

# HEALTHWRITER

## Writer online

NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF HEALTH WRITERS



### A word from the chair

**Happy New Year to all Guild members and friends. Lets hope 2013 is a busy and prosperous year for us all.**

If you're planning on securing some new sources of work in 2013 - you might want to sign up for our 'Perfect Pitching' event on Tuesday February 5. We've persuaded four top editors to come along and tell you all what makes a perfect health pitch for their publications. The impressive line up includes Justine Hancock, editor of the Daily Mail's Good Health section, Jane Collins assistant editor of Bella magazine, Elin Tough, features editor of Zest magazine and Susan Grossman, a former magazine editor who now runs SG Media Training and regularly runs courses on pitching for journalists.

You'll get all those insider tips, including the best way to make a pitch, optimum times to call/email, subjects of most interest - and their pet hates. There will also be time for questions. Hopefully it will encourage you to seek out new commissions - we all know that sources of work can sometimes dry up, editors move on or sometimes writing is taken back in-house. The trick is to not take it personally and learn to move on. There are plenty more publications out there - they just don't know about you yet!

Only rule is - no pitching on the night! The event will take place at the University of Westminster, 115 New Cavendish Street, London W1W 6UW at 6.30 for 6.45pm start. Tickets are on sale now. Ticket price is £12.50 for members and £18.50 for non-members from healthwriters.com. Hope to see you there. **Jo**



*Clockwise from top left: Rachell Hipkiss, Director of Science & Nutrition at Healthspan welcoming guests to the party; Jane Symons, Justine Hancock, Lucy Elkins and Andrea Nichols; Michael Lister and Alan Burns; Hilly Janes and Barbara Rowlands; Jan Fairfax, Susan Aldridge and Liz Bestic*

## The warmest welcome in town

*Oh, the weather outside was frightful...*

If you want a little atmosphere at your Christmas party, the House of Lords is the place to go. Walking in through Black Rod's Garden entrance, gave a sense of grandeur to the occasion, while the warmth within quickly dispelled the chill of the cold, wet, December evening.

Our party was held in the Attlee Room by the kind invitation of Baroness Howells of St David's, who was there to welcome us and spent some time talking with her guests. The evening flew by, filled with vigorous catching-up with friends, and with first face-to-face meetings with colleagues previously known only by name, or online.

The evening was kindly sponsored by Healthspan Limited, a leading supplier of vitamins, minerals and supplements. It was lovely to see members of their team enjoying themselves on the evening, and helping us get Christmas off to a very jolly start. (Their goody bags were also very welcome.)

We would like to thank Jatinder Dua, as always, for all the work she does for the Guild, year round, organizing events such as these, and for having an unending supply of patience. And our grateful thanks go to Helene Martin Gee, for making it possible for us to hold our party in such historic surroundings.

## Ed's letter



This is cervical cancer health awareness month, and so an important time for our adopted charity, the Eve Appeal. In case you aren't familiar with it, the Eve Appeal is the only national gynaecological cancer research charity in the UK, and was founded to raise funds to fight these diseases.

Cervical cancer is one of the five cancers that start in a woman's reproductive system. HPV vaccination will prevent most cases of cervical cancer in the future, but the Eve Appeal says that cervical screening will still be vitally important over the next few decades.

Cervical cancer is most common in women aged between 30 and 45 years old. It can affect women of all ages, but is very rare in those under 25.

The early signs to watch out for include any unusual bleeding from the vagina, particularly:

- after sex
- after menopause when your periods have stopped
- persistent vaginal discharge that is blood stained or smells unpleasant.

Any woman who has these symptoms should see their doctor.

Public awareness of these cancers is remarkably low. So keeping cervical cancer in the public eye can be life-saving. **Lesley**

- For more information go to: [www.eveappeal.org.uk](http://www.eveappeal.org.uk)



**“The earlier cervical cancer is diagnosed, the better the outcome will be,**

**so even if women have been vaccinated and had regular screening, none of these is 100% effective. Women owe it to themselves to be aware of the early warning signs.”**

**Robert Marsh, CEO, The Eve Appeal**

## How to get ahead in journalism – or finding your brand

*November's branding event taught us how to sell ourselves, and how to get where we want to be in five years' time.*



**Mark Jeffries is an international personal branding guru, and listening to him talk, it was clear how he became so successful.**

**Confidence, charm, humour, and the ability to respond rapidly to his audience had us engrossed from the moment he started talking. Better still, he explained how it's possible for us to have all these qualities and win more work.**

“We're all in sales. We all do it, all day, people look and listen to you and your ideas, and decide whether to buy you or not,” he said. Soft skills are also important, making yourself stand out from other journalists, even using something as simple as a common bond. Baseball worked for one of his US clients.

Here is a brief version of the Jeffries guide to getting on in business:

- **The rule of pay-back.** Every time you go above someone's expectations they feel they need to pay you back. For journalists that could mean that an editor gives you another job.
- **In communication follow the three Cs.** Consistency – we trust people who are consistent, always where they should be, and always do a good job. Clarity – how clear are you? If you're so immersed in a subject that you drop in acronyms, you may lose clarity. Always explain what they stand for. Confidence – you can display this by using self-debate in front of your editor. Raise objections against your story then counter them with sound reasons why they should run the piece.

● **Networking.** You may not like doing it, but your network is your brand and your unofficial sales team. One way to improve your networking is to pay attention when someone hands you a business card. This is their CV and they'll want to see your reaction to it. Any comment shows you care. And if you care about their business card, they'll feel more confident that you'll care about their business.



**Eve Menezes Cunningham, freelance psychology, health and wellbeing writer, and Guild member, set us a task. What is the happiest we could all be in five years time? Eve gave us a series of questions to ask ourselves. These included thinking about our working surroundings and also doing a stock take of our working wardrobes and asking what our clothes are saying about us.**

One piece of good advice from Eve, which members of our industry are notoriously bad at following, is be kinder to yourself. When you don't feel on top of things, take some time out, give yourself a treat, and tell yourself how good you are. Finally, decide on one thing you're going to change from today. It's a pretty good way to start 2013.

- To contact Eve, email her at: [eve@evemenzescunningham.co.uk](mailto:eve@evemenzescunningham.co.uk)

● To find out more about Mark Jeffries: email him at: [mark@markjeffries.com](mailto:mark@markjeffries.com) or go to his website: <http://markjeffries.com>

**OBITUARY Simone Johnson (Née Cave)****“She was warm, wise and soothing, with a sense of fun.”**

*Health journalist, author and Guild member Simone Cave, died suddenly and unexpectedly in November. Amanda Hayhurst recalls the determined, spirited woman who was respected for her work, and much loved as a mother, wife and friend.*

Health, wellness and nutrition journalist and writer of six parenting books, Simone Cave, started her career after graduating from Birmingham University in 1989 with a BA in Geography. Later, she made a joke of her chosen degree course, saying she still had no sense of direction. This was certainly not true of her career - Simone became the successful writer she'd dreamed of being.

Simone's journalistic career began in September 1989, at Benn Publications, a family-owned trade publisher of titles such as Builders Merchant Journal and DIY Week, based in Tonbridge, Kent. In the 80s, Benn's was renowned for its in-house journalism-training course.

But like many trade publishing firms in the recession of the late 80s, Benn's had to make most of its trainees redundant, including Simone.

It is a testament to Simone's force of will, bravery and resourcefulness that she was undaunted. She travelled to Japan and a lack of contacts didn't stop Simone styling herself as a Far East correspondent.

It was under this byline that she published her first article for a national newspaper, the Sunday Observer, about whaling in Japan entitled "Blood on the chopsticks".

On her return to the UK in 1994 Simone set herself up as a freelance writer for national newspapers and women's magazines.

She later described that time as a series of constant knockbacks, in

which she honed her skills by fearlessly demanding feedback on ideas that didn't work and writing that didn't sing.

Simone's byline started appearing on medical and health articles in women's magazines and newspapers such as The Daily Mail and The Mirror's M Magazine.

As a daughter of a dentist and an NHS Director, Simone was always fascinated by everything to do with health, nutrition and wellbeing. News of her ability to speedily turn around thoroughly-researched, tightly-written health articles soon spread.

In 1999, The Mirror were looking for an editor of their Tuesday supplement, Health Zone, and turned to Simone.

Former deputy editor Tina Weaver says: "Simone had a real passion for the subject and an in-born ability to distill complex matters into digestible easy to understand copy. Whereas a lot of writers who had come up through newspaper ranks would hand over their stories to subs and designers, Simone had an innate ability to visualise it on the page and came up with diagrams and images, breakouts and boxes. Her pages sparkled, inviting the reader in."

"She was very clever, very focused, and understood what the reader wanted. I'm not surprised she became such a prolific and respected author when she left. She had a real connection to the reader."

After Simone's third child was born, in 2007, she took voluntary redundancy from The Mirror and fulfilled her long-held ambition by writing her first book: "Your Baby Week by Week", co-authored with paediatrician Dr Caroline Fertleman.

Caroline says: "I met Simone in 2005 when we signed a contract with Random House for our first book. We then worked steadily on this and another five books from then till now. She was great to work with and we had a superb professional relationship. We had lots of fun writing and editing together"

Simone and Caroline's first book "Your Baby Week by Week" was a best seller. This, and Simone's subsequent five books



established Simone and Caroline as trusted and loved authorities for parents all over the world.

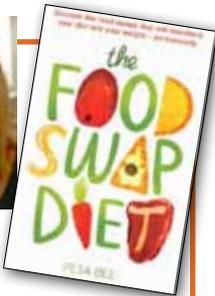
Simone's authorial voice was down to earth, warm, wise and soothing with a healthy sense of fun thrown in.

Simone's death on 2 November 2012 was unexpected, and, is, so far, unexplained. It is one of the tragic, but thankfully rare, cases of Sudden Adult Death Syndrome. It is a bitter irony that such an energetic, spirited young woman, who seemed so "alive" and devoted her career to helping others to live a healthier, happier and longer life, died so young.

Simone leaves a husband, Paul, and three children: Lewis, eight; Douglas, seven; and five-year-old Natalie.

- Simone's family are requesting donations to their CAFOD Candlelight Fund, set up to honour Simone's memory, which supports the Ana Manganaro Clinic, in Guarjila, El Salvador. The clinic specialises in the health of pregnant and nursing mothers, and children under five, and is recognised by the WHO and the Salvadoran health authorities as a model rural clinic.
- Please send any donations via <http://cafod.force.com/donate/candlelightfund>

## Members News



### PETA BEE'S

latest book, **The Food Swap Diet** has just been published by Piatkus. A healthy eating manual rather than a diet book, it aims to help you achieve - and keep to - your healthy weight by making healthy food choices. By swapping some of the foods you eat regularly for healthier options you can shave hundreds of calories from your diet without 'going on a diet'.

The book will help you find the best choices for health, what the label on the packaging is really trying to tell you about the nutritional value of the foods you buy, and the basics that should be in your store cupboard.

### DEBORAH DOOLEY describes her writer's retreat.

Writing will always be my first love. But four years ago I strayed into a literary dalliance which has gradually blossomed into a full blown and rewarding affair. Our thatched house in Devon has become a haven for writers to write, read and relax, while being well fed. Featuring comfortable bedrooms with desks and kettles, and squashy sofas, shelves bulging with books and a log fire. In short, it is a writer's retreat.

● [www.retreatsforyou.co.uk](http://www.retreatsforyou.co.uk)

### CHRISTINE BAILEY

Nutritionist, and Freelance Food Writer specialising in Health, Fitness and Nutrition has received a **Highly Commended CAM 2012 Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Community.**



**SUSAN GROSSMAN** has had a long career in the media as a freelance journalist, broadcaster, magazine editor and travel writer. For 10 years she has lectured in journalism at Westminster University and she also tutors at the City Lit. As a writing and career coach she helps individual journalists get published and increase their earning capacity.

● *Forthcoming workshops and courses include **One day Pitching to Editors workshop**, Saturday 26th January 2013, £140 for the day, (discount for Guild members) and **Drop-in Freelance Cafes for journalists**, Tuesday or Friday mornings, minimum booking three sessions, at £30 a session.*

● *Contact Susan at [sgrossman007@gmail.com](mailto:sgrossman007@gmail.com)*

### MARILYN GLENVILLE, PhD,

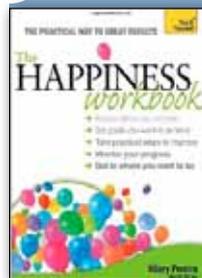
nutritionist specialising in women's health, has a new book out in February entitled **Natural Solutions to IBS** which covers what IBS actually is and how it is diagnosed. 1 in 5 people are affected by IBS and it causes as many days off work as the common cold. This book covers the medical treatments, nutritional options, and the impact of stress and emotions on this problem. It also offers natural solutions to many common digestive issues including bloating, flatulence, burping, indigestion, heartburn, constipation and diarrhoea.

● *For more information or to contact Marilyn go to: [www.marilynglenville.com](http://www.marilynglenville.com). **Natural Solutions to IBS** is published by Macmillan*



### The Menopause Exchange founder **NORMA GOLDMAN** is now emailing their quarterly newsletter for free to anyone interested in the menopause and midlife health. The newsletter includes information on menopausal symptoms, osteoporosis, coping with the menopause including HRT, complementary therapies, nutrition and self-help measures and also health problems. **The Menopause Exchange** is completely independent and is not sponsored by companies or commercial organisations.

● *For free newsletters please email: [info@menopause-exchange.co.uk](mailto:info@menopause-exchange.co.uk)*



**HILARY PEREIRA** has written a new title for Hodder Education's Teach Yourself series. Full of inspirational quotes and interesting facts from research studies, **The Happiness Workbook** accompanies you on a journey to greater contentment every step of the way with diagnostic tools, goal-setting charts, practical exercises, personal review pages and many more features.

**NIGEL SUMMERLEY'S** first novel has just been published. **Like A Flower**, which he describes as a story of "life, death, love and gardening", is e-published and available on Amazon (for Kindle) and also on Apple's iBookstore and WH Smith's eBook store.

Nigel's pieces on alternative health have appeared over the past couple of decades in the London Evening Standard, The Times, The Daily Telegraph, the Daily Express, The Independent and the Western Daily Press, and in a range of health magazines, including Health Sciences Institute magazine.

So is "Like A Flower" really a gardening book? "Not at all," says Nigel, "although a garden is at the heart of the story. It's basically a whodunnit, but I hope it also has a deeper, more philosophical and spiritual subtext."



● ***Like A Flower** by Nigel Summerley is on sale, priced £4.99 (Writers Readers Direct)*

## Members News



New member, **HILLY JANES** has a new book out: **Latte or Cappuccino? 125 Decisions That Will Change Your Life** (Michael O'Mara Books). It aims to cut through all the jargon and information overload about health advice. Based on sound medical research, expert advice and personal experience, it takes the reader through 125 daily dilemmas from waking up and wondering whether to have a bath or a shower, through the working day (delegate or do it yourself?) and evenings (cook with wine or stock?) The book also extends to broader lifestyle decisions about time management, relationships and raising children.

Hilly is an award-winning journalist who launched and edited the Times Body & Soul 24-page weekly health section for six years. Now freelance, this is her first book.

## NEW MEMBER

### Associate member:

**Amanda Moore** Nutritionist and freelance Healthwriter, Honorary Research Fellow at King's College London

## DON'T MISS!

# Perfect Pitching

**Tuesday 5 February 2013, 6.30pm**

*Does your pitching approach need fine tuning? Come and hear four top editors explain what makes a winning health pitch.*

Find out how to make the ideal pitch, when to call or email, which approach is best, subjects that will always spark an interest, and topics to avoid.

### OUR FOUR TOP EDITORS ARE:

**JUSTINE HANCOCK**, editor of the Daily Mail's Good Health section

**JANE COLLINS**, assistant editor of Bella magazine

**ELIN TOUGH**, features editor of Zest magazine

**SUSAN GROSSMAN**, a former magazine editor, now a writing and career coach at SG Media Training.

**DATE:** Tuesday, 5 February 2013

**VENUE:** University of Westminster, 115 New Cavendish Street, London W1W 6UW (close to Warren Street, Great Portland Street or Goadge Street underground stations)

**TIME:** 6.30 for 6.45 start

**TICKETS:** £12.50 for members and £18.50 for non-members from healthwriters.com

## Get well soon

Guild member, ex vice-chair, and events committee member Jean Elgie is recovering from a major back operation.

**'Jean, we hope you're back doing the tango in double-quick time, with very best wishes from your friends at HealthWriter towers!'**

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For further information on Members News and forthcoming events visit the website

[www.healthwriters.com](http://www.healthwriters.com)



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**Guild office hours:** 9am -12pm Monday to Wednesday

Members are very welcome to send in contributions to Health Writer and to submit ideas for events and workshops.

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[www.viridian-nutrition.com](http://www.viridian-nutrition.com)