

Ryerson Index Inc

President's Report

Presented to the AGM on 5th November 2018

Welcome everyone to our tenth AGM as an incorporated organisation, held again at Baulkham Hills, thanks to the hospitality of Peter and Pauline. Welcome especially to those attending by Skype.

This year marks the retirement of one of our long-serving committee members. Alan Nancarrow is not standing for re-election, having served on the committee since our incorporation in 2008 in various positions, most recently as the Back-Indexing Co-Ordinator. We sincerely thank Alan for his service to Ryerson, particularly the many hours spent scanning Joyce's original notices to form what eventually evolved into the RNR.

I'd also like to acknowledge the passing of Sybil Jones, our first indexer. At the DPS meeting on 10 Oct 1998, Sybil was the first person to put her hand up when I called for indexers, and she (with husband Peter as proofreader) indexed the Daily Telegraph for the next 18 years. Sybil now has her own entry in Ryerson – from the Daily Telegraph, of course!

While last year was our best year ever on many fronts, this year has been one of consolidation. We added 486,966 records to Ryerson during the year which, while down on the past few years, is still a very impressive achievement.

Our new software continued to perform even better than we had hoped. It has saved a considerable amount of time by reducing the time taken for both the daily database update and the weekly website update. Rex and I produced a new version of the software in July this year, incorporating some enhancements which we had identified as necessary while running the software for nine months following its introduction, and after some months of testing, this version is now our production version.

Our corporate sponsorship list continues to grow, with Perpetual joining during the year. That brings to eight the number of corporate sponsors, and their contributions each year assist significantly in our ability to keep Ryerson in the forefront of the Australian genealogical community.

This is also helped by our regular attendance at various conferences and fairs. Bob Atkins has now taken on the responsibility of representing Ryerson at many events, particularly in Sydney and southern NSW, in areas too far away from Toowoomba for me to attend easily or economically.

A by-product of Bob's attendance at one of these fairs was the formation of an indexing group at Maitland, which is now well into back-indexing the *Maitland Mercury*. Another indexing group is in the pipeline for the Milton-Ulladulla area, and

having Bob available to roll out this process to interested societies is a real plus for Ryerson.

Our website continues to be one of the most reliable in the genealogical world. During the past year we had a total of 107 minutes of known outages, which represents 99.98% availability. It is a real tribute to the excellent support provided by Rob McDonell. In addition, our Facebook page has now passed 4,000 Likes.

Our financial position continues to be very sound. I will leave Therese to provide the dollar details in the Treasurer's report.

The excellent committee overseeing Ryerson deserves a vote of thanks for keeping everything running smoothly. As I mentioned earlier, Alan is not standing for re-election, but all other committee members are and I urge you to support them with your vote.

Aside from the formal committee positions, we have two non-committee members who carry out a huge amount of work behind the scenes. Bill Shute acts as mentor to new indexers, making sure they start out on the right track, and he makes my job infinitely easier by identifying and fixing problems before they become big problems.

Dawn Montgomery oversees the indexing of most of the Queensland papers, particularly the *Courier Mail*, performing a similar role to Bill in ensuring the quality of the Queensland indexing is as good as it can be.

Our project to catch up with the SMH Funeral Notices (which were left unindexed on our original pass through the SMH) continues, as it will for some time yet, with Peter Kettle and Roy Vickers making inroads into the missing notices.

So, on behalf of the Committee, I thank all of you – indexers, gatherers and lookers-uppers - for your efforts during the past year, and feel confident in saying that the current year will see another milestone, as we pass seven million records.

John Graham
President

Appendix A – Year-on-Year Figures

Looking at the figures for the number of records indexed over the past few years, we have:

Date	Records	Increase
30-Jun-08	1,750,286	
30-Jun-09	2,091,363	341,077
30-Jun-10	2,503,696	412,333
30-Jun-11	3,066,875	563,179
30-Jun-12	3,559,727	492,852
30-Jun-13	3,990,376	430,649
30-Jun-14	4,500,200	509,824
30-Jun-15	5,033,716	533,516
30-Jun-16	5,563,788	530,062
30-Jun-17	6,133,046	569,258
30-Jun-18	6,610,628	486,966