



Bookworm

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS (WA) INC.

May 2009

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Say what you mean;
hire an editor.



From the President

Going back to study is always a pleasure for me and I like to think of myself as a lifelong learner. Early university days were not only about study. Socialising and interacting with fellow students was equally, if not more, important than the course we were undertaking. University days were a while ago now and my needs and habits have changed. Working full time makes the hours outside work precious. Hence, I have chosen to study completely online with fellow students located all around Australia. Some may believe this is isolating but I find posting into cyberspace liberating. I love the online environment and find the ease of logging on whenever I'm available, extremely satisfying. My current unit, 'Interactive writing', is forcing me to look over the coalface of technology, specifically in relation to writing for the web, and present online content in an interesting dynamic format. The enormous growth of the Internet has given writers (and editors) additional opportunities never thought possible only a few years ago.

A current dilemma for the committee lies in whether the Society needs a blog or not. To make such a decision it's important to know something about blogs and understand how they differ from websites. The following websites provide information on this topic:

<http://www.backbonemedia.com/blogsurvey/23-difference-between-blog-and-website.htm>

http://appraisalnewsonline.typepad.com/appraisal_news_for_real_e/2006/09/what_is_the_dif.html

<http://seo2.0.onreact.com/the-most-important-difference-between-websites-and-blogs>

While there is a place for both websites and blogs, the lines of definition are blurred.

I find posting into cyberspace liberating
I love the online environment and find the ease of logging on whenever I'm available, extremely satisfying.

Though opinions differ, most agree websites are the more static and require more technical knowledge in uploading content. Blogs are, in effect, online diaries or journals with content that is more current, available to more users and hence, more interactive. They offer a way of keeping in touch with your clients and getting to know them more intimately. A blog provides the opportunity to post articles of varying topics and interest.

Here are some examples:

<http://jilltxt.net/> [recommended good blog]

http://grammar.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=grammar&cdn=education&tm=3&f=00&su=p897.4.336.ip_&tt=3&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.editsk.blogspot.com/ [for copy editors]

www.evidencanecdotal.blogspot.com [literary blog]

www.dgmyers.blogspot.com [discussion of reading]

www.nytimesbooks.blogspot.com [design of book covers]

If the Society decides to trial a blog, its success will depend on members posting questions, offering opinions and giving feedback on topics matching their interests. While a dedicated blogger may lead a discussion, input from members will determine its success. The committee would like to see this Society really working for its members. To do that we need to hear from you. If you have any opinion at all on this idea, please email me at robinb@westnet.com.au.

Wherever there is writing, there is also editing and it is important for editors to develop skills in the constantly developing online world. The Society will help you do this by holding a website and technology session at our September meeting. In the meantime, keep tech savvy.

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COPY DEADLINE NEXT ISSUE
Tuesday 2 June, 2009

Robin

Robin Bower
President



Next Meeting

Topic: Defamation demystified—*or* How to protect clients, and yourself!

Date: Tuesday 19 May 2009 **Time:** 7.30 pm

Venue: Subiaco Community Centre (Activity Room) 203 Bagot Road, Subiaco. Entrance: Glass double doors opposite courtyard; Activity Room left.
Parking: street parking and Crossways Shopping centre car park opposite

Cost: \$2 members \$5 non members

RSVP: <josmith@wordsmithwa.com.au> by Thursday 14 May

Our special guest for the May members' meeting, solicitor **Jamie Blanchard** from the legal firm Jackson McDonald, will provide an overview. Don't miss this opportunity to learn and ask questions.

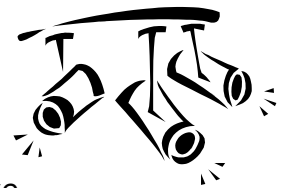
Are you up to date on what constitutes defamation in Australia? Do you know when to suggest to your clients or employers that legal advice might be necessary? Are you aware of your own potential liabilities? Standards A3.1 and A3.6 of *Australian standards for editing practice* (2001) require editors to have knowledge of this important legal issue—something worth noting if you're planning to sit this year's accreditation exam.

Amanda Curtin



Spotlight on Margaret Johnson

The Book Doctor <ask@bookdoctor.com.au>



So there I stood, at the end of a post-doc and nowhere to go. I looked around: no-one appeared waving handfuls of money and lucrative contracts. Perhaps I had got off at the wrong stop. But no: ahead of me, faintly in the distance but still clear, beckoned the sylph-like, siren-like Ghost of Editing Future. As the streetcar named Academia rattled its way around a corner and out of sight and mind, I picked up my computer, arranged my collection of red and blue pens in my plastic-protected shirt pocket, whistled my Oxford commas to heel, and headed after the will-o-the-wisp ahead of me.

What to do? What to do? What to do? My heels tapped out their plaintive monody as I hurried after the apparition. Was this my path? Was I being lured into a trap? Was I doomed forever to speak in triples? Did I dare to occasionally split an infinitive? Or write a partial sentence? Or use a preposition to end a sentence with? Well, that answered the last four questions, anyhow.

For ten long years I trudged slowly through the muddy marshes of redundancy, waded through wastes of abysmal alliteration, sliced red through those who felt impelled to argue that 'alot of there sox where occasionally in they're bottom draw'. The Ghost drew me ever forward: always in sight, always out of reach.

In time I learned its name: 'Perfection,' it whispered on the breeze past my cheek. I stretched a yearning hand toward it, but it danced out of reach. On I struggled, knowing that what I sought was no more than a dream, a desire, a longing for what could never be. But what a goal! What an aspiration! Excelsior ...

Margaret Johnson runs The Book Doctor, which combines editing, ms assessment, publishing assistance, and tutoring.

Welcome to New Members

Melissa Dunham * Alison Elsom
Raelene Ann Hall * Seth Merlo
Suzanne Mungiofi
Bruce Robins



BOOK EARLY—PLACES ARE LIMITED

special training event

Editing skills refresher workshop

Saturday 30 May 2009

9 am – 4 pm

This training workshop, targeting core editing skills, is designed for less experienced members as well as those who want to revise their existing skills—and who doesn't want that?

Our experienced presenters are:

Anne Surma (grammar)

Carla Morris (punctuation)

Allan Watson (style)

Mar Bucknell (proofreading)

The venue is Building 3, Room 3.213 (*first floor, near staircase inside main entrance*), Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford Street, Mt Lawley.

Be there at 8.45 am for a 9 am start.

All you need to bring is writing materials. Tea/coffee and a light lunch provided.

Free campus parking on Saturday (*except for bays marked 'reserved' or for disabled drivers*). Enter from Bradford Street and turn left. The closest parking area is in front of Building 3.

Register by FRIDAY 22 MAY

to u.shaw@bigpond.com

\$55 (*Editors WA members only*)

Please indicate method of payment (*cheque/EFT*) when registering. Bookings will be confirmed on receipt of payment. Send cheques to Saturday Workshop, Editors WA, PO Box 99, Subiaco WA 6904, or pay using EFT, BSB: 806036, Account: 17594, Account name: Society of Editors (WA) Inc.; **enter your full name in the Reference/Description window.**

COPY DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE OF BOOKWORM

Tuesday 2 June, 2009

The Slogan Competition

You may recall our President initiated a Slogan Competition early in April. She invited members to come up with a slogan that encapsulates what editors do - short, simple, memorable - something that might be used on the Society's website, placed on business cards, stationery or as a signature at the end of emails. The committee voted on the submitted slogans prior to the April meeting and the winning entry:

Say what you mean; hire an editor

came from Jan Knight.

Congratulations Jan. I hope you enjoyed your prize. [Ed.]

April Meeting Report

EDITOR'S NOTE: Such was the enthusiasm for the April Meeting that two members (Jan Knight and Bruce Robins) submitted reports on the event and I am left with the dilemma of marrying the two (reports, I mean, not the people) in a way that honours both contributions. Thank you Jan and Bruce, and forgive me if I get it wrong.

Starting and Surviving as a Freelance Editor

21 April 2009 meeting *by Jan Knight*

About - Rosina Pedalina

UWA graduate; worked as a freelance photographer, taught photography at adult education classes, and managed and worked for various small businesses including lighting design, photography, and interior design.

While searching for 'a better way' than the often haphazard operations of small businesses, she completed a Master of Business Administration at UWA.

Areas of expertise at SBDC:

- general business advice
- business start-ups
- financial management and analysis
- marketing
- leasing commercial premises

Rosina particularly enjoys helping emerging artists (and editors!) to apply business principles when selling their work/services.

rosina.pedalina@sbdc.wa.gov.au

Phone: 08 9220 0221

Panel moderator Jan Knight welcomed over fifty members and guests ready to explore the double challenge of starting a small business and surviving as a freelance editor.

A show of hands revealed that about two thirds of the audience were freelance editors (10 years+ = 15; 5 years = 8; 2 years = 10). Jan remarked that our February 2009 membership survey found that 79% of the 63 respondents were freelance editors.

Our strong panel was composed of one official 'expert' in small business development, Rosina Pedalina, and two very experienced EditorsWA members, Georgia Richter and Amanda Ellis.

Rosina is a Business Advisor with the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC), a Western Australian government agency providing free guidance and advice on everything you need to know about starting and running a small business. Her presentation was an amazing feat. In 30 minutes Rosina gave an overview on how to start and register a small business, touched on marketing, invoicing and helped us work out how much we were worth!

First she took the pain out of some acronyms and important terms. Did we have an ABN from the ATO? Did we pay GST? What was a 'registered business name' and what business 'structure' did we prefer? Would we like a free licence report from SBDC? Did we have our free E-record accounting package on disc from the ATO?

Rosina frequently urged us to 'ask your accountant' for advice to suit our individual personal and financial circumstances. I was fascinated by the assumption that people thinking of starting a business would already *have* an accountant. For me, *getting* an accountant was proof that I was actually running a business!

We discussed contracts which can also be called 'letters of agreement', 'terms and conditions' or even your 'fixed price agreement'.

Rosina suggested the practice of using a draft template, a 'pro forma with blanks'. Members described a range of payment options: an advance down payment, progress payments, payment before delivery, discounts for volume guaranteed work.

To make it easier for clients to make payments, she recommended invoices include the due date and EFT details and referred to a free ATO publication 'How to set out tax invoices and invoices' (no. NAT 11675-08.2004).

She all but electrified us with an innocent looking form called 'Calculate Your Hourly Rate'. None of us, it seemed, knew what our annual billable hours were. 'Work it out,' she challenged, 'that's your homework!' [A copy of this form is on page 9.]

Bruce Robins provided this summary of Rosina Pedalina's segment

Basic advice for starting a small (editing) business

Rosina talked first about the SBDC and its services. You can call SBDC on 13 12 49 for small business and tax advice. The organisation also runs workshops for small business such as 'Getting your biz on the Web'.

- You need an ABN to avoid paying unnecessary tax.
- You need to be registered for GST if your annual revenue is likely to be over \$75,000.
- You should structure yourself as a sole trader, partnership or (proprietary limited) company - each has advantages. Companies are more expensive to set up and have more onerous reporting requirements but are a good structure to limit your personal liability (sole traders and partners can be sued personally by creditors/litigants).
- You should keep your personal and business accounts separate and have at least some simple systems in place. The ATO (<http://www.ato.gov.au>) has a free downloadable spreadsheet for small businesses that can help you keep track of costs.
- You should use an appropriate contract template to formalise your dealings with clients and have it checked by a lawyer to make sure it is legally correct. If clients balk at having a contract, offer it as a 'fixed price agreement' which may be more acceptable.
- Develop good invoicing practices and tie them in to your fixed price agreement - e.g. put it in the agreement that you will be invoicing regularly, upfront deposit, all at the end, etc. All this helps to minimise bad debts and unpleasantness in having to chase up payments. The ATO has an advisory document that helps.
- When establishing the business, check with your local council what the requirements are for running a home-based business and if you need a 'home occupation permit'.
- Establish a process/formula for setting your (hourly) rates. Determine what gross revenue you believe you need, then double it and divide by the number of billable hours you believe you could work in a year - this is your base hourly rate.
- Market your services to clients who will pay your rate (or higher). Use the 4 Ps of marketing to set out a marketing plan - Price, Product, Promotion, Place.

About Georgia Richter

Three career themes: writing, teaching and editing

Numerous awards for short fiction throughout Australia

Member of editorial committee for forthcoming Fremantle Press poetry anthology *Shorelines 2*

Taught creative writing and professional writing at Melbourne University, Curtin and UWA, as well as community and in-school workshops, including 'How To Write a Novel in Fifteen Minutes'

Delivered the 2008 Editing and Publishing unit of the post-graduate Professional Writing and Publishing course at Curtin Uni with fellow EditorsWA member Janet Blagg

Now Publisher and Editor of Adult Fiction and Poetry at Fremantle Press

grichter@fremantlepress.com.au

Phone: 9430 6331 (w)

Georgia Richter told us that her freelance days spanned a good 15 years, most recently in partnership with editor and writer, Deborah Fitzpatrick. Georgia and Deb met at UWA when Georgia was doing a Masters in Creative Writing; Deb went on to do her Masters in Creative Writing the following year. Their formal editing experience began when both became proofreaders at *The Post* newspaper.

Georgia and Deb formally established their business Proofed Editing Service in 2005 and dealt with a satisfying variety of freelance work. 'We found ourselves with the "classic kitchen table job", Georgia said, 'no overheads, no website, just a network and the contacts we already had. We had only minimal advertising and some business cards.'

One of the strengths of these two very compatible business partners is teamwork. They work on individual jobs, while offering each other support through discussion and joint problem solving.

The company's base rate can be varied depending on the resources of their wide range of clients. 'Relationships are very important; we work out the brief together and we have happy repeat clients.'

Georgia remarked that an important component of their business was to refer clients to other trusted 'specialists in our industry – indexers, designers, ghost writers, PR people'.

Editors are always learning. Peer support is one vital component of this ongoing education. Georgia mentioned the useful queries about editing practice that members share on the EditorsWA chat list. She pointed out that editors in Australia right now can benefit from a really big learning opportunity – preparing for the national IPed accreditation exam. Volunteering is another way to learn. Georgia suggested that members take on the newsletter of their pet non-profit organisation.

Bruce Robins summary

Georgia Richter, Fremantle Press, <http://www.fremantlepress.com.au>

Main tips:

- Keep overheads low
- Useful to have a complementary partner to share with
- Great if the job can be a 'luxury' rather than a necessity for survival
- Be flexible on your rates
- Develop relationships with the clients and with other parts of the editing world – designers, authors, marketers, etc
- Take on formal learning opportunities to expand your skills
- Work to your strengths

Get experience wherever you can

About Amanda Ellis

UWA graduate, Bachelor of Commerce (marketing major; business law minor)

Four years as an in-house copyeditor for state government agencies; responsible for hiring and managing contract editors; several large publications including *State of the Environment Report Western Australia 2006*

Member, UK Society for Editors and Proofreaders; European Association of Science Editors

amanda@amandaellis.com

Phone: 0438 003 868

Amanda Ellis is a journalist and sub-editor. She has contributed to subscription websites such as MiningNews.net and PNGIndustryNews.net. Through her business, Quenda Communications, Amanda offers editing and writing services.

You want to know about surviving as a freelancer? Just ask Amanda about her year in the United Kingdom, 2007 to 2008. How did she manage to publish all those articles and reviews in regional tabloid press and magazines? Where did she find time to take on the editorship of Office Professional magazine and complete a certificate in journalism (sub-editing) with the National Council for the Training of Journalists?

Amanda shared eight very useful survival tips. They demonstrated her passionate attention to good customer service.

1. Personal connections are very important. When your clients become your friends, it is easier to successfully complete the job and to win a repeat job.
2. Make it easy for clients to find you – keep the same website and email address over the years.
3. Send your invoice care of the staff person you worked with and make sure it has important details, like the project number or purchase order number and the name of the contact person.
4. Be familiar with the agency's in-house style guide.
5. Be very clear on the client's preferred method of editing, especially how they feel about using Track Changes.
6. Clarify whether you are expected to edit within an in-house template or to fix the wonky formatting.
7. Try very hard not to affront your authors. Everyone is sensitive to remarks about what they have written. Be very diplomatic.
8. Protect your authors from 'too much red pen'.

Bruce Robins summary

Amanda Ellis, Quenda Communications, <http://amandaellis.com>

- Make friends
- Keep in touch
- Be easy to find in the industry
- Send the bill to your contact to help make sure it gets paid promptly
- Include the project number
- Find out what the style guide is at the start
- Find out what the client's approach/attitude is to editing, e.g. use of track changes or hardcopy markup of the document?
- Use the client's templates if possible
- Maintain trust with the client – don't impose your views on them – decide who is going to make the changes from the start

FORM

Calculate Your Hourly Rate

| Calculate Hourly Rate | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|
| | Example | Your calculation |
| Desired Annual Income. How much do you want to earn after tax? | \$50,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Double desired annual income | \$100,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Add annual business expenses | \$20,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Total | \$120,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Divide total by annual billable hours | 1380 | <input type="text"/> |
| Hourly Rate | \$86.96 | <input type="text"/> |

| Calculate Annual Billable Hours | | |
|--|-------------|----------------------|
| Estimate hours per day you can invoice clients | A 6 | <input type="text"/> |
| Days per week worked | B 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| Weeks per year worked * | C 46 | <input type="text"/> |
| Total billable hours (AxBxC) | 1380 | <input type="text"/> |

* Subtract annual and sick leave from full year

| Distribution of Sales Income | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Business expenses | \$20,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Income tax | \$27,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Business reinvestment | \$23,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Net income | \$50,000 | <input type="text"/> |
| Total | \$120,000 | <input type="text"/> |



131BIZ
The Small Business Specialists

www.sbdc.com.au

IPEd Notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors Limited
www.iped-editors.org
May 2009



A diagram showing the Institute's governance structure can be found on the IPed website, under 'Council'. The starting point in the diagram is the societies of editors, which are the creators and members of IPed. IPed is the child of the societies.

It is educative and enlightening to browse the websites of the societies. What strikes one from the viewpoint of the Institute is the richness of the activities and resources of its parents, and the opportunities that this presents for further strengthening our profession.

Every society publishes a regular newsletter, maintains a register of editorial services available through its members and has a meeting program that engages topics and speakers relevant to the requests and needs of members.

Several of the websites give lists of documents deemed essential for good editorial practice and provide URLs of sites providing information useful to editors. A section giving reviews of books relevant to editing is a nice feature of the Tasmanian society's site. The Queensland site has a list of editing and publishing courses available at Australian tertiary institutions, very useful for new editors seeking training or for established practitioners seeking to enhance their knowledge and qualifications.

The training programs mounted by the societies themselves are impressive. The Canberra society, for example, has seven training events planned for 2009. They cover diverse topics, from grammar essentials to the business of running an editing business, and move also into areas such as graphic design and advanced on-screen editing techniques that [essentially] expand the horizons of people working in the communication sector. The 2009 training program in Victoria is equally expansive. It was launched in April with a workshop on marketing for freelance editors and, during the year, will move through grammar (also the topic for the first 2009 training event of the NSW society), graphic design, editing foreign languages, proofreading and building a website, as topics. 'Become a good editor', a WA workshop this month, will take participants back to the basics of editing practice. In similar vein, last month's meeting topic in WA was 'Starting and surviving as a freelance editor'.

A pioneering achievement of the Queensland society is the implementation of a mentoring scheme, the CAL Editors and Writers Development Project, with the financial support of the Copyright Agency Limited Cultural Fund and in association with the Queensland Writers Centre. This seeks to provide emerging writers with a basic, affordable editing service, and emerging editors with professional development. You can find a progress report on the Queensland site.

In South Australia, the society is hard at work organising our 2009 national conference, the fourth such, which is, in itself, a significant achievement of our profession. Registration for this 8–10 October event is now open, with early-bird rates applying.

The strengths of its members—the societies of editors—are IPed's prime asset in its work to advance the profession of editing. To be an effective national body promoting and strengthening the profession, it draws on the deep and broad experience of its members. A stronger profession is, in turn, sure to generate more populated and vibrant societies of editors. It's an essential synergy.

Now news of the next accreditation exam: subject to sufficient registrations, it will be held on Saturday 12 September 2009. You can register online at

www.iped-editors.org

Ed Highley
Secretary