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Medal dinner

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ADDA seminar
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Membership of the Society is open to persons and institutions engaged in indexing or interested in promoting the objects of the Society. The annual subscription, due on 1 January each year, is $20; a half-yearly subscription for entry after 1 July is $10.

Those wishing to know more about the Society should write to The Secretary of the Society at the above address or telephone a committee member.

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SOCIETY OF INDEXERS CONFERENCE 1990

The conference was held at University of Edinburgh, Pollock Halls on 6–8 April 1990. Of the 122 delegates registered, three were Australians — Josephine McGovern and John Simkin from Melbourne and Garry Cousins from Sydney. The 17 who were not English, Scots or Welsh included participants from USA, Eire, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Canada and the three Australians. Pollock Halls in that weekend before Easter were full of conferences. Other interest groups included MENSAs, the Belfast Geologists, Edinburgh and Leith Soroptimists. The Scottish group of the Society of Indexers had worked long and hard to make the conference a success and made us very welcome indeed. At 5 o’clock in the sunny afternoon of Friday 6 April, we were warmly greeted by that charming lady the Right Honorable Eleanor McLaughlin, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and by Ken Bakewell, President of the Society of Indexers, also an impressive figure.

After dinner, there was an interesting address — ‘Can lawyers use indexes?’ — by John Blackie, Senior Lecturer in Scots law, University of Edinburgh. In practice, many lawyers seem not to use the indexes of the books they use. Lawyers often browse heuristically tables of cases and tables of statutes sometimes help overcome deficiencies in the index. He posed the question of what might attract lawyers to indexes. We must be aware that there are different kinds of lawyers and law books ranging from authoritative texts to student manuals. The next point was facing up to residual traditionalism of lawyers. Indexers should also be aware that some legal language is unfixed. Remember overall that lawyers use books to find answers and make decisions. The talk was illustrated by many references to legal texts — English, Scottish, Irish and Canadian. The address reinforced my perception that indexing law requires special knowledge and skills.

On Saturday we started with Richard Raper’s ‘Business aspects of indexing’. This provoked a good deal of comment, discussion and badinage about his cute little cartoon audio visuals. Richard reminded indexers that in Britain they were part of a two billion dollar industry. Indexing is just a commodity and the aim is to make money. We should not be distracted by sentiment. He proceeded to consider the plan of a small business. Remember cash flow. As all contracts are negotiable, be sure to ask for a fair return for one’s work. Evaluate one’s work analysis. Quality should be maintained. Remember obligations to employees and concentrate on time of delivery to make sure it is on time. Employ marketing skills and consider the value of leasing equipment. Ward Phillip and Audrey’s Small business, 1979, is a useful basic text. Most of the audience were sole practitioners and there was lively discussion on maintaining standards if one sublet indexes and had to keep to deadlines.

Session 1, part 2, was a lively presentation by Nancy Mulvany, President of the American Society of Indexers, entitled ‘American indexers in the ’90s: copyright, contacts and new horizons in indexing’.

American publishing is currently in a decline and fewer books were published in 1989. The west coast is ahead of the east coast in electronic publishing. Custom or demand publishing and selective chapters will test the indexer. Although an index is copyright in USA, re-use of an index is not. Indexers lack the instinct of writers for protection. Indexing on disk has contractual implications. Indexers need to explore the need for alternative markets. For instance, bank manuals in USA often have 1000 pages. Internal corporate manuals are another field in this age of computers. Electronic publishing means more and more text online, with important implications for indexers. Continental Europe is a future challenge for markets. American indexers want more visibility. As a 25th celebration, the American Society of Indexers (ASI) installed an answering machine in its Washington and New England offices. The demands on Washington show that the indexers require full time office staff. ASI has a panel of speakers available to speak at related conferences. ASI gained much useful publicity from a project in San Francisco where a team indexed newspaper clippings files on social, political and other aspects of AIDS. Members each donated about 30 hours of work and total hours given were 1300. The thesaurus design is all on computer in a form for transfer to a database. ASI helps its members by providing group rates for insurance. Six newsletters a year are produced. Elizabeth Wallis had prepared a complementary paper entitled ‘A UK perspective’ but so many questions and comments followed Nancy Mulvany’s paper that Elizabeth graciously suggested that her paper be published in a forthcoming Indexer.

Session 1, Part 3, was of great interest to the British members present when an accountant spoke clearly on ‘Tax and finance’.

Session 2. How do publishers fit in?

After lunch, we were entertained by the paper presented by Rosalind Marshall, academic historian, author and indexer. The title of her latest work — ‘Virgins and viragos’ — intrigued many. Dr Marshall does her own indexing and reminded us of faults such as inaccurate numbering, incomplete names, lack of geographical qualification in entries and that ‘bete noir’, cross references that lead nowhere.

On the positive side, she liked to see every personal name indexed fully, a brief biography of the person, i.e. dates and occupation, and commended appropriate indexing of themes and topics. Dr Marshall gave a list of references she found useful, particularly with regard to Scottish history and biography, her speciality. These could be handy for Australians concerned with tracing their Scots relations and forebears:

- Black, — Scottish placenames.
- Black, — Scottish families.
- Ferguson, Joan. Bibliography of Scottish family histories; History of the Society of Writers of the Signet Who’s who.
- Grant, Francis. Faculty of Advocates.
- Paull, — Scots peerage, 9 vols, 1904–14
- Scott, H. Ministries by parish; Who was who.

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- Grant, Francis. Faculty of Advocates.
- Paull, — Scots peerage, 9 vols, 1904–14
- Scott, H. Ministries by parish; Who was who.
The second part of this session saw speakers from Edinburgh University Press and Aberdeen University Press. At EUP, over half the books are indexed by outside indexers. Seventy books a year is average. What is needed most is speed. Subject expertise is not considered of great importance. Costs are valued against royalties. The publisher expects a unstructured index. The publishers had to deal with academics and with indexers. Sometimes academics could be difficult. Long indexes had to be weighed up and the value of bibliographies and extensive appendices considered. He found some indexers over-enthusiastic and quoted a Josephine McGovern from the Australian Society was asked to chair Janet Christie's paper on geographical place names. Mrs Christie has worked at the famous map makers, John Bartholemew and Son, for over 12 years and is now the editorial manager. She has spent many years working on the indexes to the Times atlases. At Bartholomew's, indexing is not a popular task and only two out of 10 like indexing. With map data capture, computers are increasingly important. The aim is to be user friendly, hence:

- Nile, river
- Ganges, river
- Lomond Lough
- Mamera, Sea of

But note:

Costa Brava

With descriptives, cities, towns and villages are not differentiated. Cross references are essential:

- Florence see Firenze 45 K7
- Ceylon see Sri Lanka
- No less that 24 accents are used in coding.

The size and scope of the atlas affects the depth of the index. Atlanta (USA) would be acceptable in a school atlas but Atlanta (Georgia) would be necessary where 10 Atlantas appear in a great atlas. River names curve around the rivers on the map and are used near the mouth or the longest part of the river. Bartholomew has an ongoing project with computer indexing and work proceeds all the time to digitise and to capture the grid. The press will work for database sales. Larousse and Readers Digest are also interested in the computer process for their maps.

Session 3, part 2 was a panel on computers. The panelists were all able to give details of hands on experience.

Hilary and Drusilla Calvert spoke on the computer system Macrex which they have written and maintained for IBM PCs and compatible machines. They were supported by Gary Hall, husband of Ann Hall, who demonstrated Macrex in Australia last year.

The other panel members were Peter and Frances Lennie who spoke on Cindextm, the computer software from Indexing Research, Rochester, NY.

The panel identified the main requirements for an indexing program:

- ability sort according to British standard
- to merge
- to run at worthwhile speed
- to print in all formats required
- to see what one is doing
- to edit what has been done.

A problem with small computers such as smallest Amstrad is that publishers do not recognise the disks. English indexers have the advantage of acquiring computers through Morgans in London who acquire bankrupt stock. MS DOS is truly better. More sophistication means scanners and file compression programs. This late afternoon session was complemented by the evening fair at Pollock Halls as there were first hand computer demonstrations. Macrex information is available from:

Hilary and Drusilla Calvert
38 Rochester Rd
London NW1 9JJ
England
Tel: (071) 267 3793 (plus country code)

Cindex information is available from:

Indexing Research
PO Box 27687
River Station
Rochester
NY 14627 — 7689
USA
Tel: (716) 461 5530 (plus country code)

Stalls at the fair included the Society's Training and Accreditation Board; the Society's bookstall; including...
the training manuals; a handsome and colourful exhibition of Scottish writing today from Book Trust, Scotland; Macrex and Cindex demonstrations and discussions; Society of Freelance Editors and Proofreaders.

We had begun the day at 9 a.m. and many were still acquiring wisdom and knowledge at 9 p.m. (sorry 21.00 hours). A very full Saturday.

Session 4. How do we cope with grey areas?

Hazel Bell, whose name we know so well from the Indexer, spoke with wit, learning and style on the prosaic topic — 'Bias in indexing' on the morning of Sunday 8 April. I am happy to report that this will be printed in the forthcoming Indexer. The address is worth savouring and repetition in print. Hazel’s delivery was often drowned out by the gales of laughter this gentle lady provoked. Kurt Wellegut observed that the index sometimes tells more of the indexer than of the book or text itself.

Session 5. How do we learn?

This session covered training and involved a lively discussion between members of the Society of Indexers Training and Accreditation Board and from the floor of the conference. This important topic deserves a report in its own right as there are various schools of thought on the matter.

The weekend conference was most interesting and enjoyable. I was also fortunate to go to the 1980 conference in Cambridge. Both conferences have been notable for their friendly atmosphere and genuine concern for the states of indexing and indexers. The 1992 conference will probably be held in the north west of England but, in the meantime, an interim conference cum Aegean sojourn is planned at Hvar, Yugoslavia, in September 1991.

Josephine McGovern

LATS AND LONGS

Dorothy Prescott gave an informative talk on map indexing at a meeting held at CSIRO, East Melbourne, on 24 July. The following notes were compiled from her presentation.

Indexing of maps in books

Such maps are treated as for figures, looking in particular for: any geographical names; the type of subject matter dealt with (such as mineral distribution, trade routes, etc); and the time period, if the material is historical. In reproductions of old maps the subject matter dealt with (such as mineral distribution, particular for: any geographical names; the type of presentation.

Indexing of atlases (including street directories)

Firstly a warning: geographical names are a minefield! (Why this is so soon became evident.) All marked points/places are located on the map by means of a grid system. This grid may be a reference grid, with letters printed along the top and numbers down the side, as in Melway’s street directory. This results in many places having the same grid reference, e.g. ‘E7’. Alternatively, coordinates of latitude and longitude may be used, as in an atlas. In a geographical index, latitude is always quoted first, in degrees, and for larger scales additionally in minutes and seconds. If a computerised system is used it is necessary to precede single numbers with a zero, e.g. 03° 41’. There is an international standard for the representation of latitude, longitude and altitude, ISO 6709. It is important to note that MARC catalogues of maps record the coordinates for a map in the wrong order, with longitude first!

While the coordinate grid on a map gives the approximate location, to construct a geographical index it is necessary to obtain the actual point coordinates of a place by consulting a gazetteer. An essential reference tool is the series published by the US Board on Geographical Names. Over 200 of these gazetteers have been published by the Board. For Australia, a set of 16 microfiche (obtainable from the Australian Surveying and Land Information Group [AUSLIG] in Canberra) provides place names on the 1:100,000 map series sheets. A hard copy gazetteer of place names on the 1:250,000 map series is also available. For Victoria, the Department of Property and Services maintains a place name reference file. From time to time updates of the Register of Place Names in Victoria appears in published format with imprint, Melbourne: Place Names Committee.

Forms of place names

Settled place names appear as ‘direct entries’. For example, Mount Magnet is a town, not a mountain and is entered directly as 'Mount Magnet'. All other places (lakes, mountains, creeks, rivers, etc.) go in as 'reverse entries', e.g. 'Hotham, Mount'.

Qualification of names

Place names should be qualified, e.g.
London, Eng.
London, Ont.
Melbourne, Eng.
Note that places within federated states require state qualifiers, e.g.
Melbourne, Vic.
Victoria, BC

Historical names

It may be necessary to decide whether to use a current place name or its historical name. It is not always helpful to the user to simply adopt the name given in the particular book. It is more helpful to give the current name with a reference from the old name, e.g.
Port Fairy (formerly Belfast)
Belfast see Port Fairy

In this context it was noted that Melbourne, Vic., was earlier called Bearbrass, thankfully only for a short time!

Name changes

Name changes for Australia may be found by reference to: Wells Geographical Dictionary of the Colonies (1848); Bailliere’s series of gazetteer and road guides to Australian states; or from a map library. Political changes may necessitate references such as:
East Indies see Indonesia
Persia see Iran
For changes to the boundaries of countries or states it is necessary to refer to the particular book being dealt with, and may depend on the time period concerned, e.g. Poland.

Orthography

Attention must be paid to orthography, since systems of spelling may have altered, such as for China and Indonesia. Columbia-Lippencott is a good source for historical names (published 1972). For current names the Times comprehensive atlas is a recommended reference. Sources for Australian names are the Reader's Digest Atlas of Australia and the Macquarie Atlas, apart from the other publications mentioned earlier in the talk.

Finally, Dorothy gave an outline of her current project, The geology of the mineral deposits of Australia and Papua New Guinea. This work was compiled by over four hundred authors and is updated about every 15 years. An idea was gained of the immensity of the task and the problems involved, not the least being having to satisfy an editor who was untutored in the requirements of indexing.

Ian Odgers

MESSAGE FROM THE NSW PRESIDENT

It is my pleasure to announce to members that a New South Wales Branch of the Australian Society of Indexers was formed on 8 August 1990. Twenty-four members voted the new branch into existence as provided for in the Society's constitution. The following officers were elected:

President: Garry Cousins
Treasurer: Michael Wyatt
Secretary: Christine Winning
Minutes Secretary: Carolyn Kearney
Publicity Officer: Christine MacKinnon
Committee: Sylvia Griffin
Committee: Alan Walker

I hope the formation of the new branch will mean a higher profile for the indexing profession here in NSW, and that it will enable us to reach a greater consensus as a group both on professional matters, such as methods and standards, and on industrial matters, such as costing and relations with publishers.

Forthcoming activities of the Branch include a talk by Elizabeth Wallis on the criteria used for the registration of indexers (see separate item for details), and, early in the new year, a meeting on the problematic issue of quoting and costing for an index.

Please feel free to ring me on (02) 955 1525 if you would like more information.

Garry Cousins

REPORT ON NSW BRANCH MEETING

A meeting of indexers of NSW was held in the State Library on 8 August.

There was some discussion over the proposal to become a formal branch of the Australian Society of Indexers. The advantages and various options were considered before the motion 'That NSW members form a branch of the Australian Society of Indexers, to be known as the NSW Branch', was put, and carried unanimously. There were 15 members of the AusSI in attendance, plus eight proxy votes received.

The second motion discussed was 'That the NSW Branch adopt the Society's Constitution as its own'. An amendment was proposed by Janet Sorby and seconded by Christine Mackinnon, 'That the Branch shall be managed by an executive consisting of the Branch President (who shall act as the Branch Chairman), together with at least two other officers.' This motion, as amended, was also carried unanimously. Officers were then elected.

Alan Walker advised that the forthcoming indexing course at the University of NSW is fully booked, but that later in 1990 there will be a course, arranged through the UNSW School of Librarianship, on the use of personal computers in indexing. Those interested should phone (02) 697 3589.

It was noted that Elizabeth Wallis, Registrar of the British Society of Indexers, will be in Sydney from 25 November until mid-December and is seeking a home in which to stay. She will be teaching at a one-day seminar during her stay.

Garry Cousins gave a report on a three-day Society of Indexers Conference held in Edinburgh on 6-8 April 1990. Interesting sessions included: How can we run a business?; How do publishers fit in?; How do we deal with practicalities?; Bias in indexing; and Training for indexing.

A panel discussion on 'Dealing with publishers and editors' followed.

Nina Riemer, Senior Editor with ABC Books, spoke on her expectations of an indexer. The most important qualities are:

Accurancy

Timeliness, i.e. keeping to publisher's schedule

Keeping to the publisher's budget, i.e. by not over-indexing, by giving an estimate of the cost of the index well in advance.

Indexer's suggestions as to style and content of the index

Marjorie Flood, Chief Book Editor (Indexing), CCH Australia Ltd, spoke about her work in CCH, a legal publisher dealing mostly with taxation and business law. Most materials are loose-leaf reporting services and as well as compiling subject indexes, Marjorie is responsible for creating tables of statutes, cases and rulings. She spoke of the advantages of working in-house, with a team of indexers and editors.

Alan Walker spoke from the point of view of a freelance indexer. He told of some of the problems encountered with publishers, such as lack of communication about space and budget restrictions, which can lead to wasted effort and frustration. Also, as editors seem to be very mobile, it is rare to deal with the same editor. This means it is necessary to clarify the terms of the agreement for every job. A written contract should not be necessary, as what is preferred is a trusting
relationship based on a verbal agreement. He pointed out that the indexer can be very helpful to a publisher in indicating typographical errors and inconsistencies within the text.

General discussion followed, which centred around contracts (Nina said that although it is desirable to have written communication at some stage, publishers are too busy to issue specific written contracts) and other communication between publisher and indexer, particularly concerning the appropriate size of the index, relative to the publisher’s budget and the indexer’s quote. If an index is considered too long by the publisher, ways of shortening it were discussed. Some subheadings in an index can be removed. The publisher may ask that all names mentioned more than once be removed, but this was not considered to be a sensible strategy. The layout of the index can be condensed or it can be set in smaller type. If the publisher cuts it down, there is the danger of leaving blank cross-references. Christine MacKinnon suggested possible places where an index can be cut, if necessary, when submitting it to a publisher.

Other topics covered included the amount of taxation taken out of indexers’ fees by publishers since the law changed on 1 July; the suggestion that publishers should require an indexer to be registered, and the ensuing problem of how a budding indexer could get their first job; and how to launch oneself into the profession of indexing.

Carolyn Kearney

NEXT MEETING OF NSW BRANCH

A meeting of NSW members will be held on Wednesday 5 December in Seminar Room 1, Level 11, State Library of New South Wales. The meeting will start at 6.00 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.

Elizabeth Wallis, Registrar of the British Society of Indexers, will be talking on ‘Criteria for the registration of indexers’. She will be focusing on the experiences and problems the British Society has had in this area.

Judging the competence of indexers is always a contentious issue, and we hope many of our NSW members will come along to hear what Elizabeth has to say, and to offer their own opinions on the matter.

If you intend to come along please ring Garry Cousins on (02) 955 1525, or leave a message on his machine. A small donation will be requested to cover costs.

Please note that the list of members which appeared in the last newsletter was compiled in January 1990 and changes of address notified after compilation were not included.

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS—
MEDAL DINNER

The Australian Society of Indexers Medal for 1990 will be awarded at a dinner to be held on Wednesday 21 November 1990.

VENUE: Graduate House
University of Melbourne
224 Leicester Street
Carlton Vic.

TIME: 7:00 for 7:30 p.m.

COST: $30.00 per head, all inclusive

RSVP Ian Odgers (03) 418 7275 or Max McMaster (03) 418 7335 by Wednesday 14 November 1990.

The Medal winner will be announced, together with details of runners-up. A certificate will also be presented to the successful publishing house.

This year we are keeping the name of the winner a surprise, so come along for what will be an enjoyable evening. The winning entry together with the runners-up will be on display.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following new members:
Mr W. Anderson PO Box 1197, North Sydney, NSW 2059
Mrs J. George 21 Elgata Street, The Gap, Qld 4061
Ms H. Ranger 6/7 Greig Court, Elwood, Vic. 3184
Ms K. Robinson 1/2-6 Brown Street, Newtown, NSW 2042
Mr R. Malot PO Box 52, Lyneham, ACT 2602
Mrs K. Coolbear Glaxo NZ Pty Ltd, Private Bag, Palmerston North, New Zealand
Ms C. Pillar 10/51 Francis Street, Bondi, NSW 2026
Ms N. Seminara PO Box 813, Kings Cross, NSW 2011

REGISTERED INDEXERS

The Society congratulates the following members, who recently qualified as Registered Indexers:
Dominique Davis
Dora Chai

INDEXERS AVAILABLE

Members of the Society will receive one free copy of Indexers available this year. Additional copies are available at $7.50 each. Copies are sent free of charge to major publishing houses throughout Australia.
SEMINAR: AUSTRALIAN DATABASE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION—WILL ONLINE GO OFFLINE?

A seminar on the future directions of the Australian database industry will be held with speakers including:

Katie Blake from OTC and Editor of Online currents
Andrew Giles-Peters: La Trobe University/CSIRO
Don Schauder: RMIT—AUSTROM
Marjolijn Jones: TAFE National Centre for Research and Development
David Stephenson—on The Australian Index to Computers and High Technology Section

Also: Speakers from Telecom and the major Australian database vendors: AUSINET, OZLINE, AUSTRALIS

Where: Melbourne Zoo Convention Centre
When: Wednesday, 14 November 1990, 9.00—9.15 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Cost: $150 (includes lunch and morning/afternoon tea); $130 to ADDA members. Make cheque ($150 or $130) payable to ADDA and send to:
ADDA R.O.
Box 53,
Hawthorn, Vic. 3122

Draft Programme:

9:00 - 9:15 Welcome
Australian Online Vendors: overview
9:15 - 9:30 AUSINET
9:30 - 9:45 AUSTRALIS
9:45 - 10:00 INFO-ONE
10:00 - 10:15 OZLINE
10:15 - 10:30 PRESSCOM
10:30 - 10:45 Morning Tea
10:45 - 11:15 Telecom
Developments in telecommunications: a view from Telecom

11:15 - 11:45 Katie Blake, OTC/ONLINE CURRENTS
OTC Powersearch/The online scene
11:45 - 12:15 Andrew Giles-Peters, La Trobe University
Shifting online interface processing to the user PC
12:15 - 12:30 Discussion
12:30 - 1:30 Lunch
1:30 - 2:00 Don Schauder, RMIT
The AUSTROM experience
2:00 - 2:30 Marjolijn Jones, TAFE National Centre for R & D
Using MicroISIS to distribute the VOCED database: a floppy success
2:30 - 3:00 CSIRO
The use of CD-ROM in the distribution of scientific and technical information
3:00 - 3:30 David Stephenson, Quarrion Consultancy
Index to the Australian 'Computers and High Technology' section
3:30 - 3:45 Afternoon Tea
3:45 - 4:45 PANEL discussion

VALA Dinner
Following the Seminar a Vala Dinner will be held at the Hilton Hotel at a cost of $45.00.
All Seminar participants are invited. — Please indicate if you wish to attend.

NEWSLETTER—NEXT ISSUE

We welcome contributions to the Newsletter. If you have any material you feel would be suitable for inclusion please send it to the Editor, Australian Society of Indexers, GPO Box 1251L, Melbourne, Vic. 3001, by Friday, 16 November 1990.

Advertisements for publication in the Newsletter are now being accepted at the following rates:

1/2 inch block $5
1 inch block $10

To place an advertisement please forward text and appropriate cheque to:

The Editor
Australian Society of Indexers
GPO Box 1251L
Melbourne Vic. 3001

Closing date for next issue — 16 November 1990