

BOOK WORM

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS (WA) INC.

May 2005

From the Chair

Mentoring

In my report to the Annual General Meeting in March this year, which was subsequently published in that month's issue of *Book Worm*, I outlined a proposal put forward by the WA State Literature Centre to include the Society of Editors (WA) in a submission to the Australia Council (under their Young and Emerging Writers' Initiative 2005) to fund a project to place young and emerging writers and/or illustrators with editor-mentors.

The proposed program was designed to give these writers the opportunity to work with experienced structural editors. Unfortunately, we have since been informed that funding for the proposed program was not approved.

So, where does this leave the possibility of the Society establishing a mentoring program for experienced editors who are interested in assisting new members to become established in the profession? Surely it does not mean that we will not continue to explore avenues and possibilities for mentorship—which we know would provide excellent support for emerging editors?

Members of the Society have discussed this topic from time to time and a very successful joint seminar with Women in Publishing, in September last year, generated a great deal of interest. We now need to revisit the issue and make some firm decisions in relation to:

- what mentoring would involve;
- how we would develop and implement a program that would foster the mentor/mentee relationship;
- the desired outcomes for the Society, and for emerging editors who need assistance to reach their potential.

This is particularly important at this time, as accreditation will, no doubt, add a new dimension to a mentoring program—should we be able to establish one. It would help us to foster new members and to support them in their endeavours to reach a standard that would enhance their likelihood of becoming accredited editors.

Almost everything we have heard and read about mentoring programs is positive, and this is a conclusion backed by solid research. If members are

interested in offering suggestions and assistance to establish a mentoring program we would like to hear from you.

Elsewhere in this issue of *Book Worm* we have an article on how members can become involved in assisting the committee to organise events. We have also produced a form, attached at the end of this newsletter, which you can complete to register your interest in an area of your choosing. We would like to hear from members who can spare some time to add valuable support to the Society's many and varied endeavours.

Betty Durston

Editorial

Hello everyone. I can only reiterate what Betty has said above and say that I have benefited from informal mentoring, so I believe it would be 'a good thing' if a more formal version of this could be offered to up-and-coming editors in WA. Think back to the days of widespread apprenticeships: as a system, it had a lot going for it. Not only could you potentially avoid all the common pitfalls of your chosen trade/profession by listening to the wise advice of your 'master', you could have some initial security of income whilst you learnt to do the task. We may or may not decide to incorporate the latter aspect into our scheme, but even gaining the former benefit would save a lot of anguish in regard to such matters as non-paying clients and skills marketing.

We can do only so much as individuals, but together we can generate incredible synergy – so let's work towards a common goal of developing the best quality editors in Australia, if not the English-speaking world!

Tanya Marwood

Forthcoming Meetings

May Meeting: Editors and Mandatory Sentencing

The next meeting of the Society will be facilitated by James Hansen. The theme will be 'the sentence', that fundamental unit of meaning we wrestle with every day.

James will invite members to pool their wits and experience in considering a variety of examples of interesting, difficult, extraordinary and damn-near-impossible passages that they have come across and which they feel other members could benefit from discussing or which, frankly, they need help with. The evening will start off with some framework-setting through discussion of those grammatical elements that go to make up a sentence; simple, compound and complex sentences; analysis of sentences to reveal structure; 'run-on'

sentences; word order and agreements; parallel constructions; loose, periodic and balanced sentences; and the punctuation integral to all the above. This should give us plenty of meaty discussion starters. The emphasis will be on informality and supportive wide-ranging discussion. (Bring your favourite reference book.)

Our Society exists to promote our members and work for high standards. So, whether you are an older member of the profession or are from one of those younger generations that did not get much formal English at school, please come along: we need you all. And please, everyone, if you can, e-mail your 'problem pieces' to James in advance of the meeting so that he will have time to scratch his head and consult the reference books before he fronts up at Tresillian. Put the words 'Problem piece' in the subject line of your e-mail and send it to jehansen@starwon.com.au

Happy sentencing!

When: Tuesday 3 May, 7:30pm until 9:00pm

Where: Tresillian Community Centre, 21 Tyrell St, Nedlands

Cost: \$2

Opportunities for Networking and Knowledge

By becoming involved with the Society of Editors (WA)—either as a committee member or as a co-opted volunteer—you have much to gain. You will learn about the forthcoming national accreditation program—what it means and how it will affect you. You may also build up your network of friends and colleagues.

As a co-opted volunteer, you can help with the organisation of a specific activity—for example, a social event or an informative talk on a practical topic related to editing. Some of our recent talks have featured discussions on recalcitrant creditors and how to deal with them; and the difficulty of maintaining standards when unexpected pitfalls arise.

The two-year term of President is due for renewal in 2006, so start considering nominating yourself or someone else for this leadership role! An opportunity also exists for a budding Vice President to assist current VP James Hansen, who will be away for part of this year.

Deadline for June 2005 *Book Worm* issue:

Tuesday 17 May 2005.

All submissions gratefully accepted.

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Society of Editors (WA) Inc

Volunteer program 2005

I would like to register my interest in assisting the
management committee in a voluntary capacity

Name _____

Contact phone or e-mail _____

Area of interest _____

E-mail the completed form to Betty Durston at:

bdurston@cygnus.uwa.edu.au

Or phone on 0419 931 423 to register your interest.