

Blue Pencil

Newsletter of
The Society
of Editors
(NSW) Inc.

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May 2008

Australian English

Sue Butler provoked plenty of good-natured discussion at our April meeting with a fun and informative presentation on the role of slang in our culture. A regular commentator on aspects of Australian English, Sue revealed some fascinating details about how the language works.

The reason we like slang is that it represents the youthful period of language, sometimes slick and sometimes crude, but always aiming at that moment of focused linguistic inspiration.

I don't mean to imply that slang is solely the province of the young, although there is a juxtaposition of creative urges that means that we often associate slang with the up and coming generation. But the old and the young can be equally confronted by the need to say things that are new, or to recycle the old ideas in a new and vivid way.

By comparison, standard and formal registers can be regarded as middle-aged respectability, the desire to shock replaced by the desire to conform, the linguistic equivalent of deciding

that it is time to eat fibre for breakfast every day and take out private health insurance.

Slang is a response to a need to be innovative combined with the desire

'It is an Australia heavily influenced by America, but not wholly overrun.'

to live life dangerously, to flaunt the power of the word, to demonstrate a particular kind of style.

We worry about Australian English as a whole being swamped by American English, but when it comes to our slang that anxiety becomes acute. The old style slang of Barry Humphries and

Paul Hogan seems somewhat dated these days, but what do we have to replace it? The language of Bart and Homer Simpson?

It is easy to see how our slang is so derivative. Much of it happens first in American English and filters through to us from that society. What happens, happens there first. There's really not much left for us to do.

Except that there is still the experience of being an Australian, of being in this place, in this society, in this culture for which we have to find the right words. It is an Australia heavily influenced by America, but not wholly overrun. We have to own the words we use.

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Next meeting: Tuesday, 6 May 2008

Marketing and Publishing—Making successful books

Many of us know about book production, but what role does marketing play in the publishing process? Why do some books sell thousands, while others disappear? Using examples from the Australian book industry, Cheryl Akle will demonstrate how an effective marketing strategy is essential to the success of any publication. Whether you are pitching a manuscript to a publisher, promoting a client's work to the public, or wondering about how publishing decisions are made, this presentation will clarify the role of marketing in the publishing process, and offer practical suggestions on how to market your work successfully.

Cheryl Akle is the project coordinator of the Arts Council's Books Alive promotion, the founder of media buying group BookChoice, and the former marketing manager of Random House Australia. She has been a buyer for Myer and Dymocks, and founded the Idle Tank bookshop in Bondi. She has also taught book marketing in the Editing & Publishing program at UTS.

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 and students; \$20 for non-members and those who do not RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current concession card or student card. Non-members who book and do not show up must still pay.

Please RSVP to (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or the email address <editorbruce@optusnet.com.au> by Friday, 2 May 2008.

June meeting: 'The Book is Dead: Long Live the Book'. Sherman Young on why the book is dead, and what we can do to save it; Tuesday, 3 June 2008.

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Even the hand-me-downs have to become integrated into discourse that is distinctively Australian. We follow, we copy, but every now and then we have to do our own thing because there is no one else who can name the names and set the style. Look at Aussie Rules, look at horseracing, look at the beach. Look at the words below, recorded by children in Alice Springs, in which local colour is evident. (See examples in Table A, *An Alice Springs Dictionary* prepared by Class 421, Alice Springs High School, 1972.)

Our whole history of slang has been a mixture of the derivative and the original. The first record of Australian English was an account of convict language, brought to the colony by the thieves of London and generally referred to as ‘the Flash Language’. James Hardy Vaux, a convict himself, defined flash as the cant language used by the ‘family’. To speak good flash is to be well versed in cant terms. Although there is no clear knowledge of the origin of the term flash, the suggestion is that it referred to a specific district between Buxton Leek and Macclesford in northern England.

A *flash man*, to quote Vaux again, was ‘a favourite or *fancy man*; but this term is generally applied to those dissolute characters upon the town, who subsist upon the liberality of unfortunate women; and who, in return, are generally at hand during their nocturnal perambulations, to protect them should any brawl occur, or should they be detected in robbing those whom they have *picked up*.’ A flash man was a pimp, in other words.

Vaux (or his editor) italicises ‘picked up’ to show that this is a flash term also. So we turn to the entry in Vaux’s dictionary to discover that ‘to pick someone up’ has a broader sense than we are used to and means ‘to accost, or enter into conversation with any person

Table B: Flash language

awake to something	aware of what’s going on
old chum/new chum	fellow prisoners in a jail or hulk
conk	nose
do the trick	to carry out a robbery
fence	receiver of stolen goods
frisk	search
gammon	deceit, pretence, plausible language
grub	food
kid	young child, especially a boy who thieves at an early age, perhaps explaining the opprobrium in which this word is still held by many
lark	fun
lush	beer or liquor; to drink such liquor
plant	to hide or conceal
queer	unwell
quod	jail
racket	particular kind of fraud
scotty	irritable
shake someone down	to rob someone
sharp	swindler
on the sly	secretly
snitch on someone	tell on someone
snooze	to sleep
square	honest, fair, upright
stake	booty acquired by robbery
sting	swindle
swag	bundle
swell	gentleman
toddler	small child

for the purpose of executing some design upon his personal property; thus, among gamblers, it is called *picking up a flat* [honest man], or a *mouth* [foolish person]: sharpers [swindlers], who are daily on the look out for some unwary country man or stranger, use the same phrase; and among *drop-coves*, and others who act in concert, this task is allotted to one of the gang, duly qualified, who is thence termed the *picker-up*; and he having performed his part, his associates proceed

systematically in *cleaning out the flat*. To *pick up a cull*, is a term used by *blowens* [prostitutes] in their vocation of street walking. To *pick* a person *up*, in a general sense, is to impose upon, or take advantage of him, in a contract or bargain.’

While we have lost that general sense of taking advantage, we are left with picking someone up for the purpose of sex. The phrase for us has become more limited in context.

The above are words which Vaux records as ‘Flash Language’ which we would be familiar with today (see examples in Table B).

It is not surprising that colonial society in Australia remained attuned to the colloquialisms of British English throughout the 1800s. London was the centre of our colonial universe. British English was our model, our aspiration then, as American English is now, at least for the young.

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Table A: An Alice Springs Dictionary

biggest mobs	a lot
Comical Railways	Commonwealth Railways
galah session	a radio talkback session
muchanic	a person who is a bush mechanic who knows a lot about nothing and a little bit about something of engines
snotty gobbles	red, white and black fruit of some acacia bushes
Charlie Queenie Queenie	a small bug, lives in soft sands (ant-lion)
donkey beetles	hard-shelled beetles common in Alice Springs district

Book review: *The Book Is Dead (Long Live the Book)*

By Sherman Young, *The Book Is Dead (Long Live the Book)*, University of New South Wales Press, 2007, ISBN 9780868408040, RRP: \$29.95, paperback, 192 pp., reviewed by Lachlan Jobbins.

It's not surprising that a senior lecturer in Media at Macquarie University should be announcing the end of the book. As a consumer and digital consumer, it's in his interest to be sounding the death knell of one technology and signalling the rise of the next.

But Sherman Young's fine book is not the typical op-ed rant of the technofuturist. Nor does it pine for an idealised past when publishing was more a cultural endeavour than a business one. In 166 pages of careful argument, plus thorough notes, bibliography and index, Young takes an impassioned look at the precarious position of book culture today, and points toward a digital future.

The Book is Dead was written to start a discussion. Whether you agree with him or not, there is plenty for writers, publishers, editors and booksellers to think about.

First the bad news: according to both anecdotal evidence and statistics, almost no one reads books any more. Australian novels are barely taught in schools. In universities, literature has been marginalised in favour of cultural studies and 'new media'. Most people spend their leisure time watching TV or DVDs, surfing the internet or playing computer games. Constrained by ever-busier lives, we are increasingly choosing other forms of entertainment. And when we do read, fewer of us are turning to 'serious' books.

At the same time, the way we access and consume information is changing: online news has taken chunks out of newspaper readerships; the web killed the printed encyclopaedia; and search engines have all-but replaced printed directories and changed the role of the librarian forever. Internet technologies like blogs have made reading a much more fluid—and often interactive—experience.

But according to Young, the real threat to book culture is not technology, but what he calls 'anti-books'—market-driven products designed to extract maximum profit for minimum input that do not trade in ideas but are pure commercial objects. 'Ghost-written sports autobiographies, celebrity

cookbooks and cynical movie tie-ins, self-help books and cash register stocking fillers'. In his view, it is the growing emphasis on market-driven publishing—at the expense of serious books—that is causing the decline in the importance of the book.

(Naturally, he admits the delicious irony of his own book—a market-driven title with broad appeal from a traditional academic press.)

Yet here he is on slightly shaky ground. While pointing out that the publishing world 'has traditionally been peopled by a balance of those who were conscious of their role in the remaking of cultures and those who understood that books were business and that success was about getting the culture/commerce balance correct', he criticises the extent to which the commercial imperative seems to have taken the upper hand.

One example he cites is the Harry Potter phenomenon. Originally a series of books, it became a movie franchise, Playstation gaming series, coffee cup, lunchbox and soft toy experience. But are we to blame international multimedia conglomerates for leveraging their products on as many platforms as possible? And why should a publisher invest in an unknown quantity when a David Beckham autobiography or a celebrity cookbook is a guaranteed seller? Surely, this is just good business.

But apart from academically murky arguments about utility versus cultural value, the commercial imperative does make things hard for the lesser-known writer/publisher trying to gain a foothold in the crowded marketplace. 'A focus entirely on these sales means that there is less emphasis on other, less prominent titles; the so-called midlist.'

With more books published than ever before, more competition for shelf space in fewer (often larger) bookshops, and a need for books to sell now rather than over time, most publishers can no longer afford to support authors over the many years they might take to develop a following. And even if they can, the numbers are often too small to be sustainable. (He cites the example of award-winning novelist Brian Castro

being dropped by his publisher before signing to Giramondo).

Young presents the startling figure that, in Australia in 2005, the tenth best-selling paperback sold 'over 55,000 copies'—less than the number of people who turn up to the MCG on an average winter afternoon to watch an AFL match—and yet these fans will pay more than the cost of a paperback, and will gladly do it every weekend for the entire season. Equally passionate book buyers, I would argue, are few and far between.

Price is another contentious issue. Young looks at the economics of publishing, revealing that a title must usually sell several thousand copies in order to recoup the publisher's investment. He also shows that almost half the cost comes from the expense of physical printing, shipping and selling—sending it to a bookshop, displaying it and so on. And as anyone who has visited a US bookshop or shopped online knows, as Australians we pay a lot for our books.

So, in a market that cannot sustain small production runs, and a publishing industry tied to the printed page, with all its negatives (cost, size, inflexibility) and hesitant to make commercially risky decisions, what can be done to save the book? In Sherman Young's view, we need to let go of the book as an object, and embrace it as an idea. In order to save the message, we need to kill the medium.

Just as the music industry was forced to adapt to the reality of downloading and electronic distribution, the book industry may have to do the same. The 'tipping point' for music came with iTunes and the iPod—an easy way of legally obtaining music online, and a convenient way of listening to it on the run. Recently, iTunes overtook Wal-Mart to become the largest retailer of music in the USA.

Wouldn't it be nice to carry your whole library around in your pocket, to be able to flip through any book, anywhere? Young suggests that

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Tiered membership

The society's tiered membership system will work as follows.

Categories

This membership year (2008) the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. will offer members the option of three categories:

1. Existing members (as at 31 December 2006) can remain an ordinary member at the current fee (\$70/75) with the current entitlements; or
2. Existing and new members can become a professional editor member at the current ordinary fee with the current ordinary entitlements, provided you have two years experience in a paid editing role and can supply two letters confirming your experience; or
3. Existing and new members can become 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

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 details of their experience and two letters (in English) that can be checked by a subcommittee appointed for this purpose. The subcommittee will simply confirm the statements supplied by the third parties. The letters can just be a statement of the years of experience in an editorial role. See the essential **Professional Editor Membership form** for more details about requirements.

Corporate Associates

A new category of Corporate Associates is also available. 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 \$400, 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

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Society winter dinner in July!

We've planned a special winter dinner meeting for July as a variation from the usual format. The dinner will be held on Tuesday, 1 July, and the details will be announced in the next issue of *Blue Pencil*.

when the right 'Reader' comes along, combining an acceptable price and functionality, the effect will be swift and decisive. And just as, in theory at least, the mp3 revolution has allowed artists to be heard by whole new audiences (via the web), so digital technology will allow writers and publishers to access a theoretically limitless market—without the constraints of physical production and handling.

To date, a widely accepted delivery mechanism and convenient portable technology for books remains to be seen. *The Book is Dead* discusses the Sony eReader and other early market entrants. Since its publication last year, Amazon.com has released the Kindle, and Dymocks has begun selling the iLiad reader in Australia. Digital books are here to stay.

But the real shock may come to booksellers. As an ex-bookseller and passionate lover of the book as 'object' (as well as carrier of ideas), I have seen the effect of Amazon.com on 'bricks and mortar' bookselling. As electronic distribution of content becomes more common, the pressure on traditional bookstores will only grow.

Competing on price won't be an option. Why should consumers pay the same for an electronic file which has minimal distribution cost and no physical production cost? In theory, sales margins might be higher (it costs nothing to store an extra 'copy' of an electronic file), but why visit

a 'real' bookstore when you don't have to?

Young suggests that physical books may one day become the realm of collectors, a different grade of reader for whom the object still has value, and who (like those who still go to stores and purchase CDs and DVDs) are prepared to pay a premium for it.

But what does this all mean for those of us working in publishing and media? How do writers (and editors and publishers) make a living in this new world? The issue of digital rights management (DRM) is yet to be solved, and questions of security, of authors' (and editors') rights, of pricing, distribution models and file formats all remain to be answered.

Nevertheless, change is coming. While I don't agree with everything in *The Book is Dead*, I found myself forced to accept the implications—we all need to be ready. Young says 'I wrote this book because I love books, and want a future in which reading still happens, and books still matter, at least to some of us.' Its aim is to start a discussion—one which continues on his website at <www.thebookisdead.com>.

Lachlan Jobbins is a member of our society. He is a freelance writer and editor with a background in English literature, and has worked as a bookseller, book reviewer, and teacher of ESL. He can be contacted at <www.control-edit.com>.

Sherman Young is addressing the Society of Editors (NSW) on 3 June. With him to continue the conversation will be his publisher, Phillipa McGuinness from UNSW Press, and editor Jessica Perini.

The Editor's Job Market

The Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. offers publishers the opportunity to advertise positions vacant, by email, free of charge. Reach the editors of New South Wales by using this free service to our members.

- **Publishers: please send us your ad as a PDF or Word document and we will distribute it by email to our members. You are assured of wide distribution among your target audience.**

- **Members: please supply or update your email address so that the society can email you notices of jobs for editors.**

We welcome advertisements for all editorial roles from trainee to publisher, for permanent, temporary or freelance jobs.

Email Bruce Howarth: <editorbruce@optusnet.com.au>.

IPEd notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors (formerly CASE) April 2008

The indefatigable secretary of the IPEd Council, Ed Highley, has managed to reconcile all the councillors' work schedules, travel plans and family commitments in order to convene a face-to-face meeting in Canberra over the weekend of 12–13 April. This is the handover meeting at which the Interim Council transforms itself into the Council that governs IPEd as a company limited by guarantee. Thanks are due to Virginia Wilton who has offered the premises of her company, Wilton Hanford Hanover, free of charge as the venue for the meeting. Important items on the agenda include the appointment of an honorary treasurer, a position description for a paid, part-time secretary and the approval of the

budget. The council will also set the levy to be paid by the state and territory societies to the national body.

The Accreditation Board is making great progress, spurred by the desire to hold the first accreditation examination this year. The board is currently assessing applications for the jobs of developing and coordinating the exam and will be announcing the appointments after its meeting on 7 April. Investigations are continuing into the logistics and costs of conducting the exam on screen or on line, but the first exam will be on paper, held simultaneously in all state capitals and Canberra. More details are in the preliminary notification which is on the IPEd website <www.iped-editors.org> under Accreditation.

Many tasks have to be completed to ensure that the inaugural exam runs smoothly. The Accreditation Board is working on application forms and guidelines for candidates; guidelines for examiners, invigilators and markers; measures to preserve the security and confidentiality of exam papers; and promotion and publicity. A major area is liaison with the societies of editors, which will be encouraged to hold training sessions before the exam and provide venues and invigilators on the day. The meeting of the IPEd council in mid-April will confirm the fee for the exam, which will be posted on the website.

**Janet Mackenzie
Liaison Officer**

It comes as a bit of a shock to realise that some of the key items of Australian English are hand-me-downs from elsewhere. Iconic terms such as *the bush* and *bushranger* are in fact borrowings from American English. And a colloquialism that we think of as being central to our culture—*fair dinkum*—is in fact a borrowing from British dialect.

Following are some common items in Australian English for which we have to acknowledge our debt to British English (see Table C, this page). It is true however that in some cases we have made more of these words than the British have done. Some of them are still limited to British dialect, the word *chook* (a chicken) being a notable case in point. Others have died out of British colloquialism while remaining strong here. *Mongrel* in the sense of ‘despicable’ was a colloquialism of the 1700s in British English but is alive and well in Australian English, particularly in the expression *a mongrel act*. So what is the added value that Australia has given this rich heritage? Our special areas of creativity would seem to be sport, in particular Aussie Rules – *boundary rider* (the sports reporter who comments from the side of the football field), *desperation football* (extremely hard-fought football), *fresh air shot* (a kick that misses), *mongrel kick* (a very bad shot), *rainmaker* (a kick that goes up into the air).

From sport it is a short distance to politics. Older colloquialisms like *dorothy dixer* (a question asked in parliament specifically to allow a propagandist reply by a minister) and *donkey vote* (in a compulsory preferential system of voting, a vote in which the voter’s apparent order of preference among the candidates listed on the ballot paper corresponds with the order in which the names appear in the list, so that the voter is probably not expressing any preference at all) have now become standard terms. Others are: *duchess*, to treat as if a duchess, lavish largesse on; *free kick*, a transfer from the football use to mean ‘an easy opportunity to score off the opposition’; *rort*, as in ‘rorting or stacking the branches’.

A nice definition of *slang* has appeared in Jonathon Green’s latest dictionary, *Cassell’s Dictionary of Slang*.

He gives the origin of the word as the Scandinavian ‘sleng’, which also renders standard English’s ‘sling’, and means ‘a slinging’, ‘a device’, ‘a strategy’. Thus *slang* is both literally and figuratively a ‘slung’ or ‘thrown’ language, tossed cunningly, as it were, into the hearer’s face and ears.

Green also maintains that slang is above all ‘the language of the city—urgent, pointed, witty, cruel, capable of both excluding and including, of mocking and confirming’. This may be true of this day and age, but slang is an aspect of a fully functioning variety of English wherever it occurs, flourishing perhaps where the centre of gravity of

community might be and therefore as often as not flourishing in the city. But in colonial times, where the city/bush equation was more equally balanced, slang was as much a part of bush life as of city life. It is also true to say that city slang is more often recorded, and the slang of marginal communities more often than not, ignored.

But this leads us to some of the defining features of Australian slang which in popular belief is recognised for two attributes, the first being its black humour and pervasive irony, its constant downplaying of events and downsizing of people. The second as its reportedly huge range and vast lexicon.

Table C: British English words and their meanings.

chook	chicken
chuffed	pleased
have a derry on someone	to have a grudge against someone
cobber	friend
dink	double on a bicycle
duffer	cattle thief
dunny	toilet
flummox	to astonish
a fluke	a lucky success
fossick	to rummage around
a geek	a look
give someone gip	to annoy someone
golly	mucus
josh	tease
nick	steal
nincompoop	idiot
ning nong	idiot
purler	an excellent one of its kind
Rafferty’s rules	mayhem
a punt	a kick
the rozzers	the police
skerrick	a trace
skite	to boast
slummocky	bedraggled
smidgin	a tiny amount
smoodge	to kiss and cuddle
sook	a coward
little tackers	small children
tiddler	a tiny fish
tootsy	a toe
waffle	talk at length
wonky	unstable

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The black humour comes from Australian English's colonial origins, when grim humour was a strategy for coping with grim situations. It is particularly evident in phrases allowing for an allusive surprise, such as the following found at the headword *useful* in the *Macquarie Book of Slang*:

- useful as a bucket under a bull
- useful as a dead dingo's donger
- useful as a dry thunderstorm
- useful as a glass door on a dunny
- useful as an arsehole on a broom
- useful as an ashtray on a motorbike
- useful as a piss in a shower
- useful as a pocket on a singlet
- useful as a roo-bar on a skateboard
- useful as a sore arse to a boundary rider
- useful as a spare dick at a wedding
- useful as a submarine with screen doors
- useful as a third armpit
- useful as a wart on the hip
- useful as a wether at a ram sale
- useful as a witch's tit
- useful as the bottom half of a mermaid
- useful as tits on a bull
- useful as two knobs of billy-goat poop.

The belief that Australians have more slang at their disposal than any other English language community I think springs from the Australian habit of using slang in situations where other cultures would stick to a formal register. This has the effect of making Australian slang more notable and noted. A moment's reflection on the wealth of American slang would make one query the pre-eminence of Aussie slang. There is no scientific measurement of language varieties in these terms, but it would seem that we are all equally gifted in all the registers of our variety.

NEW MEMBERS

Virginia Barton
Lynwen Davies
Olivia Wroth
Lana Nadj
Daniela Solomon
Margaret Taylor
Gabi Brie

There is plenty of evidence in the *Macquarie Book of Slang* of our reliance on American slang, as for example in such catchphrases as *HELLO* with a heavy emphasis on the second syllable, and *Don't go there!* as an attempt to avoid an undesirable topic of conversation. But there is still an awful lot of American slang that we don't touch, because it doesn't come our way or it seems irrelevant to our circumstances or it just doesn't take our fancy.

Australian English is still building on its heritage, with, for example, tucker fucker, a term used initially for a cook, particularly the kind of second rate cook who churned out meals in institutions and economically run boarding schools, anywhere where cheap food in bulk was required and no one asked too many questions about the standard of cooking. The meaning has been extended in two directions. It has become another name for tomato sauce, and it is now another term for the microwave. Both for obvious reasons.

We borrow, we adapt, we interpret, we bend things to our use. It's a skill that we should be proud of. It's probably Australian culture. The end result is still a unique Australian blend and a unique Australian view.

The question and answer session that followed Sue Butler's talk was very entertaining. Ever the professional, Sue has tracked down these answers to some questions raised on the night:

- The colloquialism *ditz* is American English from about the early 1970s. The best guess is that it is a blend of *dotty* and *dizzy*.
- Regarding *couldn't organise a one-woman brothel*, it seems it is an individual variation. The more traditional expression is *couldn't organise sex in a brothel*.

Sue Butler is a former president of our society and was publisher of the second, third, and fourth editions of The Macquarie Dictionary. She now has a column in the Walkley Magazine and is a regular commentator on radio and television on aspects of Australian English. Material in the tables is from 'The History of the Colloquial Lexicon in Australian English' by Susan Butler.

Accreditation exam

Saturday, 18 October 2008

The Accreditation Board has set a new date for the first editing exam. It will now be held on Saturday, 18 October 2008. This will give members who plan to sit for the exam more time to prepare and also to take advantage of a revised sample exam, to be made available on the IPed website.

The new sample exam will reflect far more accurately what the real exam is likely to contain.

The next issue of *Blue Pencil* will provide more details. You will be informed of the cost per examination candidate as soon as a decision has been made.

Further details on the accreditation exam can be obtained from the IPed website <www.iped-editors.org> under Accreditation.

Please note that the NSW society will offer a workshop on the exam. The workshop will be prepared by the NSW assessors and held in Sydney prior to the exam. Details about the workshop to be held on 22 August 2008 will be provided in the 'Professional Development' section of this newsletter.

Freelancers do lunch, 29 April

The next freelancers' lunch will be held at Dick's Hotel, 89 Beattie Street, Balmain, at noon on Tuesday, 29 April 2008. Meals are available in the beer garden, under the dome. Mains are about \$10 to \$14. Buses to Balmain leave stand A or B behind the QVB every 10 to 15 minutes. Hop on a 441 or 442 then alight at the intersection of Beattie and Mullens streets, right near the hotel.

The society organises these informal freelancers' lunches every second month or so.

The invitation to lunch is cordially extended to other freelancers who work in the publishing industry. There is no need to RSVP. See you there!

Galley Club Networking Happy Hour, May

The Sydney Galley Club is hosting a monthly networking Happy Hour for anyone in publishing or printing. The next one will be in May from 6.30 to 7.30 p.m., at Level 3, Harbour View Hotel, 18 Lower Fort Street, The Rocks. For Galley Club members drinks are free. Non-members pay a door fee of \$5 and drinks are free thereafter. (Or you could just join the Club: \$50 p.a. or \$20 p.a. student concession... and enjoy free Happy Hours every month.)

For dates and more information about the Galley Club of Sydney visit <www.galleyclubsydney.org.au>.

Making direct deposit payments

Using your own bank's online funds transfer option, you can make your workshop or membership payments direct to our CBA account.

Account name: Society of Editors
(NSW)

BSB: 062172

Account number: 00905083

Include your name and abbreviated payment description in the space provided.

Bargaining rights for freelancers

The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance has written to the Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy requesting a meeting to discuss the need to revise the former government's legislation that excludes trade unions from acting on behalf of independent contractors, such as freelancers, when they negotiate minimum conditions with large corporations that purchase their services. Read the letter at <www.alliance.org.au/documents/080319_indy_contractors.pdf>.

Barbara Jefferis Award 2008 winner announced

The Australian Society of Authors is delighted to announce the winner of the inaugural Barbara Jefferis Award.

Valued at \$35,000, the Award is offered annually for 'the best novel written by an Australian author that depicts women and girls in a positive way or otherwise empowers the status of women and girls in society'.

Novelist Barbara Jefferis was a founding member of the Australian Society of Authors and its first woman President. The Award is paid from the Barbara Jefferis Literary Fund, established by a bequest from Barbara's husband, ABC film critic John Hinde. The Australian Society of Authors is Trustee of the Fund.

The winner of the first Barbara Jefferis Award is *Feather Man* by Rhyll McMaster, published by Brandl & Schlesinger. At the awards ceremony held at the University of Sydney Rosie Scott presented the judges' report, and John and Barbara's daughter Rosalind Hinde presented the cheque.

The Award judges were academic Dr Leigh Dale, literary editor Deborah Hope and novelist Rosie Scott. The judges' report is available on request.

For more details contact Dr Jeremy Fisher, Executive Director, Australian Society of Authors on 02 9318 0877 or 0438 318 673.

The Australian Publishers Association Book Design Awards, 22 May

The Australian Publishers Association (APA) Design Awards ceremony and cocktail party will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on 22 May. The event will be presented by Tony Squires, and starts at 6.00 p.m. Tickets cost \$66 per person and should be ordered by 8 May. For more details phone Kellie Cameron or Kathy Fulcher (02 9281 1073). For booking forms visit the APA website at <www.publishers.asn.au>.

Sydney Writers' Festival, 19 to 25 May

The eleventh Sydney Writers' Festival will feature over 400 international and Australian authors. The 2008 Festival promises to be as wide ranging, profound and enjoyable as ever, with its wealth of riches covering fiction, nonfiction, poetry, journalism, scriptwriting, film, new media and much more. Many events will again take place at Walsh Bay, alongside other city venues and in suburban Sydney and regional NSW.

Jeanette Winterson will deliver the festival's opening address, 'Get a Book, Get a Life' on Tuesday, 20 May, and Pulitzer Prize-winning Dominican-American novelist Junot Diaz will wrap things up on Sunday, 25 May.

More than 330 sessions will be held. International guests include Anne Enright, Sarah Hall, Peter Ho Davies, Vincent Lam, David Davidar, Mo Hayder, John Burnside, Forrest Gander, Hermione Lee, Simon Sebag Montefiore and Peter Heller. Australian participants will include Georgia Blain, Matthew Condon, Robyn Davidson, Luke Davies, Michelle de Kretser, Lisa Forrest, Tim Flannery, Helen Garner, Gail Jones, Joan London, Judith Lucy, Don Watson, Jana Wendt and Charlotte Wood.

Tickets to paid events are now on sale. For full details of the program, go to the Sydney Writers' Festival website <www.swf.org.au>.



The National Editors Conference in 2009

The Society of Editors (SA) will host the National Editors Conference in Adelaide on 8–10 October 2009.

The conference will be held at the Adelaide Festival Centre, which looks out over the picturesque River Torrens, a tranquil stretch of water in the heart of the city.

The Adelaide Festival Centre is strolling distance from the arts and cultural facilities located along North Terrace including the Art Gallery of South Australia, the South Australian Museum, the Migration Museum, the War Memorial, Parliament House, the State Library and Elder Conservatorium.

In the coming months, additional information for conference delegates will be available through regular newsletter updates and on the conference website: <www.editors-sa.org.au/conference09.html>. Start planning your trip to Adelaide, where you can enjoy the fabulous architecture and culture as well as listen, discuss, learn, edit, eat and drink!

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 <bluepencil@editorsnsw.com>.

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

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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 the Editor at <bluepencil@editorsnsw.com>.

Copy deadline for the June issue is Tuesday, 13 May 2008

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 is available in different categories.

Membership runs for a calendar year. The 2008 fees are \$70 for ordinary member or professional member renewals; \$75 for new professional members (\$45 if joining after 30 June); or \$50 for associate membership. Interested organisations can become corporate associates for \$400 per year.

To obtain a membership application form, phone (02) 9294 4999 or write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007.

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 <esd@editorsnsw.com>.

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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Professional development

Editing and publishing children's literature (2-day workshop)

Presenter: Mark Macleod

Date: Friday, 6 June and Friday, 11 July 2008

Cost: (For two days) \$351 members, \$522 non-members

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Aspiring children's editors have an opportunity to learn from one of the best in the field in two days of fun, interactive workshops. Mark will cover the basics—and more—in this popular field, ranging from picture books to young adult fiction.

Day 1

- Publishing and editing for young readers—catalogues, sales figures and reviews; are we publishing for children or adults?
- Deciding what to publish—manuscript assessment and effective reader's reports
- Editing picture books—how to tell the age of the most likely reader
- Structure in fiction—entrance lines, exit lines, segues

Day 2

- Copy editing fiction. Your ear for dialogue.
- Fiction for young adults—teens as drama queens
- The editor, the author and couples counselling (including author visit)
- How are new media changing the publisher's and editor's roles?

Grammar for editors

Presenter: Pam Peters, Professor of Linguistics, Macquarie University

Date: Thursday, 24 July 2008

Cost: \$195 members, \$290 non-members

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Editors often feel that they need more grammar, but how much is enough? The major grammars of contemporary English consist of more than 1000 pages, with vast networks of grammatical terms. Editors probably don't need to know all of them—unless they are aiming for a career change. What they do need for the purposes of professional editing is enough grammar to:

- Make the most of dictionaries, style manuals and other language references
- Understand and explain the variable points of current English usage
- Capitalise on language resources for cohesive writing
- Enlarge their repertoire for managing stylistic change.

Accreditation exam workshop

Date: 22 August 2008

Cost: To be advised

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

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).

Payments for attending the workshops can be made by direct deposit. For more information about the workshops, email Meryl Potter at <education@editorsnsw.com>.

Copy deadline for the June issue of

Blue Pencil

Tuesday, 13 May 2008

Please note: Due to changes in the booking system this year we will be asking participants to reserve their places at the workshops at least three weeks before they take place.