

Editing oral history for publication

On 4 July we took the opportunity to hear the dynamic Linda Shopes, historian at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, address the society. In town for the International Oral History Conference, Linda entertained us with an impressive introduction to the art of editing oral history for publication. Some highlights from Linda's talk follow.

It is really quite an honour to be here tonight. As you know, 4 July is a national holiday in the USA, commemorating that day in 1776 when representatives of the British colonies in North America issued their Declaration of Independence from the King of England, thereby precipitating what we refer to as the American Revolution, or the War for Independence. To be speaking with you, here, halfway around the globe from home, some 230 years later, seems to me quite symptomatic of the global connection we all share, as inheritors of the history of empire, colonialism, nationalism and independence. And it seems to me appropriate to begin by acknowledging that connection.

I have structured my comments according to what journalists sometimes refer to as the inverted pyramid mode

of presentation, going from the general to the particular.

- I will begin by defining a broad context for editing oral history interviews.

'Publishing oral history provides an unparalleled opportunity to present good and interesting history to broad swathes of the public.'

- I will offer some general comments on editing and contextualising interviews.
- Finally, I will consider editorial issues specific to different types of oral history publications.

I was initially attracted to oral history some three decades ago because I believed—and still believe—that it is a means of democratising both the historical record and the practice of history. More recently, I have come to understand that oral history can also democratise the audience for history. Certainly oral history can be 'made public' in a variety of media but books remain an exceptionally popular means of doing so. Publishing oral history provides an unparalleled opportunity to present good and interesting history to broad swathes of the public. Personal stories engage people; as such, they can become a vehicle for drawing readers into a broader, deeper story, by linking the individual story to larger themes and questions.

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Next meeting: Tuesday, 3 October 2006

How dictionaries shape our lives

Sue Butler is a former president of our society and was publisher of the second, third, and fourth editions of *The Macquarie Dictionary*. Sue will discuss the fascinating topic of the role of dictionaries in language, literature, and society. The critical role played by *The Macquarie Dictionary*, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this month, in the articulation of an Australian identity makes Sue an ideal speaker.

Sue's passions include Australian English, the rich variations of English in Asia, and the online publication of dictionaries.

Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. \$15 for members; \$20 for non-members and those who do not RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current concession card.

Please RSVP to (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or the email address <editorbruce@optusnet.com.au> by Friday, 29 September 2006.

November meeting: Tuesday, 7 November 2006

Yet I must also offer a cautionary word at the outset: turning an interview into a publication is, at best, an act of translation. It turns one kind of event—a conversation between two people—into another kind of event—reading about that conversation by a third party. As an oral historian, Alessandro Portelli, recently reminded me, the Italian word for translator is etymologically very close to the word for ‘traitor’—and indeed there is a way in which we

‘...as we attempt to transform talk into print with a measure of integrity, it is perhaps ironic we must intervene radically in the interview text...’

betray a speaker by turning his words into print. We lose not only the nuances of voice—the meanings conveyed by tone, cadence, velocity and volume; but also the social relationship constituting an oral exchange, the interactive negotiation between speaker and listener, the mental process that occurs when two people encounter each other.

So I think we must approach our work with an appropriate humility, recognising that we are transforming one mode of communication into another. Yet as we attempt to transform talk into print with a measure of integrity, it is perhaps ironic we must intervene radically in the interview text in order to create meaning.

Let me turn now to the two most obvious forms of intervention as we seek to transform talk into print: editing and contextualising the words of an interview.

Editing

First, editing in the sense of ‘messing with words’. Generally, oral historians agree that for archival purposes, a literal transcription of an interview is in order. We generally urge reproducing word for word in written form what is said on the tape, making judicious decisions about punctuation and exercising restraint in attempting to represent the aural qualities of the interview in writing.

For example, phonetic spelling is discouraged; so is extensive use of cues about tone, velocity, laughter and so on.

There is also general agreement that a transcript only approximates what is on tape—that spoken language and written language are two fundamentally different modes of expression. Anyone who has ever looked at a transcript will know what I mean—transcripts are generally replete with false starts, verbal crutches and non sequiturs, incomplete sentences, poorly transitioned leaps from topic to topic, and other modes of expression that are perfectly acceptable in informal speech, but generally not in writing/publication.

Unlike transcription, editing for publication aims at making the spoken word—and that is to say the narrator—accessible to the reader, more or less according to the conventions of written language. It aims at doing so in a manner that remains faithful to the narrator’s speech patterns, cadence and modes of presentation—as well as the sense of what they are trying to say. In other words, we don’t rewrite what a narrator has said, we edit.

- Editing means, first of all, excising redundancies, false starts, and verbal tics—‘you know’, ‘uh huh’, and the like. But it means retaining enough of the informality of the spoken word to convey the narrator’s mode of expression: retaining, for example, a phrase like ‘Well, you know, it was like this,’ introducing a story; or a series of ‘no, no, no’s’ to emphasise deep disagreement with the topic at hand.
- It means combining in one place in the written text elements of the same story that actually appeared in various places in the interview.
- It often means cutting large chunks of the interview that are sidetracks, perfectly acceptable in talk, which is often meandering, but less so in writing, which seeks a greater formal coherence and requires focus and flow to be intelligible.
- It can also mean inserting narrative bridges—that is brief paragraphs in the authorial voice—to fill in missing information and move the narrative along logically.

More generally, in oral history, the quality of the telling is essential to conveying the meaning of what is told. And objective fidelity to the spoken

word—or the literal transcript of the spoken word—can betray meaning, can serve to obscure rather than clarify what the narrator is trying to get at, as he thrashes around, mis-speaks, says things that make sense when spoken but little sense when rendered in print.

I refer to the work of US oral historian Michael Frisch, who argues that one must violate the authenticity of the transcript to avoid patronising the narrator, by rendering him an inarticulate user of the written word. Many of the people we interview are individuals without a great deal of social power, people who without our interventions would not have access to a wide audience. Is it not imperative, Frisch asks, that we present them well, so as not to replicate the social dismissal or disrespect those with little power often endure?

Editing, then, is an art, sort of like filmmaking, perhaps, in that it involves cutting, splicing, rearranging; also in that it involves subjective judgement calls. I also think of it as something akin to gardening, in that you have to arrange your narrator’s words, and prune and weed them, in order to create a work that is coherent, pleasing—even beautiful. But another cautionary word here: it is also important to retain those disruptions and contradictions, that searching for words, that reflect where the narrator’s own thinking is unresolved. I know that my own drive to create a coherent story out of a body of interviews can lead me too quickly to excise this or that contradictory statement—the challenge is both to represent those contradictions and make sense of them.

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<p>NEW MEMBERS</p> <p>Dimity Brassil</p> <p>C S Milne</p> <p>Rosemary Penman</p> <p>Bridget Shipstone</p> <p>Linda Young</p> <p>Sally Zwartz</p>

Tiered membership vote

The committee of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. has developed a proposal for the introduction of a tiered membership system (more details on the proposed system are on the following page). A vote will be taken at the members' meeting on 7 November 2006 on these changes to the constitution replacing the existing section 3 membership. (Bold text indicates new system.)

3. Membership

(a) Subject to these rules the members of the society shall be the members of the society immediately prior to incorporation together with such other people and organisations as the committee admits to membership.

(b) Individual members shall be admitted to one of the following grades, as determined by the committee:

- * **Honorary life member**
- * **Professional editor member**
- * **Ordinary member**
- * **Associate member.**

(c) Any natural person may be nominated for honorary life membership who has made a distinguished or outstanding contribution to the editing profession. Nominations may be made by any existing honorary life member or professional editor member, and will be considered by the committee. A person whose nomination is approved by the committee shall be admitted to honorary life membership at a general meeting of the society, and shall have all the rights, entitlements, and obligations of a professional editor member.

(d) Membership at the grade of professional editor shall be open to any natural person who has been engaged professionally in editing for publication for at least two years full time or equivalent in the opinion of the committee. Each application for professional editor membership must be supported by letters from referees who are acceptable to the committee. Professional editor members shall have the right to vote or take office in the society and the right to advertise in the *Editorial Services Directory*.

(e) Membership at the grade of ordinary member shall be available only to any natural person who was a member in good standing as at 31 December 2006. Ordinary members shall have all the rights, entitlements, and obligations of a professional editor member. Admission to ordinary membership shall cease on 1 January 2011, and applications for new memberships and renewals for the financial year commencing on that date and all subsequent membership periods shall be for the grade of professional editor or associate.

(f) Membership at the grade of associate shall be open to any natural person interested in editing, publishing, or the society and its aims. Associate members shall not have the right to vote or take office in the society. Associate members shall not have the right to advertise in the *Editorial Services Directory*.

(g) Corporate Associate membership will be open to publishing companies and other incorporated organisations that support the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.'s aims. Rules (h) and (i) will also apply to corporate members.

(h) Except for the limitations noted in Rule 3(f), the rights, entitlements, and obligations of the various classes of member may be determined from time to time by majority resolution of a general meeting of the society.

(i) Members shall pay fees as are determined by majority resolution of the society at a general meeting. If a member's subscription remains unpaid for over three calendar months, that member will be given 14 days notice that he/she will cease to be a member. Any person who forfeits membership may appeal to the committee.

(j) A register of members shall be kept by the society showing the name, address, grade of membership, and date of admission to membership for each member. Provision for noting the date of cessation of membership and the date of any change of grade shall also be contained in the register.

(k) Membership shall cease upon resignation, expulsion or failure to pay outstanding membership fees after due notice has been given.

(l) Membership fees shall fall due on the first day of each financial year of the society. The financial year of the society shall be from 1 January to 31 December or such other period as is determined by the committee.

Tiered membership system

As outlined in the previous issue of *Blue Pencil* the new tiered membership system, if voted in by the membership in November (see previous page), will work as follows:

Categories

For the start of the next membership year (2007) the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. will offer current and new members the option of three categories:

1. Remaining an ordinary member at the current fee (\$70/75) with the current entitlements;
2. Becoming a professional editor member at the current fee with the current entitlements (provided you have two years experience as a professional editor and can provide two written references); or
3. Becoming an associate member at a reduced fee (\$50) with reduced entitlements (an associate member cannot vote at an election, cannot become an office bearer and cannot be listed in the *Editorial Services Directory*).

Phasing in a new system

Within four years (before January 2011) all ordinary members will be asked to choose either:

1. Professional editor member status; or
2. Associate member status.

Four years should be sufficient time for those seeking professional status to gain professional experience if they do not already have it.

Experience

Professional editor members must have at least two years in-house experience as an editor or the equivalent freelance or part-time experience. For example, if you worked half time as an editor for four years (part-time or freelance) then that would be an acceptable equivalent to two years full-time work as an in-house editor. Professional experience must be in a paid editing role.

As professional members may have had career breaks there is no limit on how long ago the professional editing experience was obtained. Professional editor members will be asked to provide two written references that can be checked by a subcommittee appointed for this purpose. References can just be a simple statement of the years of experience in an editorial role.

Corporate Associates

A new category of 'Corporate Associates' will also be introduced for 2007. Publishing companies and other businesses and organisations that support the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.'s aims can become Corporate Associates. For an annual fee of \$300, Corporate Associates of the society will receive five copies of *Blue Pencil* each month and one copy of the *Editorial Services Directory*, five free admissions to each monthly meeting and two free admissions to special events, such as the Christmas dinner. The usual member rates on professional development courses and workshops will apply to Corporate Associates for up to five attendees.

The committee of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Book review: *The Australian Editing Handbook*

Elizabeth Flann & Beryl Hill, *The Australian Editing Handbook (2nd Edition)*, John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd, 2004, ISBN: 174031-0888, RRP: \$44.95, paperback, 304pp.

Reviewed by Angela Damis.

Knowledge is power, the adage goes, and I believe that this is still the case, despite the economic pressures placed on the editing profession in the last two decades or so. *The Australian Editing Handbook* (2nd edition) is essential reading for any editor wanting to expand and build upon their knowledge, whether freelance or in-house.

The second edition of the text was published in 2004; no doubt many society members are already familiar with this trusty resource. Its virtues lie in its practical emphasis and its comprehensiveness. As a freelance editor who mainly copyedits manuscripts, I find it particularly useful for its chapters on production matters, of which there are many. I have lost count of the number of times that I have consulted the book in order to prepare a proposal or see my way through the proof production process, which often differs from company to company. The index is comprehensive, and I am

usually able to find slightly unfamiliar production terms either in the excellent margin notes or at numerous points throughout the text.

I imagine the text is prescribed reading for the many editing courses now on offer in Australia. Newbie editors should love the comprehensive treatment given to the entire editing process in all three parts of the book. Editors with more experience should appreciate the many checklists and diagrams that appear throughout the book as well as the examples of briefs in the appendixes; these all serve to recap one's knowledge, and even to inspire fine-tuning of one's methods. The writing is clear and totally accessible, making it possible to read the book in one sitting without feeling overwhelmed or bored. The point, I think, would be to make oneself familiar with the contents of the book and then refer back to it whenever necessary.

Chapters that I have found useful in particular include the chapters on illustrations and on the final stages (proof production and going to press). The chapter on editing on screen is impressively detailed; if I hadn't discovered OUP's *On Screen Editing Handbook* first, then Flann and Hill's on-screen editing chapter would have been my bible. I've not 'gone there' but I am sure I'd find the chapter on editing electronic publications (such as websites and e-journals) similarly illuminating.

The very best thing about this book is its production values. It's evident that quality resources have gone into its planning, writing, editing and production. Good on John Wiley and the authors, of course, for considering so carefully the whole editing process and how we can best understand it.

Angela Damis is a Freelance Editor based in Sydney.

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Contextualising

If editing is necessary to turn oral history interviews into publishable words, so is contextualising the interview/s—or helping the reader make sense of what is said. I think the reader needs to be oriented along three dimensions: to the history being presented, to the method by which it was gathered, and to the theory underpinning the work. This discussion of history, method and theory can go on in several places within a work, depending on its overall shape and organisation: it can go in an overall introduction to the work, in introductions to individual chapters, in authorial interventions within individual interviews, to within the context of the historical argument being developed within the work itself. It can appear in footnotes. It can go in an afterword (why must editor/author get the first word after all?).

What I would like to do now is turn to three different genres or types of oral history publications and suggest some editorial and contextualising strategies relevant to each:

- single biographical narratives;
- works that pivot around multiple narrators all talking about a single topic or theme;
- studies that draw upon oral history as one of multiple sources.

'...cutting material is like cutting off an arm, but is essential to creating a coherent, tight narrative.'

Biographical study of a single narrator

Generally, works that are a biographical study of a single narrator are based on many hours of interviewing with a single individual, generally conducted by the person writing the book. Sometimes the work also includes collateral interviews with the subject's family, associates, and so on; and also interviews conducted by others with the biographical subject.

In the oral history series I coedit, three of the ten books we have published to date fall into this category.

The first task is to identify the thematic foci of the biography.

The next task is to decide how to arrange the narrative—chronologically or topically? Most oral history books are some combination of both, with a strong emphasis on chronology, because that is how people think, and that is how history proceeds. Then, the job is to edit and contextualise.

Generally, biographical narratives require significant editing—rearranging and cutting, as I outlined above—to create a coherent narrative. Given the author/interviewer's long-term involvement with the narrator, cutting material is like cutting off an arm, but is essential to creating a coherent, tight narrative. Tangents or side stories may be vitally interesting to the author—and indeed might be quite interesting—but if they are off the point, if they distend or bloat the narrative, if they are redundant—cut, cut, cut.

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IPEd notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors (formerly known as CASE)

September 2006

IPEd has some major advances to report, including a new working group, a timeline and an indicative budget for 2006–7 (see below for budget). The meeting of the Interim Council in Canberra in the first week of August confirmed that face-to-face discussions are far more productive than email or even teleconferences. We thank Virginia Wilton for arranging

accommodation and food and providing a very comfortable venue at her company's premises.

iped-editors.org

The new working group is convened by Mike Purdy of the Canberra society, who has already volunteered considerable time to set up the IPEd website. The group, which is made up of the web managers of the societies, aims to inform members about the site and encourage them to use its interactive features. If you want to have a go, join the forum on the draft document

'Ideas for Strengthening a Society'. We look forward to your contribution.

Timeline

The timeline is a dynamic document and the version on the website will be updated from time to time, so only a summary is given here (see below)

The working groups have also been busy at their various tasks; their news will be reported next month.

Janet Mackenzie
Liaison officer

TIMELINE

DATE	EVENT	RESPONSIBLE BODY
2006 Oct.	Complete the draft documentation for the accreditation scheme: guidelines for applicants and assessors, information kit for applicants, etc.	Accreditation Board
2006 Nov.	Hold workshops to discuss revised Standards, accreditation documentation and any other IPEd developments	Societies Accreditation Board IPEd working groups
2006 2–3 Dec.	Meeting of representatives of first pool of assessors (distinguished editors)	Accreditation Board
2007 end Jan.	Meeting of Interim Council	Interim Council
2007 Feb.	Complete the proposal on the structure of the national organisation, including constitution and 3-year indicative budget	National Organisation Working Group
2007 Feb.–March	Present the proposal to the societies	IPEd delegates
2007 Feb.–May	Vote to approve the national organisation (to be completed by 1 May)	Societies
2007 9–12 May	Hobart IPEd conference Meeting of Interim Council	Tasmanian SocEds Interim Council
2007 May–June	Societies amend their constitutions to enable them to join the national organisation Finalise the arrangements for becoming a legal entity (by 30 June)	Societies Interim Council
2007 July	Launch IPEd PR campaign Publish revised <i>Australian Standards for Editing Practice</i>	Communications Working Group Standards Revision Working Group
2007 Oct.	Call for applications for accreditation	Accreditation Board

INDICATIVE BUDGET 2006–2007

INCOME (\$)		EXPENDITURE (\$)	
Detail	Amount	Detail	Amount
Seed funding (levy of \$20 per member)	28,000	Meeting of Interim Council (Nov. 2006)	5,000
		Meeting of Interim Council (May 2007) (in Hobart, in conjunction with the national conference)	2,000
		Accreditation Board (AB) meetings (2)	7,000
		Accreditation assessors' meeting	5,000
		Teleconferences: Interim Council (3) Working groups and AB (12)	1,500 5,000
		Legal fees for incorporation	1,000
TOTAL	28,000	TOTAL	26,500

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Editing biographical narratives also generally involves putting words into the narrator's mouth to fill in missing details, or to provide essential information elided in the actual interview. Sometimes the material can be spliced in from the narrator's written work—speeches, memos, diary entries and so on.

Contextualising means providing enough background so that the reader can make sense of the narrator's individual story, can see how it fits within a broader historical picture, and can begin to understand the narrator as a historical character, acting within a specific set of historical circumstances. .

Providing context also means triangulating the interviews with other extant sources, to check for errors, assess veracity, and place the narrator's story within existing historiography. Narrators routinely get it wrong—a name, a date. Often these errors are quite unintentional and can be corrected seamlessly. Narrators also misrepresent the circumstances and events of their lives—sometimes wilfully, sometimes not. Sometimes they lie. Significant discrepancies between what the narrator has said and what is in the written record need to be noted and addressed.

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quite unintentional and can be corrected seamlessly. Narrators also misrepresent the circumstances and events of their lives—sometimes wilfully, sometimes not. Sometimes they lie. Significant discrepancies between what the narrator has said and what is in the written record need to be noted and addressed.

But not all factual errors are significant—some are simply memory lapses. More to the point, narrative accounts first need to be assessed against the extant record to determine what the discrepancies are; then the significance of these particular discrepancies or narrative strategies, shall we say, need to be analysed.

Series of interviews with different narrators

Series of interviews with different narrators pivoting around a similar topic present many of the same editing issues as for a single biographical narrative, but also present particular challenges. A sequence of accounts on a given topic can be numbing, whether it is organised biographically, by individual narrators, or thematically with individual narrators showing up in several thematic sections. So, the author/editor of this sort of work needs to consider carefully what these interviews all add up to.

I would also suggest that the reader needs a little help in understanding the flow of the book. I'd recommend short introductions—two to three sentences—to each section, whether by narrator or

topic—to articulate what this particular section adds to the story being told.

Interviews as one of multiple sources

Studies that draw upon interviews as one of multiple sources as a major/primary source for the book, but not the exclusive source that the author uses to develop his or her argument, are works in which oral history material may

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Volunteer mail manager needed

If you enjoy receiving the *Blue Pencil* by mail please consider helping the society.

We are seeking a mail manager who can stuff the newsletters into envelopes and/or deliver them to the post office on a monthly basis. Ideally, anyone volunteering to help with the mailout will live in Sydney and have a car.

Contact the society if you are interested in helping and would like more information about this voluntary role.

Order Form: Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

The Editorial Services Directory 2006, published by Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., is available.

It has all the usual features—freelance editors listed by Services Offered; by Types of Published Material they have worked on; by Subject (or Genre) specialities; together with a directory entry for each freelance editor of up to a page.

The price is \$20 per copy which includes postage.

I would like to buy.....
copy/ies of *Editorial Services Directory 2006* @ \$20 per copy (postage within Australia included) for a total of \$.....

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If using a credit card to pay, please fax your order form to the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. (02) 9337 4126. Otherwise, return the form and payment to the society at PO Box 2229, Rose Bay North NSW 2030.

dominate. However, it is the author's voice that controls what others say, in service to an overarching line of thought. The editorial issue here is finding the appropriate balance between the narrator's/s' voice/s and the author's voice, neither capitulating to the authority of the narrator nor erasing it, writing in dialogic tension with it, if you will. Some authors are playing with ways of accommodating the tension—and even disagreement—between their own voice and that of the narrator.

In her biography of the social activist Anne Braden, Catherine Fosl rendered Braden's words in italics, 'to retain her voice as clearly distinct from mine,... [in order to] allow me a free hand at interpretation without creating a power differential in which [Braden] felt suppressed, particularly at points when our perspectives on her life diverged.'

Alicia Rouverol, who wrote a book based on interviews with poultry worker Linda Lord says that she had to 'surrender to the text' as Lord's words 'fought back' against Rouverol's own interpretative bias about unions and deindustrialisation. She also notes how she had to resist imposing a false coherence upon Lord's apparently contradictory views on many matters.

In these and other ways, oral historians are seeking to represent the dialogue—the open-ended back and forth—that lies at the heart of the oral history enterprise and to recognise that work resulting from this dialogue is a co-creation of interviewer and narrator.

Linda Shopes is past president of the Oral History Association (USA). She has worked on, consulted for, and written about oral history projects for more than twenty-five years. Linda currently co-edits Palgrave's Studies in Oral History series; has served as book review editor for the Oral History Review and co-contributing editor for oral history for the Journal of American History; and is co-editor of The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History.

Linda visited Sydney as a presenter at the International Oral History Association Conference. For details on the IOHA see <www.ioha.fgv.br>.

'Editing oral history for publication' text is the copyright of Linda Shopes.

NEWS, NOTICES

Freelancers do lunch, 28 September

The next freelancers' lunch will be held upstairs at the Exchange Hotel, corner of Beattie and Mullens streets, Balmain, at noon on Thursday, 28 September 2006. Mains cost about \$10 to \$14. Buses to Balmain leave stand B, behind the QVB, every 10 to 15 minutes. Hop on a 441 or 442 then alight outside the hotel. There is no need to RSVP. See you there!

Frankfurt International Book Fair, 4 to 8 October

Not only is the Frankfurt Book Fair the meeting point for the book business, it is also the world's largest marketplace for trading in publishing rights and licences. Everyone who is anyone in the industry will be there: authors and publishers, booksellers and librarians, art dealers and illustrators, agents and journalists, and information brokers and readers.

Each year at Frankfurt, the Australian Publishers Association coordinates the Australia Aisle—an avenue of Australian stands—and organises a display of new titles in the Showcase of Australian Publishing.

This year the Frankfurt Book Fair will take place from 4 to 8 October. The Guest of Honour nation will be India. See the website for more details <www.frankfurt-book-fair.com>.

The Editorial Services Directory 2006 is now available

Members who have advertised their services in the *Editorial Services Directory 2006* should now have received their free copy.

Non-members can purchase a copy of the *Editorial Services Directory 2006* from Terry Johnston for \$20 (postage included). Use the order form on page 7 of this issue of *Blue Pencil* and send a cheque or money order to PO Box 2229, Rose Bay North, NSW 2030, or fax credit card details to (02) 9337 4126.

Ubud Writers and Readers Festival, Bali, 28 September to 3 October

The international Ubud Writers and Readers Festival 2006 offers inspiring discussions, creative workshops, book launches, literary lunches, free children's workshops and special events on the island of Bali. The festival will feature Anita Desai, Madhur Jaffrey, William Dalrymple, Su Tong, Ziauddin Sardar, Suketu Mehta and the Australian novelist Gail Jones. For more information visit <www.ubudwritersfestival.com>.

Redact inaugural residential weekend course for editors in Victoria, 27 to 29 October

The Society of Editors (Victoria) is pleased to announce a new initiative in editorial training. Redact is a residential weekend course that offers intensive study of processes and principles in a collegial setting. It will be held on 27 to 29 October 2006 at the Alzburg Inn Resort, Mansfield, Victoria.

This course offers three strands:

- Education with Glenys Osborne
- Fiction with Sarah Brennan
- Trade with Paul Watt.

The cost of the course will be around \$495 for non-members. To download the information brochure and registration form, visit <www.socedvic.org/cms/public_php/redact.php>.

Please note that registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. For more details contact the Redact organising committee at <redact.residential@gmail.com>.

Pass It On

For those interested in children's writing and publishing, *Pass It On* is a weekly on-line, interactive, networking newsletter for a very affordable 50 cents per week. For more details visit the website <www.jackiehosking.com>.



Australian Society for Technical Communicators (NSW) Annual Conference, 27 to 28 October

The Annual Conference of the Australian Society for Technical Communicators (NSW) will be held at the Citigate Sebel Hotel, 29 Albion Street, Sydney—near Central Station.

The program will include sessions on Editing a Web Site with Rhonda Bracey, Framework for a Successful Web Site with Belinda Leatham, and Technical Writing Using Openoffice.org Writer with Jean Hollis Weber. There will also be a post conference dinner.

Discounts may apply to Society of Editors members. Program details and booking forms are available at <www.astcnsw.org.au>.

Society's Christmas Party

Tuesday, 5 December

**Don't miss a special
night of good food, good
fun and good company.**

**Mark this not-to-be-
missed date in your
diary now.**

**Please check the website
and our next newsletter
for more details.**

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007; Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999
<www.editorsnsw.com>.

Blue Pencil

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Your comments and contributions are welcome. Mail them to the Editor, *Blue Pencil*, Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007, or email Catherine Etteridge at <cje_editing@hotmail.com>.

Copy deadline for the November issue is Tuesday, 10 October 2006

The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or insert, are those of individual authors, not of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Advertising rates

Full page, \$375; half page, \$200 (horizontal only); one-third page, \$125 (vertical or horizontal); quarter page \$100 (horizontal only); one-sixth page, \$75 (half of one column). Inserts: \$200 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 375. Please note that the committee reserves the right to decide whether advertisements are appropriate for this newsletter.

Membership

Membership of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. is open to anyone working as an editor for publication (print or electronic documents) and anyone who supports the society's aims.

Membership runs for a calendar year. 2006 fees are \$75 for new members (\$45 if joining after 31 May) and \$70 for renewals.

To obtain a membership application form, phone (02) 9294 4999 or write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007. You can also download an application form from the society's website at <www.editorsnsw.com>.

Listing in the *Editorial Services Directory*

The society's *Editorial Services Directory* is available online at <www.editorsnsw.com/esd/>. New listings and updates can be added quarterly as follows:

- online only: July (deadline 30 June); October (deadline 30 September)
 - print and online: January (deadline 31 December); April (deadline 31 March).
- The cost is \$40 per year (\$20 for new listings received from April to September) in addition to the fee for membership of the society. New listings should be submitted using a template available from Cathy Gray at <cgray@mpx.com.au>.

Committee meetings

All members are welcome to attend the society's committee meetings, generally held each month. Please contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

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Catering officer: Jennie Begg

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Professional development

Writing for the Web

The internet presents unique challenges and opportunities for writers and editors, and it has changed the rules of writing and how readers absorb information. This workshop is designed for people building a new website, or improving current website copy, or for anyone writing for the web who wants to understand its potential challenges and opportunities. You will receive up-to-date practical guidance, tips, and language tools to enhance your internet writing and editing skills.

Date: Friday, 17 November (**Please note change of date**)

Presenter: Simon Hillier

Cost: \$195 for society members, \$245 for non-members

'Getting' the book: an insight into creative writing

Writer Inez Baranay says: 'A good editor is someone who GETS the whole of the book. A good editor is a writer's angel.' In this workshop you will discuss elements of writing; build a character; give it dialogue; and look at various narrative viewpoints. By being a writer for a day, the editor will gain an understanding of how these elements work together for strong, effective writing. It will help you 'GET' the book.

Date: Saturday 24 February 2007

Presenter: Glenda Guest

Venue: City Tattersalls Club

Cost: \$195 for society members, \$245 for non-members

Indexing for editors

Presenter: Glenda Browne

Date: TBA

Effective Writing: structure, style, and plain English

Date: TBA

Presenter: Pauline Waugh

Professional Proofreading

Date: TBA

Presenter: Tim Learner

Regional members living more than 200 km from Sydney may receive a 40 per cent discount on the cost of the society's workshops (excluding computer-based workshops).

For more information about the society's workshops, please email Pauline Waugh at

<pauline.waugh@corporatecommunication.com.au>.

Call for contributions

Have you been to an interesting conference or event? We welcome your contributions to

Blue Pencil.

We would like to publish your articles, book reviews or letters. Please email the editor at <cje_editing@hotmail.com>.

Copy deadline for the November issue of

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