NEWS OF THE SOCIETY OF INDEXERS

Annual Report

The Annual Report, presented at the annual general meeting in May 1978, recorded a total membership at the end of March of 529, an increase of 157 over the previous year.

The Registrar had provided over 400 introductions to publishers for Registered Indexers, on a variety of subjects, and had co-ordinated indexing work by members on an international series of publications on Anthropology.

The Board of Assessors had introduced a new and more stringent procedure for entry to the register, and had admitted two new registered Indexers.

The Publications Board had concentrated on preparations for the twenty-first anniversary publications. With regret, the Council had accepted the resignation of Mr L. M. Harrod from the editorship of The Indexer, in which capacity he had served the Society so faithfully for fourteen years. Mr E. J. Coates had assisted in the production of the April issue.

Three meetings of members had been held in London, and preparations were well advanced for an international conference in London in July 1978, as the major event in celebration of the Society's twenty-first anniversary.

Relations had been established with two newly-formed Societies of Indexers, those of Canada and Japan.

The Society had been represented as usual on the panel of the Library Association's Wheatley Medal, and had inaugurated its own award, the Carey Award, in honour of its first president.

Now that the Society's membership records are on computer, it is even more vital that members should keep the Secretary informed of amendments, especially changes of address, as soon as they occur. The final dates for the half-yearly computer updating are 1st March and 1st September.

Two runs of back numbers of The Indexer have been offered for sale to members; one complete of volumes 1-9, the other of volumes 3-10 (ie 32 issues). Offers to the Secretary.

Meetings planned

All meetings are held at the Library Association, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1; lasting from 6.30 to 8 pm, and preceded by refreshments and conversation from 5.30 to 6.30 pm.

Tuesday 17th October 1978: Joanna Clark, Programme Information Officer, BBC: The programme index and script library of the BBC (illustrated).

In November 1978: An Extraordinary General Meeting (date and details to be announced).

Tuesday 16th January 1979: R. C. Latham, Pepys Librarian, Magdalene College, Cambridge; and Mrs Latham: Indexing Pepys.

Tuesday 20th February 1979: R. C. Kahler, Head of Technical Information Division, British Ship Research Association: Computer-aided cumulative indexing of a monthly periodical (illustrated, and seen through the eyes of a computer-user who is not a computer-professional).


Personalia

Robert L. Collison, bibliographer, indexer and teacher, and formerly librarian, is to join the Clio Press as Bibliographer, to continue and extend his advice on the publication of the Clio Press' World Bibliographical Series and other projects. He took up his new appointment in September.

William S. Forshaw, a member of the American Society of Indexers, informs us that he is at present engaged on a subject index to advertisements, which he calls SESAME, an acronym standing for Systematic Extensive Searching Advertising Media.

We congratulate Stephen and Meg Davies on the birth of a son, John Gareth, on 10th July, who just allowed his mother to post off the index she was engaged on before he arrived.

Indexing rates at Penguin Publishers are now £2.80-£3.40 per hour.
**The Canadian Connection**

Proposed terms of affiliation have been drafted by the Canadian Society. One or two small wrinkles are being ironed out and an agreed formula seems certain to be ready for submission by Council to an Extraordinary General Meeting in London before the end of the year. Minor amendments to the ASI and AUSSI affiliation terms will be necessary, simply adjusting legal technicalities which are unforeseen obstacles to affiliation not only with IASC/SCAD but with any other new national societies which may be formed in the future.

The welcome presence of Peter Greig and Mary Dykstra at the International Conference provided the ideal opportunity for establishing a good understanding between all four societies. For all of us who were there, that was the week-end when the Canadian connection became a reality and the newest society truly became a member of the club.

It was Canada’s bilingualism, reinforced by the influence of a strong contingent of delegates from France, which stimulated consideration—for the first time—of the possibility of moving out of the English-speaking limitations within which we have hitherto operated. Even before the formalities of affiliation are completed, the youngest member of the family is already making its influence felt.

**CRANFIELD RESEARCH**

The report of the first Cranfield research project was published in 1962, when comparisons were made between various methods of indexing for eye and hand retrieval. Now the Seventh Cranfield International Conference on Mechanized Information Storage and Retrieval Systems is being organized by INSPEC, to be held at Cranfield Institute of Technology in July 1979, where the theme will be ‘Towards intelligent information systems’, which will include question-answering systems and the use of non-bibliographic data banks.

In saying that this phenomenon marks yet another sign that the world is coming to an end, I am not basing the claim on the fact that pornography is being sold; I have no need of the stuff myself, but do not (unlike some) believe that what I don’t want nobody else should be allowed to have. No; what saddens me is that the word ‘books’, which is surely, in whatever language, the noblest sound the human race has yet uttered, should now come to mean something so far removed from its original concept.

Habent sua fata libellis.


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**Our predecessors of a century ago**

In a letter of 1 December, 1878, W. S. Jevons asked Macmillans if they would ‘undertake to publish the work of the Index Society’, in which he was much interested. ‘This Society has undertaken to provide indexes to a number of historical, scientific and other works which are in want of such means of reference, and in several ways to render literature as accessible and useful as possible.’

The Society had then existed for one year, and had about 170 members who paid one guinea a year. Its first publication was written by H. B. Wheatley—‘What is an Index?’. Grove (of History of Music) was a member, as was Hutt of the Cambridge University Library.

The Society incorporated with the Record Society in 1891. Their works were published by Longmans.


BARBARA LOWE.

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American newspaper indexes: Having found difficulty in locating information on indexes to United States newspapers, Kenneth D. Sell decided to make a survey himself of current newspaper indexes. With the help of State and city librarians, he identified 29 published indexes to 37 daily newspapers. About half of the indexes have been initiated since 1970. Sell lists them in alphabetical order of States, with a note on date—and news—coverage, issuing body and frequency.*

*Sell, Kenneth D. A checklist of published indexes to current American daily newspapers. RQ (ALA Reference and Adult Services Division), 17 (1) Fall 1977, 13-16.