

# AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1980

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## FIRST MEETING FOR 1981

Tuesday, 18th March, at 7.30 p.m.

at CSIRO, 314 Albert Street, East Melbourne

Committee Room, Third Floor

"WHAT'S AN INDEXER WORTH?"

by R.D. Croll, B.Ag.Sc.

(see also pages 29, 30, 32-7)

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President:	Peter Dawe
Vice-President:	Vera Wicks
Secretary:	Jennifer Challis
Treasurer:	Joyce Korn
Committee Members:	Clyde Garrow Jean Hagger John Simkin

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE (March, 1981)

should be addressed to The Editor,  
AusSI Newsletter,  
G.P.O. Box 1251L  
Elizabeth Street,  
MELBOURNE, 3001.

DEADLINE: Friday, 20th February, 1981

MEETINGS: Tuesday 17th March; Wednesday 17th June;  
Thursday 17th September; Tuesday 17th November, 1981.



AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1980

presented at the Annual General Meeting,  
on Wednesday 19th November

My first year as the Society's President has been an enjoyable one for me personally, and also I believe a profitable one for the Society. This has been due in no small measure to the creative work of the Society's foundation President, Mr. Clyde Garrow, and to the continuing sterling services of our retiring secretary Miss Jean Hagger. It is fitting that I pay special tribute to these officers the first of whom has done so much to successfully launch the Australian Society of Indexers; and I wish to make a particular point of acknowledging the support, dedication, and hard work of the retiring secretary Miss Jean Hagger. On my own behalf and on yours I express our keen appreciation of the work which Miss Hagger has done over the past three years and say how delighted I am that she will be continuing her active association with the Society as a member of the in-coming Executive Committee.

I believe that the Society has been particularly fortunate in having the services of most capable and effective secretaries since its inception. Once again we have been fortunate in securing the services of someone who will undoubtedly serve the Society well and I am delighted to welcome Mrs. Jennifer Challis as our new secretary. We record our gratitude to Mrs. Win Mills, who has given generously of her experience this year as Vice-President and previously as an Executive Committee member. It is a pleasure now to say welcome to Mrs. Vera Wicks, our next Vice-President.

We were sorry to lose the services and membership of two of our foundation members during the year: Mrs. Jean Uhl, a member of our Panel of Assessors, whose initiative in 1975 ensured our viability, when she unexpectedly donned the mantle of Interim Corresponding Member of the Society of Indexers. Also Mrs. Sylvia Ramsden, the Society's foundation Secretary, who played a major part in establishing AusSI affiliation with the Society of Indexers. A combination of pressing factors has compelled these members to sever their connections with the Society and I express on my own behalf and for the Society collectively our appreciation of the contributions which each has made in the formative stages of AusSI.

An interesting and varied programme has been offered during the year. Details of our general meetings are as follows: -

*March 19, 1980* Mr. Ernest Mann, Director, Commonwealth Dairy Research Institute (Great Britain) gave an instructive and interesting talk on the indexing activities of this Institute of the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux.

*June 18, 1980* Mrs. Margaret Fialides, Manager, Tertiary Resource and Library Services, Royal Victoria Institute for the Blind, was our hostess and guide on a visit to the Institute. This was the first occasion on which a Society meeting had taken the form of a visit and it proved to be a particularly interesting and rewarding one.

*September 17, 1980* Miss Josephine McGovern, Parliamentary Librarian, Parliament of Victoria, spoke on the Conference of the Society of Indexers which she had attended in Cambridge last July. Miss McGovern was able not only to give us an excellent first hand account of this Conference but also tabled a number of the more significant papers presented.

*November 19, 1980* Mr. Clyde Garrow, Manager, Central Information Service of CSIRO spoke on the creation of an Australian Wine Data-base.



Detailed reports of these meetings have or will appear in the *Newsletter*.

Three numbers of the *Newsletter* appeared during the year and I believe that we would all wish to thank the new Honorary Editor, Mrs. Coryl Muntz for undertaking this important task. Since December 1976, when Mr. John Simkin devised the first issue of the new series, the *Newsletter* has been the life blood of our dispersed membership. We appreciate John's efforts in beginning and continuing as Honorary Editor to the completion of Volume 3.

One of the steps taken by the Executive Committee during the year was to increase the circulation to a wider range of Australian associations and societies. In doing so we hope not only to reach a wider audience and thus more effectively publicise the interests and activities of our Society but also to attract in return the publications of these other Societies.

Your Executive Committee has been quite busy during the year holding monthly committee meetings where a wide range of issues and questions were discussed. I have already dealt with some of these matters above but some additional items of interest are as follows: -

1. Earlier in the year we wrote to the Grolier Society expressing our dismay and concern that no index was to be provided to the *Australian Encyclopaedia*. In common with many others, we regarded this as not only regrettable but almost reprehensible and pointed out that the value of this work would be seriously impaired by the absence of an adequate index. Unfortunately our protest availed nought, it being claimed that the *Encyclopaedia* was largely self indexing and that the possibility of producing an index had been rejected on the grounds of its high cost. This Society still regards this as a most unfortunate circumstance.
2. A sub-committee has been established to discuss the creation and location of a register of indexes and we hope to be able to report further on this question in the new year.
3. The Society's Executive Committee is discussing the practicability of establishing a "library" of relevant literature both for display and inspection at our general meetings and also possibly for loan. It is thought that such a service would be of value to the membership generally.
4. The Executive Committee is also looking into the question of establishing courses in indexing. Clearly this is an important motivating factor for some of the membership and we believe that the Society has an important role in facilitating the training of those who wish to develop proficiency in indexing.
5. The opportunity is being taken to publicise the existence of the Society at the forthcoming meeting of the New Zealand and Australian Library Associations' joint conference to be held in Christchurch in January 1981, by arranging for a statement to be included in delegates' satchels. In this statement we have said that we are also interested in exploring the possible future development of a trans-Tasman society similar in structure to the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand. In this connection we have been able to make contact with Mr. Maurice Downer, Editor of the *New Zealand Index to Periodicals* which is produced by the National Library of New Zealand. Mr. Downer has kindly agreed to act as liaison officer between potentially interested members in New Zealand and the Australian Society.



6. The recurring interest in a scale of fees which might be charged by members of the Society was considered at a recent meeting of the Executive Committee. This is a difficult question but we believe that the Society has a duty to its members to authorize or endorse suitable rates of remuneration, particularly for its members who work as freelance indexers. One of our members Mr. R. D. Croll has prepared a thought provoking article for publication in the forthcoming issue of our *Newsletter* "What's an Indexer Worth?". This will be the subject of our first meeting in 1981.

Finally I express my appreciation and thanks to all members of the Executive Committee for their interest and support during the year, to other members of the Society who in numbers of ways have helped to promote our interests and objectives and with you I look forward to an interesting, useful, and productive 1981.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

January - December 1980

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>\$</u>
Affiliation Fee to "The Society of Indexers"	30.72	Membership subscriptions	615.00
"The Indexer" 1980 subscriptions	241.88	Newsletter subscriptions	82.50
Newsletter Printing and Postage	484.00	"The Indexer" subscriptions	187.50
Refunds		Bank Interest	22.34
Overpaid subscriptions	20.00	RESI Interest	13.85
Cheque Book	3.00		
Petty Cash			
President 11.50			
Hon. Secretary 26.18			
Hon. Treasurer 20.00	57.68		
	-----		-----
	\$ 837.28		\$ 921.19
	=====		=====
Surplus income over expenditure	\$ 83.91		

BALANCE SHEET

	<u>\$</u>
Cash in Bank at 1 January 1980	610.03
Plus Income	921.19
	-----
	\$ 1,531.22
Less Expenditure	837.28
	-----
Balance at 31 December 1980	\$ 693.94
	=====

ASSETS POSITION

Cash in Bank	130.09
On Call with RESI	513.85
	-----
	\$ 693.94
	=====

Joyce Korn  
Honorary Treasurer

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Those of us who deal with the *Newsletter* mailing list are particularly conscious of the President's comment on dispersed membership. Having previously aired our views on communication (even unto the Society of Editors) the increasing number of contributors from near and far is observed with gratitude. Jean Uhl has been one of the most sustained and informative in contributing original articles and news items. Yet it is but a minor facet of her work for the Society. As well as invaluable



guidance of the Interim Committee during 1975-6, as Liaison Officer with our British colleagues and on the Panel of Assessors, many ignorant newcomers to the art have been rescued from disaster on the 'hazardous path' by some amusing, but most pertinent experience. All this has been volunteered in addition to significant achievements in indexing and other literary commitment. Jean formed the keystone of our foundation: now we must look to our laurels ....

Only about ten per cent of our membership appears to be engaged in freelance work; an even smaller proportion has recorded (on application forms) Indexer as a relevant salaried occupation. If this is another tip of the iceberg situation, those working *sub silentio* are also urged to respond to R.D. Croll's views and proposals, stated in his article on financial aspects.

A contract agreement reverses the responsibility for equipment, insurance, leave arrangements. In the opinion of a respected publisher of scholarly works, 15 per cent of agreed gross payment is an acceptable adjustment for the freedom of casual employment: i.e. his accountability for an employee involved with a specific project. Would it simplify the issue of expenditure to express each component thus? The term *professional* should not imply 'playing for money': *bona fide* is used elsewhere to distinguish an indexer who has the ability and business acumen to fulfil and organise a contract within (almost invariably) a close production deadline. Editors willing to defer publication until a prospective indexer has learnt enough about the desired subject are rarely encountered. Conversely, there are some who are open to suggestion when an indexer has sampled the text and speeds back with a few facts on mental and physical limits. (We are inclined to believe that the topics of training and testing, vital in themselves, should be considered as separate areas of enquiry.)

In any case, time is significant on both sides of a contract. Award rates and agreements are related to the expectation of a certain number of hours worked. How many freelancers actually achieve or maintain more than say 60 hours per fortnight *chargeable* activity - when spread over the whole of 12 months? Time spent thinking about distractions, book-keeping, cleaning the typewriter, does not belong in this category. The aforesaid agreements also tend to consider similar occupations. Thus, the figures cited for journalist and translator have relevance - assuming the latter is offering written presentation. Although status gradings are recognised, formal qualifications are not mandatory. Perhaps the outward and visible sign of *bona fide* is a sample of previous work. This could be an obstacle for the novice, even if prepared to state a price per 1000 words of unseen text. It would be useful to know the order of payment attracted by our colleagues actually employed as Indexer; likewise how librarian members rate the value of this task, in comparison with their other duties.

Furthermore, in considering the grim realities of existence, we should heed Elizabeth Wallis's statement:

"Every skill worth acquiring has to be got at some cost in time and effort to the apprentice. I find it rather alarming that some indexers, who can give little proof of their knowledge, even after finishing a correspondence course with high marks, should consider they are worth employing at exactly the same rate as indexers of many years standing. Even more alarming is the belief of the novice indexer that he can provide an adequate index to a book on any subject at any level." [Indexer 11 (3): 162 (1979)]

Her subsequent remark about the Society's constitutional priorities is no less relevant.

Deliberations upon the combination of expenses incurred and skills for sale and survival approach reality in understanding the indexer's place among all publishing priorities. Provision of valid guidelines for payment on visible quantities would be a source of general thanksgiving - not least from those who deal with firms that reduce the author's payment by 10-12 per cent to pay for a contracted index. After all, production costs are stretched occasionally to include a designer and/or illustrator. What compatible inducement can the Society offer those whose business is budgets, perhaps even profits?

Time spent on reconnaissance is seldom wasted.



SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE SOCIETY OF INDEXERS' CONFERENCE, CAMBRIDGE,  
July, 1980.

Read to the meeting of the Society 15th September

by Josephine McGovern, Librarian, Parliament of Victoria.

My overwhelming impression of the conference "Indexers in a world of change" was the friendliness of the participants, the delightful setting in the ancient city of learning Cambridge and the efficient way a small group of indexers resident in Cambridge had carefully prepared the varied programmes and the entertainment.

There was obvious pleasure that representatives of the Canadian and Australian Societies of Indexers were present and we were specially asked to take greetings and best wishes to our respective societies. We were not the only overseas folk as two participants came from Jamaica and some from the Continent, not forgetting ex-patriate Victorian, Leigh Baker, who had come via Papua New Guinea and a management course in the U.K. The Society had representatives from every corner of the British Isles and members from every vintage - founding members, new members, young members, octogenarians, several married couples and housewives who had left children at home with husbands for the weekend.

Meals at Newnham College provided a great forum for exchange of ideas. So did the bar! Many of those present had come to learn and many were indexers of books, working in isolation. On the other hand, librarians and indexers of information were well represented too. There was much interest in a workshop session on computer-aided indexing and those present strongly urged the Society to pursue research in this direction.

I was asked to bring back two suggestions, but feel time may have caught up with events. A membership list of AusSI was reported lacking. On enrolment, my status was pleasantly queried. Of which Society of Indexers was I a financial member? The other suggestion was that bulk airmailing of *The Indexer* to Australia might be advantageous.

Normally I make copious notes, but on this occasion decided to wait for the written accounts of the Conference in *The Indexer*, not realising our AusSI meeting would come sooner.

The evening guest speakers were excellent choices for an after-dinner occasion. The first, Morris McWhirter, gave new perspectives on the *Guinness Book of Records* and responded to questions with a quick wit and a real grasp of the subject of indexing. Mr. Chadwyck Healey, on Saturday morning, gave useful pointers to coping with a new world of micro-publishing and I was specially interested in his references to the House of Commons thesaurus used in the compilation of the "Non - HMSO Catalogue", properly known as the "Catalogue of British Official Publications not published by HMSO". The thesaurus which I saw on a quick visit to Westminster is based on the strip indexes used so successfully for many years in the House of Commons Library. This month, September, 1980, the House of Commons is to completely computerise its information retrieval, after several years of careful preparation.

Saturday afternoon provided an opportunity to visit interesting institutions and places in Cambridge, namely, tours of Cambridge Colleges, or the Scott Polar Research Institute or Cambridge University Botanic Garden or the Fitzwilliam Museum.

I had a most satisfying afternoon in pleasant company visiting the Fitzwilliam Museum, the town market, Heffer's Bookshop, a nice tearoom and then Evensong at King's College Chapel, before returning across the Cam to Newnham for dinner.



The second after-dinner speaker, Mr. Hugh Williamson, Director of Alden Press, Oxford and author of *Methods of Book Design*, spoke on "Indexer and printer: with a modicum of history and prophecy".

Sunday morning was devoted to workshops and discussions. Very popular was the one on general computer indexing, chaired by Robert Collison. The Society resolved to pursue vigorously the question of general computer indexing and Mr. Charles Raper, of Hove, East Sussex, distributed a paper on low cost computer-aided indexing which evoked much interest.

Other topics dealt with by workshop in the first session were archaeology, biography and single subject works, law and crime. In our seminar room was the well stocked bookshop where there were even bargains to be had.

The next workshops were on archives, medicine and allied subjects, abstracting of scientific periodicals (by Professor Kenneth Mellanby) and the one I attended, general end-of-book indexing. The comments of individual indexers were most illuminating and a lively debate ensued on the merits or otherwise of indexers and authors collaborating. Several expressed the opinion that publishers tried to keep indexers and authors away from each other. Useful comments were also made on the great necessity to index books for children.

After lunch, some of the discussion flowed on to the closing session. The next conference has been tentatively arranged for 1983 in the Bristol area. I hope I am able to go again.

Those who did not have to go back to work or engage in other pursuits on Monday had another day of interesting excursions, in spite of early torrential rain. There was a morning guided tour of the Cambridge University Library where a splendid display of indexes was put on by Society member and university librarian, Mr. Glynne Parker.

There were early indexes, lots of Bibles, Wheatley Medal winning indexes, plain bad indexes, and even comic indexes. The organiser set the puzzle - in which book does one find the earliest index. No one could provide a definitive answer.

After lunch we were transported to Cambridge University Press in private cars and given a comprehensive tour of the plant, seeing both traditional and computer typesetting. By a strange coincidence, the book we saw tumbling off the casing and binding machine was by the father of one of the indexers on the excursion.

By the end of the afternoon, the poor weather had gone and we farewelled the kind group of indexers in Cambridge who had worked so hard to make everything happen easily and pleasantly at the 1980 Conference of the Society of Indexers.

#### WHAT'S AN INDEXER WORTH?

by R. D. Croll

#### *Synopsis*

Assessment and registration of indexers are activities recognised by the Australian Society of Indexers as being part of its duties; the need for definitive action is asserted to be urgent. Skills required for effective indexing are evaluated in \$ per hour against a background of remuneration in various occupations. Rates in \$ per 1000 words for two levels of complexity of indexing are derived and commended for adoption. Costs encountered by the freelance indexer (excluding consumables) are estimated.



It is doubtful whether there exists a profession whose members are convinced that they are adequately rewarded. To bring this closer to home let us recall Bernard Levin's note to *The Times* (December 17, 1976), reprinted in *The Indexer* 10(3):139 (1977) - "Indexers are shamefully treated. Their pay is disgracefully low and they are hardly ever acknowledged in the book." In what follows an attempt is made to evaluate the rewards appropriate for having the basic talents that are essential for the task of indexing, to discuss those that, if possessed, make the practitioner more effective, and to consider the demands made by different sorts of index and material to be indexed. The approach is directed primarily to the freelance operator - mercenary but not medieval! (The O.E.D. defines a freelance as a medieval mercenary!) - because it is rare to a full-time employee wholly engaged on indexing. This possibly accounts for the fact that indexing skill is seldom accorded the value it deserves - it is often a task that somebody knocks off as required. In fact, one can encounter an attitude among employers that seems to reflect the notion that any fool can make an index. One must grant that many a book index betrays the use of personnel in just that category, but I suspect the publisher gets just what he pays for!

The purpose of this analysis is to incite discussion and hopefully, to engender the development and promulgation of a certificate of competence, a code of practice, and a scale of charges for the professional task of indexing that have the blessing of the Society. I know these activities are acknowledged to be part of its duties: the need for definitive action is becoming acute.

It proves to be extremely difficult to get concrete figures for charges for indexing used overseas. The Canadian and the American Societies leave this aspect to negotiation between indexer and employer; the U.K. Society's various documents yield much philosophical matter but, the only figures I can find are the mention in 1980 of Stg 2.50 per hour giving way to Stg 3.00 per hour and in 1978 a statement of opinion that if indexers were to charge Stg 3.50 per hour "as suggested" they would price themselves out of the market. It is patent that the Australian Society must arrive at conclusions for itself.

First let us get some perspective on how various types of employment and levels of annual salaries rank when expressed in dollars per hour. Such data may surprise many. I have used scales related to library work, to information services, and to some other professions and trades. Annual salaries have been divided by 52 to get the weekly figure; this in turn has been divided by the hours per week applicable to the activity to get the hourly rate. Here they are:

<i>Commonwealth Awards (37 hour week assumed)</i>		\$p.a.	\$p.w.	\$p.h.	\$p.h. + 15%
Librarian Grade 1	min.	11,766	226.27	6.12	7.03
	Max.	15,666	301.27	8.14	9.36
Librarian Grade 2	min.	16,210	311.73	8.43	9.69
	max.	17,843	343.13	9.27	10.66
Librarian Grade 3	min.	18,568	357.08	9.65	11.10
	max.	20,744	398.92	10.78	12.40
Scientific Services Officer Grade 2	min.	17,359	333.83	9.02	10.40
	max.	19,153	368.33	9.95	11.45
Scientific Services Officer Grade 3	min.	20,003	384.67	10.40	11.96
	max.	22,099	424.98	11.49	13.21



*Some State Awards (much more is usually paid! - 40 hour week of 5 days assumed)*

	\$p.w.	\$p.h.
Carter's Assistant (alias "garbage remover")	165.26	4.13
Bricklayer (includes \$3.90 per day for travel)	259.10	6.48
Carpenter (same travel loading)	as for bricklayer	
Plumber (registered) (includes \$2.50 per day for travel)	271.70	6.79
Electrician (registered) (no travel loading)	274.50	6.86

*Some other occupations (37 hour week assumed)*

			\$p.h.
Accountant - junior	min.	ca	12
	max.	ca	15
Accountant - senior	average	ca	25
Accountant - freelance	from		15
	to		25
Journalist - casual rate		ca	10
Psychologist	from		30
	to		45
Translator - freelance (European languages)		ca	20+

I am indebted to an accountant friend for the third group of figures (excluding "Translator" and "Journalist"); they are not normally accessible.

The figure for "Translator" is based on information from a senior and experienced translator who tells me that currently, the following rates are given approximate recognition by freelance operators:

- Common European languages - \$7 upwards (\$8 perhaps average) per 100 words of English translation;
- Asian languages - not less than \$12 per 100 words of English translation.

My informant adds, in respect of common European languages, that 1000 words per hour is a possible rate, 500 words per hour is an easy rate to meet, and 300 words per hour would be very generous indeed.

Nevertheless, I have based the \$21 per hour calculation shown above on 300+ words per hour at \$7 per 100 words. If this were sustainable for 37 hours per week for 52 weeks per year the attractive figure of \$40,400 p.a. emerges.

My accountant friend has helped further by providing the following guidelines for costs associated with freelance work.

- to compensate for lack of holiday and sick pay - 15%  
(note calculation of this addition in final column of table above)
- to compensate for lack of worker's compensation  
(i.e. personal accident and sickness policy - average) ca 10c p.h.
- to cover use of heating and lighting - average ca 40c p.h.
- to cover amortization of fireproof security cabinet over 12 months ca 22c p.h.
- to cover amortization of office equipment required ca 66c p.h.



Total of items to be added to figures appearing in the final column of table

\$1.38 p.h.

Thus, for example, the figure per hour equating the salary of a Librarian Grade 3 on the top step of that scale, viz. \$10.78 per hour, becomes \$12.40 for the freelance to cover sick and holiday pay and then should have added to it a further \$1.38 to give a total of \$13.78 per hour for the freelance operation.

To these data we could well add the recently expressed opinion of a very experienced publisher that the industry would be likely to argue against any figure above \$10.00 per hour.

I am sure fellow indexers will agree that these figures make interesting background. But they are only background. We now have to come to grips with the real decisions.

- how is the possession of the skills for competent indexing to be assessed?
- to what level should the basic skills required for indexing be equated?
- should we (i.e. the Society) recognize, and suggest rewarding differentially, different degrees of competence in using these basic skills and differing degrees of demonstrable experience? How would such a classification be effected and operated?
- to what degree, if at all, should we (i.e. the Society) suggest loadings for specific subject matter knowledge and for the possession of such knowledge in a plurality of subjects?
- should the agreed rate be in \$ per hour or \$ per unit of material indexed (e.g. per page or per 1000 words) or \$ per unit of indexing produced (e.g. per index entry)?

I have grappled with these problems and, on balance, suggest the following conclusions:-

- the possession of the basic skills and principles to index competently can only be established by test. (I consider the Society has a duty to set up an examining panel of not less than three and not more than five experienced indexers to formulate procedures and criteria, and to give effect to them on behalf of the Society. A corollary is that the Society should establish a "Certificate of Competence" and a List of Registered Indexers, i.e. those that hold the Certificate.)
- the Society should accept, promulgate and maintain a set of current rates for a Registered Indexer and express them as \$ per 1000 words of text indexed.  
  
(The use of a rate per hour is validly criticisable on several grounds: a rate per unit of work indexed (e.g. \$ per single-spaced, typed, A4 page indexed; \$ per 1000 words indexed) is to be preferred. Some of the advantages suggested are:
  - an employer is more readily able to estimate the cost of an indexing job and hence feel more confidence in the charges made;
  - an indexer, even one new to freelance work and its associated costing, can easily price a job;
  - the employer is not penalised by having employed a slow indexer, unless deadline considerations loom large.



There is one further basis of charging for indexing that has, I understand, been used, viz. a charge per each entry in the resulting index. This seems to me to have all the disadvantages of a rate per hour, e.g. estimation of cost in advance can only be by trial indexing of a sample, thus making it difficult for the novice to quote and the employer to accept. The one user of this system known to me mentioned that rates quoted varied with complexity of material, between \$0.13 per entry and \$0.24 per entry. An entry eligible for charging was defined as an indexing term against which appeared one or more page numbers and the entry counted only as one, irrespective of how many page numbers were indexed to the entry.)

- irrespective of the mode of expression of the rates, their determination involves the concept of \$ per hour; moreover, the \$ per hour rating is the only possible form for some work.
- a basis, from which to calculate, of \$10.00 per hour should be adopted. (This proposal is based on the fact that much of the competent indexing of which the writer is aware is performed by employees at about this level of salary. It is also founded on the writer's firm opinion from considerable experience that effective indexing benefits from the talents and experience implied by employment in classifications having this level of payment.)
- the Society should formally recognise the generally accepted loading, currently \$1.38 per hour, say, \$1.40, to cover overhead costs of the self-employed indexer.
- the addition to an invoice of a charge for consumables can be left to the indexer.
- different degrees of competence in applying the basic skills and various lengths of experience can neither be readily nor effectively determined and compared; it is more productive to rate the degrees of complexity of indexing tasks.
- it is both invidious and illogical to suggest differential rates for the possession, by an indexer, of competences in one or more specific areas of subject-matter. As in the previous point, it is concluded that instead of differentially grading indexers we should grade indexing jobs. (This does not mean that the Society should pretend that all its Registered Indexers are equally competent in performing in any area of subject-matter. A listing of indexers' knowledge and experience will, no doubt, be created and maintained for use with tasks needing high speed. But let me interpolate the view that it would be most improper for a Registered Indexer to be denied access to a job in a field new to that indexer. Though difficult it is possible for that indexer to consult references and produce an effective index. More time will have to be spent working that way. Of course, that added time must *not* be reflected by the invoice; it is to be regarded by the indexer as purchased additional training. In any case it cannot be charged for when a \$ per 1000 words rate is used.)
- of the many levels of complexity among indexing tasks, arising from sorts of indexing demanded and from subject-matter, only two broad categories need be considered by the Society, viz.:
  - (a) simple - indexes that require no more, or little more, than a meticulous listing of items actually mentioned in the text.

(This postulates minimal need for long experience and knowledge of the specific subject-matter(s).)



- (b) complex - indexes that require the addition of an extensive, interpretative array of terms.

(This postulates a strong need for having or acquiring experience, and knowledge of specific subject-matter(s).)

(To the first it is obvious that no loading to the base rate is justified. My initial thinking led me to apply a loading to the second category. But I finally came to the conclusion that any variation between the two extremes of complexity would be adequately covered by the figure representing the hours spent on the job, when considering hourly rate, or the price per 1000 words when rating in that fashion.)

Those are the conclusions I have reached. The final thing that is necessary is to put figures to the price per unit of work indexed. I do so, in slightly rounded terms, on the following bases developed in this paper:

- basic rate per hour for Registered Indexer - \$10.00 per hour;
- the two defined degrees of complexity, "simple" and "complex";
- the loadings needed by the freelance to cover sick/holiday pay (\$1.50 per hour) and overheads (\$1.40 per hour);

and the additional fact that three experienced indexers found themselves in broad agreement with the number of pages per hour of sustained effort shown in the table below:

	"Simple" indexing	(Mid-point)	"Complex" indexing
Base rate per hour	10.00		10.00
Sick/holiday pay loading per hour	1.50		1.50
Overhead pay loading per hour	1.40		1.40
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Total basic items per hour	12.90		12.90
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Sustainable "output" (A4 page: 600+ words)	13 pages per hour		6.5 pages per hour
Price per page =	\$1.00		\$2.00
Price per 1000 words =	\$1.70	(\$2.50)	\$3.30

I commend to the Society that these rates be considered for adoption as its dicdum.

And don't let anyone say, in a relieved tone, "Thank goodness the author got through all that tedious stuff on \$ per hour and arrived at a really useful basis of \$ per 1000 words!" The author is currently indexing maps!

SO YOU WANT TO INDEX?; by Peter E. Grieg

Published by IASC/SCAD, this paper gives a precise account of the situation in Canada, with some useful bibliographic references. It is a most relevant adjunct to *What's an Indexer Worth?* A loan copy is available from our Hon. Secretary.



BOOK REVIEW

by Jean Uhl

INDEXING, THE ART OF - A Guide to the Indexing of Books and Periodicals; by G. Norman Knight. George Allen & Unwin, London 1979.

A few years ago when endeavouring to find out more about the art of indexing, it was clear that in Australia, at any rate, there was very little written information available on the subject. According to one publisher I visited, a pamphlet entitled *Making an Index* by Gordon Carey (1951) was the only publication he knew and this was out of print in Melbourne. It is therefore encouraging even at this rather late stage to be aware of Norman Knight's book and to find that AusSI had been sent a review copy. This posthumous publication is a worthy memorial to the late Norman Knight, founder of the Society of Indexers and its first Secretary; the Society was twenty-one years of age when the book was published in 1979.

It was unnecessary for the author to have apologised "that this book is on the whole rather elementary." As he said, 'it was arranged so deliberately because any indexer who observes the elementary principles will not go far wrong ...' All who start out on the hazardous path of indexing hoping to attain an understanding of the art and a high standard will appreciate Mr. Knight's lucid explanations and elegant expression. Practical comments on many aspects of the British Standards add to the value of the work as *vade mecum*: not only to the novice but also to the more experienced who still need a ready reference for such vexed questions as headings and sub-headings, subject headings, cross-references, alphabetical arrangements, follow-on method versus line-by-line or indented form. All indexers develop their own *modus operandi* but the introductory chapter contains truths of which some may not be aware - 'a good indexer must be both born and made, have an orderly mind (one may wonder why so many women make good indexers when this trait is supposed not to be one of their attributes!), infinite patience and the ability to approach the book from the readers' angle.' To these, the author added: common sense, imagination, general knowledge above the average and a good memory plus an insight into the author's meaning - (one of the most difficult bridges to cross in some instances!)

Indexing, the Art of, covers indexing of periodicals, newspapers, cumulative indexing and a chapter on editing and correcting of proofs is helpful and instructive. Regrettably proof reading of one's index is not thought necessary by many publishers.

The inclusion of the history of the Australian Society of Indexers in Appendix Three may be taken as indicative that AusSI has arrived - the Society is the third to be founded in the world.

Even for a reader who may never have compiled an index the book makes interesting general reading. It may inspire more to practise the art and gain a greater understanding to the question of "What is an Index?" The chapter on Humor in Indexing is tempting, but how many of us could indulge in this exercise though we may long to, when cost-price is the ruling factor in any publication these days and an index is often considered the 'cinderella' of a book?

If one may be slightly critical, it would appear that the index to the book might usefully have had an entry for indexing terms such as 'line-by-line', 'columnar', 'run-on', 'indented', under the alphabetical letters concerned instead of listing them only under the heading 'sub-heading.' Would an experienced indexer realise that these terms were connected with sub-headings? Would it not be more likely that with a smattering of terms they would look for 'line-by-line' under 'L' and 'indented' under 'I' etc? Also it would be useful to have made a separate bibliography of all the useful and informative publications mentioned in the text instead of including them in the general index - this would save the reader time in locating a publication such as Carey's



*Making an Index* if one did not know the name of the author or the title of the publication. Perhaps this is being pernicky, but one must observe the rule 'what is in the reader's mind?'

As would be expected of George Allen & Unwin the production leaves little to be desired in print, lay-out and binding and it is easy and light to handle, with a dust-cover clearly indicating what the book contains between its covers. Recommended price in Australia for hardback is \$24.50 - no price is given for paperback, but it is a book which should be on every indexer's bookshelf.

MY FIGHT FOR BIRTH CONTROL; b Margaret Sanger

A copy of the index to the first edition (1931) of this book, compiled by Kenneth Bolton, has been received by the Hon. Secretary. This accompanied a letter from Mrs. Eileen Palmer, mentioning that she has sent (1/10/1980) copies to four Australian institutions. She and her brother hope it may be of assistance to research workers concerned with the history of the international movement for family planning. Further copies are still available for distribution. [*vide News* 1.4 (2-3): 24]

#### REVIEWS - INDEXES MENTIONED

From *The Age*, Melbourne

6th September, 1980. Sir George Arthur, Bart., 1784-1854; by A.G.L. Shaw (Melbourne University Press), reviewed by Dr. L.L. Robson. "...Professor Shaw exhibited his mastery of the documents and dossiers which virtual police States produce. ... not least through the perhaps too frequent direct quotations and certainly through the multitude of reference notes. It is a pity then, that the index is not as comprehensive as it might be."

City on the Peel; by Roger Milliss (A.H. and A.W. Reed), reviewed by Paul Watson. "... well written, generously illustrated and in an attractive format. The index, bibliography and notes are excellent. It is an exemplary local history." [Tamworth, N.S.W.]

11th October, 1980. The Wind Commands: Sailors and Sailing Ships in the Pacific; by Harry Morton (University of Queensland Press), reviewed by Olaf Ruhen. "An over-active conscience sent me through the 1350 chapter notes and much of the index, both unsatisfactory mainly because Morton displays an academic reluctance to identify the subject of his sentence. 'A traveller noticed ...' 'One veteran captain said ...'."

15th November, 1980. Victoria the Golden; by William Strutt with a narrative by Marjorie Tipping (Library Committee, Parliament of Victoria), reviewed by Mary Eagle. "The designer has rearranged Strutt's ordering for the negligible return of having the sketches sorted under five categories ... I don't find that this categorisation "assists" in reading the album. Strutt's handwritten Index is reproduced as attractive end-papers."

From *The Herald*, Melbourne

4th November, 1980. Healing Plants: A Modern Herbal; edited by W.A.R. Thomson, M.D. Macmillan, reviewed by David Dark. "... beautifully illustrated and so cross-indexed as to make your eyes cross. But there's probably a remedy for that, too."



From *The Medical Journal of Australia*

3rd November, 1979. Developmental Defects and Syndromes, by Michael A. Salmon (HM and M Publishers Ltd), reviewed by John G. Rogers. "The most frustrating feature of this book is the lack of a good comprehensive index. This first edition lacks the practical utility of some of its predecessors in the field, and cannot be recommended."

23rd August, 1980. Letter to the Editor from Patrick West, Editor at HM and M Publishers Ltd: "... on matters of fact there should be no doubt ... There is an index, extending to 9.25 pages and containing in excess of 1200 entries."

Letter in response to the above, from John G. Rogers: "His letter highlights one of the serious defects of the index of this book. Ehlers-Danlos syndrome does not appear in the index and is listed in the contents as a multi-system disease, when in reality it is a collagen or connective tissue disorder. ... disorders listed in the contents have not been indexed. This is a very serious defect, particularly when the classification in the contents is rather capricious. ... Cutis laxa does not receive any mention at all on the pages indicated. I find the length of an index and the number of entries quite irrelevant when it fails to index all the conditions which the book considers of sufficient importance to constitute the contents."

FINALLY, SOME GENERAL COMMENT ..... from those more or less aware.

*Folio*, Autumn 1980, p.31 Talking about Books; by David Holloway: "... and then there is the index. A well-compiled index is a joy. I wish I could stop there for to say more will bring down on my head the wrath of that intensely sensitive body the Society of Indexers, who comb publications of all sorts for praise and blame of indexes and print them with acid comments in their Journal. I once wrote a light-hearted paragraph about preparing a book for publication, and of the agonies of preparing an index; principally because one is forced to read one's own text very closely at a time when nothing more can be done to improve it. Every phrase that might conceivably been bettered sticks out. In addition, the actual chore of listing names and topics is considerable. I said in my article that the best way to compile an index was to do it sitting in the sun, listening to a cricket commentary on the radio. To say this is apparently to insult the craft of the Indexer. I am unrepentant: indeed I commend sunshine and a good cricket match to anyone as sugar for a bitter pill ..."

*The Bulletin*, Sydney, 26th August, 1980, p.51 Reading the old Lang signs; by Ron Saw: "And there is the matter, mentioned on 2BL in Sydney every weekday, during that fellow Robertson's program, of "the *Financial Times* index," Index? What in God's name can they be on about there? An index, to my certain knowledge, is a page of information as to content, found in the front of many books. But what could that have to do with the market or the *Financial Times*? Of course its an English paper, and that reduces, sharply, my chances of understanding a single word of it."

All the news that's wit to print .....