



National Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.

Volume 14, number 5 - December 2006



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WA and Qld branches press the flesh
New AUSIT National Executive
Interpreter or alter ego?
Translating theatre



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AUSIT National Council December 2006

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ACT	Malcolm Leader
NSW	Uli Priester
QLD	Ita Szymanska
SA/NT	Claudia Ait-Touati
VIC/TAS	Eva Hussian
WA	Annamaria Arnall

Since publication of the last newsletter the following people have been admitted to AUSIT as members or subscribers:

Dima Rashid, SA;
Tanh Duc Thi Pham, SA.

Welcome to these new members!

Front cover photos (clockwise from top) — John Hallett introduces Chris Poole and Sam Berner to the Together Towards Professionalism audience in SA; the AUSIT banner at the Qld Multicultural Festival; John Crone collects his Honorary Award for exceptional service to the T&I industry at Monash University in Victoria.

Greetings from the new President

Uli Priester presents his plan for the next year in AUSIT's life

Dear colleagues,

I joined AUSIT in 1995, then dropped out and rejoined several years later. I joined because I needed to break through my isolation, learn



the tricks of staying in business and find some backup in case something went wrong (which it did). Most colleagues would have similar needs. We are fulfilling them by running the bulletin board, operating a branch-based CPD program across the country, negotiating insurance contracts, etc.

I was very quickly roped in for volunteer work by the NSW branch and I don't regret that for a minute. What I do regret sometimes is the demand placed on members that put their hand up. AUSIT will always rely on its volunteers to present interesting events locally and Australia-wide, but I believe that our time of being an almost 100% volunteer organisation is coming to an end.

Changing the way we do things

We have a National Council consisting of the honorary office holders: president, vice-president, immediate past president, treasurer and secretary plus one delegate from each branch. In other organisations the NC would be the board of directors setting policy and leaving management to those employed by it. In our case the NC is the board, management, administration, PR department, lobbying group, negotiation party, event manager and everything else you can think of.

The elected president ends up fulfilling the functions of chairman and administrative head of AUSIT. Altogether this conflicts with the business interests of the office holder whose primary interest is and should be to make a living. AUSIT interferes with that and there is always a danger of

both the president and AUSIT losing out along the way.

As a result, our administration, management, negotiation and PR efforts often appear inconsistent and haphazard, if not somewhat amateurish.

In other words, we need a proper administration to keep track of what we are doing, carry out decisions, plan ahead and provide continuity. At the moment we have two paid workers who run our membership admission and renewal system, the *National Newsletter* and the Yellow Pages advertisements. We can build on these existing administrative structures and expand them.

For that we need money. AUSIT needs to understand that it is a business. The government already knows that - we have to collect GST for it. Let's identify ways we can sell our unique knowledge to third parties. We need research and advice on how to raise money.

We need sponsorship for everything we do. Government grants and fundraising activities must be tackled. The example set by the VIC/TAS branch in these areas will be indispensable for the entire organisation. Read the VIC/TAS sponsorship manual.

AUSIT got this far based on the voluntary work of its members; now we have to find a way of sustaining our Institute without exhausting members' goodwill and sheer ability to cope.

Consolidation - maintaining what we have

Let's build on our achievements and put them to good use via:

- a regular, relevant and interesting PD program offered by all branches
- the PD points system
- the AUSIT Excellence Awards and biennial conference
- the Board of Professional Conduct
- the Senior Professional membership category
- detailed research into the community interpreting sector
- Membership policy - opting into the PD

points system

This issue has caused friction on the eBulletin board in recent times. While I am in favour of the PD points system, I can see the need for members to have a choice in the matter. The National Council will put in place a policy by which members can exercise that choice in line with their needs and convictions.

Senior Practitioner policy

The National Council will put in place an admission policy for the Senior Practitioner category and start admitting members into that category.

Keeping an eye on government contracts

In accordance with article 4d of our Constitution, AUSIT will continue to monitor contracts proposed by government agencies and promote appropriate working conditions and fair remuneration for members.

So, all in all, a very busy time lies ahead for both office bearers and members of AUSIT who would like to provide some assistance on those issues near and dear to their hearts or expertise.

We need to focus our efforts and do what we do well. We have a very dynamic and enthusiastic team on the bridge and would like to thank you all for voting at the NAGM in person or by proxy. Your votes will not be wasted if I can help it.

Finally, both the NC and myself would like to wish you all very happy and safe end-of-year celebrations and we hope you have time to enjoy some R&R with your families.

And happy 2007!

The NAGM - a member's impressions

New Treasurer **Moreno Giovannoni** writes from the 'centre' of the world for three days

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Thank you once again to all for your submissions. I would like to remind members that the deadline for the **February 2007** issue is **15 January 2007**.

Please send any letters, articles or images for forthcoming editions to:

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The editor reserves the right to edit or not to publish any item submitted for publication.

Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editor or those of AUSIT and its Executive.

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The world came to Melbourne last weekend (17-19 November 2006).

What with the G20, the AUSIT National Annual General Meeting, the Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture, the AUSIT /Monash University Conference and the Make Poverty History concert with Bono and U2, the place was rattling and humming.

After addressing the G20, my involvement was limited to assisting behind the scenes with some AUSIT NAGM and post-NAGM work.

Some 45 people attended the NAGM (not official figures – this was roughly the number of flyers I handed out on behalf of Uli, who turned out to be our only presidential candidate). The meeting started about forty minutes late because everyone was having such a good time mingling in the reception area that we didn't want to go in. There were no protests, violent or otherwise, and the police congratulated participants on their good behaviour.

Outgoing President Chris Poole acknowledged that the President's job was very demanding (see Chris's message on the e-bulletin for Mon 13 Nov 2006, 7:03 pm). He answered a question about membership numbers by acknowledging that numbers had probably declined over the past 12 months but that this was not necessarily a bad thing if it meant that those who were left were truly professional practitioners. He argued that AUSIT did not necessarily need larger numbers than it had in order to be effective. (I think it may also be that recent membership fee increases led to the decline, which in any case appears to be small. A small drop-off was to be expected and was factored into the decision to raise fees. The decline should be easily made up in the medium term.)

A member made the point that AUSIT's profile was pretty low and Chris responded by pointing out the various means by which AUSIT makes its presence felt (including the website, *Yellow Pages* advertising, Biennial Conference, Excellence Awards,

professional development, liaising with government departments and committees, distribution of brochures etc).

From memory, the membership numbers and profile issues were the most controversial parts of the meeting – and they weren't very controversial at all – so I won't bother going over the rest of the discussion. It will all be in the minutes soon anyway. I think by 8.45 pm everybody wanted to finish and go home or out to dinner.

The candidates for President (Uli Priester), Vice-President (Annamaria Arnall), Secretary (Patricia Avila) and Treasurer (me) were appointed by acclamation as there were no other candidates.

Voting on changes to the Constitution was well-run by Chris and Sarina. We started late but the meeting was generally good-humoured with much patience displayed by members. Motions 6, 7 and 8 were unsuccessful, while 9 and 10 were successful (see the October 2006 *National Newsletter* for information about the content of the motions).

As incoming Treasurer I wanted members present to understand in very basic terms what AUSIT's financial position is. I asked the outgoing Treasurer a 'Dorothy Dix' question, just so there would be the opportunity to stress that AUSIT currently has: an annual income of approximately \$128,000; and an annual expenditure of approximately \$132,000.

A reasonable outcome, it seemed to me. But is there enough money to pay a bookkeeper to do my work?

Then I realised AUSIT has the income of two school teachers.

As Uli said, the biggest part of our job over the next 12 months is to increase revenue, including that from alternative streams. A statement issued by the G20 agreed.

Then we went home.

Excellence Awards to go national in 2007

Vic/Tas member **Silke Gebauer** anticipates recognising more excellence in T&I

At the biennial conference 'Translation and Interpreting: Risks and Rewards', held in Melbourne from 17-18 November 2006, AUSIT announced its intention to run a National Excellence Awards program in 2007, based on its successful Vic/Tas model. The Awards will alternate with the AUSIT conference and be held initially in odd-numbered years. Participation in the inaugural AUSIT Vic/Tas Excellence Awards (conducted with one category in 2004, and extended to include two practitioner categories in 2005) was restricted to residents of Victoria and Tasmania. Entry to the 2007 AUSIT Excellence Awards will be open to all relevant organisations and T&I practitioners based anywhere in Australia. Nominations and submissions are now being sought for the categories 'Outstanding Contribution to the Translation & Interpreting Industry', 'Excellence in Translating', and 'Excellence in Interpreting'.

With their key message of outstanding performance in T&I, the Excellence Awards have already proven their immense value in enhancing the professional image of translators and interpreters in Victoria and Tasmania.

Says Eva Hussain, Vic/Tas Chairperson: 'In 2005 we had most of the key players in translation and interpreting involved in the Awards: business, all levels of government, language service providers, community organisations and practitioners en masse; we were very successful in our sponsorship strategy and it seems clear that both governments and the private sector want to be part of the message of success'.

Uli Priester, the new AUSIT President, fully supports the national program: 'The Awards have the potential to raise the profile of AUSIT amongst practitioners and users of T&I services, and must therefore be given a prominent place in our marketing. I encourage everybody to participate in the Awards – be it by submitting an entry or simply by nominating worthwhile initiatives that you are

aware of. This is not only about recognising individual performance but also about publicising role models and enjoying the 'glamour factor', from which all members of the profession stand to benefit in the long run. Focussing on our achievements will take us further than concentrating too much on shortcomings will.'

As the Victorian experience in 2005 showed, the Excellence Awards have proven highly attractive to sponsors, giving AUSIT much needed funding and consolidating new relationships with industry stakeholders, thereby further establishing AUSIT's role as the industry's top professional body. The 2005 Vic/Tas Excellence Awards were supported by the Victorian Department of Multicultural Affairs (VOMA) as key sponsor, and NAATI and SBS Radio Melbourne as partners. In addition, the Victoria State Office and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) supported the Awards Presentation Gala Dinner held in Melbourne. AUSIT is currently seeking sponsors and partners

for the 2007 National Excellence Awards campaign. The extent of our marketing efforts (such as running advertisements in relevant media, printing promotional materials, etc) to the business community and other end-user and buyer groups, and the overall delivery of such a major project will depend greatly on the financial support extended to AUSIT. The 2005 Awards presentation was opened by the Minister Assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs, the Honourable John Pandazopolous, and attended by 200 guests, including high-level representatives from government and business, agencies, practitioners and the media. We look forward to giving you a national event of even higher calibre.

Like the AUSIT 'Risks and Rewards' Conference, the National Excellence Awards will be held in a different Australian states each time. As a benefit to the host city, regional Excellence Awards for residents of that state may also be granted in addition to the

(continued on page 6)

Benefits for Award Winners

Acknowledgment as the inaugural National Award winner

Public recognition of your work with a presentation at the AUSIT gala national dinner, attended by practitioners, sponsors, relevant industry people and media. Brief details of the award-winning project or assignment are highlighted

Engraved trophy and certificate

Promotion and exposure through AUSIT, NAATI, and via various media including SBS, and the AUSIT website

The right to use the Excellence Awards logo and to refer to your award on your stationery, marketing materials, website etc. Some conditions apply

Knowledge you are helping promote the profession by providing a role-model

Gaining PD points – all eligible entrants to receive up to 2 PD points

(continued from page 5)

National Awards. As Sydney is the 2007 Awards host city, the Awards jury will not only select national winners, but will be able to select winners in each category from NSW residents' submissions. Conceivably, a submission could therefore win both a NSW Excellence Award as well as a national one.

The 2007 Awards kits contain details on how to make a nomination or a submission (including forms) and have been uploaded to the AUSIT website (www.ausit.org), where you will also find everything there is to know about the Awards, including category criteria, FAQs, previous winners and profiles

of past jury members. Make sure you peruse the summaries of winning initiatives from previous years (which also include jury comments).

We invite AUSIT members to start thinking about suitable initiatives you may want to submit, so that you can collect client references and other required components in due time. Award winners gain many benefits. The National Excellence Awards are open to all organisations with an interest in T&I, and to all practitioners holding NAATI (or equivalent) qualifications who are based in Australia.

Important dates

Nominations close 7 September 2007.

Submissions close 24 September 2007.

Awards Presentation Gala Dinner: Sydney, late October (exact date TBA)

Go to www.ausit.org 'Excellence Awards' for instructions and forms.

P.S. The 2007 Excellence Awards Committee needs more hands and brains. If you want to contribute either or both, please contact Uli Priester, AUSIT National President (editor@anglo-german.com.au), and Vic/Tas branch committee members Kate Ritchie (kate@chincommunication.com.au) or Silke Gebauer (sgebauer@primusonline.com.au).

For those who missed this year's Jill Blewitt Memorial Lecture (delivered with passion and wit by the author Arnold Zable), I wish to announce that John Crone, Vic/Tas Treasurer, was presented with an 'Honorary Award'. This Award was introduced in conjunction with the AUSIT Excellence Awards in Vic/Tas in 2004 and is conferred solely at the discretion of the AUSIT Vic/Tas branch committee. It recognises outstanding individuals, (including AUSIT office bearers) for their exceptional service to the industry. Unlike the Excellence Award categories, this 'popularity' Award is not subject to a judging process and is decided solely by committee vote. While there is no formal entry process, the committee welcomes suggestions for individuals deemed meritorious.

The award recognises John's voluntary contribution to AUSIT, his dedication to the profession and the achievements he has helped us accomplish over the years. John is an outstanding networker, a meticulous treasurer and a wonderful colleague. He has assisted the branch in organising PD activities, including the national conferences, and has been instrumental in developing the Excellence Awards program since its inception. Using his contacts and industry knowledge, he has worked very hard at securing funding and government grants. Once again, congratulations John, and thank you for all your hard work.

On another note, the 2006 AUSIT/



John Crone and Eva Hussain

Monash University Conference was also a great success. Over 20 sessions were delivered on a variety of themes, ranging from mistranslations in politics and media, literary translation, training initiatives in the TAFE sector, to T&I issues in law enforcement. The initial feedback has been very positive and it is thanks to the hard work of the conference sub-committee (John Crone, Kate Ritchie and Chris Poole plus Rita Wilson, Brigid Maher, Leah Gerber, Rhiannon Geeson and Denise Formica from Monash) that we've delivered another quality event for the benefit of our practitioners. It was very refreshing to see people from outside of the industry participating as presenters and attendees; I was very pleased to be able to catch up with colleagues and put names to faces, particularly those who travelled from

interstate. Photos from the conference and the JBML will soon be available on our website and Monash University will take care of producing the proceedings in due course. Arnold's speech was recorded and will be available on the website.

I am also excited by the prospect of our Awards going national in Sydney next year in conjunction with the AGM. The tried and tested team of superwomen Kate Ritchie and Silke Gebauer will take care of some tasks from Melbourne, but the NSW branch will coordinate the event. I encourage people to start thinking about nominating outstanding practitioners and projects, and to attend the awards ceremony in Sydney.

Eva Hussain
Vic/Tas Chair

Registration open now for Critical Link 5

Early bird registration until 31 Jan 2007:

<http://www.criticallink2007.com/Registration.htm>

Interpreting and translation in the community

11-15 April 2007 Crowne Plaza Hotel, Parramatta

If you've been keeping up with items in the newsletter and on the eBulletin over the last two years, you will all know about the CL5 conference by now. But just in case, you'll find inserted in this edition of the *AUSIT Newsletter* a flyer with details of the themes, plenary and panel speakers at the conference, which will be held over five very full days in April next year in Parramatta. AUSIT members will earn four PD points per day for attendance at CL5.

Find out more at:
www.criticallink2007.com.

So who is responsible for quality in interpreting? Who do you think should share the responsibility with you?

Many of the people you think of in response to these questions will be represented at Critical Link 5, discussing the issues you care about, so you need to be a participant too.

The preliminary programme will be up on the website any day now; it reveals that plenary and individual speakers will include theoreticians and practitioners from Australia and overseas. Among them will be doctors and lawyers, nurses and speech pathologists, researchers, teachers and employers, who will all be discussing issues relating to T&I work. For example, a panel at one of the early plenary sessions will discuss the issue of responsibility from the perspective of the training institution, the interpreter, the system, the accreditation body and the professional association. There will be other panels examining the role of the interpreter, government and employing agencies, with a final session on the implementation of changes to improve working conditions

and policy-making.

Issues of quality arise for interpreters and translators, regardless of the setting. Papers will be presented on accuracy and other matters relevant for interpreting sessions in court, social welfare or police interviews, medical examinations, refugee hearings and so on. Translators will also find sessions of particular interest to them, relating either to theory or practice. Delegates to Critical Link 5 will be coming from all over the world, as well as from within Australia.

Full registration (including students) entitles you to:

- All Congress sessions
- Opening ceremony and welcoming reception
- Morning teas (12-15 April)
- Afternoon teas (12-15 April)
- Entry to exhibition (12-15 April)
- Congress satchel
- Congress material

Day registration fees include:

- Congress sessions for day of registration
- Morning and afternoon teas on day of registration (where applicable)
- Entry to exhibition on day of registration
- Congress satchel
- Congress material

REMEMBER: Early Bird registration ends on 31 January, 2007. *See you there!*

STOP PRESS

On Tuesday, 10 April 2007, AUSIT will be hosting a special pre-conference gathering for interpreters and translators in Parramatta. Use this opportunity to welcome your colleagues from all round Australia and the world. More details to come, but put it in your diary!

From Terry Chesher, AUSIT representative on the CL5 Organising Committee.

terrychesher@gmail.com.

FIT flash

Four FIT events took place in Johannesburg in late August. The FIT Executive Committee met on 24 August to prepare issues for the FIT Council meeting. That day there was also an FIT-ACALAN meeting, attended by Dr Neville Alexander for ACALAN (the African Academy of Languages) and, for FIT, by the Executive Committee, as well as FIT Council member Marion Boers and former FIT Vice-President Dr Anne-Marie Beukes. Dr Alexander reported that ACALAN was launching action through five core projects: i) the Year of African Languages, 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007; ii) the Stories Across Africa project, collecting children's tales while focussing on cross-border languages; iii) the Training of Language Practitioners – translators, interpreters, lexicographers, terminologists, etc.; iv) the Translation Project, to yield key cultural, scientific, technical and socio-political documents in indigenous, mainly cross-border languages; and v) the Terminology Project.

The South African Translators Institute (SATI) celebrated its 50th anniversary on 25 August by holding a successful one-day conference attended by some 150 people, including many FIT Council members. The conference was then followed by a cocktail reception.

Plans are progressing for the 5th Asian Translators Forum – Translation and Cultural Dialogue – in Bogor, West Java Province, Indonesia on 11-12 April 2007 (see http://wartahpi.org/asia_forum.php). As to the XVIII FIT World Congress in Shanghai, the Congress logo has been publicised and the website has been launched in Chinese, English and French (see www.fit2008.org). The dates are 2-3 August for the Statutory Congress and 4-7 August for the Open Congress. Record these events in your calendar now.

Translators & Interpreters
are never lost for words

**Another super-hot Brisbane day,
another super-hot AUSIT promotion.**



Play it again, Brisbane

Qld Secretary **Sam Berner** celebrates the branch's teamwork and spirit

This year's QLD Multicultural Festival, held on October 15, was a much bigger event than the inaugural one. The festival attracted 45,000 people, there were hundreds of performances, workshops, dance sessions, cooking demonstrations and children's activities, while more than 30 international food stalls offered festival patrons the sights, tastes and sounds of 89 artists from more than 66 different cultures across the globe.

AUSIT rose to the occasion admirably: the QLD branch was abuzz with activity from early September. Sponsors were sought and found, two multilingual bookshops – Language People and The Small Bookshop Around the Corner – were approached for display materials, hours were spent collating, printing and laminating display materials. A huge banner was prepared so no one could miss where we were. Bags were purchased to distribute AUSIT promotional materials while Monash University and Critical Link sent in their own conference promotional materials. VITS in Melbourne sent boxes of glossaries and training CDs

which were distributed to interested public and private sector parties at the Festival. ALITRA sent newsletters; KIS sent posters about Aboriginal languages and interpreting services. ARADIA donated a colour television. All AUSIT members were encouraged to send business cards and brochures for display to the thousands of people who crowded through the AUSIT stall.

And what a stall it was! Twice as large as last year's, with a new slogan and four mobiles prepared by talented AUSIT member Olga Zelenski adorning the stall. Helium-filled balloons with the AUSIT logo floated on the ceiling (and occasionally around the Festival's grounds). The famous T/I bloopers attracted attention and caused roars of laughter to be heard from the stall. AUSIT QLD showed a very commendable team spirit, with over 15 members and a similar number of friends and partners all pitching in on the day. Visitors were met by volunteers suitably attired in AUSIT T-shirts and beaming professionally. The famous AUSIT QLD line dance was even performed for the benefit of those who

might deem us boring. Many interested people were guided towards a new and promising carrier, and hundreds learned the difference between professional work and a 'backyard job'.

The whole performance would not have been as successful if it hadn't been for the dedication and many hours of hard work of AUSIT QLD members, who pitched in with their partners and friends to lend a hand – many hands made the load lighter. Special thanks, then, go to the following people: Ita Szymanska for securing the best stall and starting the ball rolling, Sam Berner for coordinating our team and telling us what to do and when to do it, Jadranka Brown, Maurite Fober, Veerle Vanderplasschen, Annick Bouchet, Julie Segal, Tea Dieterich, Alison Rodriguez, Olga Zelenski, Effie Antoniou, Claudia Touati and Mariana Munoz for running various errands, collecting things, looking after finances, setting up the stall, packing up and inviting sponsors to get involved, Nada Validzic, Hoa Tran, Kieu McKenzie for helping at the stall on Sunday, Irene Ko, who although

not rostered spent two hours staffing the stall, Loren Leong for the marketing spiel and time spent talking quite a few young people into doing the T&I course and meanwhile joining AUSIT as associates. Special thanks are also due to Nicole Bouchet for the T-shirts and writing pads, David Brown for packing it all on the truck and bringing it in the morning, Robert Bouchet for helping us set up, Dan Danielsson for walking all the stuff out of the park, getting iced water and marketing AUSIT to visitors, and Patti Avila for packing everything into her car on the night then driving it from one end of Brisbane to the other the next morning.

With a group like this, our branch will go from strength to strength! Thank you all for your enthusiasm, energy, smiles and all your contributions which made our stall shine!

AUSIT QLD's team spirit ROCKS!

1. Getting busier; 2 Irene doing the sales pitch; 3 Standing from left: Frank Ho, Julie Segal (Treasurer), Alison Rodriguez (com. member), Maurite Fober (PD Coordinator), Mariana Munoz (ARADIA), Jadranka Brown (Vice-chair), Annik Buchet (com. member). Sitting from left: Nada Validzic (com. member), Sam Berner (Secretary), Ita Szymanska (Chair) Effie Antoniou. Missing from the photo are our North QLD rep, Tea Dietterich and committee member Veerle Vanderplasschen.



Translating theatre at the ANPC

Rita Pasqualini reports on a recent seminar to help build more cooperation between language and theatre professionals

AUSIT members will have read on the AUSIT eBulletin (July 6) about the seminar on 'Translating Theatre', held on 5 July as part of the Australian National Playwrights' Conference 2006 in Perth. One of the aims of the seminar was to enable language and theatre professionals in every state to follow suit and to organise PD sessions on aspects of common interest, relevant to the broader theme of 'roles for language professionals in the performing arts'. To this end, some additional information will be shared through the newsletter, making it easier to reproduce and disseminate beyond AUSIT.

Tom Gutteridge (Artistic Director of Black Swan Theatre Company) provided the initial impetus of the seminar's organisation and the 'provocations' for the brainstorming session, as well as a concise report on the evening, developed on the basis of notes patiently compiled on the whiteboard by our ANPC host, Tom Healey. The following elaboration is based on their record and on Annamaria Arnall's post of 6 July.

Within the area of 'Translating Theatre' two main options were possible: a focus on text, or on venue/performance. At the Playwrights' Conference the former was given priority, while the latter can be considered in 2007-08, ahead of the opening of Perth's New Performing Arts Venue in Northbridge. This next seminar would include issues of linguistic access, from signed interpretation to surtitles, and possibly discuss simultaneous versions in different languages, requiring technology as well as linguistic skills.

The range of skills required for translating theatre from and into English could be the object of as many jokes as there exist about changing a light bulb. Not every playwright is Beckett: in his case, the number of professionals needed to produce the version of a play in another language is

zero. For the complexities and nuances of theatre, it was generally felt that a native speaker for both languages is preferred. Their interaction can help translate the energy of performance. Some people may be in a position to go solo, as in the case of dramaturg and translator May-Brit Akerholt, who, thanks to daily use of both languages (Norwegian and Swedish) is one of those rare 'balanced' bilinguals, one who can also combine her linguistic expertise with the relevant skills and experience in theatre.

May-Brit had generously offered to speak about her experience with NIDA and Sydney Theatre Company and provided the opening presentation. Interestingly, the case she chose to discuss involved several people as the source language was Russian. Comments on how far a text by Gogol should be made 'English' (or Anglo-Australian, for that matter) were of great interest to all participants, with artistic as well as linguistic decisions involved.

The brainstorming session came up with a number of ideas and beliefs about how translation in theatre can be most effective, as well as suggestions for further action to pursue this.

Ideals and challenges for translating works of theatre

- Translators — 'it takes two to translate' could be a summary of the points noted above, adding that 'all generalisations are wrong, including this one'.
- The value of translating theatre — desire and need to instil a love of other cultures, openness and understanding. It was suggested that Australian bilingual writers translating into their language of origin would bring a particular insight to this.
- Some of the most successful theatre in this area is multilingual work, where difference is embodied in the performance.

- How do we translate the specific theatre conventions of a culture as well as the words? This is another 'linguacultural' aspect that needs to be addressed.

- Theatre of the Deaf (using Auslan) could be a model for how this kind of meaning is created. ASLIA members can present shared aspects of their work.

- The task of translating must include the desire to recreate the impact of the original on the audience. Is text or subtext more important? As noted above, balance needs to be preserved in the translating process.

Practical suggestions for further action

- Given the need for a public register/database of bilingual theatre artists, the PEN model was mentioned as a starting point.

- One or more practical workshops with language and theatre professionals to exchange expertise were suggested:

- o Language professionals could help theatre professionals in terms of cultural advocacy/awareness and linguistic/idiomatic detail;

- o Theatre professionals could help language professionals in terms of the structures of the form (i.e. dramaturgy), and other types of practical introduction to theatre technique

- A network of contacts overseas was suggested, to provide literal translations or synopses, breakdowns, scene samples and reviews of new works to assist Australian theatre companies in choosing which plays to pursue.

- o ASSITEJ (The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) already has such a network for youth theatre. How can we best take advantage of this?

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China International Forum on the Translation Industry

Victor Xu meets former acquaintances and learns about common translation issues in China

I was invited to attend the China International Forum on the Translation Industry, sponsored jointly by the Translators Association of China (TAC) and Tongji University, and held over 28-30 May 2006 in Shanghai, China. The professional networking and meeting sessions with translators and entrepreneurs from various countries as well as the parties, exhibits and sessional tours were an overwhelming delight!

The forum was entitled 'Competitiveness of China's Translation Industry Versus Globalisation' and attracted more than 200 entrepreneurs and professionals engaged in translation work within and outside China to share their stories of successes and challenges. I was surprised to find myself the only person from Australia attending the forum.

Four parallel sessions were run: translation services, translation in publishing, translation and technology, and translation training.

Mr Xiliang Liu, president of the Translators Association of China (TAC), told the forum that with the 29th Summer Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 and the World Trade Expo in Shanghai in 2010, China could expect a soaring demand for translation services over the next few years. China's translation industry currently accounts for \$1.5 billion annually, and that figure is expected to grow to \$2.5 billion by 2007, with the TAC stating that there are currently over 3,000 translation companies operating in China.

Ms Sheryl Hinkkanen, FIT (International Federation of Translators) secretary-general, also spoke at the forum.



Ms Hinkkanen said the structure of the translation sector had undergone fundamental changes worldwide at a very rapid pace and that since the early 1990s, it had evolved from individual national markets into a global industry.

'Standardisation is one response to the altered operational environment,' she said. 'First come the national standards: Italy in 1995, Germany in 1998 and Austria in 2000 formulated their own standards for the services and activities of translation and interpreting enterprises.'

'The current development is toward a broader approach,' Ms Hinkkanen added. Among the latest efforts is the European standard for translation services drafted in March 2006. These may come into force in the second half of this year.

I learned that in China, the Ministry of Personnel entrusted the China International Publishing Group with organising and implementing the China Aptitude Test for Translators and Interpreters (CATTI) in 2003. A person behind the scenes gave us a detailed introduction on how this initiative has replaced the conventional prerequisites for education and seniority appraisal. Now professional competence and merit are the criteria.

In my view, the forum was well organised. Simultaneous interpreting services provided for the audience from

different countries; each attendant could request a wireless earphone, free of charge, to listen to the discussions simultaneously. In a large hall situated outside the forum area many exhibitors offered translation-related magazines, dictionaries, conference recording equipment, and translation software. There were product demonstrations, informative live presentations, and one-on-one consultations.

I came across Mr Patrick Fang, business manager of SDL International China office. He told me that Germany-based Trados had launched its Trados multilingual translation solutions in China as early as 2001. However, SDL and Trados had since merged. Patrick said the majority of China's translation companies did not yet use any computer-aided translation (CAT) software, due to the ideographic nature of the Chinese language.

During the forum I met my English teacher of 20 years ago, Mr Sihui Mao, who is now the duty director of the MPI Bell English centre in Macao. I also met with one of the vice-chancellors from my alma mater Guandong University of Foreign Studies, Mr Weihe Zhong.

The three days were wonderfully fulfilling. I enjoyed every minute of it; not only the networking and time spent with my former acquaintances, but also the discussion of common problems and solutions in the translation sector.

Other AUSIT state office bearers

ACT

Chair Malcolm Leader
 Mins. Secretary Carole Aubury
 Treasurer Tarja Karjalainen
 NAATI RAC Carole Aubury

NSW

Chair (Vacant)
 Secretary Stephen Houston
 Treasurer Andrew Bean
 M'ship Sec. Wai H. Kwok
 PD Coordinator Michael Grunwald
 NAATI RAC Paul Sinclair

Qld

Chair Ita Szymanska
 Vice-chair Jadranka Brown
 Secretary Sam Berner
 Treasurer Julie Segal
 NAATI RAC Patricia Avila
 Ita Szymanska

SA/NT

Chair Claudia Ait-Touati
 Secretary Hiromi Waki
 Treasurer Dirk Pohland
 NAATI RAC Claudia Ait-Touati

Vic/Tas

Chair Eva Hussain
 Vice-chair Kate Ritchie
 Secretary Lydie Pradier
 Treasurer John Crone
 PR Officer Silke Gebauer
 PD Coordinators Sarina Phan
 Brad Paez
 NAATI RAC Chris Poole

WA

Chair Yutaka Kawasaki
 Secretary Michele Dreyfus
 Treasurer Diana Rodriguez
 Liaison with WAITI Ella Davies
 PD Coordinator Annamaria Arnall
 NAATI RAC Michele Dreyfus

All these people's contact details are available from the AUSIT website.

Together towards professionalism

Claudia Ait-Touati reports on the presentation by **Chris Poole** and **Sam Berner**



TTP presenters and organisers

In August, the SA/NT branch was treated to a presentation by our National President Chris Poole and the passionate translator from AUSIT QLD, Sam Berner. They jointly presented the 'TOGETHER TOWARDS PROFESSIONALISM' evening to over 80 attending the event.

Attendees started gathering at 6.00 pm on the landing of Adelaide TAFE, who generously hosted the presentation. AUSIT members and TAFE students in the T&I stream mingled, were introduced, talked, nibbled, then talked some more.

Following a brief introduction by AUSIT SA/NT chairperson John Hallett, the presentation started off with a bang and clatter!

Sam Berner, known for her enthusiasm for the profession, paved the way towards an understanding of humane

professionalism, illustrating her points with her many vivid real-life experiences from her worldwide travels and work with the UN in the developing world. Her talk challenged us to reach out for the possibilities our profession offers and delineated paths towards the realisation of our realistic goals.

Chris Poole approached the subject from a slightly different angle, but his talk was no less exciting and illustrative. In a clear and very practical way he explained how he got started, what the basic requirements were for a successful T&I business, and how all this magic he was talking about could be achieved. He cracked up the audience with his many humorous real-life experiences, which nevertheless illustrated the points he was making beautifully.

During the entire presentation, which lasted for two hours, I could not



(from page 10)

Translating theatre

Other issues emerging from the session

- In order for translation of theatre to succeed long-term we must develop the idea of the translator as an artist/member of the creative theatre team
- Australian theatre companies need to travel and/or otherwise seek plays beyond the US and Europe
- We should take advantage of the existing connections within our communities in social clubs and support organisations working with different populations (culturally and linguistically diverse, not just non-English-speaking).

It should be added that initial items associated with translating theatre texts included:

- *Translations from foreign languages into English*
- *Translations of Australian English language plays into foreign languages*
- *Translation within Australian plays into and out of Indigenous languages*

The importance of the Indigenous presence in Australia, and particularly in WA, had already been stressed at the beginning, and was evident from the ANPC program.

In conclusion, the general consensus was very much in favour of pursuing the connection between the theatre industry and language professionals.

Quote of the seminar:

*'Was your play set in Australia?'
'No! No! No! It was a comedy!'*

help but notice how engrossed the entire audience was by our fabulous speakers.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the people who attended and filled in the questionnaires, providing us with heartening and wonderful responses as well as great ideas for the future. It goes without saying that I would also like to thank our wonderful speakers and Magdalena Rowan whose generosity provided us with the venue at TAFE.

I would also like to welcome the new members who applied for

AUSIT membership as a result of this presentation. I am looking forward to seeing you all at the next AUSIT SA/NT event.

I also look forward to the new SA/NT AUSIT committee implementing as many of Chris' and Sam's ideas as possible.

Interpreter or alter ego?

AUSIT's **Barry Turner** describes the lives of two 'famous' interpreters and their extended relationships with world leader clients

Since English is so ubiquitous these days, many overseas business leaders or politicians visiting Australia are native speakers or speak enough English to get by without interpreters. And when our overwhelmingly monolingual politicians and business leaders travel overseas they rarely take their own interpreters along. Rather, they make do with interpreters from the countries they visit.

Australian interpreters usually eschew the limelight, preferring that attention be given instead to their clients. But in some parts of the world interpreters play a much more prominent role. Leaders who are not fluent in English or one of the other large 'international' languages have to rely heavily on interpreters. Some of them prefer to use one trusted interpreter for a number of years. Over time, some of these interpreters become so accustomed to their famous clients' turn of phrase and political views that they are often able to anticipate what their client is about to say, almost becoming their client's alter ego.

Palazchenko and Gorbachev

This sort of relationship was on display in Australia in August this year when former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his loyal long-standing interpreter, Pavel Palazchenko, came to a conference in Brisbane. Phillip Adams, who interviewed Gorbachev, later wrote in *The Australian* that Palazchenko knew 'his boss so well that the translations seem to precede the utterance.' At one stage Adams suggested to Gorbachev they go outside for a cigarette and leave Palazchenko to frame the questions and answers. Gorbachev laughed; Palazchenko interpreted the dialogue but not the laugh. Adams remarked, 'I don't think he saw the joke.'

Anyone who followed international politics in the late 1980s will recognise Pavel Palazchenko's face, although very few will know his name or recall precisely what his job was. Palazchenko

was the thin, balding man with a moustache who stood alongside Gorbachev in his talks with Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, George Bush Senior and a host of other world leaders from that era.

His voice, in which traces of a Liverpool accent can be detected, was beamed into living rooms around the world. Palazchenko attributes his slight Mersey-side twang to his love of the Beatles during the 1960s. Palazchenko and his friends became addicted to the music of the 'Fab Four' but also found 'their freedom, their mistakes, their crises' an antidote to 'the dull and senseless ideological liturgy' of the Soviet Union. After the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia Palazchenko rejected the idea of working for the government and after graduating in 1972 from the Institute of Foreign Languages in Moscow he thought that he would stay on as a teacher. However, he soon found himself drawn towards interpreting.

Interpreters are like high-wire artists. Unlike translators, who have the safety net of dictionaries or other reference materials in their work with the written word, interpreters are risk takers who have to make snap decisions as they transfer meaning from one language to another. Whether it be in a court or at a conference, they not only need excellent knowledge of what the various experts are saying; they need to be able to express it in two languages.

Arguably, simultaneous interpreters are at the top of the interpreting tree. They are jugglers as well as trapeze artists who must juggle the task of speaking to their audience at the same time as listening to the speaker. While doing this their minds are racing frantically to come up with equivalents for difficult expressions or words.

By this time Palazchenko was working as a simultaneous interpreter and enjoying it. He believed that the money he could earn as an interpreter and translator would supplement his salary

and provide him with a good living. However, his life changed when he was invited to attend a United Nations language-training course in New York. Arriving in 1974, he spent five years in that city where he honed his ability as an interpreter.

When he returned home he found Russia a down-at-heel and closed society, and his arrival coincided with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He experienced a moral dilemma when invited to work for the Foreign Ministry's translation service. He accepted the offer because he wanted to continue to work in translating and interpreting and because 'in the Soviet Union of the time everyone was working for the government or for some state organisation – the state monopoly was total.'

It was a choice that was to change his life, eventually propelling him to the position of trusted interpreter to Gorbachev. He was often at the Soviet leader's side as Gorbachev tried and failed to reform the communist system, in the process unleashing political forces that culminated in the dissolution of the Soviet Union. By the time Gorbachev resigned on 25 December Palazchenko had become so closely identified with his boss that he followed him into relative obscurity.

While Gorbachev was feted in the West and set up a think tank known as the Gorbachev Foundation in Moscow, at home he was given a meager pension of US \$1,000 a month and increasingly reviled for having 'lost' the Soviet Union. Palazchenko remained intensely loyal to Gorbachev, helping him to establish the Gorbachev Foundation where the interpreter now also works as a consultant while continuing to interpret for Gorbachev on his travels.

During this process Palazchenko stepped beyond the role of interpreter. Interpreters are usually bound by a code of ethics that obliges them not to reveal confidential information from

their assignments. (A notable exception was a book by Hitler's interpreter, Paul Schmidt, which appeared in the early 1950s.)

With the support of Gorbachev, Palazchenko published *My Years with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze: The Memoir of a Soviet Interpreter*, an account of the talks between the Soviet leaders and Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush Snr, Secretaries of State George Shultz and James Baker, and Margaret Thatcher, which led to the end of the Cold War. He adopts the position that this outcome was achieved because of the increasing trust that developed between the various politicians.

Apart from working at the Gorbachev foundation, Palazchenko is a columnist for a number of Russian and overseas publications, and he also teaches at universities in Russia and the United States. In his role at the Foundation he gives interviews in which he discusses the pros and cons Gorbachev's reform agenda. Palazchenko tends to concentrate on Gorbachev's foreign policy, with which he became intimately associated through his role as Gorbachev's interpreter.

Widodo and Suharto

Closer to home, another interpreter who became closely associated with his famous client was Widodo Sutiyo. Widodo was former Indonesian President Suharto's interpreter for some thirty years. Indonesia is not a superpower so Widodo's face is not well known outside Indonesia. Nevertheless, Suharto depended on him for his frequent meetings with other world leaders and Widodo had the sort of media exposure in Indonesia that Palazchenko had on the world stage.

Like Palazchenko, Widodo's face was widely known in Indonesia but few could put a name to his face. However, unlike Palazchenko who was Gorbachev's 'voice', most Indonesians never heard Widodo's voice as his services were mainly called upon when foreign leaders visited Suharto.

Again like Palazchenko, Widodo started his career in the Indonesian Foreign Ministry. Unlike his Russian counterpart, Widodo had no particular interest in becoming an interpreter and intended

to pursue a normal foreign-service career. This ambition was put on hold for more than thirty years when Suharto began calling on his services as an interpreter in 1968.

Widodo is a music lover and the musical genre he most loves is jazz. His was an urbane and privileged background and he spent his secondary school years in Rome where his father was Indonesia's Agricultural Attache to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation. When he arrived in Rome he spoke Javanese as well as Indonesian and had learned some English at school. He quickly became fluent in Italian and because he attended an American school in Rome he also became fluent in English. He returned to Indonesia for his university education.

Suharto first called upon Widodo when he needed an interpreter for a meeting with the visiting Cambodian Foreign Affairs Minister, who spoke French. Widodo had just returned from a year's diplomatic training in Paris where he had become highly proficient in French.

While Suharto was clearly impressed by Widodo's fluency in English, Italian and French he no doubt also felt comfortable working with a fellow Javanese. When speaking Indonesian Suharto has a thick Javanese accent, which was greatly appreciated by satirists and comics during his three decades in power. Widodo was easily able to follow the President when he peppered his pronouncements with pithy remarks in his native Javanese.

He was then transferred to the Secretariat of State (which provided administrative and translation support to the President), where he rose to the position of Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Minister/Secretary of State. He taught himself simultaneous interpreting and accompanied Suharto on his overseas visits. Generations of Indonesian television audiences watched him age and (like Palazchenko) become quite bald.

Widodo remained in the Secretariat of State after Suharto stepped down as President in 1998. He had long felt frustrated at not being able to pursue his diplomatic career and in June 2000 his patience was rewarded when he

was sent back to his beloved Rome, this time as Indonesian Ambassador to the Vatican. He came home to Indonesia in 2003 and now runs his own consultancy business and an event production/organising company.

Unlike Palazchenko, Widodo has not stepped out of the interpreter's role to publish his memoirs and he appears to have no plans to do so. Indeed, he is known for his reticence in discussing the close interaction he had with Suharto over so many years. However, something that Widodo has in common with Palazchenko is that he remains an admirer of his former boss.

In 2001 he told a Jakarta journalist of his last trip overseas with Suharto: 'The last time I accompanied Suharto was when he went to Egypt in May 1998: 'When we returned we could see from our aircraft that Jakarta was in flames.'

He expressed regret at the manner of Suharto's loss of power: 'It was sad to see Suharto appear to be so low profile when he voluntarily stood down. Actually he was still in a strong position. He still had support. But apparently to avoid endless tensions he decided to stand down. This is proof of his sense of responsibility to the country.'

AUSIT moves a step further along the road to recognition

Diana Rodriguez-Losada was part of the WA team at the Australia Needs Skills Expo

AUSIT staffed a booth at the Australia Needs Skills Expo at the Perth Exhibition and Convention Centre on Saturday 11 November 2006.

The background

The 'Australia Needs Skills Expo' is a two year old Australia-wide initiative organised by local DIMA branches. The overall purpose of the Expo is to address how bringing employers and prospective employees together can help solve the Australian skills shortage (see <http://www.immi.gov.au/skillexpos/index.htm>). Thanks to some fortunate contacts made by our now National Vice-Chair, Annamaria Arnall, Ausit WA secured for free a booth that would otherwise have cost \$1,100. We considered this to be a fantastic opportunity to promote the benefits of using qualified, experienced, reputable, peer-recognised AUSIT Translators and Interpreters amongst the different industries that would also be present at the Expo. We put thought into action, called out for help from other WA members and worked out a booth staffing roster (thanks Barbara, Coral, Edward, Ella, Michelle, Trish, Yvonne). In a PowerPoint laptop presentation based on material provided by Yutaka, Annamaria highlighted in a humorous way what a bad translation/

interpretation can do to your business, project, health, trip, etc. Additionally, we agreed to commission Bradley to design and produce an AUSIT sign and posters (state of the art material!) to complement the only promotional material we had, which were the new AUSIT brochures.

At the EXPO

We were fairly busy throughout the whole day. Most of the queries we received were from bilingual people (quite often with poor spoken English) wanting to become T/Is either to practise or gain 'immigration points', or otherwise believing they could get jobs from us. As you might imagine, queries about NAATI came up constantly, to which we had to explain their role and supply their webpage details, as they did not have a presence at the EXPO. The lack of awareness about the difference between being accredited by a body such as NAATI and being a member of a professional association such as AUSIT was manifest. What was most worrying (and I am not saying anything new here) was the continued lack of awareness of AUSIT, not only by prospective T/I candidates but also by government bodies and agencies such as DIMA, the Overseas Qualification Unit, and even organisations such as

the CPA association, all of whom we approached and introduced to AUSIT.

Post-EXPO

I believe I can speak for most of those involved in this Expo initiative by saying that we, AUSIT, must synergise our efforts in providing our members unique value for membership by helping our association achieve the recognition and respect it deserves within the government and private sectors. We have to inform them that as well as being accredited, the best T&I practitioners working in most professions worldwide need to belong to a body whose members are reputed for their qualifications, experience and peer-recognition. I know we are not creating history here and am aware that some ground has already been covered, but I also know there is still a long and winding road to travel and would urge all our AUSIT colleagues to join in this journey.

*Diana Rodriguez-Losada
Ausit WA Treasurer*



From left: Jerzy Brodski, Mary Gurgone, Annamaria Arnall, visiting former IPP Yveline Piller and Yvonne Galan caught up in Perth recently.