



The Beacon

Your guiding light for writing and publishing

Number 27, Summer 2006

The Final Push - An Author's Chronicle of Book Production (3)

February 06 – at month's end, I was working intensely with my editor. Patricia emailed both her substantive edit and the copy-edit all in one MS Word document. (She had not tackled the 450 endnotes at this stage.) First, I dealt with her suggestions/comments and responded with a comment box for each, as she had requested. Found I only had to revise 4 paragraphs – big grin! Then went through the ms, line by line, looking at her copy-edit – no editor's marks in MS Word – in a different colour. Occasionally, I disagreed and put in comment boxes with an explanation. The majority of her changes made a big improvement. (4, 16-hour days of whizzy-eyed effort!)

March 06 - Returned my 'edit of the edit' to Pat, who then spent several days making all the corrections and readying the ms for Dundurn's design department so they could drop it into their book template, and embed the 60 illustrations. Pat hand-carried this final version to Dundurn. Then she copy-edited the endnotes in a previous version of the ms and I checked them (a horrible job that took 4+ hours). Pat emailed this ms to design with instructions to use it only for endnotes. I prepared the captions for the illustrations and sent them along.

Three days later, a Friday, Pat and I received the final page proofs to proof-read. By page 60, I was concerned that it did not look right. By page 100, I knew that design had used the wrong version of the corrected ms – it's hard to tell when you are working at the level of commas and semi-colons. Pat was away for the weekend and I couldn't reach my publisher.

On Monday, I got up at 5am (8am in Toronto) and called Dundurn. They had mistakenly used the old version with the corrected endnotes! There was consternation in design because we were on a tight deadline to meet the slot at the printers. They dropped what they were doing and completely re-did my book and sent it back to me for proofing in .pdf format. Printed out the entire book and pulled an all-nighter to keep book on schedule. So did Pat. One footnote was missing and all the rest had moved onto the wrong pages. Also, the corrected endnotes got lost!!!! Spent another 5 hours re-editing the endnotes in hard copy and faxed them back the same day (March 28th). Pat checked them.

April 2006 - Now that I had the final pagination, I had to prepare the index – in two days. (Another all-nighter.) With extraordinary(!) foresight, I had .../2



From the editor's desk

Although I had planned to keep the third installment of my chronicle as a secondary *Beacon* article, its length and importance to writers made it the lead. After a breathless three months *Sing a New Song*, my latest book, is on bookstore shelves. The final push in the production phase was exciting, fatiguing, and riddled with anxiety – it always is.

Production is the busiest stage of a book's birth. Today, editors and authors use MS Word for the editing process ("Track changes"). When design department gets the ms, they convert it into Quark Express and the page proofs come back to the editor and author for checking in Adobe Acrobat (pdf format). From then on, my editor and I printed out hard copies and used traditional editing marks on the typos. We had to fax back our corrections to design.

The joy of receiving the first copy of a new book has not diminished. I spent a long time gazing at the high gloss cover, smelling the pages, and feeling their smoothness. Two hours later, my first grandchild was born. We celebrated the two births in one day with a bottle of champagne before dinner! I don't remember dinner....

Enjoy a great summer!

Julie H. Ferguson

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Bits and Bobs:

E-book Sales and Revenue Climb in 2005: The International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) reported that nearly half a million e-books sold in the USA in one quarter of 2005. This represents part of a 36% increase in e-books sold in 2005, along with a whopping 69% increase in e-book revenue over the same period. They also reported a 24% increase in e-titles published. Encouraging...!

Lulu.com is well worth investigating if you are considering print-on-demand to self-publish a small run of poetry or books for inter-family use. This company does not charge set-up fees and earns its revenue from a cut on each copy produced. The draw-back is that authors must be able to format camera-ready copy themselves. Check Lulu.com out with Moira Allen (owner of writing-world.com) at www.writersontherise.com/newsletter.html. Her article is the fourth one down and contains links to further details.

Recycled paper: writers take note! It takes 60% less energy to manufacture paper from recycled stock. Producing one ton of virgin paper requires 20 trees and 26,500 more litres of water than one ton of 100% recycled paper. Each ton of recycled paper used in place of a ton of virgin paper reduces total energy consumption by 27%, net greenhouse gas emissions by 47%, and wastewater by 33%.

Forthcoming events for writers

(for details see website)

Sep 24 – **Word on the Street**, Library Square, Vancouver, 11am-6pm

Sep 27 - **Crack Open Your Creative Channel** for writers. Vancouver Community College (downtown campus), 6:30-9:30pm.

Sep 30 - **How to Craft Irresistible Query Letters** for writers of books and articles. Vancouver Community College (downtown campus), 9am-4pm.

Oct 4 - **Book Magic: Turning Writers into Published Authors** for writers who yearn to get a book published. Vancouver Community College (downtown campus), 6:30-9:30pm.

Oct 19-22 - **Surrey International Writers' Conference**, Sheraton Guildford Hotel, Surrey, BC. Program TBA in July 2006 - visit www.siwc.ca for details.

Oct 25 - **Brainstorming Brilliant Bios** for all writers who want to increase their chances of getting published. Vancouver Community College (downtown campus), 6:30-9:30pm.

Oct 28 - **Book Magic: Turning Writers into Published Authors** for all writers who want to increase their chances of getting published. Creative Writing Diploma Program, Johnston Heights Secondary School, Surrey..

Nov 22 - **Writing Online: the New Adventure for Writers** for writers of all kinds. Vancouver Community College (downtown campus), 6:30-9:30pm.

Registration: VCC - www.vcc.ca/programs/pceprograms.cfm
CWDP - www.ce.sd36.bc.ca/

Chronicle...(cont'd from p. 1)

already formatted the index document as per Dundurn's instructions (two columns, run-on, etc.) and laid out the main subjects and their sub-heads. All I had to do was match the subject head and sub-heads with the page numbers in the page proofs. I never did check the index – not enough time! Believe it or not, both Pat, Dundurn, and I met the printer's deadline in spite of the hiccups – it was brutal! Printing took the next four weeks.

May 2006 - on the 8th, I learned that *Sing a New Song* was finished and in Dundurn's hands. They told me it looked "really good!" On the 9th, I ordered my first 50 at the bookseller's discount of 60%. On the 10th, Dundurn hosted a party for its nine Vancouver authors – I was the only one without my most recent book. One copy of *Sing a New Song* arrived on May 15th – I took it to bed with me.

Now I'm working on my book launch on June 15th (everyone's welcome) and also planning media interviews and signings in Toronto and Ottawa in July. The all-nighters are fading fast as I receive compliments all round. I am very grateful for the hard work that Dundurn put in to produce a beautiful, final product of which I can be proud.

Previous issues of *The Beacon* are archived at www.beaconlit.com/beaconli/newsletter.htm



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Julie H. Ferguson
#5-300 Maude Road,
Port Moody, BC
Canada, V3H 2X6
P: (604)469-1319
F: (604)469-1316

info@beaconlit.com
www.beaconlit.com

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