

Remembering the IJA Newsletter circa 1976-78

The IJA's moving away, after 64 years, from having a printed publication causes me to reminisce about my time as IJA Newsletter editor.

I think Hovey Burgess was the Newsletter editor when I first received a copy. Then Don and Lana Reed took over for something over a year.

I had personal access to a computer (BBN's TENEX time-sharing system), and it bothered me that Don and Lana seemed to be manually addressing the newsletters. Therefore, without asking them first, I typed the roster names and addresses into a plain text computer file, wrote a little program to format the file into labels on a page, and printed the labels out on my TI Silent 700 (I think) connected from my home to TENEX via an acoustic coupler. I provided the labels to Don and Lana for the last couple of issues of their term as editors.

I went to my first IJA convention in Los Angeles in 1976. Several prior editors of the Newsletter attended. Hovey was there, as were Lane Blumenthal, Danny Rees, Roger Dollarhide, and perhaps another prior editor or two. I volunteered to become the Newsletter editor to replace Don and Lana who didn't have time to continue, and I was elected although I was a relative unknown in the association.

The job of the newsletter editor as I did it was to gather (sometimes create) content, edit it, type it into computer files, printout columns of text, and "paste" (using some sort of adhesive tape invisible to the camera) the text at appropriate places on full-size pages. I can't remember if I also pasted photographs into their positions on pages, or if the printer did that. I took the laid-out pages to our BBN printing department (which was allowed to take outside work), and the printer photographed them, made printing plates, and printed however many hundreds of copies were needed on two sides of 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. I think his collation process also included a staple in the top left corner. Then I folded the newsletters in half, sealed them with a staple, applied a label, stamped them (they were labeled as third class printed matter), and mailed them at the post office. Often my wife and young son helped with the steps of folding, sealing, labeling, and stamping.

Naturally I had to keep the address list file up to date based on address changes sent in by members, new members joining, and issues were returned by the post office as undeliverable, and to print a new set of labels for each issue of the Newsletter. I was in close communication with the association secretary, Carol Bengé. Ken and Carol Bengé were Newsletter editors before Hovey, and I visited them once outside of Chicago while making a cross-country trip.

Somewhere along the line, Eric Roberts over management of my address list file. Later John Robinson converted the address list file to reside in some sort of database management system. (Both Eric and John were co-workers at BBN and later co-chairmen of the Amherst convention.) Perhaps the current IJA address database is a descendent of John's original work.

I turned the editorship over to Donna DiMeo at the 1978 Eugene, OR, convention. A year later, at the Amherst convention, Bill Giduz began his long editorship with the eventual replacement of the Newsletter by Juggle's World magazine.

Of course I wanted to put out a good looking and interesting newsletter. But the most basic principle I followed during my term as Newsletter editor was to put it out on time according to the publication schedule I announced. I believe regular publication of the Newsletter was appreciated by members and also led to more content being provided by readers.

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