

**AUSIT**

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AUSIT 30th anniversary special edition

# IN TOUCH

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS



## AUSIT IS TURNING 30!

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From foundation student member to National President

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A summary of the genesis of AUSIT

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Three decades and still going strong

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### **Plus more ...**

... including the NT's new Aboriginal audiovisual interpreting service, the trials of translating Trump, challenges faced by interpreters in a healthcare setting, and future-proofing T&I

## < In Touch

Autumn 2017

Volume 25 number 1

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# Letter from the editor

As many of you already know, AUSIT turns 30 this year. To celebrate this impressive milestone we've put together this bumper 'AUSIT 30th anniversary' edition of *In Touch*. It comes complete with a makeover by our new designer Mine Konakci, and includes: a personal take on the last 30 years by a foundation student member, now President, Sandra Hale; a summary of the circumstances under which AUSIT was formed; a list of foundation members who are still active in T&I; and some photos from AUSIT's first decade. And if you have an idea for a special anniversary article, you haven't missed out—the anniversary lasts all year, and there are three more editions to come! See the following invitation to contribute.

## Contributions welcome

Don't forget, if you have an opinion on, expertise in, or an interesting experience of a particular area of T&I—whether you are a student, practitioner, academic, LSP or other stakeholder—we'd like to hear about it.

If you wish to contribute, please contact *In Touch's* editor with your idea or drafted piece, and it will be referred to the Editorial Committee to assess its suitability for publication.

As a preliminary to writing or adapting an article, please view *In Touch's* Submission Guidelines, which you can find through the Newsletter link at <http://ausit.org/AUSIT/Publications/Newsletter.aspx>

# News in brief

(a summary of T&I-related items that have appeared in the national mainstream media since the Summer 2016 edition of *In Touch*):

**28 Feb: Indigenous interpreter shortage 'adding to high incarceration rates' for Aboriginal people**

ABC News

**14 Feb: Translation app helping to preserve endangered Indigenous Queensland languages**

ABC News

**9 Feb (see also below): Trump's immigration ban defied as soldier welcomes Afghan interpreter**

The Australian

**31 Jan (see also above, below): Trump's travel ban: Veterans protest, saying it hurts interpreters**

The Australian

**28 Jan (see also above): Immigration ban: Iraqi interpreter who put own life on line for the US detained at JFK**

ABC News

**13 Jan: Translation needed in \$200m Vic drug bust**

The Australian

**3 Jan: Concerns raised about national shortage of sign language interpreters**

ABC News

**27 Dec: Court interpreter pay dispute left Vietnamese clients waiting in custody**

The Sydney Morning Herald

**14 Dec (see also 9 Dec): Christmas carol backflip: Deaf audience to be given interpreters**

The Sydney Morning Herald

**12 Dec: Auslan interpreters at Grand Final**

The Sydney Morning Herald

**9 Dec (see also 14 Dec): Vision Australia will not provide Auslan interpreters at its popular Carols by Candlelight event this year, despite calls from the deaf community**

The Sydney Morning Herald



Member organisation Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs International Federation of Translators





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# Intercultural communication: challenges in interpreter-mediated medical consultations

**Sophia Ra** investigates the challenges encountered by professional healthcare interpreters, to explore their impact on the success of interpreter-mediated consultations and to recommend strategies to deal with them.

**A**ustralia, one of the leading countries in community interpreting, provides various professional interpreting services within the public health system, using nationally accredited interpreters who are expected to abide by a professional code of ethics. However, in spite of this national standard and policy, healthcare interpreters still face various challenges.

This study set out to examine cross-cultural issues that could affect interpreter-mediated medical consultations, as well as the perceptions of interpreters working in different language combinations regarding to what extent they might be able to offer cultural brokerage in similar contexts. The study was carried out in a large hospital in Sydney, chosen because its catchment area includes a sizeable migrant population from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Observations of 20 interpreter-mediated medical consultations were followed by semi-structured interviews with five of the interpreters.

Findings suggest that interpreters face challenges relating to:

- end-of-life situations
- family involvement
- patients' reluctance to ask questions
- nonverbal communication.

The study also identified challenges caused by working conditions, protocols and expectations, including:

- a lack of briefing or debriefing sessions
- a lack of introduction to, or greeting by, medical professionals

- a lack of background information supplied prior to consultations
- time constraints placed on the interpreting task
- unrealistic expectations apparently entertained by both medical professionals and patients regarding the role of interpreters.

However, the study found cross-cultural misunderstanding to be less of an issue for the interpreters involved than expected.

The study also explored a number of unethical behaviours engaged in by the interpreters involved, including side conversations being held between medical professionals and interpreters but not interpreted for patients, and interpreters acting as advisors for patients.

*Sophia Ra is a PhD student conducting research in the area of community interpreting at UNSW. Her research is supervised by Prof. Sandra Hale and Assoc. Prof. Ludmila Stern.*

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# Vale Vince Danilo

(22 February 1925 – 29 December 2016)

by Barbara McGilvray

Long-time AUSIT member Vince Danilo died on 29 December at the age of 91. Vince made a very significant contribution to AUSIT at both state and national levels, from the time he joined—a couple of years after its establishment—until a few years ago, when he sadly developed dementia.



**B**orn in Split, on Croatia's Adriatic Coast, in February 1925, Vince grew up in Belgrade and came to Australia as a refugee in 1949, having served in both the Serbian and Croatian armies in World War II. Working by day and studying at night, he graduated from the University of Sydney with a degree in economics and went on to become a prominent businessman.

Late in his business career Vince served on the Executive Committee of the Australian Trade Development Council, and was subsequently appointed to the Export Development Grants Board. Invited by the then minister for trade, Lionel Bowen, to become its deputy chairman, he accepted because, he said, it would enable him to give back to the country that had given him so much.

Vince spoke Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Italian and English, and was always interested in language and the power of words; so it was natural that when he retired from the world of business he would turn to translating. He gained NAATI accreditation as a translator and as an interpreter, and eventually worked with the Federal Police and the Australian Crime Commission until well into his eighties, as well as doing some nonfiction literary translation.

Vince clearly believed in the value of active participation in his professional association, volunteering for the NSW Branch Committee soon after he joined AUSIT. His background in economics and accounting was invaluable to our Institute, in which such skills were then rare. He went on to serve as branch treasurer for several years, before taking on the job of general treasurer at the national level. Carrying out both roles with distinction, he laid the foundations for AUSIT's future by ensuring that it had a viable financial structure.

When Vince was nominated a Fellow of AUSIT in 2010, the national presidents he had worked with in his three terms as general treasurer all paid tribute to his crucial contribution, and to the countless hours and patient effort he devoted to improving the Institute's accounting and financial reporting, as well as putting processes in place to streamline and simplify the task of the branch treasurers.

Respect for due process and correct procedure was another of Vince's good qualities, and he

made a substantial contribution to the first review of AUSIT's constitution. The late Dr Harry Blackmore, another AUSIT Fellow, spoke for many of us when he described his high regard for Vince's "integrity and dedication to the purpose and principles of AUSIT". Vince always had AUSIT's interests at heart, and colleagues who served on the branch and national committees with him appreciated his willingness to share his knowledge and experience, not only in matters financial but also in such areas as formal meeting procedures and the application of the constitution.

At the local level, Vince attended professional development sessions regularly over two decades. He also contributed to conversations on AUSIT's e-Bulletin, often suggesting a solution or offering a comment that might help defuse a potentially explosive situation—wisdom and advice always dispensed without the slightest affectation. When the NSW Branch was close to collapse just over a decade ago, Vince supported its renaissance with his contribution to the *Conseil des Sages*, a small group of 'elders' who continue to work with the Branch Committee after leaving office, providing continuity and occasional advice or guidance as required.

Vince acted as advisor and sounding board for a number of AUSIT's voluntary office-bearers, and in addition to his integrity and patience we valued his ability to think clearly and logically, cutting through the superfluous to

*Vince spoke Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Italian and English, and was always interested in language and the power of words; so it was natural that when he retired from the world of business he would turn to translating.*

With his daughter Lillian in the mid/late 1960s  
Showing off the bounty from his fig tree  
At the AUSIT Biennial Conference 2010 in Perth,  
when he received his AUSIT Fellow award

get to the crux of any matter. He always showed the courage of his convictions, speaking out even on uncomfortable or controversial issues and insisting they be correctly addressed—often with his trademark wit and gentle sarcasm, and without beating around the bush. Inevitably there were occasions when this didn't win him friends, but his suggestions were always informed, constructive and made in good faith.

Those of us who were privileged to know Vince well appreciated his wicked sense of humour and admired his love for his family; Moreno Giovannoni, national president while Vince was treasurer, also enjoyed going to the opera with him. Vince's colleagues in the NSW Branch were fortunate to get to know Rose, his wife, and to her and their extended family we offer our sincere condolences on behalf of AUSIT. RIP Vince.

*Barbara McGilvray OAM, freelance translator, editor and educator, is a foundation member and Fellow of AUSIT. She served on the NSW Branch Committee with Vince for some years; they enjoyed many a lively exchange on questions of language, and became good friends.*

*Barbara wishes to thank Vince's daughter, Lillian Armitage, and AUSIT colleagues who have contributed information for this obituary.*





# Ilke Brueckner-Klein: AUSIT Fellow 2016

## CITATION

**Ilke grew up in Germany, and in 1986 completed a three-year professional training course for translators at the Wuerzburg Translator and Interpreter School. She started her career as an in-house translator, interpreter and bilingual secretary with the US Military in Germany, and then moved on to the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research, where she worked for several years before emigrating to Australia in 1997.**

Ilke had contacted AUSIT even before moving to Australia, and became a member as soon as she arrived. By now an experienced translator, she began freelancing (German<->English) in Melbourne. In her native Germany, translation is a highly regarded profession which Ilke had pursued as her dream career; however, in Australia there is relatively little recognition for her chosen occupation. It was initially this lack of recognition that propelled her into what is now nearly two decades of involvement with AUSIT, during which time she has contributed to many of the Institute's initiatives in various official capacities.

Soon after joining AUSIT in 1997, Ilke was elected to the Victoria/Tasmania (Vic/Tas) Branch Committee. In 2000, during the chairmanship of Filomena LoSchiavo, Ilke organised Victoria's first ever Networking Sessions, soon to become a regular feature on the branch—and later the national—calendar.

Subsequently, Ilke supported the Vic/Tas Branch Committee under chairs Elizabeth Costabir and Sarina Phan in various roles, and in 2004 helped revive the branch's newsletter *In Touch*, which lives on as AUSIT's national quarterly magazine.

The early 2000s were also the time when the unofficial 'Playgroup'—which consisted of a number of keen Melbourne-based AUSIT supporters, including Ilke—made an important contribution by getting AUSIT's first serious website off the ground.

In late 2003—by now a well-established German translator in Melbourne—Ilke spread her radius of activity to include Brisbane, where she could avoid the Victorian winters while maintaining her base in Melbourne. A prolific networker and communicator, Ilke continued her engagement with AUSIT regardless of her physical location, now also contributing to the Queensland Branch.

Ilke has held several major official roles in AUSIT, including three years as secretary to the National Council (2008–10), and in 2011 she supported the reestablishment of the faltering Vic/Tas Branch. Meanwhile she was on the Organising Committee for the AUSIT National Conference in 2008, and again in 2014. From 2012 to 2013 she represented Queensland as their delegate on the National Council, and the following year chaired the Queensland Branch (after which she supported the next elected committee until it found its feet). Many important initiatives and successful AUSIT conferences occurred during those years.

Ilke has been involved in several projects on the national level. She has always contributed generously, and when she undertakes a task she unfailingly delivers the highest quality results, on time. Her clearly drafted and comprehensively argued written communication has enabled the National Council to resolve issues in a precise and timely manner. Ilke has a sharp eye for potential hazards and imperfections, and she can offer truly constructive criticism—a rare and invaluable gift to both giver and recipient.

Since Ilke first arrived in Australia, many aspects of the T&I profession in this country have gradually changed for the better. A great deal is owed to models of collegiality such as Ilke, and their spirit of generous contribution. Ilke, who in the meantime took up Australian citizenship to become German–Australian, still loves translating, and has used the flexibility that this mobile skill affords her to build a border-transcending dream lifestyle of her choosing. In this, she is again a role model.

Ilke is an outstanding colleague who has always represented what is most desirable in professional attitude and demeanour in a member of our profession and our professional institute. Her voluntary work to promote Translators Australia to interpreters, and her



constant presence and support of AUSIT, both at branch and national level, should be held up to other members as an example of quiet but persistent devotion.

Ilke's considered and often courageous contributions to debates and discussions have substantially added to the knowledge, understanding and insights we so badly need to protect and advance the interests of professional translators and interpreters, and by logical extension, those of our clients. She has always stepped forward when help or support is needed. She is a strong advocate for offering and engaging in meaningful PD for translators, and an active participant in online discussions and in the AUSIT German group.

In short, AUSIT has benefited enormously from Ilke's skills and knowledge, and it is with great pleasure that the Institute awards her this fellowship.

*Ilke is an outstanding colleague who has always represented what is most desirable in professional attitude and demeanour ...*

# Extreme translation: LOTEs and the POTUS

**Melissa McMahon** recounts the challenges and dilemmas facing translators and interpreters around the world, as they grapple with the idiosyncratic, idiomatic, and often simply confusing output of the USA's 45th President, Donald Trump.

At a time when even the English-speaking world struggles sometimes to interpret the words of US President Donald J Trump, pity the poor translator or interpreter (T/I) whose job it is to convey his message in another language.

In December last year Bérengère Viennot, a French translator of news items for print and digital media, published an essay online about the special challenges of translating the then US President-elect. Her remarks have been widely circulated and her predicament has been echoed by T/Is working in other languages.

Trump's language is studded with idioms, slang and colloquialisms—all notoriously challenging to translate. His spoken discourse is also famously meandering, full of digressions, half-thoughts and sometimes contradictions, making him difficult for the T/I to follow. Finally, the informality of his register is unprecedented for a US President, a disorienting departure from the conventions

the T/I is accustomed to in this context. All of these factors are part of his appeal for his supporters, part of his ugliness for his detractors, and simply very hard work for his T/Is.

Most T/Is have at some point faced the dilemma of a 'messy' source, experiencing conflict between the instinct to produce clear, comprehensible language and the obligation to accurately reproduce the meaning (or lack thereof) and effect of the source. Underlying this conflict is the awareness of the practitioner, of course, that linguistic flaws in the target text may well be attributed to them, rather than to the source.

Alongside the challenges of syntax and grammar are those posed by individual terms. Consider what is arguably Trump's most (in)famous utterance, "Grab 'em' by the pussy." Even assuming there is an equivalent for the key term in the target language that conveys the appropriate level of vulgarity, is it utterable in a public forum? While the term was awkward enough in English-speaking countries (I hesitated myself!), in other parts of the world phrases such as "nether parts" and "special physical area" were used.

Consider also Trump's defence, challenging in a different way: "This was locker room banter". 'Locker room', of course, has a figurative meaning here, and is shorthand for quite a complicated set of assumed cultural knowledge and stereotypes. And how would you translate "bad *hombres*" into Spanish?

The potential consequences of how the words of such a powerful person are translated are enormous. One of Trump's first forays into international diplomacy was his controversial phone conversation with Tsai Ing-wen, the President of Taiwan. Correctly understanding Trump's defence tweet: "Interesting how the U.S. sells Taiwan billions of dollars of military

*And how would you translate "bad hombres" into Spanish?*

equipment but I should not accept a congratulatory call" relies on identifying its underlying sarcasm. One Taiwanese news organisation apparently took his 'I should not' as an expression of regret, exactly the opposite of its intended meaning.

It is a fascinating subject, and has given rise to quite a few articles online which include many more examples; you can find them simply by entering 'Trump' and 'translation' (aka 'Trumpslation') into a search engine.

*Melissa McMahon is a Sydney-based French>English translator and chair of the Editorial Committee for In Touch.*



# Critical Link 8 International Conference, Edinburgh

**Denise Formica reports on the eighth Critical Link conference. Held at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, CL8's theme was 'Critical LinkS – a new generation: Future-proofing interpreting and translating.'**

The cool weather and cloudy skies of an Edinburgh summer were not enough to dampen the mood of the eighth Critical Link International Conference, which was held at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh between 29 June and 1 July 2016. Critical Link International is a Canadian-based organisation which, although initially focused on community and healthcare interpreting, now advocates for the advancement of community interpreting across the social and legal domains as well. The conference theme, 'Critical LinkS – a new generation: Future-proofing interpreting and translating', drew more than 350 delegates from over 30 countries.

There were many interesting presentations and posters from spoken and signed language practitioners, academics and graduate students—as well as others in related professions—on the subjects of research, processes and practices of community translation and interpreting. Some of the hottest topics discussed over the three days will be familiar to Australian community interpreters and translators: raising and maintaining professional standards, remuneration and working conditions, ethics and practice across all domains, and issues regarding pedagogy and training, as well as future prospects for the T&I profession.

The conference opened with an address from Professor Emeritus Ian Mason of Heriot-Watt. He discussed the uncertainty that has arisen from a controversial arrangement made in 2011 by the UK's Ministry of Justice, under which courts and other judicial bodies across England and Wales are now obliged to obtain T&I services from a single agency. This cost-saving exercise has caused chaos across the system, with questions being raised about the quality of the interpreting provided, as there are no mandatory regulations to ensure the use

of credentialled interpreters in UK courts. Mason contended that the low wages and poor working conditions of UK public service interpreters can hardly improve while government agencies enter into contracts with language service providers who continue to outbid each other by slashing interpreters' pay. A plenary session with the theme of 'Shaping the future of PSI: Influencing Policy and Practice', and presentations such as 'The New Barrier to Language Access: The Language of Money' and 'The Public Services Interpreting & Translation Network (PSIT)' lent support to Mason's claim. If this topic sounds familiar, it is: as the conference continued it became more and more obvious that our own local concerns are mirrored globally.

Keynote speakers and plenary panels across the 3-day conference—especially the final session entitled 'Future-proofing Interpreting and Translation: the Road Ahead'—routinely spoke to the issues of poor pay, government budget cuts and the subsequent race to the bottom, the need for laws and regulations mandating the use of credentialled interpreters, and our own role in improving the status of the profession.

The panel discussion entitled 'Interpreting in Times of Turmoil – Conflict and Immigration' focused on interpreters and translators, and also provided a space in which the voices of the many victims of our troubled times could be listened to and reflected upon.

An enthralling discussion for all the tech-heads among us was led by Martin Volk, Professor of Computational Linguistics at the University of Zurich, who is at the forefront of research into machine translation. Introducing conference delegates to the variety of systems that go beyond Google Translate and the like, he also underlined the manner in which technology can improve media access for people with disabilities. And no, according to Professor



*... it is up to every single one of us ... to mobilise, to strategise and plan with our colleagues, so that a more unified professional voice is heard*

Volk, we needn't worry about our work being done by robots—at least not in the foreseeable future!

Among the sessions that I attended were some that focused on the issue of vicarious trauma. The AUSIT Code of Ethics clearly prohibits the interpreter advocating on behalf of the NESB client, but this is not the case in some countries. To guard against the risks of vicarious trauma as a result of interpreter advocacy, an experienced UK-based nursing



instructor encouraged health interpreters to adopt an approach known as ‘Care Ethics’, which is applied in nursing training programs. The core component of this approach is empathy, which is described as a cognitive rather than an emotional process. Nurses are encouraged to be attentive, responsible, competent and responsive, while also protecting themselves from possible trauma. Another session, presented by Canadian organisation Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, placed great emphasis on the importance of recognising and relieving stress at the earliest possible stage, and then initiating the established protocols, beginning with staff debriefing and concluding with outcome assessments. A secondary presentation in this session, entitled ‘Remaining Professional in Challenging Situations’, advocated strongly for an ‘Interpreter Introduction’, which the presenter described as a ‘suit of armour’ to protect the practitioner from the fallout of traumatic interpreting assignments.

The ‘Interpreter Introduction’ is essentially the same concept as Helen Tebble’s ‘Interpreter’s Contract’, which is familiar to Australian interpreters; and this leads me into a brief overview of the Australian contributions to the conference. It was, of course, impossible to attend every presentation, but the program

showed a strong presence of Australian researchers, practitioners and other stakeholders who contributed to the various conference topics. Recognising that there are challenges ahead is the first step on the road to the professionalisation of our industry, and presentations on research from both spoken and sign language into dialogue interpreting (in the legal and medical domains), telephone interpreting, intercultural communication, pedagogy and technology showed the vitality of the work being done within the Australian community T&I sector. My own paper entitled “‘Are we there yet?’ Stages in the Journey towards a Professional Interpreting and Translation Industry in Australia’ included the latest developments in Victoria where, as a result of the initiatives led by Professionals Australia, the Andrews Government is currently reviewing all aspects of the industry: government procurement, language service provision, and standards in the T&I workforce. This topic tied in well with the plenary webcast session held on the final day of the conference and chaired by Franz Pöchacker. The webcast allowed conference delegates and participants from across a range of countries to raise questions on issues concerning the future of the profession. Unsurprisingly, most of the discussion revolved around the importance of remuneration and

working conditions, and the training and credentialling of all translators and interpreters as a means of achieving the recognition that we feel we are all due by those we assist.

My concluding remarks reflect the consensus I felt we had reached during that final session, namely, that as practitioners we should be the first to acknowledge that unless we are part of the solution, we are part of the problem. And if the answer to the question of “‘Are we there yet?’” is less than satisfying, then it is up to every single one of us to become part of the solution: to mobilise, to strategise and plan with our colleagues, so that a more unified professional voice is heard—not only in our everyday work in our communities, but also in larger and more formal forums within our various home states and/or nations.

*Denise Formica, PhD completed her thesis on the translation of Australian contemporary literary fiction into Italian at Monash University in 2009. She now works as a sessional tutor in Italian Studies at Swinburne University, and also as a freelance professional interpreter and translator, English<->Italian.*



# Thirty years an AUSIT member



National President of AUSIT **Sandra Hale** grew up in Argentina, where she remembers, at the age of 10, playing at ‘interpreting’ her cousin’s Spanish into ‘English’—despite having no knowledge of the language.

When Sandra was 12 her family migrated to Australia, where she was ridiculed at school for her lack of English. This just made her determined to succeed, and she went on to rank in the top 10 per cent of the state in English at HSC level (whilst also, as the first in the family to acquire fluency in English, becoming an ad hoc interpreter for her parents and friends).

Here Sandra describes her trajectory in the T&I industry and in AUSIT, from student foundation member to her current position, outlining how both she and AUSIT have grown and changed over three decades.

**I** remember sitting in a classroom at the Macarthur Institute of Higher Education (MIHE), where I was in the first cohort of the only bachelor’s degree in interpreting and translation then on offer in NSW, one of only a few such courses in Australia. It was 1987, my final year. Course coordinator Stuart Campbell announced to the class that we were about to experience history: a national professional association for interpreters and translators was about to be created.

He was, of course, referring to AUSIT, and he urged us all to join. I soon did so, becoming a student foundation member. I attended the first NAGM, at which Luciano Ginori was elected national president, and remember meeting many people who are still active in AUSIT—among them Barbara McGilvray and Terry Chesher.

Those were exciting times. Everything was new and promising: language policies were being written; language services were being created; NAATI was only 10 years old; and our cohort would soon graduate with the first T&I degree in NSW—a new generation of trained professionals about to embark upon careers as interpreters and translators, facilitating communication across languages and cultures. There was so much to look forward to.

After graduating and gaining NAATI accreditation, I started working freelance and for various language service providers, both public and private, in community interpreting and also translation. Working across the

community areas of education, welfare, medicine and law, I soon found that I preferred working in the legal setting.

A few years later I started working as a conference interpreter as well. I had enough work to keep me very busy, but I wanted to learn more; so I returned to Argentina to study translation for a year, after which I felt much more competent in this field.

On my return, MIHE—which had become the University of Western Sydney (UWS)—asked me to teach some classes in interpreting. I was happy to do so, and incorporated insights gained from my own professional experience into my teaching.

However, I felt I needed a teaching qualification, so I completed a Diploma of Education in Community Languages part time. Still keen to learn, I then enrolled in a Master of Applied Linguistics at Macquarie University, and completed a thesis on court interpreting.

All my studies informed my T&I practice, and my masters research opened my eyes to many subtle factors that can influence interpreting. To explore these further I undertook a PhD, analysing 17 court cases in which interpreting was used, then conducting experiments and questionnaires with the interpreters.

This research, completed in the year 2000, clearly demonstrated that accuracy of interpreting in court settings depends on much more than faithful rendition of content. I found that in a legal context, *the manner in which* something is said is as important as *what* is said. I concluded that court interpreters need highly nuanced training in order to interpret accurately, and to minimise their own impact on the outcome of cases, and I incorporated these new insights into my own teaching of interpreters.

By this time I was a full-time academic at UWS and was coordinating the undergraduate and new postgraduate programs, in addition to conducting research and teaching. I also continued working as an interpreter and translator part time, as well as organising events (including many workshops for AUSIT, plus the Critical Link 5 conference which I chaired in 2007) and hosting an annual symposium with international speakers (including Franz Pöchhacker, Mona Baker and Anthony Pym).

In 2011 I took up a position at the University of New South Wales, where I'm currently Professor of Interpreting and Translation. I continue to host an annual symposium, plus monthly seminars to which AUSIT members are always invited.

Over the years I've felt very privileged to train and mentor many interpreters who have gone on to have successful careers, both in Australia and overseas (some of them remaining in contact as colleagues). I've also had the privilege of training Australian magistrates, judges and lawyers on interpreting issues. I've seen noticeable improvements in this area, culminating in the National Standards for Working with Interpreters in Courts and Tribunals, which are due to be launched this year.

I've seen many positive achievements in Australian T&I in the past three decades: many excellent T&I programs—both undergraduate and postgraduate—are now offered around the country; our research and pedagogy are recognised worldwide; NAATI is undergoing a major review which will put Australia at the forefront of T&I assessment and certification; the T&I industry now has a union—Professionals Australia—to fight for better pay and working conditions; and there is better coordination and closer cooperation between the various stakeholders, with AUSIT playing a pivotal role.

AUSIT has gone through many positive changes itself over the years, and we can be proud of belonging to a mature professional association that is taken seriously. The excitement of the early years has experienced a resurgence recently, and I know this will continue to foster improvements in our profession.

As a student joining the fledgling AUSIT in 1987, I didn't imagine that in November 2014 I would become its National President. It has been a huge responsibility, and also a privilege, to lead the professional association that I saw being born. It goes without saying that every national president, every national council, every branch and every member has made an invaluable contribution to the success of our organisation. I look forward to my final year as president; let's celebrate this important year, and wish for another 30 years of excellence and progress.

*Sandra Hale is Professor of Interpreting and Translation in the School of Humanities and Languages, UNSW, and National President of AUSIT.*

<https://research.unsw.edu.au/people/professor-sandra-beatriz-hale>

Sandra Hale at her graduation ceremony in April 1988

*... we were about to experience history: a national professional association for interpreters and translators was about to be created.*







## All Ears: complying with medical device documentation regulations whilst localising at Cochlear Ltd.

**Stephanie Riches Harries, a Canadian national, works within the localisation team of Cochlear Ltd. Cochlear, based in Sydney, produces the revolutionary multi-channel cochlear implant. This medical device, invented by Australian Professor Graeme Clark in 1977, has changed the lives of nearly half a million hearing-impaired people worldwide.**

**A**pproximately 360 million people worldwide live with disabling hearing loss. Cochlear translates its technical and marketing communications into 42 languages—for medical professionals, cochlear implant recipients and their families and carers, and potential candidates. Material translated includes product labelling (technical documentation and packaging), software, apps, websites, online services, and marketing material (pamphlets, brochures and videos). Translation plays a key role in the broader localisation process, in which material (e.g. text, images, audiovisual) is adapted to give it the look and feel of having been created specifically for the target market.

Stephanie's story begins here ...

I migrated to Australia with my husband and two sons in 2007. During my first week here in Sydney, at school pick-up, I met the mother of a boy who had befriended my elder son. Over a cup of tea and a chat, I learned that she was famous in the 'bionic ear' realm; she was the first woman surgically implanted with a cochlear device, some 32 years ago.

She told me about the meningitis that rendered her profoundly deaf at the age of 20, her courageous decision to undergo the near-experimental surgery, and the ensuing rehabilitation that brought her back into the hearing world. I had no idea then that five years later, I would join the recently formed localisation team at Cochlear's head office in Sydney!

Cochlear's localisation team in Sydney was formed in 2011, before which translations were organised on a somewhat 'ad hoc' basis. Once the need for a centralised localisation system at the Macquarie head office was realised, one localisation professional was employed. Since then, the team has grown to our current number of nine. We're a diverse group—Dutch, Belgian, Canadian, Czech, Chinese, Australian, and Argentinean—all possessing linguistic skills and a passion for language, culture and quality.

### The team's work

A common misconception, even within Cochlear, is that we carry out translations ourselves. Several team members *are* professional translators; however, the volume of new or updated material to be translated is massive. In the last financial year alone, over

three million words were produced, across 42 languages! So needless to say, we outsource to language service provider (LSP) agencies, based here in Australia and in Europe. Cochlear also engages over 70 in-country reviewers (ICRs) to check the resulting translations from a subject matter expert perspective in their native languages.

### So what do we do on a daily basis?

The localisation project cycle begins in meetings with other departments (regulatory, design and development, technical and marketing communications, and online), to gather information. We then devise projects for targeted 'language other than English' (LOTE) regions. Throughout the subsequent translation process we liaise with, and between, our LSPs and ICRs. Once a translation has been formally verified by the ICR we perform quality checks, then upload it to Cochlear's document control system, ready for internal review and approval. (13,428 controlled documents have been uploaded by our team since 2011.) For many projects, we also coordinate with printing companies.

To support this cycle we oversee and maintain terminology databases (as approved terms are continually questioned and challenged during the translation and review process) and communicate regularly with Cochlear's localisation teams in Switzerland and Sweden, to discuss and align our processes and share language assets (translation memories, terminology databases, and so on).

In our 'spare' time, we conduct cross-cultural research, organise conference interpreting

events, review and select voiceover talent for target language videos, coordinate new product training sessions for translators and ICRs, create translator style guides and ICR review guidelines, and attend Cochlear’s product and marketing training sessions ourselves, in order to stay up-to-date with the company’s constantly evolving environment. In turn, it is our ongoing quest to be advocates for, and educators about, the rewards that are reaped when an efficient and streamlined localisation approach is valued and maintained.

Like all medical device companies, Cochlear maintains high security and confidentiality; but let’s open the door a crack and reveal some actual projects our team has completed, to give you an idea of the range and challenges involved:

### **Project 1 Technical documentation: the imperatives of imperialism!**

Product labelling for medical devices is highly regulated, and translations must adhere closely to a source English text which has been approved by global regulatory bodies. Target ‘Instructions for Use’ (IFUs), for example, must contain both the metric and imperial units of measure, regardless of whether the audience is the Hispanic population in the USA (appropriate), or the French and Dutch speakers in the Benelux region (not so appropriate). No omissions or additions are permitted, and failing to adhere to the approved source text could render the product or company noncompliant.

In 2013, the Sydney team was asked to update and reissue the technical documentation for the Nucleus CI (cochlear implant) 512 for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The rewriting of the IFUs entailed the translation of 10,500 source words into 28 languages using the existing translation memory (TM). This exercise allowed a reining-in of nonadherence to the source, such as the reintroduction of imperial measurements that had been omitted in the past for local markets. It took many rounds of quality assurance before the TM reached source adherence standards for technical documentation compliance and would pass scrutiny in a regulatory audit.

We worked on a tight two-month schedule, from the date the IFUs were submitted to the regulator, to readiness of target IFUs for printing and shipping. Back then we were a team of only five, and really busted our chops to get the job done—despite time needed for extra tasks such as coordinating translator/reviewer training videos, and last minute regulatory textual changes halfway through the project—while working simultaneously on other projects with their own deadlines. Many backflips were performed, but we got there. (And celebrated, with a scrumptious lunch in The Rocks!)

### **Project 2 Marketing communications: an exercise in international diplomacy**

The ‘Cochlear Promise’ of “Hear now. And always.” is untranslatable, but the 500-word blurb and mission statement that accompany it in all marketing brochures are continually updated and translated into 42 languages. In contrast with technical documentation, where localisation is strictly limited, adaptation and enhancement of target texts for local audiences is essential to effective marketing. However, with the pull between the translators’ expertise, the parameters of the translation requirements, and the ICRs’ subject matter expertise—plus their desire

to adapt the text to their local market—considerable diplomacy is often required on our part to arbitrate and resolve issues.

For one project, the Canadian French translation presented a delicate situation, and one close to my heart as a native Montrealer. Professional/technical text is not wildly different between European and Canadian French, so for technical documentation Cochlear adapts ICR-verified European French translations to Canada-specific French. However, for marketing material it’s another story, so Canadian French translators and ICRs are engaged to translate text into Canadian French from scratch.



The characters in this play are two French Canadians—a professional translator based in Montreal, and an ICR (the director of audiology at Cochlear’s Toronto office, holding a degree in linguistics)—and ... me, in the middle.

**First Act:** after reviewing the translated text, the ICR retranslates close to 50 per cent of the first paragraph to demonstrate her desired style, and returns the file to me for a complete rework. Bearing in mind the extreme protectiveness French Canadians inherently feel for their distinct language and culture—don’t mess with it!—I don my diplomat hat and send the feedback to the translator.

**Second Act:** the translator responds to the substantial suggestions and corrections from the ICR with some fairly strong comments, touching on ‘Anglicisms’, ‘incorrect use of French Canadian topography’, ‘incorrect syntax, orthography, grammar’, and so on, all introduced by ‘the client’. To her credit, she does rework the entire translation to appease the ICR, but her final comment stings: “We have fixed the grammatical mistakes left by the client’s reviewer, but stand behind the original translation, which flowed better in our opinion.”

**Third Act:** I tone down the translator’s remarks before sending the file back to the ICR, along with a carefully composed email acknowledging the respective professional skills of both the translator and the ICR that, I believe, will enable an agreement on the final translation.

**Dénouement:** the ICR quickly accepts the translator’s rework, including all the corrections of ‘client introduced’ errors.

I will never know whether the ICR was truly content with the rework, or simply didn’t have the time or the will for a further rebuttal.

# Work-induced trauma —help is at hand

There is growing awareness that professionals who work with cases involving violence can suffer from work-induced trauma (also known as vicarious trauma, burnout and compassion fatigue). The National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service, 1800 RESPECT, has telephone and online counselling services which cater for professionals working in this sphere.

Both services are available 24/7; call 1800 737 732, or go to:

<https://www.1800respect.org.au/telephone-and-online-counselling/> and click on ‘Connect to a counsellor’.

1800 RESPECT also offers a free online 10-week ‘Resilience Program’; the details can be found at: <https://www.1800respect.org.au/workers/resilience-program/>

## Project 3

### Cross-cultural name checks: sudden death in China, filthy fools in Europe

Cochlear’s product names are generally kept in English globally, for trademark reasons. For one new product the team conducted a survey of translators and ICRs, to gather feedback on a selection of English words under consideration for the product’s name.

Our main goal here was to ensure the chosen name would not offend or cause confusion in any language. Our colleagues around the world were pleased to be asked for input at this early stage, as new English product names can, at times, present predicaments for regional markets.

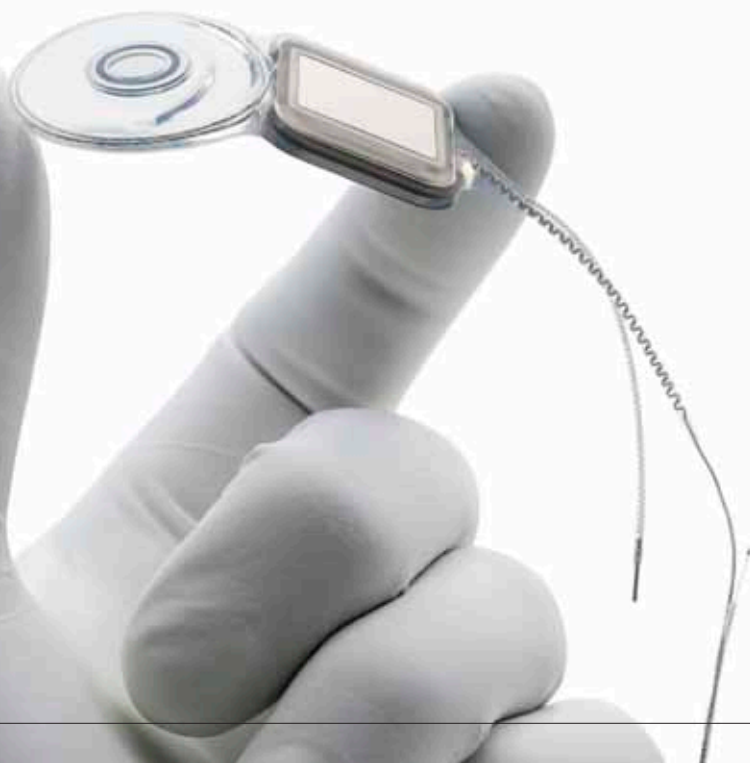
The head office managers’ preferred product name was overwhelmingly deemed ‘too English’ and ‘not pronounceable’ in nearly all of the 18 target languages slated to launch the product, but the clanger award fell to Simplified Chinese, with French and Italian tying for second place. Why? you may be asking ... well, the English pronunciation of this word sounded like a Chinese term meaning ‘sudden or immediate death’, while its attempted pronunciation by a unilingual French or Italian speaker based on its English orthography could evoke target terms meaning ‘idiot’/‘fool’ and ‘filthy’/‘dirty’ respectively. The global product and marketing managers took our findings on board in forming their final decision; it was definitely a good idea to carry out a cross-cultural linguistic check!

## Hear, hear

A recent assessment of localisation maturity by a leading globalisation consulting firm rated Cochlear as “very mature” in comparison with most life sciences companies, i.e. ahead of the curve compared to the industry as a whole, due to the work of its localisation teams in Australia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Being part of this ‘machine’ that creates a medical device to enable hearing is—what can I say?—a wonderful working environment, one in which we are reminded on a daily basis that our efforts make a difference to peoples’ lives around the world. It’s a pretty good reason to get out of bed each morning!

*Stephanie Riches Harries holds a Graduate Diploma in Translation from Western Sydney University and works as a freelance translator alongside her full-time position as localisation project manager at Cochlear Ltd.*





# AUSIT: in the beginning ...

**A History of AUSIT, prepared by foundation members Adolfo Gentile, Barbara McGilvray and Terry Chesher, has recently been posted to AUSIT's website. Their account of the circumstances under which AUSIT was first formed has been summarised here.**



Terry Chesher

Adolfo Gentile



Barbara McGilvray



**T**he genesis of AUSIT is found in the early 1970s, with a growing awareness in Australia of the needs of a 'multicultural' society. Many of those who had arrived in the country under its post-war migration program spoke little or no English, and communication problems were hampering their access to essential services in the community. Recognising this, the federal government established the internationally ground-breaking Emergency Telephone Interpreter Service (now TIS National). This naturally led to discussions about what would now be described as 'professionalising' the role of the interpreters and translators who were providing the service.

The immigration minister at the time, Al Grassby, asked the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ)—whose remit was to harmonise the different approaches to overseas qualifications by a range of professional bodies across Australia—to devise a system for creating a T&I profession. Within seven months, COPQ had produced a report that would serve as the blueprint for setting up a national body to develop and implement the requisite systems and structures for accreditation, registration and course approval. It was intended that this body would then facilitate the birth of a national professional association to take over these functions, ceasing to exist itself (although some stakeholders argued that accreditation power should not reside in those with the most vested interest in the process).

Instituted in September 1977, NAATI was given a term of five years. It immediately set to work to create a multilevel testing and accreditation program, and this was in operation by the early 1980s. As the five years stretched to six, however, it became clear that no association could take over the task of T&I accreditation, both for financial reasons and because of a lack of coherence between the

existing state- and territory-based bodies.

On 1 July 1983, therefore, it was agreed that a restructured NAATI would continue to operate. It would retain responsibility for accreditation, registration and approval of courses, while also facilitating the creation of a separate professional association, as initially planned. NAATI became a company limited by guarantee, and the Federal Government ceased to provide full funding and administrative support. Now jointly owned by the federal, state and mainland territory governments, it was expected to begin generating a large portion of its operating funds itself.

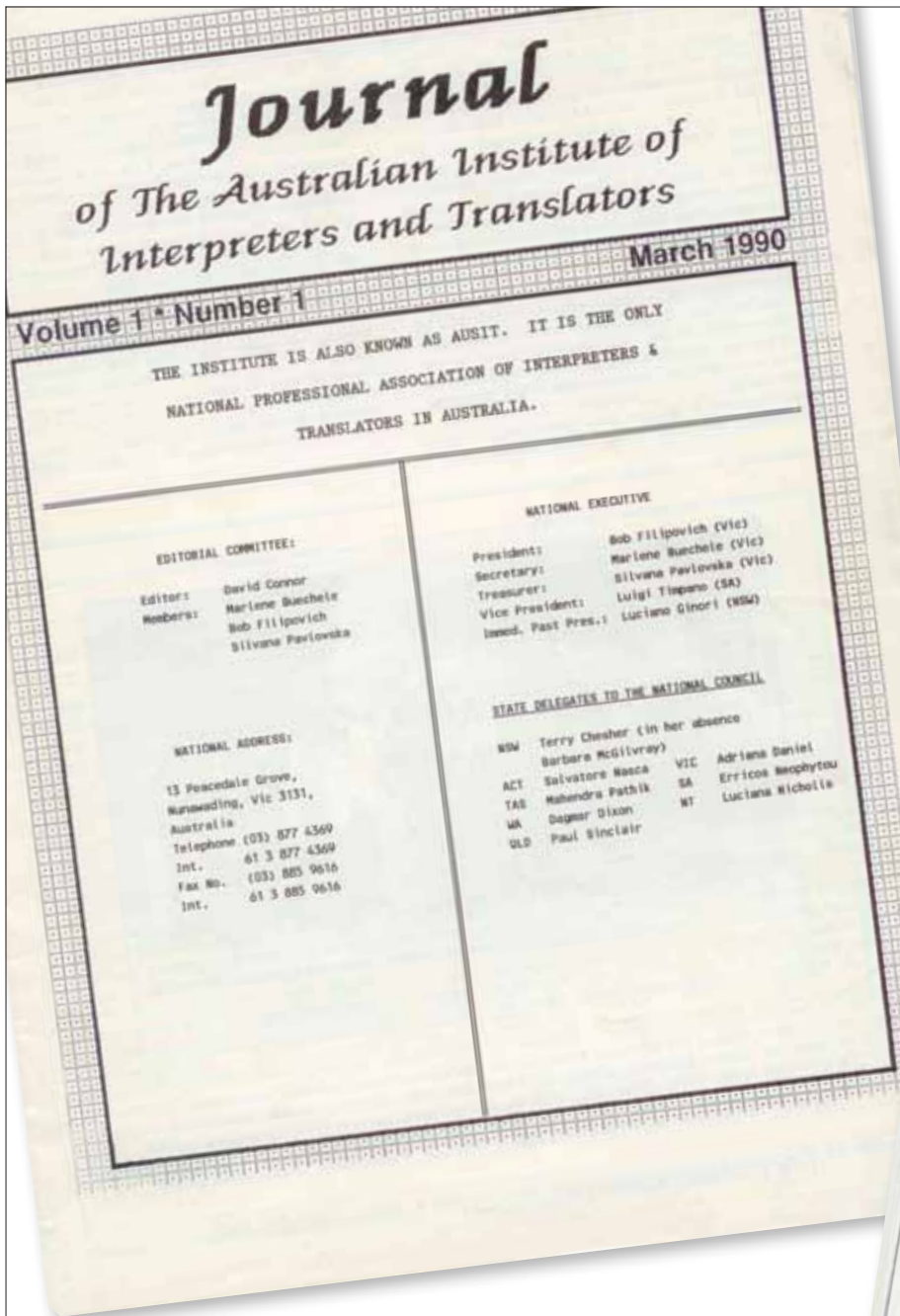
In 1987, NAATI gathered appropriate representatives from all the states and territories together for a weekend in Canberra. A constitution and bylaws were drafted, and the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) was established.

The following June, AUSIT's inaugural National AGM was held at the Sydney Opera House. The constitution and bylaws were endorsed, and the first national council, with representation from state and territory branches, was appointed. The council's president and an executive council would be appointed by the branches, rotating between the states biennially, and each branch appointed a principal delegate to represent it at quarterly national council meetings (conducted via teleconference until the advent of the internet).

Thus was created the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators. Run by committed volunteer members, it has made many significant contributions to the language service industry, both locally and internationally, over its first three decades. Above all AUSIT is, as it has always been, a community of translators and interpreters who provide each other with support and assistance and share knowledge, information and ideas.

*For more on the history of AUSIT, go to: [http://www.ausit.org/AUSIT/About/Who\\_We\\_Are\\_-\\_Our\\_History.aspx](http://www.ausit.org/AUSIT/About/Who_We_Are_-_Our_History.aspx)*

*Above all AUSIT is, as it has always been, a community of translators and interpreters who provide each other with support and assistance and share knowledge, information and ideas.*



# AUSIT's early years: in pictures ...

Pages from the first edition of AUSIT's *Journal*,  
edited by foundation member **David Connor**



## First AUSIT National AGM, Sydney Opera House, 1988

From left to right: **Mary Gurgone** (WA delegate), **Mahendra Pathik** (Tasmanian delegate), [unidentified female], **Bob Filipovich** (elected National Vice President), **Paul Hellander** (South Australian delegate), [unidentified female], **Barbara Ulmer** (elected General Secretary), **Luciano Ginori** (elected National President), **Luciana Nicholls** (NT delegate)



Photo taken at the California Motor Inn, the morning after 1988's AGM held in Melbourne.  
From left - David Connor (VIC), Roger Jones (NSW), the morning after 1988's AGM held in Melbourne.  
Melike Rudzars (NSW), Rita Deuchamps (WA), Luigi Tinpano (SA), Paul Sinclair (QLD), Bob Filipovich (VIC),  
Ahmet Oztrak (VIC), David Deafauli (NSW), Kate Johnson (NSW), Eve Saville (VIC), Erricos Neophytou (SA),  
Knoxling - Luciana Nicholls (NT) and Terry Chester (NSW) with Adriana Daniel (VIC) standing behind.  
The Australian Institute of Interpreters & Translators Vol 1 No 1.







**NAATI conference in Canberra, at which AUSIT was established, 5 September 1987**

From left to right: **Jane Munro** (NSW), **Iro Melbye** (NT), **Sherill Bell** (NAATI), [darkhaired female hand raised], **Valerie Taylor-Bouladon** (ACT), **Kate Johnson** (NSW), **Heinrich Stefanik** (ACT), **Lorna Kempner** (VIC), **Susana Hovell** (NSW), **Peter Martin** (NAATI), **Anne Looker** (NAATI), [male in blue suit], **Paul Sinclair** (NAATI), **Stuart Campbell** (NSW), **Jill Blewett** (SA/NAATI), **Peter Davidson** (QLD), **Luigi Mastellone** (NSW), [female in brown sunglasses], **Adriana Daniel** (VIC), **Paul Hellander** (SA), **Ted Kempner** (VIC), **Mary Gurgone** (WA), [female obscured], **Anthony Restuccia** (NAATI), [male obscured, poss. **Jan Wikstrom** (NSW)], **Luciano Ginori** (NSW), **Arman Turkay** (later Armand von Stein) (QLD), **Mahendra Pathik** (TAS), **Luigi Timpano** (SA), **Bob Filipovich** (VIC), **Antonio Flores** (VIC), **Barbara Ulmer** (NSW)

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**FIT Congress 1996  
AUSIT Organising Committee**

From left to right: **Clare MacAdam** (event organiser, Fauth Royale & Associates), **David Connor** (General Treasurer), **Klaus Hermes** (National President), **Adolfo Gentile** (chair of the Organising Committee), **Barbara McGilvray** (General Secretary), **Demetra Egan** (AUSIT member)



# AUSIT 30th Anniversary Foundation Members

The following translators and interpreters joined AUSIT in the year of its inception, 1987, and are still active members:

- |  |     |   |     |  |     |
|--|-----|---|-----|--|-----|
| <b>John Antoniou</b><br>T&I: Greek>English                             | ACT | <b>Adolfo Gentile</b><br>T&I: Italian>English   | VIC | <b>Barbara McGilvray</b><br>T: Italian>English                       | NSW |
| <b>Anthony Atkinson</b><br>T: Japanese>English and I: Japanese>English | WA  | <b>Luciano (Lou) Ginori</b><br>T&I: Italian>English                                   | NSW | <b>Eve Oakley</b><br>T&I: Dutch>English                              | VIC |
| <b>Marta Barany</b><br>T&I: Hungarian>English                          | NSW | <b>Mary Gurgone</b><br>T: Italian>English and I: Italian>English                      | WA  | <b>Magdalena Rowan</b><br>T&I: Spanish>English and I: Polish>English | SA  |
| <b>Marianne Bland</b><br>T: Spanish>English and I: Spanish>English     | VIC | <b>Sandra Hale</b><br>T&I: Spanish>English  | NSW | <b>Eva Schulz</b><br>T&I: German>English                             | VIC |
| <b>Patrizia Burley-Lombardi</b><br>T&I: Italian>English                | VIC | <b>Susana Hovell</b><br>T&I: Spanish>English, T: French>English and I: French>English | NSW | <b>Enid Sedgwick</b><br>T&I: German>English and T: French>English    | WA  |
| <b>Terry Chesher</b><br>T: Italian>English                             | NSW | <b>Lia Jaric</b><br>T&I: Hungarian and Serbian>English, and I: Bosnian>English        | NSW |  |     |
| <b>David Connor</b><br>T: Afrikaans, Bulgarian and Norwegian>English   | VIC |   |     |  |     |

This list was compiled from the records available; however, it's possible that some foundation members have slipped through the net. If that includes you, we'd love to hear from you, and will update the list in an upcoming edition.



# Interpreting—from a distance! The Northern Territory's new Aboriginal audiovisual interpreter service

In Amata, a remote community in South Australia, the police have taken a suspect into custody. He speaks only Western Arrernte, and the nearest interpreter is well over six hours' drive away, in Alice Springs. How will they caution the suspect and advise him of his rights? Aboriginal interpreter **Derek Hunt** explains how a new audiovisual (AV) service launched by the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) is extending the assistance it can provide to Aboriginal Australians whose first language is not English.

**S**ince the AIS was launched by the Northern Territory Government (NTG) in 2000, we have been providing face-to-face interpreting in most urban areas and many remote locations of the territory, and more recently in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in South Australia and the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands in WA. Although Indigenous interpreting is a relatively new industry in Australia, we have expanded quickly and are now a large organisation; in 2016 we provided over 34,000 hours of interpreting in 39 languages, predominantly in the legal, health and social welfare sectors. Yet there are still plenty of requests we can't fill—when there's either no interpreter, or no culturally appropriate interpreter, available.

Phone interpreting has played a huge part in Australia's T&I industry for many years; however, although useful in theory, there are difficulties in practice. The NT has poor phone coverage in remote areas and even sometimes towns, plus most Aboriginal interpreters don't have access to reliable phones or quiet places. In recent years we have often interpreted via video in court, but this hasn't cut travel costs or made it more convenient for us, as we've still had to get to wherever the video facilities are.

In 2015, a push to expand video conferencing services in NT courts gained momentum, particularly targeting remote communities and links between prisons and courts. Deaf Queensland visited the AIS and introduced us to some of the great interpreting services that can be provided via video. The Department of Human Services, as a key client that requires flexibility and remote access to interpreting services, was also keen for innovation. The AIS's Director, Colleen Rosas, and Executive Director for Community Development and Engagement, David Alexander, initiated a drive for the AIS to invest in phone and video interpreting facilities.

The AIS launched its new AV interpreter service in November 2016, having installed soundproof interpreting booths in its major offices—Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine. The booths, equipped with phone and video equipment and software, provide interpreters

with comfortable and confidential environments in which to work—a far cry from the improvised last-minute quiet spaces or empty offices previously used to take mobile calls.

We are currently running AV rosters Monday to Friday, providing 'on demand' interpreting. We are already covering seven major Aboriginal languages across the three offices, and are taking many calls from Centrelink offices and call centres around the NT, and even from Queensland. Hospitals in Adelaide (to where NT residents have to fly for many health procedures) also call for patients from APY. We often provide video interpreting to mental health wards for assessments and tribunals, and to interstate courts.

The booths are also being booked to assist people who are outside the area in which their language is commonly spoken, allowing us to provide a quicker and more cost-effective service in such situations. For example, the other day a case involving a Yolngu Matha speaker came up in the Katherine Court House. Our Katherine office doesn't cover this language, but a Yolngu Matha interpreter was provided in our Darwin office, eliminating the 600km round trip.

Unexpectedly, phone and video interpreting are proving useful in situations where face-to-face interpreting would not be culturally appropriate. For example, I have interpreted over the phone for a female patient in a health matter. As I'm male this would normally be

considered inappropriate in most Aboriginal cultures; but as we didn't know each other or each other's families personally, and were far apart (she was in an interstate hospital), we agreed that it was OK for me to interpret.

Interpreters are also benefiting from the flexibility of working from different offices. Whilst the Pintupi-Luritja roster is normally covered from Alice Springs, last week it was covered by an interpreter who was in Darwin for family reasons, allowing him to balance work and family commitments.

While the new AV service is proving valuable for clients, professionals and interpreters, its first few months haven't been without challenges. Firstly, the cost of transporting the booths to the NT made it expensive to set up. Secondly, there have been IT issues: as we're part of the NTG, its firewalls and IT security measures limit which platforms we can use—for example, we can't use Skype; and the organisations we work with don't always know much about their own AV facilities. Lastly, although there is quite a bit of downtime between jobs for the rostered interpreters, two jobs will then, inevitably, come in for the same language at the same time!

Ellen Gapany, a NAATI-accredited Djambarrpuynu (a dialect of Yolngu Matha) interpreter, is a regular on the Darwin office's AV roster. Her feedback is summarised below:

- It's *manymak* (good) that I'm able to assist people straight away, because I'm there waiting for calls to come through.
- The technology is easy to use, and I find this mode of interpreting easy with both clients and professionals.
- For some requests I can adjust my mindset to allow interpretation. For example, if I know that a client is my avoidance/poison cousin—a relative with whom I must avoid direct contact—I can refer to him as his father. This would make him my grandfather (rather than my avoidance/poison cousin), and I'm then allowed to interpret for him.

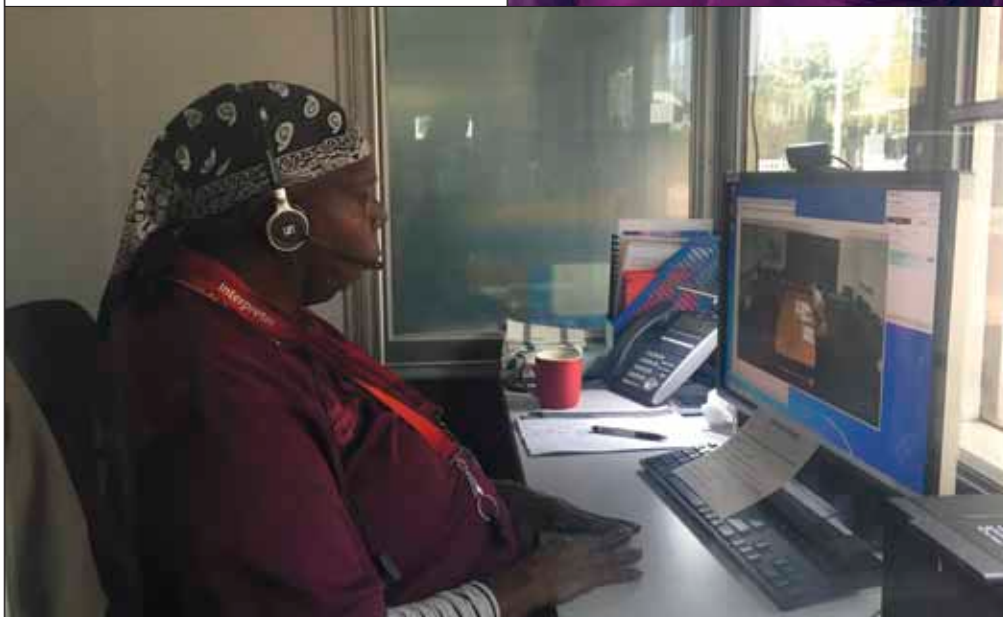
In conclusion, although the new AV service is in its early days, it's showing promising signs that it will improve both services to our clients and working conditions for our interpreters.

**Derek Lika Mutpu Djalarriny**

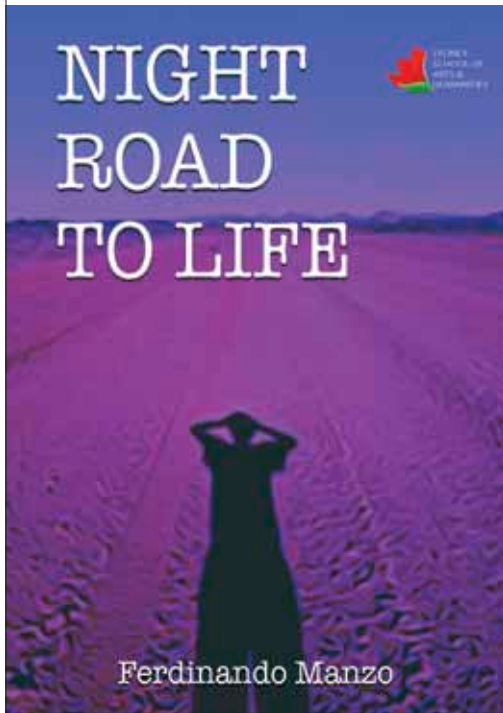
*Ngarr'ngarr'ngu Hunt, from Galiwinku on Elcho Island in north-east Arnhem Land, NT, is a paraprofessionally NAATI-accredited Djambarrpuynu (a dialect of Yolngu Matha) <-> English interpreter, and also an interpreter trainer, with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS), based in Darwin.*

*To find out more about the new AV service, contact the AIS: 1800 334 944 / [ais@nt.gov.au](mailto:ais@nt.gov.au)*

*“It’s manymak (good) that I’m able to assist people straight away, because I’m there waiting for calls to come through.”*



Ellen Gapany at work in one of the new AV interpreter booths in the Darwin office of the AIS.



## *Strada di notte per la vita* (Night Road to Life)

**In August 2016, Australian Italian poet Paolo Totaro AM launched the first poetry collection from writer Ferdinando Manzo, recently arrived from Italy. In his address, Totaro introduced Manzo and reflected on the place in Australian literature of poets whose first language is not English. Following is a lightly edited transcript of Totaro's address.**

We see them at Woolworths, at the gym. They are young, speak Italian better, are tall, well dressed. They are the new Italians of Australia. They are Italy's great loss and our gain. Ferdinando Manzo is one of them and, as a poet who has just begun to write in English, he deserves particular attention.

Australian poetry has a special place in English literatures, in part due to the wide diversity of first languages and cultures that exist among its poets—Italian, Greek, Arabic, Vietnamese, Lao, Filipino, Latvian, Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, Serbian and many more—although only a few such poets have been published and have received recognition. Their stories are often interwoven with world events, and always they strive to find a new voice in a new language, and relevance in a new land. So it was for Italians like me, who arrived on these shores over half a century ago, soon after WWII.

More than half a century later, it is now the turn of migrants from today's Italy to stake a claim for an original Australian poetic voice. Ferdinando, in his poem *Fear of Tomorrow*, hints at a new relationship between those who knock and those who open the door. It is more between equals than it was for immigrants sent from ship to camps to distant worksites, with no clear hope of ever returning home:

*Don't give me your fears.  
You can keep them.  
I have to finish my bottle,  
Count my pennies and read my book.  
Each of these is more real than your paranoias.*

As a published poet who writes in both languages, I pay now close attention to these developments; so when a former colleague spoke of a poet who arrived four years ago from Naples, my attention was awakened. Then Ferdinando sent me *Night Road to Life* and wrote (I've translated from the Italian):

"I would greatly appreciate your opinion, either positive or negative, of this small collection, my first foray into poetry. I should add that poetry is an art that for me, a Sci Fi and other fiction writer with a background in journalism, still represents a vastly untilled field."

I read the book in both languages. I did like his poetry, and was honoured to be asked to help in launching it today.

Ferdinando comes from Torre del Greco ('The Greek's Tower', named from an ancient Greek hermit who squatted in a local abandoned tower). Torre was in Roman times part of Herculaneum, and patricians' villas now lie buried in ash under the modern town. Today it is in a continuum with the ever-expanding Naples, still dangerously right at the feet of Vesuvius, where lava and sea have met for millions of years. Torre is on the way to Pompeii and Sorrento, in one of the most recognisable landscapes in the world, every few centuries incinerated then punctually fertilised



to new life by the volcano. Perhaps echoing Latin poet and philosopher Horace, Manzo writes:

*Because  
it's not yesterday  
it's not tomorrow.  
It's just today  
and today is always  
the perfect day.*

Or as Horace puts it in his Ode 1:11:

*Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.*  
[Seize the day, you can't be sure there will be another.]

In Italy, Ferdinando worked in the media and in politics, as an editor and journalist. In Australia, he works at the Sydney School of Arts and Humanities, and also as a chef. He recently received his first contract as an author, for his science fiction book *The man who saved the world*, and he has two more books in the pipeline.

Tonight he presents his first collection of poetry, *Night Road to Life*, and I want to draw your attention to one important fact. The same as, say, with North Africans in Italy, who now write poetry in Italian and are studied in universities as part of postcolonial literature, Italian poets in Australia who write in English become part of Australian literature. Some call them 'of the diaspora', which literally means 'of people dispersed from their homeland'.

I don't like the biblical term, but it's useful to remind us that these poets are in search of new voices, each on a journey requiring a gigantic effort—and not only in balancing the familiar sound, say, of a Leopardi with the less familiar Yeats, or of an Ungaretti with Les Murray. The search for our own, new, poetic language is a tough journey. It's about listening both to other poets and to our own work, especially when read or sung by others.

In two poems, *The forgotten beach* and *The oblivion of the forgotten*, Ferdinando gives voice to the daily reality of the millions of refugees who seek asylum. Like most of us, he fluctuates between hope and despair facing this epochal crisis:

*There  
on that beach  
I have seen the birth of a flower  
I call tomorrow.  
... as his hope is shipwrecked  
among waves of indifference  
in a common sea  
in a statistic  
in the oblivion of the forgotten.*

There is so much more to say about this truly interesting new poet, and no doubt it will be said.

Let me finish with a positive note: true, publishing poetry in print books is more and more difficult if one is not part of a quite restricted canon of celebrated poets; but the internet has opened to many new, important poetry magazines all over the world that are much more receptive. Universities such as those in Lecce, Udine, Milan and Padua, just to mention a few in Italy, as well as Leeds, Salzburg and New York, actively study new literatures in both Italian and English; and their offerings are available at the strike of a keyboard.

I am sure that Ferdinando Manzo has the qualities to join in, on his own terms. Now some of his poems will be read. You will be the judges.

*Paolo Totaro is an Australian Italian poet who has held several prominent positions in Australia, including founding director of the Community Arts Board of the Australia Council, and later founding chair of the NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission. He is a Member of the Order of Australia (AM, 1988) and a Commendatore of the Order of Italy (2006). See [www.paolototaro.com.au](http://www.paolototaro.com.au) for more information.*

*The text for Totaro's address was co-edited by In Touch's former editor (2013–16), Jeremy Gilling.*

*“Because / it's not  
yesterday / it's not  
tomorrow. / It's just  
today / and today is  
always / the perfect day.”*



# Aboriginal interpreters in early Sydney

At International Translation Day 2016, held at Macquarie University, Helen Slatyer presented an overview of the history of T&I in Australia, from the early days of the penal colony in New South Wales up until the 1970s. In this edited extract she focusses on records from those early days.

**A** growing interest in documenting the history of interpreting in different countries has led me to explore what we know about Australia's first known interpreters. We can assume that interpreting occurred between coastal Indigenous peoples and the various outsiders who visited this land prior to European invasion; also that it occurred then, as it does now, between different Aboriginal language groups, for example in ceremonial situations that extend across language groups. However, the first historical records that explicitly mention interpreting here date from the time of British colonisation and their first settlement in Sydney Cove.

The colonists documented their observations and experience in detail in journals, diaries, letters and drawings, many of which survive today. In contrast, however, the local Aboriginal peoples' traditional dissemination of their histories—through language, land, ceremony, dance, songs and stories—was severely disrupted by colonisation. In 1789 their population was decimated by an epidemic of

smallpox, believed to have arrived with the First Fleet. As a result, there is little record of the early colonial period from an Indigenous perspective; the early histories available, therefore, must be recognised as partial, and necessarily lacking cultural insight and understanding.

The colony's founder, Governor Arthur Phillip, had arrived with instructions to "endeavour ... to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them"<sup>1</sup>. He appears, as far as a coloniser can, to have attempted to do so; however, although his despatches record friendly gestures made from both sides, within a few months relations between the colonists and the clans of the coastal Eora people had deteriorated into unmanageable conflict<sup>2</sup>. Phillip set about encouraging local Aboriginal families to move into the settlement "in order to get their language"<sup>3</sup>. However, by October 1788 he had lost hope of achieving this aim "without using force"<sup>4</sup>.

Two months later, Phillip did resort to force: Arabanoo, a young Eora man, was kidnapped near Manly Cove, to act as a 'go-between'. Despite the violent manner of his capture and being kept prisoner, Arabanoo seems to have been resigned to life in the settlement. He was known for his gentle nature and courteous manners (particularly to the ladies), and became attached to several people, including Phillip and Captain Watkin Tench. Having quickly learned English, Arabanoo accompanied the Governor on trips around the Sydney basin<sup>5</sup>.



In April 1789, during the smallpox epidemic, Arabanoo accompanied Phillip and Chief Surgeon John White to attend to Aboriginal victims and bring them into the settlement for treatment. Arabanoo sadly succumbed to smallpox himself after nursing one such rescued family, and died.

An eight-year-old Aboriginal boy named Nanberry was brought for treatment with his father, who died a few hours after their arrival. Nanberry survived and was adopted by Surgeon White, growing up as a brother to White's firstborn son. He learned English, and regularly accompanied Phillip and other officers on trips during which encounters with the Eora were planned. Nanberry was often

*Phillip set about encouraging local Aboriginal families to move into the settlement “in order to get their language”. However, by October 1788 he had lost hope of achieving this aim “without using force”.*



referred to as an interpreter and go-between. An Aboriginal girl named Boorong, aged about 14, was also orphaned during the epidemic and, having been adopted by a settler, is documented as taking on the role of interpreter.

By late 1789, Governor Phillip was becoming desperate to find interpreters “to reconcile [the Aboriginal peoples] to live amongst us”<sup>6</sup>. Food was scarce in the settlement, and according to Tench, Phillip decided to take two more prisoners, to facilitate “intercourse with the natives, for the purpose of knowing whether or not the country possessed any resources, by which life might be prolonged”<sup>7</sup>.

Nanberry was delighted to see the two new prisoners, Bennelong and Colby. He didn’t have their company for long, though; Colby, Nanberry’s uncle from the Gadigal clan and a respected warrior, escaped soon after his capture; while Bennelong, from the neighbouring Wangal clan, escaped five months later.

However, after a ‘payback’ for his kidnapping during which Phillip was speared, Bennelong returned to the settlement of his own free will. Boorong accompanied White and Chaplain Richard Johnson to interpret when they returned to the site of the attack on Phillip, in order to determine what had occurred. It is well documented that Bennelong subsequently served as a go-between and interpreter in the settlement. He developed a close relationship with Phillip, calling him *beanga* (father) and accompanying him to England in 1792.

Returning to Australia three years later, Bennelong went back to live with his clan. He died at Kissing Point, on the Parramatta River, in 1813<sup>8</sup>.

By October 1790, some of the surviving Eora had come peacefully into the British

settlement, following negotiations between Phillip, Bennelong and Colby for reconciliation that were facilitated by Boorong and Nanberry<sup>9</sup>.

I note that:

- Few of the British appear to have performed the role of go-between or interpreter, although Lieutenant William Dawes was a keen linguist, and he and Tench documented much of the vocabulary and customs of the local Aboriginal clans. Others are also reported to have acquired limited proficiency in the local languages in order to carry out simple conversations and to assist with communication between the different linguistic communities.
- Arabanoo and Bennelong provided information about customs and culture as well as language, and it is evident that they and the other documented Aboriginal interpreters, Nanberry and Boorong, were cultural as well as linguistic mediators.
- Excursions on which Arabanoo accompanied Phillip included visits to Arabanoo’s friends, who eventually shunned him. His experience resonates with those of interpreters hired locally by occupying forces in conflict zones in recent decades, who are frequently treated with suspicion and hostility by their own communities.
- The two adopted children, Nanberry and Boorong, fulfilled a common role of bilingual children, interpreting for their family and community.

*Dr Helen Slatyer is the director of the translation and interpreting programs at Macquarie University.*

1 Frederick Watson (ed), *Historical Records of Australia, Series 1: Governors’ despatches to and from England, Vol. 1, 1788–96* (Sydney: Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1914), p. 13.

2 Josephine Flood, *The original Australians: story of the Aboriginal people* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2006), p. 37.

3 Watson, p. 96.

4 Watson, p. 96.

5 Keith Vincent Smith, *Bennelong* (Sydney: Kangaroo Press, 2001), p. 33.

6 Watson, p. 65.

7 Watkin Tench, *A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson in New South Wales* (London: G. Nicol and J. Sewell, 1789), pp. 33–34.

8 Smith, p. viii.

9 Smith, pp. 67–68.

*Taking of Colbee & Benalon, 25 Novr 1789, c. 1789–92, from A Voyage to New South Wales, the journal of First Fleet naval officer William Bradley. Image courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.*



# Member profiles

T&I practitioners often work alone, or in environments where they are the only member of their profession.

Do you ever wonder who else is out there ... why they chose to become a translator or interpreter ... what path they then took to reach where they are today ... whether you and they share the same pleasures and frustrations in your chosen profession?

AUSIT has a large and diverse body of members. Randomly selected members have been asked to answer a short questionnaire, and four respondents are featured here. We hope you will enjoy—and participate in—this ongoing project, and that it will enhance the sense of community among AUSIT members.



## STÉPHANIE BAUCHE

Translator or interpreter (or both): translator  
Language(s) and direction(s): English>French, Spanish>French

Location (city and/or state): Sydney

Practising since: 2000; full time since 2012

Member of AUSIT since: 2005

Main areas of practice: technical, IT, marketing

## Q&A

### Q1

How did you become a translator/interpreter (T/I)?

### Q2

Why did you join AUSIT?

### Q3:

What aspect of being a T/I do you like most?

### Q4:

What aspect of being a T/I do you like least?

### A1

When I was 17, I went to Poland for a holiday. I stayed with a family in which only the father could speak French, and I was amazed by what he did for us by interpreting. I thought that it was great to help people communicate like he did, and I decided I would like to become an interpreter. Then later, I found that translation was more for me.

### A2

When I came to Australia from Europe in 2005, I knew no one and didn't really know how things worked here. Joining AUSIT made total sense to get to know the market and meet new people working in translation like I do. I learned a great deal, thanks to AUSIT and its members.

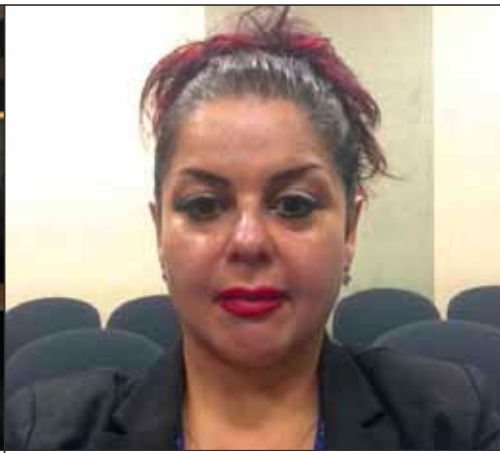
### A3

The fact that I'm learning every day, and the satisfaction of making a document written in English available to French-speaking people.

### A4

The isolation and loneliness can be hard sometimes, but they're kind of necessary in order to work efficiently. Sometimes nowadays I go and work at the local library to get a change of scene—it's a good way to break the routine.





**DENISE FORMICA**

Translator or interpreter (or both): both  
Language(s) and direction(s): Italian<>English interpreter; Italian>English translator  
Location (city and/or state): Mount Waverley, Victoria  
Practising since: 2001  
Member of AUSIT since: intermittently since 2006; annually since 2011  
Main areas of practice: aged care, health, legal, business and personal documents

**SARIR HOMAYUNI**

Translator or interpreter (or both): both  
Language(s) and direction(s): English<>Persian  
Location (city and/or state): Melbourne  
Practising since: translation 1995, interpreting 2003  
Member of AUSIT since: senior member since 2001  
Main areas of practice: you just name it! From legal and medical to immigration, education and social security

**JULIAN (SULIENI) LAYT**

Translator or interpreter (or both): interpreter  
Language(s) and direction(s): Tongan and Samoan<>English  
Location (city and/or state): Brisbane, QLD  
Practising since: 2009  
Member of AUSIT since: 2016  
Main areas of practice: immigration, health, community, media, legal/corporate

**A1**

I learned Italian living and working in Rome in the 1970s and '80s. Back in Australia I returned to university in 2001, and completed my PhD in Translation Studies in 2009. I started interpreting to earn some money while studying, and so loved the job and the people I met that I never stopped!

**A2**

I started working on the local committee in 2011, met many colleagues, and made lots of friends. I believe AUSIT has an important role to play in the professionalisation of our industry.

**A3**

Meeting people during my interpreting assignments, and the challenge of finding the best word or the right turn of phrase when I'm translating. I particularly enjoy literary translation, and am currently working on an Italian novel.

**A4**

The downside of life as an independent professional is the isolation from colleagues. I also find that not having a regular flow of work is stressful; weathering the lean times can be challenging.

**A1**

I studied for my BA in Translation (English>Persian) in Iran, graduating in 1994, and began working as a translator the following year. Five years later I came to Australia as a skilled migrant. I was awarded a scholarship by the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs (VOMA) to study for an Advanced Diploma of T&I at RMIT, which I completed successfully in 2004.

**A2**

To have a sense of belonging, to network, and also to support the T&I industry in Australia and across the world. Also because AUSIT plays a big role in raising awareness within organisations / interpreting service users, by training them how to work with us and clarifying our roles with them.

**A3**

I like the flexibility, and also the regular and ongoing learning due to being exposed to information in a variety of specialised fields on a daily basis.

**A4**

Low remuneration, in particular in the legal field, while our NSW colleagues get paid heaps more! Also invoicing my clients, mainly my translation clients. For example, I have to invoice Centrelink monthly for providing phone interpreting, despite every single detail being already recorded in their system. They don't seem interested in benefiting from technology!

**A1**

I'd worked for many years using several languages interchangeably in the community (ethnic radio and television), private (airline industry) and government sectors. I decided to sit the NAATI test and register as a freelance interpreter to further supplement my income and be able to assist the community in a paid/professional capacity. I'm currently working for the Federal Government.

**A2**

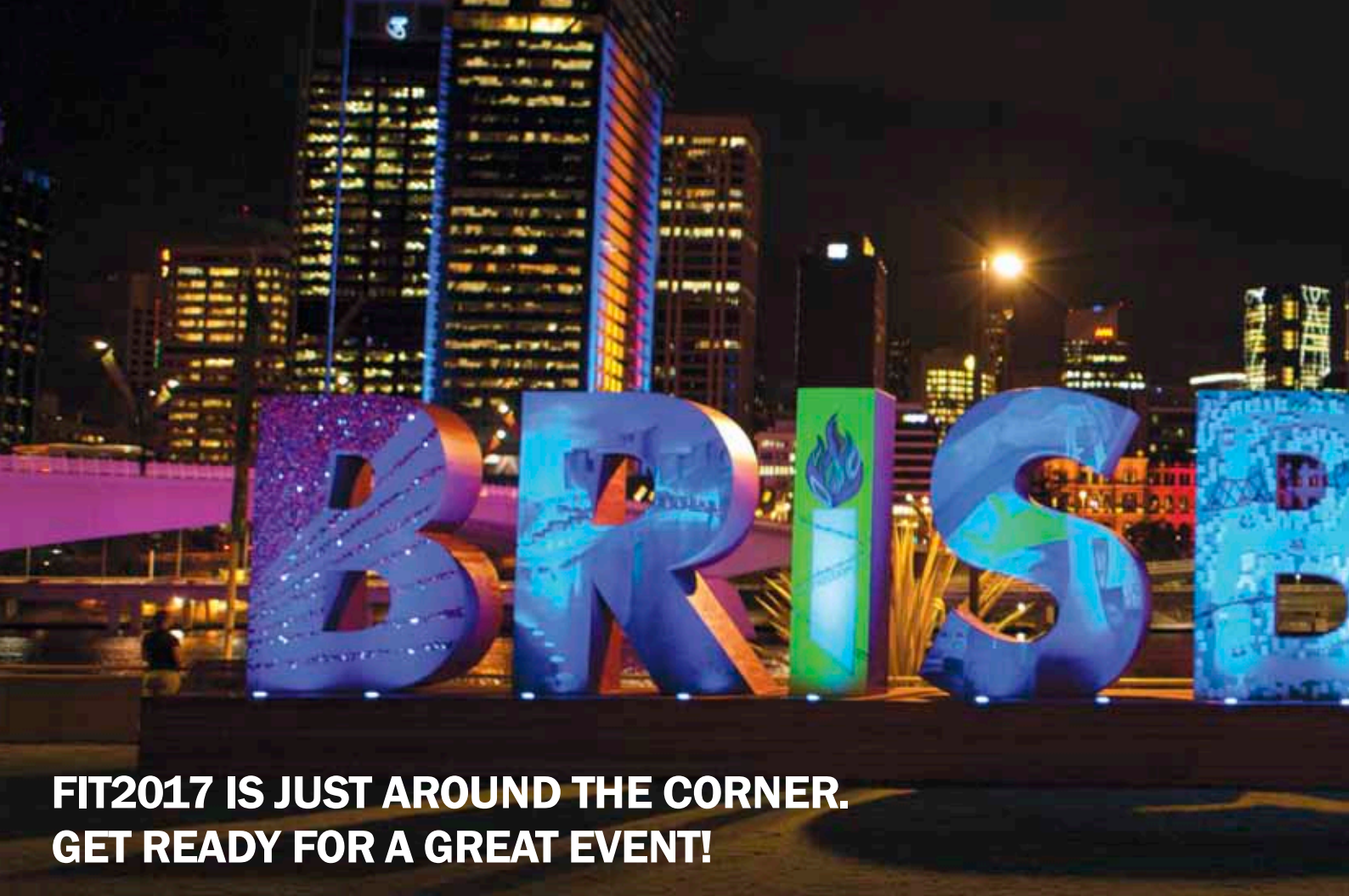
AUSIT is a well-established and respected industry player worldwide. I attended several webinars offered by AUSIT for professional development (PD), and decided that the next step in my PD was to become a member.

**A3**

I enjoy: the opportunities to grow and expand my knowledge of various industries; being the conduit between two different parties, facilitating communication; and the challenges of moving between multiple languages and cultures in a professional capacity.

**A4**

The inconsistency of assignments, challenging timeframes, and sometimes inconvenient distances to attend assignments. I prefer phone interpreting; however, this comes with its own challenges, such as one's whereabouts when a call comes through!



## FIT2017 IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. GET READY FOR A GREAT EVENT!

### FIT2017: Diversification and Disruption

3–5 August 2017



AUSIT



There are only four months left—and counting—before the grand opening in Brisbane of XXI FIT World Congress, the 21st world congress of the International Federation of Translators (and, oh, that includes interpreters, too).

Time has flown since AUSIT Queensland member Alison Rodriguez flew out to Berlin with all our hopes—and a huggable koala!—to convince the world that Australia, and Brisbane in particular, would be a great place to host the triennial event.

Alison was successful, and soon afterwards AUSIT put together the Congress Organising Committee, which has been busy ever since. Sponsors have generously poured in; 300 proposals for presentations have been sifted through, and over 100 selected; the five-star, world-class Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre has been selected as the venue, and a gala dinner at Rydges South Bank Brisbane organised; entertainment has been prepared, and tours have been negotiated.

FIT2017 is shaping up to cement AUSIT's reputation for hosting the best FIT congresses, acquired in 1996 when we hosted the XIV World Congress in Melbourne. This time we've had the added advantage of being able to establish a presence on social media.

It is expected that the congress will attract nearly 1000 delegates, many of them from overseas. Subtitled 'Diversification and Disruption', the program (see a draft version at [www.fit2017.org/](http://www.fit2017.org/)) tackles a variety of subjects, from the future of the profession to endangered indigenous languages, through sign language and community interpreting,

literary translation, technology, subtitling, transcreation ... and much more. We've even included presentations on translating humour, music and Tibetan scrolls; there's something for everyone. The only constraint on the size of the program was that of the venue!

The three-day program is packed with distinguished academics and world-renowned practitioners and mentors, with four keynote speakers confirmed to date:

- **Professor Jemina Napier**, sign language interpreter, researcher, educator and practitioner
- **Professor Michael Cronin**, author, editor and regular Irish language TV contributor
- **Professor Anthony Pym**, authority on sociological approaches to translation and intercultural relations
- **Dr Sara Kendzior**, writer, journalist and researcher

... plus professors **Sandra Hale** and **Alan Melby**; Associate Professor **Ludmila Stern**; **Glenn Flores** MD, FAAP; translator, consultant and past president of FIT **Adolfo Gentile**; translators and authors **Brian Mossop** and **Chris Durban** ... and many more.





FIT2017's Event Partners are Tourism Queensland and Brisbane Tourism—both keen on attracting visitors to Queensland—and the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association (ASLIA).

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) and FIT was very timely, considering that this is the first time the program has featured a sign language stream.

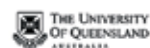
Additional sponsors already signed up include NAATI, Congress Rentals, the University of Queensland, SDL (provider of Trados), 2M Language Services, Monash University, RMIT, the University of New South Wales, Translationz (language service provider) and Multilingual magazine, and talks are also afoot with SBS Radio, Kilgray (developer of memoQ) and others.

We encourage you to attend—international translation conferences of this magnitude only occur in Australia once or twice in any of our careers, and there's the added lure that Brisbane is exquisite in winter. Hurry up and register, places are running out!

Visit [www.fit2017.org](http://www.fit2017.org) for more information, and don't forget to like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and spread the good news.

**SEE YOU IN BRISBANE!**

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