

Melbourne Indexers Bulletin

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Professional development

Professional development (PD) is very important. Big professional organisations often have very strict conditions for members to accumulate PD points every year. Working for an organisation you are often encouraged to participate in PD programs. Typical PD programs usually cover the following sorts of things:

- Attend conferences, seminars, lectures, etc.
- Make a presentation of some sort to the profession.
- Professional reading.
- Undertake formal training.
- Devise a personal study project.
- Write an article or paper for a professional publication.
- Contribute to the professional organisation by becoming a member of a committee.

Being a small profession with limited formal PD offerings and usually working as a sole trader, it is tempting to let PD slip from your list of priorities. Cost does come into it. Here are a few ideas for ‘arm chair’ PD at little cost. Perfect for a cold winter’s day?

- Browse your bookshelves, or those of your local library, to find a book with a poor index. Why is it a poor index? Rather than mentally dismissing the index, force yourself to actually write a review highlighting faults and how it could be improved.

- Spend time taking a closer look at the features offered in your indexing software. It is very easy to just use the features you need, until challenged with a particular task that has you exploring. Open the manual and learn about something you haven’t used before.
- Similarly explore your PDF reader such as Acrobat Reader. The Society of Indexers *SDelights* April 2016 had some things to get you started.
- Have you explored the early editions of *The Indexer* online at <http://www.theindexer.org/online.htm>? There is an index at <http://www.theindexer.org/contents/onlineindex.htm>. Their Centrepieces are all very informative and full of useful tips <http://www.theindexer.org/categories/centrepieces.htm>.
- Read the newsletters of other indexing Societies available via <https://www.anzsi.org/member-area/international-newsletters/>.
- The American Society for Indexing has published several indexing books <http://www.asindexing.org/publications/asi-books/>. Have you explored their Index Mashup at <http://www.asindexing.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/default.html>? Are you familiar with the books? Many are available for loan from the Melbourne Indexers library. (See later item for details on how to borrow.)

- Explore some early examples of indexing in the blog Dennis Duncan is writing while researching his book: *A History of the English Book Index*.
<https://indexhistory.wordpress.com>.

No prizes for guessing my next hint. Do you have other suggestions you can share? If you worked on something a bit different or found

something of interest, why not write it up and share with other readers of the Bulletin?

I welcome contributions and I'm sure readers will welcome reading someone else's work for a change. Thanks to Max McMaster for the next article.

Mary Russell

Plant and animal name indexing conundrum

How do you index plant and animal names when both the common and botanical (or zoological) names are the same? Adding to the dilemma is the indexing convention stipulating that where there is likely to be more than one of a thing, the entry should be plural. This was the conundrum I faced when indexing a book on the natural history of the Tweed Coast. The book is designed for an educated readership. I have chosen *Banksia* as an example.

Indexed correctly, the following sequence of entries should have been used: botanical names (in italic), inverted common names (in the singular, as there is only one of each) and finally, general information (in plural).

Banksia

aemula 204, 246
ericifolia subsp. *macrantha* 209
integrifolia 198, 199, 210, 222, 245, 246, 249, 299
integrifolia subsp. *integrifolia* 209
oblongifolia 206, 208, 209, 246
robur 209, 220, 246, 248, 250

Banksia

Coast 192, 195, 198, 199, 200, 209, 210, 222, 225, 245, 246, 249, 270
Fern-leaved 206, 208, 209, 246
Heath 209
Swamp 209, 220, 245, 248, 250
Wallum 204, 205, 209, 225, 246

Banksias 191, 209, 210, 216
root adaptation 216
winter flowering and bird numbers 292

Although structurally correct, the above entries are messy, unduly complicated and difficult for the reader to use. The approach I took was a compromise.

Banksias 191, 209, 210, 216
aemula 204, 246
Coast 192, 195, 198, 199, 200, 209, 210, 222, 225, 245, 246, 249, 270
ericifolia subsp. *macrantha* 209
Fern-leaved 206, 208, 209, 246
Heath 209
integrifolia 198, 199, 210, 222, 245, 246, 249, 299
integrifolia subsp. *integrifolia* 209
oblongifolia 206, 208, 209, 246
robur 209, 220, 246, 248, 250
root adaptation 216
Swamp 209, 220, 245, 248, 250
Wallum 204, 205, 209, 225, 246
winter flowering and bird numbers 292

Whether I have assumed too much knowledge on the part of the reader is debatable. However, the issue is ultimately about the usability of the index, and this second version more neatly groups all of the *Banksia* concepts together.

Max McMaster

Have you ever indexed the authors in a list of references?

I have been looking in craft books for some inspiration. In one that had something I liked the author said “I was inspired by the work of Sara Lamb and how she”. I was curious to obtain further details of the work by Lamb. In tuning to the back to find the list of references I passed the index. I glanced under L and found Lamb, Sara with two page numbers. The first was the page which mentioned her. The second, to my surprise, turned out to be Lamb’s book in the list of further reading.

As a user, I found this very useful. The further reading was not a single A–Z list. They were grouped into several themed A–Z lists and

spread over several pages. Yes, I would have found the book by Lamb, but having the page number in the index made it easier. Were all authors listed in further reading indexed? No, just the authors mentioned in the main text.

If you were indexing a specialised craft book of about 290 pages, would you index the names in the lists of grouped references? If you had asked me before I had seen this book, I would have said quite a definite NO. This made me stop and ask myself why not? I would index Sara Lamb in the text and all I would have to do is add the additional page number for the details of the book.

Mary Russell

Melbourne Indexers Library

Thanks to donations and past purchases by the Victorian Branch of ANZSI, Melbourne Indexers has a comprehensive library of books, conference papers and journals. It is available for all members to use, even if you are unable to attend meetings. While postage costs have increased this year, they are still cheaper than purchasing books overseas. It also offers a way for you to ‘taste’ before you purchase.

A comprehensive subject list to the library collection was published in the first issue of the Bulletin in June 2015. Here is a title list of the American Society for Indexing publication held:

- *Genealogy and indexing*
- *Glossary of terminology in abstracting, classification, indexing, and thesaurus construction*

- *Index it right! Advice from the experts volumes 1, 2 and 3.*
- *Indexing for editors and authors: a practical guide to understanding indexes*
- *Indexing names*
- *Indexing specialties: cookbooks*
- *Indexing specialties: history*
- *Indexing specialties: law,*
- *Indexing specialties: medicine*
- *Indexing specialties: psychology*
- *Indexing specialties: scholarly books*
- *Indexing specialties: websites*
- *Marketing your indexing services, 3rd edn*
- *Running an indexing business*
- *Starting an indexing business, 4th edn*

Contact Karen Gillen (kamgillen@gmail.com) to arrange a loan of any of the items. Let her know if you hope to pick an item up on meeting night (3 August) to make sure it will be there.

Upcoming meetings

Wednesday 3 August Editing the ANZSI Newsletter index 6 for 6:30 Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall, Kew 7:45 meal at Café La Q	Twenty years of newsletters, several indexers and what do you get? While it isn't a dog's breakfast, there is quite a lot of editing to be done. Most is obvious. Names need to be checked, typos fixed, entries need to be in the form decided, etc. There is variation in how some types of articles have been indexed. Please come and provide guidance on how things should appear in the index. If you have time have a browse through the early issues at https://www.anzsi.org/publications-home/newsletters/ and think about preparing a subject index. Found something that has you stumped? Bring it along to discuss.
Wednesday 5 October What was your most challenging index? 6 for 6:30 Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall, Kew 7:45 meal at Café La Q	What was your most challenging index? What aspects of the job made it challenging? Perhaps it was your first job, the clients were difficult or the book itself was massive or intellectually challenging. Come and share your experiences. Who knows what will be discussed?
Wednesday 7 December How are books constructed? 6 for 6:30 Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall, Kew 7:45 meal at Café La Q	Have you ever made your own book? After a brief discussion on the process of how a book is bound there will be a chance to make your own simple booklets from sheets of A4 paper.

Frankfurt Book Fair

Here is something to daydream over. The Frankfurt Book Fair is the biggest book fair. Think about eight multi-level aircraft hangers. English books are only in one building, the furthest from the entrance (of course). It should be on your list of "things to do one day". This year the book fair has an additional

attraction –an indexing seminar. The German and Dutch indexing societies have joined forces to put together an international line up of indexing speakers (including a familiar name to readers). Full details at http://www.d-indexer.org/neu/veranst/Flyer_Frankfurt.pdf

Contributions to *Melbourne Indexers Bulletin* are welcome at melbourneindexers@gmail.com