



## AMWA e-news November 2008

Greetings!

### AMWA annual conference report

The recent 25th annual conference was a great success. This year it was held in Brisbane and members from all over Australia and New Zealand (and even one from India) turned up to hear some great speakers and attend insightful workshops. There are some photos from the conference on the AMWA website at: [www.medicalwriters.org](http://www.medicalwriters.org)

Congratulations to Katherine Baverstock who was elected president of AMWA at the annual general meeting held at the Brisbane conference last month. Katherine has been a member of AMWA since 2001 and has been Treasurer since 2005. She is keen to increase AMWA membership, make the PDP program more accessible to all AMWA members and to increase the number of networking events for members located outside of Sydney.

Our outgoing president Tina Allen reports: 'I really enjoyed the Brisbane conference and would like to thank everyone for their kind wishes and the lovely present given to me at the dinner (some hand-made glass platters). Also a big thank you to our sponsors and everyone on the executive and conference committees who assisted with organising the conference. In addition to being able to share my experiences as part of the executive committee and my career in publishing, I also enjoyed catching up with many long-standing and new AMWA members. I wish Katherine Baverstock and the new executive committee every success and look forward to being part of it as the immediate past president during 08-09.'

See below for the list of our new committee members.

We have a showbag from the Queensland Writers Centre to give to a lucky AMWA member. The first member to email Tina Allen ([tina.allen@bigpond.com](mailto:tina.allen@bigpond.com)) will receive this great showbag.



New president, Katherine Baverstock and outgoing president, Tina Allen at the annual dinner at Augustines on George in Brisbane.

Katherine is a pharmacist by training. She is based in Canberra and works as a National Program Manager for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, managing a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs. Her interest in medical writing commenced when she started studying a graduate journalism program at UniSA, an interest that turned into a PhD examining the portrayal of prescription medicines in the Australian print media. She has also worked as an academic and a vocational trainer.

AMWA conference session



## AMWA events

### AMWA ACT – Christmas networking and drinks

ACT members and their colleagues are invited to Christmas Networking and Drinks at the National Press Club (16 National Circuit, Barton) on Monday 8 December from 6pm to 8pm. Drinks will be accompanied by a range of canapés. More details will be sent to the ACT members shortly via e-mail. Bring your business cards and bring your colleagues for a great evening.

### AMWA Victoria

AMWA Victoria Branch will start the New Year with renewed vigor with a networking evening planned in February. Guest speaker is Veronica Pitt of the Australasian Cochrane Centre. The Cochrane Library is a free web resource in Australia and New Zealand and is invaluable for all medical writers. The venue is the Red Back Hotel, Flemington Rd. Date and time to be confirmed.

Expressions of interest from members who are interested in attending can be sent to L.E. Ohman, LE@medicalwriters.org, or Jacinta Miller, jacmil@bigpond.com or phone L.E. on 0408 318 907.

### Social secretaries wanted

Medical writing can be a lonely job, and networking events are very important to maintain a sense of connection with each other. We are looking for “social secretaries” who would be willing to organise and host one or two social events each year for local members, with support from the executive committee. Please contact the President, Katherine Baverstock at president@medicalwriters.org if you are interested in learning more.

### What's new

- AMWA was fortunate to hold our 2007 conference in Melbourne with the World Conference for Science Journalists (WCSJ). The WCSJ are holding their 2009 conference in London, 30 June to 2 July 2009. To find out more, [click here](#)
- The Peer Review Congress held every 5 years will be hosted in Vancouver on 10–12 September 2009. The congress covers all aspects of academic biomedical science publication. If you would like further information [click here](#)
- 29 November is ‘Thank You Day’. This is your chance to send a thank you to those health and medical researchers who are the unseen workers that help advance medicine and science. To find out how to send your thanks, visit [www.thankyouday.org](http://www.thankyouday.org)
- The Association of Clinical and Regulatory Scientists (ARCS) is holding a seminar entitled ‘Introduction to Medical Writing — Your Questions Answered’ on 2 December. For further information [click here](#)

- The Royal Australian College of General Practitioner (RACGP) recently presented two awards for outstanding medical journalism to Leigh Parry (Medical Observer) and Helen Signy (Reader's Digest). For more information [click here](#)
- The 2nd Australasian Mental Health Outcomes Conference is on 24-26 November in Melbourne. For further information [click here](#)
- Melbourne is hosting the RANZCP Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age Scientific Conference on 27–28 November. To find out more [click here](#)
- If you would like to receive regular media releases about nuts and health, please contact dietitian, Lisa Yates from Nuts for Life on: 02 9460 0111 or [admin@nutsforlife.com.au](mailto:admin@nutsforlife.com.au).

## Getting to know one another

### Dr Justin Coleman, freelance medical writer



Justin usually boasts he is a medical writer who moonlights as a GP, except on his tax return, where a quick glance at the numbers increases his admiration for the dedication of real medical writers.

In 1996 he and his young family moved from Melbourne to Tennant Creek as Australian Volunteers Abroad (neither volunteering, nor abroad), kicking off a career in Indigenous health which later included various remote aboriginal communities, most recently two years as the Kakadu GP. He has now settled in Brisbane, still in Indigenous health part time, relishing his first decent cappuccinos in years and the time to drink them.

In 1997, not only was his first ever article published, but *Medical Observer* immediately offered him freelance work. Unsure what this meant, he joined the nearest union... AltaVista came up with AMWA. Since then, he has published 500 'GP Tips' in *Medical Observer*, another hundred or so articles in a dozen newspapers and mags, owned two newspaper columns and has edited four medical books.

Despite a lifelong penchant for exaggeration, he did not formally write fiction until recent years, when a play won an award (admittedly quite a little one) and he is the current holder of the rather misleading title 'Australian GP writer of the year'.

Geographically challenged, he has done very little for AMWA until now, so at this year's Brisbane AGM he strategically ate his sandwich within gavel's reach: he now hopes to serve the committee with honour.

### AMWA executive committee

The annual general meeting of the AMWA was held in Brisbane on Saturday, 28 October. The following committee members were elected:

President: Katherine Baverstock

Vice President: open

Treasurer: Katherine Baverstock (until end 2008)

Secretary: Andrea Malcolm

Education sub-committee chair: Beejal Vyas Price

Ordinary members: Tina Allen (Immediate past president), Rhana Pike (webmaster), Jacinta Miller, LE Ohman, Anne Ring, Sophie Scott, Justin Coleman

Affiliate member: Adrian Dolahenty

### New members

The committee met by teleconference on 11 November and would like to welcome the following new

members. Ordinary: Jane Carstens (ACT), Andrew J Wight (Qld), Shamala Masurkar (India), Christine Finch (ACT), Sue Cripps (NSW); Affiliate: Carolyn Norrie (ACT), Janelle Batchelor (NSW), Lisa Yates (NSW); Discount Affiliate: Simren Kauer Gill (ACT) and Carolyn Ng (ACT)

### Websites we like

This site tells you more than you would ever want to know about mathematical symbols. It's a useful reference for anyone who writes with numbers, but also has enough detailed commentary for idle browsing. It's not specifically medical.

<http://home.att.net/~numericana/answer/symbol.htm>

To unsubscribe to this newsletter please email treasurer Katherine Baverstock:

[treasurer@medicalwriters.org](mailto:treasurer@medicalwriters.org)

[www.medicalwriters.org](http://www.medicalwriters.org)

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