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**Bookmark**

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ABOUT THE SA BOOKSELLERS’ ASSOCIATION

The SA Booksellers Association represents a united front for booksellers. Through strategic liaison with the different sectors of the industry and provinces, SA Booksellers strives to regulate the book-trade, reminding publishers to act as wholesalers and booksellers as retailers. The annual SA Booksellers AGM has historically been co-located with the Publishers Association of South Africa (PASA) AGM. The AGM is open to all members of SA Booksellers and is a conference full of information, energetic discussions, pertinent topics and eloquent speakers. This is an opportunity for education for all, keeping members at the cutting edge of developments in our ever-changing industry.

SA Booksellers works closely with government departments, educational authorities, and the state tender boards concerning matters that affect the trade.

More than 50% of SA Booksellers members are previously disadvantaged and SA Booksellers is well positioned to lobby government on all issues pertinent to the book trade. SA Booksellers provides access to information for all its members, through the commissioning of research papers and the gathering of news, to the effective dissemination of this information via the industry magazine Bookmark and through www.sabooksellers.com.

Bookmark, the official magazine of SA Booksellers, is distributed free of charge to all members as well as to all influential people in the book trade from publishers to government departments. The digital edition is sent to an ever-increasing subscriber database. This magazine is a mouthpiece for SA Booksellers members as much as it is a source of information. Send a letter to the editor at bookmark@sabooksellers.com to get your views published.
We are the foremost provider of total logistical and importing services to the book and magazine industry. Using our equally experienced partners, we are able to offer our clients a total service, from order to front-door delivery anywhere in Southern Africa. Whether by sea or air, our dedicated staff will oversee your shipment from order to delivery. We offer unique and personalised service. So, if you’re involved in importing books and magazines to Southern Africa and expect nothing less than a partner beyond expectations, can you afford not to be talking to the experts?
President’s Letter

Dear Readers,

The universities around South Africa have been in turmoil during the last two months, with students burning the Vice Chancellor’s and other nearby offices at University of KwaZulu-Natal and engaging in other much publicised protest action on most campuses around the country in their #feesmustfall campaign. Van Schaik Bookstores has seen three shops looted and various stores had to be closed during the period of unrest. This will be a week we remember! We do hope that the discussions between the students, universities and the Department of Higher Education will lead to a return to normal for the benefit of all concerned.

In my last article in Bookmark I warned of the consequences of the adoption of the draft Copyright Bill. SA Booksellers Association and PASA have both submitted their opposition to a number of aspects of the Bill to the Department of Trade and Industry and we hope that there will be substantial revisions.

Last year we submitted our concerns about the suggested changes for the procurement of textbooks outlined in the White Paper of the Department of Education. We have reason to believe that many of our fears may turn to reality. It appears that the Department of Education has decided that the distribution of books by specialists is preferable to using booksellers. Speed Services and another company have successfully delivered the internally published workbooks and they have been paid on a per kilo basis. Booksellers will, if they are to participate in the deliveries, have to make their costings on a new basis and be competitive. Rates given to those delivering school books have declined steadily over the years and we hope that booksellers will not lose this opportunity to support their other activities. The use of the contracted regional distributors is also being reconsidered: The Department appears to be planning to do centralised purchasing to be delivered into regional warehouses of its own, from which their distributors will collect. This will be possible once the current contracts have expired.

School book purchases in the current year are running at levels about 30 percent below the levels of the previous year in the provinces for which we have figures. The Department aimed to put readers into the Grade 1 classrooms – an excellent development – and to provide for the purchase of new literature books for Grades 10 to 12 this year. That aim has been cut back to the introduction of the readers and for literature books for Grade 11 only. It seems that in some areas the schools are not being given the funds for the purchase of top ups to make up for lost books or rising classroom numbers and we expect that there will be shortages next year.

Your National Executive met recently to consider how we could better serve the industry and came up with two suggestions: One was to look into the production of bookseller training which could be delivered in different locations…. The other initial aim is to develop standards for the transmission of book information into different environments.”

Technology should enable us to do this far better than could have been achieved only a few years ago. The UK model has always provided for individual bookshops to do training for the accredited bookselling qualifications. Material is given to experienced booksellers who give weekly instruction and the work is submitted to a central administrator to ensure that it is done and is up to standard. We believe that much of the required material is similar to that required in other environments and that we may be able to develop material suitable for specific environments such as general bookselling. Melvyn Kaabwe and Olinka Nel will see whether a qualified developer can be found.

The other initial aim is to develop standards for the transmission of book information into different environments. At present publishers’ information supplied, for instance, to websites varies in numerous ways, and when it is consolidated on a website it is inconsistent. Considerable thought and effort is being put into this in Europe, and local information users believe that we should try to have similar standards applied here. It will save time for publishers and improve the quality of the work we do.

We are also going to be approaching you shortly to complete our statistical return. This provides critically important information on the size of the industry and is interesting to all of us. So please complete it as soon as you can after receiving it.

We have yet to hear the outcome of the Operation Phakisa discussions on digital learning. The experience of members with the sale of digital books has not been good this year. Interest has, if anything, waned. General book sales have improved, however, and our main concern is over the rapid price rises which are the result of the weakening of the rand. We are going to see whether the overseas publishers cannot be persuaded to give some special support to our market while the readers become accustomed to gradually increasing prices.

We are about to move into our busiest seasons. Let me take this opportunity to wish you all well with your trading.

Guru Redhi

President, SA Booksellers Association
E-commerce
Trends and legalese
By JESSICA FAIRCLIFF

Following on from Alan Vesty’s article on e-commerce in Bookmark in September, we look at the e-commerce scene in SA and offer some tips around the legalities of operating a solid e-commerce platform.

The new CEO of Media 24, Vincent Hoogduijn, recently commented on the South African e-commerce market as one that needs to be grown rather than tapped into, which means that retailers positioned as market leaders now will be well placed to grow with the market.

“In SA, the challenge is mostly around increasing the convenience level to buy online. In a market where retail is very well developed – SA has 32 malls per million inhabitants, ranking it in the top three worldwide – there is no massive urgency to buy online. Improvements in broadband penetration, cost of data, payment and delivery infrastructure and product offerings should help to raise that convenience level.

But retailers themselves also play a large role in making online shopping more convenient: They need to go online as that is where their customers are to be found more and more often, predominantly on mobile. And they need to embrace e-commerce as an extension of their offline footprint, improving the overall shopping experience, and not so much look at it as cannibalising their stores’ performance,” said Hoogduijn.

Although the market place models, “Agile and tech-driven businesses that can prove to scale much quicker and aren’t asset heavy,” are the current online market leaders, this will probably develop predominantly on mobile. And they need to embrace e-commerce as an extension of their offline footprint, improving the overall shopping experience, and not so much look at it as cannibalising their stores’ performance,” said Hoogduijn.

The trends in e-commerce all point towards mobile becoming ever more important with Google reporting that more than 50% of their worldwide search traffic comes from mobile.”

“Discoverability is vital, and this refers to your website and your product. Good metadata in books is becoming ever more vital. According to World Wide Web Size, there were 4.73 billion indexed web pages on Friday 13 November 2016. This number is however, always fluctuating due to the monthly fluctuations in the count of inactive sites and most of these sites exist without being seen.

So a better measure of the web is search and the growth thereof. “In August 1999, Google was fielding 3 million search queries per day, according to John Battelle’s book, The Search: How Google and Its Rivals Rewrote the Rules of Business and Transformed Our Culture. A year later, that number had leaped to 18 million search queries per day. By 2012, the most recent year for which data is available, Google was serving more than 3.5 billion searches per day—equivalent to 40,000 searches every second,” reports Adrienne Lafrance on theatlantic.com.

The great thing about Google is that people know who owns the company’s “PAIA manual” on your website. Requires that you publish your company’s “PAIA manual” on your website.

Up to date copyright notice: Make sure people know who owns the copyright to your website and the content thereon.

Secure payment platform: Your payment system must be secure and should comply with the Payment Card Industry Security Standards, because you will be liable if your website does not use a secure payment platform.

- 10 things your e-commerce website must have, 19 August 2015, www.fin24.com
- The size of the World Wide Web (The Internet), www.worldwidewebsize.com
Business model innovation is a topic that most businesses and industries have been grappling with since the rise and growth of all things digital – e-commerce platforms, mobile consumption, or social engagement to name just a few. In its most basic form, business model innovation is the development of new, unique products and services to support and grow an organisation’s financial viability and the steps or processes necessary to deliver on these products and services for sustainable future growth.

In the book industry we have also been contending with how to stay relevant to our customers in a changing digital market environment. Concepts such as the long tail theory, free content, repurposed content, micro publishing and e-publishing have resulted in the traditional book industry having to rethink its value-chain and its value proposition. We are all aware of the high-stakes at play when as book businesses we do not enter into the digital realm with a certain degree of success. In some instances these efforts result in marginal success for the organisation and/or its customers. In other instances we fail miserably. But this is the nature of innovation – the ability to take calculated risks, assess and measure our success and failures and eventually move on and try something new.

In South Africa in particular we have a mobile market. What does this mean? According to the Mobile Africa 2015 study conducted by GeoPoll* and World Wide Worx, Internet browsing via phones now stands at 40% across the markets in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and Uganda. The report further lists the most common mobile activities for South Africans as sending SMS (52%), taking photos (45%) and browsing the Internet (40%). From the 2015 Effective Measures** report South Africans use the Internet for e-mail (88.39%), banking (65.60%), research/obtaining information (62.32%) and reading news/magazines/articles online (60.27%). How does this impact the book publishing industry and trade? Well, on the one hand as producers and retailers of content we are competing for our potential customers’ attention on these devices, whether for entertainment, educational purposes or for general information. Secondly, the Internet allows for a vast number of opportunities to deliver content, any kind of content, that is relevant to consumers. Taking a very simple approach to this data, it might be worthwhile to investigate opportunities to deliver relevant and quality content via SMS or through an email subscription service. If Google is the biggest publisher and aggregator of content in the world, how do we make our content, whether book blurbs or online reading communities, searchable and findable?

“This is the nature of innovation – the ability to take calculated risks, assess and measure our success and failures and eventually move on and try something new.”

Let’s consider an important mobile product for a moment. According to Google an App is “a self-contained program or piece of software designed to fulfil a particular purpose; an application, especially as downloaded by a user to a mobile device.” We all download Apps for various purposes; to check the weather when we are travelling, to read a book, to connect with old friends on social media or to measure our fitness and calorie intake. But the technology that delivers Apps is changing faster than the software behind Apps. How we experience content via connected devices – laptops, phones, tablets, wearables (e.g. Apple Watch) – is undergoing a dramatic change. Apps as independent destinations will become less important in 2016 as we see them evolving as a publishing tool with related notifications that contain content and actions. The content may be repurposed to enable more natural user input and optimised for every individual’s unique situation. So the book I read in my mobi-book App will become an email to my friend who is at her desk at work with snippets of the best quotes that I enjoyed from the book. Delivery of content, irrespective of context and customised entirely.

These developments allow for business model innovation even at the most basic level. When we fail to innovate the business model we fail to stay relevant to our customers. There is perhaps no more relevant example than the recent notice on Friday 23 October 2015 that local social network Mxit is shutting down its commercial operations. Their monthly active user base has been steadily dwindling since 2013 amid intense competition from international rivals such as WhatsApp and Facebook. But perhaps their biggest error was the inability to recognise the fast pace at which cheap smartphones would penetrate the mobile market. Mxit was originally developed as a feature phone tool and despite some attempts from the Mxit team to develop a quality smartphone application, they were unable to stay abreast of these fast changing trends and innovate their business model in a timely fashion.

The only constant is change, and fast-paced change. It is necessary for book businesses to include opportunities for their teams to occasionally brainstorm and reflect on how their business model might need to innovate at any time to remain relevant and useful.
Book Token vouchers are promoted and exchangable at most bookshops in South Africa. Are they available in yours?

For more details contact the SA Booksellers Office on 021 945 1572 or email saba@sabooksellers.com
BOOKSHOPS IN FOCUS »

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Since: April 2006
Contact: Janine O'Connor, 031 563 6288, shop@booksandbooks.co.za, www.booksandbooks.co.za
Are you part of a chain or independent? Independent
Why did you decide to open your own store?
My love of books started with my Mum and older brothers reading me stories before I could read, but it was my wonderful primary school librarian, Mrs de Saint Pern who turned me into a voracious reader! I would read anything – Dr Seuss, Enid Blyton, Willard Price, Ian Serralier, but particularly enjoyed adventure and historical novels. I also enjoyed non-fiction books – I begged my Mum for my first atlas when I was about eight and have collected them ever since!
How did you get into the Book business?
I had the dream to open a bookshop since 1990. Fortunately for me I knew Peter Adams of Adams & Co in Durban, so he allowed me to work for him part-time on Saturday mornings to see if I would enjoy working in the book trade. When a sales rep position came up at HarperCollins in Johannesburg, Peter encouraged me to apply! After working in sales & marketing for Jonathan Ball Publishers, MacDonald Purnell and finally Penguin SA, I decided to move back to Durban to open Books & Books, so you could say that Peter is the reason why I joined the book trade!
What is the all-time best seller in your store?
Spud Learning to Fly by John Van de Ruit, which we launched at the shop in July 2009. We were also fortunate to be able to take John to a number of Durban schools, where we sold many copies to the kids. We sold over 1 100 copies which is a huge quantity for a shop of our size!
What keeps you going?
The constant flow of glorious new books coming in to the shop and the thrill of suggesting a book to a customer, which they rave about on their next visit! Any interesting stories about your store?
We regard ourselves as a “community bookshop” so make every effort to get involved with the schools, libraries, businesses and wider community in Durban North, the Berea and Umhlanga. We receive wonderful support from our customers and in turn hope to make a difference in our community and further afield.
We supply textbooks and library books to the schools in our community. We regularly host functions that parents and children can attend. Obviously school holiday and Christmas activities are a fun and regular occurrence. Recently we participated in a World Book Day promotion to collect new and “previously loved” books for disadvantaged schools. We regularly have book launches (at the shop and at other venues) and wherever possible take authors to our schools. In May we hosted world renown picture book author, Niki Daly, here for a week, visiting schools – what a treat for the children that he spoke to, as well as the teachers who were able to meet him! In the past two years we have visited schools with teen author Chris Bradford, Lewis Pugh, Conn Iggulden and PJ Powers. In September we hosted the UK Children’s Laureate, Chris Riddell at a number of schools which was a real thrill, particularly as he then drew a cartoon for our shop!
The love for reading and books. What keeps you going?
I love having reading sessions with children introducing them to all interesting and exciting books and characters.

Armstrongs Books
Armstrongs Books has moved to a bigger shop in Rissik Street in the Johannesburg CBD. Andre Wedepohli is excited to be expanding his range. It was just UNISA books but now includes a selection of general titles focused around books in indigenous languages, religious and self improvement books, and some for those with political interests. As it is on street level with a shop window, it will, he hopes, find a new book buying public among the growing middle class in the area.

Exclusive Books, Hyde Park
When Benjamin Trisk told Philip Jones, editor of the The Bookseller, in November last year of his ambitions to put “the best Tapas bar south of Barcelona” into Exclusive Books’ flagship store at Hyde Park, not too many took him seriously. Even after the spectacular success of the chain’s first coffee shop at Rosebank, some thought it a bridge too far. Fast forward to the present, and Mr. Trisk and his team are well on track to do exactly that. On Friday the 6th of November, the refurbished bookshop opened its doors to unanimous delight. “This is now the only bookshop in Johannesburg”, one customer remarked. Many came from afar to see for themselves if the hype was true. The buzz was palpable, with overheard conversations ranging from the genuine leather counter-top to the special “chmem” method of brewing coffee. Everyone bought books,
resulting in the best day of trade in the long history of the store.

This first stage of refurbishment comes with a beautifully designed coffee counter, tables where customers can relax and read with a cup of locally roasted arabica, as well as a big and brightly coloured new children's section, complete with Prometheus play table. Not to mention the Fabriano Boutique, showcasing hand-made Italian stationery not available anywhere else in the country. Combine all this with the curating talents of Lauren Watson, quite possibly one of the best book buyers in the world, and you have a space people will not want to leave. Books as beautiful objects, now given centre-stage by the superstar architecture team of Sylvio Rech and Lesley Carstens.

On the 1st of December, the curtain will rise to reveal the jewel in the crown: quite simply, “the best Tapas bar south of Barcelona". Trisk partnered with Michelin-starred chef Russell Armstrong, who relocated from Australia especially for the exciting project. You only have to Google Armstrong to know you’re in for a culinary treat: his resumé includes the famous Connaught Hotel and Le Gavroché in London, Le Frere Trois Gros in France and Michael's Riverside Restaurant in Australia.

To quote Trisk in The Bookseller a year ago: “Tapas is about conversation. Friends go to talk, people talk to strangers. If any country needs conversations between strangers, given the fractures we’ve had, it is South Africa.” Today that dream has become a reality.

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**US Woordfees 2016**

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Visit www.woordfees.co.za for the full Literature program
In 1942 was the behoefte vir ‘n monument ter ere van die derde grootste taal in Suid-Afrika, Afrikaans, reeds uitgespreek. Dit het egter eers jare later ‘n werkl�回licie bewerk word en vandag pruik die betonreus reeds 40 jaar lank wes van Bretagne-rots op Paarlberg.

Die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en -monument (ATM) het op 10 Oktober behoorlik hulle 40ste bestaansjaar gevier. Die dag was propvol aktiwiteite vir oud en jonk wat saam die bestaan en ontwikkeling van Afrikaans in Suid-Afrika gevier het. Daar was ‘n omvormende gevoel van innovering te bespeur by die monument wat dit duidelik maak dat die jare hom nog nie inhaal nie.

’n Eerste permanente uitstalling is tydens die feesvieringe in die Besoekersentrum gepoort – dit handel oor die bou en simboliek van die monument en oor Afrikaans se plek in die wêreld. In Groen: Tuin van digters is die werk van verskeie bekende figure in die Afrikaanse literaturu waaronder Adam Small, Breyten Breytenbach, Hemelbesem, Koos Kombuis, Marius Titus en Stef Bos vir die volgende ses maande in die monument se tuin tesiene.

Die Taalmonument hou gereeld Volmaanpieknieks wat ’n moet is! Volg die ATM op:  

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Afrikaanse Taalmonument vier fees

40 Jaar later en Afrikaans staan steeds sterk

In 1942 was the behoefte vir ‘n monument ter ere van die derde grootste taal in Suid-Afrika, Afrikaans, reeds uitgespreek. Dit het egter eers jare later ‘n werkl�回licie bewerk word en vandag pruik die betonreus reeds 40 jaar lank wes van Bretagne-rots op Paarlberg.

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By ‘n glansgeleentheid die aand van die vieringe, is die wenners van die ATM se eerste Neville Alexander-prestige-toekenning aangeweys. Alexander was ‘n bekroonde linguis, opvoedkundige en akademikus, wat hom sterk beywer het vir veeltaligheid en moedertaalonderrig in Suid-Afrika. Die prys sal voortaan toegeken word aan ‘n kandidaat of instel- linge wat op enige gebied van Afrikaans op voetsoolvak ‘n beduidende hydra- gele wer het. Sabina Dumas, opvoeder aan New Orleans Sekondêre Skool in die Paarl, en die fakulteit onderwys van die Kaapse Skiereiland Universiteit van Tegnologie (Ksut) op Wellington het met die prys hierdie jaar weggestap.

Die Taalmonument hou gereeld Volmaanpieknieks wat ’n moet is! Volg die ATM op:  

Standard Book Numbering turns 50

Where would we be without ISBN?

In the book world, we’ve come to take International Standard Book Number (ISBN) – that 13 digit number found on the copyright page or back of a book – for granted. We may not need to understand how the number is made up, but we know it’s a number that identifies a book and that it somehow makes ordering and sales more accurate and efficient.

In the 1960s publishers wanted to improve their efficiency and profitability, but how could they introduce automated order processing and inventory control systems, when the products could not be consistently and reliably identified? Giving numbers to books wasn’t new – many publishers did that – but the idea of a standard book number that could be used on all computers and which could uniquely identify a publication was startling.

The idea for the system started in the UK prompted by WH Smith announcing in 1965 that they wanted to move to a computerised warehouse within two years. There were a number of reports and working parties and eventually a 9-digit number, including a final “check digit” to validate the whole number, was proposed. The UK was the first to adopt this “Standard” Book Number and the first registration agency was operated on behalf of the trade by J Whitaker and Sons Ltd. – its success was immediate. Soon RR Bowker in US, and national libraries and bibliographic services in Canada, Australia, Denmark, Sweden and The Netherlands also wanted to join the system. So, to accommodate this expansion to other countries, the number was increased to 10 digits and became an International Standard under the auspices of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1970. Following later developments, the ISBN has been a 13-digit number since 1 January 2007.

Books are a unique industry – there are many new product lines every day, but also older ones remain very much in demand. You can order and read books that were originally written many hundreds of years ago as well as the very latest releases. Books also come in many types and formats – hardbacks, paperbacks, pop-up books, audio-books, and digital books for e-readers, tablets and smartphones, etc. An ISBN is used to identify a particular book from a specific publisher that appears in any form, and is available to the public.

Today, fifty years on, there are more than 150 national and regional ISBN agencies providing ISBNs to publishers in more than 200 countries. We live in a world where information about books is not only based on walking into a bookshop but also readily accessible through internet searches. Websites can display all the information about a book from basics such as the author’s name, the title and price, through to an image of the cover, the number of pages, even links to reviews. In most cases, it is the ISBN that is the glue that binds all this information into a single, searchable record. Without ISBN, it is unlikely that there would be bar codes on books. There wouldn’t be systems such as Nielsen BookNet TeleOrdering which automatically routes orders to the correct supplier thereby saving the bookseller time and effort. Sales data would be less granular; product databases would be less efficiently compiled and contain a lot less information. Quite simply, there would probably be chaos.
All things literary

Open Book Festival 2015 a hit

By ELIZE KNOETZE

The Open Book Festival (OBF) ran from 9 to 13 September and attracted just over 9 800 people and 166 participants to the core programme. There was a strong international presence this year, with 26 participants from all over the world, including the UK, USA, Ukraine, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Sweden, China, Nigeria, France, Switzerland, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Festival goers experienced true Cape Town weather with a day from every season, but come heat, rain or wind, the OBF was set to be a success.

The core programme consisted of 123 events showing a variety of topics on all things literary. “Each year we learn a tremendous amount which goes into our thinking for the following year. Our approach is streamlined annually which makes the experience a smoother one, and which enables us to pilot new ideas. This year we had a Kidzone for the first time and while it was a small start, it is an area we are excited to grow in the future. We are also very happy that we were able to contribute towards travel expenses, allowing for more people to get to the festival, who would otherwise be unable to do so. Again, this is an area we hope to grow in the future,” says organizer of OBF Frankie Murray.

As for my time at the OBF, it was an interesting and worthy trip into Cape Town.

First on the menu was a combination of two of my favorite things in life: Food and Fiction. Karina Szczurek was joined by celebrity chef Jenny Morris and writer Kathryn White at the much-loved indie bookshop The Book Lounge. Jenny truly lived up to her title as the Giggling Gourmet with wonderful stories from her many culinary adventures. She also shared her secret ingredient to a good meal: good company. Kathryn left the audience hungry to read her latest book Anna Peters’ Year of Cooking Dangerously which isn’t your typical cookbook, but rather a food diary. Both authors agreed that the creative process of writing a cookbook is very different from any other type of book, but every step is simply delicious.

Moving to the Fugard theatre, Drie vars stemme (Three new voices) proved that Afrikaans is still very much alive in South African literature. Lien Botha (Wonderboom), Debbie Loots (Split) and Dalena Theron (Huisies van papier) spoke to Elmari Rautenbach about their debut novels. It took both Lien and Debbie very long to start writing. Dalena, on the other hand, was simply ready to start very early and just had to get her story out there. Although it was a challenge for them all, they agreed that writing a novel was an interesting and exciting journey and emphasized that you should stick with what you know.

Kerneels Breytenbach led Skop, skiet en bier a discussion with well-known Afrikaans crime writers Martin Steyn and Rudie van Rensburg. Other than one might expect, both writers tend not to plan the storyline ahead, in Rudie’s words “die pen kry ‘n lewe van sy eie” (his pen gets a life of its own) and Martin doesn’t bind himself to one character. When the storyline allows or needs it, he will add or remove characters as he goes along. It was clear that both writers enjoy what they do. Martin described his writing process as an adventure that he embarks on himself. To everyone’s delight, both writers are already busy working on their next book. Rudie admits that he never stops writing and that he is, in fact, busy with book number six while we still only have three of his masterpieces on our shelves.

All in all the festival seems to have been a great success and left everyone wanting more. The attendance has this year been the best since the history of OBF and it promises to continue to grow. When asked to comment on the success of the festival, Frankie said, “The festival has four goals: To put on an international festival featuring significant numbers of international writers, to promote local writers to a bigger audience – local and international, to promote a love of books and reading to school learners and lastly, to run a festival that appeals to a diverse audience that reflects our city. In some areas, we certainly attained our goals, while others speak to ongoing work.”

Above: Decisions, decisions… what to attend with 123 events to choose from? Right: Okey Ndibe (Nigerian author) and Petina Gappah (Zimbabwean writer) clearly enjoying a panel discussion.

“A great conference, well-run, friendly, and filled with fascinating people talking about fascinating things. I can’t wait to come back!”
Karen Joy Fowler

“Open Book is my new favorite. From the beauty of Cape Town, to the lively and intelligent and urgent discussions at the festival, this is the kind of gathering that reminds us of the unique power of literature and the necessity of community.”
Laura van den Berg

“It was a huge pleasure for me to be part of Open Book 2015. The creative energy, the stimulating dialogues both on-stage and off was like a booster shot of creative energy.”
Z P Dala
National Book Week (NBW) was launched in 2010 and started as a joint initiative between The South African Book Development Council (SABDC) and The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC). It was conceptualized in response to a 2007 study commissioned by The SABDC into the book reading habits of adult South Africans. The results indicated:

- 51% of households in South Africa did not have a single book in their home.
- Only 14% of the population are avid book readers.
- Only 5% of parents read to their children.

The results of the survey highlighted how our reading culture is a barrier to the country’s economic and social development plans as reading and literacy are at the heart of personal growth and development. Having as few as 20 books in the home has a significant impact in propelling a child to higher levels of education. This ultimately resulted in the launch of NBW, made up of:

- A national awareness campaign, to promote the importance of reading and books.
- A targeted programme to be implemented on the ground.

Events aim to promote a key message to encourage reading as a fun activity with each province or location tailoring the programme to meet local demands, with a strong focus on promoting indigenous languages, local authors as well as library awareness and access. The key objectives of NBW are:

- To promote reading as a critical part of South African development.
- To celebrate books as instruments for education, culture, heritage and economic progress.
- To showcase and increase indigenous language publishing.
- To showcase South African and African writers, publishers, booksellers and related businesses.
- To raise the profile of the South African book industry with emphasis on SMMEs.
- To form partnerships with other African countries celebrating NBW.

- To create national awareness via various media channels.
- To develop a corporate identity for the campaign.
- To attract key partnerships through an increased profile in the market.

“Marking the sixth year of the longest running and most successful reading campaign in South Africa, NBW once again travelled throughout SA with the NBW Bus transporting various programme activities to far-away places, both in the rural and urban areas.”

This year NBW was celebrated from 7 – 13 September, the pinnacle of various campaigns that had commenced as early as July.

Marking the sixth year of the longest running and most successful reading campaign in South Africa, NBW once again travelled throughout South Africa with the NBW Bus transporting various programme activities to far-away places, both in the rural and urban areas.

The mobility of the Bus, as well as other events that were supported by NBW reached five different provinces, with a multitude of events and activities taking place.

During NBW, each Province hosted multi-faceted localised programmes, which included reading in indigenous languages, storytelling and motivational talks, word-a-thons, poetry sessions plus many more. The NBW mascot – Funda Bala – continued to capture the imagination of children throughout South Africa.

Funda Bala, literally meaning ‘Read Read’ across indigenous language groups, was designed as a book, and shares books, laughter and joy amongst the overwhelmed and excited audience.

This year National Book Week had two very distinct pillars of activation – #BuyABook and #GoingPlaces.

Pillar 1 #BuyABook centered around increasing the number of leisure books in households. With more than half of South African households not having a single leisure book in their home, NBW launched the #BuyABook Campaign which aims to remedy this situation. It was a call to action for individuals, corporates, families and groups to go out and #BuyABook for someone who does not own one, bringing magic into someone’s life and making South Africa a better place.

This campaign was rolled out in three phases and began in July 2015.

Phase one – As the nation honoured Nelson Mandela’s legacy, NBW called on corporate organisations to turn their 67 minutes of service into R6 700 for 67 Books by South African authors.

Phase two took place in August, whereby The SABDC along with Musa Capital, a boutique investment-banking group, hosted the NBW Women’s Day Celebration at Exclusive Books, Rosebank with female learners. Learners were presented with Book Token vouchers to the value of R250 each and enjoyed the experience of buying their own books.

- #BuyABook
- #GoingPlaces
Phase three began in the beginning of September 2015 and ran until 20th September. Publishers Pan Macmillan SA, Penguin Random House SA, and NB Publishers offered a selection of discounted books that were sold in Bargain Books and Exclusive Books stores nationwide. The public was encouraged to purchase the books for R20 and donate them into the NBW book bins in the stores.

**Pillar 2 #GoingPlaces** was centered around advocacy and was aimed at building public awareness about NBW and to encourage book reading amongst South Africans via a national wide bus tour, following on from the success of it in 2014. The bus stopped in five provinces and made various stops at different NBW events as hosted by the various partners.

**Diversity of audience**
This year also marked the greatest range of diversity in audience participation. Participants included the elderly, children with impaired hearing, visually impaired and physically challenged participants. There was also a greater increase in participants that transcended racial lines.

**Media partnership SABC Foundation**
This year also marked a new partnership with The SABC Foundation. As the National Public Broadcaster, the SABC supports bona fide organizations by promoting social and welfare campaigns of a national nature through the granting of free advertising time on Radio and Television platforms as Public Service Announcements (PSA). Per this partnership radio PSA’s were recorded in all eleven official languages and a 30 second TV PSA was developed. Both aired from the 24th August until the 13th September 2015.

To date NBW has generated over R100 million worth of PR coverage. NBW featured in most of the major national, provincial, daily, weekly and weekend newspapers, and included prime time slots on national radio stations and TV shows such as SABC Newsroom, YoTV, ANN7 and eNCA Sunrise plus many more.

We can safely say that NBW continues to grow into a sustainable campaign that will live on for many years to come!

African Book Connection, one of our members, celebrated NBW in their own way this year. They made up book parcels to be delivered to 60 schools in the East London area to inspire learners to read.

To get involved with National Book Week please contact The South African Book Development Council on: 021 914 8626 bookweek@sabookcouncil.co.za www.sabookcouncil.co.za

And be sure to like/follow our pages: NationalBookWeekSA @NBW_SA NationalBookWeekSA
Eastern Cape Book Festival

Revitalising SA Literature

From as little as 30 attendees and almost no funds in 2014, the Eastern Cape Book Festival (ECBF) has grown to 200 literary-hungry attendees in 2015 with the promise of big things still to come. We spoke to Selome Payne, festival co-curator and owner of Poetree Publications about what the buzz is all about and what the future holds.

Literary events are increasing by the day in South Africa, what was the reason behind starting a festival in the Eastern Cape?
The Eastern Cape (EC) has never really had a literary platform of its own, and as writers/artists from the region, we are very passionate about creating spaces that develop and promote our people – a platform that is nationally and globally recognized, not just as a small, unknown event. There is an abundance of writers in the EC that do not have the access to events like these, who cannot travel to outside festivals to showcase their writing or participate in programmes that cater for writers. That’s why we felt it necessary to bring these facilities to our EC artists, and create that space right in their surroundings.

What is the main goal of the festival?
First and foremost, to promote reading and writing in our communities – our vision and mission is to revitalize literature within the EC, combatting illiteracy, and contribute to the preservation of our indigenous languages. Our goal is also centered around providing sustainable programmes and events for our writers where they can network with key industry stakeholders and exhibit their books and talents on a greater scale.

The festival is only in its second year, but shows a lot of potential. Do you have any specific goals for the future? Definitely! We want to be recognized as one of Africa’s leading literature festivals and expand this platform to such an extent that we host more and more writers every year. This year we launched our first poetry anthology and the interest has been phenomenal. We envision future anthologies to be distributed within our schools and also make it possible that more of our writers’ books find their way onto major bookshelves. We’re in the planning phases of incorporating an ECBF Kids programme as well – this will specifically cater for children’s literature – but it’s still an idea we’re toying with. We’d love to eventually establish fixed headquarters with an ECBF library, workshop centre and book donation facility.

There seems to be a great focus on poetry at the festival. Will you be focusing on different genres every year?
In the first year we had more poets showing interest in the event. The 2015 festival surprised even us as a team, where more writers of all genres came forward to launch their books and exhibit at the festival. We now have an even larger database, a wider variety of genres, and even greater interest from writers (even well-known internationally acclaimed authors) who wish to participate and contribute in the coming years. We definitely welcome all genres; this is an event where writers are able to learn from each other and encourage the youth to tell their own stories.

Were there any international participants this year?
Yes oh! We were privileged to host Jawhari Trahan this year. She is the owner/editor of Urban Tymes International magazine in California, and Zarin Soulye Artist Management. She came all the way to address our writers and participants on marketing yourself as an international writer. This is the kind of opportunity we strive to create, so that writers and artists from the EC can expand their scope, gain the necessary knowledge and have access to facilities that would not generally be made available to them.

The Chain Poem at the ECBF sounds like a great initiative and we can’t wait to see the final poem. Can you tell us more on how this worked?
The Chain Poem was such a fun aspect. It came from an idea loosely based on a “so you think you can write” concept, where anyone could contribute one line that embodied or gave voice to their idea of ‘Revitalising SA Literature’ – our theme for the 2015 festival. There were some quirky thoughts, really hilarious lines, and ones that left you with a deep sense of introspection. I think the guests simply enjoyed having an opportunity to actively participate in the festival and add their own little literary mark, even if they are not writers/poets. It’s quite a jumble, and I’m still unscrambling it, but we hope to publish it in the 2016 anthology as a ‘special’.

Who is featured in the anthology and what is the purpose of it?
The ECBF poetry anthology is specifically open to poets from the EC: current residents as well as those who have moved to other regions but are originally from EC. We want to feature mostly young poets, to give their voices a platform and a platform to publish that’s their own. With this annual anthology, we hope to publish as many EC poets as possible, and have the book distributed in our schools so that students can learn poetry written by their peers. For the coming publications, we will host workshops with hopeful poets and this will be a mandatory criterion to be considered for submission so that we can deliver high-quality poems in the publications and also develop the skills and talents of our youth.

Overall, would you say the ECBF reached its goal this year?
Oh, of course! We do not sell tickets; the festival is free to attend by anyone and everyone. We do ask that guests to sign a register on arrival or at any time during their visit. This way we have an indication of how many people attend over the two days and also get to contact guests after the event for their feedback. From starting off in 2014 with only about 30 visitors, and growing this year to nearly 200 people, we were pleasantly surprised and extremely satisfied with how this year’s festival turned out. We had 15 authors on exhibition, more than 20 writers and poets who shared their writing through readings, book launches and panel discussions and so many book lovers who enjoyed a fantastic two-day festival on their doorstep.
PEN South Africa

Working towards a literate nation

PEN International promotes literature and freedom of expression. Founded in 1921, the organisation’s global community of writers spans more than 100 countries. PEN International is a non-political organization, which holds Special Consultative Status at the UN and Associate Status at UNESCO.

The organisation is all about advocacy and PEN South Africa, led by South African author Margie Orford, is an active and pro-active organisation. Recently they took on Nitesh Patel, head of financial solutions for customers at Standard Bank, over his money saving tips published in Die Beeld, which referred to books as luxury items that should be avoided.


Asking Patel to withdraw the statement in public, PEN Afrikaans made many valid points around the industry, detailing the intricacies of the book value chain.

“Producing books is labour intensive. The author spends months, sometimes years, writing a book. Then a large number of people work on that book. Here are a few careers to think about: the publisher, the editor, the setter, the person who provides the artwork or photograph(s) for the cover, the person who designs the cover, theproof reader, the marketer, the warehouse worker and the courier who takes the books to the store. Bookstores in South Africa are struggling. They have to pay rent and they have to pay their staff. By discouraging people to buy books, Patel increases the odds against an industry that is already staggering.”

In response Patel “issued a brief statement to PEN Afrikaans and to the newspaper Beeld in which he pledged his own and Standard Bank’s continued support for the arts and the book industry.”

PEN Afrikaans took the opportunity to reiterate three points.
• Books, like education, are not an unnecessary luxury and cannot be placed in the same category as designer clothes.
• It is a myth that there is no cost involved in making e-books.
• Local publishers already provide the cheapest possible books to our readers.

Newly elected PEN International President, Mexican-American writer Jennifer Clement sums up the import of books in a recent Q and A with Tanja Tuma on Publishing Perspectives.

“In my house, books were revered. I was always surprised to go to homes that didn’t have any books. I can still remember the first time I read to myself in silence. The words in my mind revealed my interior world… There are so many cases where literature has accomplished both changes in laws or public perception of problems. Great examples of this include Charles Dickens’ Oliver Twist, which changed child labor laws. The works by Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë shed a brutal light on the way in which women suffered since they could not own property. The books by Emile Zola and Victor Hugo changed ideas on poverty and the mistreatment of miners. Joyce’s Ulysses allowed us to see the everyday man as a hero. Novels have always been a place of protest.”

The other matter of advocacy that our local organisation is involved in is SECTION27 and Better Education for All (BEFA)’s #TextbooksMatter campaign against the government that the textbooks shortages in Limpopo were a breach of learners’ rights. PEN SA is calling on government to ensure that all schoolchildren have access to textbooks.
The 67th Frankfurt Book Fair (FBF) closed its doors on Sunday, 18 October 2015. The Fair and its over 4,200 events attracted more than 275,000 visitors. The organisers report this to be an increase in visitor numbers of 2.3 percent. We unfortunately could not attend Frankfurt, but a few South African booksellers and publishers did. We asked them to share their experience with us.

A peripheral view of Frankfurt

October comes once a year end imbedded therein lies the all important Frankfurt Book Fair. The Fair is one of the highlights of the book year that starts by getting to Frankfurt at a reasonable Rand price and finding affordable accommodation within walking distance that is not next to the methadone dispensary in the red light district. I have a quirkiness in booking my accommodation, which my mother cannot understand, that has become a hard and fast rule to add an edge to the yearly pilgrimage. I book my accommodation a couple of days before departure, I go cheap and never book the same hotel twice. People who have been to Frankfurt a few times probably would have guessed this from the mention of the red light district and methadone dispensary earlier, but in saying this I can assure you that all the accommodation I have stayed in has been honest and Spartan which is essentially all you really need.

Frankfurt is a rebuilt city due to the devastation of World War II and there is not much surviving before 1945. Even the cathedral could not escape the ravages of carpet bombing and from afar the sight of it fills you with wonder but on close inspection it appear to be almost completely rebuilt. The new Frankfurt impresses on me a city of grey and cream Lego pieces with towering shards of glass clustered in areas.

The Fair itself is large and intimidating to first timers but once you have been several times its bravado melts away. It always remains a challenge both mentally and physically and one cannot help feeling a sense of relief once it is over. Hall 8 at the Messe was the home to most of the English language publications until this year. In all honesty I can say good riddance to that hall with its hard floors, grey dominance and queues for the loos. It was far removed from everything else at the Fair, which I probably mistakenly put down to a German sense of humour. Thankfully the English halls are closer to the centre of the Fair and one does not feel as if you are the bad cousin visiting. The new halls are Halls 4 and 6 with their various levels (I will leave that to the uninitiated to discover its complexities) and are rather welcoming. Bright colours abound, toilets are plentiful and food is readily available and this seems to have an effect on the mood of the Fair, or it could just be my mood improved with the better location. A few more visits to the new location will decide that uncertainty.

In closing I can say with certainty a few things about the Fair. The weather was cold, so cold in fact that smokers were seen changing hands half way through their cigarettes to do the pocket swap. The location of the English halls at the Messe was a vast improvement on Hall 8. And the Fair was as necessary and demanding as it has ever been. – Richard Hargraves, Hargraves Library Services

Notes from Frankfurt

Our new digital chairperson, Melvin Kaabwe of Van Schaik, sent me his notes from attending the EditEUR international Supply Chain Seminar. The take home from the conference, which also celebrated the ISBN’s 50th birthday, was discoverability and how good metadata was vital to being discovered.

• ISBN: The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is a unique international identifier for monographic publications. Published as an international standard (ISO 2108) and in wide use since the 1970s it has been adopted in over 160 countries. Assigning an ISBN enables not only each publication to be uniquely identified but also rich product metadata to be associated with a particular publication record as well as the accumulation of sales data by specific title, edition and format. ISBN celebrated its 50th birthday at Frankfurt and is becoming ever more relevant.

• Metadata: So much rests on accurate ISBN capturing methods. Without ISBN, a good jacket design and comprehensive metadata, sales are low. With enhanced metadata they are incredibly successful.

• ONIX: The Online Information Exchange for Books Product Information Message is the international standard for representing and communicating book industry product information in electronic form. ONIX is an XML-based standard for rich book metadata, providing a consistent way for publishers, retailers and their supply chain partners to communicate rich information about their products. It’s widely used throughout the book and e-book supply chain in North America, Europe and Australasia, and is increasingly being adopted in the Asia Pacific region.

• Thema: Thema is a new global subject classification system for books, which has already gathered wide international participation. Thema is intended for use by all parts of the book trade: unlike other book trade subject classifications, it aims to be globally applicable.
Publishers perspectives

PASA (Publishing Association of South Africa) annually sends a small group of publishers over to the Fair. We managed to track down Nkemi Molefe, Publishing Manager, Pelmo Books, who had the following to say about her experience.

“FBF was in a way overwhelming as well as exciting for me as a small South African Publisher. It was a great platform for me to show/display my product as well look for new business. It was a bit of a challenge figuring out how I fitted it when I came for the first time last year but I soon grasped the concept and planned better for this year’s fair. My aim was to meet with publishers of children’s classics, negotiate good deals to translate them into a South African indigenous language and publish them locally. FBF was a great platform for me to do that and more.

What I found amazing was how the last two days of the Fair are open to the general public and it was just great to see enthusiastic young people dressed up as different characters from all types of books (comics). How they would be sitting and reading at every other corner and checking out what the Book Fair has to offer.”

Dorothy Dreyer from Cover2Cover books was another small publisher that attended the Fair.

“In South Africa we often forget about the big world out there! At the FBF you get reminded of how big the world is, how many languages are spoken, and the many different issues and concerns of publishers in different countries. Yet there is a common language of publishing, and it is inspiring to see the innovation and artwork of the displays.

For Cover2Cover, what was most interesting was meeting other publishers doing similar work to us – creating exciting books that make young people want to read. Unfortunately African publishers are hugely under-represented, but some of those that were there were interested in our books... so watch this space!

Frankfurt is also an opportunity to investigate different international distribution and printing options. And last – but certainly not least – spending extended (often social) time with other small publishers from South Africa often offered interesting contacts and collective solutions to what we think of as our individual problems.

It’s a hugely enriching experience that without the DTI and PASA small publishers would not have a hope of having!”
AWARDS IN FOCUS »

ATKV Woordveertjies
Hierdie toekennings bekroon uitsonderlike hydraes rondom die Afrikaanse woord en bestaan uit agt katerogieë. Hierdie jaar se wenner is as volg:
• ATKV-Prosaprys: Kamphoer – Francois Smith (Tafelberg).
• Prys vir Dramateks: Die dag is bros – Wessel Pretorius.
• Prys vir Liefdesroman: Ewebeeld – Chanette Paul (LAPA Uitgewers).
• Prys vir Poësie: Mede-wete – Antjie Krog (Human & Rousseau).
• Prys vir Romanse: Rider in ‘n wit jas – Marie-Louise Steyn (Amelia Strydom) (Hartklopf).
• Prys vir Spanningslektuur: Donker spoor – Martin Steyn (LAPA Uitgewers).

Dinaane Debut Fiction Award
Any debut writer of an English-language manuscript would want to win this prize. The award is not just R35 000, but Jacana Media will also publish the manuscript. Andrew Miller had the honor this year and Dub Steps is now on the shelves.

Ingrid Jonker-Prys
Die wener van hierdie prys vir 2015 wat hierdie jaar ‘n halfeeu reeds bestaan is Nathan Trantraal vir sy bundel Chokers en Survivors. Die bundel is deur een van die beoordelaars as “een van die opwindendste bundels” in Afrikaans bestempel, met temas wat “verras en ontroer”. Die prys word toegeken aan ‘n Afrikaanse of Engelse debuutdigbundel.

Man Booker Prize
The Man Booker prize, now in its 47th year of existence, is seen as the world’s most important literary award and has the power to transform the fortunes of authors and publishers. It is awarded to the best novel of the year written in English and published in the United Kingdom. The honor of this prize was bestowed on Marlon James for A Brief History of Seven Killings (published by Riverhead Books) this year. Well-known South African writer, Marlene van Niekerk was one of the finalists.

Media24 Boek pryse
Hierdie prysie gaan aan boeke wat deur die loop van die jaar by die Media24 Boeke-groep verskyn het.
• WA Hofmeyr- pryse vir Afrikaanse fiksie: romans, kortverhale en drama: Buys: ‘n Grensroman deur Willem Anker (Kvela Boeke).
• Herman Charles Bosman- pryse vir Engelse fiksie: A sportful Malice deur Michiel Heyns (Jonathan Ball Publishers).
• Elisabeth Eybers- pryse vir Afrikaanse en Engelse digkuns: Mede-wete deur Antjie Krog (Human & Rousseau).

Rect Malan- pryse vir Afrikaanse en Engelse niefiksie: Lost and Found in Johannesburg deur Mark Gevisser (Jonathan Ball Publishers).
• MER- pryse vir jeugromans: Alive Again deur Andre Eva Bosch (Tafelberg).
• Mer- pryse vir geillustreerde kinderboeke: Noko and the Kool Kats deur Fiona Moodie (Tafelberg).

Kinderboektoekennings

Voorleeskategorie: Graad RR–1
Skrywer: Marita van der Vyver en Illustreerder: Zinelda McDonald (LAPA Uitgewers) – Die coolste ouma op aarde

Selfleeskategorie: Graad 2–3
Skrywer: Fanie Viljoen en Illustreerder: Arnelle Woker (LAPA Uitgewers) – Plos

Selfleeskategorie: Graad 4–5
Skrywer: Elizé van der Collf en Illustreerder: Chris Venter (Tafelberg) – Nina en die funky eksperiment

Selfleeskategorie: Graad 6–7
Skrywer: Jaco Jacobs (Tania Brink) (LAPA Uitgewers) – Wian Verwey het ‘n crush op my

Selfleeskategorie: Graad 8–10
Skrywer: Marisa Haasbroek (LAPA Uitgewers) – lewens vleug daar fairy dust

Die Toekennings vir Leesbevordering in Afrikaans
Storiwerf – Prof. Franci Greyling.

Wieners van die 2015 ATKV-Woordveertjies aangewys, 12 September 2015, bookslive.co.za/blog


Sol Plaatje European Union Poetry Award
This award is set out to recognise the life and vision of the political and social activist Solomon Tshekiso Plaatje and is bestowed upon a poet how truly reveals the political and social attitudes of our time through poetry. Athol Williams was this year’s winner with Streetclass Diseases.

Sunday Times Literary Awards
The Sunday Times Literary Awards celebrate the best South African fiction and nonfiction of the year. The awards consists of the Alan Patron Award for non-fiction and the Barry Ronge Fiction Prize. This year’s gala event took place at the Summer Place Ballroom in Johannesburg on the 27th of June. Jacob Dlamini walked away with the Alan Paton Award for Askari: A Story of Collaboration and Betrayal in the Anti-
Apartheid Struggle and the winner of the Barry Ronge Fiction Prize was Damon Galgut for *Arctic Summer*.

Damon Galgut and Jacob Dlamini Win the 2015 Sunday Times Literary Awards, 27 June 2015, bookslive.co.za/blog

The Nobel Prize in Literature
This year marks the 108th time this Nobel Prize has been awarded. The prize goes to an author from any country who has, “produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction”, Alfred Nobel. On 8 October, Svetlana Alexievich from Belarus was awarded with this honor.

Alfred Nobel’s Will, www.nobelprize.org

The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade
The German Publishers and Booksellers Association as a symbol of the industry’s unique dedication to peace gives this award. “The foundation is committed to peace, humanity and understanding among all peoples and nations of the world. The Peace Prize promotes international tolerance by acknowledging individuals who have contributed to these ideals through their exceptional activities, especially in the fields of literature, science and art.” German writer Navid Kermani won this year.

The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, www.friedenspreis-des-deutschen-buchhandels.de/445943/

1. ATKV Woordveertjies: Debra Primo, Marie-Louise Steyn, Antjie Krog, Kerry Lee Jones, Chanette Paul, Etienne van Heerden (LitNet), Martin Steyn, François Smith en Franci Greyling.
3. Dinaane Debut Fiction Award: Andrew Miller.
4. The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade: Navid Kermani.
7. The Nobel Prize in Literature: Svetlana Alexievich.

2. The Great White mansion, a popular bar in London.
4. The Blue Moon, a historic theater in New York.
5. The Green Dragon, a traditional pub in Dublin.
6. The Yellow Bird, a trendy café in Berlin.
Many years ago, Country Life Magazine created a route – called the Route to Nowhere. It started somewhere deep in the platteland and ended in Hanover, 60 kilometres before Richmond. I had wanted to write to Country Life then, complaining why their Route to Nowhere could not end in Booktown Richmond. But today Booktown Richmond is a "somewhere". In 2015, it was listed amongst SA Travel Portfolio’s Blog as one of the six most quirkiest festivals to visit. Earlier in 2015 BookBedonnerd was listed by Travel Weekly’s Paul Ash amongst its top 40 escapes for 2015. Yes, make no mistake, BookBedonnerd has turned the page.

But before I get to what all the fuss around BookBedonnerd is about, let us pause and explain – what is a booktown? A booktown is a small, rural area, usually a small town or village of between 500–1500 people, with a high concentration of booksellers, specializing mostly in second-hand and rare and outdated books. The bookshops are often twinned with coffee shops, internet cafes, bakeries, cheese or wine shops or with artisan enterprises such as paper production, book design, book illustration and the dwindling art of bookbinding. Some of these bookshops also sell arts and crafts and antiques.

Most booktowns develop around villages of historic significance or of scenic beauty. Very often, the architecture of these towns hark back to a period forgotten by time. But most crucial is cheap property. In order to be successful, booksellers must have lots of inexpensive display and storage space, for low overheads remains the key ingredient for a profitable business. Cheap property is a rarity in cities. Moreover, many cities may have the number of booksellers to match that of a booktown, but they are rarely clustered in one area. Attracting enough booksellers to a rural community creates a critical mass that is irresistible to the bibliophile.

These bibliophiles are indeed the foot soldiers who engineer the revitalization of the economy. They have a multiplier effect on the economy, because they are usually discerning tourists with high spending potential. They prefer to stay in guesthouses and bed-and-breakfasts. They pound the streets in search of that special antique that will become the conversation piece at their next dinner. They patronize the local café, the quaint restaurants and sometimes even become residents of these towns after exchanging a few months salary with the local estate agent.

The idea of a booktown was thought up by the maverick Richard Booth, way back in the sixties. His dream was to create the largest second-hand bookselling centre in the world. Today, Hay-on-Wye in Wales attracts over a million visitors a year. Booth started the venture all on his own with just one bookshop. Slowly, he started buying up the empty buildings in a town whose population was dwindling, and turned these buildings into bookshops. Booth always maintained that “a town full of books could be an international attraction”. Today, his “build-it-and-they-will-come attitude” has resulted in Hay-on-Wye being home to 38 bookshops, and booktowns developing in approximately 25 other regions throughout the world. Booktown Richmond is the only booktown in South Africa and indeed on the African continent, and locals believe it is truly the one project that has cemented the Karoo’s reputation as the literary heartland of SA. However, as popular as Booktown Richmond might be, it is its literary festival BookBedonnerd which has truly put Booktown Richmond on the map. We started Booktown Richmond with just three bookshops, owned by Peter Baker, Darryl David and John Donaldson. We opened the booktown with a performance by Patrick Mynhardt (his last in SA before his death a month later in London). But after that performance, everybody turned to me as the founder and asked “what next?” That is how BookBedonnerd was born. I instinctively knew that we needed a literary festival – and an unforgettable name. We hope that BookBedonnerd will go down in South African folklore as the book festival that changed the literary landscape of SA.

In our eight years, we have attracted many of the greatest names in South African literature. Antjie Krog, Mongane Wally Serote, Albie Sachs, Ivan Vladislavic, Deon Meyer, David Kramer, Etienne van Heerden, Sindiswa Magona, Diana Ferrus, Ahmed Kathrada to name but a handful.
Farewell to a great bookseller

Philip Joseph

In 1951, Pam and Pauline Joseph, wife and mother of the late Philip Joseph respectively, opened a small secondhand bookshop in King George Street, Johannesburg and called it Exclusive Books.

Philip at the time thought the book industry was something he would enjoy doing. “But my wife and my mother made it clear to me that this was their pitch, and while I was entitled to have a look, if I wanted to go into that line of business I would have to open up on my own.”

He then did just that, he opened another Exclusive Books in Hillbrow, which also started out as a secondhand bookshop. With Pam’s love for literature and his strict business principles, Exclusive Books quickly became known as South Africa’s premier retail bookseller.


“"He was a teacher in the real sense of the word and a great companion.”

Philip believed that much of the success in a business depends on the people running it. After years of experience in the industry Philip established a sound business model and was willing to share it with others. Benjamin Trisk, CEO of Exclusive Books described Philip as generous with his knowledge. “He was kind to all and razor-sharp. But he was more than this: he was a teacher in the real sense of the word and a great companion.”

“I met him in the 1970s when I worked at Macmillan and would see him fairly regularly. He was a remarkable fellow who made a great contribution to the book business in SA and the UK, and he had the wisdom to sell his UK business before the advent of Amazon.” Jonathan Ball, founder of Jonathan Ball Publishers.

Fred Withers, former managing director of Exclusive Books, says: “Philip was quietly spoken but had very strong and well-thought-out views of the publishing and bookselling businesses. He introduced me to the Seattle Coffee people, with whom Exclusive Books had a good, long relationship.”

The SA Booksellers Association would like to pay tribute to this great man.
Open Access Week – celebrated internationally during the third week of October – is a highlight on the LIASA calendar. Libraries have always been and still are about providing access to quality information for a better educated nation, which in turn leads to an empowered society with a higher life expectancy. Information needs to be kept open, for people to remain informed and to engage in self- and lifelong-learning, and to empower themselves.

Through Open Access Week LIASA supports publicly funded research being open at no cost to the public. Openness of information is important for all citizens, and not only for researchers at research and/or academic institutions. Information connects researchers, society and development. Quality information is unfortunately not always open, and information has in many cases become expensive and unaffordable. Still fresh in our minds are the protests on SA university campuses against the increase in student fees, fuelled by the poor rand/dollar exchange and the very expensive international research information to databases libraries subscribe. For a university to remain a high profile, high impact institution when benchmarking against other universities worldwide, it is crucial for its researchers to remain players on equal ground with researchers internationally.

A variety of activities were hosted at libraries and institutions worldwide to create awareness and to advocate for information to remain open. Public, school, special and academic libraries in South Africa all participated. The theme for this year was “Open for Collaboration”. In the spirit of collaboration libraries, researchers, school children and more got together and participated in competitions, activities, seminars, online webinars, exhibits, digital storytelling and more.

LIASA has further initiated SPARC Africa, which was launched at the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Academic and Research Libraries (ARL) Satellite Meeting on 14 August 2015. SPARC Africa will be running alongside SPARC USA and SPARC Europe, and will focus on capacitating Africans in academic and research sectors to champion free access to scientific knowledge as a means to alleviate Africa’s lack of access to quality scholarly content. At the same time, knowledge produced by Africans will be shared internationally as open access, contributing to the international knowledgebase (Nyahodza 2015). SPARC Africa would like to invite academic and research institutions, library and information profession associations, funding bodies, student representative organisations and parastatal organisations located in South Africa and African to become members.

According to Nyahodza (2015) SPARC Africa will prioritise creating a development forum, which will assist with capacity building and infrastructure to open up the African continent’s scholarly output; making it accessible and discoverable for the international community. The Chapter will create this developmental forum, by tapping into the Ubuntu nature, which is an African meaning, ‘humanity to others’.

This forum seeks to achieve:
- Development of training programmes to address open access activities, for example, the creation and management of repositories and publishing.
- Adoption of relevant open source software and the development of a support base for the optimal utilisation of such software.
- Promotion of the exchange of ideas and experience among members. The organisation also aims to establish global collaborative efforts by cooperating with international groups and organisations (such as SPARC) in the advancement of open access.

Open Access is growing from strength to strength, and LIASA would like to see all members contributing to an open World Wide Web (WWW) – a Web We Want for the World We Want.

Ina Smith is the SciELO Planning Manager of ASSAf (Academy of Science of South Africa).

www.liacl-org
International School Library Month

Get ready for 2016

By MARIE O’BREIN

‘October is International School Library Month (ISLM)’. This simple statement is repeated around the world in many languages every year in October. The event is hosted by the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) and is organized by a small volunteer committee of school library professionals. The current committee comprises members from Australia, India, Ireland and Zimbabwe. You can find out more about ISLM and see how schools around the world celebrated the event by visiting the IASL website www.iasl-online.org and navigating to the Advocacy tab.

The celebration of school libraries worldwide began in 1999 with International School Library Day (ISLD) being feted on the fourth Monday in October. This suited northern hemisphere schools as it marked the beginning of the school year for most countries. In 2008 ISLD was changed to ISLM so that all schools in both hemispheres would have the opportunity to take part.

This year’s ISLM theme was ‘The School Library Rocks’. Over the years a variety of projects have been initiated and some, such as ‘Email Around the World’, run by Cherie Shirley of Australia, have been replaced by the ‘Skype Project’ with 43 schools taking part this year. Two years ago, when the project was new, only a few schools made contact with each other. After the events of 9/11 in 2001, Barbara Braxton, the then ISLD coordinator, initiated ‘Planting Hope Growing Peace’. This united schools around the world in the planting of seeds for new life. The most enduring project though is the Bookmark Exchange. Schools have the opportunity to register for participation and are assigned partners. During October thousands of bookmarks are made by children all over the world and posted to their partner schools. A possible inclusion for future bookmark exchanges could be the emailing of digitally produced bookmark files to each other. With the ever-increasing cost of postage this could be a viable alternative if adequate equipment is available at both ends of the exchange to enable this to occur. This could be as simple as taking photographs, uploading them to a computer, editing them and emailing the file.

This year 257 schools, some with multiple campuses, took part in the exchange. This involved 616 separate registrations, thousands of email and 182 matched groups to ensure that all registered classes received the correct number of bookmarks.

If you’d like to register for the exchange in 2016 just watch the IASL website for updates. You don’t have to be an IASL member to join in the celebrations.

• Marie O’Brien is the co-ordinator for ISLM.
• www.iasl-online.org

Thank you for your continued support.

Here’s to a bright future in 2016

www.cup.co.za
Nal’ibali drives literacy change
Story Bosso storytelling competition

By SALLY MILLS

Reaching over 18 000 people and collecting over 2 000 stories from South Africans across the country in just one month, the Nal’ibali storytelling competition, 'Story Bosso', has helped drive literacy change in homes and communities throughout the country by reviving the lost era of storytelling.

Run throughout September this year, which was both Literacy and Heritage month, the competition aimed to connect members of the public to ideas and inspiration on how to tell stories and read aloud to others while showcasing a range of local stories in all official languages. By inviting everyone in South Africa, young and old, to share their favourite story in their language, the message from Nal’ibali was clear: Anyone can tell a story, anytime, anywhere!

“Storytelling is one of the greatest tools we have to develop not just our children's curiosity and imaginations, but also their sense of empathy and belonging. Storytelling and reading aloud allow us to build connections with each other by passing on knowledge and providing a shared experience while at the same time being important building blocks of literacy learning,” explained Carole Bloch, Director of PRAESA (the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa), a key partner in the Nal’ibali campaign.

“As South Africans, we have a deep and respected history of storytelling. Those most fortunate among us will remember being enchanted as young children by the stories told to us by our gogos, parents and other family members. Stories were told to teach us lessons, instill morals and values and often, simply to entertain us. These storytelling moments stay with us throughout our lives and become some of our most cherished memories,” added Smangele Mathebula, Nal’ibali Campaign Driver.

Accepting submissions online in the form of audio and video clips, Nal’ibali Literacy Mentors in seven provinces also held a series of pop-up auditions and public events to provide community members without appropriate technology or Internet access with an opportunity to share and record their stories. “For many people entering the competition there was a delicious moment, one that was charming to witness, when the full stride of story burst through the fear and nerves they had in telling it. Eye contact, a small smile… and then three-minutes of magic,” said Jade Jacobsohn, Managing Director of Nal’ibali.

Held at schools, shopping centres, public transport hubs and other community centres, the pop-up auditions brought joy to passersby of every age with the distribution of free books and special Story Bosso story cards while bigger public events created the opportunity for community members to showcase their talents with a public performance. Nal’ibali characters, Neo and Bella, also made their first public appearances, encouraging younger storytellers with friendly waves and plenty of hugs and photo opportunities.

“Some of the stories told were well known, some brand new and surprising. There were funny tales, cautionary parables, and some downright befuddling plots filled with twists and turns, and told by a full cross section of South Africa’s society. It’s clear that we are a nation full of creativity and imagination, and the Story Bosso competition created a big space to validate the importance of sharing our stories,” concluded Jacobsohn.

And, while many masterful storytellers were discovered in the process, the key aim of the competition was to highlight and share the tips and techniques that can help make anyone a better storyteller and get our children excited about books and reading.

Now, guided by Nal’ibali’s staff, a host of celebrity judges including actress and writer, Lebogang Mashile; founder of the South African Reading Foundation and its division ReadabookSA, Tebogo Ditshogo; author and retired teacher, Sindwe Magona; social activist and writer, Shaka Sizulu; comedian and author, Nik Rabinowitz; actress and author Bonnie Henna; children’s author, Alan Glass; new-age performance poet and singer, Busiswa and TV presenter and radio personality, Elana Afrika will help review the entries and select a winner.

The short list announcement outlining finalists in each of the competition’s three categories will be made in early November prior to the crowning of South Africa’s first Story Bosso and two runners-up. Taking home not only the title, a R 5 000 cash prize, a R 1 000 Ackermans voucher and home library courtesy of Bargain Books, Exclusive Books and local publishers, the winner will also receive a visit from a participating celebrity judge. The runners-up will each receive R 2 500 in cash, a R 500 Ackermans voucher and a home library.

For more information about the Nal’ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign as well as reading tips and stories in a range of South African languages, visit: www.nalibali.org, www.nalibali.mobi. Follow us on Facebook or Twitter nalibaliSA

Nal’ibali is driven by PRAESA, 2015 laureate of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for children’s literature and reading promotion.
The classroom of the future

An unknowable entity

By JESSICA FAIRCLIFF

The Classroom of the Future was a much talked about theme at this years Frankfurt Book Fair. The Fair was open to the public on the last two days and youth, dressed up in their favourite literary or comic book characters flooded into the Fair. The classroom of the future was a key point of interest. The installation portrayed a vision of the future where small groups of children worked together on nine explorative tours in five different subject areas where they created machines out of LEGO, scanned seashells to be printed in 3D, and told their own stories using sound. The whole installation was led by a hybrid textbook of the future, and it is this small detail that is most exciting.

“Studies have shown that 70 per cent of schoolchildren prefer working with printed books. Nevertheless, the advantages of digital teaching materials should not be underestimated,” www.buchemesse.de.

For this reason the Classroom of the Future presented this crossbreed solution: A hybrid textbook. The book was much like a traditional textbook with text and pictures but also connected to a world of digital material through waving a smartphone over an invisible watermark. The hidden / digital content of the book was then accessed via the smartphone, thus combining print and digital in a most successful manner.

The concept, designed and created by Hewlett Packard, is interesting because it offers an option where the education sector can continue to work with print products and yet incorporate all the advantages of digital innovation. Hewlett Packard believes that the Hybrid textbook will help the students of today prepare for their own future in the knowledge economy, yet still operate in a controlled environment.

Four leaders from the world of educational technology spoke about their business models at a session at the Business Club at the Fair and their discussion echoed the sentiment that drove the concept of the hybrid book. Most education is still happening in print and though there are drivers of digital first, the penetration is sparse.

“Classroom of the Future presented this crossbreed solution: A hybrid textbook. The book was much like a traditional textbook with text and pictures but also connected to a world of digital material through waving a smartphone over an invisible watermark.”

Worldwide, in all economies, there is much hype around digital in schools, however, the reality of low budgets, teachers that are unwilling to move across to new platforms and business models that seem to take more money than they make, means that the sector is really still in its infancy and print is still king.

“Todd Brekkus, President of myON, a division of Capstone, sees the Cloud as key to the wider adoption of digital in schools – and his platform is proof of that potential. A personalized literary platform for schools, myON has 6.2 million students online, primarily in the USA. The average student spends 22 minutes on the platform each day, with some even looking at 25 books on myON in a week. Its success has even led to the company moving to become a distributor of content on a revenue sharing basis,” reported Mike Piesing in a piece on Publishing Perspectives.

For Martin Fielko, International Business Manager of Cornelsen Schulverlage, their strategy is to penetrate the market and get the teachers used to digital by giving away the digital book for free when they sell a book. “At the moment, we sell content and give services like training and technical support away for free. In the future, we may follow the ‘freemium’ model of giving the content away for free and then charging for services,” he said.

“When people ask me to give them examples of countries that are really driving digital education my response is always that it is patchy,” says David Langridge, Worldwide Education Senior Partner Development Director of Microsoft Education. “You have got some schools that are really driving it, but to say that it is widespread is really overstating it. We are a productivity and platform company, so our goal is to drive the use of Microsoft technology in schools. Having said that, we give Office away for free to schools, and they get 80 to 90% off commercial rates for our other products.”

“In the end, our goal is really to improve education, as we have been teaching the same way for over 100 years,” he says. “We are getting the same results, while tech companies like Microsoft can’t find graduates with the right skills to fill our vacancies.”

By using the latest technology in the Classroom of the Future, Frankfurt organisers hoped that teachers and publishers would be shifted from being providers of information to being supporters and prompters of the learning experience, reported Piesing.

“The goal is to show that education can be innovative and international, and publishers can find new ways of delivering material in the future. The first two years of the Classroom of the Future focused on the use of 3D technology in scientific education. This year, the classroom of the future demonstrates other aspects of innovative learning such as the hybrid textbook and how nicely-designed spaces … can have a direct impact on how much time you want to spend in a room, how you learn — and even how you think,” said Martina Wolff de Carrasco, Manager Vertrieb Bildung at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

“In the end,” Wolff de Carrasco says, “it is designed to provoke a discussion, as no one knows what the future of education will look like. So, we are completely free to do what we want with it – and they are free to say that they disagree.”
Opening up access to research and info

A necessity, not a luxury

By JOHN BUTLER-ADAM, co-authored by Susan Veldsman and Ina Smith

Children struggle to learn when they don’t have science labs and libraries. Learning becomes difficult in classrooms that are falling apart, or where children are expected to sit on the floor because they have neither desks nor chairs.

A lack of infrastructure is just one contributor to South Africa’s entrenched and ongoing educational inequality. There is another, less frequently discussed issue that is deepening this inequality: access to quality peer-reviewed information.

Such information should be available to all South Africans whether they are school children, university students, researchers or citizen scientists. This will encourage lifelong self-learning. It will spur continued research and innovation. Access to information can bolster education, training, empowerment and human development.

It has been more than 21 years since apartheid ended, but a distinction remains between South Africa’s “rich” and “poor” universities. One of the reasons for this distinction is the richer institutions’ ability to invest in research resources. They can afford expensive subscriptions to databases, which contain a wealth of research – ironically funded by taxpayers’ money.

The historically disadvantaged and predominantly black universities can’t afford such subscriptions. Their academics also can’t contribute to such resources, because authors are expected to pay a fee for the “privilege” of being published.

As university budgets are slashed, even wealthier institutions are beginning to struggle with subscription and publication fee costs.

This problem is not unique to South Africa. Research and academic institutions, funders and governments around the world are beginning to embrace Open Access for publicly funded research. In the internet age, it is possible to tremendously lower the cost associated with publishing.

Open source software has also made it possible to manage quality peer-reviewed research. Sometimes this involves having an article published for the first time in an Open Access journal. This is called Gold Open Access. In other instances, an article may first be published in a limited access journal and a second copy then made available in an institutional repository, a practice called Green Open Access.

The value of this second, open-access copy is that it allows more people to get hold of research being conducted by a particular university or academic. This in turn increases the number of citations an institution receives – and that translates into more money from government research subsidies.

Repositories also play an important role in risk management. Digitally preserving a copy of a research article and its accompanying data sets provides evidence of what was done with research funding. It means the data sets can be reused, which ultimately saves taxpayers’ money because they don’t have to fork out again for repeat data collection.

South African universities are also involved in the open access revolution. Presently, there are 31 institutional repositories in the country. These are used to digitally preserve research articles, theses and dissertations by scholars associated with the relevant institution. Of the 303 scholarly journals accredited by the country’s department of higher education and training, just fewer than half are available as open access.

Eight of the country’s research or academic institutions – including its National Research Foundation – have policies on Open Access to publicly funded research. All of these are positive developments, but there is much more to be done to truly open up access to research and information in South Africa.

Researchers still have a deeply ingrained preference for publishing in the high-impact, high-profile scholarly journals produced by prominent publishers. This is driven by prestige. If academics have the money to pay the exorbitant author fees, they publish in these journals. These academics’ own universities must then pay again to access research that was conducted using institutional resources and taxpayers’ money.

The next step would be to formalise open access in South Africa and to provide proper guidance in terms of the standards that researchers and research institutions should adhere to. A well-informed national open access policy could be created by learning from what other countries have done. Until now, individual academics and institutions have driven the open access process. This bottom-up approach has its merits, but a push from the top is needed to ensure that we stay on track.

In keeping with this top-down approach, the Department of Higher Education and Training should consider allocating some of the money it generates through accredited journals to funding universities’ open access initiatives.

All South Africans should have access to quality, peer-reviewed, publicly funded research. How else can the country showcase what it has to offer in terms of research? How else can it increase the impact of this research? And how else can we inspire future generations of innovators and thinkers to embark on the research that’s needed to solve the country’s problems?
The Executive Committee of the South African Booksellers’ Association would like to thank the following members for acknowledging their ongoing support by remitting their annual membership fees:

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