

## Next dinner meeting

**Catherine Cole**

### The writer and the shop-soiled manuscript

**Wednesday 6 May, 6.30 pm for 7.00 pm**

**Lanai Bar – Duke of Edinburgh Room**

**113 Queen St (cnr Little Collins St) City**

**(Car parking on site, kerbside, or near Queen Victoria Market)**

Catherine Cole is a Professor of Creative Writing at RMIT University, and also a novelist, non-fiction writer, essayist, reviewer and literary judge. She has published three novels – *Dry Dock*, *Skin Deep* and *The Grave at Thu Le*, and the non-fiction books, *The Poet Who Forgot* and *Private Dicks and Feisty Chicks: An Interrogation of Crime Fiction*. She co-edited *Fashion in Fiction: Text and Clothing in Literature, Film, & Television* and *The Road to Dien Bien Phu*. She is currently editing an anthology of writing about Vietnam, and has just completed her latest novel, *Sleep*, a novel set in Sydney, Paris and London.

Catherine will discuss her experience of writing and editing from the writer's perspective, including the various levels of editorial involvement before the work goes to an outside editor. 'There is sometimes so much editing that the manuscript can become a bit grubby before it even leaves the writer's house'. Catherine also has strong views about writing and editing non-fiction, and what can be learnt from fiction writing. How do we 'shake the academic out of the academy'?

#### PLEASE NOTE BOOKING DETAILS ON PAGE 8 OF THIS ISSUE

The dinner meetings are organised by volunteer committee members – please assist them in this very time-consuming task by taking note of the details on page 8 of this newsletter.

## IPEd notes

### News from the Institute of Professional Editors

March 2009

[www.iped-editors.org](http://www.iped-editors.org)

The IPEd Council met in Adelaide on 14–15 February. Also participating were the new (Larissa Joseph) and outgoing (Karen Disney) chair of the Accreditation Board (AB), and the new convenor of the Communication Committee (CommComm), Rowena Austin. Discussions were wide ranging, as will be evident from the agenda, which is on the website. The minutes of the meeting will also be there in due course.

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Here are some highlights of the meeting:

- A discussion paper from CommComm raised, among other things, the matter of IPEd 'branding'. Each of the societies (the Members of IPEd) has its own brand but, at present, nowhere is it mentioned that they are members of a national body. In short, IPEd currently presents no brand to the wider world. As a first step towards establishing IPEd as the nationally recognised representative of the editing profession, it was agreed that the societies should be asked to take simple steps to identify themselves as Members of IPEd on their websites, publications and documents. For its part, CommComm is preparing materials focusing primarily on promoting accreditation to employers and editors who may not be members of their local society. These will include a media release, an advertisement, a poster and a compact brochure.
- *CredAbility 9*, published in society newsletters and available on the IPEd website, provides a wrap-up on the first accreditation examination. Council agreed that the second exam should be held later this year, with an announcement of the date to be made four months before the event. The exam this year will again be 'on paper', but there are plans for electronic delivery in 2010 if possible. The AB is initially focusing on on-screen rather than online delivery and on offering an on-screen exam as an alternative to a handwritten exam in the first year at least. All facets of electronic delivery are being investigated by a subcommittee headed by Pam Peters (NSW).
- Increasing the professional development opportunities available to working editors is a high-priority objective of the Council, and it

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proposes to harness the resources of the member societies as a big first step towards its achievement. All of the societies have training programs for their members, and many of the workshops and other events that constitute these programs are transportable. IPEd aims to provide the logistical and other support to 'roadshow' training events between the societies and other interested groups. To catalogue all that is available, Anne Surma, convenor of the professional development committee, will be contacting society training officers.

Susan Rintoul, chair of the organising committee for the national conference to be held in Adelaide on 7–9 October this year, joined the meeting to outline an informative and stimulating program in progress, and some exciting ancillary events. The committee's call for papers closed on 27 March. Of the high-profile keynote speakers invited, prominent refugee advocate and human rights lawyer Julian Burnside has already accepted. Mr Burnside has a strong interest in 'the word' and 'truth' and their corruption in the doublespeak of the usual suspects.

The conference organisers realise that the costs of travel and accommodation make it hard for many editors to consider attending. To help defray such costs, members of the SA society will be able to offer billets to some out-of-state registrants. Discounted, early-bird registration will be available from April. Visit the conference website at <<http://www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=node/66>>.

The minutes of the Council teleconference held on 30 November 2008 are now available on the IPEd website.

*Ed Highley  
Secretary*

### Treasurer's position vacant

The Society's committee would like to thank Liz Atkinson for her hard work during her eight months as treasurer and wishes her a return to good health in the near future. Liz's expertise is a loss to the committee.

If you are interested in this committee position please see the advertisement below.

### URGENT CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – TREASURER

The Society of Editors (Vic) Inc calls for nominations for the important Committee position of Treasurer. Due to personal circumstances, our current Treasurer has had to resign. We would like to fill this position as soon as possible.

The Treasurer's role is to manage the financial affairs of the Society, keep accurate records and produce regular financial reports for the committee and a report for membership at the end of the financial year. Responsibilities include:

- ensuring banking is done regularly
- paying the Society's bills and expenses
- reconciling monthly bank statements
- attending and reporting at monthly committee meetings
- monitoring the Society's funds
- attending and reporting at the Annual General Meeting
- providing information to a tax accountant for annual income tax returns.

Please refer all enquiries to Liz Steele (President) at <[president@socedvic.org](mailto:president@socedvic.org)>.

## 6th Williamstown Literary Festival

Friday, Saturday, Sunday May 1–3, 2009

### WORKING WITH AN EDITOR

**A SocEds-sponsored editing workshop for writers, Working with an Editor, heads the Williamstown Literary Festival program on Saturday, 2 May from 10–11.15am.**

Why is the editor so vital to a book's success? Can an editor help you get published?

Hear the answers from two of our skilled editors, children's and teenage fiction editor Sarah Brennan and educational editor Tess Moloney.

**Sarah Brennan** has been editing books for over 30 years, starting with academic books and ESL titles for Oxford University Press in Melbourne and winding up with children's and teenagers' books at Allen & Unwin. Along the way she has encountered PhD theses, novels, picture books, ESL texts and gardening books among other genres. From 2002–2007 she coordinated the subject 'Principles of Editing and Publishing' at the University of Melbourne.

**Tess Moloney** AE has worked in the publishing and communications industry for 20 years. She has managed the development, editing, design, production and distribution of print and electronic publications in a number of settings: educational, information, community, academic, business and trade. She is currently the Editorial and Production Manager for Flexibooks, a new business initiative of Macmillan Education Australia.

**The 2009 Williamstown Literary Festival**, with a star-studded cast of speakers, extends over two venues: the Williamstown Town Hall, Ferguson Street, and the Mechanics' Institute in Electra St.

The Society of Editors' WORKING WITH AN EDITOR workshop will be held in Tent 1 at the Town Hall on Saturday, 2 May at 10.00–11.15 am.

Other festival workshops include writing for children, writing for young adults, women's writing, writing for adults, scriptwriting, non-fiction, poetry and more.

This niche festival is a not-for-profit community event run by a small volunteer committee, with strong support from the Hobsons Bay Council and libraries, local community and traders.

Contact our SocEds Writers Events Calendar compiler, Christina, on <[wec@socedvic.org](mailto:wec@socedvic.org)> if you would enjoy helping at our promotional table (free refreshments!) at any time during the festival.

### WIN A SEASIDE HOLIDAY

**Buy a numbered ticket to the festival and be in the running to win a weekend at the luxurious Quest Williamstown North Serviced Apartments overlooking Port Phillip Bay.**

**Two lucky ticket numbers will win a \$650 prize package of two nights' accommodation in a two-bedroom apartment, a bottle of wine on arrival and complimentary continental breakfast, valid to 31 October 2009.**

Only festival ticket holders may attend workshops. To reserve a workshop seat, phone Williamstown Library on 9932 4170, apply in person at any branch of the Hobsons Bay Libraries or email <[communitylearning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:communitylearning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)>. Workshop seating is limited so please reserve your seat early. Full program and more information from <[www.willylitfest.org.au](http://www.willylitfest.org.au)>.

## Liaising with the VWC

One way in which the Society of Editors tries to spread the word about editors and the work they do is to form relationships with other bodies allied to the writing and publishing sectors of the industry. This can range from making ourselves available to answer queries to full-blown participation in seminars and industry panels.

One specific such activity is to provide support and input to Victorian Writers Centre (VWC) events that have a heavy focus on editing and editors.

This year, five such events are on the VWC's very busy program – three of them as short evening sessions and the other two longer and far more intensive courses.

The first of the evening sessions was Working With Editors on 11 March featuring popular panelists Bryony Cosgrove (Freelance), Mandy Brett (Text Publishing) and Michael Nolan (Penguin) with Tess Moloney in the chair.

The next will be Getting Into Editing – a theme that always draws a large audience. This is scheduled for 3 September with a provisional panel of Anna Macdonald, Nadine Davidoff and Ruth Siems.

The third and final evening event is a VWC networking night on 17 September for which the Society of Editors is invited to provide a guest speaker.

Both the intensive courses are run by freelance editor and RMIT tutor Glenys Osborne. The six-week Wednesday evening course Intro to Editing goes from 1 April to 6 May and aims to cover all the basics of our craft.

Later in the year, Glenys takes students through another six-week evening course titled Advanced Editing. This runs from 2 September to 7 October.

Most of the planning and organisation of these events is in the hands of the VWC's highly capable program manager, Mary Napier. However, to ensure she has a readily identifiable point of contact should help be needed, your committee this year created the role of VWC Liaison Officer.

As the appointed officer, I maintain regular contact with the VWC through Mary and also ensure our membership is kept informed of upcoming events at the VWC.

The centre (located in the Nicholas Building in Swanston St but moving to the State Library in September) has an extremely diverse membership with an enormously wide field of interests. All forms of writing are catered for and, stating the obvious, all are going to need editing at some stage or other.

Participation in VWC membership and activities can therefore be an added resource for society members by way of promoting our services and marketing ourselves as a profession and individually.

The centre publishes a lively and interesting monthly newsletter which, in its latest edition, focused extensively on the editing process from both sides of the fence.

The society's liaison with the VWC is a worthwhile extension of our activities and one deserving the support and involvement of all who deal with the written word.

*Tony Berry  
VWC Liaison Officer*

## Victorian Writers Centre events

Places are still available for the following courses at the Victorian Writers Centre. Bookings are essential. Please phone 9654 9068. Unless stated otherwise, all courses are held at the Salon, 2nd Floor Nicholas Building 37 Swanston St Melbourne. For more info visit <[www.vwc.org.au](http://www.vwc.org.au)>.

### **Research for Writers With Christine Balint**

Workshop: Have you ever wanted to work with family or local history but wondered how? Or become intrigued by an event you've read about but not known where to go from there? This one-day workshop will give tips on commencing your research process and explore creative ways of working with source material. We will discuss excerpts of researched fiction and undertake writing exercises based on samples of source materials provided. Participants should feel free to bring along extracts of their own source material for discussion and use in workshop exercises, if they wish.

Christine Balint is the author of two historical novels, *The Salt Letters* (1999) and *Ophelia's Fan* (2004). She has undertaken research in libraries and archives in London, Paris, Dublin, Washington DC and Venice. Christine holds a PhD in Creative Writing and teaches in various TAFE and university writing courses around Melbourne.

**When:** Saturday 18 April, 10am–4pm

**Cost:** \$140, VWC Members \$100/\$90

### **Fiction Publishers Tell All With Meanjin, Text & Penguin Books**

Panel: Join Sophie Cunningham (Meanjin), Penny Hueston (Text) and Rachel Scully (Penguin), who will discuss current market trends, the process of manuscript submission to publication, and the right (and wrong) way to approach a publisher. This is a must-see event for all fiction writers, whether they may be seeking publication for short fiction, essays or novels.

Sophie Cunningham is the editor of Meanjin and a writer of fiction, non-fiction and screenplays. Penny Hueston is the Associate Publisher of Text Publishing. Rachel Scully is the Executive Editor at Penguin. Rachel Scully is the Executive Editor at Penguin.

**When:** Thursday 23 April, 6.30–8pm

**Cost:** \$7, VWC Members \$5

### **Writing the Short Story With Paul Mitchell**

Weekend Workshop: Paul Mitchell will help beginning and intermediate writers through the basics of constructing a short story. How do you know when a story's finished? How much detail do you need? Should you use first person or third person? These and other questions will be answered while workshopping drafts of one of your stories.

Paul Mitchell's short story collection, *Dodging the Bull* (Wakefield Press), was published in 2007. His stories have appeared in Meanjin, Overland, Island, Best Australian Stories and Sleepers Almanacs, and been broadcast on Radio National. He has won the University of Canberra and Eastern Regional Libraries national short story competitions and tutored in creative writing at Victoria University.

**When:** Saturday 11am–5pm and Sunday 10am–4pm, 25–26 April

**Cost:** \$260, VWC Members \$200/\$180

## The Society of Editors goes (south) west

I am pleased to report that we have set a date for a regional training session in south-west Victoria.

Glenys Osborne will be travelling to Warrnambool to deliver a full-day grammar refresher workshop on 21 May. Glenys will cover a range of topics aimed at people who have a good grasp of the basic principles but would like to refine and touch up their editing knowledge.

We have secured a centrally located venue within five-minutes walk from free parking. Tea, coffee and lunch will be provided – great for those who are travelling away from their home base.

Those in south-west Victoria appreciate this opportunity – many thanks to Melanie Dankel, Liz Steele and Glenys Osborne for their patience and encouragement thus far.

Regional members in other parts of Victoria that would like us to consider a training session in their area, please contact Training Officer Melanie Dankel at <training@socedvic.org>.

*Jayne Shirtcliffe*

## First regional training course

### Grammar Refresher (Warrnambool) with Glenys Osborne

Do you know a dangling modifier when you see one? Do you hyphenate your compounds with confidence? Are your commas in the right places? Do you capitalise your nouns and titles consistently? Are your lists parallel? Do you know when to use who and whom, which and that, or I, me and myself?

If not, a grammar refresher may be just what you need.

This one-day workshop covers grammar basics, terminology, punctuation, common traps and effective solutions. It is ideal for people who work with words and who perhaps know what to do when writing or editing, but not why to do it.

Editing Grammar consists of class instruction, individual and group exercises, and class discussion. Participants are encouraged to bring along any grammatical questions, problems and examples they wish to discuss.

**Glenys Osborne** is a freelance editor who teaches editing in RMIT's MA in Communications course and in the CAE's Diploma in Professional Writing and Editing course. She was formerly a managing editor at Macmillan Education and at Thomson Learning (now Cengage). She has won various awards for fiction writing and has recently become fiction editor of the creative journal *Etchings*.

**When:** Thursday 21 May 2009, 10am to 4pm

**Where:** The Regal, 163-165 Timor St, Warrnambool

**Cost:** \$150 for members and \$200 for non-members

**Enquiries and bookings:** <jayneshirtcliffe@gmail.com>

## We want your words on Wikipedia!

Here's the chance for you to help us get an entry for the Society of Editors (Victoria) on Wikipedia. Something for you to do if you're at a loose end over Easter, maybe? If you're inspired, please contact Kerry Biram <kerry.biram@bigpond.com> and discuss it with her first. Here are some Wiki-pages that you may like to look at for comparison or inspiration:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Editing>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book\\_editor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_editor)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muphry's\\_law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muphry's_law)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Bangsund](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Bangsund)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society\\_for\\_Editors\\_and\\_Proofreaders](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society_for_Editors_and_Proofreaders)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_Copy\\_Editors\\_Society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Copy_Editors_Society)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_and\\_New\\_Zealand\\_Society\\_of\\_Indexers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_and_New_Zealand_Society_of_Indexers) (very new page)

## Newsletter news

The *Newsletter* team is currently investigating the option of moving to an online newsletter format. We feel we must make this move in order to keep up with technology while continuing to meet the needs of our members.

This will mean that instead of receiving a PDF attachment of the *Newsletter* in your email, the *Newsletter* will get sent directly to your email through an electronic newsletter provider in a more online-friendly format. You will be able to view the *Newsletter* within the email itself or click on an item to open it up in a new window.

This will, of course, also mean that the format and design of the *Newsletter* will be updated. We are confident that we will be able to maintain a high visual standard, and of course all the content will remain of the highest quality!

The electronic format will be ideal for those members who like to read the *Newsletter* onscreen. We recognise that others like to download it and read it at their leisure or print it out, which will still be possible with the new format.

We hope to have the new format up and running by mid-2009. We're interested in hearing your feedback so if you have any comments or questions about this, feel free to contact the *Newsletter* team at <newsletter@socedvic.org>.

*Rachel and Jackey  
Newsletter Coeditors*

## Society represented at RMIT awards

On Tuesday 17 March Peter Riches represented the Society at the RMIT School of Applied Communication Awards at Storey Hall. Peter presented The Society of Editors (Victoria) Award for distinction in the editorial components of the Graduate Diploma in Editing and Publishing to Seona Galbally.

Each year, the School of Applied Communication recognises its highest achieving and hardest-working students. The evening featured a guest lecture from Russel Howcroft, Chairman and Managing Director of George Patterson's Y&R and provocative panelist on ABC TV's *The Gruen Transfer*.

## Training course

### Editing Foreign Languages with Emma Koch

Scattered by script? Troubled by translits? Perplexed by pinyin? If these terms mean nothing to you then it's time to learn to love languages. Editors are often faced with foreign language material in texts, whether it's a quote from Goethe in the original German, a list of place names in a travel guide or an instruction manual in Arabic. But guess what? You don't have to be fluent in order to edit text in an unfamiliar language.

This short course provides editors with the tools to make informed judgements about unfamiliar languages, identify potential problems and avoid introducing errors. Get experience and gain confidence working with different foreign languages, and learn how to approach transliterations systems, script languages, tonal languages.

Note: this course provides an overview of working with unfamiliar languages. It is not a language competency course. Participants do not need prior experience in working with languages.

#### Course outline

- Approaching unfamiliar languages (including principles of what to examine, how to decide what to edit, what to query and when)
- Common errors
- Overview of writing systems (including alphabets, syllabic alphabets, abjads, and complex scripts)
- Working with Romanisations of script languages (including Romanisation vs transliteration)
- Grammar (what to expect, what to watch out for)
- Language and politics
- Resources for editors

**Emma Koch** has over 10 years' experience as an editor. She has worked in a variety of editing roles, including as a languages editor, editing phrasebooks and language guides, and as a translator. Her first love is the Scandinavian languages, but she has an interest in all foreign languages. She particularly enjoys puzzling out script languages.

**When:** Saturday 23 May 2009, 10am to 4pm

**Where:** CAE, 253 Flinders Lane Melbourne

**Cost:** Members \$135, nonmembers \$185

**Enquiries:** <training@socedvic.org>

## Training course

### Introduction to InDesign (PC) with Noè Harsel (still a few places available)

InDesign is the publishing industry standard for desktop publishing. The Society of Editors (Vic.) invites you to build your understanding of this program with an interactive **Introduction to InDesign**.

With the digitisation of the industry, more and more editors are required to be versatile in their approach to editing. A working knowledge of InDesign will help editors further market themselves by being able to edit manuscripts up to final production and layout stage. Covering a range of tasks and activities, you will gain a broader understanding of how the program works and what it can do for you, as well as be able to navigate text pages, edit text and set styles. This course will enable you to have a basic working knowledge of InDesign.

This course is ideal for people with a basic grounding in computer skills, who would like to explore desktop publishing and layout.

#### Course outline

Participants will be able to perform the following on completion of this course:

- Create an InDesign document
- Use the Toolbar and Palettes
- Understand the basics of typography, fonts, kerning and leading
- Make text changes
- Use Story-Editor and Style Sheets
- Adjust Type and Page Preferences
- Work with multiple document pages and InDesign files
- Use Master Pages
- Import images, add colours and change colours

#### IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT THIS COURSE

- Basic computer literacy is required for this course, but no previous desktop publishing experience is needed. Knowledge of other desktop publishing or graphics programs will be an advantage.
- This course uses a PC platform. Another Mac course will be run in September 2009.
- Students are invited to bring along general text files and images (files should be saved as .doc, .txt, .pdf, .jpeg, .tif) to create your own InDesign document (eg flyer, poster, business cards etc) using your own content. General purpose material will also be supplied if you do not wish to bring your own.
- If you would like to save any documents you create in this course, please bring along a memory stick or flash drive (or equivalent).
- Places are strictly limited for this course.

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**Noè Harsel** has extensive experience in publication production, writing and editing for both print and web media. She has taught InDesign and publishing at RMIT University, LaTrobe University and Swinburne University.

**When:** Saturday 23 May 2009, 9.30am to 4pm

**Where:** CAE, 253 Flinders Lane Melbourne

**Cost:** Members \$160, nonmembers \$210

**Enquiries:** <training@socedvic.org>

## Beat the rush!

The 2009 training program can be found  
<<http://www.socedvic.org/training/training.html>>

Book in advance and avoid disappointment.

## Update: Occasional Series on Australian Editors

It's been a while since we've updated members on the Occasional Series on Australian Editors (OSAE) oral, print and digital project. Now is a good time to let you know of our plans and activities for 2009.

The Occasional Series working group has been busy with two major projects, including the first print deposit of Occasional Series archival material to the State Library of Victoria. Archival boxes provided by the SLV were collected by Kerry Biram and we have also printed out key archival material relating to OSAE publication, interviews and correspondence.

Since the Occasional Series project was established in November 2004, we have generated a lot of material. We sought advice from archivists and key SLV staff to assist with the formidable task of deciding what to archive and how to organise this material in print and digital form. We hope to make a second deposit of digital material later this year to the SLV. It has been a fascinating and time-consuming task, helped by great lunches, dinners and of course conversation!

The other project has been interviewing and producing text and artwork for the second publication in the *Editors in Conversation* series. We look forward to the national launch at the 2009 IPEd conference in mid-October. We hope to see you there.

In *Editors in Conversation 2*, eight honorary life members from Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales were interviewed in conversation. They are:

- Basil Walby & Nick Hudson
- Barbara Ker Wilson & Janette Whelan
- Colin Jevons & Teresa Pitt
- Jackie Yowell & Ruth Dixon.

We've also included an abridged version of a lively talk by Julie Watts to the Society of Editors (Vic) last year on the success of *Mao's Last Dancer*. There is an interesting link from Julie's talk to one of the conversations in the first part of the book, to be revealed when you purchase your copy.

We were pleased when two members of the Queensland Society, Sharon Nevile and Jennifer Wright, accepted our invitation to interview Barbara

Ker Wilson and Janette Whelan for the book. And Jenny, Kerry Biram and Wendy Owen all produced interesting interviews with Victorian honorary life members.

Again, we could not have produced another edition in the series without generous sponsorship. We'll update you on sponsorship in subsequent updates.

In 2009 there have been a few changes in the lives of our small but dedicated working group. Jenny Craig has moved to regional Victoria, and we are looking forward to travelling to Castlemaine for the Occasional Series meeting in late April/early May. Wendy Owen has been living, working and corresponding from overseas and we look forward to her return to Australia.

Our working group continues to meet every two months and work with Liz and the committee to advance the Occasional Series project.

Don't forget to check the Society's website for updated material and new links to the Occasional Series project. Click on Publications and follow the links to the Occasional Series page, biographical entries on honorary life members and more.

*Diane Brown  
Convenor, OSAE*



*Members of the Occasional Series on Australian Editors working group (l-r): Kerry Biram, Jenny Craig, Di Brown, Wendy Owen (January 2008).*

Photo courtesy of Kerry Biram

## Membership matters

In March, the society admitted six new associate members (Samantha Bok, Phyllis Papps, Susy North, Roger Walter, Natalie Phillips-Mason and Sophie Splatt) and three full members (Trent Holden, Maureen O'Keefe, Tim Clarke). We extend a warm welcome to them all and hope they find their memberships useful and valuable.

If you'd like to join the Society or renew your membership, please visit <<http://www.socedvic.org/membership/join.html>> for details and to download a membership form.

*Ron Thiele  
Membership Secretary*

## Say what?

SocEds member Diane Brown saw the following statement printed on the back of a takeaway menu for one of her local cafes in Hurstbridge:

'Please be advised prices may change at any time due to market punctuations in the cost of supplies'.

*Ed: Thanks for sending this in Diane – this could be a fun new inclusion in the Newsletter. Send your 'Say what?' items to <newsletter@socedvic.org>.*

Renée Barber stumbled across this great T-shirt and thought our readers might get a kick out of it (although she wonders whether 'bad' should be 'poor').

Where can we place our orders?



Source:[http://blogs.ajc.com/social-butterfly-blog/files/2009/03/bad\\_grammar\\_makes\\_me\\_sic\\_tshirt-p235132632817031517q6wh\\_400.jpg](http://blogs.ajc.com/social-butterfly-blog/files/2009/03/bad_grammar_makes_me_sic_tshirt-p235132632817031517q6wh_400.jpg)

Don't forget to send in your useful websites for editors – or any editing-related blogs or clothing – to <newsletter@socedvic.org>.

## From the Newsletter archives

### Backnotes

From The Society of Editors Newsletter, February, 1979

#### THE EDITOR AND THE FLOPPY DISC

*Continued from March 2009 Newsletter*

We saw a film, *System V*, about a system used by the largest book publishing house in Sweden, in this case orientated to production of a newspaper. The questions that arose from this focused on the problems of staff displaced by computers.

The printing industry is the fourth largest secondary industry in the world. In Australia it directly employs 85 000 people. This industry, which is vital in influencing the social patterns of mankind, is increasingly going to be affected by technologies that removed unnecessary costs, for instance in printing a daily newspaper. At present, getting out a Saturday paper in Australia can involve eight or nine hundred people, but fewer will be involved in future. Some figures: *The Sydney Morning Herald* prints 1300 columns of classified advertising every Saturday; this can be done now at the rate of 38 seconds a page instead of the many hours previously taken. A newspaper of 48 pages in Paris is produced by fourteen people; the Saturday Melbourne *Age* could be produced by 30–40 people.

We cannot halt the introduction and ultimate acceptance of this technology. People will still be needed to provide and edit the information, but obviously the role of the editor will change, and education institutions will need to realize the necessity of training young people in modern technologies.

So far as sociological effects are concerned, it is generally recognized by academics and others that older staff may be moved to other areas of their organizations, or be invited to retire on full pay, or be retrained. There may well be a group in our society who will never work, but they will receive money. Those who produce will be the workers, and companies will have to support more heavily those whom they force into unemployment. Greater leisure time for people will mean that they will read more and enjoy life more. Many people will change their occupations; perhaps more jobs will be generated. Society may become more automated in the bigger industries, but more small industries will arise.

The future is very bright for everybody who can learn the new technology. Des gave more details of the computer processes. As the author reads his MS into a microphone it is digitised on floppy discs; an average 224-page book of 800 000 characters will be recorded on 2½ discs. The material is then put into a reader and is thrown onto a full-page screen. Editing and proofreading can be done from the screen, or one can get a proof showing word breaks, hyphenation, justification, depth of page, and so on. We are not far from the stage where we will not proofread for literals at all, particularly in technical and scientific works. The editor will call up the computer, and it will answer most of his problems and throw out those it cannot answer, for over a period the computer will build up from the books it has worked on a store of information, including facts as well as spelling.

The problem of authors' alterations will remain. The economics of Australian publishing, with relatively few titles and small runs, mean that the editor must retain control over the cost of a publication, and the day of the author having a second bite at the cherry is coming to an end.

The rate of technological change is so rapid that the cost of equipment must be amortized over five to seven years, but computerized equipment is not terribly expensive. Larger publishing houses will have scaled-down versions of the equipment described within five years, and prices of systems will fall.

We also discussed the possible replacement of newspapers and books printed on paper by screens and visual images. Des Corr thinks that books will always be needed as works of reference, though students will have the advantage of screens as well. The unit value of the average book in Australia is becoming increasingly higher, and the industry does not have the advantages of overseas publishers in terms of size of world market, flexibility and so on, so the technology must be used. However, although the unit cost of books is growing, this has not affected the creation of books or the demand for them. Only the methods by which books are produced will change.

*Your editor [John Bangsund], who unfortunately does not produce pages at the rate of 3500 lines a minute, cannot help venturing the thought that the next development in this technology will be a computer that reads the books produced by other computers, giving us even more time to indulge in more useful things. I am not, to be truthful, reassured by Mr Corr. Even such little things as the fact that my twenty-year study of the function of the Third Aorist Pluperfect, which is not understood by most editors, let alone computers, will be of no use at all in my work this time next year tends to distress me no end.*

## Dear Ed...

***In this column Ed answers FAQs and some curly ones about the ins and outs of the editing profession.***



*Dear Ed*

*You're always banging on about how great it is being freelance. I don't believe you! I bet there aren't even ten good things about being a freelance editor!*

*Dubious of Spotswood*

Dear Dubious,

My, such vitriol! Thought I was back at Sunbury Rock Festival in '73 for a moment. I was almost expecting someone to yell out 'Judas!' and start lobbing full cans of Victoria Bitter onto the stage. Okay, Dubious, you're on. Herewith ten good things about being freelance. And if you don't agree, you're a nebbish.

1. You don't have to squeeze your feet back into work shoes at the end of your summer holidays.
2. If you know your brain has entered its no-go phase, you can take a break without some idiot boss confusing productivity with time spent at the desk.
3. No-one gives you dirty looks if you've been out for an extra-long lunch (even if you do have to drape a towel over the bathroom mirror).
4. Freelancers have as many ways of saying 'no' to a job as the Inuit people have words for snow. (Actually I don't think that's true about the Inuit people, but it's too good an idea to pass up.)
5. You can start work at 5.00am if you want to without your colleagues thinking you're committing an act of industrial espionage.
6. You get to meet clients . . . and as an added bonus you get to say goodbye to them an hour later and leave the building.
7. The daily commute from kitchen to study is about five metres each way. This saves you a minimum of ten commuting hours per week and the time gained can be devoted to pursuits unrelated to earning an income, such as reading for pleasure.
8. What you lose in colleagues, you gain in peers.
9. You can do all your errands in those sweet spots between 10.00am and noon and 2.00pm and 3.00pm when no-one else is about. It feels so good it should be illegal.
10. You no longer have to trade your boss ten units of daylight in exchange for a wage and four days off every fortnight.

Of course, all of the above is just this Ed's opinion, so feel free to lob a few comments in my admittedly biased direction.

*Seriously,  
Ed*

### DINNER MEETING BOOKING DETAILS

- a. Book with Christina Ratcliffe – email preferred – at <bookings@socedvic.org> or phone or text 0400 655 884.
- b. Please book as early as you can, but definitely before 5pm on Monday 4 May.
- c. State if you are a Soc Eds member, or a member of WWC, ASTC, AusSI, or APA, or a student.
- d. Cost: \$25 members, \$20 students, \$30 non-members. (Pay cash or cheque on the night; no credit card facilities available.)
- e. Please state if you are a vegetarian.
- f. If you need to cancel, please contact Christina as soon as possible.
- g. If you cancel after 7pm on the day before the meeting, the Treasurer will contact you shortly after and ask you to pay as if you had attended.
- h. People who arrive on the night without a booking will be unable to attend.

## Dates for your diary

### May dinner meeting

Catherine Cole

### The writer and the shop-soiled manuscript

Wednesday, 6 May 2009, 6.30 pm for 7.00 pm

### Williamstown Literary Festival

1-3 May 2009

### First regional training course

Thursday, 21 May 2009, 10am to 4pm

### Training course:

### Editing Foreign Languages

Saturday, 23 May 2009, 10am to 4pm

### Training course:

### Introduction to InDesign (PC)

Saturday, 23 May 2009, 9.30am to 4pm



If undeliverable,  
please return to  
PO Box 176  
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## Honorary Life Members

John Bangsund, Ruth Dixon, Elizabeth Flann, Beryl Hill,  
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John Curtain (d. 1999)  
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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. Application/renewal forms are available from the Membership Secretary or the Society's website:  
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