ndexers
Newsletter

data

In the *Sydney Morning Herald* 22–23 February 2003, Nicole Manktelow wrote an article about the trend towards funding cuts to Australia's precious resource of databases, which will lead to reduced public access to information. Several rural research and conservation databases, such as Streamline and the AESIS database, are used to make the point, but specialist databases in general are threatened by lack of funding.

Free websites

Streamline is a collection which indexes information about water, research and conservation (www.lwa.gov.au). It contains references to the nation's most urgent water problems, including salinity, blue-green algae and pollution. Access to all its data is free.

Researchers, such as Elizabeth Swan, of online information brokerage Information Edge (www.infoedge.com.au), say 'the free website is suffering. Just when we have the worst drought ... the funding has dried up. Local databases are weak. It's not because the people who create them don't know what to do, it's because there's not enough support.'

Swan lists agricultural, multicultural, family and medical databases as some of the specialist databases that suffer from lack of funding.

AESIS database

Another important database, the Australian Earth Sciences Information Service (AESIS), is still in limbo, following the demise of the Australian Mineral Foundation in December 2001. Ownership of the database rests with the liquidators of the AMF and as yet no buyer has been found.

Streamline contains references to the nation's most urgent water problems, including salinity, blue-green algae and pollution. Access to all its data is free.

The loss of AESIS is considered a disaster. It covered a wide range of Australian materials, including documentation on exploration, mining, mineral processing and production. It also covered the related areas of environment and rehabilitation, safety, legislation, finance and economics, and land rights.

Streamline

Millions of dollars have been invested in Streamline over the past twenty years. It was founded in the early '80s by the federal government and has been funded by the research and development corporation, Land & Water Australia, since 1991.

Until recently, Streamline collected summaries of all published

Continued on page 42

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GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601

Notice

AusSI International Conference

Indexing the World of Information, 12–13 September. See page 39.

Sponsorship to attend the conference.
See page 45 for details.

AusSI Victorian Branch

Soecial Meeting—Indexing as a Business, 22 May. See page 40.

New members

AusSI warmly welcomes the following new Victorian members:

- Ms Sue Hill, Hill Associates, Yeodene
- Ms Patricia Convery, St Kilda.

UNSW Continuing Professional Development Courses

Introduction to Book Indexing 23, 30 May, 6 June

Those who will benefit from this course include those who are or who are planning to become indexers, editors responsible for indexing, librarians responsible for compiling indexes. The course will cover the following topics:

- Introduction to indexing
- Methods
- Analysis of text
- Selecting terms
- Principles of subject access
- Headings and subheadings
- Cross references
- Alphabetical arrangement
- Style
- Editing for publication
- Dealing with editors and publishers
- Indexing as a business
- Computer-aided indexing

Computer-aided Indexing

This is a one-day workshop on computer-aided indexing, The introductory session is an overview of indexing theory and what kinds of indexing computers can and cannot do. Subsequent sessions concentrate on a variety of microcomputer proprietary software packages used for preparing indexes. The functionalities, capabilities and constraints of these packages will be discussed and demonstrated and there will be hands-on tutorials and practice sessions.

The software packages to be discussed and demonstrated are word processor and desktop publishing generated indexes, full text indexes, and indexing software—CINDEX, SKY Index and Macrex.

A discount is available for participants enrolling in this course and Book Indexing.

Web Documents and Intranet Indexing 20 June 2003

This one-day workshop has been radically updated from last year's workshop 'Indexing Web Pages and Documents'. Indexing is all about access and Web sites and intranets are not useful unless they are easily accessible. This workshop explores the skills of subject analysis, evaluation and annotation and their application to Web documents and Web sites. The concepts of metadata, including XML, and subject gateways are explored. The workshop will include such topics are:

- indexing individual electronic documents for Web delivery
- indexing Web sites with both internal and external links, including the use of site maps
- the issue of moving content online and the demands of moving print to web
- creating subject gateways
- the use of existing classification schemes, thesaurus & data dictionary terms as access points
- the use of metadata (Dublin Core, AGLS, XML etc.)
- the use of automated indexing tools and metadata creation tools
- optimising Web documents for search engine retrieval

Registration fee $245 which includes lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

Maureen Henninger
Coordinator of Continuing Professional Development
University of New South Wales
tel. (61 2) 9385-7128
fax: (61 2) 9662-4061
mhenninger@unsw.edu.au .

Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand

Focus On Users. The New Zealand Conference for Technical Communicators

4–5 September 2003 Centra Auckland Airport Hotel, Auckland, New Zealand

Beyond Gutenberg and Gates ... gazing into the e-future Editors' National Conference

A diverse and interesting program is developing for this conference, including topics such as, intriguingly, the long-term future of the book, new tools for old editors, and the new grammar. There will also be several workshops, including one on editing for the Web and electronic publications, which is sure to be a hit. For more details email conference@editorsqld.com

ASI conference

'Northern Entries' is the title of the 35th Annual Conference of the American Society of Indexers, and it is going to be an exciting and informative event. The conference is scheduled for 19–21 June 2003, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, BC. That's right, British Columbia. For only the second time in history, ASI has partnered with the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada/Société canadienne pour l'analyse de documents (IASC/SCAD) for a joint international conference.

Visit www.asindexing.org/site/conferences/conf2003/index.shtml and read up on the conference details. Then, you can register online, or download a form to print out and mail or fax.

Michael P. Thompson, Director of Communications
American Society of Indexers
mthompson@resourcenter.com

SI Conference 2003

27–29 June 2003 at Strathclyde University, Glasgow. The booking form and further details are now available on the SI website www.indexers.org.uk or from Paul Nash paulnash@zetnet.co.uk, Alison Brown alison.brown10@virgin.net or Phyllis Van Reenen pvr@indexology.fsnet.co.uk

Gather with us in Scotland's friendly city — Glasgow. Make and renew friendships. Learn about the latest indexing techniques. Find out what our customers (authors and editors) think about us as indexers. As well as workshops for beginners and specialists, we will be looking at the ways indexing is changing, and how we could react.

Australian Committee on Cataloguing : Aiming for Access Seminar

Registrations are now open for the Aiming for Access Seminar to be held on 25 July 2003 at the Wesley Centre, Sydney. The seminar is being organised by the Australian Committee on Cataloguing and will be the premier professional development event for Australian cataloguers and metadata creators in 2003. Registration fees are only $130.00 (ALIA members) and $165.00 (non-members). Full details of the seminar including the program and a registration form are available at www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/acocseminar2003.html

The seminar will focus on how the use of thesauri and classification can enhance access to information and increase the value of metadata. It will feature a keynote address by Joan Mitchell, Editor-in-Chief, Dewey Decimal Classification. Judith Pearce from the National Library of Australia will discuss the "One Search" interface that enables users to search the Library's catalogue, Web site and other key resource discovery services with a single search. The afternoon will feature a panel session focusing on why it is necessary for libraries to develop existing standards further, or create new ones to provide good subject access to resources.

For registration and sponsorship inquiries please email Daniella Kiley at ALIA: conferences@alia.org.au For inquiries regarding the seminar program please email Rob Walls at the National Library: rwalls@nla.gov.au.

Sydney Writers' Festival

19–25 May

The sixth festival sees more than 30 international and 150 Australian authors in over 100 events.

Wharf 4/5 Hickson Road, Walsh bay, Sydney.

APA Bookfair

19–20 June, Darling Harbour, Sydney.

Dates Diary

May 19–25
Sydney Writers' Festival

May 22 AusSI Vic Branch special meeting 'Indexing as a Business'—see page 40

May 23, 30 & Jun 6
Introduction to Book Indexing, UNSW—see Noticeboard

Jun 19–20
APA Bookfair, Darling Harbour

Jun 19–21
ASI conference, Vancouver, Canada—see Noticeboard

Jun 20 Web Documents & Intranet Indexing, UNSW—see Noticeboard

Jun 27–29
ASI conference 'A Scots Quair', Strathclyde University, Glasgow, Scotland

July 18–20
National Editors' Conference 2003 Brisbane conference@editorsqld.com

July 25 Australian Committee on Cataloguing Seminar — see Noticeboard

Sep 4–5 Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand—see Noticeboard

Sep 12–13
AusSI International Conference 'Indexing the World of Information', Sydney—see opposite

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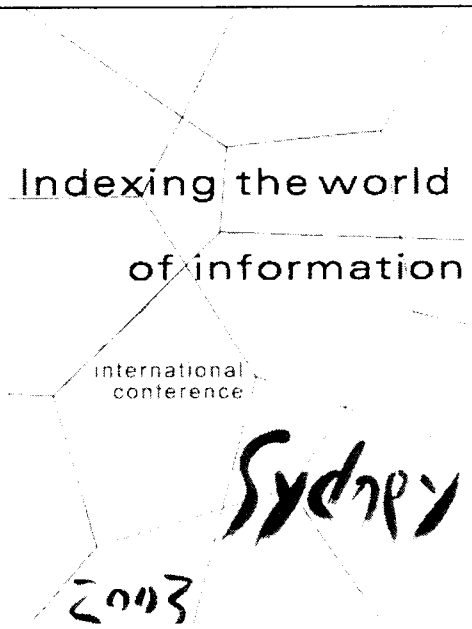

Indexing the World of Information

An international conference hosted by the Australian Society of Indexers

The Australian Society of Indexers will be hosting an international indexing conference in September 2003.

Dates: Friday 12 to Saturday 13 September 2003

Venue: Carlton Crest Hotel, 169–179 Thomas Street, Sydney

Cost: Australian Society of Indexers members AUS$330, non-members AUS$380.
Late registration (after 13 July) members AUS$380, non-members AUS$430

Papers and panels on:
- ❑ Indexing names
- ❑ Indexing standards
- ❑ Teaching of indexing
- ❑ How indexing, thesaurus construction, classification and database management are integrating with the information architecture and content management of the online world.

Software demonstrations and workshops on:
- ❑ Indexing printed resources
- ❑ Metadata development
- ❑ Thesaurus construction.

Who should come? Anyone interested in how the world of information is turning: indexers, editors, information architects, publishers, web publishers, librarians, metadata experts, archivists, web designers, content managers and usability experts.

Contact: Glenda Browne
Email: webindexing@optusnet.com.au
Phone: +61 (0)2 4739 8199

More information: www.aussi.org

Registration: visit www.aussi.org where you can download a registration form to print out and mail with your cheque.

National and ACT Region Branch Annual General Meetings

The National and the ACT Region Branch Annual General Meetings were held on Friday 7 March 2003 at The Brassey of Canberra. The meetings were well attended and it was particularly pleasing to welcome interstate members: Alan Walker and Michael Wyatt from Sydney, Jenny Restarick and John Simkin from Melbourne, and Clodagh Jones and Emeline Haight from Hobart.

The results of the elections for positions on the national committee for 2003 were declared. Lynn Farkas was re-elected as President and the other office bearers are listed on the back page of this newsletter. Alan Walker (NSW) stood down as Vice-President after completing six years on the Executive—four years as President and two years as Vice-President—and the committee thanks him for his sterling service to the Society. It was pleasing to welcome Hobart member, Clodagh Jones, as Vice-President for 2003, particularly as all other office bearers are members of the ACT Region Branch.

Geraldine Triffitt was re-elected President of the ACT Region Branch. In her report for 2002 she stated that 'it has been a year of finding our feet and defining the relationship between the National and ACT Committees. It has been beneficial that both committees are similar, that we meet alternate months and that we have realised that there must be the opportunity at one committee meeting to discuss urgent business for the other'. Geraldine reported on the activities for 2002. These included training programs in annual report indexing and database indexing, a post-annual report indexing debriefing meeting, and social activities that included a dinner and a Christmas brunch. The ACT Region Branch benefited from contact with other similar professional bodies. Members attended the launch of the new edition of the *Style Manual* and met many editors and designers; some went to the Annual Report Seminar and learnt something of the composition and compilation of annual reports; others had dinner with the Society of Technical Communicators; editors were invited to the indexers spring dinner; and a graphic designer attended the post-annual report indexing debriefing session. A number of thought-provoking criticisms from both within and without AusSI have been discussed including are we an organization worth joining; how are we going to use our funds for the greatest benefit of members; what benefits do our members get; and who has jurisdiction over training. These are issues that will continue to be addressed in 2003.

The National President's report for 2002 will be published in a later newsletter.

The meetings were followed by dinner after which Gabrielle Hyslop, the Acting Assistant Director General: Public and Readers Services at the National Archives of Australia, provided an informative and entertaining insight into making the archives more accessible to the people of Australia.

AusSI Vic Branch Special Meeting

Indexing as a Business

Join us for a special meeting on Indexing as a Business on Thursday, 22 May 2003.

A Panel of experienced indexers and an experienced managing editor will lead the discussion by offering advice on the following topics before taking questions from the floor:

- ❑ Getting your first indexing job
- ❑ Quoting successfully
- ❑ Staying in business
- ❑ What do editors really want from an indexer?
- ❑ Do editors shop around for the cheapest index?
- ❑ Do editors have a price in mind before they ask you to quote?

These and other issues will be raised on the night.

Bring along your burning issues and questions.

6 p.m. for drinks and nibbles for a 6.30 start at the Australian Council for Educational Research, 19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. RSVP by 15 May to Karen Gillen on 9808 5471 or karen_gillen@yahoo.com.au
Cost: free to members; $15 for non-members but free to those who join on the night.

Membership forms will be available on the night.

From Index-L

Sorting symbols

A question about indexing an engineering text book on materials science which required the insertion of the Greek characters alpha, beta, gamma, etc., was answered by AusSI member Tonia Johansen as follows:

'Ferrites are metallurgical (materials science) compounds rather than minerals. However, for a comparative example, there are a number of polymorphs of quartz, two of which are alpha (Greek letter)-quartz and beta (Greek letter)-quartz. These would be filed under 'q'. If they required separate entries to quartz, I would file them as such:

Quartz
    a-quartz
    b-quartz

(where a=alpha symbol and b=beta symbol)'

Also mentioned was NISO's *Guidelines for Alphabetical Arrangement of Letters & Sorting of Numerals & Other Symbols* (by Hans H. Wellisch). It's available in PDF at www.niso.org/standards/std_resources.html

Abstract: This technical report provides rules for the alphabetical arrangement of headings in lists of all kinds, such as bibliographies, indexes, dictionaries, directories, inventories, etc. It also covers the sorting of Arabic or Roman numbers, and other symbols. It consists of seven rules that cover problems which may arise in alphanumeric arrangements of headings. The technical report is based on the traditional orders of letters in the English alphabet and that of the numerals is ascending arithmetical order. It does not address issues concerning meaning or type of headings. The rules can generally be applied by human beings as well as by computers. Each rule is followed by illustrative examples.

'The dead'

An extended discussion on whether direct order, inversion, or other terms should be used in indexing 'the dead' brought the following interesting statement on indexing. I do think 'dead, the' is far preferable to 'dead people' if the latter is not the author's terminology. However, the inversion is awkward and raises the issue of the extent to which we want our indexes to be readable, whatever that may mean to each of us. I have often thought that I want my indexes to read like smooth, felicitous prose in some sense, partly because each group of subheadings forms a coherent, smoothly-flowing whole. It's interesting to me that I had never heard or read any indexer refer to *readability* of indexes until the word was used some time ago on this list.

Military book indexing

I have a new web site up and invite you to take it out for a spin. I welcome feedback—please reply to me offlist. The site is www.militarybookindexing.com

I will be adding pages to it in the near future and would like to develop a list of military book indexers with web sites on my site. If you would like to be listed, please email directly with your name, web address, and military specialty (World War II, US Navy, Vietnam, etc.) If possible, please place a link to my site on your site but that is not necessary to be listed on my site. As always, thanks for your input. This list is a great tool for everyone and everyone makes it that way!

Carry on!

Edward P. Hamelin, Military Indexer, Milidex Indexing Services

Readings

How would members index the following passage? If we get a lot of answers, it will make the response interesting for its diversity or otherwise! Please email responses by 23 June. And, yes, you will be anonymous—Ed.

There are readings—of the same text—that are dutiful, readings that map and dissect, readings that hear a rustling of unheard sounds, that count grey little pronouns for pleasure or instruction and for a time do not hear golden or apples. There are personal readings that snatch for personal meanings. I am full of love, or disgust, or fear. I scan for love, or disgust, or fear. There are—believe it—impersonal readings where the mind's eye sees the lines move onwards and mind's ear hears them sing and sing.

Now and then there are readings which make the hairs on the neck, the non-existent pelt, stand on end and tremble, when every word burns and shines hard and clear and infinite and exact, like stones of fire, like points of stars in the dark—readings when the knowledge that we shall know the writing differently or better or satisfactorily, runs ahead of any capacity to say what we know, or how. In these readings, a sense the text has appeared to be wholly new, never before seen, is followed, almost immediately, by the sense that it was always there, that the readers knew it was always there, and have always known, it was as it was, though we have now for the first time recognised, become fully cognisant of, our knowledge.

A.S. Byatt, *Possession*, Vintage, 1991, p. 471.

The data drought
Continued from page 35

research about water in Australia. But it was expensive work. A recent funding cut of about 75 per cent has reduced its capacity. New entries will reflect mainly the research and development directly undertaken by Land & Water Australia.

'It's no longer a national database,' according to Brenda Gerrie, from Infoscan, the company that manages the Streamline database. 'There are lots of things not being coordinated at a national level ... there's no political or social will to fix these things,' Gerrie says.

'At Streamline you can search to your heart's content for free. Land & Water Australia has tried to do the right thing even though they had a funding cut. They have tried to make it accessible.'

Land & Water Australia has recently tried to get funding from other organisations with an interest in water conservation but, so far, there has been little response.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, whose members include the chiefs of related Australian commonwealth, state and territory departments (www.affa.gov.au/docs/operatingenvironment/armcanz/scarm.html), helps pay the bills for two other rural research databases. There is potential for Streamline to be merged with these to create a single service with a combined funding arrangement.

Efforts are also under way to resurrect AESIS. Observers hope that the national agency, Geoscience Australia, will ultimately provide an appropriate home.

Internet users

Several sources suggested to Manktelow that efforts are also under way to resurrect AESIS. Observers hope that the national agency, Geoscience Australia (www.agso.gov.au), will ultimately provide an appropriate home. Geoscience Australia was unavailable for comment.

'It's a database that lots of people have been asking for,' Sandra Oxley, director of RMIT Publishing, told the Herald. 'Databases are a lot of hard work and it's hard for organisations to see how they are getting value out of it.' However, Oxley says subscription sales are holding, which indicates there could be a resurgence on the way, particularly as internet users tire of searching online content.

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Letter to the editor

In the September 2002 AusSI Newsletter, Alan Walker writes on "'Trivial' matters of indexing". Some members of SI were somewhat bemused by his comment that "English indexers are old women, and they are excellent indexers. One gets the impression that the average age of English indexers may be somewhere close to seventy". Three points strike me: I am glad that Alan did not substitute "but" for "and" in the first sentence; "old women" does not sound very polite; and averages can be misleading (visions of thirty- or forty-somethings—yes there are some younger members—rubbing shoulders at conferences with one-hundred- or one-hundred-and-ten-somethings, thus giving an average of seventy?). Or does Alan really think that everyone is between sixty and eighty or sixty-five and seventy-five?

He then compares the notional English average with the perceived average of Australian indexers which he guesses to be "below that ... not by more than a decade or two" and American indexers, with, apparently, a much lower average age.

Anyway, what does it matter? With all the emphasis on "yoof" culture these days, isn't it nice that older (not old) women (or "ladies" even), to say nothing of older men, can continue their profession (or start a new one) as long as they want and as long as they are able to meet the required standards? That ability is a rare thing and it is to be commended.

SI are inviting universities and colleges that run publishing courses to include an indexing workshop in their syllabuses, thereby "catching" people when they are young, or at the beginning of their careers. With luck, students will become hooked at an early stage to see the importance of indexing and of commissioning professional indexers. But will these youngsters need more experience of life before they become good indexers themselves? Perhaps a little maturity is needed and that explains why, in general, indexers seem to be "of a certain age" as Alan says.

Madaleine Combie
SI Marketing Committee

NISO and the standards for controlled vocabularies and thesauri

[Would AusSI members care to comment?—*Ed*]

The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) announced a new initiative to revise the leading standard for thesaurus construction: *Guidelines for the Construction, Format, and Management of Monolingual Thesauri* (ANSI/NISO Z39.19). Leading the development team is Dr. Amy Warner, principal of Lexonomy. Grants from the H.W. Wilson Foundation, The Getty Foundation, and the National Library of Medicine are supporting this new area of work.

'The core strength of NISO's Thesaurus guideline is that it offers a standardized way to organize many kinds of information,' noted Dr. Amy Warner, chair of the revision team. 'However, information providers face lots of challenges today. They are serving a changing audience. Searching and browsing of information systems are no longer limited to information professionals—individuals of all ages, professions, and nationalities are using search tools. Developers of Internet and Intranet-accessible Web pages, databases, and information systems need better metadata to support non-expert information searches, and metadata developers are recognizing the need for incorporating controlled vocabularies and taxonomies into their schemes.'

The revised standard will:

- Reflect the ways that users search or browse, the many types of content they will find, and the new technologies they are using.
- Address the needs of a variety of information organizations and content—beyond the traditional abstracting and indexing services—and add explicit examples that are relevant to business and industry.
- Introduce more user-friendly language and include the why and how behind the key concepts and principles.

Working with Dr. Warner is an Advisory Group made up of representatives from the project sponsors, NISO members, and other interested organizations, including: Vivian Bliss, Microsoft; Carol Brent, ProQuest Information and Learning; John Dickert, U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Technical Information Center; Lynn El-Hoshy, Library of Congress; Patricia Harpring, The Getty Foundation; Stephen Hearn, American Library Association; Sabine Kuhn, American Chemical Society, Chemical Abstracts Service; Pat Kuhr, H.W. Wilson; Diane McKerlie, Consultant; Peter Morville, Consultant; Stuart Nelson, National Library of Medicine; Diane Vizine-Goetz, OCLC; and Marcia Lei Zeng, Special Libraries Association. Emily Fayen is the NISO Standards Development Committee liaison to the activity.

News on this activity is featured on the NISO website (`www.niso.org/committees/MT-info.html`).

NISO develops technical standards that enable libraries, publishers, content providers and their business partners to maximize the value of their content. All NISO standards are available to the public without charge from the NISO website. Accredited by the American National Standards Institute, NISO is a nonprofit organization supported by over seventy members representing the leadership in the global information community.

literature

Glenda Browne

ASI website

Carolyn Weaver's article 'Gist of Journal Indexing' is now available in the *KeyWords* area on the ASI web page at www.asindexing.org/site/keypast.shtml This is a great overview for those interested in journal indexing.

Bibliography and Indexing: a Basic Guide

Ed. Reuben Musiker, ASAIB 1995

This small publication from South Africa introduces readers to the basic principles of indexing and bibliography. Two quotable quotes by Sharon Rubin (p. 28) are:

Thomas Mallon said about the index to his book: "How learned the author feels just seeing those hundreds of alphabetised subjects; it is as if someone has finally gone into his brain and, all for the gentle reader's sake, put those heaps of clutter into a gleaming row of filing cabinets."

To quote Willowdean W. Vance of the American Society of Indexers, "Isn't it great to be in a profession where you get paid for having the last word."

Indexing Museum Specialities

Ed. Reuben Musiker, ASAIB 1999

This is ASAIB's eighth publication, and includes articles on:

- 'Indexing in museums' (including the type of information that is collected, and choice of access terms)
- 'Documenting Museum Africa's collection' (including the use of Cuadra STAR software for data storage and retrieval)
- 'Use of computer databases in botanical collections' (including the use of PRECIS.pc, and the need to identify specimens before they can be catalogued)
- 'Indexing and classifying material in a military museum' (including a discussion of the language used, eg, 'Hollow projectiles can justifiably be termed shell if unfilled, but not otherwise. Solid projectiles cannot qualify as shell and are, in fact, termed 'shot'.) This author is one who believes that indexers sometimes need specialised subject knowledge. He concludes by saying that the Museum of Military History has been called a 'Boys Own' sort of institution, but replies that 'These museums are monuments to the greatest of human folly. They serve as reminders ... Those that are being reminded ought to be presented with the facts in their minute detail ... the classification and indexing of the material is central to this task.'

Search Engine Guide

'A 10 minute search engine optimization' by Ross Dunn (April 21, 2003; (www.searchengineguide.com/dunn/2003/0421_rd1.html) gives a quick introduction to methods that can make your site more findable through search engines, including determining your target market, optimising your text and title, and adding keyword and description metadata.

Blue Mountains Gazette

Blue Mountains City Council Library Service and CityRail are now providing a mobile library on Katoomba and Springwood Railway Station platforms during morning peak hours ('Commuting with books', 9 April 2003). What an excellent idea, so that the fifty-eight per cent of Mountains workers who commute have a chance to borrow books with minimum fuss.

Image & Data Manager

I received a free copy of *Image & Data Manager* at the One Umbrella Executive Briefing held last month. Their TOC always looks very appealing, but I find the articles don't go into enough detail for my needs. The January/February 2003 issue has articles on 'The sore idea of thesauri', which says 'Classification of business concepts into a working taxonomy is one of the most under-rated elements of knowledge management' and 'Search for portal order', which says 'Finding documents is much easier when a portal project team does the hard yards to build a corporate taxonomy'.

There is also a brief report from the Information Online conference held in Sydney in January 2003, which starts: 'The humble librarian risks budget cuts and redundancy, unless they embrace the Internet and overcome the spinster image, warned an information management expert [Mary Ellen Bates] visiting Sydney.' I thought we had long outgrown the 'grey hair in a bun' image, and I rather resent librarians and journalists restating this image so it stays current in people's minds. (Of course, as a few grey hairs start creeping in, I might soon be embracing this description with pride). In contrast to these comments, Paul Bentley, who reported on the conference for *Online Currents*, found that the general feeling at the conference was more positive than it had been in previous years, so I believe librarians are settling into new roles.

This issue also reported on the launch of the online Nominal Roll for WW2 (p.10; www.ww2roll.gov.au), the service records of all Australians who enlisted during the war.

The database contains basic biographical details of each person such as their full name, date of birth, enlistment and discharge dates, rank; any gallantry awards and whether he or she was a prisoner. The Web site includes a search engine capable of searching the massive database by name, service number, honours received; place of birth, place of enlistment or town or suburb on enlistment form'.

This issue also includes two articles on knowledge management, and one on email retention policies. Overall it is a good place to get a snapshot of current data management activities in the corporate and government sectors, but I don't feel it offers enough detail to be of ongoing value for most indexers.

... *the Word* (SA)

July–August 2002

This issue lists some sites with information about public liability insurance, provided to the editors society by the Australia Council:

- www.niba.com.au—the National Insurance Brokers' Association of Australia, which provides news and a calendar. The remainder of the content (if any) seems to be available only through the Search function.
- www.iecltd.com.au—Insurance Enquiries and Complaints Limited, which provides information about insurers, including a code of practice
- www.artslaw.com.au/reference/publicliability02/—provides practical advice about public liability insurance in plain English. This site also has other information which may be relevant to indexers, for example about copyright issues.

'As we may think'

by Vannevar Bush

The full text of this oft-quoted article, written in 1945, is available at www.theatlantic.com/unbound/flashbks/computer/bushf.htm. Bush had a vision of information management using linked microforms that worked remarkably like the current web. He suggested that after the war, scientists should focus their minds on 'the massive task of making more accessible our bewildering store of knowledge.'

International Conference: Indexing the World of Information

Sydney 12–13 September 2003

Sponsorship available to attend this conference

The National Committee will fund sponsorship for one member of the Society remote from Sydney to attend this conference. Sponsorship will include the registration fee and $500 towards transport and accommodation costs on production of valid invoices. Following the conference the successful applicant will be required to provide a report to the National Committee.

Criteria to be taken into account when determining the recipient of this sponsorship include: must be a member of AusSI; has not attended a previous AusSI conference; does not have easy direct contact with other AusSI members; can show evidence of practical indexing work or indexing study; and the quality of the application.

For further information please contact the Secretary at secretary@aussi.org

Applications close Monday 2 June 2003

Position Vacancy

Women's Health Victoria, Library & Information Systems Officer

Women's Health Victoria is an independent state-wide women's health promotion, advocacy and health information service. We are looking for women with experience in indexing, abstracting, reference services and information technology support to apply for the position of Library & Information Systems Officer.

The position description is available on www.whv.org.au or by phoning (03) 9662 3755.

Applications close 5 p.m. Friday 23 May 2003.

Applications, clearly marked confidential and with position title, to be addressed to

Marilyn Beaumont
Executive Director
Women's Health Victoria
GPO Box 1160K
Melbourne 3001

or email whv@whv.org.au

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