

OCTOBER 2013

## Letter from the chair

Thanks so much to everyone who filled in our feedback forms after the Broaden Your Horizons event. From what you've told us it seems that it was really useful – with some members even describing it as inspiring.

**Based on all the positive comments** we thought we would introduce a series of training workshops to help members brush up on new skills. Please take a few minutes to fill in our survey (see link on page 2) which will enable us to provide you with something that can enhance your skills, broaden your horizons and, hopefully, boost your income.

**Meanwhile, although it's a cold and dreary October** there's a lot to look forward to – events that are guaranteed to give you a warm glow! Make a note of what's coming up in the next few months and look out for more information from Jatinder – coming in the next few weeks.

Looking forward to seeing you at an event soon.

Michele

## Report on Broaden Your Horizons Seminar

Mastering the digital age was the key message at the Broaden Your Horizons Seminar held at the Medical Society of London, in September. The Seminar was chaired by Barbara Rowlands, Director, Magazine Journalism MA at City University London. Eva Gizowska took notes



Seminar chair, Barbara Rowlands



The first speaker, MAUREEN RICE (Editorial Director of Cedar Communications), talked about the 'content revolution'.

Maureen's key points were:

- **Think of yourself as a 'content producer'**. Employers are looking for writers to provide content across a variety of multimedia platforms, including blogs, e-newsletters, mobiles, apps, websites, social media, podcasts and video.
- **Learn about new technology** - even if it means taking an evening course or weekend workshop.
- **Cultivate a strong social media presence**
- **Think strategically**. It's no longer enough to pitch 'ideas'. You need to be sharp, on trend, original and very persuasive.



Next up was JOHN ISITT, Director at Resonant Media, a specialist health and wellbeing social marketing agency.

Here are his top tips:

- Approach your local authority, health and wellbeing organisations and NHS trusts. They are finally waking up to the fact that certain longterm conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, may be more manageable, preventable even, if only people knew about their condition. As a result, there is a demand for experienced health writers who can provide accurate, accessible patient information.
- Use your skills to apply for copywriting jobs.
- Think in terms of 'finished' material that doesn't need any subbing or editing'

**'There is plenty of work out there if you're prepared to use your skills in new ways'** Simon Warne, Creston Health

## Broaden Your Horizons seminar cont'd



**SIMON WARNE** (*Media and Marketing Director at Creston Health*) offered the following advice:

- Find ways to apply your journalistic skills to other areas. For example, think about writing for pharmaceutical companies, advising companies on their cross-platform media strategy or writing press releases.
- If you're looking to do a career switch, offer to spend a day in-house watching what someone else does. For example, at a healthcare company, working on the more strategic side.
- Recognise that many companies don't want your ideas, they want your skills!



The final main speaker was **MARTIN TRIPP** (*Managing Director at Martin Tripp Associates, a media headhunting company*)

His advice was:

- Update your CV. Keep it brief and make sure it reflects your skills.
- Increase your visibility, eg, create a website, blog, tweet. Make it easier for companies to find you. Employers are looking for journalists with a 'trusted' voice who they can rely on for getting their message across effectively.
- Think of what 'package' you can offer. For example, how content will tie in with your client's needs.
- Learn how to make videos. This will increase your work options.

Guild members Lucy, Liz and Helen also shared these useful insights on how they'd broadened their horizons:



**LUCY JOLIN**

[www.lucyjolin.net](http://www.lucyjolin.net)

- Explore all your existing contacts – go to events, network.
- Get on Twitter, Facebook and

LinkedIn - and use them.

- Adjust your pay expectations – both up and down. For example, if you know a client has a huge budget, aim high. Likewise, if a company has a tiny budget, be realistic.

- If you're asked to do something new – do it.



**LIZ HOLLIS**

[www.lizhollismedia.co.uk](http://www.lizhollismedia.co.uk)

- Think about what skills you have and how you can use these to attract new clients.

- Attend local networking events in your area.
- Offer your services as a media consultant. There are many small businesses that have no idea about how the media works and what makes good content. You can advise them on how best to promote their organisation, find a good story, write press releases, blog and deal with journalists.
- Work with PR companies – copywriting, training.
- Invest in camera equipment and learn how to make videos, such as client testimonials, promotions on YouTube and podcasts.



**HELEN FOSTER**

<http://healthehelen.wordpress.com>

**Author of Gymspiration: 52 Ways to Wake Up Your Work Out, Helen talked about how to**

**write an e-book**

- Plan and write your book.
- Don't format it until you're 100% happy.
- Source a designer from [www.elance.com](http://www.elance.com).
- Don't believe the hype that you have to spend a fortune on formatting. Read *Publishing E-Books for Dummies* or the *Amazon Guide to Writing For Kindle* for the basics what to do.
- If you want to make any money, you'll have to keep promoting your book via blogging, your website, articles, etc.

## Calling all members...

### Tell us what you want!

If you want to expand your client base, move into other areas of health writing, learn new skills, be more efficient and more organised then let us help you. We're planning a series of training seminars, but we need to know what you think so, please take a few minutes to fill in our survey by clicking on <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6Z37MPW>

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

## Martine Gallie

I recently decided that I was going to have a sabbatical. I figured that, when you're a freelancer like me, you're never going to have a sabbatical unless you give yourself one.

**Of course as soon as I made that decision,**

the phone started ringing and I haven't stopped working since. And it's amazing how much more relaxed you feel about work when you are supposed to be on sabbatical.

At the moment I am doing a copywriting job. I do a fair amount of copywriting these days, usually for the web. I first started doing it when I was made redundant from a website in 2008 when the recession hit. I found I actually quite enjoyed it, and it's been a part of my working life ever since.

I'm based at a digital marketing agency where I'm writing a website and customer emails for one of their (baby food) clients. The deadlines are crushing, so I've been going into the office to escape housework and kids and really get stuck in.

**The office is incredibly 'buzzy'.** Music plays non-stop and people talk frenetically all day long. Unlike some magazine

offices I know, where people communicate with the person next to them by email, the complex, multifaceted work of a digital agency means they tend to thrash things out verbally as soon as an issue arises.

I often hear print journalists say that they can't write for the web. I'm really keen to stress that, if you have ever worked as a journalist, then you absolutely have the skills to write for the web.

**There is no mystique.**

There are about eight golden rules you need to know – keep sentences short, break the copy up into digestible chunks, make sure you use searchable heads and so on. It's nothing that you couldn't pick up in 30 minutes of Googling. People only tend to return to web content that is well written so, if you can write, you can definitely write for the web.

The same goes for copywriting. As journalists, we all have the skills to write for private companies, charities,



public sector organisations and so on. It's more a question of whether you are prepared to abandon your journalistic instincts to find and shape the story. The job of a copywriter is to immerse yourself in someone else's story and language and find effective ways to put these across to their audience.

**You also need to be a serious detail merchant.**

If you're the kind of person who relishes spending five minutes pondering whether a jar of baby food is 'yummy' or 'fruit-licious' then you'll have work for life.

I guess many more weeks spent enthusing over baby food would eventually drive me mad. But for the time being it's well-paid, satisfying and fun – definitely a great stop gap until the next journo job comes along. And if it doesn't, maybe I'll finally get to have that sabbatical.



**Keep tweeting...** According to our Twitter chief, Christine Webber, the Guild now has around 600 followers, which is fantastic. However, our aim is to get to 1,000 by the end of the year so if you know someone who is on Twitter and isn't following us, do pass on our details!

## MEMBERS' NEWS

### AN EASIER WAY FOR MEMBERS TO PAY...

We know that paying the membership fee in one whack can be a big ask so we would like to offer members the chance of splitting the cost, so from this month you'll be able to make two £25 payments.

● **Contact Jatinder on [admin@healthwriters.com](mailto:admin@healthwriters.com) for more information and the relevant standing order form.**



**SARAH BREWER's** new book **Eat Well, Stay Well**, is launching on October 31st from Connections (£12.99)



**Carol Cooper's** co-authored book for medical students, **General Practice at a Glance**, won first prize in the prestigious BMA book awards last month.



**NEW MEMBERS**  
A warm welcome to:

**LUCY HUNTER**  
– Health Editor of Spirit and Destiny

**JILL LESLIE**  
– dietitian (associate member)



GHW member **Nigel Summerley** is co-editing a new website called **Double Take**, billing itself as 'a seriously stimulating online magazine with a different way of looking at the world'. Nigel's co-editor is Rowena J Ronson, an holistic physician who practises homeopathy, nutrition, counselling (for individuals, couples and families) and life coaching.

● **Double Take ([www.double-take.biz](http://www.double-take.biz)) will cover not only health issues but also look at family dynamics, parenting, work/life balance, relationships, love, sex, spirituality and personal development, plus wider topics, such as culture and the environment.**



### Congratulations to Jo Willey!



**Jo Willey's** 12-month campaign highlighting the growing epidemic of diabetes in the UK resulted in a well-deserved Silver Star Globe Award in September. Launched by Labour MP Keith Vaz seven years ago, when he was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, the awards are a mark of recognition for the consistent and excellent coverage over the past year. Well done, Jo!



## SAVE THE DATE!

We have several not to be missed events coming up – including our infamous Christmas party – so be sure to put these dates in your diary



**20 November (Wednesday)**

### What really happens to health complaints

12.15pm lunch, followed by presentation

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is hosting a lunchtime event for Guild Members at Millbank Tower to provide an insight into the issues in health policy and reveal how it carries out its health investigations

**5 December (Thursday)**

### The great HRT debate

6pm for 6.30 start

Hot, bothered or confused about whether HRT is good or bad? Then don't miss the great HRT debate. We've persuaded some of the UK's leading experts to come and argue the case for and against. Join us at:- The Medical Society to find out more what the experts really think. Event kindly sponsored by Pharmicare



**11 December (Wednesday)**

### The Guild Christmas party...

6.30pm

Come and eat, drink and be merry at Duke's Hotel in St James, SW1.

*Look out for more details and information on all these events coming soon...*



#### THE GUILD OF HEALTH WRITERS

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