



# ... the word

Newsletter of the Society of Editors (SA)

ISSN 1833-3796

January–February 2013

## Next meeting

**Monday 18 February, 7.30 pm**

SA Writers' Centre

2nd Floor, 187 Rundle Street, Adelaide

*Access is via the stairs from Rundle Street or by lift accessible through Café Brunelli*

## Editing theses – the joy and the challenge

The first members' meeting for 2013 will have a panel of three editors with much experience in academic editing.

**Dr Diane Brown** will be the participating chair. Diane is a full-time freelance editor and consultant. Her freelance clients include academic and educational book publishers and Australian universities. As a consultant, she offers professional development workshops for academic staff and higher degree students.

**Margaret Bowden** has been involved in academic editing for the past 20 years, with clients from universities all over Australia, and others from New Zealand, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and the UK. Her other work as a research assistant at Flinders University involves research, writing and editing with individual academics across several disciplines.

**Valerie Williams**, who has extensive experience in the non-government, not-for-profit sector, has since 2006 provided editing and proofreading services to international postgraduate students in engineering, public health, management, the built environment, information technology, banking and finance, geochemistry, social sciences and environmental studies.

These three editors will satisfy our curiosity about working with clients whose first language is not English, keeping within the guidelines of thesis editing, establishing a client base, running the business profitably and, above everything, why they find thesis editing so challenging and rewarding!

Audience members will be encouraged to put questions to the panellists as the evening progresses.

You might like to join us for a pre-meeting meal at 6 pm at **Red Rock Noodle Bar & Restaurant**, 187 Rundle Street (ground floor). Please RSVP to <rsvp@editors-sa.org.au> by **Sunday 17 February**.

## Next workshop

**Late March or early April** (date to be confirmed)

**Editing for the web** *Presenter: Elizabeth Spiegel*

More details to come.

## Next editors' lunch

**Sometime in March, 12 noon**

Exact date and venue to be advised.

## The vice-presidential word

*Marianne Hammat*

As vice-president of the society, one of my roles is to take on the president's tasks if the president is unavailable. In this case, Loene Doube is unavailable for a most pleasant reason – the wedding of her daughter Katherine.

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate the three newly accredited editors who sat the IPed accreditation exam in South Australia in October 2012: **Mary-Ann Came**, **John Liddle** and **Katy McDevitt**. They join a growing number of IPed Accredited Editors nationally, and I hope their AE status will serve them well. When their certificates are printed, we will invite the three to a general meeting for a formal presentation.

The 6th IPed National Editors Conference will be held in Perth on 10–12 April 2013. The Society of Editors (SA) is offering a variety of subsidies, including two substantial bursaries, to help members to attend the conference. Details have been emailed to all members; the bursary applications close on Friday 15 February. I have found past conferences to be interesting and energising, great for professional development and for networking, and I urge you all to consider attending.

The society has another busy year ahead. Our first general meeting is on editing theses, an important source of work for some members. I also know editors who have been approached to edit a thesis, but they have declined for various reasons. Should they try their hand at a thesis? What might the problems be? What are the advantages? Join us on 18 February to hear a panel of experienced editors and to ask them your questions.

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Our first workshop in 2013 will be about editing for the web. More of us are editing material specifically for the web, or for several platforms that include the web. The workshop will be an opportunity to keep up with the industry. Details will be emailed to members.

We will be continuing with the lunch for editors in the months when there is no general meeting. The first lunch for 2013 was on 24 January; the next is in March.

The committee has a strategic planning day on 23 February with a professional facilitator. The focus will be on planning for the next three years.

Speaking of the committee, its members do have work and other commitments and these have led to a few changes to roles. **Celia Jellett** stood down and we thank her for many years of valuable service on the committee. Among other positions, Celia was newsletter editor until 2011. **Adele Anderson** is the new Accreditation Board delegate for South Australia. **Katy McDevitt** is now handling emails to members. We especially welcome **Bridget Ransome** as a new committee member.

Yes, it is another busy year.

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## Vale, John Pfitzner

**John Pfitzner** passed away on 28 January. A society member since 1991, he served on the committee several times, including as vice-president and acting president.

Born in Loxton in 1942, John studied English and Classical Greek at the University of Adelaide and theology at Immanuel Seminary. He was ordained as a Lutheran minister. Among his other ministries, John (with his wife Diana and their three children) spent 15 years at Hermannsburg, 130 km from Alice Springs. He learnt Arrernte, the local Aboriginal language, and he retained a lifelong interest in Aboriginal culture. In recent years he sustained his faith through the intellectual and spiritual pursuit of progressive Christianity.

Before his retirement in 2009, John was an editor at Openbook Publishers and ERA Publications.

John was actively writing poetry in the past few years and won several awards. His poem 'Pointless' was selected in *The Best Australian Poems 2012*. (For more on his poetry, see page 2 of the last issue of ... *the word*.)

John's other interests were broad, including reading, films, music, sketching, birdwatching, human rights and spirituality. He completed four marathons and, as a young man, played Australian Rules football for West Adelaide in the SANFL.

Pamela Ball recalls:

In the early 1990s John was called by the Lutheran Church to be managing editor of the Lutheran publishing house, Openbook. With the Society of



Editors very recently established in South Australia, John joined up and learned as much as he could from the society's early members. He attended all our meetings and workshops and it wasn't long before he joined the committee and subsequently served as vice-president. We are very fortunate to have known such a warm, creative and intelligent man.

Kathie Stove says:

Whenever I saw John, I felt a sense of pleasure – pleased that he was there and I could talk to him. He was interested in many things and interesting. We had many discussions about new music at concerts and at other times. It's something you have to work hard at 'getting' and we learnt a lot together. It was great to have an ally in the voyage of discovery that new music continues to be.

Karen Disney adds:

He was simply a man whose company I always enjoyed, and whose face always carried a welcoming smile.

Rosemary Luke says:

His friendship, gentle manner, openness to new ideas, warm smile and keen intelligence will be missed by many.

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## Three newly accredited editors

All three South Australians who sat the accreditation exam on 13 October 2012 passed. Congratulations to **Mary-Ann Came**, **John Liddle** and **Katy McDevitt** who are part of a group of 60 newly accredited editors across Australia. Results were released in early December.

The 2012 exam was the fourth conducted by the Institute of Professional Editors. The success rate for candidates was good, with 60 of 75 candidates passing. Nationally, we now have over 250 accredited editors.

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## We're online!

**Katy McDevitt**



Members will be familiar with the society's website, where you can find lots of helpful information about membership, events and meetings, as well as the freelance register. But did you know that you can also find us online at Twitter (@socedsa) and Facebook <[www.facebook.com/SocEdsSA](http://www.facebook.com/SocEdsSA)>?

If you're into social media, why not visit our profile pages and hit 'follow' or 'like'? It's a great way to stay in touch with what's happening with the society and in the broader editing world, and of course we'd love to hear from members, so feel free to share your own news and views as well. We're also bringing you updates about society activities, news from the publishing industry and other fields relevant to editors, and reminders about forthcoming events. We'll look forward to seeing you online very soon.

## Calendar for 2013

The program for the year is gradually being developed. If you have ideas, please contact the society's program coordinator, Pamela Ball <pam.ball@bigpond.net.au>.

### General meetings

**Venue:** usually SA Writers' Centre seminar room

**Time:** 7.30 pm to approximately 9.30 pm

**Pre-meeting dinner (optional):** 6 pm

**Dates:**

Monday 18 February – see page 1 for topic and presenters

Tuesday 23 April

Wednesday 19 June

Monday 26 August – annual general meeting

Thursday 17 October

Wednesday 4 December – venue to be advised

### Workshops

**Venue:** usually SA Writers' Centre seminar room

**Time:** morning, afternoon or full day

**Dates:** usually on a Saturday or Sunday

Several workshops are planned for 2013, with the first in late March or early April: 'Editing for the web', presented by Tasmanian web specialist Elizabeth Spiegel. More details to come.

### Lunches

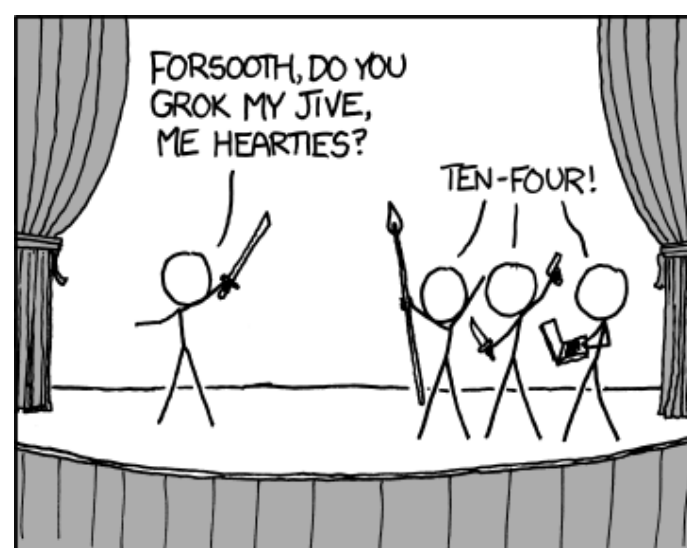
**Venue:** various restaurants or cafes around Adelaide

**Time:** 12 noon (nominal starting time, but you can arrive when convenient)

**Dates:** every second month; next one in March

Details to be advised closer to the date.

*Apologies that the 24 January lunch repeated the previous venue, due to a hiccup in arrangements.—Michael Vnuk*



A FEW CENTURIES FROM NOW, ALL THE ENGLISH OF THE PAST 400 YEARS WILL SOUND EQUALLY OLD-TIMEY AND INTERCHANGEABLE.

xkcd.com (Randall Munroe)

## Conference news

### Program firming up

More information is now available about the speakers and workshop presenters at the 6th IPed National Editors Conference in Perth, 10–12 April 2013. Check out the website <www.ipedperth2013.com.au>.

The three workshops (all on 10 April) are: 'XML for editors' with David Gardner; 'Tools for onscreen editing' with Dr Hilary Cadman; and a panel discussing freelance editing, including financial management of the business.

On 11 and 12 April, there are three concurrent sessions in technological, cultural and ideological streams, which will be complemented by joint sessions for keynote speakers, business sessions and a hypothetical. And of course there are social events.

The conference even has an app, accessible from the News page on the website.

### Subsidies for SA members to attend

The committee of the Society of Editors (SA) has decided to provide financial assistance to help society members attend the conference. The three subsidy schemes are:

- a general subsidy of \$250 for any member who attends the conference
- a bursary of up to \$1000 to cover conference registration and other reasonable costs for an editor with less than 3 years' editing experience
- a bursary of up to \$1000 to cover conference registration and other reasonable costs for an accredited editor.

The closing date for the bursaries is 15 February. Details of the schemes were emailed to all SA members on 22 January. If you need another copy, please contact Marianne Hammat <marianne.hammat@bigpond.com>.

### BELS certification exam

The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) is offering a certification examination in conjunction with the conference. BELS was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions. More than 1000 life-sciences editors worldwide are now certified by BELS.

The exam is on 9 April in Fremantle. Register by 19 March. For more information, visit <www.bels.org>.

*Editing across borders*  
6th IPed National Editors Conference, Perth, 2013

## Member news

Ella Grace Morrison was born on 31 January, weighing 3.45 kg. She is not a member of the society, but her mother **Lisa Morrison** is, and her father James was the guest reader at our editors' book club in 2011.

*Please send news about yourself or other members to <newsletter@editors-sa.org.au>.*

# Christmas dinner and quiz night

Wednesday 5 December

Katy McDevitt

In December, the traditional society end-of-year gathering was held in Parkside at the gorgeous Nepalese restaurant Namaste, a local institution that had been on several members' must-visit list for some time. In the genteel setting of an 1890s bluestone cottage, now updated with flags and Nepalese artwork, a few dozen editors got together to reflect on a great year, eat some delicious food, drink some good wine and promise that we really would do this kind of thing more often in 2013.

Vice-president Marianne Hammat – acting for president Loene Doube, who was interstate – welcomed the Christmassy crowd and raised a glass to the outgoing year, while the friendly waiting staff brought out the first of several tasty courses.

For those who Google a restaurant before visiting, Namaste's website promised 'a cuisine full of flavour without the overpowering influence of chilli'. But arguably the evening was spicy enough courtesy of Michael Vnuk's quiz night, which followed the meal: there was certainly lots of lively team discussion of curly questions, such as 'How many of Australia's six states and two major territories have had a woman as premier or chief minister?' and 'What do we usually call the ingredient that Americans call cilantro?' [Answers below.] Michael topped off the quiz with the most challenging round of all, called 'Black or White?' It sounded a breeze: every answer was either 'black' or 'white', so what could be so hard about that? In fact, it was devilishly difficult. As a result of this round, even if only for a brief, shining moment, I knew whether a soccer ball had more black or white shapes on it.

Although my table's final score was a pathetic 63 out of 100 – we romped home proudly in last place – we had a great time. In our defence, we probably enjoyed the entertaining conversation a bit too much and contemplated our answers a bit too little. I will remember this next year and try – making no promises – to be more focused on the task at hand.

A big 'thank you' to Dani Cash and Pamela Ball for organising another excellent social event on the society's behalf, and to Michael for all his hard work in preparing and hosting the quiz. It was a swell way to end the year and everybody seemed to love the venue and the company on the night. Namaste!

Answers: seven (only SA has missed out); coriander.

## From the quizmaster

Michael Vnuk

The winning team was 'Minus One', being Rosemary Luke, Jo and Doug Mason, Kate Leeson and Rowena Vnuk. (I promise that I revealed nothing about the quiz to my wife.) They beat four other teams to score 80/100, made up of 29/40 for sheets on flags, faces, overachievers and spelling, and 51/60 for the six rounds of questions.

I judged the best team name to be 'Universally Challenged', a clever play on *University Challenge*, a popular UK (and briefly Australian) television quiz show.

The following questions formed the spelling sheet, one of the toughest rounds of the quiz (teams scored 3 to 6 out of 10), but perhaps the closest in content to editing. Answers are on page 6.

## How do you spell the surnames of these people?

The simplified pronunciations in bold below are from the online *Macquarie dictionary*, and may differ from the original language. If the dictionary has more than one pronunciation, only the first is here. The syllable after the symbol < ' > takes the word's primary stress.

The spelling required is from the online *Macquarie dictionary*. As usual in Australian writing, no diacritics are used, even if present in the original language.

For example, for 'Peter **chuy'kofskee** wrote *Swan Lake*', the answer would be 'Tchaikovsky'.

1. Ludwig '**luykaht** disappeared while exploring Australia in the 1840s.
2. Gabriel '**faruhnhuht** devised a temperature scale in which water freezes at 32° and boils at 212°.
3. Anders '**selseeuhs** devised a temperature scale in which water freezes at 100° and boils at 0°. (Later, the figures were swapped to give our present scale.)
4. Morgan '**chahnguhruy** is prime minister of Zimbabwe in a power-sharing arrangement.
5. Sitiveni **ram'bookuh** led the 1987 coup in Fiji and has been active in Fiji's politics since.
6. Elsa **shapuhr'elee** was an Italian-born fashion designer in Paris, a rival of Coco Chanel.
7. Nicolae **chow'sheskooh** was the Romanian leader executed after a coup in 1989.
8. Mark **filuh'poohsuhs** is an Australian tennis player, runner-up at Wimbledon in 2003.
9. Nikita **kroohs'chof** was the leader of the Soviet Union during the Cuban missile crisis.
10. Thor '**hayyuhdahl** led the Kon-Tiki expedition across the Pacific.

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## Library time

If you're an editor, you probably like books. And if you like books, you probably like libraries. And if you like libraries, then the internet – the inexhaustible fount of information you didn't know you needed – can supply you with (ta-da!) '16 Great Library Scenes in Film'.

As the list's compiler, Jeff O'Neal of the Book Riot website <bookriot.com>, says:

Some combination of ambiance, seclusion, hidden knowledge, and the sheer beauty of shelves upon shelves of books make libraries a fantastic film setting.

The list includes scenes from *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Se7en* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. And commenters on the website supply further interesting suggestions.

*Is 16 significant? Who knows? Perhaps O'Neal ran out of time or ideas to make 20 and couldn't decide how to cull the list to 10, or perhaps he thought that 10 was mundane.*



## What they say about editors

*A regular feature to highlight what people – authors, reviewers and others – say about editors.*

### Raising respectability

In *The things that nobody knows: 501 mysteries of life, the universe and everything* (2011), William Hartston ends his acknowledgements with:

I am also indebted to my editor, Ian Crofton, whose encyclopedia [*encyclopedic*?] knowledge, and refusal to let me get away with vagueness or feeble attempts have raised the respectability of this book at least a couple of intellectual notches. Any errors or bad jokes that remain, however, are all my own.

The book refers to the moons of Venus (but there are none) and humans and monkeys diverging 350 million years ago (5–7 million years ago is more likely; there weren't even dinosaurs 350 million years ago). I wonder if the author or the editor would claim those errors.

### Irreplaceable skills

Simon Winchester – who is most famous for *The surgeon of Crowthorne* (1999), about some of the people who helped compile the Oxford English Dictionary – has over five pages of acknowledgements at the back of his *Atlantic: a vast ocean of a million stories* (2010). One sentence starts with 'Among others who took time and trouble to help I most gratefully mention', and continues for *nearly two pages* naming some forty people and detailing their assistance. At least he uses semicolons to help us breathe (not that I was reading it aloud, but you know what I mean).

More relevant to us is his thanks to his editor:

If this book eventually merits any favourable attention – and of course, any errors or infelicities are entirely my own – then this will in large part be due to the irreplaceable skills of my New York editor, Henry Ferris. This is the third book on which we have collaborated, and though he is a decidedly tough editor, his thoughtfulness and courtesy have conspired to make this most necessary of processes much more than merely bearable. Traditionally in the creation of a book it is the research and the writing that are the fun parts, with the editing the time for payback. Not so with Henry: I find these days that I look forward to receiving his notes, however vividly stated and numerous his editorial suggestions may be. His tireless efforts result in the making of a much better book: and so if you like what you hold and read today, you should know who really deserves the credit.

I found the editing left a little to be desired in some aspects, such as the coordination between illustrations and text, and the variability in which new terms were explained. Winchester's discursiveness, which adds charm to some stories, causes others to drag; the editor could have cut more. Winchester's attempt to structure the book along the lines of Shakespeare's *Seven Ages of Man* from *As you like it* is unnecessary and perhaps even pretentious; the editor should have advised against it.

Nonetheless, Winchester's praise of his editor is good to read. I particularly like how he describes editing as being the 'most necessary of processes', and his final statement that the editor's efforts have produced a much better book.

## Adelaide Writers' Week

You probably know it's on, but here's a reminder.

**Venue:** Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, just off King William Road

**Date:** 2–7 March, including a kids' day on 3 March

**Cost:** nearly everything is free

Those of you who heard Laura Kroetsch, the Director of Adelaide Writers' Week, speak at our AGM in August will know that war features in the program, but not in all events. The detailed program (released recently) can be downloaded from the Adelaide Festival website <[www.adelaidefestival.com.au](http://www.adelaidefestival.com.au)>.

## Commas

One problem of punctuation is that each punctuation mark can have more than one legitimate use, plus other uses that can be informal, innovative, inconsistent, inappropriate, incorrect or just plain incoherent. Furthermore, punctuation styles vary between countries, publishing houses, types of writing and so on. And that's just now; punctuation styles have also varied through time. It's a wonder we can read anything at all.

Commas are awkward. A common discussion is whether or not to use a comma after the second-to-last item in a list. Is it *short, sharp and shiny* or *short, sharp, and shiny*? The extra comma is called the 'Oxford comma' because the Oxford University Press requires it in their house style (although most other UK publishers do not use it). The Oxford comma is far more common in the US, where it is also called the 'serial comma'. Observant readers will note that the Oxford comma is not part of this newsletter's style, but I have to shift a gear when editing publications where its use is mandated.

Arika Okrent, writing at the Mental Floss website, has assembled some examples and arguments from both sides of the debate about the Oxford comma. Words like 'clarity' and 'economy' are often mentioned.

The following sentence is a favourite of the pro side:

This book is dedicated to my parents, Ayn Rand and God.

The sentence (which is probably apocryphal) is crying out for another comma. And if the sentence was in this newsletter, it would receive that comma. A style decision, such as avoiding the Oxford comma, should not be religiously followed if it confuses the reader.

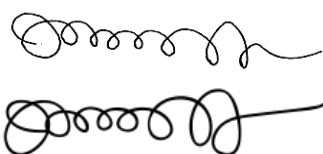
See <<http://mentalfloss.com/article/33637/best-shots-fired-oxford-comma-wars>>.

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Transitional terms cannot be forced into loose, badly composed writing. They are too definite for loose thinking. If you can change an 'and' to a 'but' without much damage, there is something wrong with your English.  
—Henry Seidel Canby (1926)

## Mr Squiggle?

President Obama recently nominated Jack Lew to be the United States Secretary of the Treasury. Some reports have discussed Lew's suitability for the job, but other



reports have focused on his signature. Why? Because if Lew is confirmed for the post, his signature (two examples from the internet at left) will be on all US

paper currency during his term. One opinion is that these squiggles look as if they were made when someone was testing a ballpoint pen.

## 'Copy editors killed'

The article below appeared in an American publication on 7 January 2013 accompanied by a photo of a crime scene – police tape restricting access, police milling around, cars parked awkwardly, onlookers in the distance, and so on.

### 4 Copy Editors Killed In Ongoing AP Style, Chicago Manual Gang Violence

NEW YORK—Law enforcement officials confirmed Friday that four more copy editors were killed this week amid ongoing violence between two rival gangs divided by their loyalties to the *The Associated Press Stylebook* and *The Chicago Manual Of Style*. 'At this time we have reason to believe the killings were gang-related and carried out by adherents of both the AP and Chicago styles, part of a vicious, bloody feud to establish control over the grammar and usage guidelines governing American English,' said FBI spokesman Paul Holstein, showing reporters graffiti tags in which the word 'anti-social' had been corrected to read 'antisocial'. 'The deadly territory dispute between these two organizations, as well as the notorious *MLA Handbook* gang, has claimed the lives of more than 63 publishing professionals this year alone.' Officials also stated that an innocent 35-year-old passerby who found himself caught up in a long-winded dispute over use of the serial, or Oxford, comma had died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

*The publication was The Onion <www.theonion.com>. It contains mostly satires and parodies, but sometimes these stories have been accepted as true by other media organisations (for example, see Wikipedia for a list).*

## Answers to spelling questions on page 4

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Leichhardt | 6. Schiaparelli  |
| 2. Fahrenheit | 7. Ceausescu     |
| 3. Celsius    | 8. Philippoussis |
| 4. Tsvangirai | 9. Khrushchev    |
| 5. Rabuka     | 10. Heyerdahl    |

[Of a script] What I have crossed out I didn't like.  
What I haven't crossed out I'm dissatisfied with.

—Cecil B de Mille (attributed)

## Society of Editors (SA)

**Mail:** PO Box 2328, Kent Town SA 5071

**Website:** <[www.editors-sa.org.au](http://www.editors-sa.org.au)>

**Email:** <[eds@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:eds@editors-sa.org.au)>

**Facebook:** <[www.facebook.com/SocEdsSA](http://www.facebook.com/SocEdsSA)>

**Twitter:** @SocEditorsSA

For further information about the society, contact:

President, Loene Doube  
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Treasurer, Birgitt Olsen  
<[SATreasurer@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:SATreasurer@editors-sa.org.au)>

Membership database administrator, Ray Simonovic  
<[membership@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:membership@editors-sa.org.au)>.

## Membership

To join the society, go to:

<[www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=joinus](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=joinus)>.

**Full** membership of the society is open to anyone who is engaged professionally in any aspect of editing for publication, on a full-time or part-time basis, or who has had such experience in the past. **Associate** membership is open to any interested person.

Subscription fees are due on 1 July each year, and cover the 12 months until 30 June in the next year. The annual fees are below. Rebates are available to those studying full-time in a recognised editing or related course, or living over 50 km from the Adelaide GPO.

\$80, full membership

\$50, associate membership.

If you have an enquiry about your membership status, send an email to: <[membership@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:membership@editors-sa.org.au)>.

## Freelance register

The freelance register is available at:

<[www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=findaneditor](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=findaneditor)>.

Full membership is required for inclusion. The fee is \$60 per year and the entry is displayed during the society's membership year. More information and a form are at <[www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=freelanceregistermembers](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=freelanceregistermembers)>.

## General meetings

General meetings are open to all members, prospective members and guests and are held (unless otherwise indicated) in the Seminar Room of the SA Writers' Centre, 2nd Floor, 187 Rundle Street, Adelaide.

## Newsletter

The society's newsletter, ... *the word*, is issued six times a year. It is emailed to members. After a few months, each issue also becomes publicly available on the website.

Send news, reviews, letters or comments to:

Editor, Michael Vnuk  
<[newsletter@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:newsletter@editors-sa.org.au)>.

Or send to the society's PO box (listed above).

Literature is the art of writing something that will be read twice; journalism what will be grasped at once.  
—Cyril Connolly (1938)