

Michael Hauge — Story and Script Consultant, Author, Lecturer

Michael is the keynote speaker '*All You Need Is Love*',
at the 2016 Romance Writers of NZ Annual Conference: **P. 2**



**Meanwhile,
on page 2
Jim Kennard
makes it
happen P. 2**

**Making money
by Blogging
P. 3**

**The philosophy
of charging by
the hour P. 4**

**Drake's brass
plate P. 6**

**Tips for
better writing
P. 9**

**Thinking about
a new Career?**

**LOOK INSIDE:
Ideas on every page ...**

**FICTION:
Cut the blue wire: P. 12**

More Good News

Jim Kennard is a graduate.
He's applying his training.



Jim's backstory ...

"My writing career started in the 1970s when I was recruited to write safety submissions for each component in a modernised Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. These ICBM submissions were then presented to the British Admiralty Board to show the missiles could be safely accepted into service.

"I spent some time in the sales department writing proposals to sell British missile control systems to friendly foreign navies.

"Later, I renewed my qualification as a hydrographic surveyor and worked in the heavily documented oil exploration industry.

"Today I'm a pensioner seeking something interesting to keep me busy at home. That's why I completed the excellent NZIBS Proofreading and Editing course which took me up to the next level with my writing.

"I have established 'CrossCheck Proofreading & Editing' with a website, LinkedIn page and a Facebook page.

"I helped with proofreading Kate Rivers' romance novel, a PhD thesis and some MSc essays for Nigerian students studying at Plymouth University in UK.

"I find I can be most helpful where English is not the students' native language."

Well done, Jim.

Believe – and you can make things happen in your life too.

Romance Writers Conference

"All You Need Is Love"

Romance Writers of NZ will hold their 2016 annual conference at the Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre in Mt Wellington, Auckland, F-S-S, 12-14 August.

The featured guest speaker is screenwriter **Michael Hauge**, who will be conducting his full one-day Story Mastery Workshop all day Friday 12th August. He'll also speak during the weekend.

Michael has credentials and experience the rest of us can only dream about. He will be at the conference sharing his considerable knowledge!

<http://www.storymastery.com/events/michael-hauges-story-mastery-4/>

All the details for booking into the **one day workshop** (or the entire conference) are on the RWNZ website:

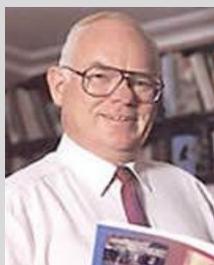
<http://www.romancewriters.co.nz/conference/>

There are still places for the Friday Workshop with Michael. You will not be disappointed. See Michael's five minute interview on **YouTube**:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MoNvhUyX2c

Gaylene Atkins, who was a NZIBS graduate in 2008, writes: *"It's an opportunity not to be missed. With the right encouragement and expert tuition there is much more to come from us writers 'down-under'. Michael could be the person to help another Kiwi writer unlock something special within you."* □

Brian Morris Principal



On NZIBS website

Learn new skills and create a new career for yourself.

Freelance Travel Writing and Photography:

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=40

Journalism and Non-Fiction Writing

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=38

Sports Journalism

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=60

Internet Entrepreneur

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=1726

Creative Writing

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=28

Romance Writing

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=58

Mystery and Thriller Writing

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=50

How to Write Poetry

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=44

Writing Stories for Children

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=83

Writing Short Stories

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=79

Writing Your First Novel

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=85

Life Coaching

http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=46

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http://nzibs.co.nz/?page_id=30

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You already have one foot on the first rung of the ladder. Your climb will take you higher than you are right now.

Making Money By Blogging

Blogging has been 'a hot thing' since the 1990s.

One rumour says blogs are the new road to riches; another says there is no money in blogs.

Which is correct? As is usual with human endeavour, both rumours have some truth.

Success is almost solely dependent on your intent, technique, and persistence.

The 'average' blog earns nothing – because they are average. Yet, plenty of bloggers make six figure incomes. These are the bloggers whose posts get repeated and reposted. But they represent fewer than 1% of those people who start a blog.

Successful bloggers choose their topics carefully. Most cater for a narrow niche. "An inch wide and a mile deep" is a common mantra.

They treat their blogs as a business and they give them the same intense attention they'd expect to give any activity that returns a six figure income.

Blogs take a while to mature, like an olive tree. Gaining a loyal following takes t-i-m-e.

Some topics cater for a numerically smaller audience than others. So don't expect your blog to fascinate millions of readers straight away. It will grow slowly.

There are two main ways to attract blog revenue. You can do either or both.

The first is direct revenue gathering— by carrying product advertising.

However, if you're advertising other people's stuff and taking a small commission if or when a reader buys something, you probably won't make much.

For example Amazon is one of the biggest, most well-known, and most-searched-for sites.

Amazon's products are

promoted by lots of people. But Amazon pays only a tiny percentage, so if your blog readers buy mostly book-sized purchases through your link, you won't make much.

The other strategy involves indirect methods—and much of it will be done 'off-blog'.

When you're focused on indirect revenue streams you have more than a blog - you have a small business.

Some bloggers write books, or offer courses, others teach using videos. Some use the reputation they have created as writers to gain freelance work.

A blogger can also conduct live workshops or do consulting or speaking on their topic.

This last raises an important issue: your indirect success—or any success—depends on the popularity of your topic.

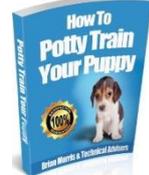
To be precise, what problem are you solving? Or offering to solve?

Many magazines sell and lots of people read them. But magazines are more entertainment than problem-solvers.

People are willing to spend their money to solve their problems, so the more problems you can solve, the more money you'll make.

It's a good idea to aim to specialise in a single area.

You should aim to satisfy a small market with detailed help, rather than brand yourself as another generalist offering broad-brush information on multiple topics.



Problem-orientated, detail-minded specialists answer actual questions.

Tip: Find the questions people need answered in your area of expertise, and answer them.

People will pay well for answers that solve their problems with strategies, products, techniques or tips if these can be implemented *now. Today!*

That is why 'How To' ebooks which solve a problem are brief.

Consider these detailed steps for bloggers:

1. Discover the NEED in your market, or the field you are skilled in.

2. Help those who identify with having the problem you outline to get specific about their frustration.

3. Explain how you can show them a way out, or through.

4. Illustrate how your solution will solve their problem.

5. Offer your help with something specific – information or product.

Doing those things focuses your attention on solving the problems people have today. NOW!

Plenty of gurus suggest 'building a tribe'. Yes, a tribe has energy, for sure. But if the tribe you attract is only interested in reading about the subject, eg: clean rivers and streams, they may not buy anything from you.

You need to attract a tribe whose members all have the same identified problem - and they want it solved now. They believe YOU have the answers they seek.

Think about that awhile.

If your blog articles offer 'helpful hints' and 'tips' on a wide range of subjects loosely linked with your blog topic, it's not likely to be a blog that solves problems NOW for your readers.

Will your tribe members just keep reading in the hope you'll write something soon that fixes their specific hot topic problem?

Or will they unsubscribe and wander off in search of someone who will offer a solution?

Think about the problems you could solve today. Do you already know exactly 'how to'. Can you find out? Interview a few experts.

Then blog about those problems, loudly and frequently. Offer a product or an ebook. ▣

When you charge by the hour

by **Diane Faber Veitzer**

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ONE of the great innovations of the 20th century was the billable hour – the idea that professionals would get paid based on how many hours they work, rather than on the results of their labour.

As long as I am working, each hour is valued equally, whether I contribute a million-dollar-insight, or I revise the same document three times, crumple up the page and start over. The billable hour is a sure thing.

I've been a lawyer working on the billable hour system for nearly 15 years. The system never falters.

If I work one hour, I bill the client for one hour, and my law firm gets a fixed amount of money. Of course, the law firm uses some of that money to pay me, my secretary, rent my office space, buy office supplies, and take some profit for the senior partners. Generally speaking, about a third of my billable hourly rate will 'trickle down' to me.

After 15 years, my working hour yields about \$100 to me. Not bad, for an hour's work as a lawyer.

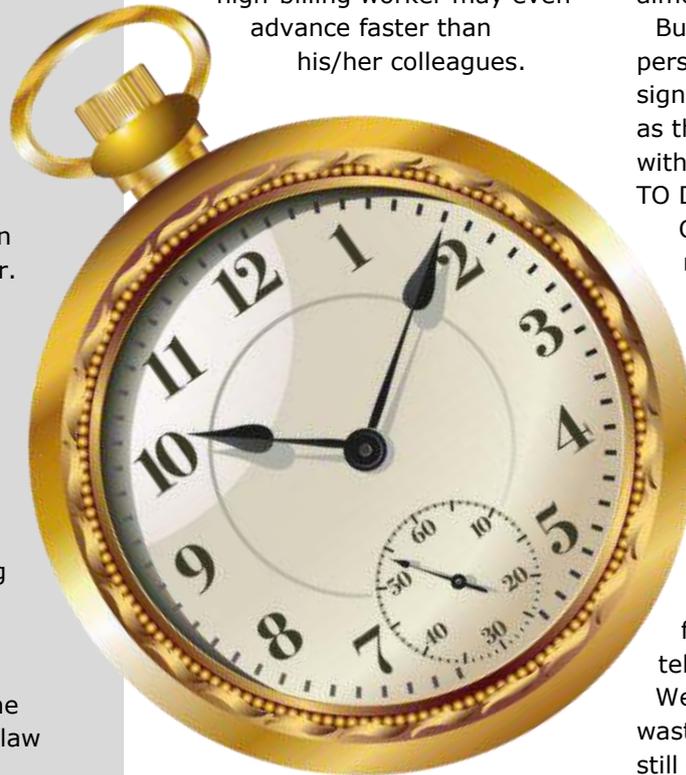
And it's day in, day out, every hour I choose to work directly influences my wage envelope.

Assuming there is an unlimited amount of work to be done (there is), and the clients pay (they usually do), it's fairly steady money in my pocket for each additional hour I work.

A folk hero was born in the 1980s when a New York lawyer legitimately billed 27 hours in one day*. Add to the equation that those—in a law firm—who work the most hours are held in the highest esteem. *He worked as he flew west to California.

A person whose billing nears 3000 hours a year is regarded as superhuman by some and resented by others who worry that their 60-hour weeks make them look like slackers.

In the hour-billing world, the high-billing worker may even advance faster than his/her colleagues.



(After all, he works nearly two years of time for every one year of his neighbours.)

In this environment, work becomes an endless game of recording billable time.

Instead of the 9-to-5 workday, five days a week, for which my country's labour unions fought so hard, most lawyers, accountants, and consultants talk of 8-to-8 workdays, often 7 days a week.

That folk hero who billed 27 hours in one day included time spent working on a westbound flight JFK to LAX. He added three hours of extra time to his miracle day. Energetic London lawyers are now thinking about a flight LHR to HKG to break his record!

The incentive to work is thus clear and constant: a fixed amount of money and an incremental status hike come with every additional hour billed.

Yes, it's a good thing - but it's also a curse.

There is little discussion about what is actually contributed during the billed hour.

We often joke among ourselves that 'the hour of great brilliance' is worth \$1000, and the hour waiting for a connecting flight is worth almost nothing.

But the hour in which I cleverly persuade my opponent to settle a significant case is paid the same as the hour spent in a meeting with my junior colleague making TO DO lists.

Outside lawyer work, there is no price tag on my time. But what is the value of the hour spent outside the office? What do I earn in that hour? It is much harder to value our time when we're not paid for it. Many of my hours outside work are spent buying paper towels, waiting in line at the dry cleaner, or 'on hold' waiting for a live person to pick up the telephone.

We may begrudge the time wasted in these activities, but we still do them because we can't avoid them.

(Thanks to the mobile phone, I can still take business calls - and bill my time - while I'm doing errands, as long as I'm being honest.)

Some of the most profound moments in life are not valued in dollars.

But what of the hours which could be used either way - to generate more income at a fixed rate, or for some non-lucrative purpose? The 'marginal hour' poses the tough decision between what is a sure thing and an unknown value.

A person with a fixed hourly wage must make decisions every day to determine when it is time to leave the office. He values having those remaining hours free as being more valuable than the pay he would get for working them. That decision requires courage, optimism, and a core belief that some of the most profound moments in life are not paid for in dollars.

The Non-Billable Hour

There is no hourly rate paid for building a relationship with another person.

Unlike working at an hourly-wage job, the time spent building a relationship with another person is speculative, and its outcome is uncertain.

The initial hours of a relationship can be critical - just being available is part of the dance.

Once the relationship is established, how quick are we to devalue the time spent maintaining it, choosing instead to work extra hours and boosting our salary?

What about spending half an hour on the telephone with a parent, rather than putting off making the call so we can get back to work?

Those middle hours are even harder to gauge. Should we make the time to attend a child's school function - which might cost me \$250 in real salary dollars? What if it's not my child, but my neighbour's child, and she can't be there today?

What if the project isn't a single hour, but ten or twenty hours spent planning and hosting a bridal shower for a woman you hardly know, but you have a home that's perfect for hosting the party? What about the time spent visiting a sick person, or a widow who is mourning?

How long should you stay?

How quickly do we run away because we want to get back to work and earn more money?

And what of 'free time' - that strange concept of 'hanging out' with friends, talking about nothing much.

Almost every Sunday I find some distraction unexpectedly comes up.

What if I missed the telephone call from the friend who really needs to talk to me for moral support?

[Rabbi Kushner](#) once observed that the hardest choices in life are not between good and evil - they are between good and good.

Earning a living is good. Helping another person is good. The hard decision is knowing how to choose the activity that will bring the most life - not just the most money.

Almost every hour of one's life can be spent doing something that is eternal. Just as there is an endless amount of billable work to do, there is also an even more endless amount of non-billable work to do.

[The Torah](#) gives us the courage to place a real value on doing mitzvahs -- even when it literally costs us money by the hour.

The kind of professional work that commands high billable rates can be fun, interesting, challenging, and deeply satisfying. It can meet intellectual hunger; it can give the thrill of winning; it can provide an opportunity to do some good in the world. We need to work, not just entertain ourselves, but we need to earn a living, support our families, and give support to others who are in need. These are also mitzvahs. To the lucky ones who get paid well for that effort, congratulations!

Do good with the money.

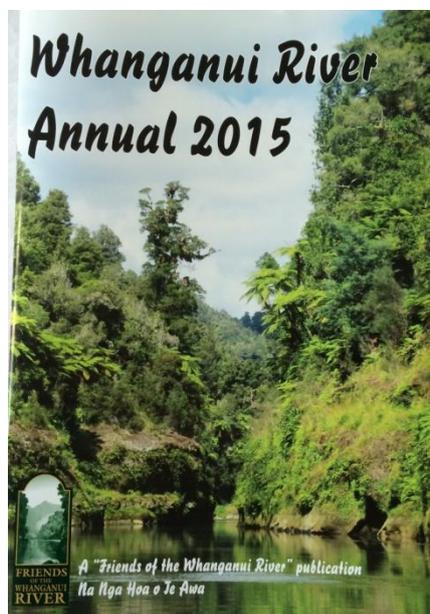
But consider the dollar's value in eternity for what you could have done while you were working. □

Conservation-Minded?

The Whanganui River Annual, is a **Friends of the Whanganui River** publication. The group describes itself as a non-political fan club.

Here's their website:

<http://www.friendsofthewhanganuiriver.com/>



The annual is edited by NZIBS student **Jim Parnell**.

Job Opportunities

[Trainee Multimedia Journalist](#),

Dorset Echo, Dorset, UK.

Are you comfortable with printed words but also savvy on social media? Turn events into photos and stories that sell. Full time. Closes 24 June.

[Trainee Reporter](#),

Newsquest Clyde & Forth Press, Galashiels/Peebles, UK.

Do you have a hunger to find exclusive stories? Work for the Border Telegraph and Peeblesshire News. Full time. Closes 8 June.

All these jobs were put on the Student Discussion Board SDB when they were first listed.

That may have been several days ago! But there may have been no suitable applicants.

Has the date expired? Check. Put yourself forward anyway!

[Journalist](#),

Fairfax Media, Canberra, AU.

Write for digital platforms bringing news to rural communities. Full time. Closes 14 June.

[Journalist - Sport](#),

Fairfax Media, Canberra, AU.

Write about a city's sports life and capture the action for digital and hard copy news channels. Full time. Closes 14 June.

[Photographer/Food Stylist](#),

Faroo Fresh Food, Auckland.

Do you love gourmet food? Create images of prepared dishes, in house recipes, signage and more. Full time. Closes 10 June.

[Freelance](#)

[Photographer/Videographer](#),

Potential Plus Media, Hamilton.

Capture creative images of homes, properties and lifestyle. Part time contract. Apply now.

[Support Workers](#),

Renaissance Group, Auckland.

Work with individuals with a disability, supporting them to achieve their goals. Shift work/flexible hours. Apply now.

[Technical Writer](#), Beyond

Recruitment, Auckland.

Write technical guidance manuals, 'how to' manuals and more. Full time. Apply now.

How to get a job is an ebook you'll find at Amazon.com This short \$1 book gives you all the steps for getting a job - age 16 to 75. Click here for the book.

<http://tinyurl.com/pgvgiky>

Call 0800-801994 for a chat about your other career options.

CONTACTING NZIBS

Our Institute toll free telephone number is 0800-801 994.

But we've been stretching it lately so we invested in extra telephone services.

The Institute now has an overflow toll free number:

0508-428 983.

(This is also the number you'll dial to connect on designated 'Chat To Your Tutor Days'.)

If you called the office recently and didn't get through, apologies.

The office is usually ready for action 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday.

There is an ANSWERPHONE service to take messages after hours and on weekends.

The website is open 24/7. The SDB is always open and available, day and night, 7 days.

Or you can email ...

registrar@nzibs.co.nz

principal@nzibs.co.nz

tutor@nzibs.co.nz

If you have some good news

to share with everyone, use the SDB Student Discussion Board.

We ALL love reading about students' new books, competition wins, even small achievements.

Remember, you can look in all sections and post other than the subject you're studying.

That means proofreaders and story writers can see what the photographers are getting excited about. And so on.

There are monthly competitions anyone can enter.

Participate in the full student life!

MEDIA caps for NZIBS graduates

- ❖ Journalist,
- ❖ Sports Journalist
- ❖ Photographer
- ❖ Travel Writer.

If you'd like one, please send \$10 and a letter detailing your name, postal address and former student number. One size fits all.



Drake's Brass Plate

In 1579, according to contemporary records, Francis Drake posted a brass plate intended to be a permanent record of his landing in California.

On it, he claimed "the kingdom" for the crown of England. The plate has never been found.

However, a fake one was in the spotlight for nearly half a century.

Several hundred years after Drake, but before the development of modern metallurgical testing, some amateur historians decided to play a joke on a colleague, Herbert Bolton.

Bolton, a professor of Californian history, had been looking for the missing Drake plate "for years".

His friends forged Drake's Plate, making up a design and cutting some words into it with a cold chisel. They buried it in 1933, close to where the landing had taken place, expecting someone to find it and take it to Bolton.

Bolton was California's noted expert in such things.

Unfortunately, the first finder dumped it as he did not realise its significance. Three more years passed before it was re-found and handed over to Bolton—who bought it from the finder for \$2,500 and quickly authenticated it.

Bolton had found Drake's Plate! Rudimentary metallurgical tests seemed to back up his decision, despite a number of voices who declared their doubts.

However, other experts also declared it genuine, and the hoaxers decided to stay silent. Replicas of the plate were even presented to the current Queen Elizabeth II.

The plate came to be considered genuine until a much broader range of tests was done in the 1970s. But not until 2002, nearly seventy years after it was first buried, was the full story unpicked.



"Take up one idea.
Make that one idea your life.
Think of it, dream of it, live on
that idea. Let the brain, muscles,
nerves, every part of your body,
be full of that idea, and just
leave every other idea alone.
This is the way to success."
~ Swami Vivekananda



17 Tips for better writing

by **Steven Goldsberry**

From Graduates Club Report #958
Reproduced for educational purposes.

1. Never save your best for last. Start with your best. Expend yourself immediately, then see what happens. The better you do at the beginning, the better you will continue to do.

2. The opening paragraph, first sentence, first line, phrase, word, title is vitally important. The beginning is the most important part of the whole work. It sets the tone and lets the readers know you're a commanding writer.

3. The first duty of writers is to entertain their readers.

Readers lose interest with exposition and abstract philosophy. They want to be entertained. But they feel cheated if, in the course of entertaining, you haven't taught them something worth knowing.

4. Show what you mean, don't tell or editorialise.

"Not ideas about the thing, but the thing itself" said Wallace Stevens.

5. Voice is more important than image. *"Poetry is not a thing, but a way of saying it."* A E Housman

6. Story is more important than anything. Readers (and publishers) care a lot less about craft than they do about content. The question they ask isn't, *"How accomplished is the writer?"* but *"How good is the story?"*

7. These rules, pressed far enough, contradict each other. That's the nature of rules for most things.

8. All writing records conflict and change. Give the opposition quality attention and good lines.

The power of your antagonists should equal the power given to the protagonists.

9. Shift focus often. Vary sentence structure and type; jump back and forth in time and place; make a good mix of narration, description, exposition and dialogue.

10. Be careful with your diction. A single word, like a drop of iodine in a gallon of water, can change the colour of your entire manuscript.

11. Provide readers with closure. The last sentences of the novel should echo something that happened earlier. Life comes full circle. "If I have a pistol in my first chapter, a pistol ends the book."—Ann Rule

12. By the end of the work, the conflict should reach some satisfactory resolution. Not always a 'happily ever after' ending, but something should be finalised.

13. Revise, revise, revise. You never get it on the first try. Art shows up in rewriting.

14. Avoid excessive use of adjectives and adverbs; trust the precision of nouns and verbs. Verb form: the shorter the better. Avoid helping verbs and progressives. Avoid passive voice. Avoid clichés and stock phrases.

15. Be interesting with every sentence. Be brief. Hemingway's first editor at the *Kansas City Star* gave him this style sheet:

"Use short sentences. Use short first paragraphs. Use vigorous English. Be positive, not negative."

Hemingway later referred to that list as "the best rules I ever learned for the business of writing."

16. If you can be misread or misinterpreted, you will be.

Check what you've written for innocent but troublesome double entendre.

17. There are no rules for good writing. Those who break the 'rules' successfully are the true artists.

But: learn, practise and master the rules first. *"You cannot transcend what you do not know."*

Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Job Opportunities

[Technical Writer](#), Madison Recruitment, Auckland. Prepare, review and revise technical products documents. Full time. Apply now.

[Bid Writer](#), Jacobs Group (Australia) Pty, Auckland. Develop and organise sales documents, conduct market research and write bid proposals. Full time. Apply now.

All these jobs were listed on the Student Discussion Board SDB when they were fresh.

That may have been several days ago! But there may have been no suitable applicants.

Check. Has the date expired? Put yourself forward anyway!

[Digital Copywriter](#), Young & Shand, Auckland. Write advertising copy for a digital/web/mobile environment and collaborate with a digital art director. Full time. Apply now.

[Digital Marketers](#), The Creative Store, Auckland. Let your creative ideas flow and write digital ad campaigns that appeal to a wide audience. Full time. Several positions available. Apply now.

[Photo Lab Worker](#), PhotoLife Studios, Auckland. Photoshop, sort and laminate school class, portrait, student ID and sports club photographs. Full time. Apply now.

[Photographer/Salesperson](#), Open2view, Queenstown/Wanaka. Are you a self-starter, confident and well-organised? An interest in real estate and photography an advantage. Full training provided. Full time. Apply now.

[Medical Writer](#), Springer Healthcare, Auckland. Prepare slide kits, abstracts, posters, manuscripts for journal submission and more. Full time. Closes 5 June.

[Content Writer](#), Hudson New Zealand, Christchurch. Write about information and communication technology. Contract/temp. Apply now.

Some things change, some things don't.

Cheques have now disappeared from our day-to-day lives.

But the electronic façade that protects bank employees from having to talk to customers is alive and well—and it has many more layers in 2016 than in 1999, when Peter Wear, a columnist for the Courier Mail in Brisbane, Australia, wrote this withering fictional letter for the paper's 'Perspectives' column.

Dear Sir:

I am writing to thank you for bouncing the cheque with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations some three nano-seconds must have elapsed between his presenting the cheque, and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it.

I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly deposit of my entire salary, an arrangement which, I admit, has only been in place for eight years.

You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account by way of penalty for the inconvenience I caused to your bank. My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to re-think my errant financial ways.

You have set me on the path of fiscal righteousness. No more will our relationship be blighted by these unpleasant incidents, for I am restructuring my affairs in 1999, taking as my model the procedures, attitudes and conduct of your very own bank.

I can think of no greater compliment, and I know you will be excited and proud to hear it. To this end, please be advised about the following changes.

First, I have noticed that whereas I personally attend to your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you I am confronted by the impersonal, ever-changing, pre-recorded, faceless entity your bank has become.

From now on I, like you, choose only to deal with a flesh and blood person. My mortgage and loan repayments will therefore, and hereafter, no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank, by cheque, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee of your branch, whom you must nominate. You will be aware that it is an offence under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope.

Please find attached an Application For Contact Status which I require your chosen employee to complete.

I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.

Please note that all copies of his/her medical history must be countersigned by a Justice of the Peace, and that the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof.

In due course I will issue your employee with a PIN number which he/she must quote in all dealings with me. I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required to access my account balance on your phonebank service.

As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Let me level the playing field even further by introducing you to my new telephone system, which you will notice is very much like yours. My 'Authorised Contact' at your bank, the only person with whom I will have any dealings, may call me at any time and will be answered by an automated voice. By pressing buttons on the phone, he/she will be guided thorough an extensive menu:

- 1, to make an appointment to see me;*
- 2, to query a missing repayment;*
- 3, to make a general complaint or inquiry, and so on.*

The contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service. While this may on occasion involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration. This month I've chosen a refrain from

The Best Of Woody Guthrie:

*Oh, the banks are made of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And the vaults are filled with silver,
That the miners sweated for!*

After twenty minutes of that, our mutual contact will probably know if off by heart.

On a more serious note, we come to the matter of cost. As your bank has often pointed out, the ongoing drive for greater efficiency comes at a cost — a cost which you have always been quick to pass on to me. Let me repay your kindness by passing some costs back.

First, there is the matter of advertising material you send me. This I will read for a fee of \$20 per A4 page. Inquiries from your nominated contact will be billed at \$5 per minute of my time spent in response. Any debits to my account as, for example, the penalty for the dishonoured cheque, will be passed back to you. My new phone service runs at 75 cents a minute (even Woody Guthrie doesn't come free), so you would be well advised to keep your inquiries brief and to the point.

Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this arrangement.

I wish you a happy, if ever-so-slightly less prosperous, New Year.

Your humble client.

Unfortunately, the above may not be Peter Wear's original. One 21st centuryism we've all got used to is the inevitability that amusing pennings such as this will be rewritten—often badly—and posted on the internet. ... One popular 'Bank Manager Letter' version says the author is 96 years old whose letter was "published in the NY Times". Maybe. Maybe not. ❑

A Photographic Challenge

from **Robert van de Voort**

Perhaps the word 'challenge' is too much of a challenge. Should I call it an Invitation to participate?

You participate by submitting a simple photograph based on the principle of Haiku.

To explain Haiku: it is a Japanese form of poetry which is based on a very simple principle: a haiku poem consists of 3 lines.

The first and last lines of haiku have 5 syllables and the middle line has 7 syllables. And it is not necessary to make the words rhyme.

Haiku poems date from 9th century Japan to the present day.

Haiku is more than a type of poem; it is a way of looking at the physical world and seeing something deeper, like the very nature of existence.

As you can see, the principle of a haiku poem is very simple, and my idea was for you to create or visualise or conjecture an image in your mind out of those 3 lines.

For instance, here is one I found on the Internet.

**Autumn moonlight
a worm digs silently
into the chestnut**

That is something we can visualise into a very simple effective image.

Here's another:

**Falling to the ground,
I watch a leaf settle down
in a bed of brown.**



Undoubtedly we can all visualise the leafy situation in our minds.

MY IDEA: that we convert this principle of haiku into something very simple to photograph.

You need not be a photographer, you just have to be "aware and alive" and have a gadget at your fingertips that captures an image.

You could use a camera, or a mobile phone with a built-in camera.

Use anything that captures the reality around you photographically.

If you see something that is very simple, photograph it and submit it in our thread of haiku on SDB.

You don't need to write a haiku



poem, but if you want to you can.

If you don't write your own haiku perhaps another student will write one, inspired by your photograph.

What I would like to see is a caption under your photograph explaining what motivated you to make that image.

Why did you make it? Your reason?

If you'd like to participate ... then - once you have made your image, put it up on your computer screen and look at it closely.

Analyse your image

Is there anything in your image that is not helpful to the story?

You may have inadvertently included a rubbish bin, a lamppost, part of a car or somebody's finger.

If it is possible to crop the image, eliminating the superfluous item, then do so. The result will be a better, simpler image.

Of course, it's even better when you look through the viewfinder and can shift your viewpoint or focus slightly to exclude those things you do not want in your image.

I am not looking for perfect images. I am trying to inspire people to look around with their eyes and experience their surroundings with a haiku in mind.

Even when you have something that is not stunning nor brilliant, just average, post it on the SDB!

What is important in this task?

It is the idea, it is the concept, it is the visualisation. **It is your translation of reality.**

You may inspire someone else. You may give someone else an idea. You may also enrich someone with your vision, so do not hesitate. Even if your image making is well below your expectations, set it free and let it FLY. Post it on the SDB.

If you have a problem cropping your image (recall the 'Rule of Thirds'), or because you don't know how to do it, I am happy to crop the image as per your instructions and return the image back to you so you can submit it.



This invitation is open for the remainder of 2016 so each student or NZIBS Grads Club member can submit one image per month.

Entry is free.

I hope you accept my invitation and I hope to see what you've made.

This is the thread:

Haiku - your ultimate challenge for 2016:

<http://www.nzibs.org/forums/showthread.php?t=6693>

Robert VDV - Photography tutor

Graduates Club

Why join NZIBS Graduates Club?

Students who graduate are invited to join the Graduates Club and enjoy these services:

- # Access to your former tutor for Q&A. Ask as many questions as you wish. Either through email exchanges, telephone, Skype etc.
- # Access to the Principal, ditto.
- # Monthly newsletters.
- # Access to Student Discussion Board, 24/7/365.
- # Free entry to all NZIBS competitions.
- # Information about worldwide competitions.
- # Annual renewal of PRESS PASS where applicable.
- # Annual renewal of STUDENT ID CARD.
- # Access to graduates and students who will proofread your manuscripts, without a \$ fee.
- # Access to a tutor for manuscript appraisal, for a fee.
- # Assistance with finding placements for articles, photos, book manuscripts.
- # Help with finding paid work.

All that for **\$100 subscription** per year seems a modest charge.

PS: As a consultant any of these people could charge \$75 per hour.



Palindromes

These are words and descriptions that read backwards the same as forward.

Examples you'll find include **MUM** and **Was it a cat I saw?**

For more about palindromes, there is a great description at <https://nrich.maths.org/822>

Here's a palinmentous poem:

Doppelganger

by James A. Lindon

Entering the lonely house with my wife
I saw him for the first time
Peering furtively from behind a bush --
Blackness that moved,
A shape amid the shadows,
A momentary glimpse of gleaming eyes
Revealed in the ragged moon.
A closer look (he seemed to turn) might have
Put him to flight forever --
I dared not
(For reasons that I failed to understand),
Though I knew I should act at once.

I puzzled over it, hiding alone,
Watching the woman as she neared the gate.
He came, and I saw him crouching
Night after night.
Night after night
He came, and I saw him crouching,
Watching the woman as she neared the gate.

I puzzled over it, hiding alone --
Though I knew I should act at once,
For reasons that I failed to understand
I dared not
Put him to flight forever.

A closer look (he seemed to turn) might have
Revealed in the ragged moon.
A momentary glimpse of gleaming eyes
A shape amid the shadows,
Blackness that moved.

Peering furtively from behind a bush,
I saw him for the first time,
Entering the lonely house with my wife.

An Objective Approach?

Books have been traditionally published when emotively driven editors—though they might deny it—made decisions to accept or reject a work.

A new initiative, **Inkitt** suggests a different way; Inkitt promotes books to a publisher based on the ratings of an online reading group, which includes anyone who wants to take part.

Inkitt notes:

"The entire publishing industry has always relied upon the subjective and emotional opinions of their decision makers. This is why Harry Potter was rejected by 13 publishers, Twilight by 14 and Carrie by Stephen King was refused by 30 publishers.

This is why we built artificially intelligent algorithms that have the ability to analyze reading pattern data and engagement levels. This allows us to make objective and data-driven decisions regarding a novel's potential to become a bestseller."

Have a look for yourself:

<https://www.inkitt.com/>



The Great Unwonted

Please tell me the Word of the Day does not originate within the *Chronicle* offices, for I know the guys down there can read and write.

On May 10, Word of the Day was

“unwonted”, which is fine, no problem. However, I did read the explanation because the last time I used its antonym, “wont” (NO apostrophe please note, spellchecker) meaning “custom” or “accustomed”, my editor (of the documentary-style book I happened to be writing a chapter for) insisted I remove that word and rewrite the sentence.

Strange, I thought, seeing as I had learned the word at high school so to my mind, as a word written rather than spoken, it shouldn't have been foreign to the averagely literate reader.

But I digress with that mention of my schooldays.

The Word of the Day of May 10 explained (I loosely paraphrase) that “unwonted”, among other origins, derived from its antonym, “wont” [sic]. Er, no! The addition of a tiny apostrophe in that one word of the *Chronicle* article has changed “accustomed” (wont) to “will not” (won't). It's like the article is trying to show that an apple derives from a worn sock — there's no relationship.

Out with spellcheckers, bring back proofreaders.

It is indeed my wont to use the apostrophe correctly, and, one hopes, I won't get it wrong.

A street sign seen in the suburbs of Whanganui recently: “Flower's and Plants” [sic]. If it were completely right or wrong, I could understand how it happened, either way. But half right? I hope I am spelling “gaaarrghhh!” correctly.

STAN HOOD
Aramoho



When you see mistakes, offer your services.

Competitions Have a go!



We search the world for details of competitions. Click the links and join in. NZIBS competitions are free!

Winners' names are posted on the SDB after the NZIBS competitions are judged at month's end.

See the competitions here:

<http://nzibs.org/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=11>

Photography competitions:

<http://nzibs.org/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=4>

New meanings for old words

For years, an email has been circulating about the “Washington Post's Mensa Invitational”.

The **Washington Post** doesn't have anything to do with this initiative, although it may once have had such a thing. But the idea has been taken on by someone else:

<http://www.washingtonpostsmensainvitational.com/>

In their words:

“... it's a good idea. So we thought we'd collect words here. We started this site on a whim in 2010 and it's grown every year since. We get hundreds of words a year and post the ones that are fun, funny or useful.”

Here's a few to raise your interest:

Semi-colon What a patient is left with after intestinal surgery.

Grammar The old fashioned way your nana talks.

Lexicon A well-read prison inmate.

Have a read—and a laugh.

You'll find new meanings for some common words, and a clever list of words made by changing others.

Job Opportunities

[SOP Writer/Administrator](#),

Oji Fibre Solutions, Auckland.
Re-vamp and simplify our out of date and overly complicated SOPs. Contract/temp. Closes 5 June.

[Business Opportunity](#),

Successful Resumes NZ Ltd, Auck.
Apply your practical business experience as well as your intellectual and creative skills to help people achieve their goals. Full time. Apply now.

Check. Has the date expired? Put yourself forward anyway!

If the closing date has passed, ask whether the position was filled. You could still be considered for it.

[Journalist](#),

Fairfax Media, Bunbury, AU
Bring news to a rural community and write about community events. Full time. Closes 8 June.

[Event Operations Coordinator](#),

Fairfax Media, Auckland
Are you a strong communicator? Plan multiple events simultaneously for a large company. Full time. Closes 8 June.

[Trainee Reporter](#),

KoS Media, Ashford, UK
Full of ideas? Write for the award-winning Kent on Sunday newspaper. Full time. Closes 6 June.

[News Editor](#), My News Mag,

Hemel Hempstead, UK
Organise news stories and make magazine content shine. Full time. Closes 20 June.

[Content Editor](#), Palmerston North

City Council, Palmerston North
Write web and social media content to promote council objectives. Full time. Closes 7 June.

[Assistant Editors](#), Naked

Recruitment Ltd, Auckland
Write sales pitches for social media and web platforms. Several positions available. Full time. Apply now.

[Reporter](#),

Times Newspapers, Auckland
Write about sport and local community events for a Facebook page. Full time. Apply now.

Cut The Blue Wire

Author **Patrick Mahon**.

Reproduced for educational purposes.

The face of my wife, Samara, floats into my mind. It's the same memory as always.

~

"Do you have to go, Jon? I'm scared."

"Don't be," I reassured her, gathering her into a hug. Her hair smelled of lilies. "I know what I'm doing."

"It's not just you I'm worried about," she said, pulling away a little and staring intently into my eyes. "What about us -- me and the bump, I mean." She glanced down at her growing waistline. "The insurgents get closer every day."

I put on my game face. "Do you think I'd go to work if I wasn't entirely happy about security? There's nothing to worry about, darling. The base is safe. You and baby Belinda can sleep soundly until I get back."

We hadn't actually agreed on a name for our unborn daughter yet. But after my younger sister Belinda died in the food riots of '22, I'd vowed to keep her memory alive if I got the chance. I hadn't convinced Samara yet — she thought it mawkish — but I was working on her.

"Ok," Samara said. "As long as you're sure."

She balanced on tiptoes, I bent my knees, we met in the middle and I kissed her goodbye.

"See you in a couple of days," I said, then shouldered my kitbag and walked to the jeep outside.

That was the last time I saw Samara.

~

"Cut the blue wire, Jon."

The hiss of the radio message cuts into my reverie like a scalpel; it takes me a couple of seconds to register what Control said.

So the insurgents have switched their MO. That's fine; so have I.

I cut the blue wire.

~

"Jon, are you in there?"

I come to, confused and disorientated. Large amounts of startup code scroll across my eyes, and I can hear dialogues between internal subsystems.

"Jon?"

"I'm here, sir." My words emerge in an unfamiliar voice, richer and more resonant than I'm used to.

"What happened?"

"Double bluff, I'm afraid," Colonel Stornoway says.

My vision isn't fully functional yet, but I'd recognise his cut-glass accent anywhere. "There was a boobytrap on the blue wire. Sorry, old chap."

"Damage?" I ask, though I already know the answer.

"Almost total. We managed to salvage your memory chip, but the Mark Two body unit was a write-off. We've transferred you into the first of the new Mark Threes."

"Just as well you sent me, rather than a human," I say.

No response.

It's a sore point for everyone. Especially me. I'd been the last bomb disposal technician to "die" — in the guerrilla wars in Afghanistan — some fifteen months earlier, when the terrorists changed their bomb design and I found out the hard way.

My body was critically injured, but the reinforced helmet I was wearing protected my brain and they managed to save that.

As I found out afterwards, the government had become increasingly worried about the number of casualties from IEDs, and the effect this was having on morale back home.

The politicians leaned on the top brass to do something. They started by working us bomb disposal guys harder, but that just led to mistakes. Fatal mistakes.

That's when DARPA — the Army's resident eggheads — got involved. They'd been developing robotic super-soldiers for the war in Brazil.

The project had failed. The robots lost every firefight because they were too bulky and slow. But when one of the DARPA guys heard about our IED problem, he realised he had the answer.

They took the bomb-disposal knowledge and experience locked up in my brain, downloaded it onto a memory chip and married it to one of their robots.

Bomb disposal engineers don't need to rush around, or beat the other guy to the draw. Bulky and slow is fine for us, as long as we can manipulate delicate mechanisms.

My robotic fingers are as sensitive as a concert pianist's.

It took months for me to learn how to use them. Longer to accept what had happened.

Eventually I did both.

What choice did I have? I'm still doing the job I always loved. But now, if anything goes wrong, I simply wake up in a new body.



There's just one problem.

Samara can never know, because the programme is top secret and the brass want to keep it that way. She thinks I'm dead, killed in the line of duty. They had a funeral and everything.

It's my daughter Belinda's first birthday next week. I'd love to see her open her presents. But I can't. Not if I don't want to be decommissioned — permanently.

Mind you, the Mark Three body is much less bulky than the Two. I could almost pass for human now.

Hmmm. Enough to sneak over to the crèche without being noticed?

I dedicate some processor time to the question. I'll think about it properly later.

For now, I pull myself together, put those thoughts back in long term storage, along with the rest of my human memories, and get back to business.

"Where next, sir?" □