

Slidelights

ISSN 1363-9854

NEWSLETTER OF THE
**society of
indexers**
information from A to Z

Editorial

One may reasonably surmise that as dedicated a self-promoter as Jeffrey Archer would gladly accept the coverage so widely enjoyed by Dennis Duncan's new book, the title of which you may have come across. Few avowedly specialist volumes can ever have been accorded such wide attention [see *passim*]. Dennis has been a genial friend to the Society and the success of his book is good for us and good for the wider profession.

Why is it helpful for indexing to be noticed? We all have plenty of anecdotal evidence that little thought is given to the provision of back-of-the-book indexes, even by inveterate consumers of non-fiction. It can only be to the good if increasing numbers of laypeople not only understand the functions of an index but also appreciate the kind of professional application that produces such an index. What's more, those who learn to value the advantages of a well-conceived and thorough and sometimes even entertaining index may be moved to trouble to make a complaint to the publishers of those non-fiction volumes they come across that lack any trace of an index. All of us – and especially indexers like ourselves – should be making nuisances of ourselves when we happen upon indexless texts.

Where can we promote the profession? National Indexing Day in March generates exchanges on social media as well as a certain attention in the more earnest reaches of the national media. But we could all, as a routine exercise, share our experiences, ruminations and anecdotes on Twitter feeds

and to Facebook friends and followers.

Participants on these platforms use their access in many different ways. Tweets and Facebook posts can be like a personal diary or a commonplace book; they can be places to rehearse ideas, first-draft essays, speeches and arguments, fair copies of which are deployed later and in other circumstances; they can host provocations and declarations. Foregrounding material about indexing can stimulate interest in your readers. Many of those who shrug and say they can't be bothered with social media have not considered the opportunities these platforms offer to promulgate the unexpected.

We owe it to each other to wave the flag for indexing wherever we may. The more awareness of the benefits of a good index we can raise, the more support our profession will receive from people who, by definition, are readers, and the more we can dare to try to tickle up our rates. Faced with the imminent cost of living explosion, we really need to.

Archives and indexes can go together, as they have done for Francesca Hillier at the British Museum: see page 9.



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Missed an article in *Sidelights*?
Back issues and the cumulative index for 2006–2015 are [on the website](#)

January 2022 *Sidelights* Copy deadline
Friday 7 January 2022
(for electronic distribution mid-January)

Presidential Musings

It's not often that the noble art of indexing gets a day in the sun, inasmuch as well-informed attention is paid to it across all mainstream media. But this is what – hooray – our friend Dennis Duncan has achieved with his superbly lively *Index, A History of The*. As well as containing any number of funny and hair-raising stories, disentangling the history of the subject index from that of the concordance, and revealing how versions of both of them could exist before we even had page numbers as locators, Dennis's book makes clear that the problem of what we now call 'big data' – a problem indexers are uniquely equipped to solve – dates back to the Great Library of Alexandria. So, do avail yourself of a copy or two if you haven't already.

But, seeing the place in which these musings are published, it seems only proper to focus our attention not on the author, but on the indexer. Obviously, this book was going to have to have an index – and a clever one at that. The person tasked with the job was the SI's own **Paula Clarke Bain**, connoisseur of comedy indexes (as witness her blog) and introducer of comedy



Paula Clarke Bain

into the index for the history of indexes. Some reviewers – the *Express's* Beachcomber, for instance – made approving mention of her work there, including the linked references between "Wild Goose Chase", "Chase, Wild Goose" and "Goose Chase, Wild". Her outstanding work is placed in parallel, incidentally, with a far less impressive computer-generated index – affirmation were any needed that a human professional is still the best indexer.

Historical footnote: the bound proof I was originally sent, like almost every bound proof, had no index in it. In its place on p 281 came the following: "Indexes: necessarily produced late in publication cycle, 235; initial absence of, in books where the omission is striking, 199; author humbly seeks early readers' indulgence for current lack of, 281".

Sam Leith



Society News

Executive Board Report

The Executive Board last met on 10 August. The Society's accounts to the end of this June were reviewed; the financial position is currently sound. EB also agreed to increase the honoraria payments made to members involved in the production of *Sidelights*, expressing its thanks to **Christopher Pipe** and **W. Stephen Gilbert** for their work on this [blush – ed].

CONGRATULATIONS TO
New Accredited Indexers – MSocInd
Valeria Padalino, London
Susan Penny, Tobermory

➡ p3

p2 ↻ A final review of the documentation and proposed administrative systems for Fellowship took place, and plans for the launch of the scheme are in hand. To help members maintain the currency of their indexing skills and knowledge, EB agreed that all Professional members will now be able to purchase the current training course modules for a nominal fee.

The dates were agreed for this year's Conference, which will be held online over two half-days on 9 and 10 November. The programme is currently being developed for EB to review before details of the Conference are announced [see p 4].

EB agreed the timetable for the production of the Annual Report, and confirmed the plans for the AGM. Once again, the need for new

EB members was noted; the tenure of **Rosi Dear**, **Ann Hudson** and **Jan Worrall** comes to an end at the 2021 AGM. Members interested in standing for EB should contact the Chair, **Nicola King** (chair@indexers.org.uk).

Tanya Izzard, Minutes Secretary
tanya@tanyaizzard.co.uk

Seeking a new Minutes Secretary for Executive Board

After four years in the role, I'm stepping down as Minutes Secretary of the Executive Board after the AGM in November. Could you be the next person to take on this role? The Minutes Secretary's responsibilities are, in summary:

- attending all EB meetings and minuting all discussions
- attending and minuting the Annual General Meeting
- drafting formal minutes of the meetings for approval by the Chair
- maintaining and updating the action list for EB members
- writing a summary of recent EB meetings for each issue of *Slide-lights*.



Tanya Izzard

There is a fuller job description and templates available for the various documents you would produce.

Meetings are scheduled by the Secretary (**Philippa Jevons**) and papers are written and circulated by EB members themselves.

Doing this job is an excellent way of discovering more about how SI works and how the profession is developing. I've learned a lot about indexing and about all the work that goes into SI behind the scenes. You don't need to be an experienced indexer to do this; I started just after I became a Professional member. However, the role is not open to student members.

If you're interested in taking this role on and would like to know more, please do get in touch.

Tanya Izzard
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Behind the Chair

As autumn mists cloud the view from my attic eyrie we are coming to the end of another extraordinary year. While the threat of Covid-19 may be receding and we are learning to live with it as best we can, the world is opening up again and that means face-to-face events. One or two local groups have already managed in-person meetings, and others are booked for later this year. I think most of us will be glad to be reducing the time we spend in Zoom meetings, but we have had some excellent get-togethers over the air-waves and we have seen the benefits of doing some things in this way, particularly those that target sharing

our working methods. I hope more can be planned in future.

Recently, I was lucky enough to attend a talk at Blackwell's bookshop in Oxford hosted by Richard Ovenden, Bodley's Librarian at the University (and man with a [Wikipedia page](#)), presenting Dennis Duncan talking about his book *Index, A History of the*. And I got an elbow bump from **Paula Clarke Bain**, who made the index for this book. I hope you have been able to keep track of some of the indefatigable Dennis's physical appearances, podcasts, radio appearances and blogs, as well as the numerous reviews that have praised his book. There can't have been as

much in the media about indexes for a very long time. He almost always mentions the Society, so that is good publicity, and I don't know how he has managed to get on with his actual day job in the meantime. Dennis and Paula are, of course, talking about the book at our conference next month, so no missing out.

And talking of the indefatigable, I am also very grateful to **Ann Kingdom** for her continued engagement with the society since she stepped away from the Executive Board, including working on the conference, with *The Indexer*, and internationally with the ICRIS group. In a recent Zoom, ↻ **p4**

p3 she described herself as the 'memory' of the society. If she doesn't know, she does know who to ask about things that went on in the past, and I am always

grateful for her contributions. As usual I will end with a quick reminder that the Executive Board needs your help and if you think you could contribute to the running of the

society, please do get in touch.

Nicola King
chair@indexers.org.uk

Website and Social Media

The main event this quarter on social media was the launch of Dennis Duncan's new book *Index, A History of the*. Dennis is a very active user of Twitter and the mighty marketing machine of Penguin Random House also kicked in. There were reviews and interviews in many of the major newspapers as well as in the more specialist book and publishing journals. Radio appearances and podcasts also featured. All of this led to positive attention

for his indexer **Paula Clarke Bain** and raised awareness of the importance of good indexes in general. The exposure on Twitter alone was similar to that which we get for National Indexing Day. Our directory is currently receiving more visits than previously, which hopefully means more professional indexers being hired. The associated [topic in the forums](#) contains links to many of the articles.

On the website, our eagle-eyed

members may have noticed a recent change in the cookies acceptance notice on first landing on the site. This is to ensure we are legally compliant with the latest requirements. At the same time we have also reviewed the various plug-in pieces of code and removed a few that are no longer required. This helps with both stability and security.

Ruth Ellis
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SI Conference 2021

Nearly time to log on for your annual (well, almost annual) dose of inspiration, designed to spur you on to even greater things in the coming year. So come and join us on Tuesday 9 November and Wednesday 10 November for a conference expressly designed to develop your skills and help you make the most of your opportunities. This year's conference is all about boosting your productivity and implementing all those little tips and tricks that will help you to work smarter to achieve more without working longer. And as we're online you'll have no travel costs, no problems with lifts that don't work as you move from one session to the next, and no more running out of the vegetarian option at lunch.

The conference will start with a keynote presentation by Dennis Duncan and **Paula Clarke Bain**. Dennis has already appeared at a couple of previous conferences and is well known to us as an entertaining speaker who appreciates a well-crafted index compiled by a human indexer. His latest book, *Index, A History of the*, was published in September and includes the first few pages of a computer-generated

index as well as a professionally produced index by Paula, neatly demonstrating why computers can't index and humans can. This session should give us a really good insight into what can be achieved when working with an author who understands the value of a proper index.

Throughout the conference we will be bringing you sessions on the various software packages available to help streamline your working practices. These will take the form of tips and tricks from both the developers and those who use the software, so if you haven't already contacted us with your suggestions and queries please do get in touch. Sessions on Cindex, IndexManager and IndexConvert will be led by their developers, while the sessions on Macrex and Sky will be led by SI members with experience of using those particular software packages.

In between these sessions, there will be presentations on the more practical side of the indexing process and on running a business in the 21st century. These will include question and answer sessions on indexing practice and working methods, finding work, using social

media, Making Tax Digital (which will roll out to include freelancers such as indexers in 2023) and dealing with the perennial problem of late payments. Again, if you do have any tips or queries, please get in touch in advance so these sessions can be focused as much as possible on what you will find most helpful.

There will be extended coffee breaks on both days with breakout rooms available for more informal interaction: on Tuesday you will have the opportunity to meet the members of the Executive Board who will be hosting networking sessions, and on Wednesday the sessions will be topic-based.

The AGM and Society Matters will be held just before we break for lunch on Wednesday and the final session of this year's conference will deal with indexing the metatopic.

The Zoom link will remain open for a while after the close of proceedings on both days for anyone wanting to continue networking, or to catch up with friends.

Rosi Dear
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NISO Z39.4 Criteria for Indexes

On 14 July, the National Information Standards Organisation (NISO) published a new American national standard on criteria for indexing (ANSI/NISO Z39.4). It replaced an outdated technical report from 1997 (NISO TR02-199, Guidelines for Indexes and Related Information Retrieval Devices). The new standard covers both print and online publications, and addresses recent advances in technology and techniques such as embedded indexing. The standard is available [here](#).



There are several differences between the criteria recommended in ANSI/NISO Z39.4 and the guidelines presented in the British Standard ISO 999: 1996, the SI Training in Indexing course, and the older (now withdrawn) British Standard BS 1749: 1985, *Alphabetical arrangement and the filing order of numbers and symbols*. While ISO 999: 1996 is itself a fairly old document and in need of revision and development, it still remains the 'current' standard in the UK. Indexers in the UK, particularly those working for US authors or publishers, should be aware of these variances in convention and practice. The principal differences are itemised below. The relevant NISO and ISO 999 clause(s) are given in brackets; the NISO recommendation appears first.

- **commas in filing:** ignored in word-by-word and letter-by-letter sorting (11.3) *vs* treated as break point in reversed personal names (see BS 1749: 1985 clause 4.1):

NISO

word-by-word:

New, Agnes
new moon
New, Thomas
New York
Newark

letter-by-letter:

New, Agnes
Newark
new moon
New, Thomas
New York

BS 1749: 1985

word-by-word:

New, Agnes
New, Thomas
new moon
New York
Newark

letter-by-letter:

New, Agnes
New, Thomas
Newark
new moon
New York

- **initial articles in proper names and titles:** not transposed (8.2.1.2, 8.2.5.2) *vs* conventionally transposed to end of heading (7.3.4.2):

NISO

The Club (London)
The wind in the willows

ISO

Club, The (London)
wind in the willows, The

- **introductory notes:** "listed as running headers or footers on printed index pages or display screens" (10.1) *vs* presented at beginning of index (7.1.3, 9.2)
- **see also cross-references:** precede subheadings when these are numerous and positioned after any main heading locators (8.8.1.3) *vs* precede subheadings if numerous, positioned before any main heading locators, and placed in brackets (7.5.2.1):

NISO

economics 51, 78, 82 *see also* assets; banking; transport
bibliographies 105
statistics 155

ISO

economics (*see also* assets; banking; transport) 51, 78, 82
bibliographies 105
statistics 155

- **see under:** used for a reference from a term to an instance of that term as a subheading under another term (8.4) *vs* not mentioned in ISO 999 (*see* or *see also* is taken to be generally applicable):

NISO

binding
adhesives
comb
mechanical
perfect
spiral
comb *see under* binding

SI Training in Indexing course 5th edition (B3.2.1.0)

binding
adhesives
comb
mechanical
perfect
spiral
comb *see* binding: comb

- **turnover lines** (in set-out style): indented deeper than deepest subheading in same entry (10.2.5.1) *vs* indented deeper than deepest subheading in index (9.4.1.4)

A more comprehensive listing of all the differences has been uploaded to the [Indexing Resources](#) section of the SI website. From there the user needs to navigate to 'US and UK indexing conventions'.

David Green
Training Course Committee
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Christopher Pipe reads Dennis Duncan

"*Index, A History of the?* Bit niche, innit? I mean, sounds like an academic's indulgent whimsy".

Well, Dr Duncan is indeed an academic (he has spent a long time in serious study of relevant materials from ancient, medieval and modern history and his book contains over 24 pages of source references); and he indulges his love of a good story (which makes his book an entertaining read). But what is important is that he has a deep understanding of how indexes work and how they can meet the varied needs of different readers, scholars and other users.

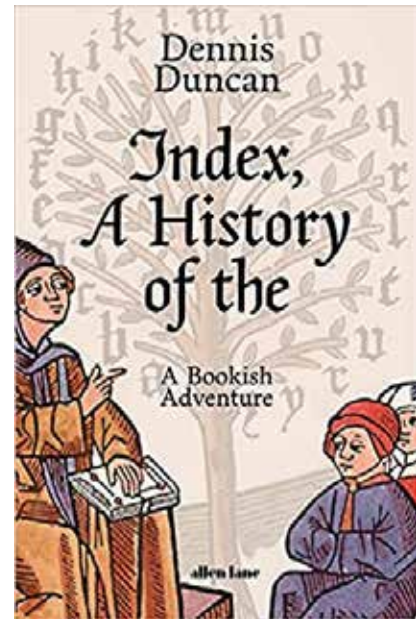
We may think of an index as a mere everyday convenience, but Dr Duncan tells us how indexing has been known to save a life and wreck a career.

He knows the difference between a table of contents (which reflects the structure of a book) and an index (which has an entirely different structure designed to help the reader or researcher locate the part of a book that meets their needs). He also knows that a subject index is not just about quick access to information – discrete units of knowledge – but about recombining the elements of a text so that readers with different needs and from varied starting-points can see how the points they are interested in may be addressed by an unfamiliar author. He appreciates how an index can offer morsels, *amuse-bouches* that tempt the more casual reader to investigate further; and he understands that there is a particular art in divining what terms the reader may look up when trying to find again a passage previously read and only half-remembered.

There are pages dealing with the nature and purpose of reading, which have changed over centuries and sometimes over very short periods of time. Other passages deal with the *modus operandi* of scholars. Illustrations come from medieval manuscripts that show how preachers and theologians have presented complex arguments; and from eighteenth-



Dennis Duncan



century printed indexes to the themes of poetry, plays and novels. There is even a picture of the very first printed page number (in 1470, important for enabling passages to be located by indexes).

From the nineteenth century, the teenaged Lewis Carroll features with his index to his family's handwritten magazine :

Ideas upon Ink . . . 73
In General, Things . . . 73
...
On Telescopes, Twaddle . . . 86

And English professor Henry Morley with his 'Index to Tears' in the 1771 novel *A Man of Feeling*, puncturing its author's 'emotional incontinence':

Tears, burst into . . . 54
—, *Sobbing and shedding . . . 74*
—, *burst into . . . 75*
—, *virtue in them . . . 75*
—, *he wept at the recollection of her . . . 80*
—, *glisten of new-washed . . . 81*

There is clear analysis of recent developments in indexing, including

deplorable attempts at computerised indexing, and noting that when we use Google to search the web we are in fact searching not the web itself but Google's index of the web.

Consequently, the practising indexer will find things here to prompt fresh thought, and maybe help explain to less enlightened authors and publishers why a good index is vital both for scholarly communication and for wider understanding in general (and even for better sales to the public). In an age of misinformation, that is important.

Paula Clarke Bain's index itself runs to 31 pages, or a little over 10% of the book's main text, which is a testament to serious purpose.

Christopher Pipe
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- *Index, A History of the: A Bookish Adventure* / Dennis Duncan. London: Allen Lane, 2021. xii+340 pages, £20.00. ISBN 978-0-241-37423-8.

See the publisher's webpage [here](#).

Note to the gentle Reader: Page numbers in *italic* indicate figures. Page numbers in the form 273n1 indicate endnotes. Entries are sorted in letter-by-letter order, except where noted. This index was created by Paula Clarke Bain, who is a professional indexer and a human being. [PCB]

Paula Clarke Bain's introductory note to her index of Dr Duncan's book.


Francesca Hillier gradually discovered the worth of education

When I was asked to write about my path to indexing, I thought at first that perhaps my experience would have been a little different from the experiences of other indexers – from a factory office to the British Museum – but then I thought, what makes a typical indexer? I don't suppose there's any such thing. Everyone will have taken a different route to the profession.

I was born and grew up in Darlington, County Durham and found myself bored with education by the time I began my A Levels. When a job offer came in at the start of my second year of study, I jumped at the chance and bailed out of school, much to the horror of my parents. I was 17 and I'd been offered a job in the office of a glass factory, making cooker doors and shower screens, and earning money and independence was my priority rather than my education. It was an eye-opener to say the least, but it gave me a very good grounding in the world of full-time work. I began with basic office administrative duties (and tea-making) and worked through various roles over the 13 years I spent working there, becoming a senior member of staff by the time I left. But towards the end of my tenure, I began to realise that I wasn't fulfilled and began wondering if I could go back to school and finish my education – I didn't know whether I could even study again. Still working at the factory, I undertook an A Level evening class for a year to test what I might be capable of, studying English Literature, and it gave me the education bug. When I got my result, I resigned.

With only an A Level in English Literature, I knew I didn't have enough qualifications to go to university, but I could do a foundation course which might then lead

to a university place. Deciding that my options would be greater if I went south, I left the factory in the northeast and moved to London to begin an Access Course at City and Islington College (in not yet fashionable Shoreditch) and an A Level in Ancient History in the evenings for good measure. At the same time, I worked in a supermarket to support myself. But it was the Ancient History A Level which was to influence my next move in education. I'd always been interested in Classics, having taken an O Level in it at school, and I decided to apply for a university place to study for a degree in Ancient History. I got a place at UCL and began my university education, only to find that I was pregnant with my first child before the end of my first year – having a baby a week into year two of my degree course made life more complicated, but I somehow managed to get through it. By my final year, my son had a place at the university nursery and life was a little easier. I no longer had to take a new baby into lectures with me, but I still had to wait until he was asleep before I could study in the evenings.

After my degree, I was offered a job, first working as a PA to the Director of the Institute of Archaeology at UCL, and then for the admissions office of the History Department there. But when a second baby arrived, working with two small children became impractical so I decided to give up work and be a full-time wife and mum instead. Much as I enjoyed the time I spent at home with the children, I soon realised that post-natal classes and baby groups were not going to keep me academically stimulated, so I started looking around for something I could do from home to keep my brain occupied. Reading a women's magazine one day, I came across an 

The Indexer

The International Journal of Indexing

Articles in Volume 39, Issue 3 (September 2021) include:

*Embedded indexing with Word. Part 6 –
sorting and export of entries*
Walter Greulich

Mad, bad Lord Byron: poet, rake – and indexer?
Hazel K. Bell

*The enigmatic journal index: when a negative
search result is positive*
Max McMaster



Did you know that the indexes to the journal are available on *The Indexer* website?

Visit www.theindexer.org/indexes/

You can also search for content in the journal via the LUP website site or through Scopus.

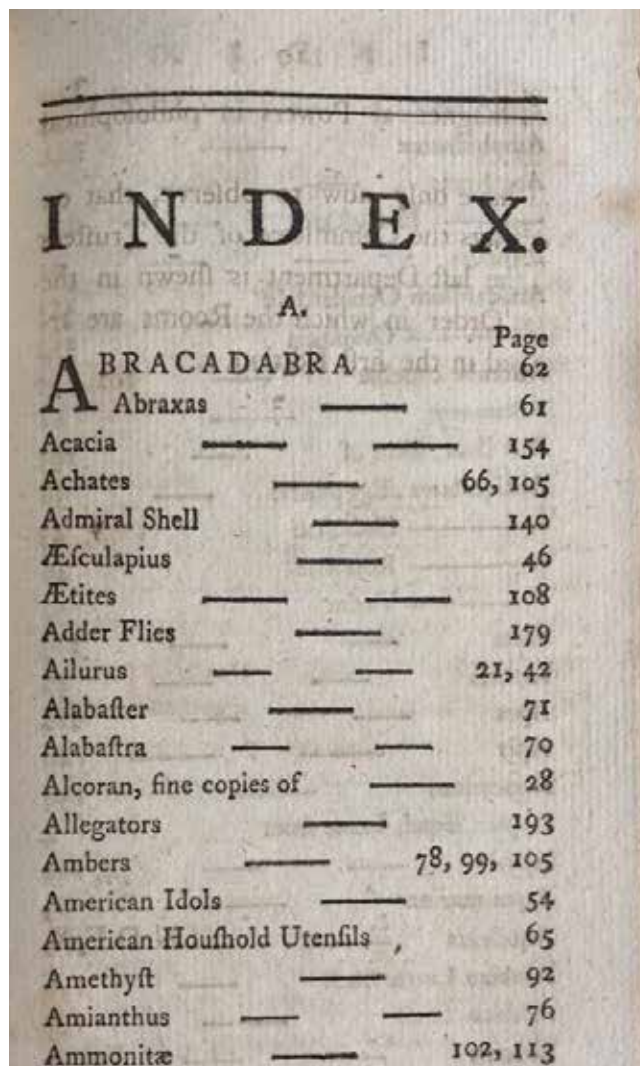
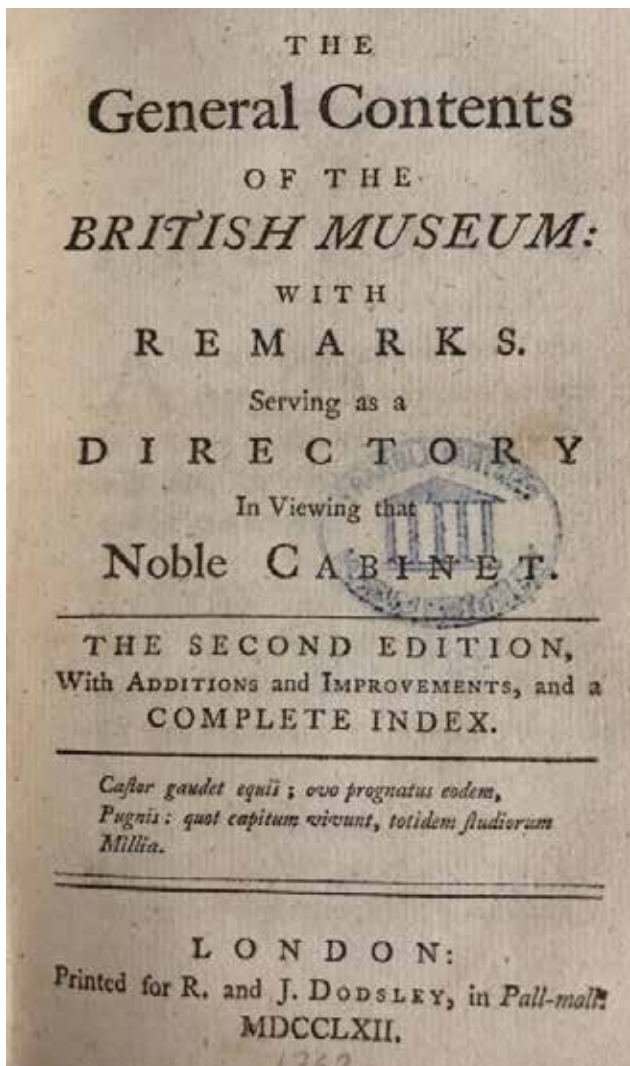
p7 ↻ article – ten jobs to do from home – and it was then that I found out that book indexing was an actual profession, and I could study for a professional qualification from home. It instantly appealed to me, so I signed up for the training course.

The course was trickier than I'd anticipated, but I liked the fact that you could do one unit and then take a break before tackling the next one, so I could fit it around my busy life. I enjoyed the challenge, though, and as I worked through the units, I began to fully appreciate how important the art of indexing is. I suffered a setback when I failed unit C, and had a bit of a wobble at that time, wondering if I would ever make a good indexer, but after a break from studying, I re-did the unit and passed. It helped my confidence and I found that, once I'd completed unit D, I was ready to take on my first commission.

By the time I'd finished the course, I'd gone back to full-time work after being offered a job at the British Museum. It was somewhere I'd always wanted to be, so when the opportunity arose to do so, I couldn't turn it down. I'd started the indexing course intending to remain a home-worker, but it didn't quite turn out that way. My first role at the Museum was PA to the Keeper of a collections department, and it was through her that

I got my first indexing job. The need for an indexer had arisen for an archaeology monograph produced by my old university, UCL, and my boss had put my name forward as a newly qualified indexer. I had a history degree and had worked at the Institute of Archaeology so the subject matter of the monograph was familiar, and I was confident I could index it to the high standard required. I loved it! The process and the preciseness of it, and I was reading books about history and archaeology, books I would never have found the time to read for pleasure and getting paid for it. Since then, I've indexed many more archaeology monographs and I've learnt so much about archaeological investigations in the UK.

I've been working at the British Museum for fifteen years now, and ten years ago I decided to do a Masters in Archive Administration, to qualify as an archivist. The Museum has a vast and uncatalogued archive collection and seeing what needed to be done, I convinced my Head of Department to sponsor my course of study so that I would be in a better position to tackle the issue. As a public body, the Museum has a legal responsibility to properly manage its public records and I was excited to begin to address this huge diverse and interesting collection. I became the Museum's Archivist once ↻ p9



The British Museum's 1762 guidebook title page, and the beginning of its index.

p 8 ↻ I qualified, and was appointed Senior Archivist two-and-a-half years ago, now with overall responsibility for the entire Museum's archival records, stretching back to before it opened in the mid-18th century. I think having an ordered mind, necessary for indexing, is also very useful for archive cataloguing. I was delighted when I saw in a 1762 Museum guidebook, the earliest we hold in the collection, a back-of-the-book index. And its first entry was "abracadabra".

Indexing whilst working full-time and with (by now) three children is challenging, but it makes you very focussed. There are sometimes very late nights when I'm trying to meet an indexing deadline after being at work all day, and there are weekends when the children have to fend for themselves a little (or my husband has

to entertain them more than he's used to), but I love my job and I enjoy indexing so I don't want to give either up. I index mainly historical, literary, and archaeological works, with three runs of journals as regular jobs, and I've done quite a few for British Museum publications too. There hasn't been a time since I started indexing that I haven't had indexing work alongside my full-time job, but the positive side of not having to rely solely on indexing for my income means that I only need to take jobs that interest me. The archive at the British Museum is full of interesting things, and every day I learn something new, but items like the 1850 letter from the Museum's correspondence archive [see p1] sometimes make things a little more challenging. I need the order of indexing to keep me sane.

My Neck of the Woods

Emma Caddy on *ein kurzer Aufenthalt* (a short stay) in Berlin

Modern Berlin has been called many things – a place that is forever becoming, poor but sexy and the most exciting city in Europe – but I tend to think that playwright David Hare got it about right when he wrote in his readings for the stage *Berlin/Wall* that the city is all about hanging out with your friends.

Around Christmas time in Sydney in 2011, Kim and I were sitting in the backyard of 'Buckland', an inner city house she was sharing with five other friends, chatting about our plans for the rest of our lives. Rather casually, I seem to remember, I said I had bought a one-way ticket to Berlin for March, that I was moving. "Really?" she said. "And I'm going in April!" I spent most of my spare time at Buckland and was a kind of honorary housemate, but it had never come up in conversation. We'd both been on holiday to Berlin but neither of us had any *real* reason for going. It was a happy coincidence, though perhaps not an unusual one for two young people (so-called Millennials) with a university education that passed them by, few belongings and a first proper job they didn't know why they were doing. We made a vague attempt to learn some German together (truly awful), compared results of our latest research on German bureaucracy (more fruitful) and organised a market stall

to sell our belongings (most of the profits went on lunch), but mainly it was good to have a partner in crime.

As planned, Kim arrived in Berlin in April 2011, just as the weather turned, and she found a small one-room apartment in the next *Kiez* (district) to mine. A little while later, she called and asked if she could practise her tour guide audition on me the following day, taking in all the major sites: the Brandenburg Gate, the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, Hitler's Bunker (now a car park), a rare preserved GDR mural (now the Tax Office), Bebelplatz and the site of the 1933 book burnings, the construction site that was Unter den Linden at the

time, the Käthe Kollwitz sculpture in the Neue Wache and the big finale, and the tricky bit where Kim asks for tips, on the steps of the Altes Museum overlooking the Lustgarten and the construction site that would become the Humboldt Forum.

It was a wonderful walking tour full of big hand gestures, key historical facts, names and dates all memorised and jokes beautifully timed. Kim worked as a tour guide for the next five or so years before moving into international politics and a job she loves. Last year she navigated the German immigration system beautifully and after nearly ten years in Germany and with excellent *Amtsdeutsch* (bureaucratic) ↻ **p10**



The Humboldt Forum

p 9 ↻ German) finally attained permanent residency.

My first home in Berlin was one section of an enormous flat on the fifth floor of an *Altbau* (old building) built around 1900 directly on the main thoroughfare Prenzlauer Allee. A friend had posted the room on Facebook and put me in contact with the *Hauptmieter* (main tenant), the wonderfully kind and patient Katharina, a German-Russian whose parents had moved to West Germany from Russia as *Gastarbeiter* ('guest workers') during one of the many labour shortages when she was eight years old. Though also in her late twenties, Katharina was in the final year of her undergraduate degree in art history (quite normal for tertiary education in Germany) and was about to start work on her final dissertation. Despite the beauty and size of the flat, it was almost unbearable in winter,

with only coal heating and a tiny boiler for hot water. At the end of the summer, we decided to find a place together, not far away but smaller and with central heating. We found another *Altbau* in Wedding, a forever

'up-and-coming' district in the old West, which had reduced rent due to a very strong slant in the floor where onions and chopped carrots, mainly, would all roll at great speed towards the south-facing windows. We had a great time being housemates and spent most evenings together in the kitchen, eating chicken, dancing around to music videos on YouTube and tormenting her grumpy old cat, Molly. I didn't stay long, however, as on one of her research trips for the dissertation Katharina had fallen in love with a Frenchman, François, and was trying to find a way of getting him to Berlin. In similar fashion,

while trying to figure out how to be an English teacher, I had also fallen in love – with Cathy, now my partner of nearly ten years. A little while later, I moved in with Cathy and François moved to Berlin to be together with Katharina and Molly the cat in the warm flat with the slanting floor.

After a few months of intensive German language classes at the *Volkshochschule* (literally 'people's high school' but more along the lines of a 'centre for continuing education'), I started to panic about earning money. A little while later and after a month of internationally accredited professional training, I found a job with a full teaching load at the Berlin School of English, mainly to students from former East Germany who had grown up learning Russian but who now found themselves in a globalised world with jobs in capitalist multinationals. I had

Fernsehturm or *Telespargel* (the TV Tower or Tele-asparagus, because it kind of looks like an asparagus) and go to nice bars, concerts, operas, the theatre, the film festival and generally have a good time. The summer of 2012 was long and hot, and Kate, Hubert, Cathy and I spent most evenings outside watching the European Football Championships in one of the many *Biergärten* (beer gardens) cheering at portable television screens. We've been a formidable foursome ever since, and despite full workloads and the Covid-19 lockdown, spend as much time having fun together as possible.

If I were in my mid-twenties again I'd probably want to move to Bucharest or Tbilisi, two vibrant cities full of young people, cafés, a history of totalitarianism and big, relatively cheap flats. Those flats have all gone in Berlin but, for Cathy and me, it's

home. A couple of months ago, Kim and her partner, Neil, moved in to a flat just around the corner from ours, in time to celebrate their daughter Isobel's first birthday. Katharina and I are going 'mushrooming' next week – picking wild mushrooms in a forest near



Unter den Linden

absolutely no idea what I was doing, but I had a wonderful time and had not only met Cathy there, but also Kate and, shortly afterwards, her husband, Hubert. Kate (English) and Hubert (German) met when they were both working as managers for Waterstones in the north of England and, on turning 50 and without children or any strong ties, decided to chuck in their jobs, sell their terrace house with the long garden down to the river, pay back the mortgage and move to Berlin to rent a big flat with a balcony looking across to the

the Polish border – to take them back to her flat to cook them with chicken in red wine and share with Cathy and François. Kate, Hubert, Cathy and I are madly planning our concert visits and bar evenings for the winter, starting with a concert at the wonderful Pierre Boulez Saal and a new production of Brecht and Weill's *Die Dreigroschenoper* at the Berliner Ensemble next week. Cathy and I moved to England for health and family reasons in 2013 but came back in 2018 to a tiny little flat in the former East – at the time we said it was because of Brexit but really it was because we missed our friends.

The indexer is apt to work at home. Unless there are constant demands from confined dependents and/or noisome children, this working situation may mean long hours of isolation, single-mindedness, silence, indeed sometimes loneliness. Happily, there is an ideal counterbalance to this potentially bleak regime. It is the ownership of a dog.

Many of my readers already know this only too well. Indeed, the pandemic has generated an unprecedented explosion in dog ownership in Britain. Some of those untutored, would-be pack leaders will have found cause to regret their choice and retreated from it. Dog rehoming has also exploded. Others will favour, and be committed to, the cat.

But those for whom the delights of the dog are still unexplored might appreciate a report from the front line of walks and feeds. The first thing to know about dogs is that they are intrinsically pack animals. A pack may be minimal: a Yorkshire terrier and a housebound centenarian. It's still a pack, though, and one member needs to be top dog. In the best-regulated domestic packs, the top dog is not actually a dog. This matter needs to be addressed from the off, because if a pet dog comes to believe itself to be dominant, the human who picks up the tab (and everything else) is at a disadvantage that is very difficult to reverse.

Dogs left alone assume that they have been expelled from the pack. This often becomes a highly stressful matter. A dog alone in an empty house for long hours will suffer, growing neurotic and apt to develop destructive behaviours. Blaming the dog for these developments is understandably seen by the dog as unjust. Sadly, thousands of dogs acquired as pets spend their lives in incomprehensible, lonely, bored misery.

That the homemaker is there almost all the time is a primary factor in commending indexers as highly suitable for dog ownership. But the benefits flow in both directions. Dogs depend on routine. They have highly sensitive body clocks. They learn that, if walks and feeds occur at around the same time each day, they don't



Fargo

need to start to be anxious until the set hour becomes imminent. (The autumnal back-peddalling of the time when GMT kicks in is an annual punishment for the dog who is naturally still on British Summer Time).

Walks are essential if the owner wishes to avoid pools or stools on the best silk rug. Tyro dog owners may be taken unawares by how much energy and stamina their mutt can exhibit once outdoors. Researching breeds before committing to a pet can pay dividends here. Fargo, our first dog, was a Great Dane, considered a giant breed. But big dogs have hearts no larger than those of a little dog and hence cannot go on for hours like a medium-sized collie or pointer, the balance of whose constitutions is much more robust. Indeed, Danes are unexpected in several ways. They can curl up happily in a corner and so do not require, as urban myth may suggest, a stately



Tati

home to patrol. In fact, they are very suitable for metropolitan flat life. Had David and I known as much, we might have acquired one when we lived gardenless in London rather than waiting (as we thought, practicably and wisely) until we had a country spread.

The benefits of dog-walking are two-way. Having an unavoidable obligation to go out of the house for at least twenty minutes four times per day, whatever the weather and one's own condition, is a fine discipline. The dog will not permit you to "just do another half-hour finishing this chapter". The walk has to be now. Laxity about looking after oneself by regularly walking away from the screen is not permitted by increasingly restless and mutinous dogs. Moreover, one can't postpone lunch while remaking this particularly unwieldy entry, because no dog recognises an entry as unwieldy.

And indeed it is balm to the soul to turn from the screen and indulge some tickle time. Animal behaviourists have established that brushing, stroking and scratching (the botty scratch is a universal favourite) increase levels of oxytocin, a very beneficial hormone associated with affection – and not only in the animal, but also in the human. This is good news for your and the dog's stress levels. Eye contact is salutary too. Your dog is much happier if you're gazing into her eyes than at the screen. And it must be better for your eyes.

Dogs are a huge responsibility, though. If you are taking on a pup, you've made a commitment that might well last 15 years or more. Dogs don't grow up and go off to school, nor can you send them to the corner shop and expect them to bring home the change and the packet of sausages ("what sausages?").

Dogs can be hard work too. Tati, our blind Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen, was the last of our first series of dogs. This August, after taking a dog break which, to our surprise, lasted two-and-a-half years, we adopted two dogs from the same rescue centre. Brie (formerly Marie – we don't favour human names for dogs and, though there are ↻ p12

p11 🐾 human Bries, we figured we're unlikely ever to know one) is an eight-year-old American bulldog. BuskyBear, whom Brie knew in kennels but wasn't close to, is a ten-year-old cross. They both quickly settled and proved very trusting and affectionate. But Brie turned out to be an accomplished food thief – she downed an entire block of butter, foil wrapper and all, happily with no ill effects – so we need to be conscious

of potential temptation. And Busky's neuroses have kicked in, leading to much barking at night sounds and at strange men. We are working on these issues, but we know we're in for a long haul. No one pretends that there are no down sides to pet ownership. Sooner or later, your best pal will break your heart. And one can very easily slip into being a pet bore. As you may have surmised.

The Locator



BuskyBear

Practical & Technical

How to get the most out of the Society forums

The [default view](#) for the forums when accessed via the blue menu bar will show you all the forums you are allowed to see, whether you are subscribed to them or not. The last post column indicates how long ago someone posted in that forum. An [alternative](#) useful top-level view is by topic. This shows topics across all your permitted forums in order of most recent posting, with the one with the latest response at the top. It allows you to quickly see the current discussions.

It's recommended that you add one or the other of these top views to your browser's favourites/bookmarks so that you can easily access them.

Also of great use in either of these top-level views is the search box. Right at the top of the screen is the search box for the website – but this does not search the forums. On these two pages there is an additional search box that will produce results from the forums. This is especially useful for checking whether a topic has been raised before.

Forum subscriptions are set up so that you have more than one option in how to keep up to date. The default is that you are not subscribed to a forum and you will need to visit the site on a regular basis to keep up with discussions. This is the option to go with if you don't want to have mails from the forums in your inbox and you are happy to visit the Society website on a regular basis.

If you wish to be notified of a new topic in a forum, you will need to subscribe to that forum. Note that you can subscribe to any of the local group forums, not only your nearest one. To subscribe, first go to the forum itself. At the top right of the list of discussions, there will be a blue 'subscribe'. Click this and it will switch to 'unsubscribe'. That should make it obvious what you need to do to unsubscribe if you should wish to in future.

If you want to follow a particular topic, you need to access the forum and subscribe to that particular thread to get follow-up emails. This works in the same way as above, except you must be on the actual page of the topic. You will see an additional option to 'Favourite' a topic which can be a handy way of keeping a log of useful discussions for future reference. A favourite does not result in an email notification for new messages in that topic. It's a great way for newer members to mark topics of value that they have found via search so that they can refer to them again in future. You can find out more about how to manage favourites and subscriptions below.

You cannot reply direct to an email notification; it will simply go to the office admin email address and not to the forums. You must come to the forum to post. Provided you are logged into the website, clicking on the link in the email will take you straight to the discussion. (When you

sign into the website there is a box to tick to say "keep me signed in").

Your forum profile is slightly different from your membership account. You can use it to access just the forums and topics to which you are subscribed. To get to your own forum profile there are two routes:

- If you have already contributed to a topic thread, then click on your name by or on your message and it will take you there.
- If you have not yet contributed to anything, the URL format for the webpage you need is <https://www.indexers.org.uk/forums/users/username>

Replace username in the above URL with your own profile for the website. It is typically all lowercase firstnamelastname. If you are unsure of the format of your username you can find it by going to your membership account page, where it should appear above your email address.

From your own forum profile, you will see menu options for:

Topics Started
Replies Created
Engagements
Favourites
Subscriptions
Edit

This is a handy place to come if you want to find that old discussion you started or replied to. The first three options above will take you to a list of the relevant topics.

Clicking on subscriptions will

show you all the forums you are subscribed to, and below that all the individual topics to which you have subscribed. Where you have subscribed to a forum, you will get an email when a new topic is posted to the forum. When you have subscribed to a particular topic, you will get a new email for every new message posted to that topic. If you no longer wish to subscribe to a topic, this is the easiest place to

unsubscribe. Simply click on the red x next to the topic/forum. Favourite is similar to the subscriptions, except that you can only favourite a discussion topic, not a whole forum.

On your profile you will see also an image, which at present will either be blank or include your Gravatar image, should you use one (Gravatar is a separate site that allows users to share a common

image across multiple discussion forums on various websites.) We are currently in the process of implementing a common profile image which can be used on either your professional directory and/or the forums. I will update you with how to manage your profile image when it goes live.

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CINDEX™, Using shortcuts in (without getting lost)

There are many ways to fully harness the power and flexibility of Cindex, in concert with the standard keyboard shortcuts your operating system provides. In this column, I will outline some of the shortcuts you can use to increase the speed and accuracy of your indexing: when accessing menus, when entering data in a record entry window, when navigating through the index, and even how best to utilise the User's Guide.

If you wish to further discuss the shortcuts outlined below, or indeed any other Cindex issues that interest you, please join me and Maria Sullivan on 9 November for a Cindex session during SI's Online Conference.

Creating and Opening indexes

Whether you have just one client or a whole stable, it is likely that they have slightly different requirements as to formatting and styling of the index. Sometimes it is hard to remember without pulling up the original directions you received. Instead, save the necessary settings for each client to a stylesheet which can be opened just before you create your index for the new commission. All the relevant settings will be in play without having to set them individually.

You can also configure Cindex upon launch to automatically open the last index you closed; in theory the last one you worked upon. You will find this option on the first screen of Preferences.

Accessing Menus and Menu Options

You can do this mouse-free on Windows machines by using the Alt key plus the first letter of the menu you want. You can also go directly to the option you want with a third key-stroke. For example, Alt-v-t would take you directly to the last-formed 'Temporary group' under the View menu. In most instances, but not all, that third letter will be the first letter of the option you wish to use. When you use the Alt key, the letter shortcuts will be underlined, both at the Menu name level and at the option level. Therefore, there's no need to commit all these shortcuts to memory since they are clearly identified as you hold down the Alt key.

Similar Menu shortcut options are also available on the Mac, but not as comprehensive or intuitive as on the PC. If you wish to see the various Menu options, you will need to use your mouse to click on the Menu name. Thereafter you will find the shortcut rubric for each option. Some are obvious and standard across most programs: Command-P for print or Command-C for copy, for example.

Entering diacritical marks

On the Mac many common accents can be entered directly from the keyboard with a three key-stroke sequence. For example, an ü is entered as Option-u-u and an ñ is entered as Option-n-n. Just call up the Keyboard Viewer (under the 'Flag/Language Menu' on the Menu

bar) and hold down the Option key to uncover the combinations. Likewise, in the Windows version you can enter accented characters using the standard keystroke combos used in Microsoft Word.

Alternatively, you can always enter specific characters from the Character Map on the Character Menu (Windows) or by using the Emoji and Symbols option on the Edit Menu (Mac), by navigating to the character you want to insert. Additionally, you could add them to the 'Favorites' box for future use. And then there is always the option of placing them on a Hot Key (Windows) or a Function Key (Mac). So many possibilities, depending on how you prefer to work.

Managing text in the record entry window

Both Windows and Mac *User's Guides* contain a full list of mouseless shortcuts you can use to move around the record entry window, to save a completed record, to copy a completed record wholesale (or just the content of individual fields from the prior record) to a new record, as well as moving backward and forward through individual records in the index. You will find these lists on pp. 24–25 (Windows) and pp. 22–23 (Mac).

Inserting Text into Records

Preferences – Cindex Menu (Mac); Edit Menu (Windows) – includes a wealth of settings that will either save time, prevent errors, or both, while entering text into

➔ p14

p13 ↻ records. I bring a couple to your attention.

Text from Word or PDF Documents: Whether you prefer to copy and paste or drag and drop, this can save valuable time and prevent errors. Check out the Preferences Menu (Editing Tab) for options to control the transfer of text.

Autocompletion: Another function found under Preferences (Editing tab) which will help you find and insert the correct form of a word or phrase – if it already exists in the index and at the heading level into which you are entering it. Not only a great time-saver but an invaluable aid to make sure your entry is consistent throughout.

From the Edit Menu (both platforms) you can assign commonly

occurring phrases to an abbreviation that when used in a record will expand to its full spelled-out form (with type-styling if required). For example, if you are a medical indexer, you may need to enter “differential diagnosis” at the subhead level quite frequently. If saved to the abbreviation list as “dd,” then each time you type the abbreviation followed by a space or the end of field key (Return on Mac; Enter on Windows) it will expand to its desired form.

The Ultimate Shortcut to Mastering Cindex

I really want to say “read the manual”, but at just under 320 pages I know that is unrealistic. I hope that you, at least, read Chapters 1–4 which describe and explains the basic

functions and operation of Cindex. Another shortcut, but not really a true alternative, is Chapter 14 which lays out all the Menu options and a concise description of their purpose (in order of appearance of menus on the Menu bar) along with the page where full details of the option are provided. Reading these two sections will fully apprise you of what Cindex can do for you – I suspect you might be surprised!

And for speedy explanations, remember that Cindex provides on-line Help topics, as well as the ? links in each individual dialog screen.

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Local Groups

East Anglia

In mid-July, members of the East Anglian group met in the flesh for the first time in many months, so that we could make the most of the summer. We went to Ickworth Hall, just outside Bury St Edmunds. Only three of us made it, but we all enjoyed the chance to get some fresh air and walk around the grounds.

First we dealt with the business of the meeting over coffee: a peer review index of a House of Commons Briefing Paper on Food Poverty. We compared our indexes and discussed the main issues that had cropped up, some of which were familiar from previous discussions, for example the nature of the reader's requirements, dealing with the metatopic, passing mentions and the level of detail appropriate for the subheadings.

We had a very enjoyable walk around the Italianate gardens, the meadows near the church and the woodland areas. We had a butterfly expert with us, which meant that I have now learned the differences between a meadow brown, a ringlet and a speckled wood. The weather was lovely and that was a definite bonus.

Our next meeting will be on 22 October, a Friday, this time using Zoom.

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London

It was very encouraging to be able to meet up for the first time in eighteen months. A few of us were brave enough to venture into London to help our favourite pub, O'Neill's, search for the “Missing Bar Proppers”. There was no formal indexing discussion but we chatted about the easing of lockdown and what we'd been up to, both socially and work-wise. The lockdown doesn't seem to have affected the flow of work.

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Scottish

The Scottish group had another Zoom meeting on Wednesday 1 September. Six members attended and the discussion centred around recent projects, workload, software issues, and how to get work as a new (and not-so-new) indexer.

As luck would have it, the group was evenly split between students,

new and recently qualified indexers, and more experienced indexers. The latter very generously talked about their experiences and knowledge of building an indexing career and shared some invaluable tips.

We all hope to be able to meet in person soon and I continue to review group visit arrangements at some of our favourite venues. We ruled out a nightclub meeting for the time being. With the conference taking place in November, we won't hold another online meeting before Christmas, but I know there are a few new students and newly-qualified indexers who would like a chance to meet – we are looking at the best way to do that.

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South West

Finally, we got together after more than eighteen months. It was with some trepidation on the part of some members, but a select few managed to get to our first meeting since before the lockdown. It was lovely to see people in the flesh and looking so well.

The first half of the

↻ **p15**



Southover Grange Gardens, Lewes, Sussex

p14 ☞ meeting was spent discussing our survival strategies for the last year and a half and our new versions of normal. It seems as if we have all undergone something of a revision or reflection of our lives, renewing hobbies or exploring new ones as well as focusing on work–life balance. It was a fairly short group meeting but nevertheless lively and members passing on useful tips and

suggestions. Moral support was the order of the day and I can think of no better way of achieving that than a good natter. We certainly had that.

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Sussex

Four members of the Sussex group met in person on 2 September, for a picnic in the lovely Southover

Grange Gardens in Lewes, East Sussex. As well as enjoying the opportunity for a social catch-up in three-dimensional form, we discussed the imminent launch of Fellowship, client relations, the advantages (or otherwise) of stretching the subject areas you work in, and dealing with comments after submission – and when to call a halt. One member had recently been involved in indexing work for an online repository, and was able to feed back about that experience. We enjoyed a walk around the gardens, benefitted from the local knowledge of **Ann Hudson** and **Priscilla Balkwill**, and can vouch for the cakes from the Garden's café. The Sussex group will meet online again during the autumn.

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Three Choirs: Sue Vaughan, Pam Scholefield, Liza Furnival, Heather Noel-Smith, Wendy Baskett, Heather Taylor, Jane Horton. Pic by Deb Webb (CIEP friend).

Three Choirs

Westonbirt Arboretum was the chosen site for the first real gathering since January 2020. Eight of us met in what were absolutely wonderful conditions – sunny, perfect for walking and looking at all the colours. Actually, I think that September was like August should have been. With a small hiccup – not connecting up with two of ☞ **p16**

p15 ☞ our group until lunch – we had a good time full of real conversation, lunch outside and a couple of walks in the woods. While Zoom has been invaluable in keeping us in touch with each other where we can discuss indexing issues and other topics, I think we all agreed that getting together is the preferred option. It gets us away from our desks for a while, which even when very busy means we can get back to work a little fresher. We will continue to Zoom on a monthly basis. Dates will be posted on the forum.

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Yorkshire

The Yorkshire Group hosted a Zoom discussion about subheadings on 7 October, led by **Ruth Ellis** with **Ann Kingdom**, **Nicola King**, two soon-to-be-qualified student indexers **Katie Warriner** and **Victoria George**, and me in attendance. Ruth used Power-Point slides as prompts for the discussion, which she marshalled very well despite my tendency to grumble at every turn about run-on subheadings. Our discussion covered the usual suspects: when do we decide to create subheadings; what do we think about undifferentiated locators; do we prefer the active or passive voice or do we aim for nouns to avoid the dilemma; do we use prepositions and conjunctions, and if so, which ones and how; and when do we depart from alphabetical sorting order?

In addition, we talked about the acceptability and value of 'also mentioned' subheadings, and the possibility of implied bias inherent in the use of 'vs.' as a conjunction: both were new to me.

The more experienced indexers shared tips for indexing efficiently and ensuring consistency within and across headings/subheadings. We reflected on how our indexing practices have developed, so that indexing decisions we would have initially put off until the final (mammoth) edit process have become more integrated into our indexing processes. Subheading organisation is part and parcel of that, although I still do sometimes get caught out: I shared some unwieldy headings (run-on, naturally) from the index I am currently working on, and my colleagues were not shy in suggesting ways to improve them. In summary, we can testify that a small group of indexers can quite happily talk about subheadings for a couple of hours, and as Ann observed, it is always worth revisiting the basics and reflecting on our own practice from time to time.

Our next meeting is scheduled for 2 December, with format and venue to be confirmed.

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