

I first introduced myself to Nicholas Jose in 2005, just after we both returned to Adelaide – me from Melbourne, Nick from Sydney - asking if he would help get PEN going in Adelaide. With his knowledge, advice and support, Adelaide PEN was inaugurated in February 2006.

Our major achievements to date include –

- Increasing the member base in Adelaide from about a dozen to just on 50.
- Created an arresting image through the introduction of a web page, posters and stationery suite.
- Instituting bi-monthly meetings with excellent regular attendance rates over the past two years.
- Creating a successful and prolific Letter-writing Subcommittee, which has sent close to 40 letters out since its inception in July 2007.
- Creating a Fund-raising subcommittee which has already worked to
 - Introduce Adelaide PEN T-shirts
 - Institute a literary competition – Caging the PEN.
 - Institute a book box for the sale (by offer) of donated books (which is doing very nicely)
 - Brainstorm creatively for the future including the idea of producing a Zine with talks and readings from Denied a Voice for sale at relevant venues.
- Producing five or six bi-monthly electronic newsletters in the first twelve months of operation.
- Raising the profile of PEN through a series of successful events –
 - Having a presence at the 2006 Writers Week within a month of starting. Fliers were distributed and several writers (themselves PEN members) were persuaded to promote PEN at the beginning of their sessions.
 - In May 2006 we worked with the SAWC on an event I chaired called ‘Writing Dangerously, both Personally and Politically’ which was well attended.
 - In November 2006 our commemoration of the International Day of the Imprisoned Writer - Denied a Voice – was inaugurated with Tony Brooks as MC. It was dedicated to Russian writer Anna Politkovskaya murdered on October 7. Our keynote speaker was Human Rights & Equal Opportunities Commissioner Tom Calma.
 - In March 2007, Stephanie Hester coordinated and Dominique Wilson chaired a big event at the first (and, I believe only) WORD! event which was part of the Festival Fringe. Arnold Zable, President of Melbourne PEN was a visiting key speaker.
 - In November 2007, Denied a Voice was again a success with Dominique Wilson as the MC. Our keynote speaker was Nobel Laureate J M Coetzee.
 - In December 2007 – through the auspices of Gay Lynch, Adelaide PEN arranged a session called ‘Adelaide PEN in Session’ in association with the Flinders University International Conference: Moving Cultures, Shifting Identities. Dominique Wilson held an in depth conversation with Juan Garrido-Salgado about his experience under the Pinochet regime, followed by readings by others from the work of imprisoned writers.
 - At our last meeting last year, in December, members shared a light meal and spent time writing to all but a few of the 58 named in the International PEN greeting card writing list. I think we sent out about 50 cards.
 - With 2008 barely under way, AdelaidePEN has already committed to

contributing locally to the global effort (our aim) by being involved in the International PEN poem relay - with translations of Shi Tao's poem "June" into Fijian, Polish and unique local Indigenous languages thus helping to keep them alive in the process.

As the outgoing Chair I want to acknowledge the special input of the dedicated people who, as part of the original main Committee have made it all happen, albeit with the support, encouragement, sometime effort and continuing support of all our members -

- Nicholas Jose
- Dominique Wilson
- Jude Aquilina
- Tony Brooks
- Anne-Marie Smith
- (Heather Taylor-Johnson who joined the committee as the convenor of the fundraising subcommittee when it formed.)

I sincerely hope that Nick will continue as the advisor to Adelaide PEN even from a distance when he leaves Adelaide later this year.

I'll make special mention of everyone who showed up at meetings and who helped at events as well Bel Schenk for her DTP contributions to the newsletters and for taking photos at different events; Stephanie Hester for her hard work for WORD! at the Festival Fringe last year and the members of both subcommittees for their ongoing commitment. My apologies if I've forgotten someone.

I also want to acknowledge the SAWC, Sinc Creative and WetInk, as well as the State Library and others like Radio Adelaide and the Adelaide Festival Fringe, and Writers Week people who have helped Adelaide PEN on its way.

Finally, I thank both the Melbourne and Sydney Centres for making Adelaide PEN possible. Not only did they agree that we could become a branch jointly with them (which created some administrative conundrums), they both contributed financially to our success. We received seed funding of \$500 from each Centre in 2006 and, in 2007, top up funding of \$300 from each. The Centres also funded the wonderful advertisement in the 2008 Writers' Week Program. Notably, while they are mentioned in it, this advertisement is under our logo.

The Centres have also promoted and thus supported Adelaide PEN on their web pages and in newsletters, giving us wider circulation that we might otherwise have received.