

BOOK WORM

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS (WA) INC.

September 2005

From the Chair

As you are aware, the October meeting will take the form of a visit to *The West Australian* newspaper office, which has been arranged by Tom Jenkins. However, as the visit ends about 4.30pm and the numbers are limited, your committee has agreed that a general meeting should also be held at 7.30pm on the same date.

This 7.30pm meeting is important, as it will provide members with an opportunity to influence the shape of a national organisation of editors. The CASE National Organisation Working Group has drawn up an Issues Paper outlining the various ways in which a national organisation can be legally registered, structured and managed. Named the Institute of Professional Editors, it will serve all editors at a national level. This meeting is significant to members of the Society of Editors (WA), as it will provide a forum for you to have input into the function and objectives of this body and its management structure.

The Issues Paper will be circulated well before the October 4 meeting so that you will have time to consider what the national organisation's functions will be, and for what activities it should be responsible. At that time you will also be informed of the venue for the meeting – but please put the date and time in your diary now.

Betty Durston and Tom Jenkins

Editorial

The upcoming meeting looks like it will be very useful for members who want to learn more about how to navigate their way through the often shark-infested waters of electronic media! I'm sure Rhonda will make it accessible to all of us.

Speaking of things electronic, I have to say that whilst I'm sure that the new SOEWA website is a wonderful improvement on the old one, it means I will have to somehow upgrade my browser software (Netscape Communicator 4.79), as I can no longer read our site – not ideal! I hope other members have more up-to-date software than I do!

Finally, I would like to extend our thanks to Siobhan Barter, editor of *Offpress*, for the light relief pieces 'The Wright Weye' and 'Quotable Quotes' that follow.

Tanya Marwood

Forthcoming Meetings

September Meeting

From paper to pixels: dealing with digital content

September's meeting is for the slightly technophobic! Or, at least, those wishing to sharpen their skills working in electronic media.

Rhonda Bracey, a member of the Society whose experience includes ten years working in the software industry, six years as principal of CyberText Consulting, being webmaster for three websites, and extensive technical writing in IT-related fields, will cover the following areas:

- Screen vs. print – what are the basic differences in the two media? Including fonts, readability, and the graphic formats suitable for screen.
- Editing screen-based content – a chance to look at some 'live' examples.
- Resources – materials for those who want to know more.

When: Tuesday, 6 September 2005, 7.30pm to 9.00pm

Where: CWA House (Board Room) 1174 Hay Street, West Perth (off-street parking and entrance at rear of building)

Cost: \$2.00 members, \$5.00 non-members

RSVP to Chris Walker (cdwalker@ca.com.au) by Friday 2 September

Report on August Meeting: Copyright Council

Thanks to Anne Surma for organising this meeting, which featured guest speaker Ian McDonald from the Australian Copyright Council making an entertaining presentation on the topic of copyright law and its developments for the editing and publishing professions, including what copyright law covers and how it is evolving.

Why do editors worry about copyright law? We're not ultimately responsible, either the author or the publisher is. Editors need to know the essentials, and provide guidance to our clients; we are (theoretically) distant from budgetary implications and thus should have an impartial view.

Ian started by briefly taking us through the history of copyright law, from its beginnings with the invention of the printing press, through to the 18th and 19th centuries when authors' rights became an issue, and on to the creation of the Copyright Acts we know today.

Ian explained what is and is not protected by copyright—“choreography and dramatic works are covered, but we draw the line at line dancing, that’s social not dramatic.”

Other areas of copyright law covered were the differences between reproduction, communication and adaptation; the recent changes to the duration of copyright in Australia; the different international laws; copyright as it affects the Internet; and moral rights.

An interesting case study mentioned was that of dodgy Bali movies created by someone with a camcorder in a cinema. It’s illegal to make them, but it’s not illegal to buy them, and it’s not illegal to bring them back to Australia. But it’s illegal to play them, as they are from that moment stored on your hard drive, and that’s technically illegal reproduction.

The Copyright Council website <http://www.copyright.org.au> has information sheets to download. They run a telephone advisory service which is run from Sydney, and have an online request form whereby they can provide feedback on specific issues.

Katie Lennerts

Occasional Series on Australian Editors (OSAE) – National Editors’ Conference Update

The overarching aim of this historical project is to increase the visibility and profile of editors as significant contributors to our cultural heritage and promote the editing profession. The Melbourne-based Occasional Series on Australian Editors (OSAE) working group—endorsed by the Society of Editors (Vic.) and CASE—has a national vision. We encourage expressions of interest and support from other state and territory members and welcome new members or volunteers to assist with our ongoing program. The recently launched new website for the Society of Editors (Vic.) will feature regular updates about the activities of the OSAE working group.

The working group has been busy planning two special events tied to the national editors’ conference (13–15 October) in Melbourne. We will host a panel, *Some of the Finest: Honorary Life Members*, sponsored by the Society of Editors (Victoria) on 13th October. This title refers to Anthony Barker’s biography of Beatrice Davis, *One of the First and One of the Finest*, which inspired the establishment of the OSAE working group.

Honorary Life Members who will participate in the panel are: Sheila Allison (Tasmania), Pamela Ball (South Australia), Loma Snooks (Canberra) and Lee White (Victoria) (chair to be confirmed). The working group will also record Honorary Life Members—Editors in Conversation—during the conference for the OSAE oral and print archives.

Some of the Finest: Honorary Life Members

Sheila Allison began her working life in various facets of newspaper publishing and as an editor for the Australian Film, Television and Radio School in Sydney and Australian Teachers of Media in Melbourne. Since 1989, Sheila has been manager and publisher for the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies (University of Tasmania, Hobart), producing a national quarterly journal and various books and also offers editorial and publishing services. She is proprietor and director of Montpelier Press and editorial production manager for Red Hill Books.

Pamela Ball was a teacher of French and English with the education department in Adelaide when the department offered her the chance to join their publishing unit, first as editor of curriculum materials, then as editor of their journal, *Pivot*, and finally as manager of the publishing unit. Pamela is now a freelance writer and editor, was one of the founders of the South Australian Society of Editors in 1989 and their first president.

Loma Snooks has over 25 years' experience at a senior level in editing, information design and publication team management. Some career highlights include assembling and leading the team preparing the sixth edition of the Commonwealth's Style Manual for authors, editors and printers; developing and managing a large team of editors and designers working around Australia and in the US and Asia on high-profile public reports; and creating a new brand (including logo, marketing material, web site and writing guidelines) for a public owned legal firm. Loma played a key part in the establishment of editing societies in South Australia and Canberra, and was the Inaugural President of the Canberra Society of Editors, of which she is an honorary life member. She was also the ACT representative on the National Editing Standards Working Group, which produced the National Standards for Editing Practice.

Lee White started editing at Sun Books, where she was trained by Geoffrey Dutton. She worked at William Collins (London), Macmillans, and the National Gallery of Victoria and Monash University before becoming a full-time freelance editor. During her career, Lee has worked with many famous Australian authors and celebrities, including Geoffrey Blainey, Barry Humphries, David Foster, Roland Robinson, Phillip Adams, Stephen Murray Smith and Patsy Adam Smith.

If members have any queries regarding the OSAE project, contact Diane Brown: diane@netspace.net.au or phone (03) 9718 1358

OSAE Working Group (Victoria): Kerry Biram, Diane Brown (Convenor), Anitra Nelson, Renée Otmar.

Diane Brown, Convenor, OSAE Working Group

'The Wright Weye'

Understatement is always best.

Exaggeration is a million times worse than understatement.

The passive voice is to be avoided.

Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.

Be more or less specific.

Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."

Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc. Don't never use a double negation. capitalise every sentence and remember always end it with point.

Do not put statements in the negative form.

If you reread your work, you can find on rereading a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing.

Who needs rhetorical questions?

And don't start a sentence with a conjunction. (Remember, too, a preposition is a terrible word to end a sentence with.)

Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.

Don't overuse exclamation marks!!!!!!

Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.

Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.

If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.

Quotable Quotes (All attributed to George W. Bush)

'The vast majority of our imports come from outside the country.'

'If we don't succeed, we run the risk of failure.'

'One word sums up probably the responsibility of any Governor, and that one word is to be prepared.'

'I have made good judgments in the past. I have made good judgments in the future.'

'A low voter turnout is an indication of fewer people going to the polls.'

'We are ready for any unforeseen event that may or may not occur.'

Both the above items are reprinted, with kind permission, from the March 2005 edition of 'Offpress', newsletter of the Society of Editors (Queensland) Inc.

New Online Journal

Pamela Hewitt has sent the following promotion for a free online journal for editors entitled 'The Fine Print'. It's a peer-reviewed journal for which the editorial boards and readers give their time and services *gratis*. Since Pamela says she pays to produce the journal but no charges are made to readers and no payment is made to contributors, I thought it probably qualified for 'non-commercial' status!

THE FINE PRINT

Australia's independent online journal dedicated to editing.

Second issue OUT NOW

www.emendediting.com/ezine

Reader feedback:

'I love the look of the pages, the graphics are fresh and the layout is clean and inviting.'

Gail Bell, author of Shot and The Poison Principle

'The articles are interesting, comprehensive and adult (all things I look for these days in my mags).'

Louise Forster, editor, WordsWorth Writing

'The Fine Print is a much-needed, informative and engaging resource for editors, writers, teachers, students and publishers. Bookmark it and use it often!'

Eva Sallis, author of 'Hiam', 'Fire Fire' and 'The Marsh Birds'

New Members

We welcome the following new members to SOEWA:

Cheryl Bettridge, 181 Versteeg Grove, Martin, WA 6110,
cheryl.bettridge@yulebrook.wa.edu.au

Peta Goodwin, PO Box 1676, Margaret River, WA 6285,
petagoodwin@iprimus.com.au

BJ Thomason, 17 Osprey Circle, Ballajura, WA 6066, asthom@iexpress.net.au

Donna Ward, 1 Galway St, Leederville, WA 6007, dw.contact@bigpond.com

Trivia Time

"A piece of trivia for you: apparently the word 'set' has more meanings than any other – 464 according to the OED!"

Alex George, SOEWA member

Deadline for September 2005 Book Worm issue:

Tuesday 20 September 2005.

All submissions gratefully accepted.

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*Not this edition, as I sent Michele last month's Book Worm (no wonder she couldn't find any mistakes!)