



March information exchange

'Come to Hobart!' Jennifer Beale entreated. And with good reason: there's an excellent program planned on editing in 'streams' (think expertise, not water), some big name speakers, a BELS (Board for Editors in the Life Sciences) exam, Saturday morning workshops and Saturday afternoon Style Council.

The Beatrice Davis Fellowship is on offer again and Robin Bennett gave us some details about that. Rosie Fitzgibbon, the inaugural winner, also spoke about the benefits of the fellowship. Applications for this year close on 12 April. You might also wish to investigate the John Curtin Fellowship for editors by going to the APA's website (you can link from our site).

Robin also mentioned the evolving relationship the Society has with the QWC: the upcoming workshop we are offering for them is titled 'Grappling with the grammar beastie', and there is also talk of seeking funding from the Arts Council to provide a paid 'manuscript assessment service' to QWC members. In further collaborative news the Brisbane Writers Festival has invited the Society to join their planning team later this month.

On the accreditation front, the exam looks like being a 3-hour 'Saturday in October' event with a focus on Standards A3, D and E. Candidates will be able to bring a few reference works (such as the *Style Manual*). More information

will be given about IPed and accreditation at the Society's EGM on 2 May.

Kim Manning spoke about the two prizes that are available to creative *Offpress* contributors: the *Editor's Prize* and the *John Kerr Memorial Prize*. Both of these prizes are for original contributions to the newsletter (not speaker reports/meeting notes); the focus of the former is quite broad and could be awarded for a letter or an article or a cartoon or ... (you get the idea), but the latter is for the best book review published in *Offpress* in a year. Both prizes come with a congratulatory \$100 and the Management Committee would love to award them later this year, so get writing!

Moira Brown, the Queensland contact for ANZSI (the professional body for indexers) reminded us of the link between our two professions and highlighted that there are now 23 ANZSI members in this state. If you require any details about indexing services Moira is happy to help: brown5moira@yahoo.com.au.

Thanks to those members who came along on the night for our information exchange. Check our website for details on all of the topics that were covered, as well as for a few URLs to help you find more information.

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If you would like to read the report to members that was prepared for the 7 March meeting it is available via the 'What's new' page of the SocEdsQ website.

What's it all mean then?

...this *Offshoot* thing ... it means a more relaxed approach (just ever so slightly; we're not dropping the ball) to communication in the Society.

Offpress will be published every second month and this flyer will pop up in inboxes in the alternate months.

Obviously, it's a bit smaller than our flagship publication, but there's still scope to have items published in it, and the same deadline for submission applies — the Wednesday after the general meeting for that month.

E: offpress@editorsqld.com

Web wanderings

AntCam — how to build your own ant terrarium or habitat. You always wanted to know, didn't you?

<http://www.antcam.com/antfarm/howtobuild/>

The Weather Network — for all the people who wished they were meteorologists.

<http://www.theweathernetwork.com/features/camweather/index.htm>

Contact points: SocEdsQ

Please visit our website at www.editorsqld.com for information about who to contact if you have a burning question to ask or a hot issue to raise.

Project management workshop

Notes on Peter Storer's 24 February presentation

Peter Storer delivered a comprehensive introduction to the vast subject of project management at a Society training workshop on 24 February: here's a summary.

The components of project management (PM) are performance (or scope), time and cost. Taking care to ensure the quality of the desired outcomes (prior to any dreaded 'scope creep'), the tightness of the schedule and how much money is in the kitty is the job of a project manager. This is a task that requires skillfully managing the trade-off in the quality/time/cost dilemma.

Careful management of the project across its life cycle (conception, selection, planning, action, termination) will ensure that the project doesn't develop a life of its own and run away from the project manager. Communication is vital in PM to avoid/minimise conflict.

The budgeting aspect of PM involves managing the fixed and variable costs that come with creating the unique product or service that is the project's goal. After building in a contingency for problems (for example, be prepared to wear 10% extra but no more!) the project's budget must also have factored in author/contributor fees, reviews, editorial, design, artwork, copyright permissions, formatting, indexing, printing, distribution, marketing, overheads and miscellaneous.

Because time is usually the least flexible of the project components, if a budget needs to be cut the considerations fall to changing specs, cutting project stages, working faster/smarter, using royalty-free images, and (if more savings are required) compromising on quality (for example, dropping from four to two colours, using cheaper paper, doing lighter editing).

Scheduling in PM involves setting a plan of procedure for a project with reference to the sequence of operations it must pass through. Stages can be consecutive, concurrent or progressive. Everyone involved in a project should be responsible for their own part of the schedule, with the project manager coordinating this to avert schedule blow-outs. A schedule can be shortened by changing specs or scope, working longer hours and sharing the workload (for example, using two editors or two typesetters).

Techniques and tools that can help with PM scheduling include critical paths and Gantt charts. Peter was careful not to overwhelm us with PM jargon, but one that widened the eyes involved 'crashing' a schedule (which means speeding up the schedule at company or client request) and the ramifications that are involved with that (such as additional resources and money and the adverse effect crashing could have on other project components).

A project manager must plan, monitor and control a project to ensure the desired result is achieved. They need to monitor cost, time, performance, staff morale, customer satisfaction and version control; they also need to anticipate problems, and collect, record and report measurable performance data. If there is a call to handle scope creep, the project manager should evaluate the benefits and costs, identify alternatives if necessary, propose acceptance or rejection, negotiate with senior management and communicate discussions with all parties, bearing in mind that scope creep often arises from a desire to improve project outcomes.

The end stages of any project involve termination and evaluation, where a

April meeting

Make sure you get to the next general meeting on 4 April. The Management Committee will be presenting feedback from the survey conducted late last year, and you'll have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments. You can have an influence on the future directions of the Society!

In addition, there'll be a PowerPoint presentation by Dr Sue Turner on the subject of editing for non-English speakers. This will be of interest to all — old hands and new. Don't miss it!

Venue: The German Club, 416 Vulture Street, East Brisbane (opposite the 'Gabba').

project is either completed or is cancelled/unsuccessful/superseded and resources are re-allocated to other projects. The process for the particular project is then audited as a learning stage for post-control purposes to highlight the successes and study the failures in a bid to improve future project processes.

What do you need to be in this game? A good project manager has to be credible (technically and administratively), driven to get the job done, organised, resilient (able to handle stress), flexible and communication savvy, and must have a sense of humour. Peter believes that metadata and XML are future issues for project management and also feels that editors will have to add this to their skill set within the next five years or so.

Many thanks to Peter Storer for his excellent presentation; thanks also to Kerri Ullrich for organising it and Jennifer Beale for helping Kerri.