

## LONDON FREELANCE BRANCH MEETINGS

## Self-publishing, seasonal networking

HOW TO SELF-publish your own work is the topic for the Branch meeting on **Monday 10 November**. Speakers will be photographer Dewi Lewis, founder of Namesake publishers. Dewi has published his own books, mostly of his own photographs, but also his non-fiction writing. As well as Dewi, we expect to have another speaker (to be confirmed) talking specifically on self-publishing for authors, possibly including small-scale magazine self-publishing.

There's a seasonal London Freelance Branch networking party on

**Monday 8 December** (our apologies for the incorrect date in a previous *Freelance*). The venue is yet to be confirmed, but it will be within easy reach of Euston or King's Cross. Free food and (within limits) free drink will be laid on.

- To make sure you get email alerts of meetings and the electronic *Freelance* – just one message a month – visit [www.londonfreelance.org/linkup.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/linkup.html)

With the exception of December's party, LFB meetings are 7pm to 9pm at **Friends' House, Euston**

**Road**, which is accessible to people who use wheelchairs. If you need the Branch to pay for care for a child or dependent so you can attend a meeting, call a Branch officer. For updates on meetings see the Branch calendar web page [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html)

This issue went to "press" as a downloadable PDF file and online version on **14 October**, and will *not* be sent by post to members. Deadline for the (print edition) December issue: **October 31**.

## New members' meeting

There's a chance for new or recently-joined members to meet each other and also to pick up tips from some of the Branch's old hands at a London Freelance Branch new members' meeting on the evening of **Thursday 30 October** from 5.30 to 7.00. It's at the Camera Café, 44 Museum St, London WC1: nearest Tube Holborn.

## New blood sought!

WE NEED YOU for the committee of the NUJ's biggest and liveliest branch, the London Freelance Branch. So now we're setting up training to help you serve on it. Elections for committee members: Chair; Secretary; Treasurer; *Freelance* Editor and Assistant Editor; Welfare Officers; auditors to check the books; and New Members' Reps to welcome new members – all are held at the Branch Annual General Meeting on **Monday 12 January 2009** – only three months away.

That meeting will also elect representatives for union "Industrial Councils" – the bodies that deal with policy concerning freelances, magazine publishing, etc – and for delegates to go to the next NUJ conference. Nominations are open right up to 12 January.

The committee meets at the NUJ HQ on the Monday evening following a monthly Branch meeting, for two hours at most. We expect committee members to commit to strive towards an ideal of turning up

to at least six of the 11 committee and Branch meetings a year.

To encourage and support potential candidates for the new committee to be elected in January, only three months away, the present committee offers training and mentoring for new committee members. This could take the form of advice and an explanation of what's involved, shadowing Branch officers to see what they do, or time set aside by outgoing committee members once they've stepped down to show new committee members the ropes.

Last year, for example, the outgoing Secretary agreed to handle the minutes and follow-up for the February meeting to help ease the new Secretary into their post.

The current Secretary will be standing down at the January meeting, in the expectation of setting aside quite a lot of time to support the new one over at least the first six months.

There's a new two-day training

course especially for freelance NUJ officers on **Friday 14 November** and **Saturday 15 November**. Potential candidates for LFB officer posts are welcome to attend this course, which ends with a qualification accredited by the Open College Network. It's at The Beeches conference centre, Bournville, Birmingham, starting at 4pm on Friday and finishing by 4pm on the Saturday. More details from the NUJ Freelance Office.

The Branch can also arrange to send those who are interested on a free day course in minute-taking at the National Centre for Voluntary Organisations in London.

All courses are without obligation – going on one doesn't tie you into standing for election. All posts are open to job-shares. There's a list of all London Freelance Branch posts and what they entail at [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/jobs.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/jobs.html). Contact a member of the committee if you are interested in standing to get more information.

## British Library collections leave London

ANYONE who uses the British Library (BL) for research should take note that the BL Newspaper Library at Colindale begins its long shutdown from December this year. Its original newspapers still on paper will be shipped out to Boston Spa, Yorkshire: [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/0811bl.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/0811bl.html) has more details.

## Herald of resistance

THE GLASGOW Herald-Times newspaper group faces the prospect of further industrial action, following attempts to force through changes in the working conditions of staff and freelance photographers at the *Herald* and the *Evening Times*. Owner Newsquest's proposals for a new freelance contract refer to "multimedia content", propose the scrapping of repro payments for second uses of pictures, and would allow the publisher to use commissioned work across all its websites and electronic editions for a nominal rise in the shift rate. For a discussion of how photographers have come together to resist these proposals, see the web version of this, imminently.

## Justice for Soran!

SORAN Mama Hama, an Iraqi Kurdish journalist working for *Leven* magazine, was shot dead in his home in the suburbs of Kirkuk, Northern Iraq, on 21 July. He had

received threats after writing articles that criticised local officials. Since 2003, 13 media workers have been killed in Kirkuk – an ethnically mixed Kurdish, Turcoman and Arab city outside the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) zone but largely controlled by Kurdish security forces.

The Union of Kurdistan Journalists has called on the KRG and the Kirkuk authorities to open an "urgent investigation to discover the killers", and the head of the Kurdish Journalists Union in Kirkuk, Latif Satih Faraj, blamed the killing on "gangs seeking to silence reporters who want to expose corruption."

London Freelance Branch voted at its September meeting to cam-

paign for an independent enquiry in Soran's death, through lobbying the UK government to use its influence on Iraqi government figures, and by working with our contacts among Kurdish media workers on the ground and living in the UK.

The Branch has a good track record of involvement in three successful campaigns to get Iraqi journalists and fixers out of prison. In October last year, LFB member Garry Trotter's efforts got Kirkuk-based fixer Tarik Ramadan out after a long spell in detention without trial – see [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/0712tr.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/0712tr.html) – and we expect the contacts made will be useful now.

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