

Informal, luncheon-roundtable types of newsletter groups existed in New York City as far back as the '50s and the early '60s in Washington, DC. The Washington group formalized itself into the Independent Newsletter Association with the stated aim of winning full accreditation for its members and their reporters to places such as the Congressional Press Galleries and the National Press Club. Ash Gerecht of CD Publications was the leader in this effort, which was largely successful by the mid-sixties.

Howard Penn Hudson purchased The Newsletter on Newsletters from Morris Hoverstein in 1968. Most of Howard's career had been spent in public-relations work and, he says, it had always been his practice to work as closely with the industry association as he could. Looking about the newsletter business, he found none which seemed to him to present an obvious opportunity to begin newsletter seminars and publish a directory. By 1973 his seminar had evolved into the first of what he called the International Newsletter Conference. By the second or third of these, a group of those attending approached him to say, "Howard, it's wonderful what you're doing here, but we think we probably ought to have a non-profit trade association like just about every other conceivable business." "Fine," he said, "let's organize one." Given the pace of volunteer effort, it took a couple of years until some bylaws were drawn up and the articles of incorporation for the Newsletter Association of America(\*) were signed in Washington on January 26, 1977.

In 1983, the board planned to change the name to International Newsletter Association to reflect the character of the membership. Debate, as it sometimes will, went awry at the board meeting, and the board wound up voting to simply drop "of America" from the name, leaving the Newsletter Association which never really suited anyone and so the name was changed to Newsletter Publishers Association in 1983 and then to Newsletter & Electronic Publishers Association in 1999.

During the next two years NAA metamorphosed quickly through stages of association development, from being run on an all-volunteer basis, to an association management firm and then, with the employment of a full-time executive director, to opening our first office in the National Press Building early in 1979.