

Blue Pencil

Newsletter of the Society of Editors (NSW)

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September 1990

Next meeting 2 October 1990

Editing magazines and journals

Have you ever dreamed of editing your own magazine, signing your name under the editorial, telling the world your views on Life? Or would you dread the hassles – the articles that don't turn up, or worse, are unusable; the photographs that go missing; the story that suddenly becomes out of date? At our October meeting we will meet three very different periodical editors: Gregory Harvey, who edits *Editions*, a new monthly book review journal; Valeric Stead, who edits a stable of bridal magazines, including *Bride to be*, *Wedding Collections* and *Wedding Etiquette*; and Margaret Foster, who edits *The Tiger*, the monthly corporate newsletter put out by Esso Australia.

This meeting will again be held on a Tuesday and at the Bowlers Club in the City. For further information, please see the enclosed notice.

Note: It was great to see so many people again at the September meeting. Just one complaint to the fifteen or so who booked but didn't turn up: If you book and then find you can't make it, *please* let us know. We have to order the food in advance and, of course, pay for it.

Future meetings

Meetings of the Society are held in the first week of the month.

November 27 Christmas dinner. See details in this issue.

February 1991 AGM and speaker

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Desktop publishing in the publishing industry

Sheridan Carter (Editorial Project Manager for J.B. Fairfax Press), Paul Little (Chief Sub-editor of the *Australian Women's Weekly*) and Laura Gallou (freelance editor and writer) formed the panel at the September meeting to tell us what is involved for editors using desktop publishing facilities.

Sheridan uses an Apple Macintosh with Pagemaker for book production at Fairfax Press. She stressed that you must understand the connection between the words and the book, and be enthusiastic and willing to learn.

Desktop publishing has made books come alive for Sheridan—it gives her the opportunity to design, which she enjoys.

At Fairfax Press an editor works with a designer to produce “bookazines”. These are for the international mass market and cover such areas as cooking, do-it-yourself, and home hints. Sheridan designs a grid and commissions contributors to write a certain number of words, which she then edits. Schedules are tight—three to four months to produce a book. It is a problem, however, to find people who

Society of Editors (NSW), PO Box 254, Broadway 2007 Committee 1990

Michael Wyatt (President). Ph 699 9491 (Keyword Editorial Services)

Kim Anderson (Library and Immediate Past President). Ph 888 4111 (Angus & Robertson)

Jeane Balcombe (Newsletter). Ph 212 4600 (Community Child Care) or 713 9696

Garry Cousins (Membership Secretary). Ph 955 1525

Lesley Dow (Minutes Secretary). Ph 698 7888 (Sydney University Press)

Valerie Marlborough (Publicity). Ph 417 4288 (McGraw Hill)

Kathy Metcalfe (Treasurer). Ph 888 4111 (Angus & Robertson)

Anyone wishing to know more about the Society may write to PO Box 254, Broadway 2007 or telephone any committee member.

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Blue Pencil is published monthly except November and December by the Society of Editors (NSW). Printing is done by The Paper Plate.

can layout books on screen, though here Fairfax provides a good training ground. It was stressed that desktop publishing is only a means of production. You need to know the rules, but you must also know when to create a new rule and when a rule is obsolete.

Although Fairfax was electronic from the start, Paul Little went through an adaptive process. In 1988 computers were introduced at the *Australian Women's Weekly* and Ventura was used. The magazine is now fully computerised, as are all magazines produced by Australian Consolidated Press.

Paul feels that you need patience to become computer literate. You must learn to think like a computer. It is difficult to learn just from a computer-training manual—training courses run by experts are needed. Computers give you increased control over your work; you are the typesetter and layout artist as well as the editor. You can fix widows yourself. You can do your job better.

As a computer-literate academic who set up her own freelance writing and editing agency, Laura spoke from an

individual point of view. She feels you have to make three basic decisions: to use a Macintosh or an IBM-compatible, to buy or lease your equipment, and to work for yourself or for others. Laura sold her Macintosh when she started her agency and bought an IBM-compatible computer, and she now uses Ventura.

The greatest difficulty Laura experienced was learning how to use the programs. It is hard to learn through books alone—you need someone to help you. It is very difficult to estimate charges for jobs (because you cannot, of course, charge your clients for learning time) and Laura has found herself undercharging on some jobs. You also have to chase business as well as do the jobs.

Question time produced some probing questions reflecting the keen interest of the audience. Perhaps the most sobering thought with which we were left was that with desktop publishing, more paper is being used than ever before.

Valerie Marlborough

Survey

Freelance register survey

Some months ago members of your committee conducted an informal survey into how useful our freelance register really is. We asked people listed in the register three questions:

- Have you received work in the last 12 months from the register?
- How many jobs?
- From what types of organisations?

Fifty eight people were surveyed. Forty two had been approached to do work and 41 had accepted jobs. One person received 10–12 job offers. Fifteen people had no job offer and 5 turned down jobs. One hundred and seventy jobs were undertaken, the breakdown being as follows:

- 23 people received jobs from private individuals and authors

- 2 people had work from private businesses (not publishing houses)
- 12 people had work from government departments (including TAFE)
- 16 people had work from publishing houses
- 1 person had work from a charity
- 2 people received crank callers
- 3 people received work from professional organisations, including a club
- 1 person received work from magazines
- 2 people used the register as a recommendation source
- 4 people may have changed their address
- 1 person received work from a packager
- 2 people received work from academic institutions
- 2 people received indexing work

Kathy Metcalfe

Censorship

Censorship register

The Australian Society of Authors is concerned at reports of recent new censorship pressures on municipal and school libraries. They feel it is important to monitor this problem so that a united response can be made.

If you come across any incidents of censorship, could you please inform the ASA so they can note it in their register. They can be contacted at PO Box 315, Redfern, NSW 2016; telephone 318 0877, fax 318 0530.

Your opportunity

Computer software exhibition

The Australian Society of Authors is planning an exhibition of computer software that can be used by authors and editors. They would like a member

of our Society to sit on their planning committee. If you are interested in doing this, please telephone a committee member.

Joint seminar – advancing your career

The Galley Club would like us to run a joint seminar with them on “Advancing your career”. If you would like to be

involved, please contact a committee member or make yourself known at the October meeting.

These things will not happen unless **you make** them happen. If you are interested in either of these activities, you must contact us now, or neither of them will reach fruition.



Society of Editors (NSW)

October 1990 meeting

Editing magazines and journals

Have you ever dreamed of editing your very own magazine, signing your name under the editorial, telling the world just what *you* think? Or do you shiver at the thought of the problems – the articles that are promised and never turn up, or worse, are unusable; the photographs that go missing or just don't come out; the story that becomes out of date the day before publication? At our October meeting we will have three editors of very different periodicals to speak to us about the trials and joys of their work.

The speakers will be Gregory Harvey, who edits a new book review publication called *Editions*; Valerie Stead, who edits a number of glossy bridal publications including *Bride to be* (a quarterly), *Wedding Collections*, *Bridal Planner* and *Wedding Etiquette*; and Margaret Foster, who edits the Esso Australia in-house journal, *The Tiger*.

- When** Tuesday 2 October 1990 at 6.30 pm
- Where** Bowlers Club, 95 York Street, City, across the road from the York Street entrance to BBC Hardware. Parking is available at the Bowlers Club (entrance in Clarence Street) for \$5.
- Cost** Wine, soft drinks, Chinese finger foods and sandwiches will be served at a cost of \$5 for members who book by Friday 28 September and \$10 for non-members and members who do not book.
- RSVP** Before 5 pm on Friday 28 September by fax to Michael Wyatt on 698 4970, or by telephoning him on 699 9491 during business hours or on 332 1414 after hours.

Christmas dinner Christmas dinner Christmas dinner

Don't miss out on this special event – our after dinner speaker will be especially entertaining. Book early to avoid disappointment!

When Tuesday 27 November 1990. Drinks from 6.30 pm; dinner at 7.30 pm.

Where Bowlers Club, 95 York Street, City. Across the road from the York Street entrance to BBC Hardware. Parking is available at the Bowlers Club for \$5.

What A Chinese banquet (some vegetarian dishes). Wine and soft drinks included; spirits available from the bar.

Editors' Societies around Australia

South Australia

The South Australian society was established in December 1989. There's talk of them putting out a freelance

register. If you want to know more, contact Jenny Walker, PO Box 2328, Kent Town 5071.

Queensland

A society is also being formed in Brisbane. For further information

contact Mary Jane Bosch, 26 Ellerslie Crescent, Terringah East 4068.

Victoria

At the August meeting of the Victorian Society of Editors the speaker was Christopher Warren, Federal Secretary of the Australian Journalists' Association. The August newsletter carried information about the establishment of a Society of Editors (Victoria) Award of \$250 for distinction in the Graduate Diploma in

Editing and Publishing; a report of Tony (Lonely Planet) Wheeler's talk in July; a report on the Style Council; a directory of editors and writers societies around Australia and overseas; news of other societies; and application forms for copy-editing and proofreading workshops.

Tasmania

The Society of Editors (Tasmania) has a new-look *Newsletter* – very professional. The August editorial suggests that the Society produce a leaflet explaining what editors do and

what services they offer, for "organisations that might make use of editors if they knew how valuable we are".

Society of Business Communicators

At the August meeting, Hugh Mackay, Communication psychologist and author of the Mackay Reports, spoke on "Why don't people listen?". At the September meeting, Adele Weiss will speak about using the corporate wardrobe as a communication tool.

On 5 September the Society visited Australian Consolidated Press to see how magazines are laid out on screen.

The Society's July/August newsletter included an article on the new registered publication rules, and a report of Colin Wheildon's talk on layout, typography, readability and comprehension.

The Australian Book Publishers Association

The ABPA held a one-day seminar on "Building a List" on 6 September. Unfortunately, information about this

reached us too late to go in the August *Blue Pencil*.

The Australian Society of Authors Ltd

The July newsletter included information about a Rainforest Writing workshop from 22 to 26 October, and news of various awards, prizes and contests. The August newsletter included information about the Children's Book Writers Group; South Australian publishing promotions

grants; "Project Grievance", a report on book publishing practices in Australia; and "Project Octopus", a report on the publishing and distribution ownership structure in the book industry, both in Australia and internationally.

The Fellowship of Australian Writers

In the August-September issue of *Writers Voice* the president describes a recent visit to the Northern Territory; an isolated writer, Jimmy Saks, writes

about one of his writing successes; a number of competitions are listed; and the annual general meeting is reported.

Award

Indexers' medal

The Australian Society of Indexers Medal is again being offered for an outstanding index to a book or periodical compiled and first published in Australia. The index must be in print and must have been first published in Australia after 1987. It must have been compiled in Australia even though the text to which it refers may have originated outside Australia.

Up to three indexes may be nominated by any one person, but the closing date is Friday 28 September (which is rather close). Send your recommendations to the Secretary, Australian Society of Indexers, GPO Box 1251L, Melbourne, Victoria 3001.

Education

Writing for environmentalists

The Total Environment Centre is offering a course of six workshops for people who wish to use writing in defence of the environment. The course will be held on Thursday evenings from

18 October to 22 November at the Australian Museum in Sydney. The cost is \$60. Telephone 247 4714 or 241 2523 for further information.

Public relations convention

The Public Relations Institute of Australia is holding its 11th national convention (in Canberra) from 17 to 20 October 1990. The topic is

"Communications: the new age". Full registration costs \$450, or \$150 for students. For further information telephone (06) 285 3000.

Introduction to printing

The Society of Business Communicators is running a course on "What every editor and print buyer should know about printing".

When: 29 October to 2 November 1990; 9 am to 5 pm each day

Cost: \$775 (\$725 for members)

Where: Artarmon Inn, Artarmon, Sydney

For further information ring Bill Smith on 450 1342.

Advanced business writing

Another course being run by the Society of Business Communicators, this time on advanced business writing. The tutor is Robert Eagleson, Associate Professor of English at the University of Sydney.

When: 8 to 12 November and 7 December 1990

Cost: \$775 (\$725 members)

Where: Artarmon Inn, Sydney

Seminar

Bringing technology closer

The NSW Society for Technical Communication is holding its annual seminar in October. The keynote speaker will be R. John Brockmann, Associate Professor of English at the University of Delaware. Other speakers include Professor Arthur Delbridge (Editor-in-Chief of the Macquarie Dictionary), Associate Professor Robert Eagleson, and

Gareth Powell (computer and travel writer for the *Sydney Morning Herald*).

When: 20-21 October 1990

Where: University of Technology, Sydney, Kuring-gai Campus

Cost: \$210

For further information telephone Reg Hardman on 555 7358.

Pagemaker freelancer wanted

The Department of Minerals and Energy is looking for a short-term, two-days-a-week person or production assistant for an expected 12-week period to prepare camera-ready publications, lists etc. The person must be

- fluent on Pagemaker for Macs—sufficiently good to produce simple brochures, covers and title and biblio pages
- able to write specifications and obtain quotes.

Some copy-editing skills would be an advantage.

Rates are negotiable; up to \$25 an hour is possible. The work will be in-house at St Leonards. Days and hours can be discussed.

Reply to Robert West, telephone 901 8265, fax 901 8246.