy of India*. Constable. Reviewed by Peter Ryan, *The Age*, 11 June 1983.

"Editing, proofreading and index are all indifferent".

GAYLE, Fay and Joy WUNDERSITZ. *Adelaide Aborigines: a case study of urban life 1966-1981*. ANU Press. Reviewed by Ronald Wild, *Australian book review*, No. 50, May 1983.

"The publication is essentially a descriptive research report but as such its value is diminished by at least two things. First, there is no index making it impossible to quickly find relevant facts and figures".

HELLER, Julek and Deirdre HEADON. *Knights*. Hutchinson. Reviewed by Wendy Blaxland, *The Australian*, 9-10 July 1983.

"Unfortunately, *Knights* has no index to help you find your favorite bits of information again. A pity".

HORNER, D. M. *High command: Australia and Allied strategy, 1939-1945*. George Allen & Unwin. Reviewed by Joseph M. Siracusa, *Australian book review*, No. 49, April 1983.

"Within the space of 446 pages and 18 tightly written chapters - the rest of the book turned over to appendices, notes, bibliography and an adequate index -".

LANG, W. R. (Roy). *Visions and realities: a history of the Geelong Infirmary and Benevolent Asylum*. Neptune Press. Reviewed by Elizabeth Hurtt, *Australian book review*, No. 50, May 1983.

"The index is thorough but covers only people - not events or topics".

MENCKEN, Henry Louis. *Mencken's dictionary of quotations*. Collins.

Reviewed by Clement Semmler, *The Australian*, 11-12 June 1983.

"It's admirably tabulated and cross-referenced; one's only criticism can be that it lacks an author index, which seems to me a necessity in a book such as this".

PAIS, Abraham. *Subtle is the Lord: the science and life of Albert Einstein*. Clarendon Press. Reviewed by Clive Coogan, *The Australian*, 16-17 April 1983.

"But the book is not without faults. I found the turgid index to be curiously defective. For example, although Einstein spent more than 20 years at Princeton University, neither Princeton nor its Institute for Advanced Study rate an entry, nor for that matter does the word laser".

PEARCE, Lee, DURRANT, Lawrence and Valerie PARV. *Wild places of Australia*. Bay Books. Reviewed by Olaf Ruhen, *The Australian*, 4-5 June 1983.

"In truth there is little to cavil at in the text, though the index is not immaculate".

PRIESTLEY, Brian. *Mingus. Quartet*. Reviewed by Dick Scott, *The Australian*, 9-10 July 1983.

"A great deal of hard work has gone into it with four appendices — transcribed solos, chorus structures, an analysis of *The black saint and the sinner lady* and a discography so comprehensive it requires its own index, a full list of references and a general index".

SPATE, O. H. K. *Monopolists and freebooters (The Pacific since Magellan, volume 11)*. Reviewed by John McLaren, *Australian book review*, No. 50, May 1983.

"Despite its lack of either a comprehensive index or a separate bibliography, both demanded by the author's command of detail and stimulation of interest which send the reader scurrying for sources ...".

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AN AID FOR GENEALOGISTS

The New South Wales Registrar-General's Department has issued a microfiche copy of the *Index to births, deaths and marriages pre 1900*.

The *Index* contains useful dates for genealogists and reference numbers which facilitate obtaining a copy of certificates from the Registrar-General's Department.

MARCUS CLARKE BIBLIOGRAPHY

An annotated bibliography of Marcus Clarke, compiled by Mr Ian F. McLaren, has recently been released by the Library Council of Victoria.

The bibliography covers all aspects of Clarke's very varied work as journalist, drama critic and book reviewer, novelist, short story writer, humourist, essayist, poet, dramatist and song writer.

Mr McLaren, who is Honorary Bibliographer of the University of Melbourne, and a member of the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, has published books and papers on many bibliographic and literary subjects. These include his notable C. J. Dennis bibliography, published in 1979.

The Marcus Clarke bibliography has been published as part of the Marcus Clarke Centenary Year Commemoration Programme, with the assistance of a grant by the Government in 1981 on the recommendation of the Marcus Clarke Centenary Committee.

Full bibliographic descriptions are given of Clarke's works and listings are provided of his contributions to newspapers and periodicals. References to and assessment of Clarke and his work by other writers are covered and the bibliography also includes manuscript material by Clarke and about him. In particular Clarke's important diaries from 1879 to 1881 are reproduced in full. Comprehensive indexes cover both works by Clarke and matters relating to him. Locations of copies of Clarke's works in major repositories are given, as well as, on a selective basis, locations of scarce or special copies.

Copies of *Marcus Clarke: an annotated bibliography* by Ian F. McLaren are obtainable from the Library Council of Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne, 3000. It is priced at \$A28.00 plus postage. Further enquiries regarding the publication should be directed to Patsy Hardy, Publications Officer, State Library of Victoria. Tel: (03) 669 9015.

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INDEXING COURSE

The June course in indexing which was arranged by the Society in association with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and guided by the Head of the Department of Librarianship was oversubscribed.

It is therefore planned to hold a further course on five consecutive Mondays commencing Monday 12 September 1983 from 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm at RMIT. The Society has contacted those who indicated an interest in the previous course but who missed out. Other individuals interested in participating in the course, which costs \$75.00, are invited to contact the Secretary for further details.

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