



Australian Society of Indexers NEWSLETTER

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The Editorial

In this first AusSI issue for 1994 we give details of the 1993 Australian Society of Indexers Medal dinner held on 23 November. Congratulations to Max McMaster for winning the 1993 award. Also, we have details of all the up and coming regional Annual General Meetings, and progress reports from Margaret Henty on the Australian Newspaper and Journal Index Survey and John Scarce on the Federation Index.

1994...A new year! Thankyou to those of you who have contacted me with ideas for the Newsletter. I have had some good suggestions such as: including a column on personal experiences in indexing and how and why indexers have chosen their fields. These suggestions will be followed up and included in issues throughout the year.

ACT News: AGM & Dinner

The date and venue for the ACT AGM and dinner has now been finalised. Details are as follows:

Date: 15 February 1994
Venue: Australian Heritage Commission
Conference Rm, MTA House
39 Brisbane Avenue, Barton
Time: 5.30pm
Cost: \$12.00 for buffet dinner and drinks

For further information contact:
Geraldine Triffitt: (06) 246 1177

Abstracting Workshop

A workshop on abstracting is planned for Saturday 30 April from 9.30am - 4.00pm at Burgman College, Australian National University.

For further details contact:
Geraldine Triffitt (06) 246 1177

Vic News: AGM and Dinner

The date and venue for the Victorian AGM and dinner have now been finalised. A booking form is included in this newsletter.

Date: 2 March 1994
Time: 6.30pm for 7.00pm
Venue: Spring Park Tea Rooms
3 Spring Road, Malvern
Cost: \$25.00
RSPV: 23rd February 1994

NSW News: AGM and Dinner

The date and venue for the NSW Annual General Meeting and dinner has now been decided. Details are as follows:

Date: 10 March 1994
Time: 6.00pm for 6.30pm
Venue: State Library of NSW
Seminar Room 1
Cost: \$5.00

Details regarding the speaker and topic will be given in the March issue of AusSI Newsletter.

The Australian Society of Indexers Medal 1993

*A report of the Medal Dinner held 23 November 1993
by Ian Odgers*

The Australian Society of Indexers Medal for 1993 was presented to Max McMaster by the Society's President, Isabelle Mentha, at a dinner held on 23 November at Graduate House, University of Melbourne. The Panel of Judges for this year's award comprised George Levick (Chairman), John Curtin (RMIT Department of Communication Studies) and Jean Conochie (formerly Chief Cataloguer at CSIRO Information Services).

Fourteen people attended what was a very enjoyable evening. Unfortunately, none of the Panel members was able to attend (George Levick was ill). Due to unforeseen circumstances, the two representatives from the publishers of the winning index could not be present. We were very pleased however to have two members from interstate attend - Kingsley Siebel (NSW) and Robert Hyslop (ACT).

During the Medal Dinner Jean Hagger gave us a very interesting brief history of the origins of our indexers Medal which

she was instrumental in organising for our Society.

Max's winning index was to the book *Chemistry and biology of (1-3)-beta-glucans*, by Bruce Stone and CSIRO Chairman, Adrienne Clarke, published by La Trobe University Press in 1992. The judges found that of this year's many entries three finalists stood out. Of these, Max's index was clearly the winner, to a work of outstanding technical difficulty. This index showed all the virtues of a good index, with clear typography and differentiation of tables and figures.

The two runners-up were Elmer Zalums, for his index to *The Cambridge history of Southeast Asia* (2 vols.) published by Cambridge University Press in 1992; and Michael Cathcart, for his index to *Manning Clark's History of Australia*, abridged by himself, published by Melbourne University Press in 1993. Both of these indexes were "commended" by the judges.



*Judges' Report by George Levick
on behalf of:*

Ms Jean Conochie & Mr John Curtin

The judging panel for this year's award was presented by the preliminary examiners with a greater number of candidates than has been usual; but their diversity was typical of those of recent years. Represented were indexes to monographs and to volumes of serials; practical handbooks and scholarly works; personal journals, histories and technical treatises.

As judges have noted in the past, when faced with such diversity, it is ultimately impossible to formulate rigid criteria so that

marks can be allocated mechanically and a winner determined arithmetically. The final choice, once the hurdle of outstanding professional competence has been crossed, has to be based on relatively subjective judgements in matters such as the magnitude of the challenge presented by the subject texts, the extent to which the indexer's opportunity to exert an individual style has been used to assist (rather than to impress) the user, and the potential of the index to contribute to the development of the profession in Australia.

So it was with a distinct feeling of relief that after the first round of solitary deliberation, the panel arrived unanimously at a "top three".

Each of the indexes to historical works was an exemplar of how such texts should be served. Elmar Zalums', in particular, was up to the high standard that we have come to expect from him year after year; and of the two it perhaps deserved some extra credit because of the extra challenge in dealing with an edited compilation.

However, on this occasion, the index to the technical monograph compelled our special consideration. The text ranges over physical and organic chemistry, biochemistry and physiology, and it presents a wealth of material in figures and tables containing all kinds of technical data. No more of this complexity than is absolutely unavoidable has been allowed to run over into the index, which is plain and

straightforward, while showing all the virtues of a good index. It uses cross-references with discretion and economy. Its handling of technical terms and biological nomenclature is unfailingly competent. It is well served with a clear typography, and its differentiated references to tables and diagrams are accurate and supported by an explanatory introduction.

We offer Max McMaster our warm congratulations.



Max McMaster receiving his award from AusSI President Isabelle Mentha



Australian Newspaper and Journal Indexes Survey... an update

In the September 1993 issue Margaret Henty reported on a 2 stage study being carried out to determine whether in-house indexing of Australian newspapers and journals by State, Territory, Parliamentary and Local Libraries could be effectively integrated to provide better national access and improved cost-benefit of operations.

Margaret Henty now reports on the results of the Questionnaires sent out to various libraries. (Part of stage one).

In mid 1993, the first stage of a survey was carried out to identify Australian newspaper and journal indexes held in libraries throughout Australia. Questionnaires were sent to State, academic and parliamentary libraries, and the National library, seeking details of indexes compiled by those libraries. The survey sought not only details of newspaper and journal indexes, but also included a section seeking details of general materials indexes (to cover such items as theatre and exhibition programs, convict records, music and so on).

The results reveal the existence of nearly 300 indexes held by those libraries and a report of the survey, *Indexes in Australian Libraries*, has now been prepared as a draft for comment. Copies will be distributed to participating libraries, Australian studies centres and others with an interest in Australian indexes and indexing. They can be obtained from Margaret Henty, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2600, fax (06) 257 1703 at no charge. In the longer term, the results will be made available in a printed volume which will be a joint publishing venture of the National Library and the Council of Australian State Libraries. An electronic database of results is also proposed, to be available via AARNet and hosted by the National Library.

This survey was an out come of the Towards Federation 2001 Conference held in March 1992. It was Stage One of a two stage survey, and suggestions are sought for the implementation of Stage Two.

The Federation Index 1889-1913... an update

The following is an edited version of John Scarce's article which appeared in the December 1993 issue of The Genealogist.

The volunteers are continuing to do excellent work on the data entry for this new index. Volunteers from the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies have now commenced data entry for deaths during the period 1889 to 1895, as they have almost completed their allocation of 1889 to 1895 births.

A meeting of the Steering Committee of the Federation Index was held on the 27th October to discuss details of the auditing process. A pilot team will commence audit work in mid-November to test the audit process. It is envisaged that full scale auditing will begin at the Registry in February 1994.

A new data entry programme, Version 4.2, has been handed to the volunteer coordinators for distribution to all those involved with the data entry.

Spare copies of the Indexer...
AusSI has 3 spare copies of the April 1993 issue and 6 spare copies of the October 1992 issue of the Indexer. For anyone interested in obtaining these issues (free of charge) are welcomed to contact:

Ian Odgers: (03) 418 7275

New Members

The Society welcomes the following new members:

Dr B Shaw, Bridgwater, South Australia
Mr A Trumble, Toorak, Victoria

Newsletter News

The *AusSI Newsletter* now has a AARNet address. Readers can now send information, letters and/or comments directly to our MacIntosh. The new e-mail address is: *AusSI@isb.csiro.au*

Subscription renewal

All members will receive a 1994 Subscription Renewal form with this month's Newsletter. Members are asked to renew promptly.

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS:

GPO Box 1251
Melbourne VIC 3001

President: Isabelle Mentha
(03) 418 7201
Vice Pres: George Levick
(03) 418 7344
Secretary: Ian Odgers
(03) 418 7275
Treasurer: Joyce Gillespie
(03) 654 8527
or (03) 710 1270
Editor: Elizabeth Baratto (03) 270 6666
Fax: c/- (03) 270 6699
e-mail: c/- AusSI@isb.csiro.au
Committee Members:
Max McMaster: (03) 571 6341
Cherryl Schauder: (03) 660 3059
Mary Long: (03) 846 0225
John Simkin: (03) 429 8817
Josephine McGovern: (03) 596 1555
Steve Sunter: (03) 418 7253

NSW BRANCH

PO Box R598
Royal Exchange SYDNEY, 2000

President: Alan Walker
(02) 380 5875
Fax: (02) 361 0651
Secretary: Michael Wyatt
(02) 281 0460
Treasurer: Kingsley Siebel
(02) 477 3149
Committee: Garry Cousins, Mary Turner,
Lorraine Doyle, Christine Winning

ACT REGION BRANCH

GPO Box 2069
Canberra ACT 2601

President: Geraldine Triffitt
(06) 246 1177
Fax: (06) 249 7310
Secretary: Jenni Cole
(06) 243 4211
Treasurer: Susan MacDougall
(06) 201 2645
Committee: Hilary Kent, Laurel Tunks,
Margaret Hyland, Barbara Dickens

Next Deadline - 4 March 1994



News, views and reviews are always welcome. Floppy disks will be appreciated where articles are longer than one A4 page (preferably 3.5" Macintosh disks; Microsoft Word software; IBM is also OK).