SECOND MEETING FOR 1984
Tuesday, 15 May: 5.30 for 6 p.m.
at CSIRO, 314 Albert Street, East Melbourne
Committee Room, Third Floor

The Speaker: Jeremy Fisher

Topic: INDEXING THE AUSTRALIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA

INDEX

Balopple, Lord, hires Mallet to
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Bolivar, 143.
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magazine', 64 n.
Boulanger, Napoleon, xxiv, 567,
568, 719, 729, 808 n., 829 n.,
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British', 477. His explanation
of the loss of his old guard,
744. His character, 115, 116 n.
Breadfruit, 577.
Brener, 387.
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Breton, 79.
Breton, 470.
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CONTENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual General Meeting -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report from Retiring President</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Income and Expenditure 1983</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Standing Committee for the Book Trade</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indexing Course</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees for Indexers</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indexing the <em>Atgus</em></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstracting and Indexing Services - CONSER Project</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Reviews - Indexes Mentioned</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

Postal Address: G.P.O. Box 1251L
MELBOURNE, 3001 Victoria

OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<td>PRESIDENT</td>
<td>Jean HAGGER</td>
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<td>VICE PRESIDENT</td>
<td>Sue HARVEY</td>
<td>418 7333</td>
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<tr>
<td>SECRETARY</td>
<td>Heather CAMERON</td>
<td>614 1077</td>
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<tr>
<td>TREASURER</td>
<td>Joyce KORN</td>
<td>602 4466</td>
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<td>COMMITTEE</td>
<td>Peter DAWE</td>
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<td>Stephen LANSDOWN</td>
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Ex Officio:

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minute Secretary</td>
<td>Joanne EINHORN</td>
<td>527 7738</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman, Panel of Assessors</td>
<td>George LEVICK</td>
<td>418 7333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>John THAWLEY</td>
<td>418 7333</td>
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This publication is indexed and abstracted by ACHLIS (Australian Clearing House for Library and Information Science) for AEI and LISA U.K.
REPORT FROM RETIRING PRESIDENT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
15 FEBRUARY 1984

Last year's annual general meeting included two talks — one from Peter Dawe, the retiring President of the Society up to then and one from myself as incoming President on the future for the Society. I do not expect such long range views to be repeated at too frequent intervals, but can record that it seems that those remarks set the scene for a successful year.

Membership now stands at 137 as against 98 at January 1983. Members are distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(+ 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>( - )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(+ 1)</td>
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<td>( - 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NZ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>( - )</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>137</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
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Meetings

During the year 4 general meetings were held in Melbourne. The talks by Jeannie Campbell on Oxford dictionaries, Ed Johnson on New developments in records management, and Margaret Jackson on Accounting aspects of freelance work, have been reported in the Newsletter. The range of excellent speakers who have addressed the meeting has helped to expand our awareness of our own and related fields.

The meeting convened in Canberra in August was reported in detail in the November Newsletter. As one outcome of that meeting there are current discussions for an indexing seminar to be run by the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

Public role of AusSI

The Committee meetings of the Society are distinguished by a growing number of reports of publishers and others seeking the services of members as indexers or consultants. This shows a healthy movement towards recognition of indexing as a skilled profession.

Interstate members

Apart from the Canberra meeting reported above, there are moves initiated by some Sydney members to form a meeting group there. This represents the work of the "enthusiastic organizers" who have appeared without any prompting from the Committee. Such spontaneous demonstrations of interest are becoming usual in the Society's affairs and indicate a bright future.
Register of Indexers

This year saw the adoption of more formal guidelines for the registration process. There are now 11 names on the Society's Register and the Panel of Assessors has a steady flow of indexes for assessment.

Newsletter

Four issues of the Newsletter were published in 1983 recording the Society's activities and interests. The Society is fortunate to have the services of John Thawley as editor.

Overseas contacts

The Vice-President, Jean Hagger, represented the Society at the Society of Indexers Bristol Conference in July, chairing one of the sessions.

It is also important to remember that the Indexer is, in part, our journal. Australian news and articles have been few and far between.

Indexing courses

Two further introductory courses were held in 1983 with the cooperation of RMIT and conducted by Mike Ramsden.

Finance

The Society continues to be financially healthy as shown by the Treasurer's report which accompanies this report.

Conclusion

Overall it has been enjoyable occupying this position for 1983. It is always enjoyable to preside over a flourishing enterprise. There is an excellent spirit of co-operation between the members and particularly the Committee.

This Society has been very fortunate in its excellent secretaries. I would particularly give credit to Jennifer Challis for many of the successes of the Society which attended her time as Secretary.

As to the incoming President, Jean Hagger, and the new Committee, some with past experience and others new to this role, they have already shown their keenness and look to be set for an even more successful year in 1984.

John SIMKIN

* * * * * * *
AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
JANUARY - DECEMBER 1983

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$4,625.14

$5,095.22

OPERATING SURPLUS $470.08
## BALANCE SHEET

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<td>Less Expenditure</td>
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## ASSETS

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The following notes formed the basis of Pam's address to the Society at our Annual General Meeting on 15 February 1984. The talk covered basic problems of book supply in Australia, particularly the libraries, and the antagonisms this has caused with booksellers and publishers. The establishment of the Joint Standing Committee for the Book Trade and its activities were also discussed.

Problems of book supply in Australia

a) Australian public, especially libraries, buy US and UK publications.

b) Information on new titles comes from UK, US by means of --

   i) Publishers catalogues
   ii) Flyers etc. announcing new titles (usually more up to date than i)
   iii) Reviewing journals etc. from overseas (TLS, Choice, Bookseller, etc.)
   iv) as well as information from local suppliers. In fact libraries often know well in advance of projected new titles.

c) Stock holding by local agents. Some hold close to 100 per cent of titles published by the parent body. Others do not, and theoretically indent titles as they are ordered. However, many agents hold mostly new titles. Some appear reluctant to indent titles not held.

d) Many local agents/publishers are not really aware of libraries requirements. They stock new titles, but often have little information on backlist titles or forthcoming publications. Information on series or continuations is often poor. Publishers do not understand that when a new subject is taught at school/college/university backlist titles may be needed.

e) Publishers/agents reporting is poor. All too many examples of first orders ignored and subsequent claims from library suppliers apparently ignored. Publishers/agents have not understood that libraries must know if the title ordered will be available, and when - both from point of view of financial commitment, and also to satisfy user. The Report (not yet published) when the lecturer has his own copy can be fatal for relationship between library and local publishers agent.

f) Finally price. Australian agents have tended to multiply the overseas price by 3 (i.e. £10 UK book selling here for $30) and given little discount for libraries. This compared badly with prices available in US and partly with UK prices. One Australian library supplier broke the ring some 10-12 years ago with a few US "academic" publishers. Now many, both US and UK have agreed to make titles available to Australian libraries at "close to overseas published price".
Joint Standing Committee for the Book Trade

These niggles have gone on for years but were "brought to a head" at a Conference of the International Booksellers Association held in Melbourne in March 1981. As part of this there was a Seminar on "Libraries and local ordering" at which two libraries, two library suppliers and two publishers spoke. The tenor of the arguments put forward by both the librarians and the library suppliers was similar - that local agents were not providing the service needed to encourage libraries to order locally. Suggestions came from each speaker that a joint committee of the three Associations be set up to examine matters of interest to all three bodies.

Subsequently the Joint Standing Committee for the Book Trade was established -

a) To consider matters affecting the publication and/or distribution of books and associated materials within Australia which may be of concern to the constituent bodies;

b) To advise the constituent bodies on appropriate action concerning such matters; and

c) To consider any matters referred to the Standing Committee by one of the constituent bodies.

The Committee has concerned itself with a number of matters including sales tax on books and the question of the availability of more Australian books in Australian libraries.

There have, however, been two matters which have been of more significance -

a) The drafting of an agreement by publishers to provide better service to both booksellers and librarians. The terms of this agreement are as follows:

Publishers subscribing to this specification have agreed to the following performance criteria --

i) That their stocks will be maintained with the objective of meeting the reasonable expectation of librarians for the immediate supply of most items provided on a closed market basis.

ii) That where items cannot be stocked economically or are out-of-stock, they will place urgent special orders for out-of-stock titles to ensure delivery within 4 months of receipt of order.

iii) That all titles not able to be supplied immediately will be immediately reported on indicating a realistic delivery date, and regular updates will be provided to such reports in a form acceptable to librarians.

iv) That pricing policies will reflect the ability of Australian libraries to purchase from overseas suppliers.

v) That trained staff capable of answering normal bibliographic and delivery queries will be contactable during normal business hours.

vi) That current catalogues of the publishers represented by any agent will be made available on request.
Significant amongst these terms are the list of acceptable publishers reports. These will not be used by all publishers and many of these that will eventually use the terms will require to write their inhouse programmes to provide for the terminology used, and to reprint stationery. Nevertheless, there are moves afoot to have these reports adopted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as an Australian standard.

b) The second, and in many ways the most exciting move is one which will interest you all as indexers. One of the problems which faces the librarian trying to decide whether to purchase a book locally or overseas is whether the book is in stock at the local agent, or is expected shortly.

The Joint Standing Committee for the Book Trade has discussed this problem with Michael Webster (Managing Director of Thorpe's which publishes Australian books in print and informally with the National Library of Australia. What we (i.e. the JSCBT) would like to make available is the means whereby information on the stock of various publishers is linked in some way and made available to those interested (which may be libraries or booksellers). A sub-committee has been set up to investigate means of achieving this. Possible means which could be considered include linking stockholdings of publishers with ABN, or developing Australian books in print to include the holdings of stocks of overseas publications held by suppliers. Other means are, however, also being considered.

** * * * * * *

INDEXING COURSE

The Society, in conjunction with the RMIT Department of Librarianship, is considering the possibility of holding another indexing course in June/July 1984. Anyone who is interested in enrolling is asked to fill in the form enclosed with this Newsletter and forward it to:

The Secretary,
Australian Society of Indexers,
G.P.O. Box 12511,
Melbourne, Vic. 3001

Please note that this form is an expression of interest only. Application forms and further details will be sent at a later date to enquirers. Membership of the Society will be a requirement for participation.

** * * * * * *

FEES FOR INDEXERS

What are the views of members on the question of fees for indexers? Are any of you receiving payment for your indexing efforts and if so how is the fee arrived at? What experiences have members had with setting fees? The Society does publish, every so often, its recommended minimum fee for contract indexing. Does anyone actually use these recommended figures? Are other formulas used by members?
There is some discussion within the Society about what role the Society should adopt towards the question of fees for indexers. Should the Society endeavour to set a benchmark or to represent the general practice?

All views on the matter of fees are most welcome and it is hoped that there will be some response.

Please address comments, in writing, to the Secretary.

* * * * * * * * * *

INDEXING THE ARGUS

A call for volunteers

One of the history projects planned to mark Victoria's 150th anniversary is the compiling of an index to the Argus for the years 1859 to 1909. Indexes already exist for the years 1846 to 1858 and for 1910 to 1949. All those interested in historical work will appreciate the value of filling this gap in the index. The History and Heritage Committee of the 150th organisation is now calling for volunteers to help with the project.

If you give a day and a half to the project, you will be able to read and record the contents of one week of the newspaper. We don't want to work in smaller units than a week: we'll be delighted of course if you can give more time and read several weeks.

Please note that you will not have to decide under what headings to enter material: that will be done later by a professional indexer. The task at this first stage is to record on cards a very brief summary description of the contents of each item or article in the paper.

You can read the paper at the La Trobe Library, the Australian section of the State Library in the city, where original copies, not microfilm, will be made available. Or you can read the paper on microfilm at any one of the University libraries - Melbourne, Monash or La Trobe. At each of these locations you can collect the cards on which you are to record the information and return them when you have finished.

If you are willing to help please phone or write to Mr David Packer, History School, University of Melbourne, Parkville 3052, phone 341 5959. If no answer, leave a message with the History Office, 345 1844. We will send you a booklet of instructions and allocate you a week (or more) of the paper.

Marian AVELING,  
Chairperson,  
History and Heritage Committee,  
Victoria's 150th  

John HIRST,  
Co-ordinator,  
Argus project

* * * * * * * * *
ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING SERVICES -
CONSER Project *

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services (NFAIS) have begun a cooperative project to enrich the CONSER (Conversion of Serials) database with information about coverage by abstracting and indexing (A & I) services. The CONSER database contains over 350,000 records for serials titles contributed by US and Canadian libraries. The project will provide a needed link between A & I service citations and library catalogues, enable researchers to learn where serials of interest are indexed and facilitate access to high demand serials (i.e. those which are indexed). In addition, the project will improve related operations in the participating A & I services and in the many libraries that use CONSER.

The goals of the project are:

1. To ensure that the CONSER database contains records for all serials titles covered by a selected core group of the most widely used A & I services in the US and Canada.
2. To add to those records information describing where each serial is indexed or abstracted.
3. To provide to the participating A & I services standardized bibliographic data (e.g. ISSN key titles, library entries) for each serial title they cover, enabling them to cite the serials they index in the standardized library form.
4. To develop the capability to produce machine-readable serials lists for use by participating A & I services.
5. To keep the A & I information in the CONSER database up-to-date.

The work of the project will be accomplished by comparing lists of titles covered by the A & I services with the CONSER file; adding, verifying, or updating coverage information for titles already in CONSER; and creating catalogue records for titles not found in the file. For further information, contact:

Nicola Daval,
Association of Research Libraries,
1527 New Hampshire Ave.,
N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036 (202) 232 2466

* Reprinted from United Kingdom Serials Group Newsletter,
Vol. 5, No. 2, December 1983

*******

BOOK REVIEWS - INDEXES MENTIONED

ADBURGHAM, Alison. Silver fork society: fashionable life and literature from 1814 to 1840. Constable. Reviewed by Rosemary Dobson, The Age, 4 February 1984. "There is a detailed bibliography covering the various forms of writing during the period, and a useful index."

"If you want to know what Eisenhower had for breakfast on 4 June 1944, the chances are that not only will Ambrose tell you, but that his excellent index will guide you to the spot in a second."


"As it covers such a comprehensive range of information of names, addresses, phone numbers, and areas of interest, the alphabetical listing under state is not adequate. It desperately needs a cross reference index if it is to realise its potential."


"The third edition was rolled out in 1977, now with six volumes and (only) 2.5 million words. This was a lively edition, full (some would say too full) of coloured pictures, and with good coverage of recent people and events. But -- quelle horreur! -- sans index. Those with a sense of the ironic and the anachronistic often used the index to the second edition to find the headings of articles which they could then look up in the third. Such subterfuge is rendered redundant by the coming of the fourth edition ... this time there is an index ...

There are faults ... here and there somebody not on the qui vive misses a q.v. There is the article on ghost towns which manages in 27 lines not to mention a single ghost town by name ...

The index itself, though full and making a welcome return to the Australian Encyclopaedia, suffers from gimmickry. It doesn't give a simple volume and page reference, but a combination of three letters and three numbers to identify the article you seek. I guess you'll get used to it eventually.

You'll almost certainly never bother to use the 'article reference guide', a full list of articles and their reference letters and numbers. I would have been happier had these particular 70 pages been filled with real encyclopedia instead. Telling us where Larapinta Land is, for example, or reincarnating some of the ghost towns."


"Reference librarians are a stoical bunch. Since 1977 they have endured, with little published demur, a major Australian reference work, representing a considerable financial investment for small libraries, with one massive conceptual fault. It had no index.

I refer, of course, to the third edition of the Australian encyclopaedia, that often neglected reference source, through no fault of its users. Happily, after reprintings with minor amendments and corrections in 1979 and 1981, the AE is now into a truly new fourth edition, this time replete with an index. It has become a real reference work once again ...

My joy at seeing the AE once more fully furnished with an index was not unclouded. For reasons which are probably very compelling to the editor and publishers, index references are not to volume and page numbers but to a three letter and three number code. So under pigeons is a reference to PIG020, pigs PIG050, Piguenit PIG070 and so on. The user then finds the volume, in this case PEA-RUS, and the correct segment within it, actually on pages 49-52. I'd have much preferred the traditional 8:49."


"The index, even by usually poor local standards, is atrocity, incomplete and capricious."

BRIMSON, Samuel. The tramways of Australia. Dreamweaver. Reviewed by Peter Spearritt, Sydney morning herald, 17 December 1983. "Chapters on each city are accompanied by useful maps but irritatingly the maps do not indicate when the lines were opened or, just as importantly, closed. Nor does the book have an index or a bibliography, let alone a guide to further reading for people who want to follow up particular cities."


THE COMPLETE book of Australian mammals, edited by Ronald Strahan. Australian Museum/Angus & Robertson. Reviewed by T. R. Garnett, The Age, 21 January 1984. "I would make two pleas for when a new edition is printed ... The second is for the recasting of the index, the least satisfactory part of the whole book. (Try looking up plant or place names.) It would surely be better, in listing common names, to put the noun and not the adjective, first."

THE DICTIONARY of Australian quotations, edited by Stephen Murray-Smith. Heinemann. Reviewed by G. A. Wilkes, National times, 30 March - 5 April 1984. "Experience may show the index of keywords to be too selective. The quiz contestant trying to locate 'Last sea-thing dredged by sailor Time from Space' would not have found it under 'last', 'sea-thing', 'dredged', 'sailor' or 'Space', but only under 'Time'. He would have found 'The black swan of trespass on alien waters' by looking under 'trespass' but not otherwise. This may limit the usefulness of the dictionary for part-remembered quotations."

MACKERRAS, Colin. Modern China: a chronology from 1842 to the present. Freeman & Co. Reviewed by Tim Wright, Australian book review, No. 59, April 1984. "Its greatest single advantage over its competitors is its index, which enables this work, unlike most others which contain either no index or only a very generalized one, to be used to find the date of a particular event or to follow someone's career."

OSBORNE, Milton. Ho Chi Minh. University of Queensland Press. Reviewed by Ken Scott, Australian book review, No. 59, April 1984. "An index is provided but it is surprising to find that it omits Paris and Moscow while including Canton and Japan when surely anyone wanting to check periods of important contact and learning would be at least as interested in the former. But then it also misspells Chiang Kai-shek, so perhaps it was added in some haste."

REIS, Brian. Film: a guide to reference books. Griffith University. Reviewed by David J. Jones, Incite, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2 March 1984. " - there are no indexes, which will be disastrous if this work gets any larger."

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<th>Tuesday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Monday, 9 July</td>
<td>15 August</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Monday, 8 October</td>
<td>15 November</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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