RYERSON INDEX INC COMMITTEE MEETING

25 November 2016 at 11am

Skype

The Meeting opened at 11.01 am

Present –
John Graham, President
Peter Kettle, Vice President
Therese Delanty, Treasurer
Pauline Kettle, Secretary
Alan Nancarrow – Back Indexing Coordinator
Bob Atkins – Committee Member

Apologies : Maxine Honczar - Training Coordinator

Minutes:
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 27 May 2016 were taken as read and adopted.

Proposed Peter Kettle, seconded John Graham

Matters Arising:
John Graham recorded that the proposed Queensland tours have been postponed until 2018.

President's Report:

1. **Ancestry**
   This turned into a major disappointment when Ancestry reneged on our agreement. I spoke privately to Brad in Adelaide, and he said that Ben should never have agreed to such a deal. After I told Jeremy (the new Australian head) and his boss what I thought of their business ethics, I doubt we will hear from them again in our lifetime. Fortunately Ancestry needed Ryerson more than we needed them, so while it is disappointing not to have a backup site, we haven't lost anything we already had.

2. **NewsCorp**
   Very pleasing to be given access to all the NewsCorp online editions for free. I have started to save all notices from dailies: The Australian. Adelaide Advertiser, Brisbane Courier Mail, Darwin NT News, Hobart Mercury, Melbourne Herald Sun, Sydney Daily Telegraph, Cairns Post, Townsville Bulletin, Geelong Advertiser; and from others: Alice Springs Centralian Advocate, Port Douglas and Mossman Gazette. In addition, Alan is also saving the Gold Coast Bulletin daily. This means we are guaranteed completeness for all these papers in the future.

   I have also found that my SMH sub gives me access to The Age each day, so both these (Fairfax) papers are being saved too.

   I am yet to investigate the small suburban papers in the NewsCorp stable, but a quick look shows that, aside from the NewsLocal papers (Sydney) which we

already index, the Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide locals don't seem to carry many notices.
From information within APN, the takeover of APN by NewsCorp is still with the ACCC, and the thinking is the longer it stays there, the less likely it is to be approved.
My plan now is to be cheeky in the new year, and approach Fairfax and ask for a similar deal to that which NewsCorp has given us. We have nothing to lose, and a huge amount to gain.

3. **IL GLOBO**
   This one came out of left field, and resulted in us being given scans of all notices 1959-1995. Currently have two indexers working on the scans, and I have advertised on our Facebook page for more Italian readers to join us.

4. **Corporate Sponsors**
   Experian (was Pacific Micro) has returned to the fold, and Monash University has joined, so we now have six full sponsors who each contribute $300pa, plus Sautelle White who give us $120pa.

5. **Adelaide and Camden**
   These two fairs have been reported on earlier. I still have some follow-up to do from Adelaide.

6. **Numbers**
   Little changed from the last couple of reports - reasonably steady, on the right side of 10,000 most weeks. The rolling 4-week average remains above 11,500 per week – very satisfactory. Late April is the expected target date for six million.

7. **New Software**
   Daily processing continues in testing mode – I run all the input through the new software for validation purposes, then correct any errors before adding the data to the database via the old process. The weekly update processing is still incomplete – Rex has had other conflicting requirements on his time recently.

8. **2017 Schedule**
   We have two Fairs scheduled for 2017:
   History Queensland state conference at the Gold Coast in May
   NSW FHS State Conference at Orange in September
   I have also been booked for society talks at Port Macquarie (March) and Bankstown (June), and I am talking to Tasmanian FHS about a series of talks in Hobart/Launceston/Devonport in November – nothing finalised yet.

Proposed, Peter Kettle, seconded Alan Nancarrow

Matters Arising from the President's Report:
None

Secretary's Report:

1. Noele Watkins of Botany Bay F.H.G. – confirming booking for a table at their fair next year to be held on Saturday 13th May 2017 from 10am-4pm at Tradies Gymea. No charge for the table but a donation for a raffle prize would be appropriate.

2. Sam Manzi – regarding a donation of scans extracted from IL GLOBO notices.
3. Joy Shepherd, Colo Family History Group regarding their Volume 2 of St Stephens Kurrajong Parish Registers 1903-1936 has now been completed and launched.
4. General enquiries regarding use of Ryerson site.

Proposed, John Graham, seconded Bob Atkins

Treasurer's Report – Therese Delanty

Net Assets as at 30 September 2016 $30,143.81

Proposed Peter Kettle, seconded John Graham

Matters Arising from Treasurer's Report
It was agreed by the Committee that a Quarterly Statement be produced in place of the statement prepared for each meeting.

Administrator's Report - Peter Kettle

Since the last Committee meeting we have resolved the problems with Central Coast Express Advocate of 8 May 2009; Sandra Bales re-indexed it.

9 errors have been pointed out by users and they have been rectified. There seems to be something of a problem with the indexing of old notices on Trove as the name of the person putting in the notice sometimes precedes that of the deceased and the wrong name is indexed. And we have found and corrected 2 days of 1997 SMH that were the wrong way round.

The principal administrative task has been switching members to the FreeLists mailing list. Particular effort has been made to get as many active indexers, gatherers and look up volunteers as possible on the list which currently it stands at 114 subscribers. This is more than we had in recent years on the RootsWeb list. Most people subscribed without difficulty but it proved a challenge for some. In Joyce Tomasi's case her isp (idx) said that FreeLists was an unsecure site and would not allow her to subscribe. The matter was sent to FreeLists helpdesk and their reply sent to Joyce for forwarding to idx. No comment has been received.

There are some 20 indexers who have not subscribed so a group email to these people will probably be the only way that they can be informed of future important matters.

The RootsWeb list was closed on November 7th.

By my count we have 26 indexers who are not members of RI Inc. Some, of course, are fairly new and some may not stay the course, and 3 have specifically declined to become members.

As you all know the scans which are used to do lookups have a number of missing days. Stephen Brooks who does SMH 1997 has one such problem and there are no digital images of this year which means a library lookup, which because of location he cannot do. He has asked if the missing days could be scanned. I have told him

that to date our preference has been to do new days rather than copy days that have already been indexed.

Proposed Pauline Kettle, seconded John Graham

Matters Arising

It has been suggested to the Mailing List recipients that they install Mail Washer and delete unwanted emails from their inbox.

It was also suggested that a further message be put on the mailing list requesting that comments should not be made unless they add to the query concerned. Other comments should be made to a person directly not via the Mailing List.

Once again John Graham emphasised that it is essential that all Indexers should remain on the Mailing List in order to receive special comment regarding the RI indexing instructions and messages placed there by the Committee.

It was agreed that non-members of RII Inc should be invited to become members.

Back Indexing Coordinator's Report – Alan Nancarrow

There does not seem to be a lot to report. It appears that the looming goal of 6,000,000 entries is encouraging a high rate of back indexing.

Back indexing of THE AGE continues steadily on with some indexers able to access a lot of the gaps.

The hiccup with the Townsville Bulletin has been ironed out. I am currently scanning 3 months' worth of TB to be returned to Judith on disc when completed around late 2016.

It seems like the Queensland Times had fallen by the wayside as there did not appear to have been any action on it for some time. Since it was available on Press Display I have added it to my stable for the time being. I haven't as yet ascertained what became of the indexer or the second person that was collecting.

Proposed Bob Atkins, seconded John Graham.

Training Coordinator's Report - Maxine Honczar (in her absence)
From May 2016 to date –

8 - Enquiries
4- No Attempts
2 - with 1 attempt
1 Mac user (unable to index)
1- Completed the Training

Proposed John Graham, seconded Peter Kettle.

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Bob Atkins Committee Member - Report

1. Special Assignment

Progress has been slow this quarter but it is hoped that a proposal for consideration by the Committee will be put forward early in the New Year.

2. Report on Visit to Botany Bay Family History Society's monthly meeting 2 November 2016 at Gymea

David Bales and I attended the Botany Bay Family History Society Monthly Meeting at Gymea. Prior to the meeting we were greeted by Julie Ashford, our RI indexer for the St. George and Sutherland Leader with whom we had a meal. We were warmly welcomed by Noele Watkins, President and several members of the Society at the start of the meeting.

There were approximately 160 members present and after a short Club meeting they listened to my power point presentation with interest and questions. I tested the group at the beginning of my talk and only15 hands went up as not using RI. Hopefully that will change.

RI Flyers and business were available for the attendees. There were a number of questions at the end of the presentation.

I made an offer to the group that if they had a number of members interested in indexing e.g. 5 or 6 that I would be prepared to attend a day group session in their rooms. This looks promising.

The President asked me if we would be happy to have a table at their next Fair on 13 May 2017. I accepted the offer subject to confirmation by our Committee. This has now been officially confirmed.

Since then I have had a direct follow up from one the members with a query about an error in an indexed item. On examination it was an apparent error in the Australian Cemeteries Index and I have put the member in touch with Rob to check it out. The RI record was correct. This gentleman has expressed an interest in our indexing program and we are arranging for a further discussion. This was interesting because I had included some examples of how to link the RI with the ACI during my talk and much interest was shown with that index and other linkages.

It is the usual practice of the Society to do a video recording of all of their speakers and this was done for our presentation. The Society keeps these videos on file for use by members and also in their training/Education program.

In conclusion, this Society is very keen on our product.

Proposed, Alan Nancarrow, seconded Pauline Kettle

The Committee wish to thank David Bales for his interest and assistance.

GENERAL BUSINESS

(John Graham)
Since the discussions with Ancestry have now collapsed a contingency plan in case to safeguard Ryerson data has been discussed with Rob, and it is realised that the

Ryerson and Australian Cemetery Index are in a similar position. Rob McDonell is to investigate.

(John Graham)
Given name search – the Committee was asked their views about introducing this facility on our site. It was decided to go ahead with a 10 year limit each search. Rob McDonell will be approached to put this in place.

The meeting closed at 12.01 pm.