

The art of subbing

For journalists who edit newspaper text there is never enough time or space. At our April meeting Peter Meredith spoke to the society about the role of the subeditor in the newspaper industry. His personal and anecdotal account offered a fascinating glimpse into the world of the 'sub'.

Newspaper subeditors are called subs. They have had their title subbed down. Subs used to be the people who, on all newspapers, processed text to ensure it was in a publishable state. Subs still process text and, now that newspaper proofreaders are a vanished species, subs are the last line of defence between the newspaper and the reader.

It has been nearly 20 years since I last worked in a newspaper office. These days I write a lot and hardly edit. I must emphasise that what I say about subs and subbing applies to the newspapers I knew and know. Speaking to other journalists has taught me that every newspaper is different, so what I say here may not apply to some newspapers.

The 'Downtable' is where, in a large paper's newsroom, the subeditors used to sit. Subs' tables were always strewn with reference books, torn

paper, scissors and pots of disgusting glue. Physically cutting and pasting was very much part of the job.

These days subs sit at individual 'workstations' and commune with a usually rather humourless computer. But, in a nod to history, your ordinary workhorse sub, the harmless drudge of the newspaper world, may still be called a 'Downtable Sub'.

'...stories should consist of short, sweet sentences that never require a second reading.'

Slightly more exalted editorial staff (deputy editor, news editor, foreign editor, night editor and so on) used to sit at the 'Backbench' or 'Top Table'. Layout people (that is, page designers, sometimes called production editors)

and the chief of staff or the chief reporter, might also be at the table.

When I started as a cub reporter on a London suburban weekly, the grumpy Scottish chief reporter tried to hammer four concepts into my brain.

The first concerned the need for accuracy. It amazes me that this is the one precept that a good many journalists take less seriously than they should. Some are astonishingly glib with the facts. Never let the facts get in the way of a good story—that seems to be their rule of thumb.

The second was that my stories should consist of short, sweet sentences that would never require a second reading. Over-long sentences were death to readability, he reckoned.

The third was that my stories needed to be so appetising that readers would devour them ravenously

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Next meeting: Tuesday, 5 July 2005

Do you want to find out more about accreditation?

Are you unsure how accreditation will affect you? Will it benefit you? Do you have concerns about the accreditation program that you would like to raise? Robin Bennett, Chair of the Accreditation Board, will report on the latest developments and respond to your queries on any aspect of accreditation. Board members will be seeking the views of editors throughout Australia on proposals made to date, so this will be a great chance for you to share your views.

Robin is no stranger to working for editors at national level: she was the convenor of the first national editors conference, held in Brisbane in July 2003. Robin is currently the Acting President of the Society of Editors (Queensland) Inc. and the Queensland delegate to IPE.

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 don't RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current concession card.

Please RSVP to 9294 4999 (voicemail) or <brhed@pnc.com.au> (email) by Friday, 1 July.

August meeting: Tuesday, 2 August 2005.

from beginning to end. For this to happen, the story not only needed to be beautifully crafted and fascinatingly newsy, but above all it had to open with an irresistible intro or lead paragraph. I found the art of writing good intros one of the most difficult aspects of journalistic writing to master.

The fourth principle, which was related to all the above, was that every story, through its newsworthiness and outstanding craftsmanship, should sell not merely itself to the reader but also the newspaper as a whole. As the chief reporter would say to me: 'If readers are bored witless by your stories they won't bother to buy the paper next week. And if they don't buy the paper, you'll be out of a job.'

'Unwanted stories ended up being impaled on a huge and lethal metal spike...'

Armed with these golden injunctions, I staggered out into the world of journalism. I soon found that some other people, namely the subs, did not agree with me about what made good copy. I would write my story and sometimes what appeared in print bore no resemblance to the original: it had been entirely rewritten and cut to within a whisker of its life. Opening the paper to see what had happened to my stories became an ordeal. Until one day a story I'd written was printed uncut and almost unchanged. Evidently I was starting to learn something.

From the beginning of my journalistic career I secretly admired the studious and rather forbidding mob of unkempt blokes who sat around the subs' table. These veteran journalists were like a club of scholars, surrounded by piles of reference books and occasionally laughing through dense clouds of tobacco smoke at erudite linguistic jokes or the hilarious howlers that reporters perpetrated in their copy.

To me, subs were the guardians of the language, craftspeople who shared my love of English and whose skills I longed to acquire. I was determined one day to be good enough at my job to be elected to that hallowed table.

Eventually, of course, I did join it. Not all my fellow reporters shared my feelings. Some considered subs to be a life form that had only recently mastered the art of walking upright.

I should stress two constants on big daily papers. The first is that there's never enough space in a newspaper for all the copy it receives, so a filtering process must begin early to sort out wheat from chaff, important news from less important, good copy from bad, relevant from irrelevant. Editors start the process, but it continues all the way down the line to the sub who does the final sorting, down to the level of paragraphs, sentences, individual words and the spaces between them.

The other reality is that there's never enough time to process text to a state approaching perfection. For news to be news it's got to be spread while it's fresh, so there's always a compelling urgency about producing and editing text on newspapers. This can be exhilarating, but it can also be highly stressful. Subs do what they can in the time available, and if the copy is still not perfect by deadline time, that's tough. If you're a perfectionist, you might find this very dissatisfying.

The copy is given a preliminary inspection by an editor of some sort. In the old days the initial filtering was done by an editor called a 'copy taster'. Unwanted stories ended up being impaled on a huge and lethal metal spike, hence the verb 'to spike'.

The editor at the top of the editorial heap may not see all the stories destined for the publication on any particular day. That is left to any number of other editors or section heads. They decide whether to use or discard copy and, if it is to be used, where in the paper it will appear, how much of it will be used, what form it will take, what prominence it will be given, roughly what size of headline it will have, and so on.

Some copy that has been badly written may need to go back to the reporter or writer for reworking—if there's time. If there isn't, it may have to be rewritten by the subs or, if it is too awful, spiked. In the days of copy paper, the editor would instruct the layout sub (page designer) how the stories were to be treated, saying something like: 'Here are the stories for the foreign

NEW MEMBERS

- Adele Cook
- Kerrie Davies
- Ellen Errey
- Lynne Gaal
- Peter Gibson
- Ken Hando
- Sally Harrold
- William Hatzidis
- Owen Kavanagh
- Vanessa Kirkpatrick
- Suzanne O'Sullivan
- Narayanan Sampath
- Robyn Smith
- Debbie Smythe
- Ray Thomson

pages. Use this one high up and big, this one down low and cut right down. This one has to go in but it's a mess; it needs a complete rewrite and a lot of cutting; it's got the main news angle buried halfway down. So get the sub to do a good hatchet job on it. And I want these two stories blended into one and used as a long caption with this picture.'

Having laid out the pages and slotted the stories into them, the designer would then issue specific guidelines to subs. These would include an indication of how much space was available for the text and therefore how much cutting needed to be done. There would also be headline instructions (type font, type size, width, number of decks) and, of course, any requirements from the section head on specific issues such as radical rewrites.

So, what are a sub's tasks? A newspaper sub used to do, and in many cases still does, everything that copy-editors everywhere do to prepare text for publication—but always in a hurry. Structural editing, rewriting, re-angling, re-jigging, condensing, précising, merging or amalgamating different stories, extracting subsidiary stories from main stories, splitting stories up into smaller units, checking grammar and punctuation, checking facts, ensuring the text is logical, consistent and

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follows house style and proofreading. And cutting. Masses of cutting.

I enjoy cutting. If a story has to be cut it has to be cut. There is absolutely no choice. I'm the boss. The story does what I say. I enjoy ensuring there are no scars visible after the surgery. The remaining elements should flow so smoothly into one another that anyone reading the story couldn't possibly believe this wasn't precisely how the writer had originally conceived and created it. It's especially easy if reporters have written their articles according to one of those golden rules of hard-news writing: write so that the most important news is at the top and your text can be cut from the bottom. It's known as the inverted pyramid style of writing.

In theory, if a hard-news story has been well-written in this style, you should be able to cut all but the top two paragraphs of a story of any length and end up with an item that's newsy and self-contained.

You might conclude that the editing of text on newspapers can be a brutal business that takes little account of writers' feelings. You'd be right.

A common job traditionally done by subs is merging two or more stories into one. Amalgamations can involve trimming thousands of words down to a few hundred and blending several, perhaps disparate, narratives into a seamlessly coherent whole.

The opposite happens on the feature pages, where a sub may split a single story into two or more parts—usually to make the subject, or subjects, more easily accessible or palatable to the reader. Some features are quite amenable to this: they may have several discrete elements that can be broken out into boxes, panels, break-outs or sidebars.

Once you've done the big changes on a story, the shifting and cutting, it's time for the other copy-editing tasks, the tidying up, the polishing. I tend to do several tasks simultaneously, fixing up grammar and punctuation, condensing, tightening, writing linking text, making house style changes, and so on, at the same time as making the big changes.

Then there's fact-checking. Of course, reporters should do their damndest to be accurate, but, to give

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IPE notes June 2005

News from the Institute of Professional Editors (formerly CASE)

Inaugural Meeting of Accreditation Board

'These are all doable jobs,' said Robin Bennett, newly elected chair of the Accreditation Board, after its inaugural meeting in Sydney on 21–22 May. Robin and the enthusiastic team are looking forward to tackling the range of tasks needed to make the accreditation scheme a reality.

Present at the meeting were Ed Highley representing IPE, Louise Forster of Canberra, Shelley Kenigsberg of New South Wales, Karen Disney of South Australia, Helen Moore of Victoria and Alison Savage of Tasmania. Robin Bennett represented Queensland and Isabel Workman of New South Wales attended as minutes secretary. Two other representatives will join the Board soon, one from Western Australia and one from the assessors panel.

'It is crucial to have a clearly recognised minimum standard for accreditation so there is no perception of subjectivity in assessment. Applicants need to know exactly what is expected of them,' Robin said. To achieve this, the Board will seek input at the October

national conference on the level of competence that merits accreditation. This may take the form of a discussion of several sample applications prepared for the occasion.

The Board also plans to keep members informed and encourage feedback with a feature called Cred Ability which will appear regularly in the societies' newsletters.

Besides this, the Board made some decisions and mapped out areas that need research and consultation. These include its own constitution; the appointment of the secretariat; arrangements to cover conflict of interest and confidentiality of applications; sponsorship and financial management; promotion of the scheme; and legal protection and insurance.

Meanwhile, the National Organisation Working Group is finalising its issues paper and expects to present it to members for discussion in the near future.

Janet Mackenzie
IPE Liaison Officer
<www.case-editors.org>

Special offer for editors — enhance your reference library

Members of the NSW Society of Editors are invited to purchase publications from the Australian Society of Authors at the ASA members' price until 31 July 2005. Call 02 9318 0877 to order, post this advertisement with a cheque or money order made out to the Australian Society of Authors to PO Box 1566, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 or go to www.asauthors.org/publications to see the full publications list. Mention this advertisement to receive the member discount on all ASA books and papers.



Between the Lines: A legal guide for authors and illustrators by

Lynne Spender

was commissioned by the ASA in response to daily queries about legal issues; it covers copyright; defamation; ethics; contracts; tax; royalties and more. *Special price \$26.95 + \$5.50 postage (save \$11.55).*

Australian Book Contracts

3rd edition is the definitive guide to Australian publishing contracts, with model print and electronic publishing contracts and tips for negotiating with publishers. *Special price \$22.00 + \$3.30 postage and handling (save \$5.50).*



Australian Author magazine was recently described by Susan Wyndham in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as 'a compelling

read that breaks news and examines writers' issues'. *Subscribe for only \$26.40 for 3 issues. Go to www.asauthors.org/author/subscribe to download a subscription form.*



The CASE debate

Peter Arnold follows up on the response to the CASE debate published in last month's issue of Blue Pencil.

The comments by Deborah Edward, Pamela Hewitt and Shelley Kenigsberg in the June *Blue Pencil* do not modify my practical and financial concerns about forming a national body.

They argue, 'a more relevant Australian example is the Australian Society of Indexers, which since 1976 has successfully operated as a national organisation as well as at the State and Territory level. There have been no dire consequences.'

Any 'relevant example' should compare like with like, which is why I chose the examples of nurses, lawyers and doctors.

Unlike the proposed federation of state societies of editors, AusSI is not a federation of state organisations, but a national body to which individual members belong directly. Furthermore, the financing and the very existence of State bodies is at the discretion of the national committee (Article 11 of the constitution of AusSI).

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them their due, it's not always possible. Think of the reporter embedded in a marine unit in Iraq scribbling up a story while trundling across the desert in the back of a Humvee.

Occasionally reporters insert the words 'subs please check' in their copy after some piece of information. While this is incredibly irritating, at least it flags doubtful material. But, how much time do you spend on questionable facts and ambiguous copy? Do you phone the reporter and politely ask them to explain what on earth they're talking about in the third sentence of paragraph nine? Do you save time by cutting? Or, do you ask someone more senior than you to make the decision?

The last task in processing the text involves 'shaving'—taking the razor to the almost finished text and slicing off a bit here, trimming a bit there—until you're down to the last line and the text is as clear, logical, easy to read and appetising as you can make it in the time available. Making sure a story was the precise length used to require what was known as 'casting off'. Now, with

Nothing in the response to my May *Blue Pencil* article gives me any assurance that the members of the NSW Society of Editors will be willing and able to afford this inevitably expensive creation of a federal body and the associated implementation of accreditation.

Let's all have our eyes wide open to the possible downsides, in particular, the likely financial impost on our members and, in turn, on the long-term effects on our membership and on our viability as a local organisation. National bodies have a way of devouring the finances of State organisations and thus eroding them.

I can do no more than most sincerely caution our members before they vote on this fundamental change to our constitution.

Peter Arnold has been Federal Chairman of the AMA and Deputy President of the NSW Medical Board. He is currently Vice-President of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

the entire operation being performed on computer, the measurements can be 100 per cent precise.

What comes out of the other end of this process is always amazingly good, all things considered, and on the world's best papers it can attain the qualities of literature. Don't dismiss the tabloids. Being so compact, tabloids need to be heavily subbed and may therefore be easier and more enjoyable to read than a waffly broadsheet in which text may have been allowed to run freely.

The sub's work doesn't stop at the editing of text. After the subbing is done, there are headlines, subheads, captions, stand-firsts and blurbs to be written—the stuff that one newspaper I know calls 'furniture'. As with so many skills acquired over years, headline-writing appears simple but it's a highly skilled art that only a few journalists are very good at.

There's a fixed number of characters to play with and a certain minimum of information you have to include. If the head's a multi-decker, the shape is important—some of its lines must be

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Editing in Context National Editors Conference, Melbourne 13–15 October 2005

- Education and training, skills, modes of delivery, gaps in provision, need and demand, pathways and possibilities, mentoring—we educate our clients but who educates us?
- Editing in the online world—valuing technology over content?
- Accreditation and its implementation—just how will we do it?
- Science editing—style, terminology and usage—does it improve accuracy and clarity?
- Freelance editing—how do I find work and know what I should be paid for it?

These are just some of the themes emerging from abstracts submitted to the CASE conference program coordinators. The program will be ready for the opening of registration on 4 July.

This conference is not just based around plenary sessions and workshops. Short health and wellbeing sessions will give you an opportunity to refresh your mind and body. Those quick enough to book can take part in some lively and informative field trips away from the conference base.

Join us at the conference dinner in the Melbourne Aquarium's Coral Atoll room. Highlights of the night will be our guest speaker, author, theatre and radio personality, Jane Clifton, and a celebration to mark the naming of our soon-to-be established national body, the Institute of Professional Editors.

See page 6 of this newsletter for registration dates.

Registration fees for the whole conference will be \$385 (early-bird) \$430 (non-early bird) or \$345 concession (student, non-waged). One-day registration is \$215 (or \$175 concession). The conference dinner and field trips will attract additional charges.

For all details of what's happening go to the website at <www.socedvic.org/editingincontext>.

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shorter than others for aesthetic reasons but not so short that they look windy.

Hard-news headlines give the nub of the story, with as much impact as possible to draw the reader in. Soft-news heads may tease or amuse or titillate, with wordplay, jokes or intertextuality.

Subs look on punny heads as their chance to unshackle their creative urges. I read one on a story about the Vatican conducting classes on satanism, black magic and exorcism. It read: OPEN YOUR EXORCISE BOOKS AT PAGE 666.

Intertextuality refers to connections between texts by citation or allusion. The skill in creating an intertextual head is to make it work effectively as a headline even if the reader doesn't get the connections.

Here's one that was over a critique of a new French movie called 5x2 about the bitter disintegration of a couple's marriage, starting with the divorce and working backwards to the initial love affair. The main head on the story was: LOOK BACK IN RANCOUR, alluding to John Osborne's play, also about the break-up of a marriage *Look Back In Anger*. Its subhead included the words: CHRONICLE OF A DIVORCE FORETOLD echoing the Gabriel Garcia Márquez novel entitled *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* that reveals on the very first page what is going to happen at the end.

This head and its subhead strike chords on a number of levels. But even if readers don't spot the connections, the heads contain enough music and poetry to be attractive in themselves.

The sub's role has changed in recent years. What seems to have

happened is that some of the sub's traditional functions have been usurped by editors, bureau chiefs and section heads. They tend to do the big stuff, the radical rewriting, the structural editing, the amalgamations. Or, they have specialist rewrite people do it for them.

One of the causes of this division of functions may be computer technology. With all the copy swilling around in a newspaper's computer system, it's much easier for a number of people to get their hands on copy and fiddle with it at all stages.

What this means is that, by the time it reaches the dountable sub, a story's pretty much in its final form structurally. What's left for the sub to do is tidy up, make sure the text adheres to house style, check grammar, punctuation, facts and cut.

'I held all the elements of the story, the pieces of the jigsaw, in my hand...'

Now that most print workers have vanished from the newspaper scene, subs have taken on some of their functions, such as dealing with typographical issues: eliminating widows and orphans, regulating hyphenation, ensuring the spacing is okay, that kind of thing. This is done onscreen before pages are printed out for proofreading by editorial staff.

In a system where the quality of incoming text varies so much, where space is always short and stories have to be pummelled, beaten and squashed into tiny gaps, there's no time to pussyfoot around because deadlines loom hour by

hour, page by page, through the day.

I've always felt, both as a writer and a sub, that when newspaper editors get their hands on copy, they consider it their exclusive property. It's theirs to do what they like with, to manipulate in any way they feel is best for the paper.

I reasoned that writers should be grateful to me for making them look good or maybe even brilliant in print. It was always wonderfully gratifying if a reporter approached me the next day to say something like: 'That was a good subbing job you did on my story. Thanks.'

To the outsider, all the glamour seems to belong to the writers, but that has never worried me. I often found glamour enough in what I did. In the newsroom, when a major story was running, and the tension was thick in the air, with orders being shouted and peoplerrushing and phones ringing, when the copy was flowing into my hands from the hotspots and I was choosing, discarding, cutting and merging it into a coherent single whole, I felt that I was the only one to have a clear grasp of the big picture. I held all the elements of the story, the pieces of the jigsaw, in my hand and was slotting them together for the enlightenment of others.

That was when I felt I was at the hub of a great spinning wheel.

Peter Meredith has worked on the Australian newspaper and several other newspapers in Australian and overseas. He has been a journalist of the writing and subediting kind for more than 30 years and is a member of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Order Form: Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

The *Editorial Services Directory 2005*, 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.....
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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.

Copyright seminar in Sydney, 5 July

The Copyright Agency Ltd is holding a free half-day seminar that will give an overview of the digital environment and digital rights-management technology related to e-publishing and copyright on a local and global level. A panel of authors, publishers and copyright experts will also lead a group discussion on the digital experience. The Sydney seminar will run from 9.30a.m.–1p.m. at the State Library of NSW on Tuesday, 5 July. To register email <info@copyright.com.au> or phone (02) 9394 7600.

Popular Australian Readers and Writers' Festival 2005, 2–3 July

The fifth annual Popular Australian Readers and Writers' Festival will be held by Australian Voices in Print (VIP) at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour on the weekend of 2–3 July. The festival will focus on books as entertainment. All sessions are free and will feature authors in entertaining panel discussions. Media personalities Mike Munro, Peter Phelps and Libbi Gorr will also be participating. For more information email <avip@australiainmail.com>.

Byron Bay Writers' Festival, 4–7 August, 2005

The 2005 Byron Bay Writers' Festival will feature everything from dinners and lunches to interviews and panel discussions. Events will be held in various locations throughout the Byron region with the main event being held in the grounds of the Byron Bay Beach Resort. The festival features Australian writers who mingle with audiences in the specially created festival site. The full 2005 program will be announced soon. Visit the website for more details: <www.byronbaywritersfestival.com.au>.

You are also invited to submit your poetry to the 2005 Byron Bay Writers' Festival Poetry Prize. Entries close Monday 11 July 2005 at 4p.m.

Bali Ubud Readers and Writers' Festival, 6–10 October 2005

Join an international group of readers and writers at the 2005 Ubud Readers and Writers' Festival, Ubud, Bali, for stimulating and inspiring discussion, poetry readings, conversations, workshops, literary lunches, laughter and festivities.

Booker Prize winner, Michael Ondaatje, will discuss his life and work. This year's festival, held in Ubud Village, Bali's cultural heart, will last for five days. If you are an avid reader or writer, this Ubud festival is for you. Click onto the Ubud Readers and Writers' Homepage at <www.ubudwritersfestival.com/home.php> for more information.

BookCrossing makes its mark in Australia

The idea of BookCrossing is that you buy a book, read it and leave it in a public place with a note inside inviting someone to pass it on after they've read it. The website <www.bookcrossing.com> explains the term BookCrossing (added to the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* in August 2004) and outlines the procedures for registering your book. The stated goal is simply, 'to make the whole world a library'.

Publishers and authors might have misgivings but, according to the website, some have seen the paradoxical value in encouraging the sharing of books, 'Many of our members, in fact, purchase two copies of every book they like, so they can keep one and release the other into the wild!'

According to a recent article on BookCrossing, 121 registered books are currently on the loose in Sydney.

Profiling our editors: occasional series

The Society of Editors (Vic.) working group is embarking on a CASE-endorsed project profiling some of our best and most interesting editors.

The aim of researching and publishing these profiles is to increase the visibility of

editors and promote the editing profession. The concept was inspired by Anthony Barker's *One of the First and One of the Finest: Beatrice Davis, Book Editor*, Society of Editors (Vic.), 1991.

The working group has a national vision and calls for expressions of interest and offers of support for the project from other State and Territory members. The group is particularly interested in hearing from others who would like to contribute to the series as researchers, writers, editors or publishers. Suggestions for editors to profile and ideas for other background details from close contacts who are willing to be interviewed about their work practices, to offer samples of their work and other biographical data, are welcome.

Complementing its print publishing program, the working group is currently setting up a database on editors, their work and influence. The Victorian working group will promote the project and its aims and will also report to the 2005 Editing in Context conference in Melbourne. It is also organising a panel session at the conference focusing on Life Members.

Kerry Biram will post news about the occasional series and related information on the Society of Editors (Vic.) website: <http://www.socedvic.org/>.

If you have any queries about the occasional series, please contact Diane Brown, Convenor of the Victorian working group: <dianeb@netspace.net.au>.

CASE Editing in Context conference: 13–15 October 2005

The Editing in Context conference will be held in Melbourne from 13 to 15 October 2005. Information will be posted on the website <www.socedvic.org/editingincontext/>.

Registration opens: Monday, 4 July 2005

Presenter registration by: Friday, 26 August 2005

Early-bird registration by: Friday, 26 August 2005

More details on the planned sessions are available on page 4 of *Blue Pencil*.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact the conference convenor, Lan Wang, at <editingincontext@optushome.com.au>.



Westfield/Waverley Library Literary Award 2005

Westfield, with support from Waverley Council and the Friends of Waverley Library, is pleased to announce that this prestigious prize of \$15,000 will again be offered in 2005.

The award will be presented for excellence in research in the creation of a literary work of merit, first published in book form between 1 July 2004 and 30 June 2005.

Factors examined by the judges will include readability, innovation, knowledge and literary merit and value to the community. All kinds of fiction and non-fiction are eligible.

Authors whose works are nominated must be Australian citizens or legal permanent residents of Australia and must be living at the time of entry.

The judges' decision will be announced and the prize of \$15,000 presented at an award function in November 2005.

Guidelines and application forms are available from Waverley Library (Phone 02 9386 7777) or can be downloaded from the Waverley Library website: <www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/library/>. The closing date for award applications is 11 July 2005.

The Editorial Services Directory 2005 is now available

The latest edition of the *Editorial Services Directory* is now available.

Participating members will soon receive their printed copy.

Copies can also be bought for \$20 using the order form on page 5.

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

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

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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 August issue is Tuesday, 12 July 2005

The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or insert, are those of individual authors, not 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. 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. 2005 fees are \$65 for new members (\$40 if joining after 30 June) and \$60 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 on the second Tuesday of each month. Please contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

2005 COMMITTEE

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Copy deadline for the August issue of *Blue Pencil*:

Tuesday, 12 July 2005

Professional development

Design for non-designers

Date: Friday, 19 August 2005

Presenter: David Whitbread

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

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

Cost includes *The Design Manual*, which retails for \$49.50.

Successful freelancing

Date: Saturday & Sunday, 17 & 18 September 2005

Presenters: Renée Otmar and Sally Woollett

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Cost: \$350 for two-day workshop, members and non-members

(lunch included)

Structural editing

Date: Saturday, 29 October 2005

Presenter: Pamela Hewitt and Shelley Kenigsberg

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Cost: \$195 members, \$250 non-members (lunch included)

MS Word: advanced editing skills

Presenter: Bruce Howarth

Date and venue: TBA (tentatively, November)

Cost: \$195 for members, \$240 for non-members.

InDesign

Date: TBA

Presenter: Alpha Computer Consultants

Venue: Level 3, 123 Clarence Street, Sydney

Cost: \$300, lunch not included

Course includes: course notes, certificate, 12 months help desk (via email to reinforce the learning) and repeat any public course within 6 months for free (conditions apply). Each student will have a workstation.

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.