



# ... the word

Newsletter of the Society of Editors (SA)  
January–February 2009

ISSN 1833-3796

## Next meeting

**Wednesday 11 February at  
7.30 pm**

**SA Writers' Centre**

**2nd floor, 187 Rundle Street,  
Adelaide**

*Disabled access through Caffè Brunelli*

Well known, highly respected and much loved writer Marion Halligan will take some time out of her sessions with students in the Food Writing program at the University of Adelaide to speak to our first meeting for 2009.

Marion will speak about her writing but, more particularly, about editing: about working with editors, working as an editor, being edited, having an editor in the family, and having a central character who is an editor. (See *The Apricot Colonel* and *Murder on the Apricot Coast*.)

Marion's books cross a range of genres: novels, memoir, food and travel writing, children's stories, short stories, reviews, essays, etc. Her titles include *Cockles of the Heart*, *The Taste of Memory*, *The Fog Garden*, *Spider Cup*, *Lovers' Knots*, *The Point*, *The Yellow Dress*, and many others, all marked by her acute observation and lyrical and very personal style. We hope she'll be able to give us a sneak preview of *Valley of Grace*, due out in March.

Dymocks Rundle Mall has agreed to bring along some of Marion's books for sale. So come ready to buy; you may be able to get one signed.

We invite members to join Marion and the committee for a meal at **Amalfi** on Frome Street at 6 pm. **RSVP** for the dinner to <eds@editors-sa.org.au> **by Friday 6 February is essential**. Dinner invitation available to members only.

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## The presidential word

*Susan Rintoul*

Welcome back to a new year. This one promises to be our most exciting yet in South Australia, with our national conference being held here in Adelaide in October 2009. We have some interesting meetings planned, and a program of workshops proposed for the year.

### Christmas dinner meeting

We had a great night at the British Hotel in North Adelaide in December. My apologies for the incorrect email address I had given you for RSVPs, which meant that we had 35 attend rather than the 25 we expected. But it really was the more the merrier and the hotel staff did a great job and squeezed us all in. It was the best-attended Christmas dinner I can recall and it was excellent having so many members catching up with each other.

Our guest speaker, Don Henderson, led us through his own informal survey of the typical (self-directed) reading program of students from Year 8 to Year 12 in the high school where he teaches, and the Harry Potter series

was not in evidence. Don started writing books with his students in mind; his first, *Half the Battle*, is about a group of kids and their football team, and his second, *Keepinitreal*, is the story of a high-school dropout in the can recycling business. I'm sure that Don's laconic humour and his feeling for genuine suburban characters won him some new readers on the night.

Thanks go to Karen Disney and Pamela Ball for arranging the competitions. Cecile Storrie won the challenge to translate a Shakespearean speech into an SMS text, with honourable mentions to Margaret Bowden, Kate Leeson and Rosemary Luke. The picture puzzle section was a tie between Michael Vnuk and Val Mobley. A special thank you to our treasurer, Loene Doube.

### Accreditation exam

With the first accreditation exam behind us last year, we will soon receive the list of the first South Australian Accredited Editors. We will hold a celebration for them at a future meeting and publish the list in the next newsletter. Accredited Editors will also be formally acknowledged at the national conference.

A second national accreditation exam will be held this year. We will give you the date as soon as it becomes available. To best support future candidates, we will hold a workshop beforehand, and will focus on the common problems candidates encountered in the first exam. The workshop is free, as our society feels it is crucial to provide as much information as possible to our members, in preparation for the national exam.

## Workshops

We are planning two workshops for 2009. As well as the accreditation workshop, we plan to repeat the very popular one, 'Grammar, punctuation and all that jazz', held in July last year, as it was oversubscribed. At present, these workshops are planned for August. Society members will be informed of the details via ... *the word* and via email.

## Meetings

For our first meeting this year we are delighted to have Marion Halligan, the distinguished writer, as our guest speaker. We will be having a pre-meeting dinner at Amalfi, so please advise us if you wish to attend, as we need to give accurate numbers beforehand.

## IPEd National Editors Conference 2009

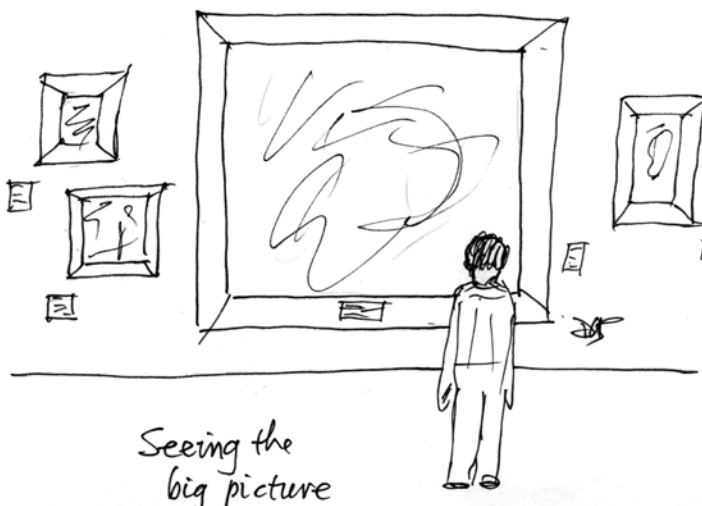
Our conference committee will now swing into action for the final eight months of work before the conference. It's hard to believe after three years of planning to date that it is actually going to happen. We are finalising our program of speakers and will call for registrations of interest in presenting a paper at the conference soon. We would be most interested in our members doing so.

## Vale David Schubert

We were all saddened by the recent death of our longstanding member, David Schubert. David sent his 'Missed Metaphors' cartoons to our newsletter for many years, unfailingly. We have featured a few in this edition. We will greatly miss having a smile over a new one. David was a guest speaker at one of our meetings and shared his great love of words and word games with us. Those of us there remember an entertaining evening.

Members who were able attended his funeral at the Pilgrim Lutheran Church, where hundreds of mourners attested to his contribution to their lives. We shall miss David Schubert greatly as a member of the society, and a friend to many of us.

### MISSSED METAPHORS



## IPEd notes

### News from the Institute of Professional Editors Limited

[www.iped-editors.org](http://www.iped-editors.org)

November 2008

IPEd's first accreditation examination, held on 18 October 2008 at seven locations around the country, was not only a milestone in the professional development of editors but also a logistical triumph. Only minor hiccups were reported by invigilators, a tribute to the organisational ability and sheer hard work of the members of the Accreditation Board and its affiliates, all of whom are volunteers.

Some 171 editors took the exam, more than IPED's target of 150. The numbers at the various venues were as follows: Adelaide 15 (14%), Brisbane 21 (13%), Canberra 21 (11%), Hobart 7 (10%), Melbourne 50 (10%), Perth 20 (20%) and Sydney 37 (10%). The percentages are the approximate proportions of the local society of editors' membership numbers. Eight of the examinees were not members of a society.

It seems that, in general, most examinees were favourably disposed to the process and content of the exam. Here is one unsolicited comment:

*Making the sample exam available was very useful for us. It gave us a chance to (a) assess whether we should take the plunge, and (b) practise! I'm sure I wasn't the only one who hadn't sat an exam for decades (nearly 30 years in my case), so it was great to have the sample exam to bring some of those grey cells back into action.*

•••

*The exam itself was well-constructed and I thought it catered well for the wide range of skills and experience that the examinees might have had. I particularly liked the fact that we could choose which questions to answer from a number of options, as this allowed us to play to our strengths.*

All examinees gave it their best and came equipped for the task. A report from Victoria notes:

*We had a great venue and people were pleased with it and commented that the exam was good. We had some arrive with the biggest dictionaries you have ever seen, that they had lugged across town on public transport!*

For a job well done, bouquets go to the Accreditation Board, the Assessors Forum, the exam development team, the exam coordinator, the Communication Committee for promotion and Sapro Conference Management for handling the nuts and bolts of exam registrations. It is planned to hold a second exam sometime during 2009.

In other news, we have to report the resignation of Michael Lewis as the NSW councillor on the IPED

Council. We thank Michael for his singular contribution and wish him well for the future. The NSW society will be confirming a new nominee shortly.

*Ed Highley, Secretary*



## Exam wrap-up

*Karen Disney, Accreditation Board Chair, 2008*

I'm delighted to say that a number of SA Soc Eds members have earned the rank of Accredited Editor, or AE. This is an outstanding achievement considering that the pass mark was set at 80%. Warmest congratulations to every one of you! Nationally just over 65% of candidates were successful, which is a very pleasing result and an endorsement of the exam: tough, yes, but not impossibly so.

Certificates are now in the hands of the president of each society, and plans in progress for presentation ceremonies around the country. As Susan has said, we'll all hear what those plans are shortly.

I would like to point out that, with a 35% failure rate, not all of our members got through. This is no cause for shame. Candidates experienced a range of difficulties, time management being one and misreading the question being another. If you are among this group, please don't be disheartened: sitting the very first Australian editing exam took considerable courage, and there is every chance that the experience you gained on this exam will see you sail through the next one with flying colours. We all admire you for taking on the challenge.

The Accreditation Board met in Adelaide on 16–18 January to debrief. We discussed the entire exam process, from go to whoa, and have mapped out plans for improvement on a number of fronts. These will be explained in ensuing issues of CredAbility, so that any of you thinking of sitting the 2009 exam can begin your preparations early.

The Adelaide meeting marked the end of a very busy year for me, as I was able to hand over the role of chair of the Accreditation Board to Larissa Joseph, the ACT delegate. It's been so satisfying to see this first exam actually happen, and holding those first AE certificates in my hand was a thrill I will never forget. So here's to the accreditation process: we welcome our first cohort of AEs and look forward to welcoming many more with every year.

## David Schubert, 1942–2008

David, a long-term member of the Society of Editors, died in November, eleven months after being diagnosed with inoperable pancreatic cancer. For many years until his death he provided the 'Missed Metaphors' cartoons for the society newsletter.

I became friends with David during the time we did our BA degrees together at Adelaide Uni. During that time we co-edited a Christian student magazine, never thinking we would one day become editors and would work together.

After working as a secondary school teacher of English and Maths, David began work in 1982 as an editor at Lutheran Publishing House (later Openbook Publishers). I joined him there in 1990, and together we handled the book publishing program, doing all editing in-house. He was interested in matters of style and was primarily responsible for creating the Openbook style guide. From 1995 he worked from home as a freelance editor.

Some months ago I felt I wanted to write a tribute to David, and the result was the following poem. Apart from describing the profession that David loved and thought deeply about, it reflects his interest in wordplay and word games. Not long before he died, I asked if he would be happy for the poem to appear in the society newsletter, and he said he'd be honoured.

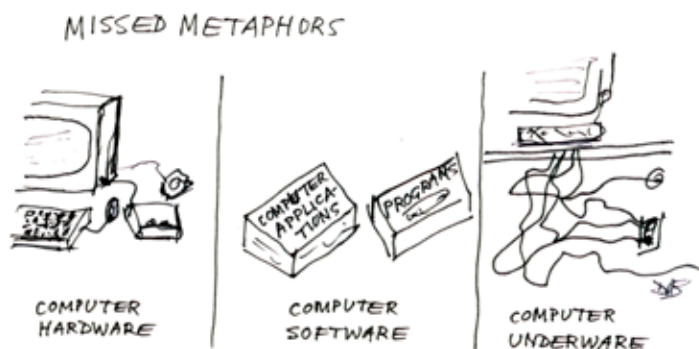
### Editor

*for David Schubert*

He's the go-between.  
Like an impartial negotiator,  
a skilled interpreter,  
he uses his diplomatic skills  
and knowledge of language  
to aid communication.  
He polishes words, when they are opaque,  
making them clear and transparent.  
He repairs damaged text with invisible mending,  
dresses purple prose in dignified black.  
He jettisons jargon and clears away clichés.  
He tidies up dishevelled grammar,  
straightens out twisted syntax,  
brings disorderly word order into line.  
He teaches sentences to enunciate clearly.  
He helps documents  
get their facts right,  
quote accurately,  
present their arguments cogently,  
tell a good story.  
He rounds up unruly commas,  
calms overly excited exclamation marks,

makes unnecessary capitals capitulate.  
 He insists that punctuation be punctilious.  
 Seeing the author receive applause,  
 he feels rewarded.

*John Pfitzner*



## Introducing new committee members

There are some new faces on the society committee this year, and they have been working hard and attending meetings for some months now.

**John Pfitzner** has been a professional editor since 1990, first at Openbook Publishers, and then, for the past three years, at Era Publications. He has been a member of the society for the whole of that time and has had a previous short stint as a member of the committee. His interests include literature, films, music and human rights, and he enjoys sketching and writing poetry.

**Jane Oliver** joined the committee this year and will be responsible for catering for society meetings. Jane has a background in medical librarianship, having worked at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and Women's Health Victoria. While at the College of Surgeons, Jane was also assistant editor of the RACS Bulletin. Jane is a member of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers and is the SA contact for this society. She moved from Melbourne in 2005 to be nearer family. Her outside interests include Pilates and subscribing to the State Theatre Company of South Australia.

After five years of working as a library assistant, **Renee Nylon** decided she wanted to work with publications in a different context and returned to study for a BA in 2001. After completing her studies she worked for a training resource company for two years, quickly climbing the ranks, but has since returned to work in web editing and development at the University of Adelaide. Adelaide born and bred, she lives with her cat Juno and enjoys scavenging for vintage treasure and attending music festivals in her spare time.

Committee newcomer **Michael Vnuk** worked first as a geologist, but changed career several times before studying editing. A freelance editor since 2007, he

moved from Brisbane back to his hometown of Adelaide with wife Rowena and son Lachlan (now five) to be closer to extended family. Michael and Rowena met through playing Scrabble and they both still compete in Scrabble tournaments.

## Conference dinner at National Wine Centre

**Getting the Message Across –**

**4th IPEd National Editors Conference**

**Adelaide 8–10 October 2009**

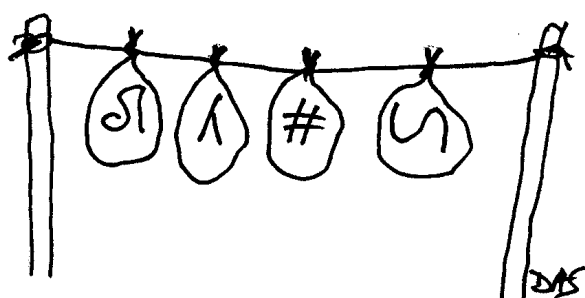
South Australians are rightfully proud of their high standing in Australian and international winemaking circles so it is fitting that the organising committee for the 4th IPEd National Editors Conference has selected the National Wine Centre as the venue for the conference dinner on Friday evening, 9 October 2009.

The selection criteria for choice of dinner venue included a reputation for high-quality food, wine and service, as well as ambience and price. The National Wine Centre stood out in all of these respects – and it also provides a stunning modern architectural setting adjacent to the Adelaide Botanic Garden, a view over the centre's working vineyards and a convenient city-fringe location.

The National Wine Centre is a showcase for Australia's wine industry, with more than 10,000 wines in its open cellar from 60-plus regions. The centre houses the Wine Discovery Journey, a self-guided, interactive exhibition that covers all aspects of winemaking; and a wine-tasting gallery where visitors may choose from featured wines accompanied by a light food selection.

If delegates have additional time in Adelaide, a stroll around the Adelaide Botanic Garden would be time well spent. The restored 19th century conservatory, the extensive plantings of native Australian species, the drought resistant garden and the Bicentennial Conservatory's rain forest are all worth a visit.

For further information about the National Wine Centre visit: <[www.wineaustralia.com.au/](http://www.wineaustralia.com.au/)>. For information about the Adelaide Botanic Garden go to <[www.environment.sa.gov.au/botanicgardens/adelaide.html](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/botanicgardens/adelaide.html)>.



*Online editing resources*

Additional details about the conference dinner will be published in newsletters and via the conference website (<[www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=node/66](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=node/66)>) as they become available, so please stay tuned.

Delegates can register to attend the conference dinner when the conference registration page becomes available. Partners of delegates are also invited to attend.

Registration of interest: To register your interest in attending the conference and receiving updates, go to <[www.sapro.com.au/editors/roi.htm](http://www.sapro.com.au/editors/roi.htm)>.

### Conference essentials:

**Where:** Adelaide, South Australia

**When:** 8–10 October 2009

**Venue:** Adelaide Festival Centre

**Further information:** <[SAPresident@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:SAPresident@editors-sa.org.au)>

**Web site:** <[www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=node/66](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/?q=node/66)>

## News and amusements

Those of you who are hooked on the ‘word of the day’ service from Wordsmith.org might also enjoy the weekly newsletter issued by **World Wide Words** and written by Michael Quinion.

The World Wide Words web site is at <[www.worldwidewords.org](http://www.worldwidewords.org)>.

Are you interested in remote editing? **Scribendi Inc.** provides a variety of English language editing and proofreading services via the internet to authors, students, academics, business people, speakers of English as a second language (ESL), web masters, corporations, small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and non-governmental organisations. Scribendi Inc. is currently looking for **remote editors**. See <[www.Scribendi.com](http://www.Scribendi.com)>.

**WritingRaw.com** is a free literary sharing website where writers can upload, view and share their writing. The only restriction is that the material cannot be illegal in any sense of the word. All writings will be posted.

Go to <[www.writingraw.com](http://www.writingraw.com)>.

The following are results from an **Oz words competition** where entrants were asked to take an Australian word, alter it by one letter only, and supply a witty definition.

Bludgie: a partner who doesn’t work, but is kept as a pet

Dodgeridoo: a fake indigenous artifact

Fair drinkum: good-quality Aussie wine

Flatypus: a cat that has been run over by a vehicle

Mateshit: all your flat mate’s belongings, lying strewn around the floor

Yabble: the unintelligible language of Australian freshwater crustaceans

Crackie-daks: hipster tracksuit pants.

Here are some other contenders:

Bronza: beaut tan

Budgie smuggler: bird cage cover

Dregemite: final scrapings from the Vegemite jar

Mangaroo: common form of roadkill

Smocko: morning coffee at the Needlecraft Guild

Swiggie: itinerant alcoholic

Viggies: what potatoes, peas and carrots are called in New Zealand

Yard yakka: gossip exchanged over the back fence.

Can you think of a funny Oz word? If you can, send it to <[eds@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:eds@editors-sa.org.au)>. The society will award a bottle of wine to the member who sends the best entry.

## Publishing can be a rocky road

*Michael Vnuk*

Last year I picked up a 2005 book that accompanied a BBC television series, *Journeys from the Centre of the Earth*. I don’t know if the series has ever been shown on Australian television, but the American version (the series was a BBC–Discovery coproduction) was called *Hot Rocks*.

The book appealed to me because I used to be a geologist. The author, Iain Stewart, a university lecturer in geology and a television presenter for the BBC’s Science Department, explains how geology has influenced the history and development of the people around the Mediterranean, or ‘how geology shaped civilisation’, as the front cover summarises it. Among other things, Stewart discusses how rocks in different areas led to varying building methods and architecture; how the patchy



distribution of ore minerals gave certain peoples trade advantages; how rocks influenced overlying soils and hence agriculture; and how earthquakes and volcanos affected populations and even religions.

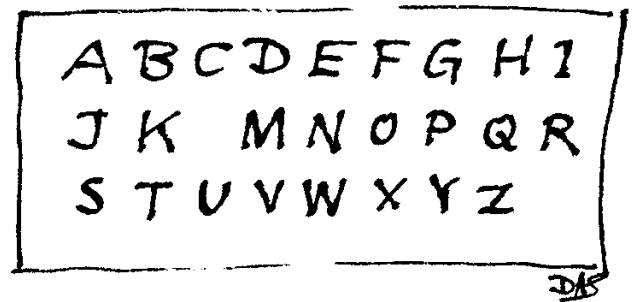
My impression is that the book's preparation was a little rushed, probably to ensure its release would tie in with the screening of the documentary. A few typos and layout errors are evident. Although most photographs are of good quality and illustrate their point, several problems suggest insufficient checking time. For instance, the double-page photo on pages 178–9 is almost exactly the same as the photo on page 181. Nonetheless, the captions differ in everything but the name of the photos' subject, Yerebatan Saray cistern, a huge underground water storage below Istanbul. Elsewhere, the captions to the photos on pages 90 and 92 are precisely the same, but the caption applies only to the second photo, which shows a basalt flow near a village. It may be two decades since I was a geologist, but I've remembered enough to know that the first photo is definitely not basalt.

Finally, the caption for the rather nondescript and blurry photo of a cliff on page 79 ends with: '[Dave - Perhaps this should have a wider view so that the figure can be seen for scale]'. Nowhere else are square brackets used in captions and Dave Crook is credited as the designer on the imprint page, so it appears that an author's comment has inadvertently stayed in. (I also expect that a wider view would have improved the photo.)

However, despite these problems, the book is very interesting. Stewart shows how history often depends on nature, specifically rocks, rather than personalities. I feel it would suit the general reader in its mix of history (which many know to some extent) and geology (which more people should know about) – but that could just be my geological background coming through.

By the way, there's a nice line in the acknowledgements: 'At my publishers, Century, my idiosyncratic prose was gently whittled into shape by the editorial scalpel of Hannah Black'.

*If you have a 500-word piece about books, editing or language, send it to <eds@editors-sa.org.au>.*



Noel

## Resolutions for a new year with limited Internet access

*Susan Rintoul*

An excellent web site, Flying Solo, has given 11 ½ resolutions for micro business owners to break in 2009. Those that particularly resonated with me as an editor (and may do for you) are:

- 1. Get ruthless about distractions.** Set aside uninterrupted blocks of time each day for your most important tasks. Be sure to switch off phones and email.
- 2. Take back your inbox.** The inbox is not a workspace – when a message arrives, delete it, file it or defer it. Deal with it once. Check email at set times during the day and turn off automatic alerts.
- 8. Express yourself clearly.** The problem is often not the content, but the delivery. You may well have a great product or service, but you need to invest the time in speaking, presenting and writing about it eloquently.
- 10. Working less works.** Get out and walk, run, swim or stretch. Great ideas rarely come when you're tied to your desk or tools. Do something each week that is 100% for you.
- 11. Communicate more.** Most client problems arise from a lack of communication. Embrace the power of progress reports, update emails, follow-ups, quick phone calls and general customer hand-holding.
- 11½. Stop boiling the kettle** and then not making tea.

(See: Flying Solo <news@flyingsolo.com.au>.)

Why did they resonate? Because my connection to the Internet crashed for four days in 2008 and while I was waiting to get it fixed I was shocked by:

- how much more solid work time I suddenly had (1)
- how much my clients appreciated a rare phone call telling them I was offline (8, 11)
- just how big a temptation it was to leave many emails in my inbox after four days (2)



- how suddenly easy it was to take a walk at lunchtime (10)
- how much more time there was to watch the kettle boil and then to actually make the tea (11½).

So what should we do about it? Ban the Internet? Give it up for 2009 as well as for Lent? I couldn't possibly — I love it too much. But perhaps, for myself and others like me, I need to limit my own access to it, and put in reasonable boundaries, so it becomes again my slave rather than my master.

## MISSED METAPHORS



Deadline for copy, letters  
and contributions for the  
next issue of ... *the word* is  
13 March 2009

## Society of Editors (SA)

### Contact details

PO Box 2328 Kent Town SA 5071

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

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

Address news, reviews or comments for ... *the word*  
to the Editor: <[eds@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:eds@editors-sa.org.au)>

For further information about the society, contact:  
Secretary: <[eds@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:eds@editors-sa.org.au)>

President, Susan Rintoul:  
<[SAPresident@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:SAPresident@editors-sa.org.au)>

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

### Membership

To join the society, send a completed application form (<[www.editors-sa.org.au/pdfs/Membership08-09.pdf](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/pdfs/Membership08-09.pdf)>) to the address above, or by email to <[eds@editors-sa.org.au](mailto:eds@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, and cover the 12 months until 30 June in the year following.

You need to be a full member to be included in the freelance register.

\$80 full membership

\$50 associate membership

\$60 freelance register

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

### Freelance register

The Freelance Register is available at: <[www.editors-sa.org.au/FreelanceRegister.php](http://www.editors-sa.org.au/FreelanceRegister.php)>. Please contact the society if you would like your details to be included.

Full membership is required for inclusion.

### Society meetings

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