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# DSNA

NEWSLETTER

## The canary in the coalmine?

Many in the lexicographic world were surprised and saddened by the sudden closing of the offices of the Canadian Oxford Dictionary. Stefan Dollinger of the *Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles* at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, submitted the following reaction to the news.



I have always liked using the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*. The *CanOx* is one of the most up-to-date Canadian dictionaries, which is why we are using it in revising the *Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles* (*DCHP*). Just as the first *DCHP* served as input for the *CanOx*, so does the *CanOx* facilitate the revision of the *DCHP*, which is currently underway.

In early October word reached us of the sudden closure of the reference unit that produced the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* and related reference tools. Four lexicographers — two full-time and two part-time — including its editor-in-chief, Katherine Barber, were let go. The reason given by the president of Oxford University Press, David Stover, was the decline in the sale of paper dictionaries and a reduction of costs. The layoff of permanent staff came with a commitment to update the dictionary with freelancers from OUP Headquarters in Oxford. As any lexicographer knows, the

quality of future updates will be compromised as a result.

The news of the layoff hit the cosmos of Canadian English dictionary makers hard. Especially so, as the *CanOx* seemed to do everything right: it came at the right time (in 1998 in its first edition), in the right package (with a big maple leaf on the cover of the first edition), with the right marketing, and with a well-established reference publisher. While *CanOx* was based on an electronic citations database (a first for Canadian English lexicography), in approach and scope it did little different from other Canadian dictionaries (e.g., *Gage Canadian*, *ITP Nelson Dictionary*). Spurred by the PR savvy of its editor-in-chief, the *CanOx* sold more than 200,000 copies. In paper only.

The publishing channel, if paper or digital format, does not only affect dissemination of access, but also content. I would argue that the complexity of Canadian English, its heterogeneous character, is difficult to capture in a paper dictionary. Beyond the regional labels such as “Cdn.,” “Nfld.” or “esp. Atlantic Canada” and other indicators, there is usually a more complex story. If one were to answer the question, for instance, whether *runner* or *running shoe* was a Canadianism, one would best use some graphs and figures. Summarizing briefly, one would say that for about 90% of Canadians west of Montreal *running shoes* is a Canadianism, since Americans use *sneakers* (the vast majority of them) for the same type of sports shoes. But in Atlantic Canada, the majority variant is *sneakers*, not *runners* or *running shoes*. And this is only the beginning of the story. It is crucial, however, that this finding does not come from dictionary sources, but from a sociolinguistic survey of Canadian English. My point is simple: if one were to embark on the sociolinguistic description of the Canadian lexis, one would need more resources than dictionary publishing houses have been prepared to invest; resources that would

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## News of Members



**Andrew Hawke** (pictured above) is the new Managing Editor of *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (*The Dictionary of the Welsh Language*). The project is based at the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies alongside the National Library in Aberystwyth. Mr. Hawke has been on the staff of the dictionary since 1983; he developed the computerized typesetting system first used to typeset the dictionary, and has also been responsible for arranging printing and publishing and preparing online resources, along with his lexicographic work on the entries themselves.

Oxford University Press has been celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Oxford English Dictionary with a traveling road show of events in October and November. DSNA members involved in the panel discussions include **Charlotte Brewer**, **Ammon Shea**, **Jesse Sheidlower**, and **John Simpson**; other participants included Barbara Wallraff and Simon Winchester.

**Ammon Shea** has garnered much publicity for his recent book *Reading the OED*, an account of his year spent reading the entire Oxford English Dictionary. The review in the *New York Times Book Review* ([www.nytimes.com/2008/08/03/books/review/Baker-t.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/03/books/review/Baker-t.html)) describes his project as "the 'Super Size Me' of lexicography." He was also interviewed on the public radio show "On Point" ([www.onpointradio.org/shows/2008/08/reading-the-oed/](http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2008/08/reading-the-oed/)).

DSNA members were interviewed for a recently published article on neologisms. Members quoted in "Why google is in the dictionary but AJAX isn't." (*Computerworld*, October 27, 2008) include **Jesse Shiedlower** and **Steve Kleinedler**.

DSNA members with books just out or coming out soon are pictured (below) at an OUP launch party. **Michael Rundell** and **Sue Atkins**, authors of the *Oxford Guide to Practical Lexicography* are at left, while **Tony Cowie**, editor of the upcoming two-volume *Oxford History of English Lexicography* and **Thierry Fontenelle**, author of *Practical Lexicography: A Reader* are on the right.



## Canadian Oxford

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allow for a national usage survey, resources that would integrate lexicographical projects into a larger unit for the study of Canadian English. For publishers, which have been a driving force behind the study of Canadian English lexis, there is no incentive to tread down this path, as the diminishing financial returns jeopardize the upkeep of existing resources, such as *CanOx*, let alone the launch of new, bigger, and truly innovative projects.

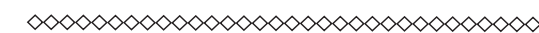
The decision of OUP has shown that commercial publishers are no longer willing or able to support even highly successful products. If reference dictionaries, such as *Merriam-Webster* or *American Heritage*, are available online and free of charge, Canadians, especially the younger generations, will use those resources rather than buying a paper copy of a Canadian reference tool. In Canada, where Canadian dictionaries still compete with American and British ones, this line of thought is not far off and chances are that examples of some of the 2,500 plus Canadianisms will be found elsewhere on the web.

In 2004, when the second edition of *CanOx* was issued, I was surprised that it did not come with a CD-ROM or, perhaps, even with an online interface. Clearly, the idea was to satisfy the Canadian user with another paper edition. One might wonder now whether digital editions, for the *CanOx* and its other projects, would have saved the Canadian Oxford reference unit. In the long run, however, the availability of open access reference, even if non-Canadian and therefore suboptimal in nature, would have decreased sales even in digital format. In terms of access and use, an Open Access *CanOx* would have been a boon for the Canadian user, but it would have required different funding models for updates. Is the *CanOx* the canary in the coalmine, the market leader that, depending on a smaller market than in the United States, did not warrant the financial commitment of a permanent staff, and other projects will soon follow? Or is it just the paper dinosaur that was not, to its demise, available in digital format?

Whichever way one prefers to answer this question, one answer to both is that new

lexicographical projects should have a firm footing in academia. While the revision of *DCHP* is not well-funded, at least it is funded. It seems to be obvious that the time-tested economic model of financing dictionary units via sales no longer works. Not even for a market leader. In the Canadian context, it might be time to ask whether public institutions would be willing to support the creation and maintenance of up-to-date Canadian English reference tools. This, ideally, should be done within a centre for Canadian English, which studies the variety on all linguistics levels to exploit synergies, as the example of *running shoes* should have demonstrated. This, doubtless, is wishful thinking, but it would produce best-case results that are less likely to be influenced by commercial interests and, almost certainly, would not be dismantled from one day to the next.

—Stefan Dollinger



The following books have been received at the DSNA office:

Craig Conley. *Magic Words: A Dictionary*. San Francisco, CA/Newburyport, MA: Weiser Books, 2008.

John Daintith and Edmund Wright, editors. *The Dictionary of Computing, 6th edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Pedro A. Fuertes-Olivera and Ascensión Arribas-Baño. *Pedagogical Specialised Lexicography: the representation of meaning in English and Spanish business dictionaries*. (Terminology and Lexicography Research and Practice No. 11). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2008.

*The Oxford American Writer's Thesaurus, 2nd edition*. New York: Oxford, 2008. Christine Lindberg, compiling editor, with new foreword by Rick Moody and introduction by Richard Goodman.

*Pocket Oxford American Dictionary, Second Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Senior Editor, Christine A. Lindberg; Editor: Benjamin G. Zimmer; Lexicographers, Orin Hargraves and Sue Ellen Thompson.

*Pocket Oxford American Thesaurus, Second Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Senior Editor, Christine A. Lindberg; Editor: Benjamin G. Zimmer.

## Laurence Urdang (1927–2008)



Laurence Urdang, one of America's most accomplished and innovating lexicographers, passed away on August 21, 2008, at age 81. He was a Life Member of DSNA and sponsor of the Laurence Urdang-DSNA Award, supporting the work of upcoming researchers and practitioners in the profession. First given in 1995, the 2009 award is to be presented in his memory. Larry remained active in lexicography and in regular contact with friends and colleagues throughout his final year. Over the last decade he conducted research and prepared entries for his *Historical Nautical Dictionary*, a labor of love combining his interest in sailing with lexicography and bibliophily; sources for *HND* were mainly rare volumes that Larry collected over the years, providing many first uses and antedatings to the *OED*.

Larry was a man of many parts — a lexicographer as well as a successful publisher, author, and editor. His lexicography was enriched by a wealth of knowledge in specialized

areas of interest far beyond languages, literature, and linguistics. A bibliography of works he compiled and edited (Larry would say “prepared”) is as impressive for its range as for the sheer number of titles. In addition to several important and groundbreaking works in general lexicography, Larry also prepared specialized reference works on medical terms, names and nicknames, allusions, anecdotes, idioms and phrases (“collocations” to use another Urdangism), prefixes and suffixes, mottoes and slogans, and loanwords.

In his graduate work at Columbia University, Larry's mentors included French linguist André Martinet and Allen Walker Read, renowned pioneer of American language studies. He lectured in linguistics at New York University from 1956 through 1961, and at the same time began his career in lexicography, first as an editor on the staff of Funk & Wagnalls dictionaries.

In 1957 Larry was hired by Random House and began work on the *Random House Dictionary*

of the *English Language, Unabridged Edition (RHD)*. As managing editor of the *RHD* Larry developed the systems design for encoding the entire text (more than 35 million alphanumeric characters) using custom-designed keyboards. In addition to typographic coding of the dictionary text, *RHD* entries were also coded for alphabetic sorting, as well as subsorting into 158 subject fields. Thus the *RHD* pioneered the application of keyboard-coding for the automated processing of dictionary information. The first edition of the *RHD* was published in 1966. Larry was editor in chief of the college edition, published by Random House in 1969.

The second phase of his career began in 1969, as Larry left Random House and formed his own company, Laurence Urdang Inc. (LUI). With operations both in Connecticut and in Aylesbury, England, LUI prepared dictionaries and other reference works under contract to various publishers, including Simon & Schuster, Random House, Times Books, Collins (UK), Longman (UK), Oxford University Press (UK and US), Rodale, Gale Research, Omnigraphics, Nelson, and Mosby.

In 1974, Larry founded *VERBATIM, The Language Quarterly*. *VERBATIM* was essentially a one-man show; Larry did all editorial, design, and layout work himself, wrote book reviews and comments, commissioned articles and artwork, and produced word puzzles for each edition. Under the *VERBATIM* aegis Larry also launched his own publishing imprint, Verbatim Books. Each issue of *VERBATIM* included the Verbatim Book Club catalogue, offering Verbatim Books titles and many other reference titles that he recommended.

One of the most complex projects undertaken by LUI was the *Collins English Dictionary (CED)*, prepared in the UK by the LUI subsidiary Laurence Urdang Associates. The *CED* was the first dictionary in the UK to be patterned after US college dictionaries in scope and content; it included biographical and geographical entries, and ran to about 1,600 pages. The *CED* project refined methods for encoding dictionary text, allowing subject-sorting of entries and alphabetic sorting for automatic typesetting. Senses within the entries were subject-coded; four-letter codes allowed in-house sorting of senses by subject for consistency of style and

fact-checking. The first edition of the *CED* was published by Collins in the UK in 1979; it is now in its ninth edition. The inclusion of encyclopedic entries in the *CED* and its sales success ultimately compelled all UK competition to follow its lead.

Seeing the potential for then-new personal computer, in 1981 Larry purchased a battery of PCs for LUI staff and freelance editors to compile and encode dictionary data directly to disc. He wrote a 30-page manual to train the editors in the use of the computer and the encoding of data. Using this manual editors normally were up and running in a matter of a few hours. Compiled and typographically coded entries on 5-1/2 inch floppy discs were sent in to the LUI offices, where in-house staff printed out, copyedited, and corrected the encoded data and sorted it as need be. In the pre-hard-drive early years, data was sent on floppy discs to a compositor for automatic typesetting. Over nearly three decades LUI produced scores of dictionaries and other reference works, effectively wedding the advantages of technology and traditional practices of lexicography.

The *Oxford Thesaurus* was published by Oxford University Press in the UK in 1991; an American edition was published in 1992. Larry authored both of these editions, drawing on his experience in preparing several thesauruses, most notably the 1368-page *Synonym Finder* (Rodale Press, 1979). Entries were presented A–Z; synonyms for each entry were accompanied by example sentences or phrases to illustrate the exact sense or nuance. Entries with multiple senses had synonyms arrayed by semantic groups. Each edition also included an alphabetic index of all synonyms listed in the entries. Larry compiled and keyed the entire text himself and submitted complete A–Z manuscripts on disc to Oxford for copyediting and production. The A–Z text with index ran to more than 1,000 pages. Remarkably, these were the first thesauruses ever published by Oxford, and proved a resounding success.

While it is impossible to capture the essence of a man such as Laurence Urdang in a few words, it is fair to say that he was a language genius and a natural for lexicography. Aptitude for language was in his nature; his father was a

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## Cordell Corner

by David Vancil

I returned from a sabbatical leave on June 30. I am pleased to continue writing about the Cordell Collection, and I hope you will bear with me and find something of interest in my ramblings.

After attending a lexicology conference in Finland in late April organized under the leadership of DSNA member Rod McConchie, where I gave a paper and heard many excellent ones on a broad range of topics, I find myself anticipating the forthcoming DSNA conference at Indiana University which be held from May 27 through May 30, 2009. At the conference hosted by the University of Helsinki, the participants traveled by bus to a medieval castle for a tour and dinner. While we cannot boast a castle, on Friday evening, May 29, DSNA members will travel by bus to Terre Haute for a reception and tour of the Cordell Collection of Dictionaries. Barbara Cordell, daughter of Warren and Suzanne Cordell, has indicated that she, her sister, and two brothers, will be at here at this time to help celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Collection which occurred with an initial gift from Warren Cordell in December of 1969. Someone in the family, it has been promised, will make a few personal remarks about Warren and his passion for word books. Following the reception a dinner and meeting will be held in the events area on the ground floor of Cunningham Memorial Library. Transportation, refreshments, and the dinner have been generously underwritten by the ISU Foundation.

After several years of tough times, I'm happy to report that the acquisitions budget for books has been restored at a level higher than in any previous period. If only the cost of books would not escalate beyond what has been provided through allocations, I would feel even better than I do about the present situation. Alas, I am receiving some very intriguing offers to acquire materials for the Collection that are simply too costly, particularly in the early part of the year. Nonetheless, I am pleased to announce that we have received some interesting titles recently, including early American imprints such as Caleb Alexander's *A Grammatical System of the Grecian*

*Language*, published in Worcester in 1796, and Benjamin Dearborn's *The Columbian Grammar*, published in Boston in 1795. Other noteworthy recent acquisitions are *Huloet's Dictionary*, revised by John Higgins and published in London in 1572, and Amos Comenius's *Neuer Pictus Orbis*, revised by Jacob Gailer, in a third Gailer edition published in Reutlingen in 1835. This edition contains the first appearance of English as a parallel language.

These are but a few examples of the books which we are adding to the collection. The Comenius citation brings up some of the support materials which have been added to or enhanced on the website. A "see" / "see also" reference for pre-1901 imprints has been created and mounted to indicate the name of the compiler or title entry under which to search for other names. While far from complete, this listing does provide access to a great many main entries found in our online database. The compiler listing of personal and corporate names as they appear in the database is already available on the site and has been enhanced by the addition of many more life dates and similar identifiers. Life dates or other appended information are provided for informational purposes and usually are not included in database entries except in cases where it would otherwise be impossible to differentiate people with the same names. Otherwise, the user would be lost among "Smiths" and "Estiennes." Other new listings and enhancements will be duly reported in future columns.

A few years back, a cataloger was added to the department staff to spend most of her time on formally cataloging the Cordell Collection. As any of you who have used our OPAC know, the records produced during this intense but brief period of about 18 months, are detailed and often remarkable. To look at such records, please follow these brief instructions. Link to <http://luis.indstate.edu>. Click on the "Advanced" button. In the first available search field, type "Cordell Collection of Dictionaries" and select "as a phrase." Run the search, and you'll retrieve over 600 titles, most of which are in the pre-1901 Cordell Collection. If you sort these by date, the

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earliest works will appear first. If you wanted to find all the books we have by Nathan Bailey, you can "and" the search described with "Bailey" as author. I think those of you who look at such records will gladly concede that they are useful to a great many individuals.

The online database was never intended to displace actual catalog records, and I am well aware of its limitations. It is our intention that full catalog records be available for the important materials in the Cordell Collection. I am happy to announce that starting September 22, we have secured the services of another individual to catalog books for a year. The main emphasis will be on creating rare-book level cataloging records for accessing the Cordell Collection through the online catalog. Because there is no assurance that this position will be funded beyond a year, I will be selecting key works for attention first. While taking cataloging requests may seem unusual, I am aware that various users of the Cordell Collection may have important questions about holdings which interest them. Simply e-mail us your request, and your book will be entered into the queue of works to be cataloged during the academic year which has just gotten underway.

Speaking of catalogs, I want to bring to the attention of DSNA members the publication of *French Vernacular Books*, a two-volume union catalog of French books published prior to 1601. Doubtlessly, this work must be the most complete listing of early French books. I can personally attest to the thoroughness of the work, since I was contacted to verify holdings of four French dictionaries from this era unknown to exist anywhere outside the Cordell Collection. Using modern technology and relying on tried-and-true bibliographic principles, the team at St. Andrews University responsible for creating the catalog are now working on Latin texts. It's amazing to me how the farther we move away from the beginning of printing, the more we continue to discover about it.

Finally, I would like to announce the revitalization of the conservation/restoration program for the Cordell Collection. Dormant for several years because of lack of funds, the Cunningham Memorial Library has invested in the future of the collection by allocating dollars to repair and maintenance. Luckily, Janette Maher,

a specialist in book care, stuck by us through the bleak period. Ms. Maher has often mentioned that books from the Cordell Collection are the favorite ones on which she works. There is no doubt that she has been very important in balancing usability with rarity while keeping the bulk of the collection fully functional for the use of researchers even as she maintained the integrity of the original material used to create the book. The Collection is fortunate to have had Ms. Maher's services available in the past and to be able to rely on them again.

Meanwhile, we continue to explore digitization options. Flatbed scanning equipment is inadequate and potentially harmful to books. Alternatively, overhead scanners and digital camera arrays are under consideration. In addition, grants and partnerships are being explored as a means to making more of the holdings in the collection available in digital facsimile to researchers and other interested individuals. I will report on progress in future columns.

([dvancil@isugw.indstate.edu](mailto:dvancil@isugw.indstate.edu) / 812 237-2611)

### DSNA Freelancer List

The DSNA Office is updating lists of freelancers and its list of folks willing to be contacted with questions from the general public, news media, and so forth. If you would like to be added to either list, please contact Lisa Berglund at [dsnadmin@gmail.com](mailto:dsnadmin@gmail.com)

### Lexikos is seeking more international subscribers!

*Lexikos*, the journal of the African Association for Lexicography, is looking for international subscribers. For more information, see their website: [afrilex.africanlanguages.com/lexikos.htm](http://afrilex.africanlanguages.com/lexikos.htm), or write to [wat@sun.ac.za](mailto:wat@sun.ac.za).

The editor of *Lexikos* would also welcome submissions for publication from members of the DSNA.

## Announcing the XVIIth Biennial Meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America

All members of the Dictionary Society of North America are invited to participate in the Society's XVIIth Biennial Meeting to be held at Indiana University, Bloomington, from Wednesday, 27 May 2009 through Saturday, 30 May 2009.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: Even at this early stage of planning, the program is full of exciting events.

- The conference will open with a reception on Wednesday evening;
- Plenary sessions will begin the following morning and continue through late Saturday afternoon.
- On Thursday, 28 May, the Lilly Library, Indiana University's rare book and manuscript library, will open an exhibit of dictionaries reflecting language contact from around the world (missionary dictionaries, explorers' dictionaries, imperial dictionaries, etc.). Breon Mitchell, director of the Lilly and a private collector of dictionaries will introduce the exhibit to the Society, and, after members have viewed the exhibit, the Lilly will host the Society at a reception to celebrate the opening.
- On Friday, the Society will travel to Indiana State University to visit the Cordell Collection, a remarkable collection of dictionaries and lexicographical material closely associated with the Society. Through the offices of David Vancil, curator of the collection, the Indiana State University Foundation will host a reception and the conference banquet following our tour of the collection.
- There will be a full schedule of papers on Saturday (to make up for our Friday excursion), and the conference will close with an evening reception.

ARRANGEMENTS: Indiana University is a delightful place to visit in late spring and its facilities are outstanding for small conferences like ours.

- Shuttle service from the Indianapolis airport to the Indiana Memorial Union in the heart of

the university's campus is frequent, relatively inexpensive, and easily arranged.

- Blocks of rooms are being held at the hotel in the Indiana Memorial Union and in a residence hall within easy walking distance to the Union, where all sessions and other meetings related to the conference will be held, with the exception of those specified above (the Lilly Library is close to the Union, and buses for our trip to the Cordell Collection will meet us at the Union steps).
- Because we are still seeking subsidy for the conference, the registration fee has not yet been set. About the fee: there is good news and bad news. The bad news is that, in spite of attempts to keep the costs down (we are still attempting), the fee is likely to be somewhat higher than in past years, certainly over \$100. The good news is that, thanks to the Indiana State University Foundation's generous gift of our banquet, there will be no additional charge for the banquet, so the total cost of attending the conference will be less than in the recent past. Student members will be able to attend the conference at a significantly reduced fee; non-members attending the conference will become members when they register, by paying a somewhat higher fee including membership dues.
- We will open registration in January and it will be easy to register online, with a credit card for payment, through Indiana University Conference Services (checks may also be sent through the mail, and registration will be possible on site, as well, at a slightly higher fee). All details regarding registration and accommodation, as well as travel to Bloomington, will be available on the conference Webpage, which will be available through the DSNA Website (<http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dsna>).

ABSTRACTS: Those who wish to present a paper at the conference should send an abstract of no more than 300 words to Michael Adams at

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[adamsm@indiana.edu](mailto:adamsm@indiana.edu) no later than 1 December 2008. Abstracts received will be reviewed by the local conference committee (composed of DSNA members) and decisions will be made promptly and communicated in early January. Abstracts are welcome on all topics relating to lexicography, though papers about Samuel Johnson's lexicography (to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Johnson's birth) and about the role of the dictionary in college/university education (including but not restricted to the writing curriculum) are particularly welcome.

SEMINARS: In addition to the usual plenary sessions, we hope to organize a few seminars focused on special subjects. Each seminar would include from six to twelve participants. Seminars would run, one at a time, parallel to a plenary session. This is NOT an attempt to restructure the conference into parallel sessions—though some members have urged such restructuring, most members (including the organizer of this conference) prefer a plenary program. The seminars are an experiment designed to vary the conference program minimally but significantly, while promoting scholarship in focused areas with the hope that papers from the seminars can be published (as books, special issues of journals, etc.), thus increasing the Society's visibility in the wide sea of American scholarship.

The organizer suggests the following topics for seminars in 2009: (1) history of lexicography, (2) corpus lexicography, (3) dictionaries and lexicography in the media, (4) learner's dictionaries, (5) Samuel Johnson's lexicography, (6) dictionaries in college/university education, and (7) creole lexicography (Indiana University is a natural site for such a seminar, given the work of Albert Valdman, Kevin Rottet, and others here on dictionaries of Haitian and Louisiana creoles). If you would like to participate in a seminar, simply send an e-mail to Michael Adams at [adamsm@indiana.edu](mailto:adamsm@indiana.edu) indicating your interest by 1 November 2008. You are welcome to suggest other topics; you are welcome to organize members and non-members

(or what we should call "future members") to ensure sufficient interest in one or another seminar. We especially encourage recruitment of non-members who might be interested in attending the conference for the sake of a seminar. Seminars with enough preliminary interest to be viable will be assigned a leader by the conference organizer.

Here are some ground rules for participation in seminars:

- Members may participate in only one seminar;
- Seminars will be organized with between six and twelve members;
- Participants in a seminar will write more elaborate papers than would be possible for a plenary session (15 pages, say, rather than 8-10 pages), papers closer to publication;
- Those papers will be distributed to all members of a viable seminar no later than 15 April 2009, so that members can prepare for the seminar by reading all papers ahead of time—those who fail to meet the deadline will not be allowed to participate.
- In other words, participating in a seminar means writing more and writing it earlier than one might for a session on the plenary program.

The seminars are a chance for those deeply interested in a subject to explore it fully and collegially, in a discussion format different from the usual "presentation followed by questions and comments" format of the plenary sessions. They are very much an experiment: we will run just as many seminars (no more than one parallel to each plenary session) as interest indicates—it's all right if there's lots of interest, no interest, or some level of interest in between those extremes.

FINALLY: Please feel free to write to the conference organizer, Michael Adams, with any questions, suggestions, or concerns you may have—[adamsm@indiana.edu](mailto:adamsm@indiana.edu).

**Laurence Urdang**

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high school teacher and principal, his sister an accomplished poet. His sensitivity for language or Sprachgefühl was deepened and informed by prodigious reading and study, not only of languages and literature, but in diverse areas of interest that included fine arts and antiques, book collecting, yachting, cookery, classical and popular music, graphic design and typography, information science, and computer technology. It was rare that he was not, when away from his desk, thumbing through a new book, magazine, even a catalogue. Larry delighted in exercising the power of language, in speech and writing, as in his many reviews and comments in VERBATIM. His wit was often playful; once when a toilet in his Connecticut office needed repair, he hung a sign on the door that read, "Out of Ordure — No Shit!". And displayed in the corner of the windshield of his car was a sign that read, "Lexicographer — On Emergency Call"; Larry delighted in relating that one traffic cop left him a complimentary note instead of a parking ticket.

Larry strove for the optimum presentation of and access to information. First he employed careful use of graphic design and typography. Many of his dictionaries included one or more indexes, allowing access to details within the entries. His dictionary *Suffixes* (Gale, 1982) required a novel approach. Since a user may not be certain where a suffix begins in a word, conventional alphabetic order presents a problem. So main entries in *Suffixes* are sorted alphabetically from right to left (that is, from the end of the suffix), then numbered sequentially. A conventional alphabetic index, keyed to the numbered main entries, allows another means of access to the suffixes and to the example words within entries.

Laurence Urdang made his own way as lexicographer, publisher, author, editor, and businessman. Those who knew him well understood his sometimes curmudgeonly nature and his railing against "gormless ninnyhammers." His imposing stature, sonorous voice, and incisive use of language were often intimidating. But Larry was also quick to be at ease, and to lighten the atmosphere

with a wry comment and infectious laughter. In relaxed moments at home Larry was a gracious and charming host and raconteur who enjoyed pleasing guests with his cooking. In addition to his contributions to lexicography and publishing, he also represents a link to many renowned publishers, scholars, and lexicographers with whom he worked, including Bennett Cerf of Random House, Frederick G. Ruffner, Jr., of Gale Research and Omnigraphics, Jan Collins of Collins Publishing, as well as Allen Walker Read, Noam Chomsky, John Sinclair, Arthur Bronstein, Richard Bailey, and Bryan A. Garner, to name but a few. Larry will be sorely missed, but his legacy will guide and inspire for many years to come.

—Frank Abate

**Other Deaths**

The DSNAL office has received notification of the deaths of the following members.

**John S. Barlow, M.D.**, (Jun 10, 1925–Feb 15, 2008) was primarily a neurophysiologist and medical researcher at Massachusetts General Hospital, but he also wrote *A Chinese–Russian–English Dictionary* and *A Pocket Chinese–Russian–English Dictionary*, both published by the University of Hawaii Press.

**Michael Jacoby** was a DSNAL life member. Among other lexicographic and linguistic works, he wrote *Historische Lexikologie zum nordgermanischen Raum: Lexika als Kultur- und Sprachdokumente zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Einflüsse von Toledo bis Paris, von London bis Berlin*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990.

Anyone with a remembrance to share of either of these men is encouraged to send it to the editor for inclusion in the next issue of this newsletter.

**DSNAL Award 2009**

The Dictionary Society of North America is offering its annual award for research and study in lexicography. The Award will support one or more lexicographical projects during the year 2009, with grants of up to \$2,500.

Laurence Urdang funded this award from 1995 to 2008; the award for 2009 will be presented in his memory.

Applicants must be current members of the Dictionary Society of North America. To join the Society, visit the DSNAL website at <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dsna/> or contact the Executive Secretary at [berglul@buffalostate.edu](mailto:berglul@buffalostate.edu).

The proposal should include the following:

- Project name.
- Applicant's name, mailing address and email address.
- A statement of the project's immediate goals and expected long-range results.
- A description of the methodology or procedures to be used.
- A summary budget of total expenses for the project. The budget may include costs of travel, tuition, materials, subsistence, and related expenses.
- An identification of other sources of support available for the project.
- A one-page biographical resume for the applicant.

The proposal, including the resume, should total no more than three pages, single-spaced.

Mail proposals to:  
DSNAL President PROF. TERRY PRATT  
932 PETERS ROAD, RR#3  
BONSHAW, P.E.I.  
C0A 1C0, CANADA,

or to [tpratt@upe.ca](mailto:tpratt@upe.ca).

Proposals must be received by December 1, 2008. Awards will be bestowed and full payments sent early in 2009.

The Society requests that copies of any publications arising from the Award be sent to the Executive Secretary.



## DSNA Newsletter

*Return Address (for Post Office use only):*

Lisa Berglund  
Executive Secretary, DSNA  
Buffalo State College, KH 326  
Buffalo, NY 14222

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### Publishing Information

The *DSNA Newsletter* is published two or three times a year: Spring, and/or Summer, and Fall. The editor is Katherine Isaacs. News of members and other items of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send **all Newsletter correspondence**, such as items for publication, etc., to the editor at <kmi@sover.net>.

Please include "DSNA" in the subject line of e-mails to avoid risk of having your message deleted unopened as spam.

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### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (U.S. \$)

	U.S., Canada, & Mexico	Other countries
Regular, joint, institutions:	\$40	\$50
Student or retired:	\$30	\$40

Send **correspondence re membership**, etc. to

Lisa Berglund, Executive Secretary, DSNA,  
Buffalo State College, KH 326

Buffalo, NY 14222

Tel: 716-878-4049

Fax: 716-878-5700

E-mail: [berglul@buffalostate.edu](mailto:berglul@buffalostate.edu)

### DSNA Web Site

<http://www.dictionariesociety.com/>

Web contact Erin McKean invites members with web sites of lexicographical interest to send her the URLs. She will be happy to add a link on the DSNA web site.