

RYERSON INDEX INC COMMITTEE MEETING

9 July 2021 - 7.30pm (Zoom)

The Meeting opened at 7.30pm

Present:

John Graham – President

Peter Kettle – Vice President

Pauline Kettle – Secretary

Therese Delanty - Treasurer

Kathy Conroy – Assistant Treasurer

Robert Atkins - Committee Member & Special Assignments

Apologies – Paul Kean

Minutes of the last Committee meeting held on 13 November 2020 were taken as read and adopted.

Adoption of the Minutes

Proposed: Peter Kettle

Seconded: John Graham

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

President's Report (John Graham) – Submitted report attached

Proposed: Kathy Conroy

Seconded: Therese Delanty

There were no matters arising from the President's Report

Secretary's Report (Pauline Kettle) – Submitted report attached

Proposed: John Graham

Seconded: Kathy Conroy

There were no matters arising from the Secretary's Report

Treasurer's Report (Therese Delanty) – Submitted report attached

Proposed: John Graham

Seconded: Kathy Conroy

Matters Arising from the Treasurer's Report:

It was pointed out that in the Donations Report the item quoted as *Monash University* should read *Aspree*.

Administration Report (Peter Kettle) – Submitted report attached

Proposed: Kathy Conroy

Seconded: Therese Delanty

Matters Arising from the Administration Report:

Kathy Conroy agreed to take over any lookups at the State Library that David Bales is unable to do. This can only be done when there are no COVID restrictions.

Special Assignment Report (Bob Atkins) Submitted report attached

Proposed: Peter Kettle

Seconded: Kathy Conroy

Matters Arising from Special Assignments Report:

Bob made comment that the proposed FH events he has organized to attend will only be possible if COVID restrictions allow or if alternative arrangements are made by the hosts to hold the event by video link up.

General Business

1) Another potential source of data.

From his discussions with Lake Macquarie FHS, Bob Atkins was made aware that a book had been published by that FHS regarding Funeral Directors' data covering the period 1926-1991. This was brought to the attention of John Graham and after the full index was scrutinized by John the idea was put forward in writing to the Committee regarding this data being adapted for the Ryerson index.

The Committee discussed the following points regarding the usefulness or otherwise of the as data -

1. To include this book means a fundamental change to the reason why Ryerson is so successful - we can put Joe Blow in a position to find a particular notice of significance to him which is likely to give him some useful family information. This book does not satisfy that aim.
2. The records are not applications (if that is the right word) for a death notice, but are only the FD's accounting entries. As such, they contain no family information, with the only information beyond what is available from the NSW BDM indexes being the age of the deceased.
3. This book is no different to dozens of other books published by various FHS over the years. In fact, it is probably of lesser value than most, being compiled from accounting records rather than family-type records. If we include this book (which is essentially low-grade data), then any other FHS could justifiably ask "why not our book?" This is a path down which we should not travel - it diverts resources from the real task at hand, and achieves a lesser result.

Regarding the above comments the Committee voted that this book would not be suitable for inclusion on our Index.

2) Lookups of Funeral Directors' Notices.

Peter Kettle enquired of the Committee if FD lookups were necessary. In his attached Administration Report he raised various thoughts about the topic. As in most cases each FD site can be accessed free by any researcher, the link to which can be obtained through our 'Coverage Details'.

The Committee agreed that this lookup service was not necessary, and the researcher is able to do this without our assistance.

3) Donations.

John commented that there has been a small drop in donations from corporate sponsors which may in part be due to their budgets.

The meeting closed at 8.06pm

Ryerson Committee Meeting 9 July 2021 President's Report

1. After a slow start to the year, when numbers dropped below 5,000 per week for a while, we have now picked up steam again with the last four weeks averaging over 7,500 pw.
2. We now have more than 400 papers and FDs included, although many of the papers are not current.
3. Our subscriber base took a hit this year, with Geelong Grammar School and Monash University (Frankston Hospital) not renewing. We currently have four sponsors (Marketsoft, Veda/Equifax, Monash Uni (ASPREE) and Adelaide Uni).
4. Nothing further has been heard from ACM since their announcement that five suspended newspapers would resume in print in April, after a 12-month suspension. It is now increasingly unlikely (in my view completely unlikely) that any further ACM papers will come back into print.
5. The West Australian is still a problem. We no longer have a supply for the RNR since Seven West stopped supplying PressReader from 16 June. Local indexer Dave Schmidt continues to index 3 days per week from his print copy, but we are falling behind now with the indexing because Kathy has lost access to her three days. We had a similar problem with the Canberra Times, and about a year ago the committee agreed that we would take out a one-month sub every three months, and during the month we would save every issue we could. We didn't follow through with this because Lindsay Graham started feeding scans through, and then we found the .pdf archive, but I propose that we do the same thing with The West, starting in late September.
6. In a similar vein, Kay Brook has advised me that all the WA regional papers owned by Seven West which she was indexing from PressReader have also disappeared from the same date. This is a pity, because we have no other source, but I don't think the volumes in these papers justifies the same subscription approach as for The West.
7. On my way back from Sydney in May, I visited Rex in Port Macquarie, to toss around a suggestion for a change to the database update program. The change was necessitated by the addition of the dob to the location field – there is an edit check rejecting numerics in the location field which was producing hundreds of spurious “error” messages each day. While my suggestion would have worked, Rex came up with a neater and simpler solution which we coded, tested and implemented in about an hour. The result is that each run now produces only a handful of genuine errors, and I no longer have to run the update daily to keep on top of the load.
8. While in Sydney, I had a discussion with Peter and Pauline regarding the best way to handle the expanded FD coverage that is planned. As you know, we allocated 80 newspaper codes in the range 20-99 for FDs, and we have

already exhausted more than half of that range. Our decision was to continue with a digit in the first position of the code, and use 24 alphabets in the second position (excluding I and O). This will give us an additional 192 codes, which should be adequate for the medium term, and will also have the advantage of clearly delineating FD notices (numeric in pos 1) from newspapers (alpha in pos 1).

9. Further on the issue of FDs, my plan was to have identified (by the middle of the year) the local FD in each of those areas where the local paper has disappeared, and to have started assigning the saving and indexing of those with a suitable website archive. That didn't happen because I was suddenly hit with a flood of other work (mainly paid), which had to take precedence over Ryerson. That looks like continuing until October, so I'm looking for someone to start identifying suitable FDs. Any takers?
10. Talks – I spoke at SAG's AGM in May (via Zoom) on the topic *Ryerson in the Post-2020 Newspaper Environment*, and have another Zoom talk scheduled for QFHS on August 27 entitled *The Ryerson Index: where we are, and where we are going*. The SAG talk is available from the Resources page of our website.

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Committee Meeting
13 November 2020 - 9 July 2021

Queries and Complaints Regarding Ryerson site

- (a) Remarks made that our site has not been updated for a few years
(advised to reload the site and always check the Home Page)
- (b) Old newspapers and how to check if they are indexed *(advised to go to Home Page and 'Coverage Details' and follow the links)*
- (c) From UK – Could only get ArkangleGenealogy *(advised to use the correct Ryerson URL – later informed that the instructions sent worked)*
- (d) Goulburn Post - why is it not up to date *(no local access to the printed version of the paper – now under a subscription umbrella)*
- (e) Strong complaint about site not finding a complete list of deaths for two years. Site is impossible to use. No reason given for the requirement of such data. *(explained that a program must be written to undertake this form of request for which small charge is likely by way of a donation. (Her reply – rude and disgusted about the small charge or donation. Did not enter into any further discussion with her)*
- (f) Assistance required to find a group of children in the Merriwa district who had died over two years due to some disease. *(Explained the use of a place search and advised a few sites to search regarding diseases)*
- (g) Details required regarding Donation to Ryerson
- (h) Request from Kununurra regarding her husband's relative which she in turn had received from lawyers in Serbia to find a missing relative from Serbia, thought to have died in Australia. *(Relative successfully found alive and where living. Being legal the full details were sent re emigration, citizenship, ERs, plus latest ER., etc. Found that the relative had changed her given name and that of the rest of the family about which they had no knowledge)*
- (i) Extended correspondence regarding *Canberra Times*

General Requests

- (a) *No response from lookup requests*
- (b) *Numerous Lookup requests (lookup done, but explained to use correct application form)*
- (c) Requests to advertise on Ryerson site
- (d) Request from ABC journalist for information re decline of local papers

Miscellaneous

- (a) University of Newcastle School of Education worldwide survey regarding family history and DNA testing and its impact on them and their place in history etc. Request to complete survey.
- (b) DNA-Weekly linkage to survey to be completed regarding myheritage vs ancestry
- (c) Regular editions of BBFHS Journal *The Endeavour* now being received and circulated to interested Indexers
- (d) Invitation from Hawkesbury FHG for a speaker *(accepted by Bob Atkins)*

New Indexers

5 applications : 4 passed the trial : 1 no reply : 1 resigned (*all received by Secretary*)

2 trained by Bob Atkins for his Special Assignments and passed.

4:05 PM
05/07/21
Cash Basis

Ryerson Index Incorporated
Summary Balance Sheet
As of June 30, 2021

	<u>Jun 30, 21</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	28,001.07
Other Current Assets	-30.00
Total Current Assets	<u>27,971.07</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>27,971.07</u></u>
LIABILITIES	<u><u>0.00</u></u>
NET ASSETS	<u><u>27,971.07</u></u>
TOTAL EQUITY	<u><u>27,971.07</u></u>

4:44 PM

05/07/21

Cash Basis

Ryerson Index Incorporated
Sales by Item Detail
July 2020 through June 2021

Type	Date	Num	Description	Name	Paid Amount	Balance
Service						
Donations						
Sales Receipt	1/07/2020	221	Donation	Sautelle White Lawyers	30.00	30.00
Sales Receipt	6/07/2020	221A	Donation	Stubbs, Katherine	30.00	60.00
Sales Receipt	8/07/2020	222	Donation	Vickers, Ray	30.00	90.00
Sales Receipt	24/08/2020	223	Donation	Dever, Brian	50.00	140.00
Sales Receipt	1/10/2020	224	Donation	Sautelle White Lawyers	30.00	170.00
Sales Receipt	23/10/2020	225	Donation	University of Adelaide	300.00	470.00
Sales Receipt	20/11/2020	226	Donation	Whiteley, John	5.00	475.00
Sales Receipt	11/01/2021	227	Donation	Sautelle White Lawyers	30.00	505.00
Sales Receipt	29/01/2021	228	Donation	Veda Equifax	300.00	805.00
Sales Receipt	29/01/2021	229	Donation	Marketsoft Services Pty Ltd	300.00	1,105.00
Sales Receipt	22/02/2021	230	Donation	Monash University (Frankston Hospital)	300.00	1,405.00
Sales Receipt	6/03/2021	231	Donation	John, Andrew	100.00	1,505.00
Sales Receipt	6/03/2021	232	Donation	Bradbury, C.R.	20.00	1,525.00
Sales Receipt	30/04/2021	233	Donation	Smith, Ann S.	100.00	1,625.00
Sales Receipt	3/05/2021	234	Donation	Woodlands, Christine	200.00	1,825.00
Total Donations					1,825.00	1,825.00
Total Service					1,825.00	1,825.00
TOTAL					1,825.00	1,825.00

4:13 PM
 05/07/21
 Cash Basis

Ryerson Index Incorporated Transaction Detail by Account As of June 30, 2021

Type	Date	Num	Name	Description	Split	Paid Amount	Balance
ANZ Cheque Account							12,494.36
Deposit	1/07/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	30.00	12,524.36
Deposit	6/07/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	30.00	12,554.36
Cheque	8/07/2020	TRANS33	Atkins, Bob	Brother portable scanner	Photocopying, Print...	-274.85	12,279.51
Deposit	8/07/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	30.00	12,309.51
Cheque	20/07/2020	TRANS34	Atkins, Bob	Renewal of Dropbox Ac...	Software Expense	-184.67	12,124.84
Cheque	27/07/2020	TRANS35	Graham, John	Computer upgrade and ...	Computer	-595.81	11,529.03
Deposit	24/08/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	50.00	11,579.03
Deposit	1/10/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	30.00	11,609.03
Deposit	23/10/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	300.00	11,909.03
Deposit	20/11/2020			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	5.00	11,914.03
Cheque	20/11/2020	TRANS36	NSW Dept. Fair Tra...	Registry Services	NSW Dept. Fair Tr...	-47.21	11,866.82
Deposit	4/01/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	30.00	11,896.82
Cheque	11/01/2021	TRANS37	Graham, John	Dropbox rental from 3 J...	Software Expense	-190.21	11,706.61
Deposit	15/01/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	300.00	12,006.61
Deposit	29/01/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	300.00	12,306.61
Deposit	16/02/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	300.00	12,606.61
Deposit	1/03/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	100.00	12,706.61
Deposit	4/03/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	20.00	12,726.61
Deposit	1/04/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	30.00	12,756.61
Deposit	28/04/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	100.00	12,856.61
Deposit	3/05/2021			Deposit	Undeposited Funds	200.00	13,056.61
Cheque	28/05/2021	TRANS38	Graham, John	Lunch for Committee M...	Miscellaneous	-124.50	12,932.11
Cheque	30/06/2021	TRANS39	Atkins, Bob	Renewal of Dropbox Ac...	Software Expense	-184.67	12,747.44
Total ANZ Cheque Account						253.08	12,747.44
ANZ Term Deposit 9141-56159							15,109.64
Deposit	13/03/2021			Interest from 1/7/2020 t...	Interest ANZ TD 91...	143.99	15,253.63
Total ANZ Term Deposit 9141-56159						143.99	15,253.63
ING 1yr Bus.Term Dep 88493276							-29.30
Total ING 1yr Bus.Term Dep 88493276							-29.30
ING Business Optimiser Account							29.30
Total ING Business Optimiser Account							29.30
TOTAL						397.07	28,001.07

4:04 PM
05/07/21
Cash Basis

Ryerson Index Incorporated
Profit & Loss Standard
July 2020 through June 2021

	<u>Jul '20 - Jun 21</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Donations	1,825.00
Interest ANZ TD 9141-56159	143.99
Total Income	<u>1,968.99</u>
Expense	
Computer	595.81
Miscellaneous	124.50
NSW Dept. Fair Trading Fees	47.21
Photocopying, Print & Scanner	274.85
Software Expense	559.55
Total Expense	<u>1,601.92</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>367.07</u>
Net Income	<u><u>367.07</u></u>

ADMIN REPORT - 9 JULY 2021

I have decided that all of the functions of an administrative nature that I undertake can be covered in a single report.

COMMENT FROM USERS

Basically the same as previous years; a small number of indexing errors have been reported by users. The 2 most prevalent type of errors are typos and simple misreading of the notice which may in part be due to the quality of the image, e.g. ages.

BACK INDEXING

The most significant event since the last report is the location of digital copies of The Canberra Times on the NLA web site which have now been indexed for back issues and are being used for current indexing. So we have essentially complete coverage from 1977. With other papers progress is steady but there is a slow year by year decline. The totals for recent years are:-

Year	Total Indexed	Back Indexing	Current year indexing	% Back Indexing
2021 to June 26	153,722	103,745	49,977	67
2020	392,868	277,360	115,508	70
2019	472,996	330,672	142,324	70
2018	515,050	342,407	172,643	66

LOOKUPS

Between us David Bales and I have decided to restrict his lookups to those that than can be done from the RNR as he is finding going to the State Library increasingly difficult.

FUNERAL NOTICE LOOKUPS

We should decide whether or not we will offer a lookup service for Funeral Notices.

The principal reason for not doing so is that anyone who is capable of filling out the request form is also capable of accessing the notice as we provide a link to the FD's web site in Coverage Details. If we do offer a service, then based on our experience with Newspaper Lookups, it will to a large extent be for those who can't be bothered to look it up themselves. I acknowledge that in time some FDs may delete older notices but that issue could be addressed at that time.

If we do elect to provide a service then it will need to integrate seamlessly into the existing lookup system for notices in papers and to simplify the maintenance of this procedure I think that it needs be all or nothing. Ideally would be done by one person, at least initially. That way the system can be set up so that the addition of new FDs to the system will not require any changes to the procedure.

Peter

SPECIAL PROJECTS REPORT 9 JULY 2021

In my report on 20 April last I attached a Word document outlining my visits to Canberra and Lake Macquarie. I am attaching a copy of that report to refresh your memories and will now add details of progress since.

Canberra Times - Date to be confirmed

My email Of 9 June outlined the details of the proposed program with HAGSOC. The following extract confirms the proposal.

On the helpers issue, we definitely want to proceed -- and probably pretty much as you have suggested. My humble apologies for taking so long to get back to you. Life has been hectic of late and will be even more so for the next 6 weeks, as I leave for Adelaide and Perth tomorrow (10/6) morning and will not be back until late July. Nevertheless, I hope to get the project off the ground this month, and will try to write to you in more detail within the next week.
Lindsay

I am hopeful that this visit will happen in September.

Lake Macquarie - September 25

Karen and Robert Delbridge have continued to supply 2 months of downloads of the Newcastle Herald per week. They are working backwards from 2016 and currently are working on 2012.

I have now received good news from Karen....

We have approx 5 people interested in learning to index.

The Council Library Coordinator is looking into using their Toronto Library meeting room for us.

I suggested a Saturday in September. Would you be able to advise if this would be suitable for yourself?

I can confirm that a full day training workshop is being set up for Saturday 25 September at the Toronto Library.

There will be a pre-training program for 2 weeks prior to the workshop using email instructions... I am using the same model as I did for the Hornsby program a couple of years ago.

Hawkesbury - Nepean - August 11

At the invitation of Michelle Nicholls, Local History Librarian, Hawkesbury Library Service, on behalf of the Hawkesbury Family History Society, I will be giving a presentation about Ryerson on Wednesday 11 August 2021. This will probably include members from adjoining groups.

NSW-ACT State Conference - September 11

I have registered for this Conference and John has advised Mel Woodford, Secretary of the Association I will be representing Ryerson Index Inc at the AGM.

Other activities

The Age

With the assistance of Judith Chivers and Craige Hicks work is still progressing around interruptions by Covid-19 with filling in the missing years. When the current program is completed the 2005 to 2016 will have been filled on the RNR.

SMH

I have been working on the missing years as you will recall using the hard copies of the paper collected by Jo Harris. When the Eresources section of the NLA opened up access to the Library Edition of the SMH, I thanked Jo Harris for her assistance and am now working on the remainder of the missing years via the internet. I am currently working on 2013 and will then only have 2015 to complete the entire project which started from 2005. I hope to finish this work over the next couple of weeks.

Daily Telegraph

Annet Latham has returned to regular visits to the SL, subject to Covid-19 interruptions and is liaising with me as she produces large amounts of material from her work of back indexing this paper. She has always had the support of an indexer to complete her work and following Sandra Bales retiring from that role, Shari has been doing a good job in support. At the present time Annet has completed the collection from 2000 backwards to 1974. She completed 1974 a week or so ago and Shari is working her way through that.

There are a number of gaps which Annet has completed and were outstanding when Sandra left and Shari will catch up on those.

Bob Atkins

6 July 2021

Report from 20 April 2021

Re: Canberra Times

As previously advised, my partner, Margaret Bushby and I met for a lunchtime meeting with Lindsay Graham and Rosemary Mackenzie on 7th April in Cook, Canberra not far from HAGSOC's rooms.

Rosemary, Margaret and I are close friends of Dorothy Fellowes. In fact Margaret and I have known Dorothy since 1950 (yep, we were teenagers together). DF introduced Rosemary to us at the State Conference at Batemans Bay in 2018.

We had a fruitful discussion about how members of HAGSOC could assist us with procuring copies of the CT for the period of 22 years and 9 months that are missing from the RNR.

Rosemary is President of HAGSOC and was enthusiastic at the prospect of supporting us.

The outcome is that Rosemary will prepare a proposal and submit it to the Council of HAGSOC to....

1. Review the current holdings of HAGSOC, which includes a large, indexed collection of inscriptions from the CT which they use to answer look-up requests which are made to them. She will contact me if and when she has checked this out.
2. Determine the best way to gather the data directly from the CT i.e. scans etc.
3. Discuss with and encourage their members to consider assisting us with back indexing of other newspapers in our RNR stable.
4. She would be happy for me to conduct a workshop to promote RI and recruit volunteers.

Rosemary is very keen to work with us and she and Lindsay, who have known each other for about 15 years will work on this project together. Rosemary is currently in the role of President for the third time.

The following day, 8th April, I visited the NLA and met with the Senior Attendant on duty in the Family History Reading Room. I outlined what we do in Ryerson. His response was that they refer many enquirers in the Reading Room to our website. He took us to a bank of cabinets and showed us the large sets of drawers containing many newspaper films including the CT. He checked over the dates we require, and they are all readily available.

Their system is an honour one in that ...

- 1 You don't have to have a member's card.
- 2 You can go straight to the cabinet and find the film you want to scan and when finished you return the film to the relevant drawer.
- 3 You have access without a booking required to a bank of readers.
- 4 You can simply download what you want to a USB stick.
- 5 All of this is free to anyone.
- 6 As mentioned above all 22 years and 9 months are simply there waiting for someone take advantage for us.

Re: Visit to Lake Macquarie FH Group last Saturday, 17th April.

This was a split session in that I delivered a talk about RI etc in the morning and after lunch in the second session we delved deeper into our gathering and indexing processes.

The morning session was a Zoom session for the benefit of members who are not yet confident of meeting at their rooms because of Covid-19. The session was recorded. However, I have reviewed the recording since returning home and am disappointed as it had not been set up properly by the folk from LM. I won't go into detail except to say that I have learned a few things about how a recording session could have been done better.

However, we had a very good day under the leadership of their President, Jill Ball. She was most supportive and endorsed my presentation to her members. After an initial hint from their IT man, I promoted the proposal that they might consider taking on a leading role in working with us to collect missing years of the Newcastle Herald (NH).

Jill and their Treasurer, Karen Edridge and her husband Robert (the IT man) and I had a good conversation during the lunch break and Jill presented our thoughts to the members at their meeting prior to my second session.

1. The outcome is that they will prepare a submission for their members to be published in the next issue of their newsletter to recruit volunteers
2. Karen will explore the LM Shire Library at Speers Point as she is certain that they have all of the NH films. She has previously used them.
3. After the meeting Karen enquired as to what, if any, dates were missing in the year 1955. I checked the RNR live and said, Yep, February. Her response.... I just happen to have that on my laptop and within a few minutes it was transferred to a USB stick and is now in our RNR.
This was an unexpected bonus for the day.
4. Karen had obtained that scan in 2013 when she was motivated to do what we are now proposing. She lost interest at that time but was excited to think that she could now contribute to our cause.

In addition, Jill is keen to contact her counterparts in FHS groups in the Hunter to consider having a joint promotion and training day etc for us.

Bob Atkins
20 April 2021

The extract below is what I showed to the group at Lake Macquarie.
As you can see there is a lot of work to e done her.

Name ^	Size (MB)	Folders	Subfolders	Files
▶ C:\Users\Bob\Dropbox\Ryerson Noti	3,937	203	27	4,272
▶ 1955	268	11	11	292
▶ 1956	155	12	12	312
▶ 1957	524	12	12	411
▶ 1958	216	10	10	491
▶ 1971	74	2	2	50
▶ 1994	73	5	5	129
▶ 1995	173	9	9	232
▶ 1996	33	3	3	53
▶ 1998	10	2	2	4
▶ 2000	3	1	1	2
▶ 2001	2	1	1	2
▶ 2003	3	1	1	2
▶ 2004	2	1	1	1
▶ 2008	43	2	2	41
▶ 2009	54	1	1	26
▶ 2010	11	2	2	3
▶ 2011	8	3	3	5
▶ 2012	85	6	6	25
▶ 2013	58	7	7	31
▶ 2014	248	12	12	313
▶ 2015	213	12	12	312
▶ 2016	166	11	11	265
▶ 2017	202	12	12	313
▶ 2018	448	12	12	317
▶ 2019	520	12	12	317
▶ 2020	300	12	12	280
▶ 2021	33	2	2	43