

# ICRIS Informal Meeting Montreal, Canada Thursday, 1 June 2017

**Participants:** Mary Russell (chair), Heather Ebbs, Maureen MacGlashan, Jie Shen (interpreter), Alan Walker, Pilar Wyman, Guanghui Yang, Yuenan Zhao

**Regrets:** Averill Buchanan, Caroline Diepeveen, Mary Newberry

**Minute-taker:** Heather Ebbs

## 1. Welcome and Regrets

Meeting opened by International Coordinator Mary Russell at 4:05 p.m. Mary welcomed all participants to this informal meeting. The next formal meeting will be at the Triennial in China in 2018.

Note was made that former International Coordinator Ruth Pincoe had planned to attend this meeting but was unable to because of injury. Her absence was noted with regret—she is missed!

## 2. Society News

### ***AEFPI Ireland (report submitted by Averill Buchanan and read by Mary)***

AEFPI Ireland member and indexer Julitta Clancy featured in April's edition of *Sidelights* (pp. 12–14), where she compares notes with Marian Aird, based in rural France.

AEFPI Ireland took part in National Indexing Day on 30 March, joining in on Twitter and retweeting the articles being shared (see Storify for the day's tweets: <https://storify.com/indexers/national-indexing-day-2017-indexday>).

On Friday 5th May, AFEPI Ireland held a Meet the Editorial Freelancers event at the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in Dublin. We invited members of Publishing Ireland to come along to meet indexers, editors and proofreaders in person. Eleven Irish publishers and 30 freelancers took part. The day was a resounding success from our point of view; all our members were able to leave their CVs and business cards with the publishers they were interested in working with. A representative from Chartered Accountants Ireland came along with a specific remit to meet indexers. We plan to run a similar event again, perhaps on an annual basis.

### ***NIN (report submitted by Caroline Diepeveen and read by Mary)***

#### **Website**

We are delighted that our redesigned website is now finally online. It has been a long time coming. It is running on a free WordPress template, which is surprisingly easy to maintain. The blog posts on the site replace the NIN newsletter. You are most welcome to post a blog on our site. Please, contact Caroline Diepeveen or Pierke Bosschieter, our webmasters, to do so.

#### *Frankfurt Conference*

In October 2016 we organised an indexing conference, jointly with DNI, at the Frankfurt Book fair. See the Summer Issue of *The Indexer* for a conference report. We think we

managed to put together an attractive program, at no cost to participations (they only needed to buy an entrance ticket for the book fair). The cooperation with DNI was very pleasant and went very smoothly. Based on participant feedback, we may organise another conference in three to five years.

#### *Elsevier*

NIN-member Pierke Bosschietter has recently established interesting contacts with Elsevier. Elsevier has expressed an interest in publishing a Dutch language book on indexing. Pierke is interested in writing it, although we have some doubts about the potential sales of such a publication. Elsevier appears to have four in-house indexers. We are keen to identify them and possibly recruit them as NIN members. Since several of our members retired recently, or are about to retire, new members are most welcome.

#### *SI Oxford Conference*

There will be two NIN representatives at the SI conference in Oxford.

#### ***ISC/SCI (Heather Ebbs)***

The Canadian society is in the pleasant position of having a surplus of funds and is looking at what initiatives might best serve members while still retaining an appropriate reserve. Current membership is just over 100, which is down. Heather noted that she is stepping down as ISC/SCI's International Liaison; Mary Newberry is the new IL for ISC/SCI.

#### ***ASI (Pilar Wyman)***

ASI is interested in indexer training—what works, what types of materials and formats indexers want, and so on. The webinars continue to be successful. Membership is holding steady. The ASI conference is 15 to 17 June in Portland, Maine.

#### ***ANZSI (Alan Walker)***

Alan is not on the executive and was not given instruction for a report at this meeting, but his impression is that ANZSI is not as healthy as formerly. Membership has been in a steady decline over the past several years. There are good groups in the Sydney area and the Melbourne area that meet and hold small gatherings (workshops, etc.), but it is hard to get enough people to sit on council or organize full conferences. The Melbourne group (about 40 members) meets bimonthly and has a monthly newsletter.

#### ***CSI (Yang Guanghui with Jie Shen)***

CSI will be presenting a description of the developments within CSI at the International Greetings portion of the ISC/SCI conference on Saturday morning. They are preparing for the 2017 conference of CSI to be held November 1 to 4. They are planning to establish institutions of indexers in three or four universities and institutions.

The former *China Index* publication has been discontinued, but a new one put out by Fudan University has been initiated; a copy was circulated at the current meeting.

The new CSI website is now accessible: <http://www.cnindex.fudan.edu.cn/>. It was further noted that "China Society of Indexers" is an appropriate translation of the name going forward.

### ***SI (Maureen MacGlashan)***

On membership, SI was in much the same position as the other societies. 2017 numbers were down a bit but the things seemed to have steadied a bit following the severe decline of earlier years. The two outstanding events of the past year were a case of chalk and cheese. On the negative side, the society's website had been severely compromised with the only way forward being a fundamental revamp, a process that had proved complicated and time-consuming. It was not yet clear when the website would be fully up and running again. One of the most serious impacts had been on the Indexers Available directory, currently operating via a downloadable PDF. On the positive side, the National Indexing Day, which had sprung suddenly out of a casual idea and ran from beginning to end in a matter of three weeks, had been an exhilarating success. This was probably due to the fact that two of the society's most enthusiastic social networkers had the gap in their diaries which allowed them to take on the project, that other members of the society with good media contacts had responded to the challenge, that our current president had a strong online presence and joined in enthusiastically, and there was important reinforcement from Dennis Duncan, the organizer of the Oxford Book Index symposium. This symposium together with SI's one-day 60 anniversary conference was the next event of the society's calendar.

### **3. *The Indexer (Maureen MacGlashan)***

This had been a good year for *The Indexer* with things going well on the editorial, production and admin front. Susan Curran has been doing production since before Maureen took over in 2004 and will be continuing for the foreseeable future. The team was particularly pleased, thanks to hard work from its webmaster, Rebecca Linford, to have a robust website safely in place, including a much improved subscription database, and an online production archive. Institutional subscriptions were standing up very well not least in the aftermath of the SWETS sudden departure from the scene. But it had long been clear that in today's publishing world there were some things a small volunteer society could not hope to do effectively, most important being marketing and outreach to a wider readership. SI were therefore again looking at the outsourcing operation. Editorial control and content management would remain essentially as of now, and the website in something like its present shape would continue, with production, subscription management and marketing being taken care of elsewhere. It was still far from clear that such an arrangement would prove viable. But if things did work out, the target date to have things in place would be the 2018 Triennial (the journal's own 60th birthday).

### **4. *International Indexing Day***

Following the resounding success of the SI National Indexing Day on 30 March 2017, it has been suggested that ICRIS discuss the possibility of an International Indexing Day in 2018. Mary asked whether other societies might be interested and, if so, what date might be appropriate (March 30 will be Good Friday in 2018).

Maureen felt that SI would want to do it again. This year's was a very last-minute thing spearheaded by a couple of social media-savvy SI members. It began, ran and ended within a span of three weeks, so there was no long-term commitment. There is an item in the forthcoming *Indexer* about it.

Heather said that ISC/SCI was definitely interested in participating.

Pilar commented on what a positive and international response the day received. She has included a question about it in her report to the ASI executive and will know in a couple of weeks whether they are interested, but she anticipates that they will be.

Guanghai Yang said that CSI may be interested, but noted that indexes in China are very different from those in other countries.

### **5. Triennial (*Yang Guanghui with Jie Shen*)**

CSI has been preparing for the Triennial for about a year. They've developed a logo, are planning display panels (and hoping other societies could contribute their indexing achievements and could give SCI some suggestions), have been preparing souvenirs for members of other organizations, preparing videos showing their development of the index, and writing a special edition of their publication for the Triennial. They will also be providing a review of their national newspaper index of about 50 years, as well as preparing an exhibition of index achievements.

CSI would be grateful to receive ideas for a theme for the Triennial. It was suggested that they come up with some ideas and circulate them on the ICRIS list for discussion and input. They do have the idea already of the index and everyday life, as well as catalogue indexing. They are also talking about establishing a controlled vocabulary, potentially with the aid of AI, and the inherent difficulties in that. another possible theme is language exchange (e.g., French–English, Chinese–English, Chinese–Chinese). Pilar suggested something on outlier or exception projects that cannot be done to a standard.

Maureen noted that all the minutes from previous Triennials and informal meetings are available on the ICRIS website, along with information about ICRIS itself:  
<https://www.theindexer.org/icris/>.

### **5. Next meetings**

- 15 June 2017, Portland, Maine (ASI conference): informal; Pilar will email to ICRIS to confirm attendance and time
- 21 June 2017, St Anne's College, Oxford (SI conference): informal eve-of-conference meal for anyone from outside the UK; lunchtime gathering during conference for ICRIS attendees

**Meeting adjourned** at 5:24 p.m.