

## **RYERSON INDEX INC COMMITTEE MEETING**

**4 November 2015, 11am by SKYPE**

The Meeting opened at 11.05am.

### **Present –**

John Graham, President  
Peter Kettle, Vice President  
Pauline Kettle, Secretary  
Alan Nancarrow – Back Indexing Coordinator  
Bill Shute –Mentor for new indexers  
Maxine Honczar - Training Coordinator.  
Bob Atkins – Special Assignment – by invitation

### **Apologies:**

Therese Delanty.

### **Minutes:**

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 26 May 2015 were taken as read.

Proposed Bill Shute, seconded John Graham.

### **Matters Arising:**

None

### **President's Report:**

- New South Wales Trustee & Guardian is now a Corporate Sponsor and has donated \$12,000 to Ryerson Index Inc to fund our ongoing costs. In return we will give them a copy of our data covering notices published in the past 40 years (ie 1976-2015). The sponsorship is expected to continue into 2016 and beyond, giving us another \$300 pa in regular donations.
- Sydney University Alumni Group has donated \$300 for our 2014 data. No further arrangements have made for an ongoing supply of our data.
- Bowral Chevalier College expressing an interest to donate and enquiry as to the sum required for levels of donation displayed on our site.
- Indexing has slowed significantly since the completion of the SMH death notices. Approximately 1,500 notices a day are being submitted.
- SMH completion – The Ryerson Facebook page received more than 100 “likes” in the week following the announcement. Now more than 2,100 likes.
- Contact was made with the SMH on 19 October with regard to an article for their paper about the completion of notices from their paper. The editor replied that he

thought it was a good story, and “someone” would follow it up. No follow-up has been received to date.

- Rex Toomey is in the process of creating a 64 bit version of the Ryerson updating program (to replace the old Clipper-based version), and this is expected to be ready for trial by end November.
- Rob McDonnell has been asked to re-write the Ryerson indexing program publication date processing as it is not always compatible with the Windows 10 recently released and an increasing number of indexers are experiencing problems with the publication date being switched to the calendar date without warning.
- Rob McDonnell has supplied Ryerson with new e-mail addresses for the Ryerson committee members involved with administration. This will eliminate the use of the tpg.com.au connection.

Proposed Bill Shute, seconded Maxine Honczar

### **Matters Arising** from the President’s Report:

Bill Shute enquired if we are still maintaining the same number of indexers since the completion of the SMH project. John commented that there are about 107 indexers who have submitted data in 2015. This figure does vary week-to-week as some indexers take holidays or retire, and more join the indexing team, but there has been no discernable overall reduction in numbers. Indexers who were involved with the SMH project have now been allocated other papers.

### **Secretary’s Report:**

#### Incoming Mail:

- Congratulatory messages received by Bill Shute and forwarded to the Secretary
- Congratulatory message from Botany Bay Family History Society Committee and members [forwarded to John Graham]
- Public Trustee for ACT – request for details regard the cost of data from our site as per the information sent to NSW Trustee and Guardian [forwarded to John Graham]
- Reply from John Graham to record that he has been in contact with this establishment.
- Paul McShane from Chevalier College in Burradoo (Bowral) expressing interest to donate and requesting the classification details of grades of donors. [forwarded to John Graham]
- Notification from Tony Middleton (indexer) that he is no longer indexing The West Australian and is now devoting his time to back-indexing Newcastle Herald.
- Request to place a link of their site [www.dead-people.com](http://www.dead-people.com) on our site. [referred to John Graham]
- Rats of Tobruk Association (ROTA, Victoria) who are working on a project for a National Database asking if there is some way Ryerson could establish an Index specially for Military Deaths that generally appear in notices placed in papers by the RSL.[forward to John Graham]
- Request for a search facility for exact given name only and also for wildcard search.

Outgoing Mail has been recorded as above.

Proposed Bill Shute, seconded John Graham

### **Treasurer's Report –**

Peter Kettle presented the report in the absence of the Treasurer. The total assets stand at \$31,926.

Proposed Pauline Kettle, seconded Maxine Honczar

### **Back Indexing Coordinator's Report – Alan Nancarrow:**

The big news this meeting everyone is aware of, that being the completion of the back indexing of the SMH. It has taken a long time and no doubt we have all despaired at times at seeing it finished, but thanks to a lot of people over the years the goal has been achieved.

Six of the former SMH indexers have moved over to work on The Age (Melbourne). It is being indexed from the Google Newspaper Archive but unfortunately not all dates are included creating a number of missing dates. These will in time be filled when volunteers are able to visit libraries and scan the copies. David Bales is already helping in this direction and will be of great help.

Pauline Kettle also commented that the indexing of The West Australian is progressing with nearly all of 2014 complete and 2013 will commence shortly. This will give a run from 2012 to the current issues.

Annet Latham is continuing to scan the Daily Telegraph and will soon finish 1980 and then begin scanning 1979 in the New Year.

Proposed Peter Kettle, seconded Bill Shute

### **Training Coordinator's Report, Maxine Honczar:**

Since the May meeting –  
8 enquiries  
3 no attempts  
4 completed the training  
1 decided not to continue.

Proposed Peter Kettle, seconded John Graham

### **Mentor for New Indexers – Bill Shute:**

Only 1 enquiry for assistance has been received.

Proposed John Graham, seconded Peter Kettle

## **Special Assignment – Bob Atkins**

Bob has been given the task of identifying which newspapers are “local” to all the genealogical societies in Australia, with the aim of contacting each society directly and seeking their assistance in indexing their local papers.

Correlation of various data has commenced, extracting lists of our existing newspapers on Ryerson, the whole list of newspapers on Trove, the Wikipedia list of all Australian newspapers which will be broken down into National, State and Regional Areas. This also includes defunct newspapers. Cross referencing with Family History Groups throughout Australia and the Coraweb website will then be possible.

Bob raised a queried as to whether more papers from Trove are being indexed as raised in the Minutes of the May meeting. It is necessary for him to know as this may impinge on his proposed analysis. John Graham commented that there is a list of papers and indexers of those papers on Barracuda copy (with a second version in Dropbox for those indexers yet to switch over). These lists may not reflect a complete answer, as some indexers do not place their details on this list, but it is the best we have.

## **General Business**

### **Potential Ryerson Attendance at 2016 Conferences**

John Graham presented a brief regarding the potential Ryerson attendance at Conferences being held in 2016.

- Kiama Family History Expo – April 16
- NSW State Conference September 9-11 to be held in Camden
- Gold Coast Family History Expo - TBA

At an estimated cost of \$3,200.

John agreed that he will attend all Conferences on behalf of Ryerson.

Proposed: Bill Shute, seconded Peter Kettle

### **Formalisation of the three proposals put by John Graham 20 September 2015 to the Committee**

viz

1. To discontinue the arrangements with World Vital Records as being no longer appropriate
2. New guidelines for expense reimbursements regarding attendance at Fairs and Conference on behalf of the Ryerson Index
3. Fairfax digital subscriptions be put in place for *The Age*

These proposals were discussed in full by email by all Committee Members. The Members agreed to all proposals by email.

The Committee reaffirmed their agreement to these proposals.

Proposed: Bill Shute, seconded Maxine Honzcar.

### **Proposed Video for Searching the Ryerson Site**

John Graham commented that this has not yet been undertaken.

### **Unpublished Notices of Deaths and Funerals**

Bill Shute made comment that whilst in conversation with a funeral director in Lithgow it was commented that less than 10% of the funerals in that area publish a death or funeral notice.

John Graham confirmed that this was very much the case in many areas and it is realised that not all deaths registered will be captured by our site. A further option would be to compare the published probates with the names on our site, but this would be a very involved undertaking.

The next Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place in early February 2016.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm.