



Australian Society of Indexers NEWSLETTER

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Medal, Medal: JOINT MEDAL WINNERS

For the first time ever, two indexers have been declared joint winners of the AusSI Medal.

The panel of judges found it impossible to split the two leading medal contenders. They decided that *both* entries were worthy of medal status.

The two medallists were Max McMaster and Margery Price; Max McMaster for his index to *Infectious diseases in pregnancy and the newborn infant* (By Dr G. L. Gilbert. 1991. Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers. 618p., incl. 40p. index) AND Margery Price for her index to *The Law Handbook 1992* (Compiled and published by Fitzroy Legal Service, Melbourne, 1992). The judges also highly commended Josephine Cardale's index to *Insects of Australia* (By CSIRO Division of Entomology. 1991. University of Melbourne Press. 2 vols, 1172p., incl. 63p. index)

The medals were presented by the Society's president, Isabelle Mentha, at a special dinner on October 13th at Graduate House, University of Melbourne. Certificates were also presented to the publishers of the winning indexes. Accepting the publishers' certificates were: Peter Boules (Harwood Academic Publishers) and Cosima McPhee (Fitzroy Legal Service). The judges' report was presented by the panel chairman, Dr Ross Harvey (Graduate Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records, Monash University).

Twenty Society members attended the dinner. The atmosphere was very chatty.

There were animated discussions all around the room throughout the night. The food and wine complemented the evening's proceedings: both were sufficient and well-presented; but also fruity and having a kick.

Steve Sunter

AusSI Medal Winners

1985	Jeremy Fisher
1986	Not awarded
1987	" "
1988	Elmar Zalums
1989	Alan Walker
1990	Not awarded
1991	Geraldine Suter
1992	Max McMaster & Margery Price



Both medallists used headings well

Australian Society of Indexers Medal 1992: Judges' Report

Deciding which index should be awarded the Medal of the Australian Society of Indexers was - emphatically - not an easy process. In fact, the judges were on several occasions reduced to gazing in silence at the indexes arrayed on the table in front of them while we confronted the difficult choices which had to be made.

The length of time we took to reach a final decision, and that not without considerable debate, was indicative of the difficulty of our task. In the end we found that we had no real option but to set a precedent by recommending that the award be made to two indexes. We also highly commended one further index.

The other indexes considered by us but not, finally, selected, displayed many fine points. In one, the effective typography drew considerable positive comment; in another, it was refreshing to note that the indexer was allowed to emerge from the state of complete anonymity to which they had been relegated in almost every other index we considered.

The judges decided to commend highly Josephine Cardale's index to *Insects of Australia*, published by University of Melbourne Press in 1991. We concluded that this index was a successful and impressive attempt to index the definitive work on the subject, one which by its nature posed many challenges to the indexer. Descriptions of this index by the judges include "a valiant effort" and "heroic". While this index was unquestionably of very high standard, by comparison with the two winners it displayed some difficulties which could not be overlooked. For example, there were blocks of undifferentiated page numbers and other signs that the publisher had imposed space constraints on the index. While the judges were fully aware of this as a fact of the indexer's working life, we felt that the solutions were not always the most appropriate.

The 1992 Medals are awarded to Max McMaster's index to *Infectious Disease in Pregnancy and the Newborn Infant*

(published by Harwood Academic Publishers, 1991) and to Margery Price's index to *The Law Handbook 1992* (published by the Fitzroy Legal Service, 1992)

The panel, as indicated earlier, had a considerable amount of difficulty deciding between these two indexes. In the end, the debate was about the nuances and we were left pondering what are probably imponderables; did feature X of index A outweigh feature Y of Index B? Was the typographical infelicity in Index B sufficiently "bad" to counteract the positive feature displayed on page Z?

In both of the award-winning indexes we particularly noted their conversational style. For instance, the indexers seemed to go out of their way to make the work of the user as easy as possible with regard to access by synonyms and alternative forms of index entries, the provision of relevant subheadings, and the appropriateness of their respective indexing styles. While it is obviously going too far to describe them as "chatty", they impressed with their user-friendliness. It is definitely going too far to suggest that they are "good read" (except to other indexers?) but they certainly both invite examination beyond that of mere finding aids, and in this they act as valuable adjuncts to the author's intentions beyond their primary role.

Margery Price's index to *The Law Handbook 1992* is especially noteworthy for the complementary role it plays to other parts of the book. It is carefully designed to work with the general contents page, the detailed contents page at the beginning of each chapter and the glossary to form a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

By contrast, it is difficult to isolate outstanding features in Max McMaster's index to *Infectious Diseases in Pregnancy*. The standard is uniformly high throughout. It impresses as a thoroughly competent work.

The judges also noted, and debated at some length, less positive features of both the award-winning indexes. In commenting briefly on these features here it is not to intend to denigrate the achievements of the indexers, but rather to assist all indexers and publishers with improving the quality of indexes in the future. Both indexes displayed some typographical features which did not assist their users, for instance, there was some difficulty with the turnovers between columns and pages in both. We were also disconcerted to note typos in both.

Despite these comments, there can be no question that the two indexes awarded the Medal for 1992 maintain, perhaps even extend, the high standard of indexing in

Australia. The judges warmly congratulate Max McMaster and Margery Price.

**Ross Harvey
John Curtain
George Levick
Cherryl Schauder**

Did you know?

The AusSI Medal award was initiated by Jean Hagger in 1985. The design of the medal incorporated the Society's recently created logo. Jean had the dies made and donated them to the Society.

We are greatly indebted to Jean for this important means of encouraging and acknowledging excellence in indexing.

NSW President's Annual Report 1992

The NSW branch of the Society is now two years old, and this past year has provided a number of highlights for members.

At our first general meeting in late August, indexers with a special interest in law indexing heard Elizabeth Moys (creator of the Moys classification for law libraries) speak on some of the finer points of law indexing, particularly on the use of specialist vocabulary and prepositions. Her advice on the latter: don't let your prepositions dangle! This meeting attracted a number of indexers from law publishing houses in Sydney which was especially encouraging.

This first general meeting was also the branch's Annual General Meeting and a new committee was elected with a minimum of arm-twisting. The committee for this past year has been Lorraine Doyle (publicity), Kingsley Siebel (minutes secretary), Alan Walker (assistant secretary), Christine Winning (secretary), Michael Wyatt (treasurer) and myself as president. The way in which the committee has shared its responsibilities over the past twelve months has certainly made my job as president much easier, and I want to thank all of them for their contributions.

The theme of the second general meeting in April was the indexing of images. Alan Walker spoke about the problems associated with the indexing of historical photographs, and Caroline Colton spoke about the peculiarities of indexing images on slides. The indexing of images receives scant attention in the literature on indexing, and I think all of those present found the evening an enlightening one. It was at this second meeting also that Kingsley Siebel floated his idea of a handbook for Australian indexers, and distributed a questionnaire designed to gauge the reaction of the membership to the idea.

In July, the NSW branch in association with the University of NSW, held a successful four-day indexing workshop at which three of our members taught (Alan Walker, Michael Wyatt and myself). The NSW branch has negotiated an agreement with the university so that the Society now receives a per capita fee from such courses.

Our treasurer Michael Wyatt will provide a separate financial report, but on the subject of money we are still solvent! Basically our main costs continue to be the hire of meeting rooms and postage.

Our income comes from fees from indexing courses and the state branch per capita allowance from the national body. The NSW branch will be making a case for the continuation of this allowance for state branches when it comes up for review.

After a stint of two years, I am stepping down as president. I am pleased to have had the honour of being the NSW branch's inaugural president, and look forward to seeing the branch go from strength to strength.

Garry Cousins
(President)

NSW August Meeting & AGM Report

The third Annual General Meeting for the NSW Branch held at the State Library on Wednesday, 16th September saw one new face elected to the committee. Mary Turner now joins Alan Walker (president), Michael Wyatt (secretary), Kingsley Siebel (treasurer), Christine Winning, Lorraine Doyle and Garry Cousins.

The rest of the evening was devoted to a report by Kingsley Siebel on Society of Indexers Conference held in Chester, England, in July (see last month's Newsletter for a full report) and a *Nuts and Bolts* discussion on problems of indexing.

Questions led to stimulating and thought-provoking discussions, e.g. Should glossaries be indexed? When do you start subdividing a subject? Natural language v factoring? How do you file numbers (and vitamins)? Comparisons were drawn between Knight's book on indexing and the new *Indexing from A-Z* by Hans Wellisch.

The evening was declared a great success and the participants felt a *Nuts and Bolts* part 2 would be beneficial.

Lorraine Doyle

SEMINARS, Etc.

Computers in Publishing

The Australian Book Publishers Association (ABPA) is presenting a seminar on "Use of computers in Book Publishing II". It is being organised in conjunction with Macquarie University (NSW) and RMIT (Vic). It will be held in Sydney on Saturday, November 14th. Further information: (02) 281 9788.

Language Expo

Australia's first language exhibition and seminar series is being organised by the National Languages & Literacy Institute of Australia. It is a cultural and trade fair for the language community, business and the general public. More than 100 organisations will be represented. Admission for adults is \$8 per day. It is being held at the World Congress Centre, Melbourne with public sessions from November 5-7. Further information: (03) 416 2422.

Publishing in Australia:

CIRCIT seminar

How did Australian publishing come to be dominated by multinational conglomerates? How will the book industry respond to changes in communications technologies and copyright protection? These are some of the questions being addressed in a seminar being organised by the Centre for International Research on Communication and Information Technologies (CIRCIT).

The speaker will be John Curtain, Senior Lecturer in Editing and Publishing in the Department of Communications Studies at RMIT. He is engaged in post-graduate research on the commerce and culture of book publishing in Australia from 1950 onwards.

The seminar will be held on Wednesday, October 28, 4 pm, at the Conference Room, CIRCIT, 1st Floor, 4 Riverside Quay (formerly Byrne St), Sth Melbourne (just over Queen's Bridge). RSVP: October 26. Katherine Brain (03) 616 8888; Fax (03) 616 880.

Peter H. Dawe: 1932-1992

Members of the Australian Society of Indexers mourn the sudden death of Peter Dawe on September 2, 1992. It was indeed a very great shock. Peter Dawe was a founding member of the Australian Society of Indexers. In October 1979, he was elected the Society's second President and in that role and in many other ways he gave outstanding service and fine leadership to the Society. Welcoming Peter Dawe as President, the Newsletter Editor, John Simkin, wrote cogently "his distinguished reputation in administration and documentation of bibliographic material is well known."

Peter was a delightful person to know. He had an inimitable style - warm, outgoing, articulate, scholarly, courteous, generous and very supportive of friends and colleagues. He endeared himself to all with whom he came in contact, and his wide-ranging and enquiring mind added to his attractiveness.

Born in Adelaide in 1932, Peter attended Prince Alfred College and subsequently graduated in Arts from University of Adelaide. He joined the CSIRO Division of Soils in 1958 as Divisional Librarian after appointments in the South Australian State Library and overseas. In 1970, he became Deputy Chief Librarian, CSIRO, and in 1973, Chief Librarian, a position he held until 1988. His professional status and experience were acknowledged in a number of important appointments including the International Federation for Documentation and Information, the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographic Services (AACOBS), the Special Libraries and Information Science Sections of the LAA; and in 1987, his election as LAA President.

In the period 1972-1988, Peter made some 60 presentations including 35 published papers. This is an impressive record which confirmed his wide interest in the field of librarianship and information science and dedication

to his profession. Topics included issues such as collaborative networking, user pays, national information policy, standards, NLA-CSIRO collaboration, translation services, document supply, ABN, end-user needs and developments in indexing. In his outgoing Presidential report to the Society, Peter drew attention to the AusSI/RMIT Indexing Course which had been established to:

- (a) *improve quality of indexing in Australia;*
- (b) *promote the training, continuing professional development, status and interests of indexers in Australia.*

These were areas of special priority for Peter. He recognised that effective indexing was an essential element in efficient information retrieval in the new computer-based information age and stressed that it should be developed as a professional activity.

Peter had a grand vision that Australia would become committed to a national information policy that recognised the significance of information, particularly scientific and technological information, by establishing an appropriate infrastructure that would enable all sectors of our population to have access to this resource. In the event the cut-backs in CSIRO funding on the one hand and the unawareness of the key role of information in advanced societies on the part of government on the other, were to reduce the outcomes to a rather pale shadow of what could have been achieved.

Disillusioned by the events in CSIRO, Peter took early retirement. After some 18 months teaching at RMIT, he accepted the post of Deputy Regional Librarian, Box Hill-Doncaster Regional Library, where he quickly became known for his untiring efforts in promoting library services.

Those of us who knew Peter believe that his achievements will be a lasting

memorial. And we hope that his vision for the special place of information in the future of Australia will come to fruition.

In remembering Peter we acknowledge the loving support that his wife, Sue, gave him in his endeavours. Peter was devoted to his family - Nicholas and Judy, Michael and his grandchildren; and to his extended family which we like to believe included all of his many, many friends. Vale Peter Dawe.

Clyde Garrow

Next NSW Meeting

This will be a MACREX evening. Members already using the software will demonstrate its features. To be held at the State Library of NSW, Seminar Room 1, 11th floor, on Wednesday, November 24 at 6:00 for 6:30 pm. Donation \$5.

ACT Online Meeting

The Canberra Online Users Group & AusSI are organising a one day indexing seminar with several guest speakers and a demonstration of indexing software packages. To be held at the National Library of Australia, Conference Room, 4th floor, on Saturday, November 14, 9:15 - 4:30. Cost is \$50 for members of AusSI, ALIA or Society of Editors (Non-members \$75). Further information: Geraldine Triffit (06) 246 1177.



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD
(Solution to last month's puzzle)

New Members

Ms D. Barnes, Balwyn, Vic
Ms P. Clarke, Deakin, ACT
Ms B. Dickens, Kingston, ACT
Ms L. Frost, Essendon, Vic
Ms R. Gipps, Melbourne, Vic
Ms D. Logan, Nth Fitzroy, Vic
Ms S. Rintoul, Henley Beach, SA
Mrs L. Tunks, Latham, ACT
Miss M. van Baer, Mt Waverley, Vic
Ms M. Whitford, Somerton Park, SA

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DEADLINE: Nov/Dec Expanded Issue
News items should reach the Editor by Nov 8 at the address on back page. This will be the last chance to publicise news until February next year.



Floppy disks will be appreciated where articles are longer than one A4 page (preferably 3.5" Macintosh disks; Microsoft Word software; IBM is OK).