

Melbourne Indexers Bulletin

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View of Derwent College and Heslington Hall, University of York

Conference news from York

The fascinating, historical city of York was the venue for the combined Society of Indexers (SI) and Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) conference, or more accurately York University. This was their first combined conference and, with about 200 people present, it offered a really diverse range of papers.

As ICRIS International Coordinator, the conference started for me on the Friday with chairing the ICRIS Triennial meeting. This is a chance for all indexing societies to come together and update the international agreement and terms of reference, as well as discuss issues of concern to each society and indexing in general. For members of ANZSI this international agreement allows you to go to other Society's conferences for the same cost as their members, to purchase books and webinars at members' rates and to have free access to international newsletters on the

ANZSI website at www.anzsi.org/member-area/international-newsletters/. The next Triennial meeting will be in Shanghai in 2018. Full details of ICRIS are at <http://www.theindexer.org/icris/>.

This feels like the confessions of a truant indexer, as most of the sessions I chose to go to were not related to indexing. Instead of going to workshops on Saturday, I went on a literary tour of York. This was a walking tour with pauses at significant locations and buildings to point out which people lived at or were associated with these places, as well as to read descriptions of their experiences and to take in the views. The tour took me to parts of York I hadn't explored and also highlighted the new work the stonemasons have added to York Minster.

www.york.ac.uk/50/impact/minster-stonework/ or for more details see the BBC program at www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlrC9uaNv0E.

Late Saturday afternoon the conference proper started and there was an international panel with all the indexing societies present to make short presentations on the recent work of their organisations.

Sunday was the first full day of papers and began with the Whitcombe Lecture on the transformation of Anglo-American trade publications. It was interesting to listen to this as an Australian, as there were some obvious differences. Apart from working on a smaller scale, the main difference was our lack of hardback fiction. The publishing of hardback fiction is still very common in the UK and US.

The next session I went to was by Paul Johnson on the magic of movable books. I am keenly interested in the history of the book in all its forms and, with my mathematics/science background, movable books fascinate me. I was very keen to attend this session as I heard Paul when he was in Melbourne several years ago. Paul spends a lot of his time in primary schools encouraging students to make small books and use the pages to be creative with words and illustrations. He believes working one page at a time helps children to form stories and be creative, rather than being given a big sheet of paper. Having created a small book they then have a tangible object to share with family and friends. Many of the structures are created in such a way that they can be easily deconstructed and photocopied and hence the child learns about book production. This was a very active session as we all created simple book structures and had great fun discovering how the books worked. He also showed us students' work as well as some of his own work. See his website for further information and examples of his work <http://www.bookart.co.uk/>

The afternoon kicked off with a session on image indexing and cataloguing from a museum's perspective. In this case it was the National Railway Museum based in York. Ed Bartholomew explained how the museum works with sister organisations to develop a structure to index and catalogue their images.

Images can be anything from oil paintings, to glass negatives, to collections of photos or their wonderful railway posters. They have volunteers to help them. Those with railway knowledge produce far more detailed captions and often assist with identifying the image in terms of location, details of trains and often people and time as well. Their collection can be accessed via <http://www.nrm.org.uk/OurCollection.aspx>

The next session was Christopher Phipps on indexing personal names. I have been to a similar session by Christopher at a past conference; however I was keen to see if my knowledge of English lords and ladies, and similar titled people, had improved. Fortunately it had.

Sunday night was the Gala dinner with presentations. Maureen MacGlashan was presented with the Carey Award for outstanding services to indexing. <http://www.indexers.org.uk/index.php?id=392>. The after-dinner speaker was David Crystal. He has written many books on the English language and is an amusing speaker. He was promoting his latest book *Making a point: the pernicky story of English punctuation*.

York University, like many universities, has had building spurts and redevelopment. This has resulted in a rabbit warren of similar looking buildings. Our navigation skills were certainly put to the test as we returned to our rooms in college after the Gala dinner. I'm sure I took the longest route possible as I was keen to stay on roads, rather than risk the maze of footpaths. It was a good 20 minutes before I had made it back to my room. While I did see several rabbits, I gather others spotted hedgehogs and owls on their return trip.

Monday started with another session to feed my love of book history. This time Rob Banham's presentation on 500 years of innovation in the design and production of type. He explained how type is made and brought the history right up to date with

comments on the font used by Google in their new logo.

The next session was Ana Frankenberg-Garcia on corpora for editors. I had heard of corpora from indexing a book on linguistics but I had not seen how they could be used. I was relieved to discover I was not alone as many of the editors present hadn't heard or used them either. A corpus is a large set of texts used to analyse the use of words statistically and to check how they are used in sentences. Keyword in context (KWIC) lists and concordances are some of the tools used. As specific texts are used it is more reliable than just searching Google. Corpus can also help identify specific English or American usage. They can be general or limited to language in a particular field.

Ana gave a practical example of translating from Portuguese an article for an English academic architecture journal for a friend. Not being familiar with the language of the field she located the PDFs of all the references the author had used and added a few similar ones. Using software to create her specific corpus she was able to use the appropriate language in her translation.

The quirkiness of English means we understand that you can have auburn hair, but you don't usually describe pants as auburn. David Crystal had a funny story about collecting adjectives and adverbs relating to footwear. Ana showed how the parts-of-speech tagging in many corpora can be used to quickly pull out lists of adjectives and adverbs in order of popularity that are used with footwear terms. This makes corpora far more useful than general thesauri in this type of work.

As an indexer, I can see corpora as one of those tools worth knowing about and possibly resorting to while indexing. If you have a multi-authored work you may want to clarify the use of specific terms and their English or US usage. Another use is to determine if words or phrases used by the author are in fact commonly used in the field. Here is the

link to the Australian National Corpus www.ausnc.org.au

The next session was a 'Crystal ball' session. It was interesting to hear the views from the diverse panel of publishers, editors, indexers and book reviewers.

The closing session was Eden Muse on the future of reading. He took us on a fascinating journey exploring the various ways we read and the tools used. Fairly obvious examples included ebooks, audio books and associated equipment. There is now twitterature (yes twitter literature). An example is *Small spaces* by Nick Belardes (2008). Broadcastr is an App that delivers text based on where you are and what you are interested in. Reading on small devices has led to Spritz that gives you one word at a time and uses a red letter to focus your eye. Test it out at <http://www.spritzinc.com/test/#/>.

Various books are now available as Apps. For example, on my iPod I have several big dictionaries, such as Oxford, Macquarie and Mosby's Medical Dictionary, as Apps. I use these far more frequently than pulling the thick volumes off my shelves. Apps lend themselves to children's books. Have a look at Peter Rabbit as an App for example <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGUqe9u56Xo>.

Some tools enable you to take different paths through the text and hence have different reading experiences. A recent example is *Arcadia* by Iain Pears <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/aug/20/novel-use-for-app-iain-pears-arcadia>

There are various analysis tools such as word trees, eye patterning of reading and mind maps that can be used to research reading. A new one for me was Voyant (<http://voyant-tools.org/>) Like other programs this gives you word diagrams based on the frequency of words, but also a corpus of the text (serendipity or what!).

This is only a small selection of Eben's examples and as he summed up 'all these inventions need to be easy to use, improve things and impress others'.

Hopefully this write up has indicated that it is possible to have fun at an indexing conference. It wasn't all sitting listening to papers, as living in meant there were lots of opportunities to network from morning to night.

There will not be an SI conference next year as they are exploring a one day seminar with their AGM (details are yet to be finalised). The next indexing conference will be the combined American and Canadian indexing conference in Chicago in June 2016. Do think about going, I am.

Slides from the SI/SfEP conference are available at:
<http://www.slideshare.net/TheSfEP>

Mary Russell

Upcoming events

All indexers and friends from Melbourne and beyond are welcome at Melbourne Indexers meetings.

Melbourne Indexers

October meeting: Corporate bodies

Company names, organisations and even military groups can pose a challenge to indexers. Michael Ramsden will lead a discussion on how to index the different types of corporate bodies.

When: Wednesday October 7
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.

<http://anzsi.org/event/melbourne-indexers-corporate/>

Special Melbourne Indexers event: St Kilda Rags to riches audio walking tour

When: Tuesday 20 October at 1:30 pm.

Where: Meet at Stop 1 of the tour which is Summerland Mansions, 17-27 Fitzroy Street. The tour will conclude at about 3 pm at Acland Street shops with a chance to sample the cakes and/or ice cream on offer.

<http://www.cv.vic.gov.au/stories/built-environment/from-riches-to-rags-and-back-again/>.

Getting there:

Public transport: From the city take the 96 St Kilda Beach/East Brunswick tram (runs every 10 minutes) and alight at Stop 135 (Jacka Boulevard) outside of Summerland Mansions. For your return journey, you can hop back on at Acland Street.

By car: As the tour concludes along the Acland Street shopping strip, it might be best to park your car in this area and then hop on the 96 tram for a couple of stops to Stop 135 where the tour starts. If you are happy to pay the fee (\$5 per hour or \$12 per day), there is ample metered parking along Chaucer Street behind the shops. The Woolworths car park (entry in Chaucer Street) offers 2 hours free parking. There are no boom gates but it is monitored by cameras so be warned, if you overstay your welcome, you will be fined! If you don't mind a little bit of a walk, free and unlimited parking is also available along Barkly, Wordsworth and Dickens Streets. Again, you can pick up the tram to the start at Stop 135 on the corner of Barkly and Acland Streets.

Around Melbourne

Public lecture – Oliver Everett

Oliver Everett, Librarian Emeritus of the Royal Library is coming to The University of Melbourne to deliver a free public lecture on the topic **Queen Victoria and Prince Albert: Patrons of the arts and art collectors.**

During the lecture, Oliver will share

sumptuous images of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's collections and challenge the popular image of Victoria as a melancholy widow, revealing her as a passionate and open-minded woman.

When: 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm, Tuesday 6th October

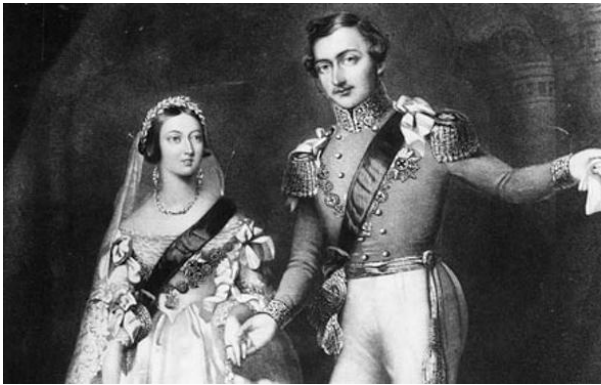
Where: Basement Theatre 117, Melbourne School of Design, Masson Road, Parkville

Further details: events.unimelb.edu.au

Registrations:

olivereverett2015.eventbrite.com.au

Registrations are essential to secure your seat



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