



**The Society of Editors WA**

## **BOOK WORM**

newsletter of the society of editors (wa) inc.

November 2006

### **From the chair**

What movie buff hasn't been inspired by the nonchalant elegance of a Fred Astaire or a Cary Grant? What has sartorial style to do with editing, you may wonder? Bear with me. Recently, I found this short passage from *Cary Grant: a Celebration of Style*, by Richard Torregrassa, and wanted to share it with you.

"To some this practice (perfect tailoring) might appear excessively fussy, almost obsessive-compulsive. (Grant would send his shirts on a 10,000-mile return journey to Tokyo with instructions to his tailor to 'extend the collar tip by one-eighth of an inch'.) But all great artists realise that even the smallest details are keenly important to the larger creation. In fact, they are the larger creation."

In tailoring, it's loose threads, a poor fit, inappropriate accessories and faulty stitching. In editing, it's the same. Overlooked details that let down the whole look... I mean book.

Educational monthly meetings, *Book Worm* and the fellowship of like-minded people should help us all to appear on the best-dressed list of publications in WA and, with globalisation, anywhere around the world, from home. Next month, after a year full of professional meetings, we're focussing more on sheer enjoyment. The details for our Christmas function, including readings from various members, are below. Let me know if you can come: we'd love to see you there.

*Kerry Coyle*

### **Editorial**

Sorry for the changes to the *Book Worm* deadline, everyone, but we needed to get it out early this month for various logistical reasons.

The end of the year looms already and soon the Christmas craziness will descend. (You guessed it – I'm no fan of Christmas: Bah! Humbug!)

As this is the last edition of *Book Worm* until next February, when we will advertise the details of the March AGM, I'll take the opportunity to say thanks to everyone who contributed material during the past year: keep it coming in 2007! This is *your* newsletter and offers every member of SOEWA a chance to have a say on editing and

related issues in a supportive, professional arena. Keep making the most of it!

*Tanya Marwood*

## **Forthcoming meetings**

### **November: Accreditation and Celebration**

Make a note in your diary now for SOEWA's final meeting for 2006: lots of good fellowship—including readings by some of our members—accompanied by delicious food and a drink or two!

During the first part of the evening, 6.30 to 7.00 pm, there will be informal readings by various members from their own works—a chance to hear from the creative side of your colleagues. This is an ideal opportunity to read a brief excerpt from one of your works (published or otherwise), so bring something along.

During this time we'll also open the wine, then just after 7.00 pm we'll bring in the food and celebrate Christmas early. This is a chance to catch up with friends and colleagues and the year in general. Those of you who attended last year's Christmas celebration at Sandra Roe's house will remember what an enjoyable evening it was—and although this year's venue is not nearly as beautiful, we have engaged the same excellent caterers.

RSVPs are essential.

*We look forward to seeing you all in November!*

When: Tuesday 7 November 2006, 6.30–9.30 pm

Where: CWA House, 1174 Hay Street, West Perth, third-floor Boardroom. (Enter via back door and take the elevator. Free parking is available at the rear of the building.)

Cost: \$15 members (subsidised by SOEWA), \$20 non-members

RSVP to Kerry Coyle, 9482 3143, [kcoyle@westnet.com.au](mailto:kcoyle@westnet.com.au) by 31 October

## **Report on October meeting: English Usage Workshop with James Hansen**

### **“Shudder Time”**

No, it wasn't a sci-fi horror fiction convention, though the emotions of the participants at the society's annual “technical” workshop on Tuesday 3 October were fully aroused when confronted with the list of topics for discussion. (The topics, largely of Australian origin, had been sent in by members and then sorted and presented by me, as facilitator, into a 20-page document for the group.)

The facile verbalising of nouns at the expense of perfectly good plain English words was soon identified as a major cause of poor expression, with nouns such as *refuge*, *disrespect*, *revenge*, *trial*, *conflict*, *medal*, *partner*, and *impact* being highlighted for discussion. The night, though, produced as many laughs as groans. Take the “verb”

*debut*, for example. How the hell do you pronounce it? “Day-boo”? What about “debuted”? “Day-booted”? The word’s elegant French connotations have long since been trampled flat.

Another good laugh came when discussing the misuse of adjectives as verbs. The following example was spoken by a Vietnamese waitress with a strong Australian accent in response to a request for fast service: “We can *quick* you.” And, following the victory of the West Coast Eagles, keen interest was taken in the statements: “People are jubilating” and “People are jubilant.” There was even time to take a look at how a nineteenth century American informal usage, “snuck”, has sneaked into Australian English. Issue was also taken with the facilitator when he asserted that no word should get into a dictionary until it had first been used by a professional writer of high repute.

The section devoted to that staid and steady stop, the colon, went by with general assent; not so the following section on the semicolon where stylistic concerns and personal preferences produced spirited though constructive exchanges – which was only to be expected in a room full of editors! But there was also time after the main session for members to discuss further matters of usage and style, with the younger members of the society in particular benefiting.

Finally, I would be happy to email the workshop notes (as an RTF attachment) to anyone who requests a copy. Just send an email to [jehansen@westnet.com.au](mailto:jehansen@westnet.com.au) and put the words “NOTES PLEASE” in the subject line.

*James Hansen*

## Call for papers: 2007 National Conference

The Society of Editors (Tasmania) invites proposals for papers and seminars for the **third IPed National Editors Conference**, to be held **9-12 May 2007**, in **Hobart**. The conference has three strands: 'From inspiration to publication' (a general strand), 'Science and education editing' and 'Corporate and public sector editing'.

We are calling for proposals for formal conference sessions, in the form of papers or panel sessions.

We also invite proposals for two-hour seminars and workshops, which will be scheduled for the morning of Saturday 12 May. Delegates will be charged a separate fee for attendance at Saturday seminars and workshops.

Please visit our website to see guidelines and information about proposals: [www.tas-editors.org.au/proposals.htm](http://www.tas-editors.org.au/proposals.htm)

We ask you to use the Microsoft Word template available from that page for your proposal.

**The deadline for proposals is 30 November 2006.** Successful speakers will be notified in mid-January 2007.

For further advice, please write to [conference@tas-editors.org.au](mailto:conference@tas-editors.org.au)

*Robyn Colman*, Society of Editors (Tasmania) Inc., [info@tas-editors.org.au](mailto:info@tas-editors.org.au)

## **IPEd notes**

### **News from the Institute of Professional Editors**

#### **October 2006**

The seed fund, held temporarily on behalf of IPed by the Canberra Society of Editors, is growing fast. IPed values this money, not only because it eases the former clumsy procedures for reimbursing expenditure but also because it demonstrates the societies' commitment to the vision of a national profession.

Several of the societies have set dates for workshops in November to discuss the latest developments. At these workshops the Accreditation Board will present its draft documentation, including guidelines for the assessors and an information kit for applicants. Participants will be able to work through these and provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. The Board is eager to hear the opinions of members because the accreditation scheme depends on members' support. Before the workshops Board delegates will circulate to all members of their societies the documents to be examined at those workshops; if you can't make it to your society's workshop, download these documents and let your delegate know what you think of them.

Plans are well advanced for a national meeting of the initial group of assessors in Melbourne at the beginning of December. Assessors from each society will devote the weekend to considering feedback from the workshops and analysing dummy applications. They expect to arrive at a common understanding of assessment and competence, and will later train their fellow assessors.

The Standards Revision Working Group is taking advantage of the workshops and the assessors' meeting to present the fruits of its work so far, and the National Organisation Working Group will also be seeking input on plans for the constitution and funding of a national entity.

The Communications Working Group has prepared the first draft of a questionnaire that will be distributed to clients and potential clients through the networks of the societies. It aims to find out what clients do and do not know about editors and editing, what they want from editors when they do know about them, and how best to reach them. The group is also searching for potential funding bodies for a public relations campaign, assembling information for a template for a general promotional article, and receiving testimonials. About 20 emails have arrived bearing testimonials. Please keep them coming.

As reported last month, a Website Working Group, comprising web minders from each society, has recently formed. This group will draft an Internet strategy with the aim of improving the visibility of all the societies' websites within the various search engines. The group has established a members-only forum and a wiki on the IPed website. The Website Working Group expects to present an initial report on its efforts

in February 2007.

*Janet Mackenzie*  
Liaison Officer

## **New members**

Welcome to:

Laura Maekivi

Angela Tan-Dominic

Sergei De Silva-Ranasinghe

Jenni Holland

Christopher O'Leary

Alex Gerbaz

## **Deadline for February 2007 Book Worm issue:**

Tuesday 23 January, 2007

*All submissions gratefully accepted.*

## **Contacting SOEWA**

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