

Blue Pencil

Newsletter of
The Society
of Editors
(NSW) Inc.

ISSN 1030-2557

PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007

July 2004

The monstrous regiment of convention

Professor Robert Eagleson spoke at the society's May meeting about breaking free from conventions which obscure plain language. Deb Doyle reports.

Among the audience of about 35, the feeling was palpable that the professor was preaching to the converted—and how we loved it! During both the talk itself and question time afterwards, we plain-English aficionados took delight in sharing our anecdotes about the perils of writing in modern English.

Professor Eagleson delivered a well-planned, eight-page paper entitled 'The Monstrous Regiment of Convention'. He accompanied it with a two-page handout comprising 20 points and examples he looked at during the talk. His main argument was that contrary to what editors sometimes believe but might not have expected: that writers lack knowledge of the rules of language and of writing, and have gaps in their education. Writers can have *too much* learning and be 'slaves...to conventions'. As editors, we have to

'release them from the tyranny of these conventions'.

The professor told us that Australia was one of the first countries to introduce plain English and that he himself was the progenitor. He was commissioned to rewrite insurance policies for the NRMA, and worked for legal professionals both in Australia and overseas; indeed, he used a 111-word sentence from the world of legalese to back up his first point: that the writer is responsible for making the message clear. Lawyers often ignore the fact that the reader won't read the whole sentence—which might run to 300 or 400 words—and after 80 or 90 seconds of frustration will guess at the meaning and move on to the next sentence.

Rather than worry that to break an overly long sentence in two would 'just possibly lead to misunderstanding',

legal writers should 'examine rigorously the legitimacy of the convention' of keeping ideas and clauses in the one long sentence and should thereby 'shape their message in a way that is congenial for readers'. Likewise, readers are responsible for approaching a document with interest and commitment. The name for this mutual obligation is the *cooperative principle*.

Moving on from the verbosity of example 1 and the lawyer's justification of it in point 2, Professor Eagleson discussed 'orientations behind schemes of organisations'. For this point 3, he provided a five-column table of options a writer can make in structuring the composition components of documents such as reports, court findings and tender documents. Writers don't have to stick to the structure of (1)

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Next meeting: Tuesday, 6 July 2004

EDITING DIARIES AND MEMOIRS—Paul Brunton

Paul Brunton is Senior Curator at the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales. He has published works on archives administration and edited the letters and diaries of William Bligh, Matthew Flinders and Joseph Banks. Most recently, he edited the diaries of Miles Franklin whose travelling exhibition he also curated.

In 2003, Paul was awarded the Centenary of Federation Medal for services to libraries. He will talk to us about editing diaries and memoirs and preparing them for publication.

Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney (between Park & Bathurst streets, closest train station is Town Hall), 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. \$13 for members; \$16 for non-members and those who don't RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current Centrelink or DVA concession card.

Please RSVP to 9294 4999 (voicemail) or <brhed@pnc.com.au> (email) by Friday 2 July. August meeting: Tuesday, 3 August.

beginning—middle—end or (2) problem—evidence—conclusion: they can use (3) conclusion—evidence or (4) issue—conclusion—evidence. An example of method (4) is the historic Mabo finding, which Professor Eagleson and his colleague Peter Butt rewrote in plain English. In its rewritten version, the document comprised the Murray Islanders' petition (the issue) followed by the High Court's ruling (the conclusion) and the judges' reasons (the evidence). The reviewers and readers in general were and remain eternally grateful.

Column 5 in the table contained the option of abstract—problem—evidence—conclusion. Professor Eagleson told us that the scientific convention of including an abstract originated in the late nineteenth century, and that abstracts became common in the humanities, including linguistics, as recently as the 1960s. Why did editors introduce them? 'To save readers [from] having to look up the last page!' Editors introduced them as a 'bandaid solution' to help readers have a more congenial reading experience, but writers now have to write not only their article but an abstract—usually a summary of the conclusion—to precede it. The key to avoiding replacement of 'one fetter with another' is to remain flexible in our approach and if necessary break with tradition, depending on the situation and the document in question.

Examples 4 to 8 included in the handout were short bursts of the eternal 'he/she . . . they' problem. For both speech and writing, Professor Eagleson believes it's now acceptable to couple, as in example 6, the singular third-person noun [*a*] *person* with the plural third-person plural possessive adjective *their* [*birth*] and the third-person plural pronoun *them*. English has no third-person neutral (neuter-gender) singular pronoun for naming people as opposed to concepts and inanimate objects (*it, this, that*). In light of this, he argues we should bite the bullet and combine the singular noun or pronoun with the plural pronoun or possessive adjective. . . unless it's acceptable and appropriate to pluralise the noun (to *people*) and keep the plural form for the possessive adjective (*their*) and the pronoun (*they*).

Examples 9 and 10 were about lack of a clear antecedent, or referent, for the

pronoun in a sentence such as *The matron told the nurse that she was ill*. The solution is easy: repeat the antecedent by changing *she* to *the matron*. To my mind, another solution is to transpose the two ideas in the sentence so it becomes *The matron was ill and told the nurse so*.

The discussion about examples 11 and 12 was about words in legislation—words such as *aggravated, exacerbated, liability, not admitted and free from appellable error*. The gist of the matters was 'As a result, you're not entitled to compensation,' and 'We uphold Justice North's decision,' so why not write those sentences instead?

The question behind examples 12 to 20 was how editors should handle numbers—whether we should use words or figures. Professor Eagleson discussed the conventions that editors use when editing cardinal numbers (*10, ten*) and ordinal numbers (*10th, tenth*) in scientific, mathematical, legal and business writing; at the beginning of sentences; in dates; with units of measurement; and as special symbols.

By the time question time had finished, 10 people had put their hand up to raise a pertinent point about the need for workable, plain-English solutions to problems that writers and editors encounter as a matter of course. Personally, I could have talked all night about the need for plain, simple English in fiction as well as non-fiction. I found it validating to have Professor Eagleson present real-life examples of the type of English that we editors might describe as a sow's ear, and of how we could turn it into a silk purse. I appreciated his effort in synthesising some of the elements of grammar, punctuation, spelling and style into an inspiring presentation characterised by humour and understanding.

Attention!
Freelancers' forum
for our
September 7 meeting.

Please see the August
issue of *Blue Pencil* for
more information.

Revised accreditation scheme in preparation

At a meeting in Melbourne on the weekend of 15 to 16 May 2004 the Accreditation Working Group (AWG) of CASE made further progress towards a proposed scheme for the accreditation of editors in Australia.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the draft accreditation proposal circulated by the AWG in mid-2003 in the light of the extensive feedback subsequently received from the membership of the State and Territory societies.

In Melbourne the AWG was able to agree on the main elements of a revised proposal taking account of the feedback. It plans to refine that proposal in the coming weeks and will then seek advice on any legal aspects arising from it, with a view to finalising its recommendations to CASE towards the end of the year. CASE itself will then have the responsibility of deciding whether the accreditation scheme recommended by the AWG should be put to the membership nationwide.

Janet Mackenzie, Convenor, AWG

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members who joined the society in April/May.

Colette Batha
Adam Doyle
Ivy Edwards
Beverley Rogers

International Conference on the Future of the Book

The second conference on the Future of the Book will be hosted in Beijing, China from 29 to 31 August 2004. Topics include: reading and literacy trends, enhancing the viability of the publishing industry, print on demand and e-books.

Find out more on the web at <www.Book-conference.com>.



Eradicate Corporate-speak and Bureaucratese

At the society's April meeting, editor and trainer, Deb Doyle, proposed setting up an organisation called ECAB (Eradicate Corporate-speak And Bureaucratese). Members would be 'plain-English' devotees wanting to stem the tide of linguistic sludge insinuating itself into all areas of public and private life, spoken and written language. To get us thinking about this, an A-to-Z word list containing ECAB terms was circulated and the audience was prompted for alternative expressions.

In 1984, Orwell's Winston Smith battled with 'Newspeak' but in 2004, we're faced with management-speak, corporate-speak, bureaucratese, journalese, legalese, academic-speak, education-speak, IT-speak acronym-speak and more! Deb cited some 'decidedly Orwellian pairings' including 'compassionate conservatism', 'Medicare revamp', 'non-core promise', 'dole diary', 'unreconstructed male'.

'Why have things become so surreal, so—well—"Orwellian"?' Scott Morris, director of international relations for APRA (Australian Performing Rights Association) believes that we can trace the 'decay of public language' to the 1980s, when the Harvard Business School introduced the MBA (Master of Business Administration).

Other significant developments of the time included a global shift to the right in politics, 'Reaganomics' and 'Thatcherism' replaced the welfare state, 'SDI' (Strategic Defense Initiative or 'Star Wars') was invented. The Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union crumbled. 'The market' ruled, the 'mission statement' was born and the cults of privatisation, marketing, branding, patenting and managerialism spread worldwide. There was a proliferation of acronyms.

What can we do about it? Deb believes writers and editors are responsible for making the message clear for the reader on the first read. If the writing is Pleasant, Effective, Alive, Clear and Enduring they have made PEACE with the reader. If the writing is Waffly, Ambiguous and Ridiculous, they have declared WAR. She teaches people how to avoid unpleasant, ineffective, dead, unclear and unending writing.

We are fighting back! Friends, relatives and associates have joined Deb to help root out the weeds in the garden of good writing. 'We relish the idea of

identifying, rooting out, replacing, avoiding and monitoring the jargon and clichés.'

Here are some irritating terms: absolutely, 24/7, address the issue, awesome, ballpark figure, basically, basis, on a weekly basis weekly, bear with me, boggles the mind, bottom line, glass half full (or . . . half empty), going forward, I hear what you're saying, in terms of, It's not rocket science, literally, between a rock and a hard place, move the goal-posts, ongoing, prioritise, pushing the envelope, the fact of the matter is. . ., thinking outside the box, to be honest, to be honest with you, to be perfectly honest, touch base.

The plain-English Campaign surveyed its 5 000 supporters in more than 70 countries as part of the build-up to its 25th anniversary on 26 July. Spokesman John Lister said over-used phrases were a barrier to communication. 'When readers or listeners come across these tired expressions, they start tuning out and completely miss the message—assuming there is one!' he said. 'Using these terms in daily business is about as professional as wearing a novelty tie or having a wacky ringtone on your phone.'

According to the campaign, 'At the end of the day' has been voted the most irritating phrase in the English language. Second-equal worst sayings were 'at this moment in time', and the constant use of 'like', as if it was a form

of punctuation, according to supporters of plain English. 'With all due respect' came fourth.

Set up your own ECAB group and offer free membership. Produce an ECAB e-bulletin. Maintain and update the A-to-Z word list (editorial style sheet) and conduct ECAB meetings. Insist that journalists and other wordsmiths use plain-English alternatives. Issue politicians with a 'Please explain!' whenever we don't understand their message immediately.

Enshrine the words of John Stuart Mill who, in *Considerations on Representative Government*, Don Watson quotes in *Death Sentence* as saying, 'One person with a belief is a social power equal to ninety-nine who have only interests.' Say what you mean and mean what you say (and don't say it mean). George Orwell's advice from 1946 is still worth following: 'Never use a metaphor, simile, or [an] other figure of speech, which you are used to seeing in print.'

Ginny Lowndes won a copy of Don Watson's book for suggesting the best refreshing alternative for an ECAB term. Her suggestions included 'poop fiction' (children's literature), 'spinach cinema' (films that are boring but good for you) and 'wriggle room' (which will replace 'core' and 'non-core promises').

Recommended reading: Don Watson's *Death Sentence: The Decay of Public Language*, Ann Summers' *The End of Equality: Women, Work and Babies in 21st Century Australia*, George Orwell's *Politics and the English Language*, and 1984.

Deb Doyle, a self-employed editor and editorial training consultant, is the author of *Grey Areas and Gremlins: A Grammar and Punctuation Refresher*.

This is an edited version of Deb's talk. This meeting report written by Ginny Lowndes and Paula Grunseit.

The doctor is in

Dear doctor,

There I was, happily reading an article about security ratings for Microsoft Windows in an American magazine when I saw this sentence:

This is like having an accounting auditor check that all of your paperwork is there and that your business practices are standard, but never actually verify that any of your numbers are correct.

Hang on, I said to myself, that's wrong; it should be 'verifying'. Then I had another look and decided that 'verify' was grammatically correct, but clunky. Then I asked myself what I would have put, and my head started to hurt. After some thought, I decided that the minimum mangle would be to make the controlling verb a participle and put the two subordinate verbs (if that's the appropriate name) in the infinitive:

'This is like asking an auditor to check. . . but never to actually verify. . .'

For me, this confirms that both 'check' and 'verify' are subordinate to 'asking', so the structure of the sentence is more clearly signposted. However, it makes the sentence a little more abstract.

Have you a better solution?

*Yours in confusion,
Perplexed of Penrith.*

The doctor's diagnosis

Your diagnosis is correct, and your observations are pertinent and astute. (IMHO!) So how does one fix it?

(Just to flex my muscles, I'll pick up on your uncertainty about the term 'subordinate verb'; it's not the verbs that are subordinate, but the clauses that contain them.)

A bit of structure marking seems called for. Bear with me:

'This is like having an accounting auditor [check [[that all of your paperwork is there] and [that your business practices are standard]]], but never actually [verify [that any of your numbers are correct]].'

If we simplify this structure, we come up with this:

'This is like having an X check A and B, but never actually verify C', where A, B, and C are all of the form "that" [clause].'

When I look at that simplified version, I don't see any problems. As you say, the original is grammatically

correct. I think we have trouble processing it because the A, B, and C are sufficiently complex that we run out of processing capacity or short-term memory or something; we have to keep too many balls (structural elements) in the air while we're waiting for the whole thing to reach closure. (To change 'verify' to 'verifying', I'd also want to change 'but never' to 'without [ever]'.)

Perhaps, then, we can look for simplifications of A, B, and C (and elimination of the redundancy in X):

'This is like having an auditor check your paperwork and business practices, but never actually verify your numbers.'

For me, that works, and it says the same thing.

Further dialogue

Patient:

I agree that your version is correct and easier to follow.

My feeling is that the writer has failed their part of the communication task, because while the sentence is correct, it's hard to parse. The great Gibbon, for instance, often wrote much more complex sentences than this one, but they're not specially difficult to follow.

I've been exposed to compiler theory and Stephen Pinker, so I may be more sensitive than most to parsing problems.

Doctor:

Spot on re the writer's failure. For many years, my mantra has been 'It is not the reader's responsibility to understand; it is the writer's responsibility to be clear.' As Robert Eagleson pointed out at the May meeting, communication is a collaborative process and it's reasonable to expect the reader to make some effort; indeed, readers will go out of their way to make sense of the writing, *if they are sufficiently interested*. But writers can't blame readers for failing to make sense of textual obscurities.

I, too, have been exposed to compiler theory, and have gained from it. My exposure to Stephen Pinker has been less profitable. . . Still, sensitivity is a great boon to editors. No amount of theoretical knowledge of grammar can aid in the detection of infelicities; for that, nothing beats a sensitive reading. But theory is quite handy when it comes to analysing and fixing the problems.

Michael Lewis

Ubud, Bali, to host the first Writers' & Readers' Festival 11 to 17 October 2004

The Balinese mountain village of Ubud, home to one of the world's richest cultures, will host the inaugural Ubud Writers' & Readers' Festival.

Ubud combines unique traditions, magnificent scenery, an ideal climate, and the hospitality of a people David Attenborough has described as 'the friendliest on earth'.

Despite the inroads of modernity, the island of Bali is still one of the most resplendent settings in the world, home to writers, artists, musicologists and creative thinkers of all kinds. The festival has been created by Janet de Neeffe, author of *Fragrant Rice* and founder of Ubud's renowned Casa Luna Restaurant and Cooking School, and organised by the Saraswati Foundation for the Arts. It will include panel discussions, bilingual readings, workshops, cooking classes, art and textile exhibitions, book and magazine launches and film screenings, as well as dazzling performances of contemporary dance and music.

About 75 writers from Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Canada, and the USA will attend. The Ubud Writers' & Readers' Festival is a celebration of the richness and diversity of the arts and literary cultures from both the east and west.

Travel information

Garuda Indonesia airlines has designed attractive packages from all major airports in Australia. These include return economy airfare to Bali, six nights accommodation at a range of Ubud hotels, full festival registration and airport transfers. These packages can be bought through Harvey World Travel. Tel: 132 757.

Web: <www.harveyworld.com.au>

Festival passes can be bought at the festival site in Ubud for \$A225. One day and single session passes available. <www.ubudwritersfestival.com>



It will capture your heart and beguile your imagination on an island that has inspired the world for centuries.

Gremlin-bashing or how to prevent computer crashes

There has been a spate of computer crashes among members of late so, instead of our usual MS-Word tip of the month column, Bruce Howarth offers us some ideas for minimising these infuriating problems. (He assumes we have already protected our computer against viruses and worms!) Next month, he writes about backup strategies.

Environmental factors

Power conditioning

A computer's power supply converts the electricity from the socket to the necessary voltages, which are then distributed within the box. Power surges, spikes and brownouts are becoming more common, and most computer power supplies have very little protection from these, let alone lightning strikes.

There are several levels of protection that you can buy. At the base level are surge arrestors designed to protect the system from lightning. Then there are products that provide surge protection (often for the phone line and the power) and some voltage control: one such is the 'Zapcatcher', available from Dick Smith; prices start at about \$50. At the next level are 'uninterruptable power supplies' (UPS). These have batteries as well as filtering out nasties from the power, so if there is a blackout you have a few vital minutes to save your work and shut the computer down properly. Prices vary with power capacity and start at about \$300. UPSs have saved many users from serious losses.

Cooling

Computer components generate heat, especially the CPU and the disk drive, but they will fail if they get too hot. The CPU has its own fan and heat sink, as do most modern graphics cards. It is important to have lots of air circulating through the case, and the fan supplied with the power supply is generally adequate. Less obvious is the need to keep the components clean. A layer of dust and fluff makes an excellent insulator, so your components can be toasting nicely under their fluffy little blankets, no matter how much air is blasting through the case.

At the very least, you should consider carefully cleaning out the computer occasionally. Don't take anything apart, and don't bump any of the components. It is possible to add an extra cooling fan and put filters on the inlets to keep the dust out. Another good idea is to turn

the computer off on very hot days, especially if your office space is not air-conditioned.

Disk management

Hard disks are electromechanical devices, and push the envelope of what's physically feasible. As a result, they're probably the least reliable part of your computer, although they're still very good. Here are some things you can do to improve your disk's life expectancy, aside from the cooling mentioned above.

Utilisation

Don't let your disk get more than about 80% full. Once you pass this level, the system has to work the disk more heavily to tuck bits of files into small free spaces. If your disk does get this full, and it's not time for an upgrade, save off the less-used files to CD or DVD (two copies on separate disks) and delete them from the disk.

It's also a good idea to remove unwanted files occasionally, such as the Internet cache files that your system accumulates. Windows has a 'disk cleanup' program, and there are many third-party offerings. Note that the files these tools remove are not the ones you would save off in the previous paragraph.

Defragmentation

After being used for a while, with files added and files deleted, the disk gets 'fragmented'; this means that files are broken up into small pieces that are stored separately.

If you use a defragmentation tool, these bits are re-organised, so your system runs faster and doesn't work the disk so hard.

There is a defragmentation tool in Windows, but third-party tools seem to

do a better job, and are quicker. There are many suppliers; the one I use comes from Symantec.

Integrity check

Very occasionally, data is corrupted on the disk, and this can cause peculiar problems. Also, a disk that is on the way to failure can give intermittent problems before it dies completely. It is a good idea to check the disk occasionally.

There is a tool called 'Chkdsk.exe' in Windows. It can do a range of checks, but usually must be scheduled to run at the next system startup. Note that a full surface check can take hours for larger disks.

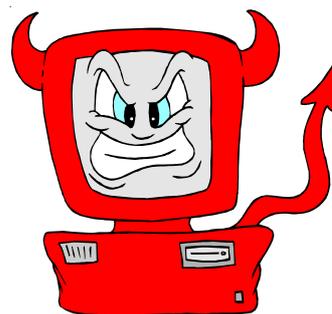
Registry check

The registry is a giant, confusing database of parameters required by the system and application programs. It can be corrupted, with effects ranging from nothing observable to complete system failure. While it is not recommended that ordinary users change it, it is a good idea to check its integrity occasionally.

Unfortunately, there seems to be no tool provided with the system that allows this. Third-party tools, such as Norton WinDoctor provided by Symantec, do allow basic checks and repairs.

To probe further

The Web has many sites where you can learn more about the above topics. Try <www.pctechguide.com>. There have been whole books written about the registry, if you feel you need that level of expertise.





Popular Writers and Readers Festival 3 to 4 July 2004

Two days of reading, panel sessions, book launches and author talks will be held in the grounds of historic Callan Park, Rozelle. Advanced bookings and cover charges are required to attend some sessions. See the NSW Writers' Centre website for session details <www.nswwriterscentre.org.au>.

Style Council 2004

Style Council 2004 featuring the theme 'Public and Professional discourse', will be held in Sydney, 9 to 11 July 2004 at the State Library of New South Wales.

The conference, the thirteenth in a regular series which concerns itself with professional uses of Australian English, is to be conducted by the Macquarie Dictionary Research Centre and Style Council Centre.

The conference highlights contemporary themes raised by Don Watson's *Death Sentence: the decay of public language* (2003), bringing together editors, professional communicators, teachers and anyone else interested in the common quest for clarity. Topics will include:

The language of government, politics and bureaucracy

Professional communication (including legal, medical, scientific)

Writing within academia (and the editing of PhDs)

Business and corporate writing (including vision and mission statements)

Plain English and its application

Public discourse on minority groups (inclusiveness versus identity).

Registration for the conference is \$300 (+GST), with full- and half-day rates available on request. Dinner \$60.

Registration forms and program details are available at <<http://www.shlrc.mq.edu.au/style/styleconf04.htm>>.

Contact Adam Smith at the Style Council Centre on (02) 9850 8783 or email <Adam.Smith@ling.mq.edu.au>

Linguistics, lexicography and communications 7 to 15 July 2004

Three conferences will be held in quick succession starting with the Annual Conference of ANZCA (Australian and New Zealand Communication Association) from July 7 to 9 at the Women's College in the grounds of the University of Sydney. The theme is 'Making a Difference' and a range of papers will be presented that consider the ways in which we can and should be making a difference to the field of communication, scholarship, teaching, the nation and beyond.

On 12 July the biennial conference of AUSTRALEX (Australasian Association for Lexicography) will be held at Sancta Sophia College. Hosted by the Department of Linguistics, University of Sydney and the Department of Linguistics, and Dictionary Research Centre, Macquarie University, this year's conference theme is 'Lexicon and culture'. Papers are to be presented on a range of topics and languages from Australian English and New Zealand English to local indigenous and regional languages. A special session on placenames will also be held, organised by the Australian National Placenames Survey.

Immediately following this at Sancta Sophia College from 13 to 15 July will be the Australian Linguistics Society (ALS) Annual Conference hosted by the Department of Linguistics, University of Sydney. Papers will be given on all aspects of linguistics including sessions on sign language, phonology, second language acquisition, phonetics, grammatical change, historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, general syntax, semantics and Australian English.

Registration, accommodation and conference schedule details are available for all three conferences at <<http://conferences.arts.usyd.edu.au>>

AusWeb 04 3 to 7 July 2004

The tenth Australian World Wide Web Conference will take place at the Seaworld Nara Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland. AusWeb focuses on evolving technologies and web usage <<http://ausweb.scu.edu.au>>

SHARP in Lyon 20 to 24 July 2004

The twelfth annual conference for the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) will be held this year in Lyon in the École Normale Supérieure–Lettres et sciences humaines.

The society was created in 1991 to provide a global network for book historians. Each year SHARP holds an annual conference that brings scholars together for discussion of a wide range of issues. For more information about conference sessions, registration and fees follow the prompts from the society's main webpage <<http://sharpweb.org/>> Plans are also in the works for meetings in Halifax, Nova Scotia, July 14 to 17 2005 and The Hague in 2006.

Byron Bay Writers' Festival 29 July to 1 August

The festival aims to examine the place of Australia in the world today, its changing image and reputation internationally and will explore the way in which this is represented by, or examined in, the written word.

In particular the program will examine the relationship of Australia with its Asia–Pacific neighbours and the effect we have on each other. Workshops will also be held from 26 July.

For conference session details, ticketing and workshop information please visit the festival website at <www.byronbaywritersfestival.com.au>

Antiquarian Book Fair

The Australia and New Zealand Association of Antiquarian Booksellers (ANZAAB) will host the 20th International Antiquarian Book Fair at the Royal Exhibition Buildings in Melbourne from 15 to 17 October.

This is the first time the event will be held in Australia.

ANZAAB will also host the 37th Congress of the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers in Melbourne from 8 to 13 October. For more information visit <www.anzaab.com>



Online Information conference

The Online Information conference (30 November to 2 December 2004 at Olympia Grand Hall, London), is recognised as the international meeting place for information professionals, librarians, knowledge workers, content managers and publishers.

Opportunities include networking, professional training and careers advice. Official 'call for speakers' is now closed but late submissions will be accepted at the discretion of the conference manager. <www.online-information.co.uk/ol04/conference.html>

Library conference

The Australian Library & Information Association's Biennial Conference will be held in Queensland at the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre from 21 to 24 September 2004. The theme of this year's conference is 'Challenging Ideas'. Full details at <www.alia.org.au/conferences/alia2004>

Call for papers: Australian Society of Indexers conference

The theme of the 2005 conference (18 to 19 March) will be 'Indexing: engage, enlighten, enrich'.

Areas of interest include indexing for museums, pictures, sound and moving images, history, the web, newspapers, databases, back-of-book, and children's literature.

Papers may be presented as full conference papers, in workshops or round table discussions. To obtain an expression of interest form or to register for the conference see the Society's website <www.aussi.org/conferences/2005/papercall.htm>. Tel: (03) 9500 8715 or email: <mindexer@optusnet.com.au>

ICCE2004: International Conference on Computers in Education

This conference is hosted by RMIT University, Melbourne and will be held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre from 30 November to 3 December 2004.

For further information, go to <www.rmit.edu.au/bus/icce2004> or contact the ICCE2004 Conference Secretariat Tel: (613) 9682 0244 Email: icce2004@icms.com.au

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

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Blue Pencil

Editor: Paula Grunseit.

Assistants: Robin Appleton, Moira Elliott, Sharon Bridgett, Janice Beavan, Rachael Fraher.

Printer: Complete Design, Marrickville.

Published: 11 issues a year, (including combined Jan/Feb issue).

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 Paula Grunseit <pgg@optusnet.com.au>.

Copy deadline for the August issue is Wednesday, 7 July 2004.

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

Advertising rates:

Full page, \$150; half page, \$80 (horizontal only); one-third page, \$50 (vertical or horizontal); quarter page \$40 (horizontal only); one-sixth page, \$30 (half of one column). Inserts: \$75 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 375.

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. 2004 fees are \$65 for new members (\$40 if joining after 30 June) and \$60 for renewals.

For a membership application form, phone (02) 9294 4999, write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007, or download an application from the society's website at <<http://www.users.bigpond.com/socednsw/>>.

Listing in the *Editorial Services Directory*

A print edition of the *Editorial Services Directory* is due to be published soon (new listings can no longer be accepted for inclusion in this edition). The online version is updated quarterly, with deadlines of 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December. Listing costs \$40 per year (\$20 for new entries added from 30 June 2004) in addition to the fee for membership of the society. New entries should be submitted using a template file available from Cathy Gray at <cgray@mpx.com.au>.

Committee meetings

All members are welcome to attend the society's committee meetings. Contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

2004 COMMITTEE

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Copy deadline for August issue:

Wednesday, 7 July 2004.

Professional development

Quotations and Negotiations

Date: Friday, 9 July 2004

Presenters: Renée Otmar and

Sally Woollett

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Cost: \$175 members, Society of Editors, \$199 non-members (lunch included)

Does the idea of submitting a quote make you shudder? Have you ever worked for half of your normal rate because you couldn't tell the publisher that the manuscript needed more than just a 'light edit'? Have you ever had to negotiate payment for work of a type you hadn't encountered before? If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, then this course is for you. Renée Otmar and Sally Woollett share their freelance experiences in difficult situations such as these. They explore how a proactive approach, good communication skills and a good dose of assertiveness can avert many of these problems.

Professional Proofreading

Date: Saturday, 21 August 2004

Presenter: Tim Learner, who has

proofread more than 500 books.

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Cost: \$145 members, Society of Editors, \$175 non-members (lunch included)

Are you confident that your documents are free from errors that lurk, unseen, to sabotage your work? Are you responsible for checking other people's writing? Do you want to develop your skills so you can work as a proofreader? If so, this workshop will help you refine the skill of proofreading.

Design for Non-designers

Date: Saturday 8 September 2004

Presenter: David Whitbread

Venue: MacCallum Room, Holme Building, The University of Sydney

Cost: \$250 members, \$299 non-members (lunch included)

David Whitbread is the author of *The Design Manual* (UNSW Press, Sydney, 2001). Originally commissioned as a companion to the *Style manual for authors, editors and printers*, *The Design Manual* won an Australian Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing in 2002. David was also part of the Snooks & Co. team that revised the *Style manual* for its sixth edition (Wiley, Brisbane, 2002). He was Head of Graphic Design at the University of Canberra until 1999. He is the editor of *Agenda*, the national newsletter for the Australian Graphic Design Association.

The workshop will cover typography, illustration, layout and principles of design, developments in design and the effect of the net on print.

Bookings

The society now accepts payment by credit card (MasterCard, Visa and Bankcard, but not American Express or Diners Card), cheque and money order. To book, please send a registration form to the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. PO Box 254, Broadway, with your credit card details or fax or phone your registration and credit card details to the treasurer, Janice Beavan, at the numbers given in the committee list on this page. Bookings will close one week before a workshop takes place.

Cancellation and refunds

The society will refund 100 per cent of the fee if you cancel four or more working days before the workshop, and 50 per cent if you cancel one to three days before. However, please note that there can be no refund if you cancel on the day of the workshop.

Manuals and handouts

The society can only provide manuals and handouts to people who attend the workshop. Please see the information about workshop bookings on this page.

For more information about the society's workshops, please email Pauline Waugh at <paulinewaugh@ozemail.com.au>.