



ANZSI

newsletter

Newsletter of the **Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers Inc.**

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Council update

Drought, fire, flood and plagues have affected all our lives in recent years. And if this issue of the Newsletter is late, please excuse the editor and blame the flooding rains which have delayed this correspondent's contribution!

As announced at the AGM, Council's membership for the 2022-23 session is:

President: Madeleine Davis

Vice-President: Shirley Campbell

Secretary: Sherrey Quinn

Treasurer: Michael Wyatt

Council members: Sharon Betridge, Marnie Hannagan and Elisabeth Thomas.

We welcome our new member, Sharon Betridge, to Council and thank all Council members and the officers of the society for their willingness to contribute to its management. There are two general-member positions on Council available - if you are interested in contributing, please contact Madeleine Davis, President president@anzsi.org

Council's first two meetings for this session have focused on routine administration, preparation for the International Committee of Representatives of Indexing Societies (ICRIS) Triennial Meeting in October in Berlin, and discussion of activities and events which might be organised in 2023. We received regular reports on finances, correspondence, membership, communications, education, the library and accreditation.

Madeline Davis and Tracy Harwood are our ongoing ICRIS representatives. Glenda Browne is our official representative at the Berlin Triennial meeting and conference, which was held in conjunction with the 2022 conference of indexing societies (17-18 October). The Berlin ICRIS meeting included discussion of updates to the International Agreement of Indexing Societies and the ICRIS Terms of Reference, and also a proposal for an independent ICRIS website. Reports on these matters and on conference sessions will be available in future issues of the Newsletter.

A principal concern of Council is ANZSI's declining membership, now numbering fewer than 90. Membership decline has been due to retirements and, sadly, deaths of members. Although we have welcomed new members, the number has not yet made up for losses, in spite of an active program of meetings and professional development in recent years. Council is considering various options for a membership drive and suggestions are welcome.

The professional development program session in September - a re-broadcast of an Indexing Society of Canada (ISC/SCI) conference session on index mark-up - was well attended, and further re-broadcasts are planned for 2023. The second quarterly social discussion session will also have been held (in October 2022) by the time this newsletter is issued. We will be varying timings for PD and social sessions so that as many members as possible have an opportunity to attend.

Council is hopeful of holding a face-to-face seminar next year and a small committee has been formed to consider location, program and training offerings. This would be the first in-person seminar that ANZSI has held since the Canberra Region / NSW group seminar at Sylvan Glen, in the NSW southern highlands, in 2017.

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During the COVID period we have been gathering suggestions for conference sessions, and all will be considered by the committee.

As usual, copy is required for the Newsletter. Please send news, comment, technical tips or any items of interest to Elisabeth Thomas, editor@anzsi.org

Sherrey Quinn, ANZSI Secretary



Report: Indexing Society of Canada/Société canadienne d'indexation (ISC/SCI) 2022 conference

The Indexing Society of Canada/Société canadienne d'indexation (ISC/SCI) held their 2022 virtual conference, 'Past Perfect, Future Progressive' on 12-14 May 2022. More than 100 participants from around the world attended the conference. The organisers kindly provided a timetable for various time zones in the programme; however, most of the sessions were scheduled in the middle of the night for my time zone. I managed to get up early to hear a few presentations though and was able to access recordings for the rest of them. The recordings will be available to registered participants for one year after the event, which is a nice touch. Handouts prepared for many of the sessions are also available on the website.

The conference started on 12 May with 'Fireside Chats' for new indexers that were hosted by Mary Newberry and Alexandra Peace, the ISC/SCI President. I didn't attend this and it wasn't recorded, but it was an excellent idea for providing newbies with an opportunity to chat with experienced indexers. Scheduled for the same time as the Fireside Chats was a session with a series of software vendors (Macrex, Index Manager, Cindex, IndeExploit) providing tips and techniques. The software session was recorded, which was an excellent idea, as it would definitely be of interest to both new and experienced indexers.

Alexandra Peace and conference chair Lisa Fedorak opened the conference on 13 May and kicked things off with a short session of 'speed networking', where participants were randomly placed into breakout rooms. These networking sessions were also sprinkled throughout the rest of the programme, along with generous breaks, daily after-parties, and a quiz (trivia) session.

The main programme included seven sessions and two themed discussions spread across two days. The discussions covered a range of topic areas and specialties: arts/literature, biographies, cookbooks, embedded indexes, gender studies, health, history, legal, moonlighting, multilingual indexing, religion, scholarly books, science, social activism, and trade books.

Dennis Duncan was the keynote speaker on the first day, speaking about his book *Index, a history of the*, published in 2021. He took us on a journey through the history of the index and of index-makers that ranged over 800 years. It was an entertaining session, but there was one thing lacking for me. Paula Clarke Bain, the indexer of the book, was present, but Dennis

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didn't provide any details about how or why the indexes to the book were created. It's a fascinating story, which I won't relate here, but interested readers might want to look at Paula's excellent article about those indexes in *The Indexer* (Bain, 2022).

Next up was Alexandre Grandmaître who explained the history of indexing in Canada's lower house of Parliament. It was interesting to hear about the work of an indexing team working with a huge collection of documents. Alexandre explained how the indexes had changed over time and considered what they might look like in the future. He noted that the indexing team have become 'tuners' of technology, tweaking the digital system and advocating for user needs with the IT team. A member of the indexing team, Martine Rocheleau, was answering questions via the chat box during this presentation, but unfortunately the chat isn't included on the recordings so I can't report on this. However, Alexandre and Martine wrote for *The Indexer* a few years ago about how the introduction of an integrated system changed their traditional indexing practices, so if you would like more details, have a look at that article (Grandmaître and Rocheleau, 2020).

Margaret de Boer moderated a panel discussion by three book indexers about how they manage their workflows. Each indexer spoke for 10 minutes, and they all supplied detailed and useful handouts, which were available to download on the conference website. Judy Dunlop was first and gave an interesting explanation not only of how she works but her overall philosophy of indexing, which is focused on user needs and awareness of reading styles. She included 'fun factors' for each stage of her work processes, which made it clear how much she really enjoys indexing, particularly the first steps to she takes in reading a book and marking up. Stephen Ullstrom then described how his work processes have changed over time as he has gained confidence and experience. Unlike Judy however, Stephen does not do any reading or markup first, he works directly on the computer after some initial planning. He also uses a notes app as an 'external' brain' where he keeps track of his thoughts processes as he's working. Gillian Watts was last and noted that her processes are a mix of Stephen's and Judy's, so she tried not to duplicate their points too much. She makes several passes through a book, using the table of contents to help her track her work and motivate her. Like Stephen, she will let an index rest and 'ripen' for a day before she edits, and she also reiterated Judy's points about indexing as writing and checking to make sure that the index can be easily understood and read by users. Overall, the panel demonstrated how varied indexers' work processes can be, but also how much they all enjoyed their work.

Sunny Widerman, a tax preparer and adviser with experience working with solo business owners, talked about financial literacy for freelancers in the final session of the first day. She was very enthusiastic about working with self-employed people, and her presentation contained a lot of useful information, particularly for new indexers just starting a business. Sunny encouraged indexers to take control of their finances with the overall message: 'it's a road trip and you're driving'.

The next day started with a presentation by Dr Bryson Payne, author of *Go H*ck Yourself* (see the reference list for details), who shared tips for staying cybersafe. He urged us to 'think before you click', to turn off wi-fi and Bluetooth when we're not using it and to turn off our devices (computers and phones) overnight. While not related to indexing *per se*, this was a very useful and practical session.

Dr Valerie Nessel (Associate Professor at the University of Buffalo and member of *The Indexer's* Editorial Board) then talked about strategies for teaching foundational concepts to library and information science (LIS) students. She noted the increasing diversity amongst not only her students but in the information profession, which is expanding into sub-fields like information management, data science, and knowledge management. Her challenge is to bring her students 'on to the same page' and consider how their role and our field are defined. She explained the conceptual frameworks and methods she uses in her teaching. She emphasised that information professionals (such as indexers) need to become more visible and let people know about their work and its value. Valerie provided a lot of details about fundamental LIS concepts that I won't try to capture here, but anyone interested can read her 2019 article in *The Indexer* for more information.

Devon Thomas, past-president of the American Society for Indexing (ASI), presented the final session on marking up during the book indexing process. Devon was obviously a fan of marking up and gave lots of reasons for doing it, as well as examples of her methods. But she also considered the disadvantages and explained when it might not be an appropriate method; for example, when indexing very structured texts (such as cookbooks or encyclopaedias), indexing names, or working in databases. It was interesting to hear her presentation as a follow-up to the earlier panel discussion on workflows, particularly as Devon noted that whether to mark up can be a hot topic amongst indexers. Obviously, it's not for everyone, but her explanation and examples might have made a few converts. If you want more details, I suggest reading Devon's article in *The Indexer* on marking up (Thomas, 2020).

The conference closed with an announcement about next year's ISC/SCI conference, which will be face-to-face in St John's, Newfoundland. Many people stayed online to chat informally but they gradually trickled away depending on their time zone and whether they were ready for bed. Overall, it was yet another enjoyable online conference from the ISC/SCI organisers, who did a great job at bringing together interesting and useful presentations and giving indexers opportunities to connect socially. The only downside for me, tuning in from Australia, was not joining all of the breaks and discussions. However, the availability of recordings more than made up for this.

References

Bain PC, '*Index, a history of the: conference adventures of author and indexer*', *The Indexer* (2022) 40(3): 189-204.

Duncan D, *Index, a history of the: a bookish adventure*. London: Allen Lane/Penguin, 2021.

Grandmaître A and Rocheleau M, 'Accessing parliamentary information: from traditional indexes to a database-integrated information management system', *The Indexer* (2020) 38(1): 3-10.

Nessel V, 'A matter of conceptualization and representation: teaching indexing concepts in the twenty-first century', *The Indexer* (2019) 37(1): 49-54.

Payne B, *Go h*ck yourself: a simple introduction to cyber attacks and defense*. San Francisco, CA: No Starch Press, 2022.

Thomas D, 'In defense of marking up', *The Indexer* (2020) 38(1): 75-82.

Mary Coe

Wanted: ANZSI Receiving officer

ANZSI Needs You!

ANZSI is looking for a member to take on the role of Receiving Officer for applications for Accreditation and for nominations for ANZSI Awards. After working in this role for 10 years Shirley Campbell has decided to step down from this position.

All transactions are via the ANZSI post office box. Physical location of the post office will be decided when the new Receiving Officer is appointed. To facilitate the process, it is desirable that this person is located in Australia. Very minimal general mail arrives at the ANZSI post office box. Mail2Day can be set up so that the Receiving Officer is notified when new items arrive thus removing the necessity to regularly check the box.

Applications for Accreditation require an index to be submitted for assessment. The applicant notifies the Receiving Officer that a book has been mailed to the post office box and on retrieving the book the Receiving Officer is responsible for managing the process of distributing the book to the assessors. When the assessment is finalised the Receiving Officer mails the book back to the applicant.

The ANZSI Medal is usually offered every other year. A closing date for applications is set and a timeline for the judges to work to is established. Applications (if a hard copy of the book) are retrieved from the post office box. Hard copy books are then sent to judges; digital books are emailed to them. The method for sending books to judges is decided once the number of applications is known (in the past two rounds approximately 10 nominations have been received each round).

There are only a few applications for Accreditation each year and the Receiving Officer works in collaboration with the Chair of the Accreditation Committee. Similarly in award years the Receiving Officer works in collaboration with the Chair of the Judging Panel. Record keeping is an important part of both processes but is not onerous.

Please contact Sherrey Quinn at secretary@anzsi.org if you are willing to take on this role.

Madeleine Davis, President



ANZSI Library



(Photograph: Karen Gillen)

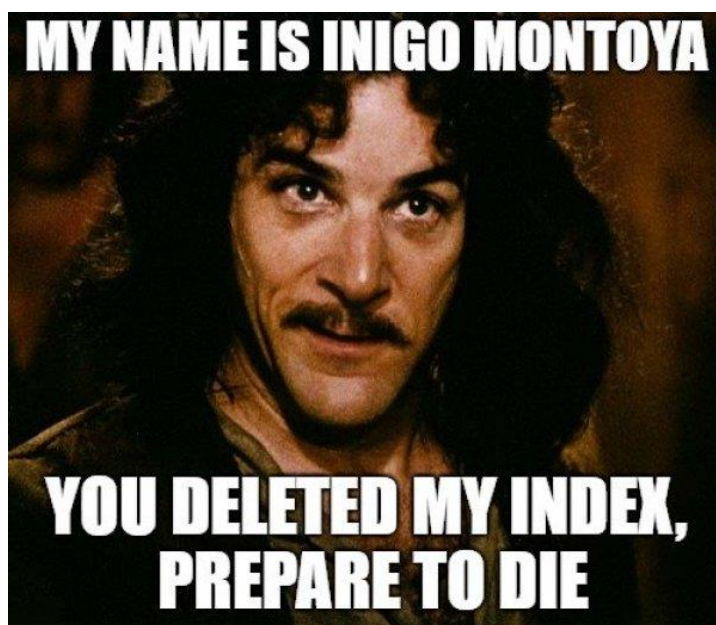
Loans

The full list of holdings of both the Australian collection and the New Zealand collection can be [viewed or downloaded](#) from the members area on the ANZSI website.

If you wish to borrow any items from the library, or have any queries about loan conditions for either collection, please contact the relevant library officer:

Australia: [Karen Gillen](#) New Zealand: [Carol Dawber](#)

Karen Gillen, Library Officer (Australia)



Gallimaufry

Food for thought: if the study findings below are a clue to future language, usage and skills, consider how it could affect findability, accessibility and the role indexing and indexers would play.

From the Australian Education Research Organisation's (AERO) recently released study, based on cumulative National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data.

Writing development: what does a decade of NAPLAN data reveal?

[This report](#) discusses AERO's 2022 analysis of student writing data - the most extensive investigation into this area ever conducted in Australia.

AERO website - article about report: <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/articles/education-rewrite-needed-change-narrative-student-outcomes>

Commentary:

“We can use the word illiterate”: The writing crisis in Australian schools [extract]

- Writing skills declined overall from 2011 to 2018, but the decline was steepest in years 7 and 9
- There has also been a noticeable decline in the writing skills of high-achieving students
- The gap between low- and high-achieving students is widening

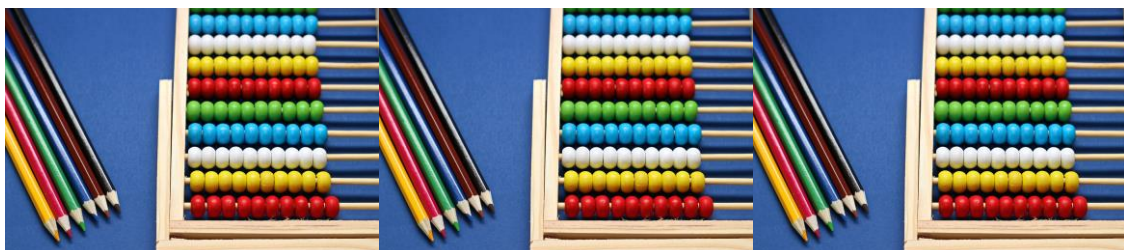
Most year 9 students are structuring sentences at a level expected of those two years their junior and are using punctuation like children in year 3, which leaves them struggling to meet curriculum standards and unprepared for senior high school or life beyond it.

A review of 10 million NAPLAN year 3-9 writing results and more than 350 persuasive writing samples by the government-funded Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) has found students' writing declined significantly in every key skill area but spelling over seven years to 2018.'

<https://www.smh.com.au/education/we-can-use-the-word-illiterate-the-writing-crisis-in-australian-schools-20221017-p5bqfb.html>

ABC interview: <https://www.abc.net.au/sydney/programs/mornings/writing-skills/101546254>

Ed.



What's in *The Indexer*?

The September issue of *The Indexer* is available.

Did you know that the electronic version of *The Indexer* is available to subscribers in the last week of the month before the month of publication? Get ahead with your reading by subscribing.

More info at <https://www.theindexer.org>

The Indexer

The International Journal of Indexing

Volume 40.3
(September 2022)

Editorial
Mary Coe

Articles

Index, a history of the: conference adventures of author and indexer
Paula Clarke Bain

The mutability of fiction descriptors: the evolution of 'pulp'
Philip Hider | Leonie Bourke

Conference Reports

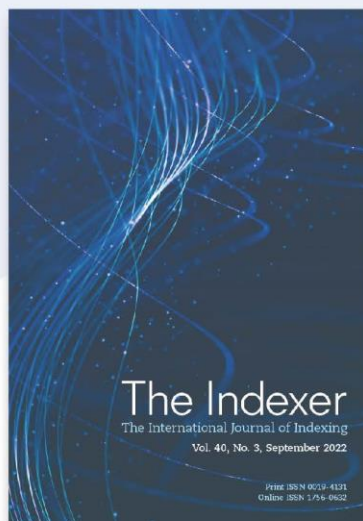
'The Future of Indexing: A Mix of Art & Technology'. American Society for Indexing (ASI) 2022 conference
Ann Kingdom | Mary Coe

'Indexing in Service of the Reader': Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers (ASAIB) 2022 conference
Madelon Nanninga

Forty years ago

The Indexer forty years ago (October 1982)
Hazel K. Bell

Indexes Reviewed
Christine Shuttleworth



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

Search for content by category or using the author, title, and subject indexes.

Visit www.theindexer.org/indexes/

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

ANZSI events

For full details, follow a link (if included) or go directly to the [Events webpage](#).

ANZSI social meeting

30 October 2022

4:30 - 5:30 pm (AEDT), Zoom videoconference

ANZSI Council meeting

28 November 2022

5:00 - 7:00 pm (AEDT), Zoom videoconference

ANZSI Council meeting

2023 dates to be confirmed



Contact information

General email: info@anzsi.org

 ANZSocietyIndexers

 @ANZSI_indexers

ANZSI Council 2022-23

President: [Madeleine Davis](#)

Vice-president: [Shirley Campbell](#)

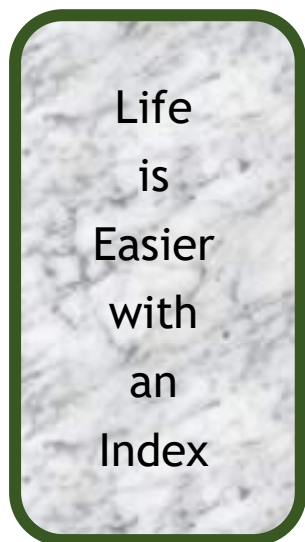
Secretary: [Sherrey Quinn](#)

Treasurer: [Michael Wyatt](#)

Council members: Elisabeth Thomas,
Marnie Hannagan and Sharon Betridge.

Group and regional contacts

Please consult the [ANZSI website](#) for details of regional and interest groups, and contacts.



Newsletter

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Schedule

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Please email contributions to the editor, Elisabeth Thomas, at editor@anzsi.org.

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