



BOOK WORM

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS (WA) INC.

April 2007

From the chair

Hello and welcome everyone.

Well, this Book Worm marks a special point in the Society's history: this is the first issue under the new editor, Rebecca Newman, and the first with a message from the new President, me.

At the AGM, we reluctantly accepted Kerry Coyle's stepping down as President, and I'd like to take a moment to thank her for her commitment and enthusiasm for the role - thanks Kerry! We also thank Cheryl Pech (Secretary) and Tom Jenkins (General Committee member) for their service to SOEWA as they also step down from their positions on the committee.

A big welcome to our committee for 2007:

Emma Pearmain (President)
James Hansen (Vice-President)
Linda Browning (Treasurer)
Josephine Smith (Secretary)

Our General Committee members are:

Amanda Curtin
Anne Surma
Janet Blagg
Tanya Marwood
Polly Delany
Carla Morris

Tanya Marwood has handed Book Worm over to a new editor and I'd like to offer my sincere thanks to her for all her hard work as well. I'm sure Rebecca can introduce herself far better than I can, but I'd like to give her a welcome and thanks here too. I'm sure she's going to do a fantastic job.

And me? My name is Emma Pearmain, and I've been working as a freelance editor here in Perth for the last 5 or so years, with my business Manaia Editing Services.

A Manaia is a guardian spirit, who sits on your shoulder and bites you if you do the wrong thing. I know we aren't allowed – and don't really want – to actually bite our clients but we do sit at their proverbial shoulder and offer advice on the right way to do and say things, so I find the image appealing ... sometimes it would be nice to be able to give at least a little *nip* when they don't want to listen.

I'm sure there's a clever joke involving bookworms and the turning over of new leaves out there somewhere, but I can't find it. Luckily, we are a society of editors, who make a living from words and using them in the best way, so I'm sure you can make your own.

So: Bookworm. New leaf being turned.

Knock yourselves out.

Emma Pearmain

A message from the outgoing President

I have had a most enjoyable year as President and look forward to attending all meetings and events as an ordinary member in the future. I would like to thank the committee and all the members for their encouragement and support over the year. The society is thriving in terms of membership and interest and it is a very rewarding group to belong to – not to mention fun!

Kerry Coyle

Editorial

Editors never get enough praise in my opinion, so I will add my thanks to Emma's for the hours that Tanya Marwood has put in as the editor of Book Worm. I hope to continue her good work and I'm grateful to everyone who has helped make the transition smooth for me!

In the next couple of months SOEWA will bid farewell to Christine Nagel who was Book Worm's editor prior to Tanya! Christine, who for some years ran an agency for writers and presented several courses and seminars on publishing, is

moving back to Melbourne. Her expertise and her bubbly personality will be very much missed. Chris, please keep in touch, and we wish you all the best.

James Hansen, our Vice President, has recently sent an email to all members with a reminder that membership fees are due and (to quote from the email) *'that our rules require that your subscription be paid no later than 31 May 2007 after which, if they remain unpaid, your membership will, unfortunately, lapse.'* Following the vote at the AGM, full membership fees this year are \$60 and \$50 concession.

Rebecca Newman

Forthcoming meeting

April: Editing sex

Good sex is one thing; writing good sex is quite another. And when it comes to editing sex – well, tell us what *you* think! Bring along your stories and examples – from the cringe-worthy to the blush-inducing – or just come along to listen (there's nothing like learning while laughing).

On a more serious note, we will also be voting on the two special resolutions concerning national initiatives: the proposal to affiliate with IPed and the proposal to introduce two levels of accreditation. These were outlined in a group email on 11 March. *Don't forget to send in your proxy form if you are unable to attend in person.*

Date: Tuesday 3 April 2007
Time: 7.30 pm
Venue: CWA House, Board Room (3rd Floor)
1174 Hay Street, West Perth
Parking at rear of building; enter via door from car park
Cost: \$2 members, \$5 non-members
RSVP: Emma Pearmain, 9243 5045, <emma007@amnet.net.au>

Report on March meeting

AGM and readings

At the Annual General Meeting of the Society of Editors WA, held on 13 March 2007, we thanked Kerry Coyle, Cheryl Pech and Tom Jenkins for their work on the committee this year as they stepped down from their positions. We welcomed Emma Pearmain as our new President, Josephine Smith as our new Secretary and Polly Delany and Carla Morris as new General Committee members. Linda Browning agreed to stay on as Treasurer, for which we are deeply grateful and James Hansen continues as Vice-President. Financial members also voted on fees

and consequently full membership of SOEWA is \$60.00 and concessional membership, \$50.00.

After the AGM there was a short interval for socialising and consumption of some fabulous finger food.

Refreshments were followed by readings by four Western Australian writers.

Deborah Robertson, originally from Bridgetown, presented a reading from *Careless*, her first novel. Set in the 1960s, this is the story of eight-year-old Pearl and her effect on the worlds of two complete strangers. This book was short-listed for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and has now also been long-listed for the Miles Franklin Literary Award.

Julia Lawrinson read from her latest novel for young adults, *Bye Beautiful*, which was short-listed for the 2006 Queensland Premier's Literary Awards. The story, also set in the 1960s, centres on a policeman's family in a small country town. Julia began her publishing career with Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

Michèle Drouart, winner of the 2001 WA Premier's Book Awards for *Into the Wadi* (and Book Worm's invaluable proofreader), then read us two short pieces from her current writing.

A change of pace ensued with Simon Haynes reading excerpts from the second book of his best-selling Hal Spacejock science fiction series, which elicited many giggles from the audience. The Hal Spacejock books are published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press, and Simon had many complimentary words for Janet Blagg, his editor.

SOEWA Life Member James Hansen then had a surprise invitation to read a short piece from his own science fiction writing. It was a surprise to many of the audience too, who thoroughly enjoyed it.

Thankfully each of the authors was complimentary about editors and the positive effect we have on their working lives.

Katie Lennerts

IPEd Notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors March 2007

Both the Interim Council and the Accreditation Board held very productive face-to-face meetings during February.

Interim Council

The Interim Council unanimously agreed on the wording of a proposal to put to the members of Australian editors societies by 1 May for endorsement. This document will form the basis of IPEd's constitution when it becomes a legal entity as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, which should be accomplished by 30 June.

The Interim Council reviewed its financial position and methods. It has drafted a policy and streamlined the procedure for one of its main costs, reimbursement of expenditure on meetings, such as airfares, accommodation and catering. An indicative budget is on the website, <iped-editors.org>, under Meeting Minutes, 08/10/06, Attachment 7, and an update will be attached to the minutes of the February meeting when they are posted on the site.

The development of the web site is slower than expected. The reason is the pressure of preliminary tasks, such as making the edwiki feature of the website accessible to Macintosh browsers. Macintosh users can now edit edwiki documents if they use the 'Firefox' browser, but not Macintosh's own 'Safari' browser.

The Interim Council received a progress report on the national conference, to be held on 9-11 May at Wrest Point, Hobart. Several high-profile guests will introduce a broad and enticing program on three types of editing: science and education; the public sector and corporate publications; and creative writing and fiction. National conferences are always stimulating and enjoyable (perhaps the IPEd Singers will reprise their unforgettable performance) and members who miss out on this one will have to wait for Adelaide in 2009. Registration is easy through the conference website at <tas-editors.org.au/conference2007.htm>, or follow the link from the IPEd site. Associated events include a BELS examination to certify editors in the life sciences; a reception at Government House; a book launch, *Editors in Conversation*; and workshops on the day following the conference.

Accreditation Board

The Accreditation Board is exploring the effects of the recommendation to introduce a copyediting examination as a first level of accreditation. Since this is a major alteration to the scheme accepted by the membership, a proposal will be put to the members through their societies. Having achieved agreement in principle, the Board will circulate a sample examination paper so that prospective candidates understand what is required. It is hoped that the first examination will be held simultaneously in all capital cities on a Saturday in October this year.

Janet Mackenzie
IPEd Liaison Officer

CredAbility 5

Institute of Professional Editors Proposed Accreditation Scheme

Motion to be voted on by all societies of editors

That the national accreditation scheme will have two levels: Accreditation, achieved by examination, and Advanced Accreditation, achieved by portfolio.

Background

It is proposed to modify the accreditation scheme in which applicants submit a portfolio for assessment by adding a copyediting examination. The examination does not replace the portfolio; rather, it provides a first level of accreditation. This model will enable the accreditation scheme to be administered efficiently while avoiding the high costs associated with the portfolio-only assessment. It has the additional advantage of enabling IPEd to roll out the accreditation scheme in 2007.

It is expected that an editor with two to three years' professional experience will pass the examination. Those who wish to demonstrate advanced skills may submit a portfolio at a later date.

The open-book examination, lasting three hours, will be held simultaneously in all capital cities and other approved locations on a needs basis. It will be held annually (six-monthly in the first year). The examination will test copyediting and other essential skills, such as project definition and the ability to identify defamation, permission and copyright issues, in accordance with the requirements set out in *Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP)*.

The examination content will reflect the variety of work that editors do, with examples from various kinds of publishing (educational, academic, reference, general non-fiction, fiction, government, corporate) and choices to allow for candidates' specialisations. The examination will comprise:

- copyediting questions
- a short manuscript for editing
- short-answer questions.

Marking of the examination will be weighted to reflect *ASEP* and will recognise that there may be more than one correct solution to an editorial problem and more than one way to mark up a manuscript. The examination will be marked 'pass' or 'fail'. Candidates who fail will receive a report on their performance and may re-sit the examination as often as they like. Provisions are made for appeals and grievances.

Sample questions and answers and an explanation of the marking system will be available on the IPed website <www.iped-editors.org> well in advance of the first examination; some sample questions are given below.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Part 1 Copyediting questions (worth 25%)

Mark your corrections clearly on the page. If you wish to use conventional copyediting marks to correct errors, follow Appendix C in the *Style Manual* (6th edn). You are not expected to check errors of fact in this exercise.

1. While thinking about this catastrophe, the sun sank from view.
2. The average lifetime for a female in Sweden is 75, but there is evidence that in a few years time it will reduce to 74.
3. Social policy today is reminiscant of Swifts A Modest Proposal.

Possible additional type of question:

4. Write a sentence or sentences demonstrating the difference between these pairs of words: principle/principal; affect/effect; alternative/alternate.

Part 2 Manuscript for editing (worth 50%)

[This section is designed to test editorial judgement and management. The manuscript, of about 2500–3000 words, includes inconsistencies of style, heading systems, referencing and ways of presenting information, as well as a realistic number of literals and grammatical infelicities.]

This manuscript is a short special-offer publication to be handed to racegoers as a special promotion at a major racecourse. It requires a light edit with particular emphasis on consistency, accuracy and ease of reading. Mark all corrections and any queries for the author clearly. You will also need to grade the headings, indicate where illustrations should be placed and create a reference list for the footnotes.

The Melbourne Cup turns this on its head. The race is a handicap – where the handicapper gives each horse a different weight according to his assessment of its ability. A different type of level playing field to the classics. A Darwin

schoolteacher, like Wendy Green, owner and breeder of Rogan Josh, the 1999 winner- stands as good a chance of winning the race as the wealthiest of Arab princes and indeed one of the world's wealthiest men, Sheik (get name from Internet), through his Godolphin Stable has tried and failed to win the Cup on many occasions – spending thousands of dollars on traveling horses and staff from Europe to Australia. Good horses don't necessarily win the Cup, but champion horses do. Tables 2 and 3 provide interesting comparisons on the strike rates of favourites and breeding costs of recent Cup winners. From a gambler's point of view, landing the winner of our handicap is a much more attractive option than ticking the boxes to come up with a classic winner. ...

Part 3 Short-answer questions (worth 25%)

[This section offers a choice of questions to accommodate candidates' differing specialties and areas of work.]

Choose FIVE of these TEN questions – each answer is worth 5%:

Question 1

You have received a freelance commission for a light copyedit on a new book by a successful fiction writer. As you work through the book you come upon passages that are familiar and you realise they are taken word-for-word from a foreign-language translation you read as a reference for your Masters thesis. You know this book is unavailable in Australia because you had to have it imported specially. Draft a letter to the author explaining your discovery and what you plan to do about it.

Question 2

The Banjo Paterson poem 'The Man from Snowy River' is being reprinted in a special edition and you have been asked to obtain six illustrations to accompany the text. How would you go about choosing, obtaining and getting permission for these illustrations if

you had an unlimited budget? How would you go about it if you had a strictly limited budget? Answer both questions.

This is an open-book test and you are welcome to bring hard-copy reference materials.

Deadline for May 2007 *Book Worm* issue:
Tuesday 17 April 2007
All submissions gratefully accepted.

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