

Melbourne Indexers Bulletin

No. 8, February 2016

Newsletter indexing as a group project

The February meeting of Melbourne Indexers revisited the indexing challenge of producing an index to the ANZSI/AusSI Newsletter. The purpose of the meeting was to see if there was any interest in dusting off the work previously done and assessing what could be realistically achieved in a year. Here are details of the challenge and where the project started in 2012 has got to.

The challenge

- Three *Newsletter* titles over 43 years.
- Volume numbers start and finish with different titles.
- Some years have continuous pages, while others don't.
- Indexes could be produced in three different indexing packages.
- Indexers vary and work will need editing when merged.

Why bother indexing them?

- It has always been rather embarrassing that as an indexing society we do not have an index to our own *Newsletter*.
- There have been attempts in the past to produce an index. The notable example is the index to volumes 9 to 18 compiled by Kingsley Seibel. An index to volumes 1 to 6 also exists.
- Style and quality of the previous indexes needs updating.
- It is a great opportunity to showcase how a newsletter can be indexed with hyperlinking to actual articles. This has the potential of providing additional work for members.

- The project is a useful case study of an indexing group project.

What has been done?

- Format for page numbers was set at Year(issue):pages
- A detailed style sheet was developed to help with consistency in indexing.
- In November 2012 a request was sent out for volunteers to index particular years.
- 16 volunteers have indexed 20 years.
- Best run indexed is 1981 to 1992.

What could be achieved in the near future?

- If we index the years 1973 to 1980 we will have 1973 to 1992 (20 years) indexed and be nearly half way in terms of years.
- While eight years need to be indexed there are only 27 issues to be done.
- As part of the editing of the merged index, authority files for names and organisational terms will be developed, as well as a thesaurus of subject terms.

What has changed since 2012?

- Volunteers, for various reasons, pulled out.
- The project has lost momentum.
- When the newsletters were placed on the new website changes were made:
 - For privacy reasons additional bits were blacked out. While it appears that this included email addresses, street addresses and phone

numbers, inconsistencies have been discovered.

- The separate PDFs of issues were merged into a year PDF.

The meeting discussed these points including if it would be more useful to index from current issues backwards.

What was decided?

1. We have come so far with the index we should continue.
2. If we continue we will index as well as we can and that should include a hyperlinked index with links direct to articles.
3. Producing an index for the first 20 years is achievable without too much effort.
4. The learnings from indexing 20 years will assist in improving the process and perhaps making indexing the more recent years a bit easier.
5. There are volunteers within Melbourne Indexers willing to assist.
6. Other volunteers from within Melbourne Indexers will be sought.
7. Editing of the index will be broken down into separate tasks, such as checking that indexed years are complete and that they follow the style sheet.
8. Issues of Society of Indexers in Australia will be scanned and added to the web.
9. An attempt will be made to track down copies of the three missing issues.
10. Guidance will be sought from Council on the need to censor personal information and if required what should be blacked out.
11. Creating hyperlinks easily requires separate issue files to be placed on the web, rather than the merged year files.

Two weeks later

The meeting certainly spurred members on. Thank you.

- We have volunteer indexers allocated to indexing all of the remaining eight years.
- We have editing volunteers checking eight of the 12 years already indexed.
- The three missing issues have been located and scanned.
- All issues of *Society of Indexers in Australia Newsletter* are ready to be placed on the web.
- A paper has gone to Council seeking guidelines on the censoring of newsletters.
- Discussions are underway to place the issues of the newsletters back on the website to assist with hyperlinking.

Future tasks

- Focus on preparing index to first 20 years only.
- Index remaining issues to complete the 20 years.
- Edit indexed years to make sure they are complete and follow the style sheet.
- Merge year indexes and edit.
- Compile authority files for names and organisational terms as well as a thesaurus of subject terms.
- Check all issues are complete and meet the Council guidelines on censoring personal information.
- Load issue PDFs on the web with appropriate file names.
- Prepare hyperlinks.
- Load indexes on the web.
- It is hoped this will be done in a year.
- Celebrate end of this stage of the project!
- Do we continue with the more recent 24 years and if so how will it be tackled?

Would you like to assist?

At this stage we need more volunteers to check the indexing that has been done. This

involves checking what has been indexed against the original issue making sure it follows the style guide. To make this easier you will receive the index in page number order.

If you would like to assist please contact me.

Mary Russell (mruss@ozemail.com.au).



State Library of Victoria

Celebrating 160 years

The State Library of Victoria turned 160 on 11 February. There were several items in media such as: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-11/behind-closed-doors-as-state-library-of-victoria-turns-160/7157100>

The SLV offers a glimpse of its first library catalogue (a small book) and some of the early items in the collection http://blogs.slv.vic.gov.au/news/state-library-celebrates-160-years-of-serving-victoria/?utm_source=SLVWebsite&utm_medium=HomeBanner&utm_campaign=160_Anniversary

Chasing missing issues of *Society of Indexers in Australia Newsletter* at SLV, I took time out to explore the *Mirror on the World* (<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/whats-on/mirror-world-books-and-ideas>) and *Changing face of Victoria* exhibitions (<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/whats-on/changing-face-victoria>). They are located on upper floors around the dome reading room. While these are permanent exhibitions they are worth revisiting as the content is changed each year.

How's your Latin?

The *Society of Indexers in Australia Newsletter* has the following Latin quote on the cover:

*Absente auxilio perquirimus undique frustra,
Sed nobisingens indicis auxilium est.*

My high school Latin wasn't quite up to the challenge, but I had a better attempt than Google translate, which told me:

In the absence of assistance by analogy from all sides purposeless, But we ingeniously help.

Further searching gave me a more realistic translation:

*Without a key we search and search in vain,
But a good index is a monstrous gain.*

[http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook_text/Classical and Foreign Quotations Law Terms and Maxims Proverbs 1000901388/21](http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook_text/Classical_and_Foreign_Quotations_Law_Terms_and_Maxims_Proverbs_1000901388/21)

Victorian terms

This short survey by the Linguistics Roadshow reminds us that we use different words for things in Victoria. The maps they use to plot the responses show that the answers to these questions were familiar to us, but are not used as much in other states:

- What do you call a battered, deep-fried potato snack? Potato cakes
- What do you call the small local shop that sells newspapers, lollies, drinks and basic groceries? Milk bar
- What do you call a frozen, water-based sweet treat? Icy pole
- Which term do you use when someone's nose is bleeding? Blood nose
- What general term do you use to refer to swimwear? Bathers



Victorians showed more variety answering:

- What do you call the object that you might drink water from in a park or school? Popular choice in Qld and NSW was bubbler

<http://lingroadshow.com/resources/engishes-in-australia/vocabulary/mapping-words-around-australia/>

Upcoming March meeting

Filing questions

At the March meeting Max McMaster will discuss filing issues. A to Z filing sounds easy. Occasionally indexers pause and puzzle over where is the best place to file something. A recent example occurred in an index to a journal where the entry needed to refer to the annual Dr Sidney Plowman Travel Award. Do you file it under D (is that under Dr or Doctor) or under S or P? This and other examples will be discussed. Please bring along your own examples to share, or send them in.

When: Wednesday March 2
6.00–6.30pm Indexing Clinic – free indexing

advice.

6.30–7.30pm discussion

Followed by dinner at a local restaurant if you are able to join us.

Where:

The Old Op Shop, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, corner of High St and Pakington Streets, Kew.

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