

BOOK WORM

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS (WA) INC.

July 2003

From the Chair

This snippet will perhaps take the prize for the shortest (and least inspired) ever From the Chair. I'm late (again) in meeting the deadline – sorry Chris (again). And with a very mushy brain, battered by reading through a couple of hundred thousand words of student assignments over the last couple of weeks, I am struggling to find words of my own. Being faced by a blank screen is scary after having faced hundreds of pages full of text, which I'm required to comment on, edit and assess. At least in the latter role I've got something to start from. In the former – the blank-screen-stares-at-me scenario – I'm alone, with the cursor flashing irritatingly and insistently, waiting for me to key in something, fill up this space.

As an editor, I have often wished (have you too, or is it just grizzly old me?) that I could wipe out the author's words and start again, so mammoth and daunting does the editing task ahead appear to be. Becoming a quasi-author myself every so often is therefore a salutary reminder of the huge work involved in the role of originating text – often text far, far more extensive and better executed than this one.

Anne Surma

Editorial

As usual, I was worrying about not having enough material for this issue, but our calendar of events and meetings is full in the near future, so that's solved that problem.

Much to my chagrin, I will not be attending the national conference, so I'll just have to stay here and gnash my teeth while all you lucky ones pop off to Canberra. (Did I hear the word "junket"?). But seriously, I hope that some really great things come of the conference and that the cause of Australian editors is mightily advanced.

And now a request: it would be terrific to have in *Book Worm* a brief report on what happened at the previous monthly meeting, similar to the "What happened in May" report that ran in the June edition. Could someone attending those meetings please whip up a brief summary of the events so that members who are unable to attend can be kept up to date. Any takers? Anyone at all?

We have some lovely contributions from our members in this edition, so if you haven't offered anything for inclusion yet, why not? The article from Alex George in Britain reminds me of a hilarious translation that appeared on a set of instructions that came with an iron I once bought. The instructions sheet opened out like an army ordnance map and had instructions in about 47 languages. The English one advised, "Always iron with a straight back to prevent becoming knocked up." Ahh, so that's how it happens!

Contributions to *Book Worm* are always wanted, so if you come across anything pertinent or would like to write something especially, please feel free to email it to me at any time. No money, but you do get international fame. I've listed here the copy deadlines for 2003 *Book Worms* so you can get cracking.

Issue	Deadline
August 2003	22 July 2003
September 2003	19 August 2003
October 2003	23 September 2003
November 2003	21 October 2003
December 2003	18 November 2003
February 2004	27 January 2004

Doing business with the government

Amanda Curtin

At our May meeting on quoting, Jan Knight referred to the Common Use Contracts (previously called Panel of Preferred Suppliers) system that the State Government uses to deal with suppliers of goods and services. There is currently no Common Use Contract covering our industry. There used to be a Panel of Preferred Suppliers for public relations, marketing, writing and editing services, but this was discontinued because, according to Principal Contract Consultant Peter Easom, the “industry” itself did not want it.

I invited Mr Easom to a SOEWA meeting to discuss the general topic of “doing business with the government”; he declined, but noted that if members had specific concerns about the current system, or had some interest in a new Common Use Contract for the industry, I could contact him again. In the meantime, however, he recommended that members consult the following web sites for guidance and background information:

- Policies and Guidelines for Buying Wisely —Open and Effective Competition:
www.ssc.wa.gov.au/pol_guide/policies/competition.html
- Policies and Guidelines for Buying Wisely —Common Use Contracts and Agency Specific Panel Contracts:
www.ssc.wa.gov.au/pol_guide/policies/common_use.html
- GEM Home Page: agate.gem.wa.gov.au/prod/wa/bb/home.do

Please let me know your thoughts on this, and thanks to Jan Knight for following up the contact.

Tidbits from Britain

by Alex George

Some delightful letters appear in British newspapers on topics that never get aired so in Australia. A recent series in the *Times* has addressed the matter of word breaks in that newspaper, which now seems to be governed by spacing rather than good practice —virtually all the principles set out on page 94 of the *Style manual* (6th edn) have been discarded. One reader thought that “the stupidest word break I have seen [was] $\frac{1}{4}$ Canaletto’s *View of Horseguard’s Parade*. It even beats bat-hroom”. Another was glad that a certain bridge player was continuing his practice of “betrotting the glo”, while another liked “bed-raggled” as it described what she saw in the mirror first thing in the morning. One of the most scrumptious I have spotted was “candi-date”. Then there was a headline with the word-break hyphen missing: “Squad helps dog bite victim”.

How would you interpret a roadworks sign, common in Britain, that advises “Expect delays until April 2004”? Would you ensure that you have a good supply of food etc. in your car? Or the advertising poster on trains that begins, “If you live in and around London ...”? That’s a pretty big area to occupy.

Labelling is also going well; for example, cans of tomato soup with the prominent advice “Suitable for vegetarians”, and an item of clothing made in Thailand that carries the warning “Do not drumble dry”.

And there is a poem:

A Very Descript Man

by J.H. Parker

I am such a dolent man,
I eptly work each day;

My acts are all becilic,
I've just ane things to say

My nerves are strung, my hair is kempt,
I'm gusting and I'm span;
I look with dain on everyone
And am a pudent man.

I travel cognito and make
A delible impression;
I overcome a slight cholance,
With gruntled self-possession.

My dignation would be great
If I should digent be;
I trust my vagance will bring
An astrous life for me.

July meeting: defamation

Editors should be able to identify possibly defamatory text, where legal review might be required. Our special guest speaker Lloyd Davies (see "About our July Speaker" below), an expert on the subject, will raise your awareness of criminal defamation, civil defamation, accidental defamation, intentional defamation, and the ethics of defamation, using actual case studies.

When: 7.30 pm, Tuesday, 1 July 2003

Where: Tresillian Community Centre, 21 Tyrell Street, Nedlands

Cost: \$2 cover charge

RSVP: Amanda Curtin (phone 9377 2091; curtin@highway1.com.au)

About our July speaker: Lloyd Davies, OAM, LLB

Lloyd Davies is a writer and, until his retirement in 1988, was also a practising lawyer. All his professional life he has been involved with civil liberties and work for under-privileged people. In 1977 he helped to organise a conference at Curtin University on the rights of people with handicaps, for which he wrote the main paper, "The Ultimate Chauvinism". He spent his last 10 years of full-time practice as in-house barrister with the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia.

In 1991 he came out of retirement at the request of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Western Australia and practised, until his final retirement from the law in 2000, as a part-time prosecution counsel specialising in child sexual abuse indictments. During that period he delivered four national conference papers that critically examined the unfair treatment of sex abuse victims in criminal trials and advocated a number of law reform proposals.

In 1992 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of his contributions to the Aboriginal community, particularly through the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia.

His publications include the short story collections *Past Master* (1980) and *The Lawyer and the Rhine Maiden* (1989); a novel, *Cult and Counter Cult* (1984); the autobiographical *In Defence of My Family* (1986); and *Sheila*, the biography of Sheila Mary McLemans, OBE, Western Australia's pioneer woman lawyer and wartime commander of the WRANS. He has also published extensively in the area of legal texts.

August meeting: TBA

7.30 pm, Tuesday 5 August 2003. Details in next issue of *Book Worm*.

ADVERTISEMENT

Advance notice of September meeting: annual joint function with Women in Publishing

The virtual reality of quoting

The Phoney Festival Project quoting challenge is coming soon to members of the Society of Editors and Women in Publishing.

The Phoney Festival organisers need some promotional material and will be issuing a brief for research, writing, editing, design and project management services. Accept the challenge—for all or part of the project—and see how your quote fares.

This exercise in virtual reality is an opportunity to:

- practise your quoting
- see how the assessment process works
- get constructive feedback from a client panel of experienced publications industry professionals
- learn more about what clients are looking for
- compare your quote with others
- showcase your talents
- perhaps even spread your wings a little by networking with others to quote as a joint venture.

The Phoney Festival client panel will discuss the quotes at a special SOEWA–WIP function on Tuesday, **2 September**, so make a date in your diary now.

Denmark bludger tells all (Lucky sod! *Ed.*)

by Ian Nowak

Just been reading the latest *Book Worm* and rather wished I hadn' been out of town (bludging in Denmark) for the May workshop on quoting etc. Just for your interest, I'll tell you how I do it. I' ma semi-retired technical editor who is now able to accept and reject work with a pleasing nonchalance. As there are few editors in my field in WA (earth sciences), I find I usually get as much work as I want.

With one major government department, I have a standing arrangement that I do the work and then send in an invoice. After many years of mutual trust (yes, they pay on time!), this is a wonderful way to work. With the other government department that uses me a lot, I have come to a superb understanding with the people (authors, mostly) in the section that requires my services. Although this organisation insists on quotes for every job, everyone there knows I' mreliable, fair and timely (even if I do say so myself!) and, most important, that no one else is ever asked to provide a competing quote. So I do the job at the behest of the author, then work out the fee, then send in the formal quote, then await the raising of an order, which is sent to me by the administration. I then allow a decent amount of time to elapse and send in my invoice. And they pay on time, too!

Anyone else who requires my services gets told that this is the way I work and to let me know in the fullness of time whether that suits them. It always does. There are not many consolations to getting older, but not desperately

needing work is a big one.

One other thing I noticed in *Book Worm* was someone speaking of being compensated for a rush job. I have no view on this really: I'll always fit such a job in if I can. But I do recall a mentor years ago telling me that there is a world of difference between a "rush job" and a "quick edit". With the former, you put everything else aside and then proceed to edit as you normally would. No worries. But never, ever, get sucked in to doing a "quick edit", the most likely outcome of which will be irreparable damage to your professional reputation, as you will surely miss things you would otherwise pick up. That's all. I'm sending this purely because the *Book Worm* catalysed these thoughts. Would seem a shame not to!

Whine list

- Clients who sign an agreement for work, produce a string of "extras" and then grizzle when you say: "OK, that'll cost you extra." After our May workshop, I'm going to use a new form of agreement which warns them, up front, that extras will cost extra. *Tom Jenkins*
- Seen recently in repeated advertising banners displayed on a prominent city jeweller's window: "Sneak Peak". *Chris Nagel*

2003 Excellence in Editing Award

The Canberra Society of Editors invites editors to submit entries for an award to recognise excellence in editing. The award has been established to highlight the crucial work of editors in ensuring the effective presentation of information and the lucid discussion of ideas. For this inaugural competition, it will be made to the editor of the entry judged to be the best-edited 2002–03 annual report, public or private sector, published in Canberra. Entry is open to all

editors.

The editor of the winning report will receive a certificate of recognition and a cash prize of \$1000.00. The closing date for entries is 30 September 2003.

The result will be announced at the Canberra Society of Editors' end-of-year dinner on 26 November 2003 and in the public notices column of *The Canberra Times* on 29 November 2003. Full details of the competition, and an entry form, can be found on the Society's web site at www.editorscanberra.org. Inquiries can be directed to ed@clarusdesign.com or by mail to: Excellence in Editing Award, Canberra Society of Editors Inc. PO Box 3222 Manuka, ACT 2603.

Events, workshops and conferences

National Editors Conference

Programme of events

Thursday 17 July 2003

Time	Session Title
5:00pm–6:30pm 1.5 hours	Trade fair set-up
6:30pm–8:30pm 2 hours	<i>Welcome drinks (drinks and finger foods, entertainment, cocktails, opening of trade fair)</i>

Friday 18 July 2003

Time	Session Title	Session Title
8:15am–9:00am 45 minutes	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Trade fair</i>
9:00am–9:15am 15 minutes	<i>Welcome to country</i>	
9:20am–10:00am 40 minutes	<i>Keynote address (Brian Johns AO)</i>	
10:00am–10:30am 30 minutes	<i>Morning tea</i>	<i>Soapbox session</i>
10:30am–11:00am 30 minutes	<i>Why is the Style Manual different? (Loma Snooks)</i>	

11:00am–12:00pm 1 hour	<i>Hypothetical —The long-term future of the book (Luke Burless, Sandy McCutcheon, Rosemary Cameron, Greg Bain, Sue Abbey, Kevin Guy, Mary Rose MacColl)</i>	
12:00 noon–12:30pm 30 minutes	<i>Official opening by Matt Foley MP</i>	
12:30pm–1:15pm 45 minutes	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Trade fair</i>
1:15pm–2:15pm 1 hour	<i>Editing fiction (Robyn Sheahan-Bright)</i>	<i>Repurposing texts — morphing for other media (Cathy Gray & Alison White)</i>
2:15pm–3:15pm 1 hour	<i>Copyright for editors —t he bits that count (Trischa Baker)</i>	<i>E-publishing (electronic supplements to print texts) (Heather Linaker)</i>
3:15pm–3:45pm 30 minutes	<i>Afternoon tea</i>	<i>Soapbox session</i>
3:45pm–4:15pm 30 minutes	<i>CASE Accreditation Working Group presentation</i>	
4:15pm–5:45pm 1.5 hours	<i>A future for design (David Whitbread)</i>	<i>Editing magazines and journals, including e-zines (Robert Nichols, Ffion Murphy) (NB: 1 hour)</i>
Evening to 6:00pm	<i>Trade fair</i>	
7:00pm	<i>Bus to conference dinner</i>	
7:30pm–10:30pm 3 hours	<i>Conference dinner</i>	
10:30pm	<i>Bus from conference dinner</i>	

Saturday 19 July 2003

Time	Session Title	Session Title	Session Title
8:00am–8:30am 30 minutes	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Trade fair</i>	

8:30am– 10:00am 1.5 hours	<i>Plenary session — Marketing the profession</i>		
10:00am– 10:30am 30 minutes	<i>Morning tea</i>	<i>Soapbox session</i>	
10:30am–12:00 noon 1.5 hours	<i>Editing Indigenous writing —old languages for new audiences (Pat Torres & Margaret McDonell; Facilitator: Jackie Huggins)</i>	<i>Corporate publishing (Trischa Baker) (NB: 1 hour)</i>	<i>Teaching editors online (Pam Peters) (NB: 1 hour)</i>
12:00 noon– 12:45pm 45 minutes	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Trade fair</i>	
12:45pm– 1:45pm 1 hour	<i>Working with self- publishers (Barbara Ker Wilson & Sue Pechey)</i>	<i>How to assess an index (Max McMaster)</i>	<i>Panel: What makes the ideal editing course? (Ros Petelin, Sharon Nevile, Tim Bugler & Hilary McLaren; Facilitator: Pam Peters)</i>
1:45pm– 2:45pm 1 hour	<i>I spy— editing autobiographies (to be confirmed)</i>	<i>Digital inspiration — techniques for editing screen-based documents (Victoria Richardson)</i>	<i>Editing for tertiary institutions (Vern Field & Rosemary Noble)</i>
2:45pm– 3:15pm 30 minutes	<i>Afternoon tea</i>	<i>Soapbox session</i>	
3:15pm– 4:15pm 1 hour	<i>The gender trap: dealing with changes in grammar and usage (Nick Hudson)</i>		
4:15pm– 5:15pm 1 hour	<i>Conference wrap-up (plenary session)</i>	<i>Trade fair wrap-up (by 5:30pm)</i>	

Sunday 20 July 2003

Time	Session Title	Session Title	Session Title
8:00am– 8:30am 30 minutes	<i>Registration</i>		
8:30am–12:00 noon 3.5 hours	<i>Developments in design (David Whitbread)</i>	<i>Editing multimedia materials (Chris Whitelaw & Lesley Henry)</i>	<i>Marketing your business (freelance editors) (to be confirmed)</i>
12:00 noon– 1:00pm 1 hour	<i>Lunch</i>		<i>CASE meeting (NB: 12:00pm–3:00pm)</i>
1:00pm– 4:30pm 3.5 hours	<i>Editing illustrated children's books — non-computer illustrations (Jill Morris & Sharon Dye)</i>	<i>On-screen editing — new techniques for editors (Paul Bennett & Helena Bond)</i>	<i>There's a person running this business (freelance editors) (to be confirmed)</i>

Katharine Susannah Prichard quiz night

When? On Friday 4 July, starting at 7 pm. Where? Swan Districts Football Club, Bassendean Oval, Old Perth Road, Bassendean. Why? To raise funds to refurbish the KSP Writers' Centre. Prizes? \$200 cash, plus other fabulous prizes. Cost? \$8 per person, tables of up to six per team. Come along and have a fun night with your friends. Tickets are available from the KSP Writers Centre, 11 Old York Road, Greenmount, at the door on the night, or contact Lara or Frank on 9573 1056.

Margot Lowe, Coordinator

KSP Writers' Centre, 11 Old York Road, Greenmount, WA 6056

Ph/fax: 08 9294 1872

Email: kspf@iinet.net.au

Website: <http://www.kspf.iinet.net.au>.

Advanced editing: fiction

Presented by Wendy Jenkins and Janet Blagg with the State Literature Centre

Contact State Literature Centre for an application form on 9432 9559 or email slcprograms@fremantle.wa.gov.au Applications close Friday 27 June. [Although this date has passed, ring Janet or the State Literature Centre to see if you can squeeze in. *Ed.*] Places are limited, so apply early.

This intensive weekend workshop is an advanced course for experienced editors, focusing on fiction editing. It will take you through the steps of MS assessment, structural editorial notes, discussion of problems with the author, sensitivity to language and style, and line editing. The strength of this workshop lies in the focus on a set of real problems in an original MS.

At the preliminary session participants will receive a copy of a MS and be asked to prepare a general assessment, identifying problems in the MS in accordance with a set of guidelines. A hard copy of these notes will need to be forwarded to the conveners by Friday 1 August.

After completion of the workshop, participants may prepare and submit an edited chapter of the MS, with structural notes, for feedback in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

When: Preliminary session: Wednesday 9 July 7.30 – 9.30 pm; weekend workshop: Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 August, 10 am – 4 pm

Where: State Literature Centre, Fremantle Arts Centre, Finnerty Street, Fremantle

Cost: \$400.00.

For more information call Janet Blagg on 9337 4352.

Indexfest

“Indexing the World of Information”, an international conference hosted by the Australian Society of Indexers, is to be held at the Carlton Crest Hotel, Sydney, from Friday 12 to Saturday 13 September 2003.

Proposed presentation/panel topics are: indexing biographies; difficult names; teaching indexing; website, intranet and database indexing projects; information architecture; thesaurus construction; taxonomies and classification; metadata development. There will be software demonstrations and workshops.

Cost: Australian Society of Indexers members \$330, non-members \$380.

Contact: Glenda Browne

Email: webindexing@optusnet.com.au

Phone: 02 4739 8199

More information: www.aussi.org

Deadline for August 2003 issue: Tuesday 22 July 2003. All submissions gratefully accepted.

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