

# The SOCIETY of EDITORS (VICTORIA)

## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 34 NUMBER 7/8

FEBRUARY 2005

### Next meeting

#### ***Editing oral histories with Janet Roberts Billett***

**Wednesday, 2 March 2005**

**Rathdowne Tavern (upstairs)  
184 Rathdowne Street, Carlton**

**6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m.**

Platters of delicious finger-food.

\$20 members, \$25 non-members. Drinks at bar prices.

Freelance historian, Janet Roberts Billett will discuss the editing process for oral histories and the activities of the Oral History Association of Australia. Janet's background is in teaching: specifically history and politics. In 2004, she completed and self-published *Memories of War: Members of The Naval and Military Club recall World War II*. This archive includes over 50 interviews completed over six years.

Currently Janet is researching *The Yachtsmen Scheme: Australian Volunteers in the Royal Navy 1940–1942* for an MA thesis and hopes to publish a book on the topic. In 2005, she has been assisting the Shrine of Remembrance researching the Changi Flag, which was unveiled on 11 February 2005.

#### **PLEASE NOTE BOOKING DETAILS**

- Book with Amanda Coverdale – email preferred – at <amanda@clari.net.au> or telephone (03) 8802 4482.
- **Book STRICTLY before 5 p.m. on Friday, 25 February.** Bookings received after this deadline will not be accepted. Book early to avoid disappointment.
- State if you are a member, student, ASTC member, AusSI member or non-member. Give an email address or telephone number.
- If you need to cancel, please email or telephone Amanda as soon as possible so we don't waste money catering for people who don't turn up.

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- If you cancel after 7 p.m. on the day before the meeting, the Treasurer will contact you shortly after and ask you to pay as if you had attended.
- People who arrive on the night without a prior booking will be unable to attend.
- When booking on behalf of a group, you will be responsible for paying for each member of the group even if they do not attend.

**Coming up:** Future speakers will include themes on crime writing, travel writing, politics and social justice. Please visit our website for regular updates and details of our 2005 program. If you have a brilliant idea for a speaker or activity for this year, we'd love to hear about it – email <lydia.distefano@eds.com>.

**Special event:** Mark June in your diary for the launch of our new website! More details in our next *Newsletter*.

### May Day

Your Society needs a new Minutes Secretary – are you interested? We need a 'fill in' Minutes taker at committee meetings until our AGM in July. If you can help, please contact President Brett Lockwood at <brett@melbpc.org.au>.



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News, comments, letters and other material for publication, review or mention in the *Newsletter* should be addressed to the *Newsletter* Editor at the address on the left.

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed by individuals in this *Newsletter* are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Society of Editors (Victoria) Inc.

# Honorary Life Membership (HLM) awarded to Elizabeth Flann

by Susan Keogh

*The HLM citation was written and presented by Susan Keogh at the December Christmas meeting.*

Elizabeth Flann is a long-standing member and former committee member of the Society of Editors (Vic) Inc. Entirely unsurprisingly, her portfolio was training, and her services to both the Society and the industry not just in Victoria but in Australia, have helped to shape the industry as we know it today.

With Beryl Hill, she conducted the 'Introduction to Copy-editing' courses before there was such a thing as formal postgraduate training, or indeed formal training, for editors. As editorial training was taken over by educational institutions, Liz moved with it, as a lecturer in editing and scriptwriting for the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Writing and Editing at Deakin University, Toorak. Her inspiration and her passion – qualities all too rare in those entrusted with training – shone through to those fortunate enough to be taught by her. Her students from both the Society's course and Deakin pepper the publishing industry today, and can be found in places as diverse as the outgoing Society committee and the shortlist for this year's Commonwealth Writer's Prize.

But Liz's lasting and ongoing contribution to the industry is far more substantial, and that is her co-authorship with Beryl Hill of *The Australian Editing Handbook*. As the reference book for hundreds of students across Australia and as an invaluable resource for editors with their student days well behind them, the *Handbook* has iconic status in the industry and should have a place on the desk of everyone in this country who thinks of themselves as an editor or proofreader. The United States has the *Chicago Manual of Style*; the United Kingdom has Judith Butcher's *Copyediting*; the Australian industry has for a decade now had its own resource: Flann and Hill. The book's longevity in an industry where few volumes remain in print for longer than a year is testament to the quality of its contents.

In the tenth anniversary year of *The Australian Editing Handbook's* appearance, it is fitting that its author be made an Honorary Life Member.

## Accreditation vote carried in all states

Members of all state and territory societies of editors have voted in favour of the introduction of accreditation for Australian editors.

A secret ballot on the scheme developed by the CASE Accreditation Working Group and accepted by CASE was held during late November and early December 2004.

Some 400 (29%) of the almost 1400 society members eligible to cast a vote did so.

The vote to adopt the accreditation proposal was carried nationally by 307 votes to 91; that is, for every vote against the proposal, there were 3.4 votes in favour of it.

Since the members' vote was overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal, CASE is now seeking the endorsement of the executive committees of all state and territory societies to proceed forthwith towards implementing a national accreditation program.

CASE met in Melbourne on the weekend of 12–13 February to discuss this and other matters, and we will keep members informed of progress.

*Janet Mackenzie*  
Liaison Officer  
Council of Australian Societies of Editors  
[www.case-editors.org](http://www.case-editors.org)

## Society of Editors Workshops

**April:** Basic editing/refresher course (full day)  
**June:** Grammar refresher (half day)

### Up and coming

- Using macros in editing
- Databases
- ATO information for small business
- Quotations and negotiations
- What you need to know about web design
- Using styles in editing

Details will be posted on the website and in newsletters. To hold a place or for queries, please contact Marta Veroni at <[bohemia@melbpc.org.au](mailto:bohemia@melbpc.org.au)>.

# Christmas dinner and book launch – and a HLM thrown in for good measure

By Estelle Longfield

Words, words, words! Fifty-five editors and friends gathered at the Rathdowne Tavern for Christmas dinner and the final meeting for 2004. The conversation was unflagging and the food, enjoyed by all, was served between business items.

After entrée, President Brett Lockwood introduced the 'serious business' of the evening, which was the conferring of Honorary Life Membership (HLM) on Elizabeth Flann, the co-author with Beryl Hill of *The Australian Editing Handbook*, which was launched later in the evening. This had been a well-kept secret and, probably quite uncharacteristically, Elizabeth was almost lost for words. Brett also read Elizabeth's awesome bio. Elizabeth's achievements are many and varied, and the HLM well deserved, despite Brett's tongue-in-cheek remarks regarding loss of annual fees resulting from this honour! Elizabeth was nominated by Susan Keogh (among others) and she read out Elizabeth's citation, which is published on page 2.



Brett Lockwood, Elizabeth Flann and Susan Keogh

Following a leisurely main course, Brett introduced Lesley Beaumont from John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd, publishers of the second edition of *The Australian Editing Handbook*. Lesley introduced the co-authors, Elizabeth Flann and Beryl Hill, and spoke of the excitement and enthusiasm amongst her colleagues when Wiley was considering publishing a new edition of the *Handbook*. The revision of the book was achieved in a remarkably short time. Liz and Beryl met with the team from Wiley in July 2004 and the finished product was available in December.

Elizabeth thanked everyone who had been involved in both editions, particularly Janet Mau and Sharon Nevile and the publishing staff at Wiley. She highlighted the contribution of Robin Freeman of Common Ground Publishing who worked tirelessly to produce a reprint of the first edition while the second edition was being written. Beryl then thanked the

staff from Wiley and particularly Sharon Nevile who had the unenviable task of being the first edition editor and consultant/reviewer of the second edition of the book. Beryl noted the contribution of Wiley editor Jem Bates and managing editor, Peter Storer.

Lesley then introduced Sharon Nevile who said that she had tackled the task with some trepidation as Liz and Beryl had been editing for longer than she had been alive; however, she had found Liz and Beryl great to work with. She had gathered her courage and presented her suggestions; they had agreed on some points, argued persuasively about others, but between them they had been able to reach a satisfactory result every time – and all parties remained friends!

Sharon, who had travelled from Queensland to be present at the launch, pointed out how appropriate it was to launch the book in the present company, as

it was with the Society of Editors in Victoria that this work all began in the late 1980s. Prior to that time there had been few formal training opportunities for aspiring editors. The traditional path had been to begin as a junior in a publishing house, making tea and numbering pages, and learning the craft 'on the job'. Elizabeth and Beryl had been involved with the initiation of such courses and had produced a *Copyediting Handbook* that was the forerunner of *The Australian Editing Handbook*. This book has been a prescribed text for most editing courses in Australia since it was first published in 1994. The new edition is fully revised and now includes very helpful



Lesley Beaumont



Sharon Nevile

information about on-screen editing for editors in this electronic age.

Sharon launched the book and announced that it would be on sale at the end of the evening and that the authors would be available for signing. Brett presented a bottle of wine to both Lesley and Sharon with thanks for travelling so far to participate in the evening.



*Elizabeth Flann and Beryl Hill*

Dessert was served and then Kerry Biram presented the 'Your Choice Editing Awards 2004'. Book prizes, generously donated by Readings Books & Music, were presented for the following categories:

- The 'Big Booker Award' for the person making a booking for the biggest group attending our Christmas party was won jointly by Renée Otmar and Kirstie Innes-Will, who each had arranged bookings for six people.
- The 'Nightmare Award' for the best 'tear your hair out experience' this year went to Maryna Mews who described her experience with a 23-chapter monster produced by an overseas academic publisher specialising in medieval and renaissance literature.
- The 'Eye Teeth Award' for 'the job you'd give your eye teeth to work on' was presented to Di Brown for her choice of a giant publication about Australian editors.
- The 'Em-Dash Award' for the manuscript with the most inappropriate use of punctuation marks was awarded to Bridh Hancock for submission of about 14 pages of poetry in which punctuation was almost absent.
- The 'Irrelevance Award' for the book title with the least possible relevance to the content was won by Amanda Coverdale for her nomination of *Ghost Walk*, which is a thriller with no reference to the supernatural.

It was a very pleasant evening with a relaxed, informal atmosphere in a classy venue.

*The Newsletter team thanks Estelle Longfield for preparing this report.*



*(l. to r.) Frans Timmerman, Anitra Nelson and Ron Thiele*



*(l. to r.) Janet Mackenzie, Wendy Sutherland and Carole Pearce*

## Newsletter advertising rates

The Society of Editors (Victoria) has a mailing list which includes libraries and universities, as well as individual members.

The newsletter is published 10 times per year, with combined issues for November/December and January/February. Deadline for each issue is the second Wednesday of each month.

Sizes and rates are as follows:

Full page: 180 x 267 (tall) – \$200

Half page: 180 x 131 (horizontal only) – \$100

Third of a page: 180 x 85 (horizontal only) – \$65

Quarter page: 180 x 63 (horizontal) or 87 x 131 (tall) – \$50

Inserts: \$250 (delivered to newsletter distributors, no folding)

(GST included for all rates)

Current print run: approx 460.

Please contact Liz Steele on

<lzsteele@melbpc.org.au> for further details.

# Editing in Context – Melbourne, 13–15 October 2005

## Conference update



Following a welcome break over December/January, the Editing in Context conference organising sub-committee is back at work with much enthusiasm for what looks like a busy but absorbing

year preparing for the second national editors conference in October.

We are proud to welcome John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd as the major conference sponsor. Wiley's continued support of Australian editors in sponsoring the CASE conference for a second time is very much appreciated.

A full list of conference sponsors is still being finalised. We have been encouraged by the generous responses so far; however, we continue to seek companies or individuals who would like to sponsor this event. A range of opportunities for promotion, signage and discounted rates for attendance are available to conference sponsors. Please contact Sally Woollett at <editingincontext@optus.home.com.au> if you would like to offer your support.

We are also very pleased to announce the three keynote speakers for the conference. They are:

- **Michael Webster** – Course Coordinator of the RMIT Graduate Diploma of Editing and Publishing and Principal of Nielsen BookScan Australia

- **Janet Mackenzie** – Freelance editor and author of *The Editor's Companion*
- **Jackie Yowell** – Consultant Publisher, Allen & Unwin.

Proudly sponsored by



Conference participants will have the opportunity to hear the keynote speakers discuss the current state of the publishing industry in Australia as part of a lively panel session. They will also present their own particular perspectives on our conference themes of Transition, Consolidation and Collaboration.

Other events planned for the Editing in Context conference include a conference dinner, trade fair and field trips. For science editors, the international BELs exam has been planned for Melbourne to coincide with the conference – see page 6 for details.

Visit our conference website at <www.socedvic.org/editingincontext/> for up-to-date information and the latest news on these and other conference developments. If you have any suggestions or questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Conference Convenor, Lan Wang, at <editingincontext@optushome.com.au>.

*Conference Organising Sub-committee*

## The editing of research theses by professional editors

**Policy developed by the Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies collaboratively with the Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE)**

### Background

Professional editors need to be clear about the extent and nature of help they offer in the editing of research students' theses and dissertations. Academic supervisors of research students also need to be clear about the role of the professional editor as well as their own editorial role. This document has been developed with close attention to the current Australian Standards for Editing Practice.

### Proofreading and Editing of Research Theses and Dissertations

It is expected that the academic supervisors of research higher degree students will provide editorial advice to their students. This type of advice is covered in Standards C, D and E of Australian Standards for Editing Practice:

- Standard C, Substance and Structure
- Standard D, Language and Illustrations
- Standard E, Completeness and Consistency

Students may use a professional editor in preparing their thesis for submission, but they should discuss this with their principal supervisor and provide the editor with a copy of this policy before they commence work.

Professional editorial intervention should be restricted to:

- Standard D
- Standard E

Where a professional editor provides advice on matters of structure (Standard C), exemplars only should be given.

Material for editing or proofreading should be submitted in hard copy. In electronic copy it is too easy for the student to accept editorial suggestions without thinking about their implications.

When a thesis has had the benefit of professional editorial advice, of any form, the name of the editor and a brief description of the service rendered, in terms of Australian Standards for Editing Practice, should be printed as part of the list of acknowledgements or other prefatory matter. If the professional editor's current or former area of academic specialisation is similar to that of the candidate, this too should be stated in the prefatory matter of the thesis.

The Australian Standards for Editing Practice is available on the following website: <www.case-editors.org>.

# Miscellanea

## BELS exam at national conference

A Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) exam will be held in Melbourne in conjunction with the CASE Editing in Context: National Editors Conference, 13–15 October 2005. Precise details of the date and time of the exam will be posted later in the year.

BELS is a US-based organisation that offers certification by examination to editors in the life sciences. Formed in 1991, it has certified members worldwide, including about five in Australia. You can read all about the BELS organisation and the certification exam at the BELS website at <[www.bels.org](http://www.bels.org)>.

The purpose of this early notice is that anyone who is interested in gaining BELS certification needs to apply to BELS for candidacy. Applicants need to submit (by mail or fax) an application form (which is available from the BELS website) a CV, proof of education (copy of diploma or transcript from the highest degree), three letters of reference and US\$25. BELS can accept VISA or Mastercard payments but you will need to send an email to request a form for this as it is not on the website.

Assuming that all is in order, applicants will be sent a letter admitting them to candidacy, a study guide (which is very useful and will also help you to decide if you want to go ahead with the exam this year), the schedule of exams and an exam registration form. If candidates decide that they want to proceed they will need to forward the exam registration form and a further US\$100.

If anyone would like further information about BELS please contact Janet Salisbury – email: <[janet.salisbury@biotext.com.au](mailto:janet.salisbury@biotext.com.au)>.

## Your news and views

We welcome any contributions to your Society's monthly newsletter. Please send your letters, anecdotes or issues you would like discussed to Liz Steele at <[lzsteele@melbpc.org.au](mailto:lzsteele@melbpc.org.au)> or to the address on the front cover of this newsletter.

## ASTC news

### Thursday 3 March

Tony Self, technical communicator, Help developer and Australasian Online Documentation and Content Conference (AODC) Convenor will present an update on the progress of Microsoft's Longhorn Help methodology, still under development. He will also give us a preview of the eighth annual AODC Conference to be held in Melbourne 4–6 May.

### Thursday 7 April

Kurt Reiter from WAM!NET, a secure digital asset transport, management and remote storage provider will discuss secure data management. Many technical communicators will work on secret or at least confidential information in their careers. How do you deal with it? How do you store it? How do you send it?

### Thursday 5 May

AGM and elections to committee 2005–2006.

## SfEP news

The Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) has relaunched its website, following a major redesign. The new site is at <[www.sfep.org.uk](http://www.sfep.org.uk)>.

## Moving large files

Droplod ([www.droplod.com](http://www.droplod.com)), is a website designed to make transferring large files over the Internet easy. It works like a temporary, one-time Web server, holding files long enough for the receiver to collect them. Simply upload a file or files (as large as 100MB) using Droplod's Web-based interface, and then the site notifies your intended recipient via email. Once that person downloads the file, it's deleted from Droplod's server. The best part is that it's free. Droplod was launched last year and there are now more than 72,000 registered users sending between 3,000 and 4,000 files across its servers every day. Similar sites, such as YouSendIt <[www.yousendit.com](http://www.yousendit.com)> and SendThisFile <[www.sendthisfile.com](http://www.sendthisfile.com)> have also been developed to accomplish the same task.

# Banished words list

Robert Doolan

*The newsletter acknowledges and thanks author Robert Doolan and Offpress, newsletter of the Society of (Queensland) Inc., for permission to reproduce the following article. It first appeared in the September 2004 edition of Offpress and was awarded the Queensland Society's Editor's prize for 2004.*

'No "smoking gun" in Iraq, Powell admits'

That was the headline in *The New York Times* on 9 January 2004. By that time the overused expression 'smoking gun' had irritated plenty of people. The press and electronic media used it widely during the search for Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction (or distraction, depending on whose side you were on). But when *The New York Times* used it in that headline, it had already spread like fire ants at a butchers' picnic.

Eight days before this *New York Times* story appeared, Lake Superior State University included 'smoking gun' in its Banished Words List. This is a list of misused, overused, and useless words the university has announced every New Year's Day since 1976.

I like Lake Superior State University, even though the only two facts I know about it are that it is Michigan's smallest public university, and it has a Banished Words List. But that's enough to get my support.

Each year the university takes nominations for words and expressions that people would like banned. More than 5000 nominations poured in through its website for the 2004 list, and there will probably be even more for the 2005 list. I feel sorry for the selectors who have to decide the finalists each year.

Words that made it on to the 2004 list include LOL, captured alive, and shots rang out.

Rachel Rose of Michigan proposed LOL (laughing out loud). 'It's everywhere on the net!' she said. "'OMG! u r chattin to sum1 then ... lol this and lol that" ... Get it away! I wonder if anyone really laughs out loud when they use this shorthand Instant Messenger slang?'

Bill Lodholz suggested captured alive. 'The news keeps stating that Saddam Hussein was "captured alive." Well, what other way are you going to be captured?'

Shots rang out annoyed Michael Kinney of Maryland. 'I'm tired of hearing this phrase on the news. Shots don't "ring" unless you are standing too close to the muzzle, and in that case you don't need the reporter telling you about it.'

The university publishes each year's final selection, as well as its complete list of finalists since 1976.

The full list has many words and phrases that editors hate — old favourites such as basically, utilise, at this point in time, think outside the box, awesome, the bottom line, synergy,

very unique, past history, on a \_\_\_ basis, each and every one of you ...

It also has some surprises. In the late 1980s the word fax was obviously annoying enough to make it on to the 1990 list. But within a few years you couldn't work in an office without using the word. Another surprise was that Let's do lunch was peeving people way back in 1986. I didn't notice it until 1994 (but that may be because no one invited me to lunch until then).

You can suggest words for the next list through the university's website at <[www.lssu.edu/banished/](http://www.lssu.edu/banished/)>.

## 'Sticky note' Award

The Victorian Society of Editors has decided to have its own competition for the best contribution to our newsletter for 2005. A prize will be awarded (we haven't thought of it yet!) and the winner will be presented with the inaugural 'Sticky note' Award and their prize at our Christmas dinner in December. Word limit will be 600 words, topic anything to do with words (of course) and as many entries as you like. So we hope you've enjoyed Robert's article and look forward to receiving your contribution.

## Bookshop discounts

Members receive 10% discount on book purchases over \$20 (specials excluded) at the following bookshops, on presentation of a current membership invoice:

- Technical Book Shop  
295 Swanston Street, Melbourne
- Brunswick Street Bookstore  
305 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy
- Pages Bookshop  
167 High Street, Kew
- Collins Booksellers  
56 Toorak Road, South Yarra (not other Collins Booksellers stores)
- Spellbound Books  
460 Lygon Street, Brunswick East

## Dates for your diary

### *Next meeting*

Wednesday, 2 March 2005

### *Editing in Context conference*

13–15 October 2005



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### Honorary Life Members

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John Curtain (d. 1999)  
Beatrice Davis (d. 1992)  
Frank Eyre (d. 1988)

Stephen Murray-Smith (d. 1988)  
Anne Godden (d. 2004)

Membership of the Society is open to anyone engaged professionally in any aspect of editing for publication, or who has had such experience in the past. Associate membership is open to anyone interested in the Society's activities. Associate members may not vote or hold office in the Society.

Membership application/renewal forms are available from the Secretary, the Membership Secretary or the Society's website: <<http://www.socedvic.org>>

#### Subscriptions

Full membership \$66  
Associate membership \$66

Distant membership \$38.50