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UNITED STATES: American Society of Indexers

Scholarly book indexing ...

The March/April 1996 issue of *Key Words*, the Newsletter of the American Society of Indexers (ASI), opens with *Jewels in the Cavern*, an article by Do Mi Stauber, which discusses the challenges and rewards of indexing complex scholarly books. Stauber comments on the basics and mysteries of working with a manuscript, figuring out structure and terminology issues essential to indexing. The content and organization of scholarly monographs and essay collections is diverse and provides an indexer variety and knowledge. Stauber notes that indexers, as creative explorers, "can add richness to the text by finding connections not made by the author."

Topic analysis and term selection ...

The 'Indexing Workshop' column features *Aboutness and Selection of Topics* by Hans H Wellisch. After an initial examination of a work to be indexed, the indexer forms some general ideas about the document. The work must then be read again more carefully, analyzing the text, selecting indexable topics, and assigning index terms. This topic analysis and term selection is discussed in detail by Wellisch.

Web news ...

Kari Bero writes *Marketing on the World Wide Web: Selling without Hustling*, presented in the 'Web News Watch' column. Bero introduces establishing an Internet Web site for an indexing business. Bero discusses using the Internet to support an indexing business by first identifying what needs will be met and then choosing the Internet tools that will be most effective in meeting those needs. Reasons for creating a Web site are noted, as are potential drawbacks to creating a Web site. Time issues, layout and design, site housing, and available Internet tools are discussed. Bero also provides resources, definitions, and enlightening background information for those of us who may be unfamiliar with Internet details.

The combined issue of *Key Words* for May/June and July/August 1996 provides news about the Wilson Award, the Hines Award, kids and indexes, HyperIndex, disability insurance, indexing with WordPerfect or Microsoft Word for Windows, and reports from Denver (ASI annual meeting).

Awards ...

There was no winner this year of the Wilson Award for Excellence in Indexing. The Wilson Award is presented for unusual and outstanding work. Judges look beyond recognizing competence to rewarding excellence. Since 1979, the Award has not been awarded on three other occasions, most recently in 1993.

The Hines Award, established in 1993, recognizes individuals who have shown continuous dedicated and exceptional service to the membership of ASI. This year's recipient of this honor is Dorothy Thomas, who has served ASI in many capacities.

Kids ...

The 'Indexing Workshop' column features *Page References As Locators: It's Not All That Obvious, Or, What Do They Teach Kids About Indexes?* by Bella Hass Weinberg. Weinberg provides an analysis of the deficiencies of what elementary-school students are taught about indexes and concludes by suggesting a potential new role for indexers: as consultants to educational publishers, advising them about basic indexing concepts that need to be taught, and providing good models of index entries for textbooks. A brief, but very useful, related article by Lori Lathrop titled *The Art of Indexing Children's Books* is an excellent example of the kind of educational efforts that interested indexers can provide.

Software review ...

HyperIndex: New Indexing Software for the Mac by Carol Roberts is presented in the 'Electronic Shoebox' column. HyperIndex, created by Andre De Tienne, is a near-stand-alone (uses HyperCard which must be purchased separately) indexing program for Macintosh computers. Roberts endorses HyperIndex and discusses the details of keying in entries, on-screen help, sorting, working from electronic copy, editing, formatting, speed and system requirements, tech support, and costs (HyperIndex \$75, HyperCard \$100). For more information or to purchase HyperIndex contact: Andre De Tienne, 7590 Harcourt Road #106, Indianapolis, IN 46260 (USA); e-mail: adetienn@indyvax.iupui.edu.

Insurance ...

In the 'Getting Down to Business' column, *Disability Insurance Coverage* is discussed by Barbara Shaw Madel. Madel, a certified financial planner, presents information for freelancers about disability insurance and long-term care coverage.

Book review ...

Cynthia D Bertelsen reviews *How to Index Your Local Newspaper Using WordPerfect or Microsoft Word for Windows* by Carla D Morris and Steven R Morris, published by Libraries Unlimited, Englewood, CO, 1995. After discussing perceived deficiencies of the book, Bertelsen concludes that this book is not in-depth enough for libraries and indexers. Professionalism in indexing is not mentioned in the book.

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— Theresa J Wolner, St Paul, Minnesota (USA)

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AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND: Australian Society of Indexers

AusSI's existing ACT Region, New South Wales and Victoria branches are joined by a new South Australia branch, and Queensland is to follow.

AusSI is marketing a silver lapel pin bearing the AusSI logo, and intends to present gold pins to the new Honorary Life Members for which it is seeking nominations.

After the success of ACT Region's International Conference in 1995, a further successful conference: Indexing in the Electronic Age was organised at Robertson NSW. *Dwight Walker reports:*

Conference eye-opener

The Robertson Conference proved a real eye-opener for indexers. Several publishers and online service providers joined to contrast their products. One sidelight was the competition at Budget time between the AGPS (Australian Government Publishing Service) and Butterworths who both vied for central position on Budget Night. It was quite amusing to see the clash! Memorable Paul Mullins (AGPS) quote: "We're the Government and of course ... we're here to help you."

A non-traditional approach to engineering data dissemination was shown by ACEL who do not have indexers but subject specialists and their product does not go through an intermediary but straight to the practitioner.

Records management consultant Peter Eden from RIMS Australasia, illustrating the role of corporate memory on the efficiency of a firm, started with: "A claim at GIO took 3 weeks to be handled and 12 minutes desk work. They agreed that they could do nothing about reducing the 12 minutes!"

At the Medal dinner we saw a move away from the awards being only for major book publishers to include technical manuals and journals. Our NSW committee grew at the conference by three members and we are looking forward to hosting the Medal and a conference in the future.

Finally, in response to my plea for something with a real Australian flavour, Marita Thompson reports for The Indexer on the indexing of Australian Aboriginal videos.

Indexing Aboriginal media

In December 1990, I became involved with an Aboriginal organisation called CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) as a part time librarian creating a catalogue for productions and television units. CAAMA produces television, video programs and related products on a commercial basis. CAAMA's television unit produces Aboriginal programs for Alice Springs regional television station: Imparja Television.

Some work had commenced in cataloguing the footage, but had ceased by the time I started.

We started with a simple card catalogue with title, video ID number and subject. After sorting what tapes belong to production or television units, putting the tapes in their job number order, then into their categories: wildreels (original

footage), masters and dub masters, Umatics, VHS, 1 inch, 1/2 inch and 1/4 inch we were able to commence with the cataloguing of approximately 2,500 tapes.

Log sheets were to be used instead of viewing each tape. These sheets gave a record of events for each tape, full description of each frame shot and its time codes, location of shot, producer, director, language, date and any other matter concerning this particular tape. However, we found that the sheets had either the wrong information or right information in the wrong tape or no sheet at all. So viewing of each tape began, recording each tape frame. A tedious exercise, but we knew we had the complete record. Firstly, a unique number was given to each tape. Once the numerical listing and title catalogue cards were completed, indexing of the subject entries would commence.

Sears List of Subject Headings, 11th Edition; Dewey Decimal Classification, Edition 19; local maps listing Aboriginal camps, language or dialect groups, alternative names and spellings, Aboriginal dictionaries, other Aboriginal publications and computer subject searches, all became our basis in creating the subject index.

Our main concern was dealing with the various corroborees and their meanings, inma (dancing), bush tucker, bush medicines, dreamings, hunting, alternative names and spellings of places, languages and names of Aborigines.

The Aboriginal society is made up of various 'skin' groups. These groups are a grouping of kin. Depending on each skin group, some mark the difference between sexes. For instance, Warlpiri female is known as Nungarrayi; and the male name is Jungarrayi. By using these terms, Nungarrayi and Jungarrayi would become their surname, followed by their names, e.g., Jungarrayi, George. Arrente, male and female share the same term, Kngwarraye, e.g., Kngwarraye, Rosie. With the wide Aboriginal society of various 'skin' groups within Alice Springs and surrounding areas, we would seek out further information by contacting CAAMA's Aboriginal interpreters and other Aboriginal organisations in Alice Springs.

Alternative place names have been given a cross reference. If an Aboriginal location has one or more languages present, each language is given a main heading.

During 1995 when CAAMA purchased a new computer for the library, all 3,500 catalogue cards were transferred. Another 3,000 (approximately) entries were made with tapes that had been archived in the library, but had not been catalogued at all. At present 5,008 index headings exist of which 29 are See also references and 94 See references.

Cataloguing still continues with the production unit today. Television unit has amalgamated with productions and some seventy new tapes a month are archived in the library that require cataloguing. Who knows when the subject index might stop!

Marita Thompson, Alice Springs, Australia

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CANADA: IASC/SCAD

The main news from IASC/SCAD is the inauguration of its web page: <http://tornado.ere.umontreal.ca/~turner/iasc/home.html>. The home page includes information about regional representatives and related associations, and the *Register of Indexers Available*, as well as links to other sites of interest to indexers, and to ASI and AusSI home pages.

Following the AGM (held Saturday May 25, 1996), the executive was renewed, with a few deletions. As it stands now officers are:

President: Christine Jacobs
Vice-president: James Turner
Treasurer and membership secretary: Noeline Bridge
Editor of the *Register of Indexers Available*: Patricia Buchanan
Editor of the *Bulletin*: James Turner
Member-at-large: Chris Blackburn

AGM report

Noeline Bridge discussed the structuring of fees. It was agreed that IASC/SCAD should continue with the policy she initiated of selling institutional subscriptions to the *Bulletin* for \$20 annually. It was also agreed that we should continue maintaining overlapping membership years. A major factor in membership costs is *The Indexer*, which according to the information Noeline received at the Society of Indexers conference can be expected to go up in price. This raises the issue of impact on future membership fees if *The Indexer* becomes more expensive. This will be dealt with at the next AGM, if required. [There is NO

price increase to affiliated societies — Ed]

Another major factor is the cost of the Register: \$12/ member (total membership); about half the membership lists in the Register). Again, the costs can be expected to rise. It was decided that as of spring 1997, there will be a \$15 fee for listing in the Register, which should be approximately 1/2 the actual cost per listing member).

Frances Lennie, representing the American Society of Indexers, discussed the possibility of reciprocal memberships for people who wish to belong to both ASI and IASC/SCAD. This would probably involve some way of receiving only one subscription to *The Indexer*. It was decided that IASC will explore the issue of ASI/IASC reciprocal membership agreements with the view of coming up with a proposal.

Christine Jacobs discussed the issue of maintaining membership and the urgency of finding people to renew the executive. We are currently two people short on the executive, and it will become critical over the next year. Christine will not be staying on as president for a third year.

Suggestions were made re: more advertising, directory listings such as *Sources*, active promotion of student memberships, corporate sponsorship.

James Turner briefly discussed the mounting of the IASC/SCAD web page, which was inaugurated on March 13.

James Turner, Montreal

UNITED KINGDOM: Society of Indexers

The competition held to provide a new title for the SI Newsletter has produced its winning entry: from now on the Newsletter is to be known as: *Sidelights*.

The main article in the issue for **2nd Quarter, 1996** is one episode in the long, and no doubt universal, debate on the accrediting of indexers; specifically on Registration (SI's major qualification). As the Training and Research Board points out, indexing is 'not an exact science', but the Board has produced what it believes is an objective list of such selected 'sins' as must lead to failure in the Assessment process (and a shorter list of sins where only the Assessors' (subjective) experience and instincts can finally judge). No doubt the debate will continue.

Regional Groups plan talks on cartoons (newspaper), on cartoons (*Punch*) and on cemeteries (suburban); as well as a joint meeting with local freelance editors to discuss a whole range of freelance publishing skills. The British Library is to fund a research project on the indexing of children's books, to be carried out by Liverpool John Moores University and the Society of Indexers. The 'Letters' pages bring more on accreditation — this time complaints that Accredited Indexers (those holding the Society's basic qualification) may be undervalued and under-promoted in some sections of the Society. Other members urge SI to take corporate

action on behalf of indexers' copyright entitlements (even reputable publishers are often strangely ignorant of the 1988 Copyright Act).

Doug Redfern's computer column writes of 'RAM-raiding' (the current wave of microchip thefts), of RAM-doublers, and of Windows-95's very own virus (apparently, Doug writes, 'from Russia. That's what you get for leaving your iron curtains open'. Hazel Bell, revered former Editor of *The Indexer*, writes modestly and delightfully of the stresses and joys of editing a journal through seventeen changing years from the single living-room of her home: Tippex was an early technological miracle; her office had to be cleared away for tea-time and the publishing schedule adjusted for school holidays, until sons grew up and a small bedroom could be devoted to the new, serious technology for the expanded, maturing *Indexer*. (Hazel also recalls a time when SI's 'Treasurer had no telephone, but the Secretary [a mile or two away] had a bicycle'; but that was long ago — this Newsletter carries an SI advertisement for a paid Administrative Assistant.)

Sidelights for the **3rd Quarter, 1996** reports on SI's AGM. After much debate, in which letters from absent members were also taken as contributions, it was agreed to raise the annual subscription to £40 in order to make proper provision for SI's

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greatly expanding activities; to consider ways in which a concessionary student subscription might be charged; and to remove the *automatic* right of Registered Indexers to retain their status even after some years without published indexes. A motion to allow the Society's Chair to be elected by Council, rather than by the Membership at large, was defeated.

The Scottish Group had been visiting the library of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, and the West Country Group was hoping to arrange similarly summery occasions. The Society had considered the conclusions of a Fees Working Party (following a questionnaire to members) and had recommended *two* minimum rates: £12 per hour and £1.00 per page. It is interesting to note that 60% of the questionnaire's respondents regarded indexing as providing either their principal income, or a 'necessary second' income. Christine Shuttleworth gives a delightful account of the varied activities of SI's Annual International Conference in Bristol; she approved particularly of the innovatory 'Soapbox' interludes, when members with a query, a grouse, or an exhortation took over the rostrum for a few minutes between major sessions. The results of a Conference questionnaire on 'Getting Work' are published, with some discouraging — and some heartening or surprising — conclusions; the article's own concluding sentence must sum up freelancing's Catch-22: 'Once you have got started and proved that you can do the work well, it will come to you'.

The Letters, as always, let us hear clearly the voices of distant members: discussing the pros and cons of combined indexes-

and-glossaries; and submitting the predictable 'yes, but's' in answer to the list of 'objective sins' mentioned above. One member, proofreading a book, had been asked, to her dismay, to 'highlight suggestions for the index', which was to be compiled electronically...

A paragraph reprinted from another publication suggests incorporating indexes to journals into their online public access catalogue entries to avoid the usual delay between journal acquisition and the appearance of relevant — and scattered — bibliographic tools on online databases. SI is shortly to have a home page on the Internet.

Judy Batchelor, London.

Wheatley Medal

The Wheatley Medal for an outstanding index was awarded for The Builder illustrations index 1843–1883, compiled by Ruth Richardson and Robert Thorne and published by SI corporate member Hutton and Rostron.

Walford Award

The Walford award for services to bibliography was awarded to SI member Magda Whitrow for work on the ISIS cumulative bibliography: a bibliography of the history of science.

IRELAND: Society of Indexers: Irish Branch

The Irish Branch of SI was founded in 1990 by Julitta Clancy and Helen Litton, with the aim of enlarging the small pool of indexers in Ireland, and of raising the profile of indexing in Irish publishing. The group has grown to fifteen members in six years, but we are still a very small pool and few of our members are as yet fully qualified or able to take on indexing as a full-time job. We will shortly produce the first Irish *Indexers available*. The group includes two Registered Indexers (Julitta Clancy and Warren Yeates) and one Highly Commended Wheatley Medal winner (Julitta Clancy). Helen Litton has published two books of popular history: *The Irish famine, an illustrated history* and *The Irish civil war, an illustrated history*.

Our meetings tend to be six-monthly, attended by about half the membership on average; although we are a small group we are very widely scattered and getting everyone together is quite a challenge. We occasionally hold meetings in association with the Irish Association of Freelance Editors, Proofreaders and Indexers (AFEPI) — this still includes 'indexers' in the title although we are now a separate group.

Irish publishing, although on a small scale, is in a healthy and vigorous state, and the October 1996 Frankfurt Book Fair will focus on Ireland as its main theme. Non-fiction publishing concentrates largely on history, biography, law and literature, and there is a heavy and increasing demand for the services of the few indexers operating here. Irish reviewers often comment on indexes

(or the lack of), and Irish publishers do appreciate the importance of indexing.

International Conference: Dublin September 1997

The Irish Branch is now girding its loins for the challenge of hosting the next conference of the Society of Indexers, 5–7 September 1997, when we hope to welcome large numbers of indexers, particularly from the Irish diaspora. The conference will be held at Trinity College, a 17th century foundation in the heart of Dublin city.

Accommodation has been reserved in the College, but Dublin has a wide range of modestly priced inns and hotels for those who feel they have left their student days too far behind.

The programme is at present being finalised, and booking forms will be available shortly. (When booking air travel, aspiring attenders are urged to seek information on Ryanair and British Airways prices which may be lower than the standard Aer Lingus prices quoted by travel agents.)

We look forward to welcoming many readers of *The Indexer* next year, now that you know we exist!

Helen Litton, Dublin.

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