

...the word

Newsletter of the Society of Editors (SA)

January – February 2006

Next meeting

Wednesday 22 February 7 pm for
7:30 pm

SA Writers' Centre

2nd floor, 187 Rundle Street

Speaker: To be finalised

Meet for dinner at 6 pm at Café Michael 2:
rsvp to <info@editors-sa.org.au> by Friday 17
February.

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Last meeting

Peter Carter

Our final meeting of the year was a well-attended dinner at the Bangkok Thai Restaurant on 8 December. Entertainment this year was devising titles for fictitious books, a competition put together by Susan Rintoul. Unfortunately I didn't catch all the contributors' names, but here are the descriptions and winning entries:

1 Jason Herping has written 250 pages of romantic poetry (rhyming) to the old girlfriend who married his best mate years ago. Subjects cover how they met (at the pub in Dubbo, NSW, where they both live), where they dated (at the pub, etc), and some too candid details of the time they spent in the back seat of Jason's red Holden Commodore with rear end spoilers and great shockies.

Highly commended: *A yobbo in Dubbo: a backseat story*
Greased lightning

Winner: David Mason: *Herpes complex verses*

2 JK Rowling is fed up with writing about Harry Potter's good deeds and has now

finished a novel where he has grown up and joined the dark side (politics). He is now the Member for Kooyong (though no longer a colt) and Prime Minister-elect, replacing John Howard, who has unfortunately been assassinated by a frustrated Peter Costello. The book deals with Harry Potter's plans to rename Australia Voldemoort Land and to ban muggles from drinking beer.

Highly commended: *The light under the hill*
You wouldn't be dead for quiddich

Winner: Pam Maitland: *Harry Potter and the goblet of XXXX*

3 Deenara Angel-Hebeneera's astrological guide to speed-dating on the Internet (if he's an Aries just click, and move on) has been road-tested by websites catering for the 20-somethings. So far it has resulted in three engagements, no marriages, 10 divorces and six premature babies. She now wants to launch the guide as a trade paper-

Continued next page...

Deadline next issue: Friday 3 March

Last meeting

...continued

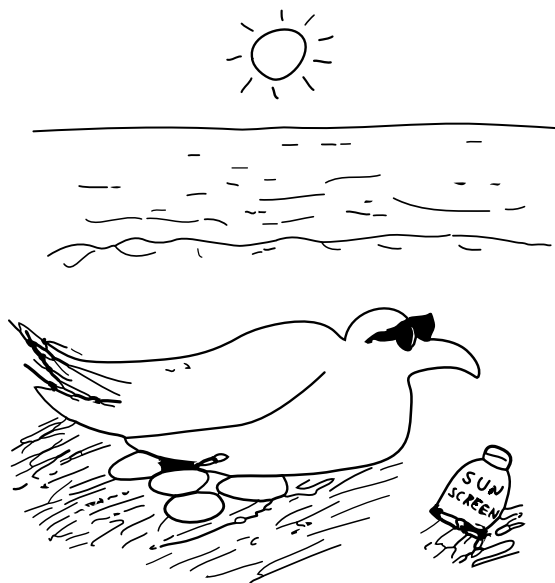
back (with preferred illustrated positions for Virgos in a special sealed section).

Highly commended: *Astro e-dating for the one-night stand*
Deadly dates for daring darlings

Winner: Susie Jenkins: *Click and flick the dick*

It all went down well.

Missed metaphors



A favourite Australian pastime:
Just laying on the beach

David Schubert

...the editorial word

Peter Carter

And so to the first issue for 2006...

As the conference report below notes, there was discussion of 'usages that they've effectively given up trying to correct and so now allow'. For the past decade I've used the original term 'Web site', but someone questioned its use in the last issue, and all contributors this time have used 'website', so 'website' it now is in *...the word*.

In association with the conference was Style Council. Loene Doube attended, and reports briefly on the individual presentations at what appears to have been a stimulating event.

Kerrie Harrison has been deeply immersed in *Wet Ink*, a new magazine project, and describes the joys and hard work that go with such ventures. The first issue has been well received, and we wish the team every success.

(We'd be delighted to have more items like Kerrie's in *...the word*. Have you been doing something interesting lately?)

Rosemary reviews a new book by our colleagues in Victoria, *At the Typeface*, an account not just of the Victorian Society, but of issues of general interest to editors. I shall look forward to seeing a copy.

Rosemary has also been trialling the Macquarie WordGenius Reference Library, an electronic dictionary and thesaurus, and gives her impressions on page 7. The makers suggested it was for 'anyone writing and reading from a computer screen', but I pointed out that 'anyone' may be using Macintosh (as I am), Linux or some other OS. (Users of Macintosh OS X 10.4 have ready access to the Oxford American dictionaries and thesaurus through a Dashboard widget.)

...the Presidential word

Rosemary Luke

This will be a very short presidential word since I've written too many words for other sections of this issue. We had an excellent Christmas/end-of-year dinner in December with over 30 members attending. Everyone had such a good time chatting that it didn't seem to matter that our guest speaker had muddled his dates and didn't arrive. Good conversation was helped along by the delicious banquet provided by the staff of the Bangkok, and by Susan Rintoul's games in which players had to devise titles for some

fascinating(!) books. There was a nice mix of new and long-standing members at the dinner. The Committee and I are looking forward to seeing all of you at meetings in 2006.

Over the break we received news from our 2005 administrator, Jane Bettoney, that she is moving to Perth and therefore leaving us. We wish Jane well and thank her for her contribution to the running of the Society over the last year. It's great to hear that she already has some part-time work with a newspaper publisher. I shall for now take on the adminis-

trator's duties so that I can get a better sense of what's involved. If you think you may be interested in taking on the role a little later, please let me know.

The committee is busy planning general meetings and workshops for 2005, so if you have any suggestions about what you'd like to hear and do, please contact one of the committee members and share your ideas with us.

I hope you were able to have a break over the holiday period and that you have a very successful year in 2006.

Editing in Context (Report: part 2)

This second report on the October 2005 National Editors' Conference will, like the previous one, provide only a few snapshots of a very full program, since it relies on SA members having attended particular sessions. With numerous parallel sessions each with three possibilities, hard decisions often had to be made.

Professor Kate Burridge of Monash University asked 'W(h)ither our English?' and looked at some of the many ways in which living languages change through 'slipshod pronunciations,... mistakes in grammar and ... newfangled meanings'. She gave examples of:

- the 'pressure of position' changing pronoun usage: he's better than me; Who did you see at the party?; Fred and me are coming, themselves, and the much debated possibilities for plural you. (Will we ever see you(s)e in standard written English?)
- verbs and verb phrases, including perfect replacing simple past; use of the mandative subjunctive; loss of modal shall and replacement with gotta, wanna, better (sic); got replacing was in passives (He got stung by a

bee); bought displacing brought, and loss of -ly from adverbs

- consistent interrogative additives, eh? and, isn't it? (this last not a South Australian practice, isn't it?)
- composite sentences, a favourite being 'I'm taking them to Kangaroo Ground which hopefully they won't have too much culture shock over there'.
- Hypocoristics, the delightful Australian habit of creating words like brekky, arvo, Chrissie, etc.

Renée Otmar and Sally Woollett of the Victorian Society ran an interesting session on setting up a freelance business which they have offered to SA as a full-day workshop. Let the Editor know if you are interested.

Kathie Stove, one of our members, presented the results of her national survey asking a selection of experienced editors about 'holding on and letting go'. Each was asked to list a number of usages that they've effectively given up trying to correct and so now allow, as well as listing the things they simply will not

permit, however popular, trendy, commonly used, etc. The range of usages cited, the 180° disagreement on some, the careful reasoning behind many of the answers made for a fascinating and well-attended session.

(We're asking for a longer piece for *...the word* about her survey and its findings for the benefit of those who did not attend the conference and will not receive the proceedings -Ed.).

An interesting double session had a group of editing educators, from universities and a TAFE talking about their courses, followed by students from each of those courses and some others discussing what they'd gained from their studies. Interestingly, work experience opportunities that led to jobs figured prominently. (All participants were from Victorian institutions.)

It was, to reprise, an excellent conference. Tasmania in 2007 promises to be as good. Start planning early so as not to miss a great opportunity for professional development with colleagues in the profession from across Australia and NZ.

Style Council 2005: Style in context, Australia and international

Some impressions

Loene Doube

The one-day Style Council was different in size and tone from the editors' conference. More intimate, lower key and more academic, the Style Council nevertheless provided many matters for contemplation for editors. I enjoyed it at least as much as I did the editors' conference.

In her opening address **Kate Burridge** explored language taboos — how we censor what we say, and how this varies and changes with the context of the moment, time, the company we are in, who we are. Taboo areas include the sexual, the scatological, the racial/ethnic, profanity, blasphemy, slang and vulgarities. Kate noted studies that indicated that 'forbidden words are more arousing, more shocking, more memorable and more evocative than all other language stimuli', and that acquiring obscene or other socially unacceptable expressions is natural: our brains are wired for it. We all learn taboo terms at a young age, and most of us also learn to inhibit their use. Kate cited studies of sufferers of Tourette's Syndrome who lose the ability to inhibit their use of obscene expressions due to a neurological disorder deep in the brain in the basal ganglia. She also suggested that political correctness is driving a climate of 'passive censorship': leading to a 'localised traffic defi-

ciency' instead of a bottleneck. We learnt the Linguistics Law, which states that 'bad meanings will drive out good'. A stimulating start to a stimulating conference.

Tony Wheeler, co-founder of Lonely Planet, spoke of *Gricers, twitchers and 'doing doughnuts': the problems of translating guide books*. He entertained with an anecdotal inspection of some of the pitfalls of translating/adapting travel guides for and marketing them in other countries. German ones end up too long, French ones are too expensive to produce ('the most in-depth and painful translating experience'), and Italian ones are just right (well, LP has a healthy market dominance there, and a loyal following). Avoiding pitfalls that might catch the unwary publisher involves not putting how to get from Sydney to Timbuktu in the French Guide, knowing which embassies are of interest to which readership, and knowing that Germans are just not into birdwatching, even when they do visit Britain. (BTW, gricers are train spotters: I knew that! Not.)

Nick Renton, octogenarian author of 58 books on writing/language use, gave his personal view of the awareness, occurrence and use of style guides in companies, the need for companies to use same, and that some of us are slaves to and others masters of style guides. He enlightened a restless audience

with such snippets as it's OK to depart from the recommendations of a style manual, as long as we do it consciously. Possibly the low point of the Council.

Jennifer Blunden, Art Gallery of NSW editor and formerly of the Powerhouse Museum, spoke to *Dumbing down for museum audiences: necessity or myth?* She gave insight into how she develops exhibit labels that engage and inform viewers in a variety of social groupings (with children, singles, couples, and adult social groups – the last pay the least attention to the labels and the exhibits) without sacrificing scholarship. Audiences are defined more by momentary characteristics such as knowledge of a topic than by general education. It's important to create a familiar context for audiences to absorb unfamiliar exhibit content; to layer the information presented (familiar to less familiar; shallow to deeper); to pair everyday imagery with unfamiliar imagery; to write as if talking to the audience, where short sentences are not necessarily best; to lighten the environmental load by using friendly line spacing, colour, location of labels. Jennifer concluded that dumbing down is a misconception, but that language, content, physical space and understanding how audiences take meaning from a message are vital to developing engaging and informative exhibit labels. For me this paper was a

highlight of the Council, full of relevance to any editor's practice.

Stefanie Pearce is Communications Manager for the Australian Synchrotron Project (Victorian Department of Innovation, Industry & Regional Development). In *Political spin or strategic style? Language choices in a government setting* she discussed the delicate issue of how she attempts to convey to many audiences (general, scientific and political; local, national and international) what her project is about and what a synchrotron is and does, while retaining accuracy and truth and in a state-based political setting. A synchrotron is a football-field-sized particle accelerator that makes and uses intense beams of light (radiation) to examine the molecular structure of matter. (See the difficulty?) This has enabled, most famously, Cadbury's to develop a chocolate that does not go white in the heat, or so they say. They are building a synchrotron in Victoria. It will be completed in 2007 and is running 'on schedule and to budget', despite, says Stefanie, the spin the media attach to reporting about it: 'the beleaguered synchrotron' and claims of overspending on the part of the government. Stefanie gave examples of how the synchrotron is described to different audiences, and how she specifically sought to minimise in communications the alignment of the synchrotron with the state of Victoria, preferring to lead audiences to consider it a national initiative with inter-

national application. She invited the audience to consider whether her choices were political spin or strategic style.

After lunch **Valerie Yule** described two studies she had done on pronunciation guides in dictionaries and word books for children. In 1989, her study revealed that few had provided a pronunciation guide at all, and in those that did, the guide was not suitable for children's needs. In her recent update (no date), she found that half of the 36 dictionaries she studied had no pronunciation guide, and in those that did, she demonstrated wide variation in how dictionaries presented guides to pronunciation. Valerie argued for simplification of spelling, especially important in our multicultural society.

In her talk, *Dictionaries for India: a cultural transition*, **Susan Butler**, Macquarie Dictionary publisher, entertained the audience with a tale of her involvement with publishing a series of dictionaries of Indian English. These were based on Macquarie dictionaries but had Australian words removed and 'high-frequency' Indian words added. She described the 'blurred view' that meeting the needs of the variety of users (and different publishers) of a dictionary necessitates, and how such a view affects the choice of words and illustrative settings for the dictionary, in this instance in an Indian setting. The associated British publisher, Macmillan, had very differ-

ent criteria for choice of words, and a different style of pronunciation guide (not working from the sound of a word but from its look), from those used in the Indian dictionaries' Macquarie predecessors. She explained that the defence of Indian English has not yet proceeded as it has done for Australian English and that there is so far no standardised form for Indian English.

Kim Lockwood, 'national editorial online training manager' for News Ltd, has been responsible for training journalists in Fiji and Papua New Guinea as well as in Australia. News Ltd provides a 4-year online training program for its journalists. Fijian students take a journalism and a sub-editing course, with the content localised. This complex task takes account of three languages (Fijian, Fiji English and Hindi), and unique morphology and syntax. In an accident in Fiji, if you are 'bumped' you are dead, but you're likely to recover if you've been merely 'tumbled'. But despite a large local English vocabulary (with many words swapped from Fijian and Hindi), News Ltd has decided that standard Fijian English, and the News Ltd national style, will be used in its training materials and in its newspapers. This causes conundrums when decisions about how to render direct quotes have to be made. There is also pressure from readers to use colloquial vocabulary more than is done. But training material must be made relevant to local conditions so that, for

example, discussion of commuter train crashes (these are no commuter trains in Fiji), Victoria Bitter (they drink kava, not beer), and the wrong Prime Minister is avoided. Kim has found that students drop out of the courses if the content is not relevant to their situation.

Nick Walker, of Monash University and Australian Scholarly Publishing, gave a rambling personal account of his experience of publishing in Africa, from his boyhood in South Africa (where he relished British literature) to working in publishing in Nigeria as a young man. Nigerian writers writing in English 'were bringing their literature to life' in the 1950s and 1960s, and now there is a 'massive' local popular fiction market. He claimed that Nigeria was little touched by settler culture (the British ruled largely from a distance), leaving local cultural structure untouched, so that there is still a vibrancy and energy in Nigerian literature. He postulated that British post-colonial publishing had

subversive content, and cited notions of justice and fair play in Kipling and sympathetic writing about Zulu culture in Haggard. British writers, he said, knew about Africa, the other, the underdog. Well that's some of what he covered anyway.

The final paper was a delightful account from **Eleanor Curtain** of her experience publishing books to be read by the very young. Her title, *'We don't do irony.'* *Thoughts and observations on editing for the US market*, is revealing. Eleanor Curtain Publishing publishes in Australia, but also exports to numerous other countries, in French and in English. The publisher's mindset is export and the books are reviewed for potential problems of ethnicity, gender, age, health, safety and taboos in all the destination countries. Australia and the UK use the same edition and there are very few changes or problems; editorial decisions to use basketball as a sport instead of football (different sport in the two

countries), for example, make the transition easy. In Hong Kong editions British English is used; in Taiwanese, American English with changes for local language. Wherever they are published the books must 'reflect the known world of the reader, but not the undesirable aspects of the reader's culture'. Tricky. In South Africa, where Eleanor is negotiating to export her books, Australian/UK editions will be used in well-resourced schools, and another set of books is being adapted for other schools, where poverty, AIDS and pollution are part of children's lives. One of Eleanor's greatest challenges is publishing books in the US. In California, for example, one cannot have unhealthy old people and one has to have a correct numerical representation of people with a disability. So you can't put granny in a wheelchair, but to how many others can you give a disability, and in which groups?

The ink is still wet

Kerrie Harrison

Every editor has a job they dream of working on. For me, it's always been something that allows me to combine my creativity and love of writing with my pedantic, editorial side. Even better if it could be a highly collaborative project with great people to work with.

I had no idea that's what I'd find when I met with a group of writers who were thinking of putting together a magazine, in response to their frustration at the lack of opportunities to have new work published in Australia. Fellow Sinc Creative director/graphic designer Simon Lownsborough also came along.

So began months of meetings to develop the magazine and get it off the ground. Apart from one member of the group, none of us had any real magazine experience. Simon and I had encouraged the group to expand their vision from a simple broadsheet to a larger, well-designed magazine that was more in keeping with a style magazine. This came partly from a niche we saw in the market and partly from our own desire to work on a really creative design project.

From the start, the vision was clear: to create a magazine that looked great, was an entertaining and occasionally thought-provoking read and nurtured new authors by taking them to an audience broader than other cre-

ative writers and academics. So the group put out a call for submissions, wondering if we would get the quality we were looking for.

Simon created a website that was modern and fun without being too funky, in keeping with our aim of reaching a broad audience. I found out later that the website played an integral role in landing us a distributor — they checked out the site and decided we would create something worth having in their catalogue.

The next step was to develop an attractive cover design. Good images that complement the text, when combined with creative design, are what will set us apart from other writing magazines. Simon worked with local photographers to source an image and presented the design to the group. Fortunately the feedback was extremely positive, the group excited to see the magazine taking shape.

Wet Ink has no financial backing (a grant application had fallen through), so it was up to the group to generate the funds needed. We developed an advertising package and contracted an advertising sales person for the job. Nobody envied her the task of selling space in a magazine that was yet to exist.

We also raised funds through events at the Tin Cat Café, a cinema, and The Lizard Lounge. At the first event, we were overwhelmed by the turn-out and positive re-

sponse from people, who were showing their support for what was little more than an idea at that stage. We also raised funds through subscriptions, including some from America, New Zealand, Asia and Europe.



The magazine works with two poetry, two fiction and two non-fiction editors. Each selects the pieces for their respective area, then forwards them to the managing editors for final approval. To our relief, we received about 400 submissions, with more than enough pieces being high quality. Frank Moorhouse agreed to be interviewed, which was a real coup.

Among the many other ways I'm involved in the magazine, I am the sub-editor. So I set about putting together a style guide. This involved several emails between myself and one of the managing editors, Dominique Wilson. We had many discussions about capital letters and use of italics, and it was great to work with someone who was willing to discuss their opinions, especially as much of my editing work comes from government departments where style is decided by people who refuse to believe something can have an impact without being capitalised.

I've heard it said that being an editor means

people see only the things you miss, and I thought about this as I set about sub-editing the text for the first issue. I allowed myself a read through before starting, knowing the stories would draw me in as a reader before I could approach them as an editor. What an exciting time that was. Suddenly it felt real, and again, I knew we were onto a good thing.

Next began an intense process of design and proofing—night after night our lounge room was covered in pages as Simon and I discussed the design, images and typography. Finally, we were ready to present the mock-up of the magazine to the group, and to our relief, everyone was thrilled by it. Our new baby was taking shape before our eyes, and it felt amazing.

At the last minute, the ads came in and nervously, we sent it to print. The day the

boxes arrived, we could barely contain our excitement. I was too scared to look at the text, scared I'd find a typo straight away. I shouldn't have worried—someone did that for me. The first page they opened, they spotted one. But of course, I left that there as a test, to make sure they were paying attention!

We launched the first issue on 9 December, and Nobel-prize winning author JM Coetzee was kind enough to speak at the event. The Writers' Centre was packed out. The launch also gave me the opportunity to use my marketing skills, running a nation-wide media campaign. I'm now doing the same for our Melbourne launch, which takes place on 27 January.

We're well into the second issue now, which will be available at Writers' Week. That

will be the real test—how many people will buy a copy after the first? We're aiming to make each issue better than the last, and by the quality of submissions coming in, this shouldn't be difficult.

Overall, Wet Ink has been a wonderful experience. I'm constantly overwhelmed by the support from those who give us their work to publish, those who buy it, and those who have lent their time, facilities or skills to help make it happen. It proves that if you are passionate and determined about what you're doing, anything can happen.

Wet Ink is available through bookstores and selected newsagents, or you can purchase a copy from www.wetink.com.au.



At the Typeface

Rosemary Luke

At the *Typeface* is published by the Society of Editors (Victoria) Inc and is a selection of contributions to the Society's monthly *Newsletter* over its 35 year life. Its editor, Janet Mackenzie notes, 'The Society has always had a wide range of interests, multi-talented members and distinguished guests; it has long been a meeting point, in its modest way, for Melbourne's intellectual and cultural life'. Wherever one opens the book and dips in one finds something to delight and provoke.

The book has twenty sections, containing an average of seven contributions each. The cover lists 48 contributors — all well-known names. Many others have written for the *Newsletter* and are included in this collection. There is a detailed table of contents and an excellent index.

Distinguished authors talk about their relationships with editors; editors reveal their role in an author's process and defend our profession against occasional public criticism. The ongoing question 'What does an editor do?' is answered in many ways, comprehensively in the list 'Qualities Desirable in an Editor' (November 1972, reprinted November 1984), wittily in the poem 'What we learned from the Course' (June 1991), and completely without exaggeration(!), in 'The Publishing Hierarchy' (October 1980).

Many of the contributions are reports of presentations by speakers at the Society's meetings. They vary in comprehensiveness, but all manage to give the taste of the talk. Sometimes speakers released the complete text of their talk to the Society and so provide the full and very satisfying repast. Among them talks about how well-known editors became editors; Nick Hudson's account of his role as publisher in the 1980s *Spycatcher* saga — one of the rare occasions when publishing became front-page news; and Janet Mackenzie's historical overview of Australian publishing and the role of the Victorian Society over 25 years.

Few issues of importance to editors are omitted. Readers will find reports of seminars on publishing economics; a well-argued section on gendered language; various views of whether or why there are too many books on the market; the role of multinationals; working with 'the corporates'; university presses; publishing for children; independent publishers; and the impact of changes in information and communications technologies. As the preface notes, the selection concentrates on 'articles that have enduring significance for editing and publishing'. Just as at conferences, one's enthusiasm for the profession is reinvigorated by being exposed to good ideas, sound arguments and outstanding individuals. When launching *At the Typeface*, Bob

Sessions, Publishing Director at Penguin described it as 'the most useful book that could be read or given to anyone who is interested in knowing what the business of book publishing in Australia is all about'.

A section of obituaries and recollections acknowledges editors, publishers and proofreaders, all remembered with warmth and fondness. In another section winners of the Barbara Ramsden Award and Beatrice Davis Fellowship talk about what these awards meant for their careers. Broader categories of literary awards are also discussed. And there are tributes to the careers and contributions of Honorary Life Members.

At the Typeface is, in addition, a book of prophecy. Long-time editor of the *Newsletter*, John Bangsund first proposed the formation of a national society of editors in 'A Modest Proposal' (April 1979); CASE began in 1998 and its successor IPed came into existence in 2005. Speakers, among them Penguin's Brian Johns in 1981, are reported as having advised editors over the years that they should become more media/marketing/accounting savvy — a point reiterated by several speakers at the 2005 National Editors' Conference, *Editing in Context*.

Throughout the text are break-out quotes which successive *Newsletter* editors have

incorporated. Those quoted include GB Shaw, Hilary McPhee, Amanda Lohrey, Society members, and anon. Many are very funny; others commemorate moments when discussions of editing have made it into the newspapers — they lend external authority to the issues discussed in the *Newsletter*.

Editors will thoroughly enjoy *At the Typeface*. I want to buy a stock of copies to keep on hand in SA as prizes, gifts and to have for sale. I also think many non-editors will enjoy this book's fascination with words and usage, its insights into publishing, its erudite discussion of the many facets of writing, editing and publishing — and the delightful whimsicality which pervades it.

At the Typeface is available from the Victorian Society's website <www.socedvic.org/re-direct/> for \$30 plus postage.

(This is an edited version of the review which I wrote for *The Fine Print*, an online editing journal available at <www.emendediting.com/html/ezine/index.html>.)



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Macquarie WordGenius Reference Library for Microsoft Windows

Rosemary Luke

Editor of *...the word*, Peter Carter, received for review a CD with the title above. He found it incompatible with his Macintosh system and immediately contacted the suppliers to point out that it is really Macquarie WordGenius for Microsoft Windows on PCs, not for just ‘anyone’. So, as an admirer of Macquarie’s products, I volunteered to do the review.

The CD incorporates the Macquarie Dictionary, Thesaurus and Spellchecker which can be simply installed on your computer. The Macquarie ‘content’ as it is referred to in sections of the Help files appears to be from the Macquarie 3rd edition (1997), although I could find this date nowhere on the CD or program.

The installation instruction recommends that the user download the WordGenius icons — quite large, but capable of being minimised; they use the familiar Macquarie bunch of eucalypt leaves. They not only sit on the desktop with other shortcuts, but appear in any open document; you can then stow them out of the way on one of the toolbars. You then highlight any word for which you want a definition and drag the highlighted word onto the desired icon.

For example, with the dictionary, using ‘highlighted’ in the line above, a document opens

up with highlight as the key word (highlighted (!) in green). Immediately underneath is a phonetic representation of the word’s pronunciation, followed by related words — ‘highlighted’ and ‘highlighting’. If you drag the cursor over the phonetic representation, the word is sounded out in a pleasant but monotone female voice: h, uy (=eye), l, uy, t, but not pronounced as a whole, and I can’t make the cursor go quickly enough to actually hear the whole word pronunciation.

Four definitions of the verb are given, the first with a 1978 citation showing the use ‘to emphasise or make prominent’. The following definitions refer to painting/photography, hair colouring, and the colouring that WordGenius has provided for the headword. Definitions for the noun and for ‘highlighter’, then follow.

The menu bar enables printing of the definition, plus a range of setup options which permit such things as extended headword search. Thus, for ‘pronunciation’, you get its definition, plus definitions for ‘Received Pronunciation’ and ‘spelling pronunciation’.

The Help section is extensive; not only does the advice help you to use this product, it also provides guidance that could be of value in using any dictionary. For this reason I see this product as being particularly useful in schools where young students are learning how to use reference tools and improve language skills. The Help contents also guide the user to most of the material in the preliminary pages of a hard copy Macquarie dictionary, including David Malouf’s Foreword to the 3rd edition.

For myself, I can’t see that I would make much use of the WordGenius dictionary in

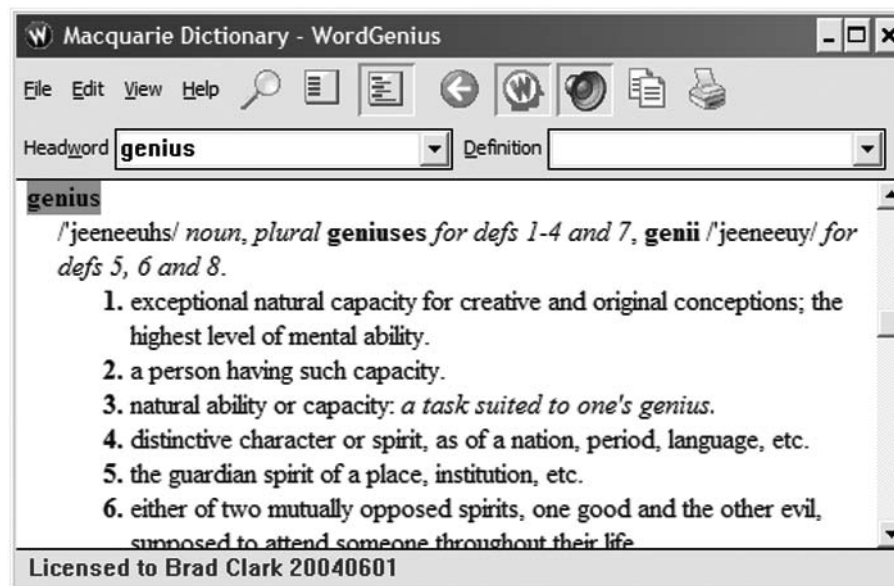


Image supplied by WordGenius

my editing work. Indeed, I'd have to turn the sound off as the pronunciation audio that I continue to hit inadvertently would drive me crazy. I generally use a dictionary to check spelling about which I've suddenly become doubtful; I suppose I could do that this way, but probably not. In fact, I deliberately keep my hard copy Macquarie at the other side of the room to make sure I get up from the computer or desk from time to time and move around. Dragging a wrongly spelled word onto the icon produces suggestions for other procedures, but not other spellings that one might have meant, as a spellchecker does.

However, I can see that the thesaurus could be extremely useful for both editors and writers — for all those occasions when you know there is a better word and it's just at the tip of your tongue but you can't quite grab it. It operates not unlike a hard copy thesaurus. You drag the word in question onto the icon, and

headwords for the various emphases of meaning are provided. Each is a hotlink which then lists numerous possible alternatives.

I confess that I did not try the spellchecker. But I can see that for many editors a spellchecker that matches the preferred dictionary of their publisher's style manual, department or institution would be an excellent investment.

For schools, students and many others, this is another useful electronic tool. Macquarie University shares the copyright with Eurofield Information Solutions.

The review copy came from 101 Communication, PO Box 241 Newport Beach NSW 2106, (02) 9997 2175, and the WordGenius website is at www.wordgenius.com.au. The complete package is \$79.95 (inc GST) and requires 10 MB of storage space.

Society of Editors (SA)

Contact details

PO Box 2328 Kent Town SA 5071

www.editors-sa.org.au

info@editors-sa.org.au

MessageBank: (08) 8411 6375

Address news, reviews or comments for **...the word** to the Editor: newsletter@editors-sa.org.au

For further information about the society, contact:

Administrator, Jane Bettoney:

info@editors-sa.org.au

President, Rosemary Luke:

president@editors-sa.org.au

Treasurer, Nena Bierbaum:

treasurer@editors-sa.org.au

Membership

To join the society just use any of the addresses above or email direct to: membership@editors-sa.org.au

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.

Subscriptions and freelance register fees are due on 1 July each year. You need to be a full member to be included in the freelance register.

\$55 full membership

\$30 associate membership

\$60 freelance register

Society of Editors (SA) membership is due annually on

1 July. If you have an inquiry about your membership status, please email info@editors-sa.org.au.

Freelance register

The Freelance Register is available at: www.editors-sa.org.au/FRregister/FreelanceRegister.htm.

Please contact the society if you'd like your details to be included.

...the word available by email

If you would prefer to receive **...the word** by email, please let the Society know.

Society meetings

General meetings are open to all members and prospective members and are held (unless other wise indicated) in the Seminar Room of the SA Writers' Centre, 2nd Floor, 187 Rundle Street East, with drinks from 7:15 pm.

...the final word



Is there a connection between making pasta and selling horticultural produce?

This from a store that once reassured customers with a sign in the window: 'Stationary ground floor'

