



Annual Reports 2008/09

Indexing Society of Canada
Société canadienne d'indexation

President: Heather Ebbs

As I read through the annual reports of each member of the '08/09 executive, I felt very proud of this organization and the people in it. We are a small enough organization that we (all members, not just the executive) are informal with each other, yet professional enough that we help each other and our Society through such things as our website, our regional meetings, the listserv, the *Register*, the *Bulletin*, our conference programming, our publicity efforts and our international liaison.

My executive has been amazing. I want to single out a few for their particular expertise, but I don't know where to start—should I start with Beth Macfie (who is far too modest in her own report) and Viv Cartmell, who have stepped in repeatedly for me this year when I've been unavailable for a few days here or a few more days there? or Cheryl Lemmens, who is webmaster extraordinaire, working with all of us for our separate website needs (including thinking of things we need before we do) and developing enhancements for the site? or Ruth Pincoe, who serves on various committees and is internationally recognized through her work as ISC/SCI international rep as well as the international coordinator for all sister societies? or Gillian Watts, who has straightened up our books and kept us in the black? or Debby Schryer, for identifying the need for changes to the *Register* and help making them happen? or our regional coordinators—Meral Alakus, Gillian Faulkner, Vivien Cartmell and François Trahan—for maintaining interest through meetings and e-mails amongst everyone in our far-flung membership? or Natalie Boon, for getting our *Bulletin* back to a regular three-times-a-year schedule and continuing to beat the bushes for interesting articles? or Audrey McClellan for not just maintaining our membership lists but also welcoming new members and responding instantly to requests for broadcasting important information? or Mary Newberry, for her work in coordinating a committee to develop a promotional brochure for ISC/SCI? And what about Anna Olivier, our 2009 conference coordinator, who took on the job even though she was not just a new member but also a francophone handling a primarily anglophone conference? or Marie Gabe, who has set up a fabulous program for the conference? or Angela Wingfield, who found such a great venue and handled the catering? And I have to personally thank Mona Iordache for translating my messages for the *Bulletin*, always at the last minute and always cheerfully and accurately. The list goes on, and in the individual reports below, you'll see more names mentioned.

Most of all, I have to thank all of you for participating in this Society and making it such an open and collegial and helpful group of people. I thank each and every one of you for all you have done for indexing and our Society during the past year.

Past-President: Beth Macfie

As past president, I participated in executive meetings and discussions, assisted with organizing the conference, recruited a slate of nominees for the biennial executive elections and prepared to conduct the executive elections (which will be held at the AGM on June 4, 2009).

Treasurer: Gillian Watts

I am pleased to present the year-end financial statement for 2008. We have done well this year, producing a surplus of almost \$1,200 when we expected only to break even, thanks to larger than anticipated

revenues from the conference and the *Register of Indexers Available*. Our reserves are also healthy, so, in spite of the hefty increase in the cost of *The Indexer*, I anticipate good things for 2009.

Because our AGM occurs in the middle of the year, here is a brief update on our financial progress for 2009. As of the middle of May we had revenues of just over \$9,000 (including conference registrations) and expenditures of about \$5,000, and there was about \$13,000 in the chequing account and \$15,000 invested in GICs.

ISC/SCI Year-End Financial Statement, 2008

	Budget		Actuals
Income			
Membership dues	9,700		10,969
Conference	5,300		7,072
<i>Register of Indexers Available</i>	1,800		2,240
Publications revenue	300		—
Interest income	—		322
Total	17,100		20,604
Expenses			
Membership (including directory)	840		289
Conference	4,300		4,795
Executive expenses:	1,930		3,989
Telephone		24	
Executive travel		2,263	
International liaison travel		1,342	
<i>Bulletin</i>	1,500		2,087
<i>Register of Indexers Available</i>	1,015		818
<i>The Indexer</i>	3,500		5,777
Internet expenses	300		395
Operating expenses:	760		554
Office supplies		29	
P.O. box rental		158	
Postage & delivery		367	
Bank charges	25		322
Regional groups:	1,200		341
B.C.		79	
Edmonton		—	
Calgary		—	
Toronto		263	
Ottawa		—	
Montreal		—	
Volunteers, honours & awards	330		—
Miscellaneous	200		50
Total	17,100		19,418
Income less Expenses	0		1,186

BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Chequing account	4,768.89
GIC	15,322.34
Accounts receivable	115.00
Total	20,206.32

Liabilities

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Membership Secretary: Audrey McClellan

As of May 15, 2009, we have 123 members. Seven members did not renew last June, and all but five renewed in December.

Geographic breakdown of members

Within Canada		Outside Canada	
British Columbia	35	United States	8
Alberta	6	Italy	1
Saskatchewan	4		
Manitoba	1		
Ontario	52		
Quebec	10		
New Brunswick	2		
Newfoundland & Labrador	1		
Nova Scotia	3		

Membership types

Individual	110
Student	3
Institutional	10

Institutional members are distributed as follows:

Alberta	1
British Columbia	2
Ontario	2
Quebec	2
Italy	1
United States	2

New members since the last AGM

Penelope J. Bahr of Gabriola Island, BC
Edna Barker of East York, ON
Susan Brown of Pierrefonds, QC
Lyle Cowles of Nanaimo, BC
Wendy L. Donnahee of Dundas, NB
Heather Hollingworth of West Kelowna, BC
Barbara Joughin of Vancouver, BC
Linda Lefler of Dartmouth, NS
Annette Lorek of Vancouver, BC
Lee Losell of Nanaimo, BC
Perry Millar of Saskatoon, SK
Hugh Morrison of Abbotsford, BC
Kim Pape-Green of Newmarket, ON

Returning members

Pat Dales of Toronto, ON
Jean Mann of Port Townsend, WA

Webmaster: Cheryl Lemmens

Web-related activities from June 2008 to June 2009 can be summed up as follows:

Register of Indexers Available

A new deadline of October 31 was implemented for listing applications and renewals. The transition to a fall deadline was very smooth, facilitating publication of the print *Register* early in 2009. The online *Register* followed on February 12.

The feasibility of creating online *Register* application forms was discussed at the November 2008 executive meeting. Four HTML files (English and French application and change forms) have since been created and made accessible to the executive for an initial review. These forms can be filled out online and sent to both the *Register* editor and the webmaster, who each receive a plain-text e-mail displaying all of the applicant's information. However, before the forms can be released to the general membership, a bit of further scripting is required to enable capability compatible with all e-mail programs (Microsoft Outlook, Thunderbird, web-based applications such as Gmail, etc.).

The move to online forms will enable the *Register* editor to assemble data immediately rather than having to wait for receipt of a hard copy form filled out manually. The webmaster will also be able to create HTML entries as each e-mail is received, rather than waiting until the print *Register* is completed. Payment must still be sent by "snail mail" along with hard copy forms, but the online forms can be printed for this purpose and forwarded to the *Register* editor for record-keeping purposes.

Once scripting has been done and the forms have been tested, they will be released for use by the membership. It is hoped that this process will not be too problematic.

New web hosting account

The scripting requirements for the *Register* forms have necessitated an upgrade to the Society's web hosting account, from the basic account we have had for a couple of years to a business standard account with many more features. The upgrade will require a small additional cost.

Conference web pages

As in past years, the conference website has endeavoured to provide "one-stop" information on all activities. In addition to the conference home page, information was provided as follows:

- conference program (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_program.html)
- AGM information (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_agm.html)
- registration and fees (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_reg.html)
- venue and accommodations, including information on St. Michael's College, its history, resources, buildings, and special attractions (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_venue.html)
- Toronto – general information on the city and attractions across the metropolitan area (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_toronto.html)
- Getting around – transportation, transit, etc. (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_getaround.html)
- University of Toronto – information on history, buildings, etc. (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_uoft.html)
- Area attractions – museums, galleries, government buildings, historic architecture (http://www.indexers.ca/conf2009_attractions.html)

International Liaison Representative (ISC/SCI) and International Coordinator (All Societies): Ruth Pincoe

This report will be available at the AGM and in the subsequent *Bulletin*.

***Bulletin* Editor: Natalie Boon**

First of all, I'm happy to say that we again published all three of our constitutionally required issues this year! I'd like to thank the following people who made this year's *Bulletins* possible:

Our contributors:

Martin Ahermaa (book review)
Shelley Brown (conference reporter 2008)
Vivien Cartmell (conference reporter 2008; tidbit from the Saskatchewan legislature)
Jennifer Hedges (conference reporter 2008)
Brian Hogan (conference photographer 2008)
Linda Jenkins (article on Ottawa indexers)
Linda Lefler (article, "Odd, Wonderful Entries—With a Purpose")
Adrian Mather (conference reporter 2008)
Maureen MacGlashan, the editor of the *Indexer*, for her columns
Audrey McClellan (conference photographer and reporter 2008)
Trine Schioldan (conference reporter 2008)
Debby Schryer (conference reporter 2008)
... as well as executive and conference reports

Our proofreaders:

Vivien Cartmell
Christine Dudgeon
Gillian Faulkner
Susana Gomes
Gillian Watts

Our translator: Mona Iordache, who translated the President's messages

Thanks also to

- the ISC/SCI webmaster, Cheryl Lemmens, who handles electronic publication of the PDF
- the ISC/SCI membership secretary, Audrey McClellan, who e-mails the membership about new issues and maintains our mailing lists
- the ISC/SCI International Rep, Ruth Pincoe, for her invaluable assistance in considering the thorny issue of courtesy copies

I'd also like to thank all those who volunteered at various times, even when circumstances made their involvement problematic.

***Register of Indexers Available* Editor: Debby Schryer**

The work for the *Register* began last October when reminder e-mails went out to the membership advising everyone of the new deadline (October 31) for sending in fees and forms. Things seemed to go very smoothly with no confusion resulting from the deadline change. The *Register* for 2009 was accomplished in February, and this time our webmaster worked on the online coding while I compiled the letters to the publishers and stuffed envelopes, so that streamlined things a bit.

This year's edition has 53 indexers working in English (5 more than last year) and 5 working in French.

Back to streamlining. I wondered if we could make the application forms for the *Register* available as electronic versions that could be sent in by e-mail instead of regular mail to the post office box. Our wonderful webmaster, Cheryl Lemmens, is making that happen, and we hope to be able to put the new system in place for next year. The biggest advantage for me is that I won't have to wait for snail

mail forms to arrive. The person who empties our post box will be happy not to have to send bunches of forms out in the mail as well. We will still need those pesky cheques as payment, but we're heading more in the direction of using electronic resources to advantage.

As we did last year, we will accept entries to go online throughout the year. Payment is still \$40, but if an entry is sent in after August it will be included in the next print version without an additional fee.

Member-at-Large, with Publicity Portfolio: Mary Newberry

Brochure

The brochure committee (Chris Blackburn, Margaret Gibbs, Jennifer Hedges, Cheryl Lemmens, Penelope Jane Bahr, Gillian Faulkner, François Trahan, Vivien Cartmell and Jane McGuire, with the help of Katherine Howlett) has almost completed its work. The brochure, in English and French, will be ready for the conference.

Logo

Cheryl Lemmens is working to develop a version of the logo that can be used by ISC/SCI members on their websites and possibly a print version that can be used on letterhead. Again, this should be ready for the AGM at the conference.

Discussions with the original logo designer about the quality of the print version of the logo are ongoing. There have been some problems in getting the text (the Society name) to be as strong as the image when printed.

Western Canada Representative: François Trahan

Vancouver was host to last year's conference, and this generated much enthusiasm for regular meetings. Our first gathering in October was well attended and the group of 15 quickly agreed to a schedule of meetings, a choice of meeting place, topics of discussion, chairs and secretaries, as well as several other agenda items for the year.

We met three times between October and April (quarterly but skipping the summer), and all meetings were held on Saturdays to allow for as many people as possible to attend. Two ISC/SCI members from Vancouver Island visited in January, and we also had two non-members who were curious to know more about indexing and ISC/SCI.

In January we held a peer review session, and in April attendees brought their favourite books on indexing for discussion. At each of these meetings we also spent time talking about networking and promotion. In the April meeting we took time to discuss tentative agenda items for the 2009/10 meetings.

Prairies and Northern Canada Representative, and Vice-President: Viv Cartmell

Indexing activity in this part of the country generally takes place in solitary fashion: the number of ISC/SCI members is low and we live far apart. As well, there is usually a low response rate to enquiries on their indexing activity, so it's really gratifying to have a few people who answer my frantic e-mails for news of their work. To stimulate the thinking process I usually ask some questions in the e-mails and I always hope that responses will go way beyond those few ideas.

Recession and difficult economic times are part of our lives right now, so my questions in early May were "What kind of a year have you had in your indexing business? Has the economic recession been causing some difficulties in getting a stream of work you consider appropriate? Have you had to do some additional marketing during the past year in order to keep business rolling in? If you do other work besides indexing, has that also been affected by the recession? Have you had to take on another job because your indexing business isn't making ends meet at this time?"

I was delighted to get three responses to my enquiries. We have a new indexer, Maha Kumaran, who is a virtual reference librarian in the Saskatoon Public Library and is starting her business part-time. She has completed two indexes for people at the University of Saskatchewan. Initially her goal is to complete a book index each month, but she recognizes that she needs to do some marketing in order to build her business.

Adrian Mather, another independent indexer, writes, “2008 was the best year I’ve had since becoming a full-time indexer in 2002. It looks as though 2009 won’t be as good. January and February were dull, but things picked up in March and April. Whether this has anything to do with the economic recession I’m not sure. Publishers appear to be busy. My publishing contacts continue to fluctuate. I’m getting work from publishers I’ve not had work from before while some of my old contacts are quiet. (This is very frustrating. You’d like to add new ones and keep the old ones.) I have no income other than indexing. I’ve thought about getting another job but as you know it’d be difficult to fit in—indexing work being as unpredictable and sometimes as unscheduleable as it is. I do the same marketing I always have: e-mails and phone calls to publishers.” I’m sure that Adrian’s experience is similar to that of many independent indexers.

As I work in one of our provincial legislatures, these reports always have content from that field. In Alberta, Deirdre Grist writes about their procedural changes. Saskatchewan implemented very similar changes a few years ago. “The biggest change in procedure for the Assembly here is discussing estimates in the various individual ‘policy field committees’ instead of in committee of supply (the whole house) as they have done for eons. Two of these committees meet each evening (in lieu of the House meeting) which makes it ‘crunch’ time for the editorial staff as it is like producing two Hansard issues per day. So far they (editors) are holding up well, and the transcripts are getting out at a fairly good rate. These committees were created last session and are intended to review certain Bills, including having public input, before they are passed. They can also review departmental annual reports, regulations, and now estimates, so have a wider mandate than the traditional standing committees (Public Accounts, etc.).

“Issues that are prevalent in Question Period include allowing nuclear power plants, changes to the health care system (no more regional health authorities—they have been replaced by a central Health Services Board, changes to drug coverage for seniors, gender reassignment surgery no longer being covered by the health care plan), a new land-use strategy and of course the ever-popular need for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Lots of other issues, but those are the main ones.”

In Saskatchewan this session ends on 14 May 2009. Significant topics in Question Period include the pros and cons of nuclear power development in this province. A round of public consultation on a uranium development report starts in May and runs until June. The NDP opposition would like to have an equal amount of time spent on researching and considering the development of alternative sources of energy, such as wind power and solar power. Health care and highways issues have not been discussed nearly as much as in previous years.

Central Canada Representative: Gillian Faulkner

In Toronto, attendance at our, mainly, monthly meetings has been good, and we have covered a variety of topics, alternating with an interesting selection of peer reviews. Ottawa area indexers also continue to meet regularly. Our thanks to Marie Gabe and Clive Pyne for their efforts, and to all who come out, no matter what the weather, and contribute their expertise, questions and opinions, thus maintaining good standards of indexing and the sense of community that we hope extends to those who live outside the main areas who receive overviews of the meetings.

As previously reported, we now have position descriptions for all executive positions that will be available on the website.

Central region is pleased to be hosting this year’s conference, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone.

Eastern Canada Representative: Meral Alakus

When we started the Eastern Canada Regional group meetings in 2007, there were a few interested people who were not ISC/SCI members then but who attended our meetings regularly, and this went on for over a year. During this period we added two new indexers to our group, Katherine Howlett and Linda Lefler, who became members. Two, three or four others attended our meetings at different times; however, this number is reduced to two now who are still considering becoming members. One member, Linda Lefler, started a full-time job as an engineer and she informed us that she will not be able to continue her indexing activities for some time. Again, I must add that, unfortunately, because of long distances between the provinces in the region, we could appeal only to indexers in the Halifax and Dartmouth areas.

We highly appreciated Noeline Bridge, who came all the way from Moncton to attend our meeting on 26 March and take part in the panel discussion organized for the Indexing and Abstracting class at the School of Information Management, Dalhousie University. We were hoping that one of our regional meetings in the spring would take place in Moncton; however this could not be arranged.

January meeting (5 January 2009)

Linda Lefler, Barbara MacKenzie, Johan Shaw and I were present. I gave my presentation on taxonomies, which I previously delivered in Vancouver and Toronto in 2008. There are always many topics to be discussed during these meetings, and the meetings are always well received and lively.

February meeting (16 February 2009)

Linda Lefler, Barbara MacKenzie, Amanda Stevens, Marina Pluzhenskaia and I were present. Linda Lefler talked about her personal experiences after she decided to become an indexer and gave general information on the indexing courses she took, the books she studied, how she became a member of ISC/SCI and how she got her first book to index through her connections in the Society. This was a good introduction to a few others who are about to take a step in becoming an indexer.

Barbara MacKenzie gave a brief introduction on corporate information and how she deals with the immediate information needs from the companies. She also spoke about the relation of information retrieval to indexing.

March meeting (26 March 2009)

The March meeting was planned to be after the panel discussion organized for the Indexing and Abstracting class at the School of Information Management, Dalhousie University, where I taught the indexing course during the winter semester (January–March 2009).

Noeline Bridge came from Moncton to talk about indexing, the Indexing Society of Canada, and her experiences of many years as a librarian and indexer. Barbara MacKenzie talked about the information needs in the corporate world, and Linda Lefler talked about her experiences as a new indexer. We also had John MacLeod, archivist/indexer (mainly indexing pictures) from Nova Scotia Archives, and Penny Logan, librarian, who is in charge of Capital Health Library Services, Halifax. They both talked about their experiences and how they used indexing in their work as information managers.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, we could not hold any meetings in May. I wrote to everyone twice and asked them if they would be willing to go to Moncton and hold our last meeting there. However, there wasn't anyone who thought they could attend a meeting in Moncton, nor anyone who was willing to come to a meeting in Halifax or Dartmouth. I am somewhat discouraged but at the same time I feel that the winter months are more active—somehow—than are May and after that. I believe that things will start moving on by November or December 2009.

It has been an honour and joy to act as the representative of Eastern Canada Region. I am sorry that I had to resign from my position at this time, as I am not sure I will be in Canada next year. Also, I feel that this is a matter of taking turns, and I am sure it will be carried on by the other members of ISC/SCI in the region.