

West Coast EDITOR

A MONTHLY FORUM FOR EAC
MEMBERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA
TO EXCHANGE IDEAS,
DEVELOP SKILLS, AND
SHARE NEWS ABOUT EDITING

NOVEMBER 2002

In this issue

THE LIFE OF AN EDITORIAL INTERN | 2
SIGNS OF THE TIMES | 3
THE CRAZIEST LANGUAGE | 3
WHAT'S ON | 4
WELCOME, HEIDI | 4

EDITORS'
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES
RÉVISEURS

BC BRANCH

The Word on the Street

Seven AM arrives far too early on Sunday, 29 September. I stumble out of bed, load boxes of Editors' Association PR materials into the car, and drive bleary-eyed to the Vancouver Public Library...

8:30 A whirlwind of early morning activity fills Homer Street and the library plaza. Display tents line the street, people unpack boxes, and a city bus backs across the plaza in front of me as I look for our table. I finally find it, noting with some disappointment that we are once again located in the coldest and windiest spot in the entire plaza, and get to work setting out books and brochures.

9:14 I have just finished setting up the seven-foot-tall EAC/ACR display board when a gust of wind blows it onto my head. Back into its bag!

9:53 Sabita Majid arrives to take the day's first volunteer shift at the booth, and we chat with a steady stream of curious passers-by. My day is picking up, and I am pleasantly surprised at the number of interested people.

11:21 I leave Sabita and take my first look around the festival. Over a hundred authors will be reading, speaking, signing books, and sitting on panels, and I don't know where to begin. I decide to gather my thoughts in front of the main stage. Instead, I end up watching dance instructor Roberta Meilleur, founder of World Dance, accompanied by local drummer extraordinaire Russell Shumsky, as they get the crowd on their feet and turn the main stage into a wild party. Everyone claps, whoops, and dances up a storm. It's a good start to the festivities.

11:42 The BC Association of Magazine Publishers booth tells me they are nearly out of brochures, down from over 300 at 9:00. It seems that everyone at this festival wants to be a writer...

11:52 At the Launching Pad booth on Homer Street, Teresa McWhirter reads from her novel *Some Girls Do*. But I must tear myself away from her gritty tales of young love and drug abuse to welcome the next shift of volunteers at our table.

11:58 Suzanne Bastedo, of Douglas College's Print Futures program, has arrived and is ready to take the next shift, along with former student John Vigna. A crowd surrounds the table, browsing through books, reading brochures, and asking about everything from workshops to serial commas. It occurs to me as I hand out brochures and take names that there are a lot of editors (both amateur and professional) out there.

12:22 PM Realizing that I won't be able to see even a quarter of the exhibits and performers today, I embark on a speedy circumnambulation of the library to take in as much as possible. Lovers of the written word in all its forms are all around; the plaza is packed with writers, editors, publishers, poets, musicians, and more. Children rush by on a literary scavenger hunt. Near the bus that serves as the forum for Poetry in Transit, I listen to Paddy McCallum read poems from *Parable Beach*.

1:10 Downstairs in the library there is a panel discussion, "Two Authors, One Agent." Attendance is good and the audience attentive as agent Carolyn Swayze discusses the finer points of the agent-author relationship. Authors Karen Rivers and John Lekich talk about selling their babies (i.e., their first novels) and the trials of touring to promote a novel for teens.

1:45 I see people with armloads of free stuff and am seized by a mad lust for brochures and magazines. I wander around the booths, snatching up free

The Word on the Street *(continued from page 1)*

materials on SFU's Writing and Publishing Program, the Writers' Union of Canada, and the Association of Book Publishers of BC.

2:03 Distracted by an issue of *Template* (the "definitive how-to guide to magazine publishing in Alberta"), I realize that I am late for the changing of the guard at the EAC-BC table. Staggering back under a mountain of brochures and magazines, I find members Jennifer Getsinger and Graham Hayman bravely taking their stations despite the icy wind that threatens to strip the table of brochures. I salute their bravery and head for the Anvil Press table to stand in the sunshine chatting with *Sub-TERRAIN* editor Jenn Farrell.

2:29 An insistent drumbeat echoes from the main stage, and I follow it back to find Adrienne Pierce and her band making some very cool music, including "Death by Water," adapted from the Lorna Crozier poem of the same name.

3:09 Back to the library to catch "Born Freelancers," a panel discussion on the pleasures and perils of freelance writing. Daniel Wood, Trevor Boddy, Ken Hegan, and Diane Hayes offer observations on working in your pyjamas and selling magazine article proposals. Here's a lesson on "trolling for publishers:" Step one: make an appointment, under any pretense, with a publisher. Step two: forget your sweater in the publisher's office. Step three: return, pick it up, and forget something else. Repeat. I watch several fledgling writers scribble this advice into their notebooks.

3:55 Back to the EAC-BC table, where member Stacy Cook is waiting to do some hard time. The flood of would-be editors finally shows signs of slowing, giving us a chance to chat and count the book sale money.

4:45 I resume my wandering, and chat with Matt Mallon, editor of *Vancouver* magazine, filling in for a missing volunteer at the *Western Living* tent.

6:04 After half an hour of watching the always impressive Veda Hille fill the downtown core with the sweet sound of her intellectually challenging piano anthems, I pack up the display and load it back into the car. In addition to my purchases and the gobs of free stuff, I've picked up a few business cards—and a few hints about jobs that just might keep me paying the bills through the long, gray Vancouver winter.

Thanks again to everyone who helped out. You might be hearing from me this time next year...

Curtis Foreman, Public Relations/Industry Liaison

So You Want to Be in Book Publishing: Interning at Whitecap

I had just finished university and was taking some part-time publishing courses through SFU when I started my internship at Whitecap Books.

I was nervous about the position, as I am terrible with photocopiers and faxes and even worse with coffee makers. However, my first day at Whitecap put most of my fears to rest. I was not going to have to make coffee, unless I wanted a cup, and I was provided with an extremely thorough tutorial on the photocopier. The work that I was expected to do mostly involved writing, something that anyone who has just completed an arts degree should feel comfortable doing.

The only real difference between writing a paper and writing copy was being expected to produce something on the spot: "Read this manuscript and then write the back cover." In university I would hand something in and then not see it for a couple of weeks (at least) so my attachment to it would diminish. At Whitecap, getting immediate feedback on my work when I was still high from writing it was quite an adjustment.

The publishing courses were invaluable as I did not have to waste time looking up all the various editing symbols. The only thing my training did not prepare me for was the varied personalities I had to deal with on a daily basis. I suppose the skills required to handle those situations can really only be developed through experience, which is why I consider my internship as part of my education.

Sophie Hunter

Signs of the Times

Business owners might save themselves some embarrassment if they called up a proofreader before committing their signage to posterity. To wit: A few signs recently spotted on Main Street in Vancouver:

Practical Plumbing

Well, he's lost my vote of confidence with that one. Honestly, someone should give this practical plumber a good caulking to.

We serve "the best" in Greek and Canadian cuisine.

Perhaps the writer was a bit sheepish about the veracity of his claim? Or did he believe he coined a charming *bon mot* that could only be recognized as such with the benefit of quotation marks? I don't know about you, but the use of quotation marks like this really "irks me," so to speak. Not to be outdone, a business further down Main on our typographical tour offers its customers:

Free Parking

Oh, right, I get it...it's (nudge, nudge, wink, wink) free parking. I think I catch your drift, you sly devil. And while I'm on my little rant, let me belatedly lament the passing of one of my favourite mercantile signs, which, while it has not graced the shingles of Vancouver's grocery stores for a long time, can still be seen in smaller places throughout BC, namely:

Overwaitea

I had originally planned to hoot in derision at this delightfully inept name. After all, not only does it guarantee to keep even marginally health-conscious customers away in droves; it also manages, through its ingenious little shift from "weight" to "wait," to conflate its promise of cholesterol-laden food and corpulence with an equally enticing thought: endless queues at the cash register. Wow! Not only is the name ineffectual, it is brilliantly ineffectual.

However, I researched the origins of the name and found a more interesting story, one that illustrates how a word (or in this case, a name) can undergo a semantic change through the loss of its referent. Apparently, when Robert C. Kidd founded and named his store in 1915, he was not in the least thinking of ways to attract large appetites. Rather, the going concern at the time was tea, and foremost on his mind was tea and how to sell it.

A shrewd merchandiser, he had already started the practice of adding an extra two ounces to each pound of tea he sold. Since customers began referring to his shop as the "overweight-tea store," he simply adopted the name and streamlined the spelling. ("Overweight-tea" must have seemed too visually cluttered, too stiffly utilitarian to put on a sign.)

When Jimmy Pattison bought the chain in 1968, the name had no doubt become anachronistic, so most of the stores were reincarnated as Save-On-Foods. Tellingly perhaps, outside of the trendy, svelte-geisted Lower Mainland, many of the stores still retain the Overwaitea name.

Overwaitea: Unhip? For sure, but quaintly and endearingly so. Somehow, it makes me rather nostalgic. Who's next to fall, the Pillsbury Doughboy®?

Jack Ognistoff

(Ed. Note: Meet the Doughboy® on his website: <<http://www.doughboy.com>>.)

The *Craziest* Language

We'll begin with a box and the plural is boxes; But the plural of ox should be oxen not oxes.

Then one fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,

Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.

If the plural of man is always called men,

Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?

If I spoke of my foot and show you my feet,

And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?

If one is a tooth and a whole set is teeth,

Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and three would be those,

Yet hat in the plural would never be hose.

And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.

We speak of a brother and also of brethren,

But though we say mother, we never say methren.

Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,

But imagine the feminine, she, shis and shim.

So English, I fancy you will agree, Is the craziest language you ever did see.

Anonymous

EAC-BC meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month (except December, June, July, and August) in the Royal Bank Room at the YWCA, 733 Beatty Street (between Robson and Georgia) in downtown Vancouver. Non-members are most welcome! (\$5 drop-in fee.) For more information, call **604-681-7184**.

WHAT'S ON

Next Meeting**Wednesday, November 20**

We are pleased to announce that our presenter for our upcoming meeting is **Camilla Jenkins**. Camilla won the 2001 Tom Fairley Award for Editorial Excellence for her work on the book *Couture and Commerce: the Transatlantic Fashion Trade in the 1950s* by Alexandra Palmer.

She is the first in-house editor to win this top editing award in Canada. Camilla is a project editor for UBC Press and is based in Toronto.

The meeting starts at 7:30 PM in the Royal Bank Room at the YWCA Hotel and Residence, 733 Beatty Street (between Georgia and Robson), Vancouver.

Guests are welcome (\$5 drop-in fee). See you there!

Substantive Editing Workshop**Sat. Nov. 16, 10 AM to 4 PM****SFU at Harbour Centre****515 W. Hastings St., Vancouver****Members \$79/Non-Members \$105 (GST included)**

This workshop will discuss assessing manuscripts, identifying problems, creating solutions, and working with the author. The strategies and techniques in this workshop will enhance your substantive editing skills.

Yvonne Van Ruskenveld, a freelance writer and editor since 1987, enjoys transforming sprawling texts into interesting, readable publications. Her clients include publishers, businesses, governments, and academics. Her work includes brochures, manuals, reports, Web sites, trade books, and textbooks. Yvonne lives in Victoria and is a member of West Coast Editorial Associates.

For more information or to register, call 604-681-7184.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR OUR ANNUAL EAC-BC**

CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Monday, December 2, 2002
Water Street Cafe
300 Water St. (Gastown)
Cash bar

RSVP by November 27 to
Paulette at 604-942-4317

Welcome Heidi Groschler, Our
New Membership Chair!

Heidi has very kindly agreed to take on the role of Membership Chair. She recently returned to Canada after spending 15 years in India, where she did some freelance editing and studied meditation and yoga.

Before her stint in India, Heidi worked with Public Works Canada as a ministerial correspondence editor, and also taught English and French as second languages. Heidi has a BA in translation from Montreal's Concordia University and has worked as a freelance translator.

She is a singer and songwriter and has produced two recordings of her songs. Heidi is very pleased to have joined the EAC-BC executive.

Next deadline for submissions to

West Coast Editor:

November 10, 2002

West Coast Editor is the newsletter of the British Columbia branch of the Editors' Association of Canada. Views expressed in these pages do not necessarily reflect those of EAC/ACR as a whole.

Mailing address **Box 1688
Bentall Centre Post Office,
Vancouver, BC V6C 2P7**

Phone **604-681-7184**

Email **bc@editors.ca**

Web site **www.editors.ca/bc/bc.htm**

WEST COAST EDITOR

Editors	Lesley Cameron Rosemary Gretton
Layout	Rosemary Gretton
Copy Editors	Rosemary Gretton Jack Ognistoff Sheila Smith
Proofreaders	Ellen Baragon Susan Safyan
Webmasters	Ann-Marie Metten Val Wilson
Branch Coordinator	Jean Lawrence

2002/03 EAC-BC EXECUTIVE

Chair	Faith Gildenhuy fgilden@shaw.ca
Past Chair	Winnifred Assmann wj_assmann@yahoo.ca
Book Sales Coordinator	Lynn Smith lynn_smith@shaw.ca
Communications and Hotline Co-chairs	Ricki Ewings ewingssharp@lightspeed.ca Kathryn Spracklin kaspracklin@yahoo.com
Membership	Heidi Groschler hirdaya1@yahoo.ca
Newsletter Co-chairs	Lesley Cameron lesley@4camerons.com Rosemary Gretton rgretton@telus.net
Professional Development Co-chairs	Susan Safyan ssafyan@telus.net Mark Varley Mark_Varley@bcit.ca
Programs	Robert Chesterman bonum@axion.net
Public Relations/ Industry Liaison	Curtis Foreman stylesheet@hotmail.com
Secretary	Ann-Marie Metten ametten@telus.net
Treasurer	Christine Kondo ckondo@shaw.ca