

SI Brains Trust 1982

The Society of Indexers' Brains Trust held on 16 March 1982 proved so informal and enthusiastic as to be, rather, an open discussion. Highlights included the suggestion by Peter Broxis that the indexer should be seen as no mere hourly worker, but as a consultant to a publisher, brought in to do a specialized job—i.e., write a computer program—rating £75 a day; Pamela Le Gassick's picture of professional indexers, armed with their own computers, beating the computer-using amateurs at their own game. Christopher Gowers pointed out the advantages of self-employed persons renting, rather than purchasing, equipment such as computers and cars, and then setting off rentals against tax. There are also other advantages of renting; for example, a quick replacement when machines break down or are replaced by a better model.

John Gibson told us that, as an author, he had found in his contract that he was responsible for providing the index, and in his innocence thought that this meant he must do it himself. He suggested that many authors thus placed may not know of the existence of professional indexers, and that we should advertise our skills and services among authors rather than publishers, who do know of us, though they may disdain.

Drusilla Calvert considered the time aspect of using a computer to assist indexing; one could take less time, and adjust the hours claimed for accordingly, to allow for computer depreciation or the charge that would have been incurred for use of a word processor; or, in the same time, by use of a computer one could produce a much better index. Judy Batchelor suggested that publishers might come to expect computer-based indexes even from the 'cottage' worker, sending out only floppy disks instead of paper proofs.

We considered the great variation in rates of pay offered by publishers. Most were based on hours worked, but might include a built-in limit, of pages, time, or budget available. John Gordon reported that the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) had a score or more of *different* agreements with publishers as to rates of pay for indexing, and felt that we should discover these, circulate the knowledge in The Society, and base our invoices upon these rates. But are publishers under any obligation to pay NUJ rates to non-members of the union?

Indexers at such gatherings continue to mull over the same questions with unchanged interest while technological changes are going on all around us.

H.K.B.

New names

NFAIS has substituted Information for Indexing in its name and is now the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services. The Federation will celebrate the 25th anniversary of its founding at its 1983 Conference in Arlington, Virginia, 1-2 March 1983.

Membership of NFAIS is open to organizations concerned with abstracting and indexing services, data base producers, and those operating information centres or conducting research in information science. NFAIS acts as a channel of communication within the information community, with conferences, meetings, and publications.

The *NFAIS newsletter* is published bi-monthly at an annual subscription of \$45 (Single copies \$7.50). Its address is 112 South 16th Street, Philadelphia, Pa., 19102 USA.

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The North American Cartographic Information Society, formed in 1980 as the Cartographic Information Society (CIS), has changed its name to avoid confusion with the Canadian Institute of Surveying (also CIS). The Society exists to promote communication and cooperation between producers, distributors, and users of cartographic information. The address for information is Christine Reinhard, Assistant State Cartographer, University of Wisconsin, 143 Science Hall, Madison, Wis., 53706 USA.

New addresses

On 26 March 1982 the Headquarters of the International Federation for Documentation (IFD) moved into premises within the new building of the Royal Library of the Netherlands in Prins Willem-Alexanderhof, The Hague. The mailing address is PO Box 90402, 2509 LK, The Hague.

The new building will also accommodate IFLA and national documentation organizations.

IFLA's new mailing address is PO Box 95312, 2509 CH, The Hague.

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The British Standards Institution has acquired a 13-acre site at Milton Keynes, where it intends to develop commercial and information services to industry. Part of the new site is expected to come into use by the end of this year and the whole to serve the expanding needs of BSI over the next 20 years.

M.P.