RYERSON INDEX INC COMMITTEE MEETING

28th November 2023 at 7pm (Zoom)

The Meeting opened at 7.05pm.

Present:
John Graham - President
Robert Atkins – Vice President & Special Assignments
Pauline Kettle - Secretary
Kathy Conroy - Treasurer
Peter Kettle – Committee Member
Paul Kean – Committee Member
Therese Delanty – Committee Member
Shari McLean – Social Media sub-committee

Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 3rd December 2022 were taken as read and adopted.

Proposed: Peter Kettle
Seconded: Kathy Conroy

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

President's Report (John Graham)

The Report, which had been distributed to members, was taken as read and adopted. It is tabled on The Ryerson Index site under 'Resources for Indexers' as part of the 2023 AGM package.

Proposed: Kathy Conroy
Seconded: Robert Atkins

There were no matters arising from the President's Report.

Treasurer's Report (Kathy Conroy) The full Treasurer's Report is tabled on The Ryerson Index site under 'Resources for Indexers' as part of the 2023 AGM package.

Income & Expenditure 01/07/2023 to 20/11/2023

Income: $14,310.00
Expenditure: $369.38

Current Balances

Cheque account $30,407.15
Deposit account $15,501.67

Proposed: Pauline Kettle
Seconded: John Graham

Matters arising.

John Grahan suggested that $20,000 be invested in a term deposit for 12 months, and to simplify matters that it be with ANZ. Agreed.

He also referred to the ATO changes to take place next year. RI does not fit comfortably into any of the given categories, but the NSW Federation of Family History Societies has requested guidance on how Family History Societies should be treated, and we will follow their advice.

Secretary's Report (Pauline Kettle).

Advertisements on Site
Despite the warnings on our Home Page and that placed at the top of the Search Page early in January 2023, users are still complaining that Ryerson is not a free site as we claim. Museums Victoria, Immigration Museum in the same vein also queried why a credit card was necessary.
All advised to refresh the site on their devices, view our notices in red on the Home Page and further advice on the Search Page. Advised to install free AdBlock.

Enquiries to Index –
7 applied
1 passed
1 Attempt repeated – no reply after further RI email
4 No attempts – no response to RI emails
1 Has health issues and will be in touch (has sub to Border Watch Mt Gambier papers and back issues)

Credit Card issues

After addition of warnings in early January a few complaints are still sent. (refer 'General Business')

General enquiries –
Requests for copies of death & Probate notices.
Blacktown & District HS – permission to use Joyce's photo for their Journal article.
GSV Library Resources Manager – Asking for a copy of Ryerson's Index logo and permission to use it for recommended genealogical sources by their Library in their journal *Ancestor*.
Enquiry from Germany regarding lost contact mid- year with an uncle in country Australia who has no relatives. Last known address supplied. Sent him the Council details & copy of lost uncle's address in 2023 ER.
Enquiry from Croatia – lost contact with aunt & uncle. Uncle unmarried. Found many details re both, but the line ran dry. Found cousins – sent lots of details. None recorded in ERs. They refuse to correspond with him. He contacted Sydney Police who said the uncle was residing in a home for old people on the NSW border. No further information was forthcoming from police.
Enquiry from James, Marketing, Swanborough Funerals, Logan City, Qld.

Q. Do we take submissions from guest contributors?

Q. Would we consider adding posts on cremation, burial services, etc? Noticed our various blogs.

Q. They would like to add much more information which would enhance our site and can be shared in social media.

Proposed: John Graham
Seconded: Kathy Conroy

Matters arising.

In view of the continuing confusion with unrelated adverts on the RI web site it was agreed that John Graham would discuss with Rob McDonnell the possibility of him performing the necessary functions for a fee instead of having advertisements.

Admin Report (Kathy Conroy)

The report had been distributed to the committee members and was taken as read.

Proposed: Peter Kettle
Seconded: Robert Atkins

Matters arising.

Peter Kettle commented that in the month to date that there had been 46 lookup requests, and that historically there had been about 500 a year. He also commented that there was a pattern whereby someone (probably new to the site) requested multiple lookups within a few days and then their requests lessened or stopped.

Special Assignments update (Robert Atkins)

The full report for Special Assignments is tabled on The Ryerson Index under 'Resources for Indexers'.

Proposed: Joh Graham
Seconded: Peter Kettle

Matters arising.

There is clearly a need for more indexers and this was discussed in the Social Madia section.

Social Media (Shari McLean)

Shari suggested that we should reactivate our Facebook page particularly with a view to obtain more indexers, perhaps by targeting FHS groups. Agreed.

General Business.

1. Pauline Kettle asked if there was any way that volunteers could correct errors in the index without imposing an extra load on John. It was agreed that John would discuss with Rex Toomey the possibility of a ‘stand-alone’ correction program to produce a file of corrections that can be input to the database.

2. Pauline Kettle asked if the ‘Search’ button on the search page could be the same as the one on the home page as this may lessen the number of people who inadvertently click on advertisers’ sites. John Graham replied that the were some programming difficulties with this, but the button is now labelled as ‘Search Ryerson’.

3. AS per the previously-agreed process of appointing up to 2 new Life Members at each AGM, it was agreed that the names of Julie Ashford and John Nance would be put forward at the 2023 AGM.

   Proposed: John Graham
   Seconded: Kathy Conroy

4. Peter Kettle had circulated a discussion note on a) the desirability of improving the ‘sounds like’ search and b) extending it to Given Names. As this can only be done by Rob, it was agreed that Peter would draft a proposal to be put to Rob either by email or discussion.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm