

The Bath Soap^a - The frothy version of what is happening in the bath at

Wednesday 11 June 2003

See me! Ed

The Editors will welcome contributions from all sources, but nothing saucy, please. Hand your contribution in at the registration desk, or to an editor.

Editorial

The big E Editor was just getting the hang of this editing business, now it is time to put away the blue pencil, close down the presses, abandon the green eyeshade, and wait until Cracow for the next volume. We all hope that you have enjoyed the conference, enjoyed Bath and the wonderful welcome we have had from everyone we have met here, and will make plans for the papers you are going to submit to our rival publication - *European Science Editing*. Farewell, adieu, auf weidersehen, goodbye, as our new rock star, Rod "Stewart" Hunt would sing.

Fools rush in !

You had to wait until the last session on the list, but it will finally happen. Rod Hunt will actually address the main theme of the conference 'Editing and Scientific "Truth"', when he introduces the session "In the public interest?" In the Aix-en-Provence Room at 11.00. Will it be worth it? Only one way to find out.

Room names

The familiar, to some, names of cities around Europe are not of our naming. These rooms are to celebrate the "twinning" of Bath with other cities, and there are regular exchanges between the cities.

M11 Non commercial publishing: is the Internet really a new challenge?

Moderator: Paola De Castro, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome

The question posed in the title of the workshop was a real challenge. Of course it was not solved in the two hour's time in which presentations were followed by a nice and

informal debate. Brydon room in the prestigious Guildhall in Bath was full of sitting and standing persons, and the friendly atmosphere facilitated questions and answers. This workshop seemed to be the natural continuation of the seminar on Open access held in the morning and most of the attendants were the same, so the themes of free and open access and the different concerns and interests of editors, readers and librarians in the changing editorial environment could be debated in depth.

Session M10. A rose by any other name ...

could be a magnolia. But who decides? All those name changes and new rules leave us so confused. We'd like to be consistent but we're daunted by information overload and competing standards, and can't afford to purchase the latest offerings from the standard-setters. Acronyms and abbreviations have us scratching our heads too - one reference book lists no fewer than 32 definitions for the abbreviation FA. Are these short cuts a useful aid, a means of reducing publishing costs or just a lazy way of writing?

But we're not the only ones in trouble. NASA managed to lose a US\$ 120 million probe to Mars because it couldn't decide whether it was using SI or "English" units for its calculations. Unimpressed by subsequent recommendations, the June 2003 NASA Web site encourages children to play around converting cups to gallons, ounces to pounds and miles to feet. Future astronauts beware.

M10 came up with some suggestions as to how EASE might ease our situation but is still not sure whether its discussions took place on 9/6/03, 6/9/03 or, as recommended by ISO, on 03/6/9!

Sally Lunn

The Editor has been disappointed not to receive more contributions on the Sally Lunn question - see *Soap* of 9 June 2003 - I am sure there must be some out there who have a few ideas?

Improving visibility

Tony Bowley, who edits a newsletter on developments in nutrition relevant for developing countries, is keen to hear from editors and nutrition journals not reviewed in mainstream computer indexes. Collaboration could involve helping him to keep up to date on nutrition research outside of Western Europe and North America, in return for reviews of papers published in their journals. The newsletter, *Nutrition*, is distributed electronically to development organisations, public health offices, universities and researchers "worldwide". Interested editors should please contact Tony at: nutrition@bluewin.ch

Burning issues

We hope the fire alarm at 10.00 did not cause too much alarm! It is meant to alarm if it does NOT go off when tested, so thank you for your tolerance and understanding, and many thanks to the Plenary speakers who had to endure this interruption.

More burning issues

Let us know what issues trouble you as an editor and we will try to organise workshops and seminars to address those issues. EASE is an organisation of individuals who use their membership to "network", so please keep in touch with us after Bath, and do not just think "I wonder what other editors do", send a

message to the Forum, or write to the journal, or e-mail one of the Council with your thoughts.

Have you seen the Stars?

Have any delegates managed to spot a Star on their travels around Bath? No? Shame? Maybe they are not filming in Bath after all - the dry weather would suggest that there is not a film unit within about 50 miles - but that is not what we wanted, we wanted all the fun of Hollywood combined with the road traffic and history of Bath, we wanted it all!

What Hollywood owes Bath

Hollywood would still be a smog-free part of the coastline on the Western seaboard of the USA if a chap in Bath had not had a brilliant "wheeze", which is an "idea" that chaps used to have a hundred years ago. The chap in this case was William Friese-Green (1855-1921) who was the first man to produce a celluloid ribbon suitable as a negative base, and thus to make moving pictures possible. The rest, as they say, is showtime.

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