

Melbourne Indexers Bulletin

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Postponement of *Indexes through Publishers' Eyes* Seminar

The good news about the planning of the program for our one-day seminar is that we have had interest from a terrific line-up of speakers, on a great range of topics. The bad news is that we are not able to bring them all together on Friday 1 September as planned. As we really want to make this happen, we have postponed the seminar until mid-March next year. Updates will appear in the *Bulletin* nearer the time.

Roving indexer abroad – Part 3

Facets of Indexing, Society of Indexers' Diamond Anniversary Conference, Oxford, 21 June 2017



Following the leisurely cruise in Portland Maine, I packed my bags and tripped to Boston, London and on to Oxford. I was hit with heat! OK, it is officially the start of summer but 34°C is a bit too hot as the English don't do air conditioning very well (or not at all).

The conference was held at St Anne's College, Oxford. Set on a compact site with a mix of old residential houses converted to accommodation or seminar facilities as well as more modern lecture rooms and a library. It was exam time. Students get dressed up and wear short undergraduate gowns for their exams. Friends give them carnations to wish them luck. When their exams finish they are met by friends and sprayed with shaving cream, etc.

The Society of Indexers has switched the format of their conferences to a full day. This year it combined nicely with the *The Book Index* Conference held the following two days at the Bodleian Library.

Subject discussions – Science, technology and medicine

After a quick introduction to the day we moved into groups based on our indexing specialities. I attended the session on science, technology and medicine. A blue plaque near the door informed us it was the former residence of Henry Moseley who established the atomic number of the chemical elements.

Going round the group it turned out there was a good mix of specialities and indexing experience. Following a discussion on rates of pay and amount of work, we discussed the difficulty of getting professional development in our subject areas, particularly at indexing conferences. Suggestions were made to see what was being offered by associated groups such as science or medical writers societies. However, all agreed it would be good to have appropriate sessions at indexing conferences.

Current developments in the publishing industry: customers, technology and companies

Philip Shaw, from Oxford Brooks International Centre for Publishing, presented an overview of the publishing industry with a focus on ebooks. In the UK there has been an increase in book sales of about 1% from 2012 to 2016. Non-fiction sales have increased 9.5%, academic texts have increased 8.9%, while fiction has decreased 23%. Digital makes up about 15% of total sales.

Jellybooks' ebook readers are able to supply details on how readers are actually reading the books, such as only reading first few chapters and not finishing the books.

Students still prefer print books and there are several rental arrangements available for text books to help reduce costs to students.

Trends in publishing are moving away from colouring books and into retro publications,

such as reprinting Ladybird books or publishing adult books in same style. Nutrition and health are big as are books making sense of the world.

There are many publishing models and some include cloud finding, self-publishing, revenue from advertisers and various mobile editions. Publishers get about 80% of income from 20% of titles. As a result print on demand is popular.

There is a return to emphasis on book design, however less publications are copy edited due to cost (you can imagine the groan from the audience).

Working efficiently: getting the most from your software

This was a good session explaining and demonstrating various software and apps that are used to assist with indexing.

First up was Margaret Berson's Megabit Macros. Sometimes it is only when you see someone demonstrating the macros that you actually realise the number of keystrokes these macros save you. For example, when you have PDF and indexing software open you can select an item in the PDF, press something like Ctrl F12 and the entry is not only added as an entry, in say Cindex, but the cursor has moved back to the PDF ready for you to select another term. If the item selected is a name, select it, press something like Ctrl F7 and it will switch the author's name correctly and again return the cursor to the PDF. Details of the macros are here <http://www.edit-mb.com/megabit/> and here <http://www.edit-mb.com/megabit/Examples%20of%20Basic%20Macros.pdf>

Several indexers still like to mark-up proofs, or like to read them when on the train or when generally out and about. Using an iPad there are several Apps that enable you to do this and a couple of these were demonstrated,

such as Notability (<http://gingerlabs.com/>) or iAnnotate (<https://www.iannotate.com/>). One feature of iAnnotate is it puts up a wrist screen to prevent additional marking happening.

Wordflex App is an alternative dictionary that is fun to use, as it mind-maps words and can assist to help find alternative words (<http://wordflex.com/>).

The drawing facilities now available with Windows 10 were discussed and how these can be used in MS Word to edit indexes.

Working efficiently – tips, tricks and avoiding bad habits

Another good session on various ways indexers try to work more efficiently. While there was a panel of speakers, it was a much more relaxed session with several comments from the floor. There was a discussion on approaches to how people entered entries and edited. They ranged from Sylvia Coates method of OHIO (only handle it once) to marking up proofs and chucking terms in and tidying up later. While some were slightly frightened by OHIO method they conceded that often, when they do go back and change something, they realise they were happier with their first choice. It is about gut feeling and often initial choice is right. Chucking in terms can be useful if you feel you can improve the heading and you let it simmer for a while until the appropriate heading appears.

There was discussion on how to handle the introductory chapter and there seemed to be general agreement that this is read first and indexed later if not last.

The concept of sub-contracting easy bits to someone else was discussed, but it seemed only the American indexers present did that, only one did get her son to assist with certain bits. One reason given for not sub-contracting was doing the easy bits is a way to get into the

text and feeling as though you are achieving something. This ranged from entering glossary terms (even if they glossary may not be indexed), starting on an easier looking chapter to indexing illustrations first.

Do you proofread and send editor list of possible errors? It was agreed we are not paid to do this, however many find this hard not to do as part of their services. Unless significant things, such as inconsistencies in names or major errors, the suggestion is not to waste time doing this. Particularly as some have found their additional work is not actually welcomed.

Practical aspects of working were also discussed. This included turning off email while working and not checking it regularly. Taking regular breaks is important as is trying to work as ergonomically as possible. Many have templates set up in their software for the various publishers to assist with remembering how they prefer their indexes to be presented. Using two screens seems to be common. Determine how many pages you can realistically index a day to get the book indexed in the time given. While you may get quicker as you progress, not meeting these requirements gives you early warning you are going to have to alter something to get it completed.

There was a suggestion that looking at footnotes or the titles of the publications cited, sometimes gives useful tips for an appropriate heading. If you are indexing a topic you remember seeing earlier and don't want to disrupt indexing flow to go back, tag the entry and go back at a more convenient time to the earlier mention.

Indexing with added value: linked indexes in ebooks

Pilar Wyman and Pierke Bosschieter discussed ebook indexes with a wide variety of real

ebook indexes and how they work, as well as examples of how indexes will hopefully work in the future. Evaluation areas for ebook indexes include navigation ability, being able to communicate full range of relationships between entries and general aesthetics.

Reference: Boyd, Ceilyn and Wade, Mitch. Visualizing back-of-book indexes. *The Indexer*. 2012,30(1):25–37.

Awards, AGM and dinner

Sam Leith, SI honorary President briefly introduced the AGM with achievements for year and commented that ‘indexes are maps of the text’.

Jan Worrall was awarded the Bernard Levin Award for outstanding services to the Society, especially their training course. They also recognised two outstanding students with the

Betty Moys Prize. SI no longer has an award for indexing excellence.

At their AGM members voted to restrict listing in their Indexers Available equivalent to only members with approved qualifications and/or experience. This is a wonderful way of transforming SI into a professional society and showing that it cares about the professional experience indexers listed have.

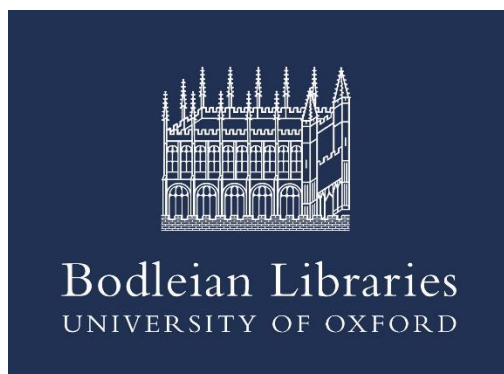
This year marks the 60th anniversary of SI and at the dinner Rosi Dear gave an entertaining potted history of the Society.

Early whispers are that the 2018 SI conference will be held with Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SFEP) Conference in September at Lancaster University.

Mary Russell

Roving indexer abroad – Part 4

The Book Index Conference, Bodleian Library, Oxford, 22–23 June 2017



Held in the newly restored Weston Library of the Bodleian, Oxford, this was a very different conference as all, except one, of the 16 papers were presented by history of the book scholars from around the world. The exception was a panel session of indexers. There were about 80 at the conference with a good mix of indexers and history of the book scholars. This led to fascinating question and answer (Q&A) sessions as both the academic

and practical indexing aspects were teased out. Rather than write about each paper, I will give you an overview. Details of all the papers and speakers can be found here <https://indexconference.wordpress.com/programme/> and papers will be published as conference proceedings in some form. I'll let you know when available.

The first speaker, James Mussell, spoke on early indexes to periodicals in the nineteenth century. His title used the quote by Henry Wheatley: ‘The indexes of some periodicals are good, but those of the many are bad’. This summed up his survey of indexes to specific periodicals such as *Strand Magazine*, *Fortnightly*, and *Gentleman's Magazine* or combined indexes such as *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature* and indexes to newspapers such as *The Times*. The modern-

day aspects of preparing periodical indexes was discussed in a Q&A session.

When discussing Chinese back-of-book indexes, the general feeling is that they are not common and they only appeared relatively recently. Several reasons are suggested for this, including the need for Chinese scholars to memorise texts and hence having an index is seen as cheating. Another view is the difficulty in placing Chinese characters in alphabetical order. This aspect was covered by Florence Hsia. Liangyu Fu challenged the lack of early back-of-book indexes with a fascinating talk examining four Chinese translations of Western books published in the late 1880s. These were herbals, pharmacopeia and even *Gray's Anatomy*. In all cases the translator had attempted to replicate the Western index in the same way in Chinese. In some cases, they had totally redesigned the index and altered the usual Chinese character layout from vertical to horizontal, sometimes they included English or Latin terms in the index and they also added new indexes to assist readers.

Several speakers spoke on medieval indexes. This may have been studying one manuscript in detail or comparing the various copies of a manuscript available. This highlighted the advantage scholars have these days with many libraries digitizing their early material. While it doesn't compare with examining the actual manuscript it does assist research. Only, as one scholar pointed out to me, it can mean you have easy access to too much material and must carefully choose which items to study in greater detail.

When comparing various copies of manuscripts, it was common to find only some copies had indexes. The contents of the index may have been transcribed exactly, hence page references may be wrong (as

written in a different hand would mean page breaks occurred in different places), or they were updated for the specific copy or have a new index. Indexes were commonly arranged under the 23 letters to the alphabet used then (no J or W and U/V interchangeable) with folio letters/numbers used as page numbers and sometimes column numbers were also given. Index entries were sorted alphabetically to first letter of the word, and occasionally second letter, then often in roughly folio (page) order.

Similar comments apply to early printed indexes. The biggest difference was the text had printed marginal notes. These notes were then used to form the index. We learnt there is evidence these notes were written on slips of paper, and the slips were then pasted onto pages headed with the appropriate letter. Hence the concepts were listed in page number order. The letter pages were then given to the printer to print. Therefore, indexes were often in a separate signature and not always bound at the back of the book. They may be slipped in as a separate item or bound at the front of the book. The index was sometimes called a table.

As the index was formed from these marginal notes the concepts highlighted in the index were sometimes odd and often hidden under unexpected letters such as 'huge snow in England' listed under H.

These marginal notes are taken to the extreme in early legal commentaries. To open a page of these books you are looking at a very complex page. In the centre is a small portion of legal text in two columns. Surrounding each column on three sides is the commentary. Added to this, the font and colour of the font used in the commentary varies for specific reasons. This style of page layout started with manuscripts and followed into printed books as it was well established

and useful. Scribes of the manuscript versions added indexes using folio number/letter to indicate each sheet and then letter A–D to indicate the four columns (back and front). When it came to printed versions, they didn't always have indexes. There is evidence that readers added their own, handwritten, indexes.

The contents of the index could be written in a satirical way as a form of cultural authority as in eighteenth-century books on the grand tour. A couple of poet-authored indexes were compared. These stretched the definition of the index as some were lists of words with no page numbers or put everything under 'a', 'of' or, 'the'.

Instead of projecting a summary of his talk in dot points, Sean Silver compiled a one page index of the key points from his talk using page numbers from his printed notes. This was very well received. In his talk, he discussed whether an index is made from stacked information or woven. He also discussed the methods of indexing used by John Locke and particularly to his commonplace books (See article by Alan Walker. Indexing commonplace books: John Lock's method. *The Indexer*. 2001, 22(3):114–8). Another indexer of commonplace books discussed was Frances Daniel Pastorius who dedicated the index to his two sons.

Views on indexes by philosophers Martin Heidegger and Ernst Cassirer were compared. Heidegger demanded his book have no index, but later editions did have an index. Cassirer was impressed by the index to his book. These indexes were described as back stairs to accessing their philosophical ideas.

In the middle of the papers on the first day was a panel of five indexers. Just to confuse the audience they arranged themselves as a palindrome based on the first letter of their first names (Ann Hudson, Paula Clarke Bain,

Janice Raymond, Pilar Wyman and Ann Kingdom). Following general introductions and a description on how a typical freelance indexer works it switched to a Q&A session. One thing that fascinated the audience was the sort of items discussed on the SI discussion list. There was also a useful discussion on encouraging authors to employ a professional indexer and to remember the cost of indexes when seeking funding for publication. This was a wonderful promotional session for the profession to an audience already interested in indexes.

As part of the conference Dennis Duncan curated a small exhibition on indexing in the Proscholium of the Bodleian. To my delight it included one of the very early illustrated indexes (first?) published in 1566 (Peter Frarian. *An oration against the vnlawfull insurrections of the Protestants of our time*). More information available at <http://bodleianlibs.tumblr.com/post/160805528790/the-almost-invisible-brilliance-of-the>

The reception for the conference turned out to be extra special as it was combined with the opening of the Bodleian's exhibition *Which Jane Austin* to mark 200 years since her death.

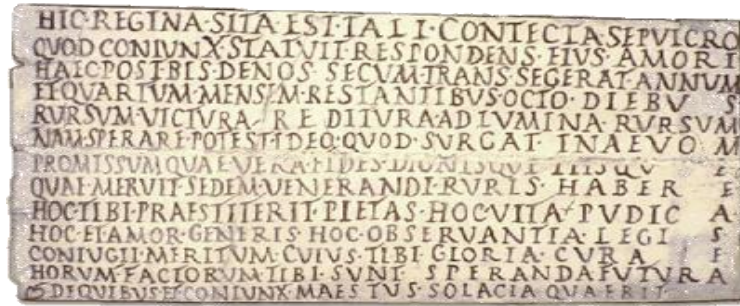
The location of the conference meant we were having coffee breaks and lunch beside one of the Sheldon tapestry maps of Worcester created around 1590 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheldon_tapes_tries).

I love book history and have attended many rare book summer schools, conferences and events, hence I really enjoyed the conference. The conference highlighted the many facets to the history of indexing. While there are articles in *The Indexer* covering the history of indexing (see <https://www.theindexer.org/contents/indexing-history.htm>), it isn't often covered at

indexing conferences. I would suggest indexing conference organisers consider having a speaker on the history of the index at future conferences. As I mentioned it was also a wonderful opportunity to promote indexing to a group of scholars interesting in other aspects of indexing.

This concludes my reports on the various conferences. Hopefully these reports inspire you to consider combining an indexing conference into a future vacation.

Mary Russell



Inscription of Regina, Monteverde catacomb

Indexing conundrum

The challenge of something not said

Recently, I indexed a book about artistic and literary responses to death and mourning. It included a fair bit of content related to the Holocaust, for which I had a heading 'Holocaust', and this was broken down into a number of subheadings. There were also a few references to Jewish experiences of death not related to the Holocaust, which I included under the heading 'Jews', adding a cross reference to 'Holocaust'.

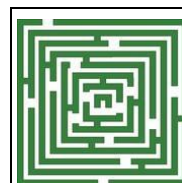
One of the page references under the heading 'Jews' was for a section of text covering an inscription (shown above) for a woman named Regina, buried in the Monteverde catacomb in Rome. The text did not actually say that Regina was Jewish – I surmised this because I had a hunch that Monteverde was a Jewish catacomb, and I was able to verify Regina's heritage with a quick internet search.

But herein lay my conundrum. Might a reader without this knowledge be confused or frustrated by not finding something on the

page clearly connected with Jews, particularly as Regina is not well known? On the other hand, a reader familiar with Regina and/or the Monteverde catacomb could rightly feel it remiss of me not to have included her. I leaned towards the reader with the background knowledge and indexed Regina under 'Jews'. Of course, had there been a need to break this heading down, the opportunity provided by a subheading would have solved my problem.

I am grateful for my inkling about Regina, and I am happy with my decision – though in situations like this, I don't like to think what might have been missed on other occasions when I didn't have a hunch!

Nikki Davis



Share your thoughts on this conundrum, or one of your own by emailing melbourneindexers@gmail.com

Upcoming meetings

August meeting: Indexing cited authors

Wednesday 2 August, 10.30 am – 12.00 pm

Meeting Room 3, Camberwell Library, 340 Camberwell Road, Camberwell

As indexers, we are well familiar with the way that authors acknowledge the work of others, naming them in the main body of the text, as parenthetical citations, or in footnotes and endnotes.

Indexing names of cited authors is seemingly easy, until the many variables are discovered, leaving the indexer to ask questions such as:

- What do I need to know about citation systems and style guides in order to meet differing requirements of publishers?
- How should I approach a project when I have not been provided with guidelines, and decisions around indexing citations have been left to me?
- What expectations might the author have?
- When is it appropriate to have a separate index for cited authors?

Along with examples, we will consider the various publisher, author and reader perspectives that help the indexer to get it right when it comes to indexing authors cited in trade, educational and academic publications.

Tea/coffee will be available on arrival. If you would like to have a light lunch after the meeting, Ignite Café in the Library complex is the place to go.

We shall be holding our regular indexing clinic for one-on-one guidance from 10.00 – 10.30 am.

Program of events

Month	Session	Details
October Details TBC	Singular or plural headings	Usual rule is for plural headings. When should headings be singular? For example, apple rather than apples.
December Details TBC	Don't make me think!	Take this very poor index and discuss its faults and how it could be improved.
Mid-March 2018 CAE, Flinders Lane	Indexes through publishers' eyes	Full day seminar

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