

The Editors

Newsletter

P.O. Box 567, Neutral Bay Junction, 2089

MEETING: September 3, 1986 Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre.

Speaker: The legendary (you can pick which legend you prefer) Bob Gould, extraordinary bookseller and video impresario, will speak on the impact of videos on book retailing and vice versa. Bob's views on this topic are well honed. Come along and hear whether Richard Gere sells more books than can be sold by putting the name Graham Greene on the cover. Graham Greene? Isn't he in the new Martin Scorsese flick?

Time: 6.30 pm. Cost: \$3 for meeting (including drinks); \$12 for meeting with meal. RSVP to Rita or Jeremy - and we mean it even if you're just coming for drinks - by September 1. Phone 888 3655.

NEXT MEETING is October 22. Christopher Koch, author of The Doubleman and that other book that's now a video (wonder if that's done anything for sales) will join a panel to discuss fiction and the editing of it in Australia today. Does a writer need an editor? If not, why not? If not not, what should a writer's editor do? Start thinking about this one; it should get some of the worms out of the books, too!

CHRISTMAS PARTY Yes, we're having one. It's going to be a Burmese Banquet at the Rangoon Restaurant on November 28. Address is 646 King Street, New town (lots of parking, near St Peter's Station; buses too), and cost will be \$20. Fill in the application form with this newsletter and send it straight in. Closing date is November 14. Hurry! Spouses (spice?), partners etc. more than welcome. Cost covers (very nice Australian bottled) wine, beer and orange juice. Send back you filled in and bechequed christmas party application with your voting paper.

VOTING PAPER? That's right, we're having a referendum. We need 60 people to vote on this issue, so please do so. We're voting on changing the name, a change strongly recommended by the Committee, although neither of the two

proposed changes is endorsed by the Committee. As the President has already moved, one suggested change is to The Editors' Society (apostrophe in place) to avoid unnecessary explanations of what "The Editors" is (or are). The (Melbourne-based) Society of Editors, which has not yet, as far as we know, changed its name to Society of Editors (Vic.) - though there is a Society of Editors (Tas.) - suggests we rename ourselves the Society of Editors (N.S.W.). The Committee sees the merit in having three state-based societies with the same name, but, in a reiteration, does not view this suggestion any more favourably than the suggestion from the President. The Committee does want a name change, however. If you don't want a name change vote No. Send your ballot in with your Christmas party cheque. Or bring them both to the next meeting.

PEOPLE WANT EDITORS Gordon N. Mills, P.O. Box 97, Curtin ACT 2605 wants to produce a book. He wants advice on what initial reading he should do to help him with the editing. Does anybody know? Is there such a book? Bruce Wilson, P.O. Box 46, Warialda 2402 has a biblical commentary he wants help with. Any divine inspiration? Robert Whittle, 2 Walu Street, Aranda, ACT 2614 has a novel he'd like an editor to fix before he resubmits it for publication. Sounds like a lotta fun!

RECEIPTS Sometimes members are understandably worried that, although it is weeks since they sent a cheque for membership, they have received no acknowledgment. We appreciate that there are delays, which are due to our being a voluntary society trying to reduce the cost of administration.

First of all, letters go to the post office box. This is emptied regularly (but not every day), the letters are sorted and sent to the appropriate committee member to be dealt with. Cheques are sent to the Treasurer, who receipts and banks them. The Treasurer then sends the receipts to the Membership Secretary, who keeps records and arranges for the receipts to be sent out with the next mailing of the Newsletters.

Because committee members are busy people they can't always deal with correspondence as soon as they receive it. Then there are delays due to Australia Post. Last but not least, if a receipt just misses one mailing of

the Newsletter, it must wait five or six weeks until the next mailing.

We hope you will understand the reasons for delay and make allowances accordingly.

MEETINGS WE HAVE HAD On May 7, it was George Paxinos who very interestingly and in great detail told us of his world-renowned work on the nervous system of rats. We got so involved with this talk that we forgot to take notes, and nearly missed dinner! Everybody who attended, though, agreed that high level science can be very exciting. On June 25, it was Peter Eastway. He told us about tax. What follows is our interpretation, not his professional advice, and he is not responsible for our errors. If you want his professional advice, his phone number is 981 5511, or write to PO Box 487, Manly 2095; this appears as information only. Peter is an editor who is also an accountant.

The relevant section of the Income Tax Assessment Act is Section 51, subsection 1 - whatever is required to assist with someone's work, directly or indirectly. It also covers partial claims e.g. use of TV where necessary.

Items to claim:

TOOLS - typewriter, pens computer. \$100 max. allowable (over that becomes capital expenditure and must be depreciated).

PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY - again \$100 max. is best, can also be depreciated.

BRIEFCASE - fine under the magic \$100. Should mention it is used to carry 'confidential material' - surely manuscripts would comply?

SPECIALIST JOURNALISTS can claim TVs and videos e.g. if involved with news, current affairs. 10% no problem - need good story for 20-30%! If TV or video was bought 2 years earlier you have to start from now as if you had been claiming and depreciating over the last 2 years e.g. bought for \$1000 now \$800 worth. Tape recorders can also be claimed for interviews.

TECHNICAL TRADE JOURNALS - newspapers, magazines. 50% allowed no problems. If specifically a writers journal

100% is OK - need to say no private use involved, purely to keep abreast of developments in your area of expertise. ALWAYS give name of journal and reasons for buying it. Newspaper claims are more difficult now. May need documentation for over 50% of amount.

HOME OFFICE - if employed very difficult to claim unless a totally separate room used exclusively as an office. If you rent and office is 1/6 size of house, can claim 1/6 of rent, etc.

ELECTRICITY - small amount may be OK.

OFFICE FURNITURE - depreciation allowed.

TRAVEL EXPENSES - as employee or self-employed. If seeing authors, typesetters etc. OK this year - put blurb with it. Costs should be apportioned from all receipts e.g. 30% business 70% private. Can also claim public transport costs in this way - itemise if no receipts. NOTE: travel to and from home to office is not deductible.

INTERSTATE TRAVEL - if not all paid by company.

SELF EDUCATION - course of relevance to what you do can be claimed e.g. fees, textbooks, transport. Conferences also.

DISABILITY INSURANCE POLICY - only deductible if paid weekly as income and not a lump sum. (Not sure if this was only for freeland and/or self-employed.)

In general - OK if claim under \$200 per year and individual amounts are less than \$10 - otherwise keep receipts for everything.

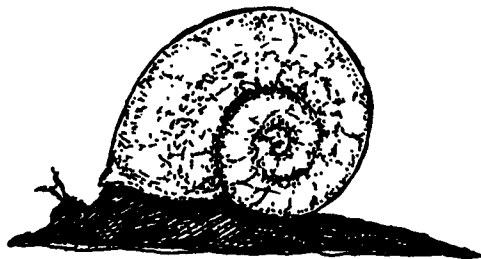
Then on July 25, our last meeting, Professor Derek Llewellyn-Jones talked about editing medical texts. His informal and entertaining lecture proved as spirited a defence of editing as our underpaid and invisible profession could wish for. Professor Llewellyn-Jones advocated a change of role for medical doctors, from that of an awe-inspiring shaman to that of a skilled communicator capable of talking with her or his patients rather than over their heads. Editors could play their part in bringing about such a new dispensation, as mediators, interpreters and translators from lingua medica or 'medispeak', into plain English. But such

mediation was not confined to medical books for the general reader. It extended to communication among medical persons themselves. Improved readability of scholarly medical publications was highly desirable, not just because it led to increased citation (which benefited one's career!), but because it was a conditio sine qua non, or an indispensable condition for the advancement of science that doctors read the publications to which they subscribed. Provided that the author had a point to make, and did so with a minimum of enthusiasm, editors on their part could make sure that there was a (story) line to follow, that the text was written in plain English, and that the title invited perusal at the very least.

Professor Llewellyn-Jones had a salient point to make and displayed considerably more than a minimum of enthusiasm in making. To judge by his eloquence he would appear to one of those rarae aves whose manuscripts need little more than a gentle nudging into perfect shape.

WORKSHOPS WORKSHOPS We are planning to hold workshops early next year. We would like to receive suggestions on what you would like to learn. Buttonhole a committee member today and let her or him have it!

RETIREMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBER Long time committee member Sue McGrath has resigned due to pressure of commitments. We miss her. Adriaan van der Weel has been co-opted to replace her.



UNFORTUNATE GAFFE By PRESIDENT!

In our last newsletter, the President, eager to get off on a holiday, advised that the price of entry in the Freelance Register was \$20 for members, and \$25 for non-members. In fact, price is \$25 for members, and \$30 for non-members. Please send a cheque for the balance if you have paid an insufficient amount. Many apologies, Your Pres.

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Texts of the papers read at the recent *Style Council 86* resumés of the discussions that followed details of the surveys taken and the recommendations endorsed, will be published in

PROCEEDINGS OF STYLE COUNCIL 86

editor: P.H. Peters

This is the first publication of the Dictionary Research Centre, Macquarie University and will appear in September/October 1986 c. 160pp. Price \$20, incl. postage.

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