



Editing, but not as we know it

Report by Wendy Abernethy

Margaret McGuire, Deputy Editor for Brisbane-based publishing company Graphic Publishing, addressed our meeting on 2 July. The company is unique in that it is a small, independently-owned company with only 26 employees. It publishes coffee table quality magazines including *Holidays for Couples*, *Queensland Brides* and *Queensland Homes*. It has recently launched a new magazine, *Our First Home*.

Margaret told how she began work as a proofreader with the company 16 years ago with no real editorial experience. Her employer, Rhonda Bannister, Editor-in-Chief and company founder, likes to employ people who are passionate and committed, even if they have no experience in the job. This philosophy of 'sink or swim' seems to carry on today as Margaret described how staff were expected to learn on the job when the software programs InDesign and InCopy were introduced.

Most of the magazines (with the exception of the bridal magazine — more on this later) have a loyal readership and are designed, laid out and written with their demographic of women aged 35–55 years in mind. The nature of these magazines means they are graphically oriented, with photographs taking precedence over story. The story has to be easy to read and the words need to be attractively presented. The font, type size, leading and kerning are all considered to achieve this goal with this readership. Fancy 'vogue' fonts are not used as they date the magazine very quickly. Margaret explained that most of these magazines are bought to be read in snippets over time (unlike the weekly magazines which are quickly flicked through and

discarded).

The bridal magazine is a different story. Being a magazine that people might buy only once or twice in a lifetime, the content is similar for each issue. It has its own editor, has a much younger demographic, is fashion oriented and includes lots of advertisements.

Advertisements are the bane of Margaret's existence. Most often, the ads come to the magazine to be published as is. The editorial team have limited powers to change obvious errors (expensive to change at the proofing stage and embarrassing to the editors). Also, some honeymoon ads have become too risqué, so Margaret foresees the time when they will have to censor the ads. She is hopeful that in the future the magazine website will be able to include the ads, leaving the hard copy to concentrate on articles.

The office has its own in-house style sheet under the control of a subeditor. It has been developed over time but, like most, is constantly changing with the shifts in language. Examples of such shifts pertinent to the magazines include: 'en suite' becoming 'ensuite' and 'air-conditioned' now 'airconditioned'.

Being a small company, all of the office currently uses only one copy of *Macquarie Dictionary* 3rd edition (but Margaret was excited to learn about access to the online version via subscription). Being small can have its advantages, however. The open plan office allows discussion where all staff members contribute to finding a solution. For example, a new feature in the holiday magazine was originally called 'Globe trotting': an ugly phrase in any font. After tossing around lots of ideas, a graphic designer suggested the final title, 'Global roaming'.

It was a win/win situation for members at this meeting where we learnt much about magazine editing from Margaret and she also learnt a

August meeting:

Editing online

How do editors work with content that has been published online?

What resources are online editors using today?

How do you get a page of text from Microsoft Word onto the Internet?

If you want to hear and see some of the current trends in online editing, come along to our August meeting to find out.

The presenter is David Hill. David is Content Editor at Wotif.com, Associate Editor for the *Australian Journal of Communication*, and our very own SocEdsQ Web Officer.

- 6.30 pm for a 7 pm start
- Wednesday, 6 August 2008
- The German Club, 416 Vulture Street East, Woolloongabba

خخخخ

Society of Editors workshop for Brisbane Writers Festival

Editing unveiled

FYI: Sunday, 21 September

Delve into the mysterious world of editing! Hone your editorial sensibilities and skills through editorial analysis of a range of writing that really works. Practise on short fiction and non-fiction under the guidance of experienced freelance editor *Helena Bond*.

Then race home to edit your work with greater skill and confidence — apply it while it's still hot!

EMAIL ADDRESS ADVICE

Dear members,

Some of you may have noticed a recent change to the format of email addresses on the Society's website. Where you used to be able to click on an email address and have it automatically open a mail window correctly addressed, there are now brackets replacing the symbols in the address.

For example, instead of website@editorsqld.com, you will now see this on the website as **website[at]editorsqld[dot]com**. You can still click on the address to open your mail program, but you need to type the proper email address in manually, before you send. In this case, you would enter website@editorsqld.com as the email address.

We have taken this step to protect the privacy of people whose email addresses are listed on the website. Unfortunately, spammers are becoming more and more sophisticated in the way they obtain email addresses, and can now scan a website and copy the email addresses it finds into its database. It has not been unusual for the Society's Committee members (all of whom volunteer their time for the Society) to receive hundreds or even thousands of spam messages every week.

This reformatting of email addresses is becoming a standard practice on the internet. I have changed most emails on our site to this format, but will continue to do so as I update pages over the coming weeks.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thanks for your patience.

Regards,

David Hill

Web Officer, Society of Editors (Queensland) Inc.



getting the message across
4th IPEd National Editors Conference
8-10 October 2009 Adelaide

The SA society thought long and hard about what they wanted the logo for the 2009 national editors conference to convey. About two years worth of long and hard actually — this is a serious business after all.

The design consultancy the SA society worked with proposed semaphore as a delightfully visual means of showing 'getting the message across'. The whimsy of the tiny folk working so hard to convey their message appealed to the conference committee.

The conference committee comments that the logo may show an old communication method but that they believe the conference will showcase a myriad of ways in which editors and allied professionals have improved on the limitations of semaphore and even other, more recent means of conveying and clarifying the message.

If you would like to discover what the little figures are spelling out go to <http://inter.scoutnet.org/semaphore/semaphore.html>.

Keep up on all things conference related at www.editors-sa.org.au/conference09.html

Society of
editors
(Queensland) Inc.

Contact points: SocEdsQ

Please visit our website at www.editorsqld.com for all contact details.

IPEd notes: July

<http://www.iped-editors.org/content/iped-notes>

Head to the IPEd website for this month's instalment of IPEd notes.

WEB WANDERINGS

<http://www.antipodemap.com>

See the other side of the world without drilling through — Captain Cook would have loved it!

<http://www.warhol.org>

If you couldn't make it to GoMA in Brisbane when the Warhol exhibition was on try this instead.

<http://micro.magnet.fsu.edu/galleria/index.html>

Have you ever wondered what vitamins look like really close up?

Mentoring Program

Keep abreast of what your Society is doing with regards to mentoring:

<http://www.editorsqld.com/mentoring/mentoring.htm>

3 SEPTEMBER AGM

It's coming ...

that time when we will take stock of who's done what, elect the Society's Management Committee, hear about our financial affairs and our professional plans, and have our ears auditorially tickled by guest speaker Frances Whiting. This will be a very exciting meeting: Frances will have you laughing out loud and leave you with a smile on your face. Do join us on for this event!