



National

# Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.

Volume 13, number 3 - June 2005

*National Council takes a break*



## National Council Meeting

# Cairns

30 April - 1 May 2005

The face-to-face meeting of the AUSIT National Council in Cairns — the first such regional meeting ever held — was the result of two things: regular requests over the past 10 years from members in Far North Queensland for some hands-on participation; and the decision made in Melbourne last October during NAGM weekend meetings that more could be achieved if delegates from around the country could get together twice a year rather than just once — and preferably in a regional area where members and potential members would benefit.

Vadim Doubine (in Cairns) and Ita Szymanska (in Brisbane) did a great job of organising the weekend. The Council met for a total of ten hours as well as participating in a three-hour Professional Development session. The committee currently dealing with a

complaint as a trial for the AUSIT Board of Professional Conduct met for an additional hour.

At the PD workshop, organised for local members and newly accredited or potential practitioners, Mike Ovington (ACT delegate) talked about ethics questions in NAATI tests, Chris Poole (Vic/Tas) spoke about T&I as small business, and Barbara McGilvray (NSW) discussed NAATI accreditation and preparing for tests. The presentations were well received and our Cairns members Vadim Doubine and Tea Dietterich felt this was an important event for the local profession. The enthusiastic and responsive audience of more than 40 included ten students Tea had brought from a course she teaches. The students were all bilinguals with experience in many areas other than T&I, who are looking to sit accreditation tests; many of them will be joining the dynamic Queensland branch as a result of the workshop.

It was a weekend of hard work,

efficiently driven by our National President Yveline Piller. Discussion of AUSIT matters wasn't confined to the meetings — it continued at breakfast, lunch and dinner — and delegates returned to their respective states not only with specific tasks to carry out, but with the conviction that the weekend had been worthwhile and productive. The following is a summary of what was covered:

- The 2005 National Annual General Meeting in Sydney in October. The idea that the NAGM should be held alternately in Sydney and Melbourne in conference years (i.e. every second year), and in other parts of Australia in non-conference years, was also discussed — this would take AUSIT to the members in remote and regional cities, with each meeting including a half-day workshop for local practitioners.
- Funding. A lot of time was spent talking about finances and ways of increasing AUSIT's funds to enable it to achieve its goals. Ideas being followed up include engaging a professional fundraiser to pursue sponsorship and grants; introducing a 'strategic partners' program, which would see such organisations as agencies and universities paying some hundreds of dollars annually for certain privileges; charging substantially higher fees for members who wish to join the proposed 'practising' category (or whatever it ends up being called); imposing a small surcharge on Credit Card payment of membership fees; developing a generic T&I induction course (in iLecture form) to be sold to organisations and institutions. Everybody acknowledged the need for a paid

*(continued on page 5)*



## In this issue

*National Council meeting in Cairns* ..... 1  
*President's report* ..... 2  
*National Council resolutions* ..... 3  
*Pay and Conditions news* ..... 4  
*Member anecdotes* ..... 5  
*Chasing the interpreter* ..... 6  
*AUSIT's National Office* ..... 7  
*Pardon me?* ..... 8  
*AUSIT WorldWatcher* ..... 8  
*Misinterpreting the translator* ..... 9  
*TM: more answers* ..... 10  
*Translating and editing - how do the two professions interact?* ..... 11  
*AUSIT Branch reports* ..... 12  
*FIT Congress* ..... 13  
*Events* ..... 14  
*Barbara Ulmer obituary* ..... 15

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# From the president

## Yveline Piller on Professional Development and the new AUSIT Board of Professional Conduct



I think I scared some students last week. When talking to them about the practice of interpreting and the preparation of the accreditation test, I mentioned the vast number of hours I spent preparing for my own accreditation test a few years ago.

Some were relieved: puzzled by the difficulties they faced in trying to reach the appropriate standard, they had not realised that interpreting (and of course, translating as well), is a profession which requires the acquisition of many skills through many hours of study.

As part of our drive on professional development around the country, and with the help of our dedicated local members and the support of our sponsors Migrant Settlement Services and Multimedia Languages and Marketing, your National Council provided a workshop in Far North Queensland for local members and prospective practitioners, who had for some time been asking for local activities. The rest of the weekend was spent in intense meetings, with National Council planning future directions and growth while taking into account our current resources. Read more about it in this issue.

The newly established Board of Professional Conduct is another channel which helps highlight the high level of skills inherent in the practice of T&I. All matters processed by the Board are, of course, fully confidential and I am unable to disclose details of cases processed. But I can say that even an apparently simple case required in-depth analysis

by a panel of four experienced practitioners. Their detailed findings and recommendations will serve to make all parties involved in assignments aware that the practice of T & I requires a fine balance of linguistic skills and in-depth technical preparation, together with an intelligent application of the principles of the Code of Ethics and an ongoing analysis of the context, the participants and the environment of the assignment.

The Board of Professional Conduct has the endorsement of the National Council and will play a significant role in raising awareness of members' professionalism.

In order to promote the profession further, AUSIT arranged to be present at the recent National Congress of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils in Australia, held in a beautiful and impressive Buddhist temple in Wollongong, New South Wales. Many organisations involved in health, immigration, education, aged care etc. were in attendance.

Participating in relevant trade shows is something we had been planning for a long time. This helps increase our presence, raise awareness and lift our profile. I would like AUSIT to promote itself even further for some time I have been investigating the possibility of using the service of a professional consultant in public relations and fund raising to help us approach the relevant stakeholders in the industry as well as users of T&I services and potential members. The consultant could promote the wide range of services and actions our Institute has been undertaking for the profession. This project is costly but not out of reach, and can bring substantial benefits.

Thanks to the hard work of a small group of dedicated volunteers,

AUSIT also recently completed two detailed submissions and one presentation to the Australian Federal Parliament and to the Australian Government on the status of independent contractors. Heavily promoted as a desirable approach to work for many of our members, the high risk nature of contracting has not delivered practitioners the high rewards thought by many to be the natural result. These documents, including our recommendations, may be viewed on our website <www.ausit.org>. They have been distributed to several interested parties, including Professions Australia, NAATI and the ASU (Australian Services Union).

During Professions Australia's AGM in Canberra in late May, I renewed our useful contacts with members of other professions. A representative from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade talked about the role of services in exports, representing almost a quarter of \$34 billion, to which interpreting and translating would make a direct and indirect contribution, whether through our role in negotiations, assembling documentation, or by providing our services to overseas clients.

As a result of our membership in Professions Australia, another new and major benefit was delivered to members this quarter. Efficient and extensive investigations by our vice-president resulted in an offer of professional indemnity insurance by three insurers, at significantly better rates than before. See details on our website.

Finally, throughout July and August, all states will be holding their local AGMs, to precede the National AGM which will be held on 22 October in Sydney. For many state and national office-bearers, including myself, these AGMs will mark the end of their term of office.

If you want the projects and services you value to continue, raise your hand and consider taking a role on your branch committee or at national level.

## AUSIT National Council Members June 2005

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The following resolutions have been passed by the National Council since the last newsletter.

Resolution No 72 of 26.04.05:

That the following persons be admitted as ordinary members:

Roderick Clarke VIC; Bradford Paez VIC; Margaret Kofod VIC;

an associate member:

Catherine Kiss VIC;

an associate affiliate subscriber:

Claire Hone VIC;

a student subscriber:

Cecilia Bouche WA.

Resolution No 73 of 26.05.05:

That AUSIT contribute a maximum of \$500 each towards the expenses of the three delegates representing AUSIT at the Statutory Congress of FIT in Finland on 2-3 August — namely Helen Slatyer and Felicity Mueller (NSW) and Annick Bouchet (Qld) — on the basis of receipts submitted, and provisional upon them presenting a report on the Congress (indicatively 1200 words) for publication in the Newsletter and on the Website, by mid-September 2005.

Resolution No 74 of 31.05.05:

That the following persons be admitted as ordinary members:

Amy Cheng VIC; Dirk Pohland SA.

Congratulations and welcome to all new members!

### From the editor



Thank you once again to all for the numerous and punctual submissions. Where possible, any omitted pieces will be included

in forthcoming issues.

I would like to remind members that the deadline for the AGM issue is 10 August and 10 September for the October issue.

Special thanks go out to Yveline, Annamaria, Barbara, Louise, and all others who helped. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome, as are any images (including author photos).

### 2006 AUSIT YELLOW PAGES COLLECTIVE ADVERTISEMENT

The AUSIT listings for the 2006 Metropolitan *Yellow Pages* Directories are now being compiled.

If you wish to improve your business opportunities by participating in the AUSIT collective advertisement, please notify Georges Mayes, AUSIT Yellow Pages Project coordinator, by email <[mayesg@optusnet.com.au](mailto:mayesg@optusnet.com.au)> immediately. Don't miss out!

# Pay and conditions news

Latest reports and information from AUSIT members

## Pay and conditions – NSW

A few weeks ago, a directive titled 'Interpreters' and Translators' Industrial Conditions' and signed by Bob Carr, Premier of NSW, came into my hands. It is dated January 1999 and is still valid.

I quote the main part:

*It is important that the professional and industrial standards established by the language services industry are recognised and individuals working in this industry are properly remunerated and protected from industrial exploitation.*

*This is also consistent with the Government's commitment to quality interpreter and translator services.*

*For this reason, all agencies should ensure that any supplier of language services to the government employs staff or sub-contracts on terms and conditions based on a New South Wales industrial instrument specifically established to cover professional interpreting and translating services.*

*(...) it is NSW Government policy that government agencies fund the provision of language services (that is, interpreting services and translated materials) when dealing with clients in order to provide all clients with access to Government services.*

Clearly, under this directive any T&I work performed for a NSW government body — whether directly or through a T&I agency — must be covered by an industrial award, such as the awards in place with the Community Relations Commission (CRC) or the hospital system in NSW.

In reality, this is not always the case. Many T&I practitioners,

especially the more recent arrivals to the profession, would be unaware of this directive. The staff at T&I agencies or within government departments may have forgotten or never known of its existence.

To be enforced, this directive relies on T&I practitioners reporting assignments in which award terms and conditions have not been applied. The contact point for these reports is located at the CRC.

Please get in touch with me if you wish to make a report and ensure that when providing T&I services to NSW government agencies your pay and conditions follow an industrial award.

*Yveline Piller  
Chair, National Pay and Conditions  
Sub-Committee*

## Interpreters Mini Survey Results

Five interpreters responded to the questions posed in the March 2005 newsletter on the number of jobs an interpreter can do in a year. Two answered the question about full-time work load, which was:

How many 90 minute on-site jobs or equivalent would you do in a year or could you do in a year if the work was available? (Assume that after allowing for weekends, public holidays, annual leave and sick leave etc., one year = 219 working days).

One respondent did 500 jobs plus an unspecified amount of telephone interpreting in 12 months. Another did 320 jobs in 12 months and could easily have handled an additional 300 jobs if the work was available. A sample population of two is not statistically valid, unfortunately. But 598 jobs a year looks as if it might be reasonably close to the mark. This is a calculated figure based on 66 minutes average travel time per job and two hours per working

day between jobs — the two hours being available for administrative tasks.

For telephone interpreting, another respondent reported doing an average of 16 to 18 calls per day between 8.00am and 5.00pm, with most calls about 15 minutes in duration. This meant they were available for 9 hours, on the telephone for 4½ hours, and paid at \$5.80 per 15 minutes, for a day's earnings of about \$120.

A public thank you to members who took the time to respond.

*John Gare*

## Interpreters' fee calculator

A very useful Excel spreadsheet for calculating a minimum fee per interpreting assignment based on the way you work is available now from the AUSIT website.

Log on to <[www.ausit.org](http://www.ausit.org)>, then once in the member area, you can find the fee calculator on the 'National Office' page or via the document browser as a sub-folder under 'Pay and Conditions Reports'.

## Release of Superannuation Choice Booklet

On 5 May 2005 the Australian Government released a new super booklet, *Super Choices*.

*Super Choices* contains information on superannuation, comparing retirement and insurance benefits, and how to keep fees and charges down. It contains a useful do-it-yourself worksheet and super calculator to help compare funds.

*Super Choices* was prepared by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) and can be downloaded from the Government's super choice website <[www.superchoice.gov.au](http://www.superchoice.gov.au)>, from ASIC's consumer website at <[www.fido.gov.au](http://www.fido.gov.au)>, or get a free copy by telephoning 13 28 64.

*From Professions Australia*

Executive Officer for AUSIT, but for this we would need to have at least \$150,000 a year available.

- Survey. A maximum of up to \$4000 funding was approved to conduct the survey of our industry prepared by Vic/Tas, on the condition that outside funding be sought first — but without strings attached, as AUSIT must own the results of the survey (and may even be able to sell them).
- Replacement of the public officer. Mike Ovington is kindly considering replacing Sylvia Jamieson as AUSIT's public officer, on the understanding that he is indemnified by AUSIT for any liability.
- Introduction of a protocol for National Council e-mail correspondence (see page 8 in this newsletter).
- Formation of a working group to prepare a motion for the NAGM on the proposed membership review.
- Parliamentary submissions by the Pay and Conditions subcommittee.
- A Board of Professional Conduct. Three complaints have been/are being considered as a trial for the Board; a panel of 10-12 people will be set up from which an ad-hoc committee of three can be drawn when a complaint is received.
- AUSIT strategic plan. The President asked each delegate present to nominate one or two things they think should be AUSIT priorities for the next 12 months. The eventual list included the following items (in no particular order):
  - Board of Professional Conduct;
  - Group representation on industrial issues;
  - Membership reform;
  - Raising awareness both among members and externally;

- Nomination of one volunteer per branch who could be called upon to handle specific issues the President may need to delegate from time to time;
- Delivery of Professional Development (Annamaria Arnall will present a proposed plan at the AGM);

on the progress of the national competencies project.

- NAATI. Yveline is looking to make our representation on NAATI's RACs more effective, particularly in terms of the two-way flow of information.
- Things are already rolling in most



*Natsuko Wada, Yveline Piller and Louis Vorstermans in Cairns*

- Survey. Chris Poole will draft a 500-word rationale explaining the benefits of conducting the survey;
- Increased funding;
- Staffing. The aim is to employ a paid Executive Officer. Ideas for the interim include using student labour, developing a database of members' (extra T&I) skills which may be tapped, and advertising in the newsletter for project managers on a case-by-case basis (\$500 per project?);
- Competencies. Chris Poole undertook to report regularly

of the areas outlined. If you have a particular interest in any of the activities mentioned, get in touch with your local branch or indicate your interest on the e-Bulletin.

Warm thanks are due to our two generous sponsors: major sponsor Migrant Settlement Services (Manager Hanz Spier), who enabled us to hold the event at the Sheridan Plaza Hotel, and Multilingual Languages and Marketing (Principal Tea Dietterich, an AUSIT member), who covered the cost of advertising in the local newspaper.

*Barbara McGilvray*

## Members' anecdotes

Last week I was interpreting at Centrelink and part of the job was to translate the forms orally, before the client could sign them. On the form the Centrelink staff wrote that the form had been explained with the help of an INTERRUPTOR.

*Fung Rodgers  
Indonesian T/ I  
Darwin*

Upon arrival in Melbourne from Canberra, I decided to join Victorian Interpreting Services. I asked a friend, who was already working as an interpreter, to put in a good word for me so I wouldn't have to start from scratch. He said to my new employer, 'Fere is such a good interpreter, she interprets before the client has spoken'.

*Fere Hooshmand*

# Chasing the Interpreter

Patricia Avila, conference interpreter and AUSIT QLD Branch Secretary, shares her career and recent media experiences with readers

The first conference I ever interpreted for taught me all I wanted to know about tartar and plaque but was afraid to ask. The dentistry books and articles I read, the hours I spent talking to dentistry-student friends, and the urgent need for me to go to my dentist (even when all my teeth were okay), to discuss incisor teeth, distal, edentulous, saggital planes, etc. (these were pre-Internet days) helped me prepare enough glossary terms to do the job, perhaps even to pass for a dentist...!

What all the preparation didn't do was shield me from the sheer horror I felt when entering the booth for that first 'real' time: vis-a-vis with a 500-strong live audience of mostly dentists having a lovely dinner in the ballroom of the El Presidente Hotel, all eager to sink their teeth into the intricacies of the new toothpaste being launched that day.

These days the panic no longer takes over; the interpreting booth is a very comfortable place to be in, especially when the conference covers topics of my interest (not necessarily tartar and plaque).

But when Fran Kelly's producer (*ABC RADIO National, Breakfast Program*) called to invite me for an interview (and to educate listeners about what interpreters and translators do and how they do it), I suddenly felt the familiar dry mouth, sweaty palms, and shivering body of old (to think that, hopefully, lots of Australians would be listening to the program!), although this time around I had the support of many colleagues who had rung me up and emailed me encouragement. Still, early on a rainy morning, as I was driving towards the ABC Studios in Brisbane, I was wondering what I was going to say, while hoping to do a good job for AUSIT.

What happened then, as you all know, is that I became a media

tart, just like our Qld Premier! More interviews were accepted and with each one I began to feel more at home. No TV programs have invited me (yet!), but there's still hope.

What I learned from the media was that the public wants vivid stories; every interviewer wanted to know about experiences that would compare to our Nic's adventures in *The Interpreter*, and fair enough, I had a few of those. Working in the Central America/Mexico region as a conference interpreter has given a bit of colour to my life. In the 1980s I lived in a country in conflict, which created weird & wonderful professional opportunities for my interpreting career.

In those pre-CSI (the TV Program, *Crime Scene Investigation*) days, the law enforcement agencies in El Salvador were engaging English-speaking experts to train their forces in modern CSI technologies, thus I had a taste of crime scenes with all the trimmings: dactilography, CS perimeter securing, CS photography, interviewing techniques ('good guy, bad guy') and a real life autopsy. The terminology presented no problem during the autopsy, but I had to do the whole session on my lonesome, as my ever faithful interpreting partner wasn't physically able to withstand the olfactory challenge that the body on the table delivered and had to leave the building, like Elvis (my friend's name was Elvis Gutierrez).

Being transported in a helicopter to a clandestine insurgent's hideout in the mountains of El Salvador was a bit of a thrill. Delegations of English-speaking senators, congressmen and trade unionists frequently visited the region to interview colonels, the President (of the moment, as there was a bit of a succession), guerrilla commanders, etc., to hear their stories.

The most challenging interpreting

job was with a team of orthopaedic and plastic surgeons, physiotherapists, social workers and prosthesis and orthotics experts who had come to El Salvador from the Burns Unit of the Boston Hospital for a follow up visit to 20 children they had been treating for a couple of years. The children were all maimed and/or blinded by landmines and the 1986 earthquake. The spirit and courage those children and families displayed, with the children having lost limbs at such early ages is something I cannot describe... I can only say that every day I'd go back home with a sense of awe and humility that profoundly shaped the way I saw the world from then on.

Last year in Seoul, Korea I interpreted for the Global Summit of Women. The summit was held in a convention centre where about 1500 women of different countries were addressed by high level women politicians and personalities from all over the world. It was a joy to hear the African women leaders taking on the responsibility of educating delegates and speakers about the courage and reality of women living in third world countries riddled with AIDS, poverty and war, where girls and women are unsung heroines, but unfortunately are also neglected as collateral damage from conflict.

I also interpreted once in an operating theatre, all geared up in scrubs, for a surgeon with a new surgical technique for freeing a child's club foot; I've been shot at (well, they weren't really aiming at me, but I had to duck shots while working for a journo); I've interpreted for Argentinean tango dancers (I proposed exchanging interpreting for tango lessons, but no go); and I've been underground during mine inspections.

There have been other opportunities to go 'underground', such as the time I decided to wear a scarf on my head and dark

sunnies at 2.00 am in Surfers Paradise to take part in the arrest of a couple of alleged Spanish-speaking drug dealers. The actions of the Australian Federal Police were swift and the language used in arresting alleged law-breakers had to be interpreted sharply and accurately, even if I'd had nothing to eat but bags of Doritos since lunchtime. The arrest took a 'bit' longer than planned — I had to sleep over in my clothes as well. Great fun.

The work we interpreters and translators do in Australia is amazing, and I was glad that even if we were piggybacking on the movie's (*The Interpreter*) hoopla, at least something might have trickled into the consciousness of the listeners about our profession. Of the ten-or-so people I talked to (interviewers and producers), only James O'Loghlin had a good idea of the work and ethics of an interpreter. Most didn't know the difference between interpreting and translation (who does? Not the judges I've been working for lately in court).

To Nic, Universal Studios and ABC Radio, thanks again! At least the movie created some interest in our work, and through these interviews AUSIT was promoted as much as possible. The other thing I learned is that not only are the interviews very short, but so is the attention span of the listeners/interviewers. I tried to convey two messages from the cheat sheet I had with me for interviews:

*AUSIT exists (I told them who we are), and ethics are essential in this business: don't hire just any bilingual to work across languages — if you want the message to be faithful, engage a professional!*

Although this was a team effort (AUSIT Marketing Team), special thanks go to Annamaria Arnall for her enthusiastic support of this project.

*[Congratulations also to AUSIT members Cathy Muir and Vanessa Hearman, who were involved in live-to-air interpreting of the verdict in the Schapelle Corby case — Ed.]*

## AUSIT's (virtual) national office

Did you know AUSIT has a national office?

Not everyone does. Perhaps because this office is not situated inside a building, but found in cyberspace. Nevertheless, visitors to the virtual office can find all kinds of information there displayed on the shelves (i.e. the web pages) and can do business with the administrators through e-mail communication.

You need to log on as an AUSIT member to enter the national office. Just type <www.ausit.org> into the window of your browser (e.g. Internet Explorer or Netscape) and click on the button marked 'Login'. A new window will open, asking for your member number and password. If you can't remember these details, please contact the administration.

After you log in, another new window will open. Sometimes, when traffic is large and connection speed is slow, this window is reluctant to load. Please click on the 'Refresh' or 'Reload' buttons at the top of the screen — this usually solves the problem. If you still cannot see anything, it is because your computer does not have software called *flash player*. Commercial websites use flash technology to display fancy (usually meaningless) advertising, but in our case, this is the most effective tool to enable entry to a separate and private dynamic section.

The members' page contains a triptych. In the middle there is a little window which appears empty at first: this will show short explanatory messages according to where you point your mouse.

On the right-hand side there is a document browser. Nearly three hundred AUSIT documents and images are filed away here in folders and subfolders. The labels are self-explanatory and the text in the middle section should offer more information when you hold your mouse over a folder. Each branch has their own archive with

photos and documents: there are newsletters, professional development material, a PDF file of taxation advice (from issues of the *Australian Tax Reporter*), an enormous collection of useful links, and many other categories or newsletter archives. This much content does not fit in one window — please remember to scroll down the side-bar to reveal it all.

On the left-hand side of the member menu there are blue menu buttons. You can see your details as they are displayed when a visitor clicks on the 'Find a Translator' or 'Find an Interpreter' search buttons, and you can update your own address, telephone numbers, etc. as well. Note also the new 'Excellence Awards' button on the menu. Now step into the national office.

The content of the 'National Office' page is changed often, just as the content of the entire website is. At the time of writing, three main issues were at the top of the list on this page:

- Professional Development (PD) access to all members, regardless of where they live, through the Virtual Lecture Room;
- a membership reform discussion paper; and
- exclusive Professional Indemnity Insurance proposals.

The AUSIT constitution and other official documents, newsletter archives (including the Qld and NSW writer centre newsletters) and many other documents are also displayed inside the national office.

Separate sections for each branch are planned, but have not been constructed yet.

Please visit the office and share your comments, opinions and suggestions with the administration.

Happy reading!

Annamaria Arnall  
Vice-President

# Pardon me?

Louis Vorstermans on communication

Ever notice how there seems to be an inverse relationship between the spectacular rise in communication technology and the ability to get hold of someone and, dare I say, communicate? If you are lucky enough not to get an answering machine, you will find the other party is either in a meeting or perhaps making love to someone.

Before you dismiss me as a troglodyte, I must warn you that I have a telephone and a separate fax line, a mobile phone, cable internet access, 'voice over IP' and a Cyclops for video conferencing.

What's all this got to do with the price of potatoes in Kiev? Not a whole lot to be honest, except that it is an introduction to the subject of this article, communication and AUSIT. AUSIT is a political organisation established 'to protect and advance the interests of its members'. And how does it do this? By communicating! We communicate with each other to articulate our concerns and aspirations in connection with our profession, so we can formulate common views and objectives more easily achieved by combining our resources through AUSIT.

In the political arena, the pooling of resources means *effectively communicating* the views of as many people (voters) as possible to achieve common ends. So what would be the most important tool in our arsenal? You guessed it — our ability to communicate! However, are we communicating effectively?

In the middle of last year I observed to my colleagues on the NC that I was receiving some 500 AUSIT e-mails a month, including the bulletin, matters related to the state committee and to National Council, and issues related to my role as treasurer. I pointed out that I was not able to read that much

e-mail in a timely manner, let alone do justice to the ones deserving a response. Unfortunately the very necessary protocol of having to remove the previous message from a reply to an eBulletin message is carried over to other communications, so we often need to dig through a bunch of e-mail to find the thread of the story. Previous correspondents' contributions would be best left in place, so that the latest message has all the information.

Be that as it may, when I compared the communication/decision-making process of National Council with my previous ten years of experience as executive director for two industry associations, I noticed there was far more discussion than I was used to in similar organisations, and perhaps more importantly, less decision-making.

I proposed to National Council last year that we do two things: one, we hold a mid-year face-to-face meeting of National Council (manifested as the Cairns meeting) so discussions could be concluded and decisions made; and two, we institute an e-mail protocol giving structure to discussions on the web and leading to effective decisions within reasonable time frames.

The second proposal was accepted in Cairns after Chris Poole saved the e-mail protocol from the abovementioned cyber maze and simplified the methodology to get it across the line (no, I am not kidding, Chris simplified, as in 'shortened' it!).

A host of other things was decided in Cairns. For me, the important achievement was the recognition that *effective communication is our core business*. If we want to succeed in defending and advancing our interests as members of our profession through AUSIT, we must make communication skills and methodology our number one priority.

## AUSIT WorldWatcher

Members all use the eBulletin and the Newsletter as a forum to exchange information on significant T&I issues within Australia, and occasionally from overseas, but we would surely benefit from regular monitoring and reporting of T&I activities elsewhere in the world.

We need a volunteer(s) to be AUSIT's WorldWatcher: our observer and reporter of world T&I, who would be prepared to collect and disseminate global information, and share it with members on a reasonably regular basis, through the eBulletin and the Newsletter.

Information already comes in from existing sources such as FIT and the International Federation of Translators (of which AUSIT is a member). A number of AUSIT members have a close association with Critical Link, an organisation founded in Canada in the 1990s which focuses on interpreting in the community. The WorldWatcher could periodically check the Critical Link website, and liaise with the Critical Link Organising Committee.

The following are a few possible activities for the WorldWatcher(s).

- i) FIT - handling correspondence from FIT, posting brief notices on the eBulletin and/or in the Newsletter as appropriate; reminding the NC or members of FIT Committees of any reports or action to be sent to FIT
- ii) Critical Link 5

Over the next 2 years AUSIT will play a supporting role in planning the forthcoming CL 5 conference to be held in Sydney in 2007. The WorldWatcher could help in many ways here.

- iii) Monitoring overseas conference calendars, notices and international media items involving T&Is - (an example is the activity surrounding the film *The Interpreter*).

Please contact me by 23 July 2005 if you are interested in volunteering.

*Terry Chesher*  
(tchesher@bigpond.net.au)



# Misinterpreting the translators

## or Did the Butler see a Mouse or a Rat?

*The Sydney Morning Herald* of 2 and 3 April, in its 'Spectrum' section, published an article on the movie *The Interpreter* that made at least two AUSIT members see red. The first one was very succinct and wrote: 'This is a nonsense, Mr Butler'. The other one actually managed a little condescension: 'It is a pity Richard Butler... marred his otherwise interesting and informative comment on Nicole Kidman's latest film...' Their reaction is hardly surprising. This was not after all a downstairs butler daring to sling off at the upstairs language professionals. The author of the article was Richard Butler, former Chief Weapons Inspector in Iraq, former Australian Ambassador to the United Nations and former Governor of Tasmania, heaping a bit of scorn on one category of our membership while upholding the other as potentially affecting 'the prospects of peace and international co-operation'. Butler not only cited the illustrious Umberto Eco and his book *Mouse or Rat? Translation as Negotiation* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 2003) in support of his proposition, but provided historical evidence as well (albeit not of the kind to ruin 'the prospects of peace and international co-operation', at least not in our post-gunboat diplomacy days).

According to Mr Butler, 'a few years ago a Japanese interpreter translated a formal introduction of the British Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Head of the Foreign Office) as "eternal lesser typist"'. Butler then declared 'it was assuredly an act of translation, not interpretation'. After all, he warned, 'Interpreters at the UN are not mere translators. This is something one learns quickly and something upon which the interpreters rightly insist. Their job is to interpret, to give true, not just literal, meaning from one language

to another. This is different from, and far more important than, translation.'

What did Eco actually say? Here is Mr Butler again: 'As Umberto Eco splendidly illustrates in his book ... there is a difference between interpretation and translation.' Which, of course, Eco does illustrate, but briefly, and in another context altogether. In fact, if there is a message in Eco's work — as is implicit in the second half of the title — it is that good translation is anything but a simple compiling of words from dictionaries. It requires subtle use of a significant variety of considerations to ensure that the whole content of a text — its meaning, its register, the implications of its cultural setting and, very importantly, its intentions — are presented effectively in the translated text. No more, and surely no less, than what a competent interpreter does.

As for the incident of the Japanese interpreter who translated the introduction (as distinct, I suppose, from a translator who might have interpreted), I would happily lay a shade of odds that it is one of those undergraduate jokes with which students of linguistics amuse themselves between examinations. Or, as Signor Eco might say, *se non è vero, è ben trovato*\*.

But Eco did raise the question of the difference between interpreting and translation which is of relevance to our profession generally and to members of AUSIT in particular. Eco's position is best illustrated by two propositions in terms of formal logic. The first is that *all translators are interpreters*. The second is that *some interpreters are translators*. It is clear that if only some interpreters are translators there have to be others who are not. Ross Gittins may interpret Peter Costello's budget policy; John Bell may interpret the role of Hamlet

at the Wharf Theatre; and Jennifer McGregor may interpret the role of Lucia di Lammermoor in the Sydney Opera House.

It seems certain none of these people would see it as their life's aim to join AUSIT, irrespective of what an eBulletin performance from time to time might suggest. We, conversely, are only interested in interpreters who *are* translators, which makes the usual AUSIT definition of the difference a matter of convention we should agree to adopt for practical purposes. A recent attempt on the eBulletin was a clear, spare reduction to essentials:

*TRANSLATORS translate written text from one language into another, while INTERPRETERS orally translate speech from one language into another.*

Having written down the translation of an occasional recording, I suggested minor amendments:

*TRANSLATORS translate written or recorded text from one language into another; INTERPRETERS orally translate speech from one language into another.*

Harry Blackmore, a star user of sign language, took it a step further, regretting that precision is sometimes attained at the cost of succinctness and elegance:

*TRANSLATORS translate written or recorded text from one language into another; INTERPRETERS orally or manually translate speech or signs from one language into another.*

With due respect to Richard Butler and Umberto Eco, this seems to me where any further discussion on this topic comes to a satisfactory conclusion. Except to add that both members referred to at the beginning were sufficiently agitated to shoot off letters which ended up in the waste paper basket. Interpret that any way you like.

Vince Danilo

\* *Italian for — If it isn't true, it's a good story.*

# TM: more answers

Ignacio Garcia and Vivian Stevenson continue on Translation Memory, or TM, software

How do TM packages differ from each other?

The best known brands are Trados, Déjà Vu, Transit, SDLX and Wordfast.

Déjà Vu, Transit and SDL have a proprietary interface, meaning whatever formatting the source text is in, the translator always works in the same environment. Trados and Wordfast work in Windows; for other text formats a proprietary editor is required (in the case of Trados, the TagEditor and the T-Windows collection). In terms of presentation, Déjà Vu and SDLX give you source and target text side by side in a tabular interface, while Trados, Wordfast and Transit do not.

Is TM right for me?

If you translate mainly literature or small unrelated hardcopy documents, TM may not have much to offer you. While it might be lots of fun to OCR a birth certificate, post-edit it in a word processor, import it into a TM program and *leverage* (reuse previous work to speed up) your translation from your database of 'officialese', it's nearly always going to be faster to just lay it out and type (or dictate) it directly on your word processor. Likewise, if you are translating a novel, you won't get far by trying to treat it as a collection of discrete sentences to leverage.

However, if you *do* expect to work with editable, 'segmentable' texts, then you can certainly expect to find gains by using TM. A modest TM package could be a big asset for a translation of, say, a recipe book, which has consistent language with repeated ingredient names and set expressions (*serving suggestion, preheat the oven to 180 degrees, etc.*). If the writer makes changes to his/her recipes, your TM software will find where they have done so and leave the rest. Scripts, dialogues and slideshow presentations like PowerPoint are candidates too.

If you are involved with aircraft manuals or websites for large corporations and large LSP that want you as part of a team and require you to link to server databases and share files, then TM software will be indispensable.

I've heard clients want discounts if you use TM. How do I quote for my work?

Quoting on TM jobs is a major headache for translators because some kind of discount is often expected. Both agencies and clients seem to reason that the program does most of the work. Time saving means cost saving, right? Right — but the trick is to realise *where* that time saving is being made.

There are the unseen time costs of learning to use the software and managing the data base which, if you will remember, grows as you work. A lot of time you save on translating is going to be absorbed by management tasks.

If a translation agency or large corporate client sends you a file *plus* a TM database with lots of perfect or fuzzy matches, then a discount is only fair. However, you might find that the fuzzy matches they claim to give you are positively *furry (!)*, and can be more hindrance than help.

On the other hand, if you are engaged by a private client who asks for TM but doesn't give you any databases (or legacy material) with the job, then it's hard to see where any discount applies. *You* will have to do all the management duties involved in setting up and administering that client's database — and even if they do give you pre-existing material with which to start one, performing an alignment takes time. The hours spent on all the organisation and negotiation — at least for the first job for that client — may more than offset any leveraging gains you make *during* that project. You might even wish to charge *more* than your normal

rates for that first job to account for all that managerial stuff, then for subsequent jobs for the same client offer discounts.

OK, I want to buy a TM package, but what criteria can I use to make my choice?

*Price:* the typical freelance versions now available, with prices current at time of writing, are: Trados 6 Freelance, US\$895; Déjà vu X Standard, US\$603; SDLX 2004 Standard, US\$603; Wordfast, 180; for Transit Xv, we could find no retail price on the product web page.

*Support:* the product developer usually offers some free after-sales support, but read the small print. Trados limits support to 30 days from purchase: after that you are advised to buy a \$245 per year support contract. On the plus side, developers' web sites will give you useful knowledge databases or FAQ sections. Another great source of informative and fast peer help is the user lists at [yahoogroups.com](http://yahoogroups.com) (*tw\_users, dejavu-l, wordfast, transit\_termstar* and *sdlx* for the brands discussed here).

These are all complex programs that require time to master - it's not a good idea to buy one for a project with a tight deadline looming! Try before you buy: go through the developers' web pages, browse through lists to see the kind of problems users encounter and their opinions of the product. Download a couple of demos, work with them, and make your decision. Don't start at the top of the range unless there is a compelling reason to do so.

And be prepared to wait a while before you start to reap the benefits. Join an expert user group for the brand of your choice, and take on modest jobs until you have learned the ropes of both your new software, and the new way of assessing and remunerating your work.

# Translation and editing - how do the two professions interact?

Translator **Matt Gredley** spoke recently to the Canberra Society of Editors

I was honoured to discuss this topic on behalf of AUSIT's ACT Branch as a guest speaker at the monthly meeting of the Canberra Society of Editors in the capital's National Library on 30 March 2005. A pleasant chat over wine a couple of weeks before with Ted Briggs, Vice President of the Society, made it very clear to me that translators and editors have a lot in common, as well as having significant differences in the way we conduct our respective professions. We both have a love of words, but translators extend that love to loftier heights by being in love with other languages. Whilst the love of editors is unsullied, translators tend to be bigamists or even polygamists when it comes to the objects of our linguistic affections!

My presentation to the society took the form of a discussion rather than a 'talking heads' session. We first looked at what translation and interpreting entails, just to clarify exactly what these tasks are, given the two are often confused in the community, and surprisingly, in the editorial community too!

In order to contrast the above, the discussion then turned to what it is editors actually do. 'We mark other's work', 'translate the unintelligible into the intelligible', 'liase with authors' and 'clarify/improve meaning', came the replies. How many of those tasks gel with translators and how many grate? We certainly don't 'translate the unintelligible into the intelligible' or 'clarify/improve meaning'. We 'translate the intelligible into the intelligible' and vice versa. And clarifying meaning is a taboo for us.

We next looked at codes of conduct and issues of professionalism. Principles of competency, accuracy and conflicts of interest are common to both, but impartiality is seen in a completely different light by editors. It is the core function of

an editor to change the expression, and even content, of a text to ensure both clarity and economy of expression — achieving the aim of 'good English'. Whilst translators need clarity in order to understand and translate a passage, if that passage was originally unclear or repetitive, so must the translation be.

This brought us to the question of how translators and editors interact. Where the translator is a native English-speaker, the interaction is generally straight forward — the translator will normally fully understand a clearly written English text (unless it is a very technical piece outside of the translator's area of expertise) or the translator will write in moderately clear English. However, where the translator does not have English as their first language, the interaction with the editor can be more intense. The editor (where the author is not available) will more likely be called upon to explain the meaning of the source text, or will be more heavily engaged in editing a translator's English which may not be colloquial.

We then considered how documents should be prepared for translation — an issue of specific interest to the audience. The convenor of the meeting, Ted Briggs, challenged the audience by saying they should expect an increasing number of the documents they edit to be translations. Should an editor (or indeed an author) take special pains when writing or editing the document to ensure it is clear and easy for the translator to translate — especially where the translator does not have English as their first language?

I relayed a story I'd heard two years before at a seminar on this exact topic, whereby a translator had translated the phrase 'Hot Tips' (meaning points to pay special

attention to) in an English-language newsletter about pensions into the other language as 'incandescent points'. The translator stated that this problem would have been avoided if the author/editor had written more clearly and in less colloquial English. However, my view then and now is that the author should write for the audience for whom the newsletter is meant. That audience is not the translator. That audience is a native-English speaking clientele who not only understand colloquial English, but who also have a strong grasp of very technical English peculiar to the topic which the translator, even a native English translator, may not understand.

I proposed to the Society that the author/editor should write for the intended audience, but should then be prepared to work with the translator as a team to ensure the document is correctly translated by providing, for example, an annotated version explaining and clarifying any colloquialisms or ambiguous phrases.

This view was received with some surprise by the audience, who felt that once they had edited a piece of writing, their job was done. Nonetheless, the more 'progressive' editors found this idea appealing as they are already accustomed to working with the author during the editing process.

Finally, we went through examples of documents that are translated, and the difficulties that translators encounter. The editors were sensitive to problems posed by ambiguous text, where that ambiguity arose from idiomatic, contextual or punctuation issues, as they are trained to weed out and clarify ambiguities. However, the audience was not so attuned to instances of cultural ambiguity. A dentist who had written a brochure for her patients on how to care

*(continued on page 15)*

# Branch reports

## Queensland report – June 2005

The branch committee undertook a number of professional activities over the last three months, including:

1. **The picnic at the Rocks.** An AUSIT Qld family and friends get together was held on 12 March 2005 at the Rocks Riverside Park, Brisbane's largest riverfront park. It provided a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new colleagues. Lovely weather (what else would you expect in Qld?), pleasant river views and yummy food and tea/coffee ensured this informal gathering was a great success.

2. **Interpreting in police and court settings.** A presentation on ethical issues from the perspective of the Qld Police Service and a session of practical group work was held on 2 April 2005 at ACE, 295 Logan Rd, Stones Corner. This workshop was facilitated by Patricia Avila, AUSIT Qld Branch Secretary, and presented by Snr Sgt Michael Maat and Crown Prosecutor Brian Cazzalino. Judging from excellent feedback received on evaluation forms, the workshop was a great success; it provided a practical approach to interpreting in police and court settings, offering essential information about courtroom set-ups and exercises in interpreting police forms and court statements. Every participant received a booklet containing samples of court statements, affidavits, affirmations and oaths, police forms, articles on legal interpreting and a list of legal interpreting links and resources, as well as a copy of the *Glossary of Legal Terms* published by VITS LanguageLink.

3. **Interpreting and translation: Professional Development and networking session.** A three-hour presentation and discussion was held on 30 April in Cairns, facilitated by NAATI examiner Barbara McGilvray, AUSIT NSW, Mike Ovington, AUSIT ACT, and

Chris Poole, AUSIT Vic/Tas. A wide range of issues related to NAATI accreditation — preparation for tests and related issues and small business practice for interpreters and translators — was followed by a lively discussion. The session, attended by 32 AUSIT and non-AUSIT members, was organised in conjunction with a two day string of meetings and strategic planning held by AUSIT's National Committee in Far North Queensland and was proudly sponsored by Cairns Centacare Migrant Settlement Services and Multimedia Languages and Marketing (All Languages), Cairns.

4. **A tour and talk at Princess Alexandra Hospital** for students of Southbank TAFE Diploma of Interpreting was held on 6 May 2005 at PA Hospital. Organised by PA Hospital Interpreter Services Unit and presented by Jadranka Brown, AUSIT Qld PD Coordinator, this orientation tour and talk included an overview of the hospital's services, its expectations and the role of interpreters in health settings, tips on medical terminology, and procedures for hospital admissions and consenting patients.

5. **Interpreting in the health field.** A joint AUSIT and NAATI workshop was held on 14 May 2005 at Yungaba, Kangaroo Point. Facilitators were Patricia Avila, AUSIT Qld Branch Secretary and Jim Duncan, NAATI Qld Regional Officer. The following topics were discussed: the structure of Qld Health, departments within hospitals (including interpreting a consent form), the theory and practice of ethics in medical settings, and medical terminology glossaries. Well-known psychiatrist Dr Patricia Haycock also gave a talk on 'Interpreting for Mental Health Professionals'.

AUSIT information brochures and membership forms were distributed to participants of all the workshops

and presentations in an effort to promote our association and increase our membership base.

Future PD events will include:

1. A talk about the role of interpreters by our PD Coordinator at an induction meeting for interpreters organised by the newly launched interpreting services branch of the multilingual communications agency ARADIA Pty Ltd on 21 May 2005.

2. A PD workshop about getting started and surviving as a professional freelancer, and for small business skills for T/Is on 18 June 2005 at ACE, 295 Logan Rd, Stones Corner.

Thank you to Jadranka, our PD Coordinator, Vadim Doubine, Tea Dietrich and the many other colleagues involved for doing a fantastic job!

AUSIT Qld would also like to express its appreciation to the Australian Communication Exchange (ACE) for their continued support in providing their premises at Stones Corner for all of our workshops and presentations.

### PR and Promotion for AUSIT:

As has been widely publicised on the AUSIT Bulletin, in the last month several AUSIT members and colleagues have had a taste of the limelight, particularly that shining forth from ABC Radio's studios around the country. We are happy to report that Patricia Avila, a Brisbane-based T/I and Secretary of the Qld Branch gave interviews about the work of T/Is to *ABC Radio National Breakfast Program* and Local ABC Radio stations in Hobart, Perth, New England and Western NSW. This was a result of the AUSIT PR & Marketing Team's approach to the media, which sought an opportunity to promote AUSIT along with the release of the movie *The Interpreter*.

James O'Loughlin (host of *The New Inventors*, ABC TV) also interviewed Patricia for his Radio Program, *Evenings with James O'Loughlin*, for a slot called 'What do you do?'. He has used interpreters widely on his trips overseas, and

Patricia reports that he's quite cluey and fully appreciates the issues of accuracy and impartiality in interpreting, which he discussed during the interview.

AUSIT was mentioned on all of these programs and, although it is difficult to provide a full rendition of AUSIT's aims and mission in 5-6 minute interviews, the

feedback from them has been very positive, especially on the message conveyed to the public that when hiring T/Is they require from the latter not only demonstrated linguistic skills but a high level of professional behaviour and ethics. Well done, team...!

*Ita Szymanska*  
*QLD Branch Chair*

## SA/NT Branch

The AUSIT SA/NT branch may have been quiet lately, but we have not been idle.

We have been busy compiling addresses of institutions that may benefit from a send-out of the GIR (Getting It Right) brochure. The list is constantly growing and the whole committee is involved in making contact with relevant people in these institutions.

In March we held a very successful PD seminar 'Ethical Dilemmas and You'. It was well attended and feedback was very positive. Natsuko Wada, our PD Coordinator, has written a report which is available in the member section of the AUSIT website and below.

Our next PD seminar is planned

for the end of June and should be very interesting. Details will be released closer to the date when everything is finalised. Let me just say that we have a guest speaker lined up who will be interesting, inspiring, controversial (maybe?), and definitely able to spark a lively discussion.

Our next AGM is just around the corner, to be held at the end of July. Details will be released in June. Please consider joining the committee; we have a small, but fantastic team. All help is welcome. This is also a great opportunity to meet fellow T/Is and to become involved with AUSIT. We hope to see you all soon!

*Andrea Hoffmann*  
*Chair, AUSIT SA/NT*

## Ethical dilemmas and you - Seminar summary

A crowd of almost 100 gathered at our recent PD seminar — 'Ethical Dilemmas and You,' which took place at the Adelaide Institute of TAFE on 24 March 2005. The moderator for the night was John Hallet, National Delegate of AUSIT's SA/NT branch.

Present also were guest panellist Gail Umehara, T/I and TAFE lecturer, Leanne Beer, Chairperson of ASLIA's SA branch, and Barbara Elsdon and Heather Loades, who interpreted for the Auslan audience. TAFE students working in Arabic, Chinese, Italian and Japanese made up the majority of the attendees.

The seminar began with an introduction to AUSIT's Code of Ethics from the website. This was followed by discussions on

ethical issues in several situations, including hospital appointments, court hearings, business meetings, and consultations at school.

The major difficulties seemed to be accuracy, impartiality and confidentiality. Finally, a video presentation produced by Centrelink in the 1980s was shown, during which two Auslan interpreters took turns to interpret.

*Natsuko Wada,*  
*PD Coordinator*

## Events

XVII World Congress of the International Federation of Translators  
Tampere, Finland, 2-7  
August 2005

The International Federation of Translators holds its World Congress every three years, when about 500 translators, interpreters and terminologists from all over the globe meet to discuss the latest issues.

These Congresses cover all the activities and concerns of the profession, from scientific and technical translation to literary translation, via copyright, new technologies and training, to the status of the translator and even more. They are an overview of the situation of the profession worldwide.

Sessions at the 2005 Congress will go beyond simple presentations and will allow more in-depth exchanges about issues affecting translators, terminologists and interpreters in their daily lives. We hope this will enable participants to adopt a stance on matters concerning them, and will enable FIT to pursue its activities constructively.

The 2005 Congress, with the theme of translators' rights, is hosted this year by the Finnish association in a university town conducive to acquiring knowledge. We hope to see you there in force and hope that once more, the FIT World Congress will be a chance to chat, to meet up again, to meet new people, and above all, to develop solidarity amongst translators.

*Betty Cohen, c.tr.*  
*President, FIT*

## AUSIT Excellence Awards 2005

Entries/nominations are now being accepted for the 2005 AUSIT Excellence Awards. Categories for this year's expanded program are: 'Excellence in Interpreting', 'Excellence in Translating' and 'Outstanding Contribution to the T&I Industry'.

Nominations due on:	23 September 2005
Submissions due on:	7 October 2005
Awards Presentation:	28 November 2005

For more info check the URL: <<http://www.ausit.org/eng/showpage.php3?id=868>>

# T&I events

## CL5 – Quality in interpreting: a shared responsibility

In April 2007, the University of Western Sydney will be hosting the Critical Link 5 conference (CL5) at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Parramatta.

The Critical Link conference is the only major international conference dedicated to interpreting in the community. It is held every three years. Following on from the CL4 theme of 'Professionalising interpreting in the community', the theme for CL5 will be: 'Quality in interpreting: a shared responsibility'.

Critical Link 5 aims to generate discussion on such issues as:

- sharing responsibility for quality

interpreting in community settings among all those involved;

- demands placed on interpreters to provide quality services;
- expectations of all parties involved in interpreting transactions.

AUSIT is delighted to support this special international event and will broadcast regular updates to members.

## French studies conference

An international French Studies conference will take place on 6 to 8 July at the University of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University (ASFS 2005).

The conference will be of interest

to translators across Australia: one of the keynote speakers is Richard Philcox, renowned literary translator (French>English). Scholars will also be giving papers on issues of literary translation as well as language teaching and learning. For all relevant details (registration, programme, abstracts, etc.), refer to the URL: <[http://www.european.uwa.edu.au/french/asfs\\_2005](http://www.european.uwa.edu.au/french/asfs_2005)>.

## ASLIA Winter School and Conference

The ASLIA Winter School & Conference will be held in Cairns from 29-31 July 2005.

For more information and a registration form, go to: [http://www.aslia.com.au/national/winter05\\_advert\\_home.htm](http://www.aslia.com.au/national/winter05_advert_home.htm)

Deaf relay interpreters are particularly encouraged to attend.

AUSIT members may be interested to know that the 'Translation and/as Culture' research group from the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at Monash University is organising a conference on this theme to be held at the Bayview Conference Centre (Melbourne) on 11-12 November 2005.

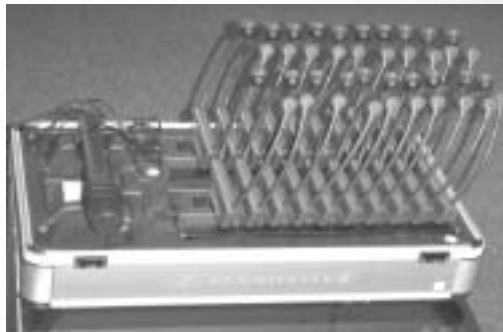
Information about the conference can be found at: <<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/lcl/conferences/translation>>.



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# Barbara Ulmer 1949-2005

A former AUSIT member is remembered fondly

Early members of AUSIT were saddened to hear of the passing of Barbara Ulmer, conference interpreter, AIIC member and former AUSIT member and office-bearer. She died in Canberra Hospital on Sunday 20 February from injuries sustained the day before in a cycling accident in the Snowy Mountains.

Barbara's father came to Sydney to work on the construction of the Opera House stages. Barbara was born in Sydney and went to school here (hence her two A languages, German and English, in her work as an AIIC interpreter). The family subsequently returned to Germany and Barbara worked for some years as an interpreter in Brussels.

She returned to Australia in the late 1980s. When AUSIT was set up in 1987, Barbara was our first National Secretary. She worked as a conference interpreter here before deciding on a change of career. She did a Master's degree followed by a PhD in Sociology, and had recently started work in a new position at the University of New South Wales. She continued to maintain contact with German interpreting colleagues, who will miss her warmth, professional

attitude and generosity.

Many of us remember her in particular for her formidable intelligence. She did not suffer fools gladly, and these two qualities made her a force to be reckoned with as she fought for what she believed in. In addition to her work as National Secretary she contributed lots of ideas and enthusiasm during her time on the NSW Branch committee. It was she who suggested the inaugural meeting of AUSIT should be held in the Opera House so the professional association would emerge with style and make a splash.

Claudia remembers meeting Barbara when she had already decided to concentrate on her Masters, and later PhD. She says: 'I was fortunate enough to have seen her brilliant mind at work. Barbara's personal dedication, tireless energy, professional competence and rare courage were an inspiration to those who knew her and will continue to be so. Barbara always stood up for what she thought was right—regardless of who she may have been up against. It is this memory of a fiercely intelligent and fearless

person which will remain with me and, hopefully, give me courage when I may need it.'

Luciano Ginori writes: 'As a founding member and first National President of AUSIT I had the pleasure of knowing and working very closely with Barbara Ulmer.

Barbara was a kind, capable, very hard-working and dedicated member of our original team. This was particularly helpful in those early and hectic days; Barbara was a very organised and efficient National Secretary.

Among her outstanding contributions, she organised and ran the National Office single-handed in a very efficient manner, setting up and operating all necessary administrative systems.

Like many other AUSIT colleagues who had the privilege of knowing Barbara, I am greatly saddened at her parting, which leaves our Association that much poorer as a result.'

Barbara is survived by her husband Dr Richard Taylor, sons Sebastian (12) and Julian (14), her mother Johanna Ulmer and her sister Brigitte Ulmer.

*Contributions by Luciano Ginori, Claudia Koch McQuillan, Felicity Mueller, Emy Watt, Terry Chesher and Barbara McGilvray.*

## Festival of Poetry in Translation

The inaugural Festival of Poetry in Translation will be held at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne on 12, 13, 14 August 2005.

Themes are Language, Place and Identity. Panel discussions and workshops on such topics as: 'How to turn a literal translation into literature' will encourage maximum audience participation.

Interested members should contact the following email:  
<clementina@pacific.net.au>.

*(continued from page 11)*

### Translating and editing

for the mouth following a tooth extraction recommended eating semolina because it would not aggravate the wound. A clear instruction. Nothing for an editor to do. Yet the translator was confused. No-one in the target community eats semolina; there was no point referring to it in the translated brochure. Instead, the desirable properties of semolina — it is non-acidic, non-granular, soft — had to be teased out and an equivalent food substituted in the translation: rice congee perhaps, in Chinese culture. Was there really

nothing for the editor to do?

The discussion proved a very fruitful exercise, illustrating the similarities and differences between the two professions, and highlighting ways in which editors and translators can interact for the benefit of readers of a translated document.

In return for the presentation, the Canberra Society of Editors would be happy to provide a guest speaker for an AUSIT ACT Branch function, to explain in more detail just what editors do. Other AUSIT branches may wish to contact their local editor societies to swap speakers.

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