

## Honorary Life Member Nomination

### Citation in support of nomination

#### Member nominated for Life membership: Michael Ramsden

##### *Professional career*

Michael graduated with a BA (Hons) in History from the University of Southampton in 1957 and took up a position as a graduate trainee with the Gillingham Public Library. He then attended the School of Librarianship at North Western Polytechnic (now University of North London) in 1958–9 and passed the Registration Examination of the Library Association, gaining his ALA in 1961 after having completed three years of working in public libraries. Michael was then appointed to a lectureship at the College of Librarianship, Wales. In 1971, he decided to relocate to Melbourne in order to accept a lectureship in the Department of Librarianship at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) (now RMIT University). Michael was then employed there for the remainder of his academic career and was promoted to the level of full professor. During his tenure at RMIT, he served as Head of the Department of Librarianship, and for ten years was the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Michael's professional achievements were recognized with the conferral of a fellowship by the Australian Library and Information Association. An excerpt from that citation provides an excellent summary of his professional achievements:

*Michael Ramsden has made a distinguished contribution to the theory and practice of librarianship through his research, his scholarship and publications, particularly in the area of classification and indexing, and in his contribution to the development of education for library and information studies. He has an internationally recognised reputation for his work in the areas of classification and indexing. His books are used as standard texts throughout the world, and the workbooks published by RMIT have been made available to school of library and information studies in many countries.*

*Michael Ramsden has researched and made major contributions in other areas. In the 1970s he was responsible for significant pioneering research in the areas of standards and performance measures for libraries. His work with public libraries in Victoria has become a landmark study. He has a record of sustained high achievement and leadership in the field of librarianship. [...] In his position as Head of RMIT's Department of Librarianship (now Information Services) he carried through a major reorientation of both the Department's teaching program and its role in the Institute. The Department's membership of RMIT's Information technology Division represents major recognition of this reorientation.*

*Michael Ramsden has been an active member and office holder in the Library Association, the Australian Society of Indexers and FID's Commission for Asia and Oceania. He has been on the Editorial Boards of two international journals and been involved in education for library and information studies in China and East Africa. He has been a professional member of the Library Association of Australia since arriving in Australia in 1971. He was General Councillor for Victoria in 1976/77, and a member of*

*the Standing Committee of Council, President of the Victorian Branch in 1974, and Secretary of the LAA Biennial Conference Committee for the 1975 Melbourne conference.*

*Michael Ramsden is a strong advocate of continuing education. He has conducted regular indexing programs for the Australian Society of Indexers, PRECIS workshops for RMIT, and two series of travelling workshops for the LAA on the new edition of AACR which were held in all capital cities and Townsville in 1979.*

*Michael Ramsden has been very active in the area of course development and course design, and led major course redesigns at RMIT, including the early introduction of computer familiarisation subjects. Since 1984 he has been heavily involved in utilising information management software packages in both teaching and research programs. He has always been very generous in giving his time and expertise to others in the interests of furthering the development of librarianship and in education for library and information studies in particular.*

[Phillips, Sue, 1988. Michael Ramsden, BA, MSocSc, FLA, FLAA, *inCite* 9/8: 9, 11]

Following his retirement from RMIT in 1995, Michael took up back-of-book indexing as a freelancer. He had already indexed a couple of books and thought that working as a freelancer would provide both intellectual stimulation and some discretionary income. He also then gave a great deal more of his time in voluntary service to ANZSI.

### **Membership of ANZSI**

Michael joined the Society in 1976, the year it was founded.

He was registered as a professional indexer (now accreditation) in 1983.

### **Service to ANZSI**

Given his background as a senior academic, and his service from 1961 to 1970 on the council of the Association of Assistant Librarians (as member, Honorary Secretary, and President), Michael brought a wealth of administrative experience, as well as an extensive knowledge of indexing, to his service as an office holder in the following Committee roles:

ANZSI Council Vice President	2019–
ANZSI Council Secretary	2009–13
ANZSI Council Member	2008–09; 2019 (Oct–Nov)
Victorian Branch Committee Member	1998–99; 2013–15

In these roles, Michael has made a significant and lasting contribution to the governance of the Society and to the professionalisation of indexing. He developed and implemented a range of efficient and effective administrative procedures, and his work on drafting (and redrafting) the Constitution is legendary. He played a key role in steering the restructure of the organization in the lead-up to the dissolution of the branches and, most recently, was a member of the subcommittee that developed the Society's Code of Conduct.

In addition to his Council and Branch committee work, Michael has also served as a judge for the John Simpkin Medal (formerly AusSI Medal), including acting as the convenor of the judging panel for the inaugural Australian Society of Indexers Medal.

Michael has also made significant contributions to the training of indexers and the professional development of ANZSI members. For example, in 1985, whilst employed by the Department of Librarianship at RMIT, he conducted short courses in indexing, in association with AusSI.

The course was designed to introduce students to the techniques used in manually indexing a monograph or serial and to provide them with the skills to index a simple monograph. It was conducted ... in five two-hour sessions, each consisting of an expository lecture followed by supervised practical work. The course covered: types of indexes; length, scope and depth of indexes alphabetical arrangement and arrangement of identical headings • choice and form of headings and subheadings; combination order; vocabulary control and authority files; references and cross-references headings for persons and corporate bodies; author and title entries subject indexing • editing; layout and style.

[AusSI course in indexing, *AusSI Newsletter*, 1985(2): 23]

Over the years, Michael has also conducted a range of workshops and delivered a number of talks on indexing-related topics, first at RMIT, and then later at the VIC Club of the Victorian Branch of ANZSI, and most recently, at Melbourne Indexers' meetings.

Michael also developed the thesaurus for the Society's *ANZSI Newsletter* Indexing Project.

## **Conclusion**

Honorary Life Membership may be awarded to members in recognition of outstanding service to the Society and significant contributions to indexing.

Michael Ramsden satisfies both criteria with distinction. His contribution to indexing has been internationally recognized, and his service to the former Victorian Branch and the ANZSI Council has been invaluable.

We, the undersigned, nominate Michael Ramsden for Life Membership of ANZSI for outstanding service to the Society and for services to indexing.

### **Nominator:**

Name: Sherrey Quinn, ANZSI Secretary  
 Email: [sherreyquinn@gmail.com](mailto:sherreyquinn@gmail.com)  
 Phone: 02 6257 9177

### **Secunder:**

Name: Karen Gillen, ANZSI Vice President & Treasurer  
 Email: [kamgillen@gmail.com](mailto:kamgillen@gmail.com)  
 Phone: 0413 222 109

**Supporters:**

Name: Shirley Campbell, ANZSI Council Member  
Email: [shirley.campbell7@inet.net.au](mailto:shirley.campbell7@inet.net.au)  
Phone: 0418 851 006

Name: Nikki Davis, ANZSI Membership Secretary  
Email: [bookindexing@gmail.com](mailto:bookindexing@gmail.com)  
Phone: 0414 758 712