



Next meeting

National organisation issues paper workshop

Wednesday, 7 September 2005

English Speaking Union

146 Toorak Rd (West), South Yarra

6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. start

Dine on an exciting new variety of finger foods (including vegetarian). Tea and coffee provided. Drinks at bar prices.

\$20.00 members, \$25.00 non-members.

The September meeting is your opportunity to contribute to the shape of the national organisation of editors. The CASE National Organisation Working Group has drawn up an issues paper that outlines the various ways in which a national organisation can be legally registered, structured and managed. This issues paper has been emailed to all members, and it will be posted on the CASE website at <http://www.case-editors.org/>

Please bring your copy of the Issues Paper with you.

The organisation, to be named Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd), will serve all editors at a national level. The September workshop will provide a forum for you to have input into its registration choice, its function and objectives as your national representative, and its internal management structure for the best possible ways in which to serve its membership.

The workshop will use small-group discussion to focus on the following:

- What should the national organisation's functions be? For what activities should it be responsible?
- How do you see the state societies working with the national organisation?
- Which model of registration do you prefer?

If you have suggestions about the national organisation but are unable to attend the workshop, please email your feedback or phone Janet Mackenzie at superscript@netspace.net.au or 5775 2988 or Katya Johanson at katya.johanson@deakin.edu.au or 9244 6465.

PLEASE NOTE BOOKING DETAILS

- Book with Katya Johanson—email preferred—at katya.johanson@deakin.edu.au or telephone (03) 9244 6465.
- Book STRICTLY before 5 p.m. on Monday, 5 September. 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 Katya as soon as possible so we don't waste money catering for people who don't turn up.
- 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.

Coming up

Editing in Context—National Editors' Conference

13–15 October 2005. Eden on the Park, Melbourne, Victoria.

Registration is now open on the conference website at:

www.socedvic.org/editingincontext or email

editingincontext@optushome.com.au for more information.

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Have you registered?

The Editing in Context conference committee is working hard to finalise the three-day program for October. Session abstracts and biographical notes on presenters and participants on our panels and workshops are being coordinated and put up on our website at <http://www.socedvic.org/editingincontext> with the draft program. Within the themes of Transition, Consolidation and Collaboration, we are developing some excellent sub-themes throughout each day that focus on specific issues like training, project management, career management and online editing.

Note that early-bird registration is due on 26 August and there is the option of shared and one-day registration. Study the program and see how it suits you and join us for the best professional development and networking opportunities available this year.

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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.

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)

Janet Mackenzie, Liaison Officer

News from the Institute of Professional Editors (formerly CASE), August 2005

Note:

IPE has decided to slightly modify its shortened name to IPEd, a more euphonious acronym according to one member.

National Organisation

The National Organisation Working Group, convened by Haya Husseini of Victoria, has been hard at work investigating the problems and possibilities of a national body. The Institute recognises that the strength of the profession is in its state and territory societies, and that any national body should contribute to the societies rather than draw energy away from them. Yet it is essential for the societies to form some kind of federation that can undertake such matters as accreditation, advocacy and promotion at the national level.

What should the national organisation's functions be? How should it work with the state societies? What legal structure should it adopt? The working group's Issues Paper sets out some of the options, and the societies will hold workshops to discuss them during August and September. Each society will send its members a copy of the Issues Paper, inform them of the date and venue for its workshop, and give an email address for feedback from those who cannot attend. (The Issues Paper will also be posted on the website

<case-editors.org>.) This is obviously a crucial step for Australian editors, and all members are urged to take part in the discussion. A plenary session at the Melbourne conference will consider the feedback from the workshops and determine how the profession wants to proceed in this matter.

Accreditation

The Institute has received a thoughtful discussion paper dealing with several aspects of accreditation from Professor Pam Peters of Macquarie University. The paper and the Institute's response will be placed on the website. Meanwhile the Accreditation Board is preparing its presentation for a plenary session at the Melbourne conference in October.

National Conference, 13–15 October

As editors face the far-reaching changes resulting from organising at a national level and introducing an accreditation scheme, it is vital to air all the issues with complete openness. The Institute cannot function without the informed consent of members and it makes every effort to consult them at each step. The biennial national conferences are as close as we get to a representative meeting of members. The Melbourne conference is shaping up as an enticing opportunity for individual professional development, and it will also be a forum at which members can influence the national profession and help to shape its future.

Membership report 2004–2005

Ron Thiele, Membership Secretary

This has been my first year on the Committee and an interesting one at that. Time was initially spent consolidating the fine work done by Helen and Rob Moore setting up our membership system, writing procedures for processing new members and renewing members, and writing the necessary form letters.

An early quality audit of our VicNet email list revealed multiple errors and it was scrapped in favour of our membership system email list, which is now maintained to a high degree of accuracy. My thanks to all those who do the right thing and let us know when they change email addresses—it saves me a phone call!

Due to some energetic chasing last year, we had less than 30 members who chose not to renew—less than 10% of the membership. This was more than offset by the 88 new members who joined during the year and by the half-dozen or so who renewed after having lapsed for a year or more.

People must have got the message that we value them as members and would like them to pay promptly: by the end of the first week of July, just over half of our 374 members had renewed for 2005–06.

During the year, to cut the administrative burden and save your money, we stopped automatically sending out receipts and membership cards by mail and sent emails instead. About 10 people were sent plasticised cards on request.

Other activities included:

- an improved method of reporting membership statistics to the committee

- the development of a sheet for potential members and referees on the requirements of membership
- redesign of the membership form
- revised policy on how much needs to be paid during the year (new members in May or June are now considered to have paid for the following year)
- an increase in the membership fee, to partly compensate for the GST and for inflation since the last fee rise (the committee anticipates no further rises for at least two years since that decision).

August membership report

The society's members have been quick this year to renew, with over two-thirds now having paid their fees for 2005-06. If you've not yet renewed, time is fast running out! When you get this newsletter, your subscription will be more than six weeks overdue. Please support your society and reduce the administrative burden on your all-volunteer officers by attending to your overdue membership without delay. Simply fill out the form in this newsletter, attach payment and return to our post office box, or go online to <<http://www.socedvic.org>> and pay online.

Kerry Greenwood on writing crime fiction

By Mary Pearl

On Wednesday, 3 August, Kerry Greenwood spoke to members of the Society of Editors about her earliest influences, and how Phryne Fisher, the 1928 lady detective, came to be born.

If you count her six non-fiction books, Kerry has produced 38 books so far. But there are many more where they came from. Kerry intends to keep on keeping on until the thought processes give out.

No experience is ever wasted. Kerry believes that almost everything she has learned or done has played a part in the particular path she has taken as a writer. Kerry studied law at Melbourne University and wrote her legal history thesis on the 1928 wharfies' strike. She hasn't been able to shake her addiction to research ever since. She learned about Greek mythology from Herodotus and her best friend's grandmother, who brought to life for her the ancient Greeks, mythical characters, and past and present events.

Like Phryne Fisher's occasional collaborators, Cec and Bert, Kerry's father was a wharfie 'with a very wide acquaintance' and her mother had a large family. They all had stories to tell and Kerry was 'the *chiel* among them' taking mental notes. She began her apprenticeship by telling tall tales to her siblings at bedtime. The stories were an amalgam of imagination and inspiration—whatever Kerry was reading at the time got thrown into the mix.

Kerry graduated from the oral to the written yarn when she was sixteen. Her first novel was a 100,000 word adaptation of Tolkien that she called 'The Magic Stone'. Kerry's office was her mother's apricot tree. I'm unsure whether she wrote them all there but Kerry produced eight novels before one got to do the publishing house rounds. No matter how dispiriting the rejections are, the trick is to have faith in your work and not to give up. 'Bloody mindedness distinguishes the published from the unpublished' is how Kerry puts it. She exhausted every publisher in the phonebook before offering up her novel for the Vogel award. The book didn't take a prize, but it did get Kerry a foot in the door with publishers McPhee-Gribble.

Hilary McPhee wanted a detective story; Kerry had read detective stories. Unfortunately she knew nothing about writing them. Clutching a two-book contract to her, Kerry boarded the Brunswick tram and thought the proposition through. She decided she would stick to the tried and true narrator's point of view and set the background in 1928, an era she understood. The protagonist would be Phryne, named after a mythical ancient Greek courtesan. Phryne took lovers, was educated, independent and could own property at a time when women were property. Kerry decided that Phryne would be perfect for 1928. Kerry's inspiration for Miss Fisher was her sister Janet who looked like Louise Brooks, an American silent picture actress. Both had a 'Bobby cut', green eyes, a long face and pale skin. Phryne would come from a poor background so she could appreciate owning the 'biggest, reddest car' and being the employer of a team of dedicated staff: a butler, a cook and a companion. By the time Kerry got home Phryne was in charge and raring to go.

Kerry feels more confident these days writing about contemporary times and characters. The protagonist in her new series is Corinna Chapman, a character loosely modelled on Kerry herself. Phryne is 'designed to be a hero, Corinna is an ordinary person like everybody else'.



Kerry recently sold a story that she started writing when she was fifteen. 'Keep all your bits of paper.' And find a good editor. If the editor gets it wrong, the book suffers and it's the author who gets the bad press for it. Kerry is always busy getting on with the next project and appreciates an editor who will treat her work with respect. 'The ideal editor does not want to rewrite the novel' but picks up information or explanation necessary to the story that the author has missed. Kerry's editor once sent her a page of dots. She was offering Kerry, who is allergic to them, 'an emergency shipment of full stops'.

Despite a bad case of laryngitis, Kerry managed an hour's worth of interesting and informative talk to an appreciative audience.

The Newsletter team thanks Mary Pearl for writing the dinner report.

Freelance Register 2006

The *Freelance Register* is a directory of independent editorial contractors, published annually in booklet form and also posted on the Society's website. It is distributed free of charge to publishers and other corporations, government departments and community organisations. Anyone who is a financial full member of the Society for 2005–06 is eligible for a listing. You must re-apply each year—freelancers with entries in the 2005 *Freelance Register* will not automatically be included in the 2006 edition.

The deadline for entries for the *Freelance Register 2006* will be Friday 28 October 2005.

The fee for an entry in the 2006 *Register* will be \$120 (including GST). Further information and the style guide will be published in the September *Newsletter*. Questions can be directed to Elaine Miller at <lemur44@optusnet.com.au>



Kirstie Innes-Will is an editor in Macmillan Education Australia's Secondary division and previously worked at Thomson Learning as a Higher Education editor. These roles have both included project managing books and supplementary material (CDs, websites, workbooks) through all production stages, with some inhouse copyediting as well.

What's the best thing about your job?

Working with people who have wonderful and diverse talents that are not my own. I love seeing all of the specialist work that goes into making a textbook come together successfully.

What's the worst thing about your job?

Occasionally having to work within extremely tight deadlines and, worse, impose them on others.

What's the best thing about being an editor?

Getting to work with words and care about things like letter spacing and visual navigation in books without being mocked (at least, not too much).

Also, it's quite fun to subvert people's expectations of what editors are like by holding a black belt in tae kwon do.

What was your first editing job?

I got my break into the publishing industry as an editorial assistant at Thomson Learning and worked on lots of reprints, so I got really good at knowing what people missed on the final proofs.

How did you become an editor?

I was mentored inhouse at Thomson and my role evolved into that of a trainee editor. At the same time, I completed the RMIT Graduate Diploma in Editing and Publishing.

Describe some of the training you have had to become an editor.

I started by proofreading marketing brochures (lots of list punctuation), editing PowerPoint slides (deleting clipart and ridiculous fonts), and doing other small editing jobs under supervision. I also started learning the skills of project management by looking after other editors' projects while they were away or swamped with other work. And then I got thrown in the deep end with my own books to edit and project manage.

What are the essential qualities of being a good editor?

Apart from the obvious skills (a good grasp of grammar, an eye for detail, etc.), the following get you a long way: tact, flexibility and an ability to balance your care for the work with healthy detachment and a sense of humour.

What is the most rewarding job you have ever done?

The last one I got to press!

Usually the harder the project, the more rewarding it feels when you get the advance copy in your hand. Except when the printer has printed a two-colour book in completely different Pantone colours than specified in the design.

With which grammatical style/rule do you have the most trouble?

I used to be really bad at knowing where to break a word with a hyphen to avoid a tight line of text. On one project, I had to look up every single instance of potential line-break hyphens for a 700-page book set in two-columns—I feel somewhat more confident with that now!

What is your favourite reference source?

The Australian Editing Handbook has helped me out a lot when I've been stuck with a new task, as it includes lots of checklists and clear instructions that are relevant for inhouse editors.

Do you prefer to edit on hard copy or on screen?

On screen, definitely! I always end up with eraser shavings all over me when I edit on hard copy, and even when I check proofs.

What advice would you give to editing students?

Don't ignore or underestimate the interpersonal skills you need to become a good editor, especially if you want to work inhouse. Look for any opportunity to practise, and seek feedback from everyone. Don't ever feel like becoming a good editor is unachievable; just resolve to keep learning and improving throughout your career.

What book would you most like to have edited?

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix so I could have cut it by 300 pages.

Society of Editors e-list ads

Companies wishing to advertise full-time or part-time job vacancies targeting professional editors can reach the members of the Society of Editors (Vic.) Inc. by running a notice on the Society's e-list. Contact Ron Thiele <rthiele@smartss.com.au>. The cost of an e-list ad is \$50.

Volunteer for challenging role

The Institute of Professional Editors seeks a volunteer to fill the position of secretary from October 2005. A fairly challenging position, the secretary organises three teleconferences a year for IPEd delegates, maintains contact lists and deals with expenses and reimbursements. The position would be for approximately eighteen months. The benefits include collaboration with colleagues in all states and territories and the opportunity to have input into the establishment of the national organisation.

For more information contact
Katya Johanson at <katya.johanson@deakin.edu.au>
or Janet Mackenzie at <superscript@netspace.net.au>.

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.

If members have any queries regarding the OSAE project contact Diane Brown:
<diane@netspace.net.au>
or tel. (03) 9718 1358
OSAE Working Group (Victoria):
Kerry Biram, Diane Brown (Convenor),
Anitra Nelson, Renée Otmar.

The working group has been busy planning two special events tied to the national editors' conference, *Editing in Context* (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 13 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, Honorary Life Member, Society of Editors (Tasmania).

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 offering editorial and publishing services. She is the proprietor and director of Montpelier Press and the editorial production manager for Red Hill Books.



Pamela Ball, Honorary Life Member, Society of Editors (South Australia).

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, 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, Honorary Life Member, Canberra Society of Editors.

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, Honorary Life Member, Society of Editors (Victoria) Inc.

Lee White started editing at Sun Books, where she was trained by Geoffrey Dutton. She worked at William Collins (London), Macmillans, 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.

Book Review

by Helen Bethune Moore

Compendium of Good Writing by Nick Renton

Nick Renton's *Compendium of Good Writing, A plain English guide to plain English* is in its third edition, which stands as testament to the value of its content. It has also undergone its third name change. First published as *Elements of Good Style and Writing* in 1990, it became *Good Writing Guide* in 1994. The latest incarnation of the title is probably its most descriptive as well as its most impressive.

Not having seen the former editions, I can't compare them with the current one, but this book is logically laid out in four parts—The craft of writing; Grammar and style; Punctuation; and Tools of the trade. Part 1 covers the art of communication, aspects of style, internal consistency, Americanisms, neologisms, business correspondence, Internet considerations, and some troublesome concepts. One troublesome concept that is explained, to my delight, is the removal of cousins, something that has always confounded me. I did have to wonder though what would cause me to look up 'cousins' in the index of a book on good writing. The index entry is there, but I found the section on 'The removal of cousins' only because I was perusing the book. It is an example of the breadth of the compendium's content.

Parts 2 and 3 are pretty much what one would expect of sections on grammar, style and punctuation. No real surprises there, but it's always good to be able to call on a definitive and prescriptive authority. Plenty of examples of correct and incorrect usage are supplied.

Part 4, Tools of the trade, covers house style manuals, automatic spellcheckers, editing and proofreading, indexing and solutions to proofreading exercises, all in 21 pages, which is disproportionately few compared to the rest of the book. But as this is a book about good writing, not good editing, this is acceptable.

I found the appendixes to be one of the more useful aspects of this book. To really appreciate them, one must like lists of things and, I confess, I do. There are orderly lists of commonly misused words, parts of speech and syntax, the subjunctive mood, tautologies, units of measurement (with a wonderful epigram preceding it—All metric signs next 50 miles), roman numerals, common Latin phrases and useful Internet links. It's risky providing links because of the ephemeral nature of the Internet, although many of the URLs in this list I use myself, and have for some time. Those that I haven't used look tempting, and had I the time, it would be very interesting to investigate them all.

Nick Renton's book claims to be 'an effective communication tool for business writers, managers, teachers, other professionals and word lovers'. And that about sums it up. It's not groundbreaking, but it's the sort of book that is handy to have on the shelf, particularly when one is having a blond moment.

Published by John Wiley & Sons, the *Compendium of Good Writing* retails at \$29.95.



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Sheila Allison, Montpelier Press

www.emendediting.com

Membership payment was due on 1 July—have you remembered to renew your membership?



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Membership application & renewal 2005–2006

MY DETAILS PLEASE PRINT ALL DETAILS CLEARLY

Given name Family name
Address Suburb
State Postcode E-mail
Tel: (BH) (AH) (Mobile)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I want to apply for **FULL MEMBERSHIP** of the society.

Applicants need one or other of the following, but may tick both boxes.

- I have two years' full-time (or the equivalent in part-time) editing experience in paid employment **OR**
 I have a post-secondary qualification in editing and publishing & one year's full-time industry experience.

I have attached a short statement that substantiates the option I have ticked above. It includes a summary of the type and duration of my editing experience and details any relevant qualifications I have.

I have attached statements from two people in editing-related employment that I have the necessary qualifications and experience required for full membership. These references state the person's current occupation, employer and position.

I want to apply for **ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP** of the society. I have an interest in editing and associated disciplines and in the Society's aims generally.

I want my associate or full membership to be **DISTANT MEMBERSHIP** because I live over 50 km. from the Melbourne GPO.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

I wish to **RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP** of the society for 2005-06.

MY PAYMENT

I **ENCLOSE** a **CHEQUE** **MONEY ORDER** for \$ *Note: New members after 1 January only pay half the membership fee.*

I have **TRANSFERRED PAYMENT** online to the Society's Bank account The Society of Editors (Vic) Inc / Commonwealth Bank / BSB 063-114 Account number 0090 1695. I enclose a printout of my online receipt as proof of transaction.

Category	Payment required	New memberships after 1 January
Full	\$75	\$37.50
Full (distant)	\$45	\$22.50
Associate	\$75	\$37.50
Associate (distant)	\$45	\$22.50

OTHER

I would be interested in talking to a committee member about joining the committee at some stage in future.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM AND POST IT TO THE ADDRESS AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE.

Dates for your diary

Next meeting

CASE/IPEd National Organisation Issues Paper workshop

Wednesday, 7 September 2005

Editing in Context conference 13–15 October 2005

Early-bird registrations close on Friday, 26 August 2005



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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 Membership Secretary or go to the Society's website for more information.

Subscriptions

Full membership \$75, Distant membership \$45, Associate membership \$75

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