

Information Technology Year in the UK

This Silver Jubilee of The Society of Indexers has been an eventful, indeed an astonishing year so far, and the fact that it has also been officially dedicated by the UK Government to the interest of information technology has tended to become submerged beneath so many national and international developments. Nevertheless, most indexers would, I believe, readily agree that we have not given the needs of information technology as much attention as they deserve. Since the majority of our members index in the area of the humanities, this neglect is to some extent excusable, but nevertheless indicates a lack of vision that we must rectify, for we owe it not only to our present members but also to those of the future to watch over the wants of every branch of indexing.

Inevitably, the question of research arises; what have we achieved in this direction, and what can we do to further the efforts of those who have already proceeded along these paths of enquiry? If, by the end of this year, we could gather in from those members who are engaged in the indexing of technological material, their opinions on what would be the most fruitful directions of research, then we could add to the expected achievements of the rather special year of 1983. Once we have decided on the most urgent topics for research, we could then discover how they are to be funded. In this connection, I suggest that there are two possible sources of financing the projects we have in mind. The first, I believe, must be our own funds: under very careful administration, the successive Honorary Treasurers have built up sufficient balances to be able to recommend a modest expenditure on research; and perhaps the current year's interest from the G. Norman Knight Fund might be put to this purpose. This suggestion is placed first, for if we can show that The Society of Indexers is ready to spend its own money in this way, we shall be able to make a stronger appeal to outside bodies for the grant of additional funds.

So far, The Society has never applied for, nor received, research grants, but, with the maturity of The Society and its fine reputation, we should have no hesitation in submitting our proposals to relevant grant-giving bodies, which may confidently be expected to consider them sympathetically. We shall have more chance of success, too, if our proposals are of an international nature: our membership is increasingly international, and so should our research be. I believe that research in indexing has modest needs, but we should not hesitate to try to meet these through our own resources and those of appropriate bodies. And, there is one more point for us to keep in mind: the results of research are to a certain extent stultified if they are not published promptly: let us make sure that our grants include sufficient money to ensure wide publication and circulation.

Robert L. Collison

The Society of Indexers' 25th anniversary Congratulatory messages

From The American Society of Indexers

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the American Society of Indexers, to congratulate The Society of Indexers on the Silver Jubilee Anniversary of its formation in 1957. The Society can look back with satisfaction on its efforts to serve indexers and further the profession of indexing during this quarter-century of operation.

The American Society of Indexers, which was formed in 1968, has been affiliated with SI for many years, and looks forward to continued co-operation in meeting goals which our organizations have in common, and to expanded interaction among SI, ASI, and other indexing societies in different parts of the world.

I extend our best wishes to The Society of Indexers for continued success in the future.

Mauro Pittaro,
President, American Society of Indexers

From the Australian Society of Indexers

The Australian Society of Indexers offers its congratulations, felicitations, and very best wishes to its English sister organization on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary. Twenty-five years is a notable milestone in the life of any organization or society, and we in the Australian Society take the greatest pleasure and satisfaction not only in recognizing this milestone but also in paying tribute to The Society of Indexers for the very substantial help, support, and encouragement that it has shown its junior partner in the Antipodes.

Many of our members are regular subscribers to, and readers of *The Indexer*. Once again we record our appreciation to the Society of Indexers for its production of this publication, which maintains such a uniformly high standard and has done so much to encourage, enrich, and sustain indexers and to improve the standard of indexing throughout the English-speaking world. The Australian Society is currently revising its constitution, and again the experience of our sister organization is proving of material benefit.

It is pleasing to report that indexing in Australia is alive and well. There appears to be a growing demand for indexers and this is reflected in a growing membership of AusSI. To meet the demands of practising indexers and beginners an indexing course has been created in association with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and will open in June 1982; this first course was over-subscribed. Our excellent quarterly *Newsletter* keeps members and affiliated Societies informed on matters of indexing interest, and the Society also maintains a register of accredited indexers.

It seems particularly appropriate that the 25th Anniversary of SI should fall in the UK Year of Information Technology. Technological developments in the handling and use of information are so dramatic that one is tempted to believe that it is only a matter of time before most traditional methods of handling and recording information will be swept aside. It is more realistic, however, to regard the use of the new technology as a servant and partner, not as master and competitor. The 'perceptive eye linked to the discriminating brain' is still, and will remain, an essential prerequisite to the effective creation of information-handling methods.

Once again the Australian Society of Indexers takes the greatest pleasure in acknowledging the 25 years of sterling achievement recorded by SI, and offers its warmest best wishes for the continued health and prosperity of The Society for the next 25 years.

Peter H. Dawe,
President, Australian Society of Indexers

From the affiliated Canadian Society

The Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada takes great pleasure in conveying congratulations to The Society of Indexers on the occasion of their 25th anniversary.

It is tempting when such a milestone is reached, to look back over the road the Society has taken and perhaps to select major accomplishments to examine and enjoy again. There would be many achievements to take pleasure in. However, as this is a year when a very special interest is being taken in information technology, it seems more appropriate to look, not to the past, but to the future of The Society. How often recently have indexers, abstractors and others involved with information

heard and talked of the information revolution and the information society that is already with us?

It is a time of change and of challenge: traditional roles are being changed; new roles present challenges. Issues related to quality of information, to privacy and to freedom of information, to sharing and to ownership of information have emerged. Our new technologies provide powerful tools indeed to assist in the storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information.

The Society of Indexers is well prepared to deal with change and meet these challenges. The Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada looks forward to sharing this with you. Congratulations.

**M. E. Mercer,
President, IASC/SCAD**

SI's SILVER JUBILEE AGM

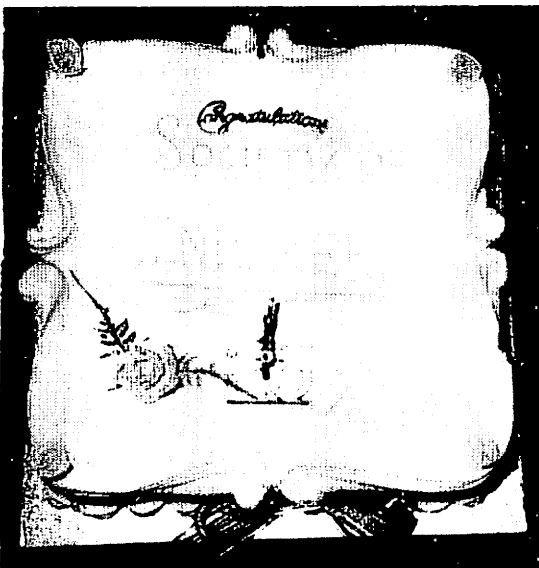
The sharp-witted lawyers who invented Annual General Meetings never intended them to be fun. Can anyone suggest a more boring topic for research than the history of AGMs? Yet somehow The Society of Indexers has succeeded during the last decade in making this repetitious formality into one of the year's popular attractions.

The 25th AGM had the advantage of being a special occasion for celebration. The photograph of the 'platform' Officers ploughing their way through the formal agenda captures the atmosphere precisely. Some two-score members carried through the business with

happy unanimity in less time than it must have taken to write out the minutes. And so to the presentations made by the SI President—the 1981 Wheatley Medal and the second Carey Award—which are separately described on adjoining pages. Then to the cutting of the birthday cake, a vast piece of delicious confectionery (also illustrated here).

There was still time in plenty for conversation (oh, how we talked!), and to allay the pangs of hunger and thirst. Indeed, so varied and plentiful were the viands provided that we could have emulated that doughty fighter for the cause of indexing, Dr Samuel Johnson, who declared, 'I like to eat, Sir, until my veins swell'.

J.A.G.



The Society of Indexers' 25th anniversary cake



A happy atmosphere as the Officers conduct the SI's silver jubilee AGM (left to right: Barbara Britton, Treasurer; John Ainsworth Gordon, Chairman; Cecil Robertson, Secretary)