Oh, law . . .

The January/February 1995 issue of Key Words, the newsletter of the American Society of Indexers (ASI), opens with an article by Lori Lathrop, 'Indexing with Doc-To-Help: an overview'. Lathrop provides a review of a popular Word for Windows utility that converts index entries and table of contents entries in printed documents to hypertext links in online help files. Doc-To-Help, developed by WexTech Systems (310 Madison Avenue, Suite 905, New York, NY 10017; 1-800-WEX-TECH), is a popular tool for creating printed manuals and online help from a single source, complete with a table of contents and an index. It is an add-on product for Microsoft Word and requires Windows 3.1 and at least 2MB of memory (4MB recommended). Lathrop examines the indexing capabilities of Doc-To-Help.

The 'Indexing Workshop' column provides a look at 'Indexing and searching in statutory text', by Maryann Corbett. The indexing of legal materials is a specialization with a literature of its own. Corbett discusses the special problems of indexing statutes and related materials, such as administrative regulations. Corbett became involved with the challenges of comprehending statutory language in the course of doing indexing and thesaurus creation and maintenance for a major project: the complete reindexing of the Minnesota Statutes. Statutes are an important body of public information intended to be accessible to all, but most statutory indexes do not serve the public. Within the larger context of indexing and searching statutory text, Corbett discusses issues related to specific problems such as information in disguise, distant definitions, statutory coding, name changes, and popular names of laws.

Barbara Cohen and Alexandra Nickerson provide views on 'An office out of the house' in the 'Getting Down to Business' column. Many indexers like indexing as a career because it allows them to work at home. By contrast, this article provides a look at advantages of having an office away from home. Cohen stresses increased efficiency, fewer distractions, and a focus on work that an office away from home can provide. Nickerson comments that the separation of work and personal life enhances both.

The 'Tax News Watch' column provides 'News and Views' from Lillian R. Lea. Lea discusses several tax issues for the self-employed including business mileage rates, charitable contributions, club dues, audits, health insurance, domestic employees, home office, automobile, property taxes, and 1099 Forms.

Meet the index . . .

Key Words, March/April 1995, provides discussion on 'Introductory notes to indexes' in the opening article by Carolyn Schade. Any unusual format or content of an index that might confuse the average reader deserves an introductory note of explanation. Schade's research found that history books are a prime candidate for explanatory notes and headnotes, as are books in the Library of Congress Z classification. Schade provides many examples of books with preliminary notes for indexes, a fun and interesting facet of indexes.

'The Business of Being in Business' is presented by Susan Rotondo in the 'Getting Down to Business' column. Rotondo provides some practical advice for establishing, organizing, and nurturing a freelance business. A checklist of items includes topics such as business description, products and sales, business location, functional resume, business identity, business name, business licence, business/financial records, insurance, equipment, supplies, tools of the trade, financing, and a business plan. This article is part one of two. The second part will discuss the daily ups and downs of doing business.

Sunday Oliver discusses 'Repetitive Stress Injuries' in the 'Staying in Business' column. Oliver presents her personal experience with episodes of carpal tunnel, and her success in finding ways to cope with and make it subside. The physical side-effects of using a computer have become more common, and this article provides methods of dealing with symptoms and injuries related to repetitive tasks, such as keyboarding.

Linda Fetters presents a brief history and current membership status for ASI in 'Where We Are'. In the last decade or so, ASI has
grown in size, and the quality of the service it offers to its members has increased. Fetters provides some memorable incidents, as well as interesting charts showing where current members are coming from.

—Theresa J. Wolner, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Australian Society of Indexers

Activities

AusSI's major activity in early 1995 was to hold its first International Conference of Indexers, 'Indexers—Partners in Publishing', in Marysville, Victoria, 31 March–2 April. This conference provided an excellent opportunity for indexers and publishers from around Australia and overseas to exchange ideas and experiences. Proceedings of the conference are to be published shortly [as advertised at end of this journal]. The National/Victorian Branch AGM was held at the conference, and the 1995 National/Victorian Branch Committee was elected (as listed in front journal cover). At the AGM, six motions aimed at improving and formalizing communications between Branches were moved by NSW Branch and were carried unanimously.

The Victorian Branch held an 'introduction to book indexing' course for editors over six successive Wednesday evenings.

The New South Wales Branch AGM was held in Sydney, and their committee for 1995 was elected. This branch held courses on computer-aided indexing, thesaurus construction, and an introduction to book indexing.

The ACT Region Branch held its AGM in Canberra, and held a meeting to discuss, 'Are computers tools for indexers or replacements for indexers?'

The Victorian Branch held a 'Nuts and bolts of indexing' discussion in Melbourne with a panel assisting with members' indexing queries. As a follow-up to the International Conference, NSW Branch held a meeting in Sydney at which conference delegates, including overseas visitors, reported back to other members.

Newsletter

Five issues of the Newsletter were published for the half-year, monthly except for a combined January/February issue (Vol. 19, nos 1–5). The first issue included news of two new CD-ROM products: the Index to Scientific and Technical Proceedings (ISTP) and the Index to Social Sciences and Humanities Proceedings (ISSHP). There were two book reviews: Robert Hyslop reviewed the Introduction to book publishing published by the Australian Book Publishers Association, 2nd ed., 1994; and Kingsley Siebel reviewed Linda Fetters' Handbook of indexing techniques: a guide for beginning indexers (Texas, FIMC, 1994). In the March issue the NSW Branch notified members of details of its six proposed motions for the 1995 AGM. Also in this issue was a discussion from the Index-L group on the Internet about dealing with indexing jobs that are late or cancelled. The first part of an edited version of Bella Hass Weinberg's review of the chapter on indexes in the Chicago manual of style was reprinted from The Indexer of

October 1994. The second part of this review was published in the April newsletter (Vol. 19, no. 3). This also included the first of a regular column by Garry Cousins, 'CINDEX Nuts and Bolts', dealing with the topic of saving keystrokes. A letter to the editor by Jo Rudd suggested a similar column for MACREX. The April issue was the last for retiring editor Rebecca Smale, whose work over the previous year was greatly appreciated. The May issue (Vol 19, no. 4) was the first for the new editor, Ann Philpott. It included reflections by Lorraine Doyle and Ann Philpott on the highly successful International Conference of Indexers held at Marysville. This issue also saw the first reporting of highlights of National/Victorian Branch Committee meetings, including a suggestion for a National Conference to be held in two years' time; introduction of a student membership rate; plans for the formation of local groups in those States without Branches; setting up an e-mail address register; and a proposal for an AusSI World Wide Web Page on the Internet. This issue also included an article by Dwight Walker about the Internet, the second part of 'saving keystrokes' in Garry Cousins' CINDEX column, and a 'Select Bibliography for Indexers' from Index-L on the Internet. The June issue contained a full list of current members of the Society, and a second article about the Internet by Dwight Walker explaining e-mail and the mail program Eudora. A letter to the editor from Dwight Walker suggested a newsletter column on general computer and software problems. Geraldine Triffit reported on the ACT Region Branch meeting which discussed, 'Are computers tools for indexers or replacements for indexers?'.

—Ian Odgers, AusSI Secretary
As mentioned in our last report, IASC/SCAD is continuing efforts to decentralize its executive, and to encourage participation from across the country.

Many of our efforts this spring were put into our first joint conference with the American Society of Indexers. It took place in Montreal, 8–10 June, and has been judged a great success. As an association with a sparse membership strung out across the country, we do not really have the ability to attract speakers and participants from across North America. Working with ASI gave us an opportunity to benefit from their larger membership and centralized offices. It was a delight for us to welcome indexers from across Canada and the United States, to share our various experiences, and to learn from the presenters and each other. One of the innovations at this conference, a series of roundtable discussions animated by individuals experienced in specific fields, was such a success that we are hoping to incorporate them into all future conferences. Participants were very enthusiastic about the opportunities for networking and learning that these provided.

The new executive was announced at the AGM that took place at the conference (listed in front cover of journal). At the AGM, it was decided that the Society’s Constitution is in serious need of revision, and a committee was struck to examine it and make recommendations. It will start work in September.

The April issue of the *IASC/SCAD Bulletin* was very elegant. James Turner has designed an attractive, easy-to-read format that we hope will encourage our members to submit material and to read with enjoyment. It included an article by Jin Tan, ‘Networking: getting the most out of your membership’, encouraging freelancers to get involved with the Society and giving tips on how to do so. Michèle Hudon contributed a thoughtful review of Robert Fugmann’s *Subject analysis and indexing: theoretical foundations and practical advice*, strongly recommending it to knowledgeable indexers with an interest in the philosophy and theory of indexing. She also compiled extracts from other reviews, so that members could get a good idea of the varying reactions to this book. James Turner offered some of his views on cookbooks without indexes in his ‘Compte rendu: Un livre de recettes sans index, c’est comme un souper sans les convives pour l’apprécier’. All in all, it was an interesting round-up of information.

—Christine Jacobs, Montreal
Society of Indexers

London meetings

Our 1995 Annual General Meeting was held at the Library Association in London in June. Mary Piggott succeeded David Crystal as President of the Society. The results of a postal ballot for Council officers and members were announced (listed in journal cover). A general discussion of Society matters included an exchange of members’ views on the draft Code of Conduct.

In March, Dr John Bowman of the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies at University College, London, spoke on indexing the Art Libraries Journal and Arlis Newsletter. Steven King gave a talk in April on compiling an index to the epigrams and cartoons of Ashleigh Brilliant. In May, an introduction to the Public Record Office and the retrieval of information from its holdings was given by its archive curator, Gervase Hood.

The Society was represented by several of its officers at the AusSI international conference in Marysville, Victoria, in March/April 1995.

Publications

Shelagh Brown took over as editor of the Newsletter from Judy Batchelor, to whose period of editorship Hazel Bell paid tribute in the April issue. The January and April 1995 issues included further articles in the ‘Hardware and live-ware’ series by Douglas Redfern, who explained fax machines, modems and CD-ROM units (January) and how to surf the Internet (April), where an indexers’ discussion group, INDEX-L, is now available.

A new series, ‘Notes and queries’, was introduced in the April issue, which also included ‘The typical indexer?’, Margaret Cronan’s report on her survey of members attending the Norwich Conference in 1994. Her conclusion was, ‘the typical indexer has a degree, uses a computer to do her freelance work at home, is about fifty years old, is married, does not live in large urban areas, is a non-vegetarian drinker, doesn’t smoke and is physically lazy’. Members’ letters on a variety of subjects in both issues were informative, amusing and sometimes pungent in tone, particularly on the subject of eligibility for inclusion in Indexers Available.

The third in the Society’s series of Occasional Papers, Indexing the medical and biological sciences, was published, written by Doreen Blake, Michèle Clarke, Anne McCarthy and June Morrison, with medical advice from John Gibson. Issue 4 of Trial Trench, the newsletter for archaeological indexers, edited by Cherry Lavell, was also published.

Special interest and local groups

Earth Sciences: published a newsletter including a report from the Geologists’ Association Annual Reunion meeting and a list of useful reference titles. Languages: compiling list of those willing to help in specific areas. Genealogical Group: continuing to produce newsletters and make contact with groups with similar interests.

The Yorkshire group visited the National Railway Museum library and archives. The Irish branch met to discuss SI’s training course. Claire Troughton and Ann Hall spoke to the Scottish group on training and qualifications; a spring meeting was held in Aberdeen.

West Country: visited the Dorchester Museum. West London group: met at the home of Judy Batchelor, where discussion centred on The Indexer and on a projected Society get-together with publishers. North-West group: met in Crewe; the theme was business aspects of indexing, with a talk on training and NVQs by Ken Bakewell.

—CHRISTINE SHUTTLEWORTH, London

An infinite index

‘CDs are being marked as “added value” products... the added value comes from being able to access the CD-journal without necessarily being in the same building, and being able to search the text of a journal for key words or phrases. This last facility is, in effect, an infinite index, which confers many benefits when searching for information.’

—from SGM Quarterly, the house magazine of the Society for General Microbiology, Feb. 1995