



THE EDITORS

PO. Box 567,
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NEXT MEETING.....NEXT MEETING.....NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of The Editors will be held at the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre at 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli at 6.30 p.m. on Wednesday 25 September 1985.

Speakers: Our Guest Speakers will be Patrick Coyle, Pam Brewster, Jacquie Kent and, I hope, Tony Walker. We have also invited the entire class of the TAFE pilot course and we hope to discuss the way the course is operating at the moment and how it could be improved for next year.

Cost: \$3 for wine and cheese only, \$12 if you stay for dinner after the meeting.

RSVP: Jenny at Weldon's on 929.5677 by Monday 23 September if you are attending.

LAST MEETING:

At our last meeting Colonel Alex Sheppard recalled experiences from a lifetime of involvement in causes, particularly in the Australian post-war politics of bookselling, censorship and publishing. Still a committee member of the Australian Journalists Association, Colonel Sheppard was also instrumental in establishing the Australian Society of Authors.

His own career was based in bookselling where, through the Booksellers Association, he was active in the network agreement. Through Alpha Press he published forty-five books, beginning with John Burton's The Alternative, and including John Lang's The Turbulent Years and an Australian edition of The Trial of Lady Chatterley in 1964 which led to the lifting of the ban on the Penguin import.

Colonel Sheppard's career in bookselling came after World War II, in which he had served as an officer, becoming involved through his legal background with the legal position of enlisted men and the conduct of courts martial. Although he describes himself as a pacifist before and since that war,

he was convinced it was his duty to oppose Fascism, and served as a military liaison officer in Greece.

His years in Greece coincided with the turmoil of civil war, and here he found his own political troubles. His experiences of the Australian Army, but more significantly of Greece at that time have become source material for modern historians, and, through maintaining his friendship with post-war Greeks, he has considerable expertise in their problems. However, although maintaining friendships in Australia with political figures of the calibre of Dr H.V. Evatt, Sheppard decided, for family reasons, to withdraw from the political fronts of either eastern Europe or Australia, and bought his first bookshop. Books and book collecting had been his one luxury since childhood, and he went into the book trade again idealistically, recalling Van Gogh's description of the bookshop as 'a light in the world'.

The book trade did not, predictably, prove to be quieter waters as they might have to a less committed man. He joined the Booksellers Association, and as a member of its State and Federal executives, fought for improved conditions. He was highly critical of British book trade practices in relation to Australia, and took on the restrictive trade practices cause.

His publishing involvement began with sympathetic efforts to help local authors find publishers for manuscripts he felt significant and he had a considerable hand in restructuring Jack Lang's The Turbulent Years. From being an informal agent, he created Alpha Press, a small scale publishing venture in which he managed the entire production process himself.

Books, such as No Case to Answer by J. Stevenson, the wife of the Captain of HMAS Voyager who had been cleared of charges related to the sinking of his ship but never restored to his former position by the Navy, had been to as many as twelve publishers before Sheppard took them on because he believed they should be published.

The main cause of publishing in the post-war period was, of course, censorship and booksellers were involved as importers as well as distributors. Censorship issues cut across party lines, and had more to do with the sectarianism of the time, which had also invaded the political arena during the Labor Party split in Victoria.

D.H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover became the focus of censorship controversy in the early sixties after British courts decided to lift the ban on the book, followed by Australia maintaining its ban and also banning from import the account of the trial. In publishing Penguin's 'Trial' in Australia, Sheppard contravened State laws. Only Victoria prosecuted and in losing cleared the way for the Penguin import.

Alpha Press was formed to meet the needs of the time and was one of the many determined responses Colonel Sheppard made to meet these needs. His extraordinary life would be too complex to recall here and would make the worthy subject of another book.

FREELANCE REGISTER:

The Editors 1985 Register of Freelance Publishing Services is now available. Five copies have been sent to all members, the extras for personal distribution to interested bodies. Copies have also gone to ABPA members, D.W. Thorpe, libraries, printers and typesetters, and other organisations who have expressed interest in the past. This good-looking booklet had a print run of 800, the same as last year, but had four more pages of entries. Congratulations and thanks to Jutta Sieverding for masterminding the project and committee members who helped with dispatch.

INDEXERS AWARD:

Congratulations to Jeremy Fisher who has just been awarded the Australian Society of Indexers first annual medal for an outstanding index. Jeremy - who says he is 'honoured and flattered' - received the gold medal for his (approx.) $\frac{3}{4}$ million entry index to the Australian Encyclopaedia, published November 1983 by the Grolier Society. The project took 18 months. He found it a tremendous challenge, but is 'happy editing books now'.

CHRISTMAS PARTY:

A joint Christmas party with the Galley Club has been arranged for Friday 29 November at Sonia's Malaysian Restaurant, 111 Regent Street, Chippendale. Cost \$24 a head. Further details later.

SINGAPORE SOCIETY OF EDITORS:

We've received friendly overtures from Mrs Triena Ong, president of the Singapore Society of Editors, suggesting an exchange of newsletters and correspondence between interested members. Formed early in 1984, they now have over 60 members. Activities so far have included a presentation on 'Effective Communication through Audiovisual Means', visits to typesetters and printers, a proofreading course, and a logo competition. If you're planning to visit Singapore, they are very keen to meet you. Contact Mrs Ong at 25 Orchid Drive, Singapore 2057.

MELBOURNE EDITORS:

The Melbourne Society of Editors president is now Colin Jevons (Nelson 03 329.5199); Jenny Trustrum (McPhee Gribble 03 419.9010) continues as newsletter editor. (We receive a regular copy of their newsletter - apply Bruce Champion or Jo Rudd). They now have 178 members with a male/female ratio of 48:130.

AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY WEEK:

ALW 1985 will be from 20-27 September on the theme 'Libraries - the best things in life - are free'. Conducted by the Australian Library Promotion Council, there will be displays, talks, competitions and guided tours throughout the country to promote library services.

AUSTRALIAN PUBLISHING OUTPUT:

The August issue of Australian Bookseller and Publisher reports a dramatic increase in the number of new Australian titles published in the first six months of 1985. The 1205 new books on the market is 36.4% up on the corresponding period in 1984.

SOMETHING TO SAY?

The newsletter editors would be more than happy to receive contributions from members. If you have something to say, useful information to share, a humorous anecdote, an account of a course or workshop you attended, or anything else you'd like to get off your chest, please contact Jo Rudd on 949.6157

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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