



# health writer online

GUILD OF HEALTH WRITERS NEWSLETTER

Celebrating  
21 years  
of excellence!

FEBRUARY 2015



## A word from the chair

don't know whether you made it to our digital workshop last month, **Maximising Your Potential in the Digital Age**, but it was such a great event.

A huge thanks to our four brilliant speakers – each and every one offered invaluable advice about raising our profiles as well as updating our skills. You can read Lee Rodwell's report on the event opposite and discover just what you need to do to raise your profile.

For me, one of the best parts of any of our events is chatting to members at the end of the evening and if there was one area where people felt they could use some help it was to do with putting together a website. With that in mind, we asked website supremo, Chris Wheal, who was one of our speakers, to organise a training course on the subject – specifically for Guild members. We're hoping to set something up over the next couple of months, but as soon as we know more – costs, venue, etc – we'll be in touch.

Meanwhile, do be sure to book a place on our publishing workshop, next month. We've organised a great line-up of experts who will be offering an insider's guide to publishers, contracts, agents, fees and the pros and cons of self publishing. Whether you are a published author, a budding novelist or simply have an idea that you think just might make a book, do be sure to join us on 25th March. Put it in your diary now!

Michele

## Why Google is your new best friend

Exploring the demands of the ever-changing digital world was the theme at a recent Guild event. Lee Rodwell reports



**According to Margaret Sullivan, public editor of The New York Times, being a health writer today is rather like being a shark. If you're not moving, it's all over! That's why Maximising Your Potential in a Digital World, held on 27 January at the Medical Society of London, was such a popular event.**

Opening the evening, former GHW chair Jo Waters explained how she (reluctantly but successfully) embraced social media. Guild member Lucy Jolin then discussed the industry shift

from print to multimedia and the way we need to follow the money to find clients other than magazines and newspapers.

Media trainer Janet Murray, who has her own company The Last Word, stirred things up by suggesting we should give away our best content free. Chris Wheal, a freelance trainer who teaches website building and online journalism, rounded things off by demonstrating how easy it is to get started.

But if you weren't able to be there, don't worry. Overleaf is the advice the speakers gave.

## Why Google is your new best friend cont'd

### TOP TIPS TO MAXIMISE YOUR PROFIT IN A DIGITAL WORLD

#### 1 Ask yourself a key question: what's my online footprint?

(Not just on Facebook but as evidence that you are a professional journalist.) If you don't have an online profile it's time you got one.

#### 2 Be visible – set up your own website.

You can use Wordpress.com which is free. If you don't want to build your own website, pay someone to do it for you. It needn't cost a lot of money.

#### 3 Make your website the hub for all your social media

with links to your work, your blog, the professional bodies you belong to, awards you have won. Ensure all your contact details are on your website so people can reach you easily.

#### 4 Think mobile.

Most people access the internet on mobiles or tablets – so make sure your website is mobile friendly.

#### 5 Start a blog.

Google is your new best friend and blogging will improve your Google rating. A random Google search by someone can lead to work.

#### 6 A good blog is one that gives people something for nothing.

How to ... Top tips for ... It's a nice way of selling yourself: people



*Experts line-up (from left to right): Chris Wheal, Janet Murray, Lucy Jolin, Jo Waters and chair Michele Simmons*

remember you as an expert when they are commissioning work.

#### 7 Update your blog regularly – it's a cheap thing to do.

The most expensive thing about having a blog is your time.

#### 8 You don't need to pay someone for SEO (search engine optimisation), you can do it yourself.

Use words you think people will search for.

#### 9 Search engines look for keywords and for links – the more links to pages with your name on, the better.

If you are a feature writer you are a content provider. The print market for features may be shrinking but the online content market is growing – so follow the money. Lots of companies outsource writing work.

#### 11 Make sure your name comes up when people Google

the words health journalist. Fill in your profile on Google – if you want Google to find you, tell Google who you are.

#### 12 Join LinkedIn (if you haven't) and fill in everything you can.

LinkedIn will widen your networks and alert you about jobs.

#### 13 Most people use Facebook and Twitter to show how brilliant they are.

You can tweet away all you like but it's no good unless you are getting people to look at your website. Use Twitter to promote yourself as a journalist – not to share your quirky outlook on life.

#### 14 Make sure you get people's email addresses – keep in touch and build a client base.

Never say no. Don't get stuck on your specialisation. All your skills – research, writing, collating and editing – are transferable.

**Stop press... keep an eye on a save the date email from Jatinder flagging up a one-day website training course with Chris Wheal.**

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

## Charlotte Haigh MacNeil

**...on the highlights of being a health journalist and the limited appeal of wearing loungewear**

**work from home on freelance commissions the majority of the time and definitely feel a freelancer at heart. I love the variety, the flexibility**

and the challenge of varied deadlines. That said, I'm quite social and often miss the creative and teamwork aspects of being on staff (plus I can get sick of only dressing in loungewear), so I usually try to combine my work at home with a couple of days in-house each week. In the past, I've worked two days a week in a job share as Deputy Editor on Healthy, the Holland & Barrett title. At the moment, I'm on a contract working on Asthma UK's web content. So on Mondays and Tuesdays I head up to the City, where the charity is based, and work closely with members of the Health Advice team to produce and edit content.

**A typical day at home starts at 6.30am with a smoothie involving lots of green leafy stuff made in my Nutribullet**

(well, I am a health writer!) This is swiftly followed by a cup of strong tea as I settle down to work. I'm a real morning person so like to take advantage of those early hours. I usually work at the table in my sunny yellow living room, often accompanied by my rather needy Burmese cat, Katsu – which is fine when he's content to sit on my lap but less helpful when he decides the Mac cable is a toy. He recently decided he wanted my attention when I was in the middle of a phone interview with an eminent oncologist. Burmese cats have very loud voices and the oncologist paused in the middle of a sentence to ask if I needed to attend to my baby.

When I first went freelance 11 years ago, I pictured myself working on my laptop in cafes and going to yoga in the afternoons, which seems laughable now. The reality, of course, is a lot more hectic. I work intensely, sometimes putting in 12-hour days, and weekends are not necessarily exempt. But the pay-off is that I can take a mid-week



afternoon off to go to a gallery or meet a friend for tea. Importantly, I really love my work. In recent weeks, I've written features for upmarket glossies and several specialist health titles, as well as content for some websites, covering subjects from aromatherapy and yoga to coeliac disease and neuroplasticity.

**Speaking to brilliant, enthusiastic experts is always a highlight of my job – the best experts can make even dry**

or difficult subjects utterly compelling and I feel privileged to have access to them.

I'm paranoid about sitting down too much so I try to fit in a trip to the gym or a yoga class at least a couple of times a week, deadlines allowing, usually after lunch, when my brain switches off a bit. Then it's back to work until about 6, when I make a meal for me and my husband – I find cooking's a great way to switch off.

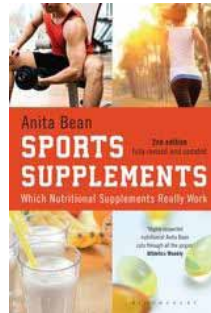
## MEMBERS' NEWS

### Maximising performance



Sports nutritionist **ANITA BEAN'S** latest book, **Sports Supplements: Which nutritional supplements really work**, (Bloomsbury, £12.99 paperback, £10.99 eBook) has been fully updated

to reflect the latest research. It is packed with clear, reliable and unbiased advice that will help maximise athletic potential. Covering the most popular supplements on the market – from beetroot juice to creatine, caffeine to whey protein, this is the essential guide for anyone considering taking supplements.



● For more information or to request a press copy please contact [Henry.Lord@bloomsbury.com](mailto:Henry.Lord@bloomsbury.com)



### Get in touch

Guild member  
**ANNETTE SHAW**

has taken on the role as book reviewer for Archant's **Devon Life magazine**. If anyone has a book with links to the county, either author or content, Annette would be really pleased to hear about it at:

[annetteshaw08@btinternet.com](mailto:annetteshaw08@btinternet.com)

### A SEAT ON THE BOARD



Dietitian **DR CARRIE RUXTON**, has been appointed to the board of the new agency **Food**

**Standards Scotland** which will take over from the UK Food Standards Agency from April. With its headquarters in Aberdeen, Food Standards Scotland will be responsible for food safety, standards and nutrition. Carrie said: "It's a great privilege to be on the first board of this new organisation. Food safety remains a massive challenge across the UK but particularly in Scotland where rates of infection are higher. Nutrition is also an area that needs some new thinking given current rates of obesity and widespread non-compliance with dietary recommendations."

● For more information see: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food\\_Standards\\_Scotland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_Standards_Scotland)



### Women telling it how it is...



Guild president **DR CAROL COOPER** is one of seven leading women authors in

the new eBook bundle **Outside the Box: Women Writing Women**. Launched last week (20 February), this genre-busting collection of seven full-length novels features a range of unlikely heroines and is available for just 90 days.

● For more info *Women Writing Women* – [www.womenwritewomen.com/](http://www.womenwritewomen.com/)

### Overcoming health problems



GP, medical nutritionist and award-winning author, **DR SARAH BREWER** has launched a new

series of books of which the first three, **Overcoming Gallstones**, **Overcoming Candida** and **Overcoming Low Sex Drive** are now available on Amazon in Kindle or in paperback formats. Each book explores the nutritional, medical, herbal and supplemental approaches to overcoming these common problems.

● Please get in touch via [sarah@medilance.com](mailto:sarah@medilance.com) for review copies.



## MEMBERS' NEWS

### Poundbury comes to London

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall officially opened **The Poundbury Fertility Clinic** at King Edward VII's

Hospital in London on 6 February. Designed to be London's premier fertility centre, the Clinic will offer patients a balance of conventional medicine alongside complementary therapies to treat a variety of fertility problems. Led by **MR MICHAEL DOOLEY** MMs FRCOG, one of Britain's renowned fertility specialists, the Poundbury team will also include Mr Alfred Cutner MD FRCOG and Mr Davor Jurkovic MD FRCOG as well as counsellors and nutritionists.



*Michael Savvas, Alfred Cutner, Michael Dooley and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall*

### VERBAL DYSPRAXIA

- overcoming the odds

Nutritional therapist **KATHARINE**

**TATE** not only contributed to **Waiting for a Voice: A Parent's Guide to Coping with Verbal**

**Dyspraxia** by Sam Walker (available from Amazon), but also worked with the Walker family and their son Monty, who has verbal dyspraxia and has made amazing progress. Monty's mother, Sam Walker, encompasses all aspects of dealing with the condition as a parent, including working with a speech therapist, school, the impact on the family and how diet and nutrition can make a big difference.

● *Nutrition advice on neurodevelopmental imbalances is available from The Food Teacher Clinic: [www.thefoodteacher.co.uk/clinic/](http://www.thefoodteacher.co.uk/clinic/)*



***Read Maggie la Tourelle's latest blog at: [www.thegiftofalzheimers.com/alzheimers-login-field/](http://www.thegiftofalzheimers.com/alzheimers-login-field/)***

### The world of ethics

Should we aim to maximize happiness? Why is it important to act morally? From the ancient Greeks to Sartre, from utilitarianism to the categorical imperative, **Ethics: A Beginner's Guide** (One World, £9.99) presents this vital topic via its most influential thinkers and theories. Author and philosophy lecturer **PETER CAVE** steers us around ethical traps – in the private sphere, in community life, and in relation to God and religion. For anyone who questions how we ought to live, there is no better introduction to ethics and how it relates to 21st society.



### All you can eat...

Award-winning nutritionist, chef and author of over 11 recipe and health books, **CHRISTINE BAILEY** has launched a new website [www.christinebailey.co.uk](http://www.christinebailey.co.uk) full of free healthy recipes specialising in allergy-free, low sugar, paleo, grain-free, raw, vegan and vegetarian recipes as well as nutrition features. Christine is also running a number of cookery classes and demonstrations including Eat Clean, Low Sugar, Paleo, Low FODMAP, sports nutrition and cancer support.

● *More details and booking on the website.*



### Diet and dementia

Health writer and medical nutritionist **PATSY WESTCOTT**'s latest book, **Healthy Eating to Prevent Dementia** (Kyle Books, £14.99) co-authored with Margaret Rayman, Professor of Nutritional Medicine, University of Surrey and dietitians Katie Sharpe and Vanessa Ridland was published on 29 January. With clear, evidence-based guidelines on how to reduce dementia risk through diet, it contains recommendations for achievable dietary changes plus more than 100 delicious brain-healthy recipes.



## MEMBERS' NEWS

SAVE  
THE  
DATE!

**WEDNESDAY 25th MARCH**

## Calling all book lovers

Many of us feel we have a book waiting to be written, but haven't a clue whether we should try to find an agent and publisher or self-publish. And what to do about those out-of-print titles on our shelves – should we update and republish them? In the second event this year on maximising your income in an ever-changing world, this is an event not to be missed.

**DON'T FORGET TO BOOK YOUR PLACE!**

**DATE:** Wednesday 25th March, 6pm **VENUE:** The Medical Society of London, Lettsom House, 11 Chandos St, London W1G 9EB

- Please can you let Jatinder know if you are planning to attend by Wednesday 18th March – [admin@healthwriters.com](mailto:admin@healthwriters.com).
- This event is kindly sponsored by the ALCS.



SAVE  
THE  
DATE!

**TUESDAY 21st APRIL**

## Don't miss our AGM

Come and join us for wine, food and the opportunity to catch up with old friends – and make some new ones, too, at this year's Guild AGM

**DATE:** Tuesday, 21st April **VENUE:** The Medical Society of London, Lettsom House, W1G 9EB **TIME:** Registration 5.45pm; prompt start 6pm

The Guild has vacancies on the main committee due to members having served their tenure. So, if you're interested in joining us, do get in contact with Jatinder for more info.

- Meanwhile, if you are planning to attend please can you let Jatinder know by Tuesday 14th April – [admin@healthwriters.com](mailto:admin@healthwriters.com).

### Michael Franklin

Nutritional therapist **VICTORIA TYLER** contacted the Guild with the sad news that **Michael Franklin** sadly passed away last November. Known for his work as a nutritional therapist specialising in gut disorders, his expertise and wisdom will be missed. Victoria worked with Michael for the past 10 years and is taking over his business.

- [www.nutritionalmedicine.org.uk](http://www.nutritionalmedicine.org.uk) and [www.ibs-solutions.co.uk](http://www.ibs-solutions.co.uk)

## NEW MEMBERS

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**  
**KATHARINE TATE**  
Freelance Health Writer  
Winner of Outstanding Student of the Year - CAM 2014 (*Complementary and Alternative Medicine*)

**JEANNETTE HYDE**  
Registered Nutritional Therapist with clinics in Marylebone and Twickenham, London.  
Regular writer for [www.welldoing.org](http://www.welldoing.org), Jeannette also runs wellbeing workshops for the corporate sector.

## MAIN COMMITTEE

Michele Simmons  
**(Chair)**  
Christine Webber  
**(Vice-chair)**  
Liz Hollis **(Secretary)**  
Jean Elgie **(Treasurer)**

Georgina Bentliff  
Oliver Gillie  
Eva Gizowska  
Janet Horwood  
Lee Rodwell  
Patsy Westcott

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Adlam  
Jan Fairfax  
Barbara Lantin

## ADMINISTRATOR

Jatinder Dua

## GUILD PRESIDENT

Dr Carol Cooper