

A Three-day Conference in one Day . . . **The EMWA One-day Meeting at Henley-on-Thames**

by Debbie Jordan and Diana Klein-Franke

The EMWA veteran, Debbie Jordan:

Having an additional meeting as well as the annual conference has often been discussed by EMWA members and committee alike, so I was delighted when at last the dream became reality with the first EMWA one-day meeting being held at Henley-on-Thames, UK on 13 December 1999.

Well, what can I say about it apart from - what a meeting it was! It seemed like the EMWA annual conference had been crammed into one day – with various workshops to choose from and lots of friends to meet up with and catch up on all the news (and gossip!). The meeting was very well attended with over 60 delegates participating, including delegates from Italy, Germany, Sweden, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Ireland and Switzerland. It was great to see so many members from overseas attending, and it was also nice to meet some new people, since for some delegates this was their first EMWA meeting. There was of course also a large number of the ‘regulars’ whose faces have become familiar from many years of EMWA conferences.

Four workshops were offered – ‘Writing the Final Report of a Clinical Trial’ and ‘Punctuation for Clarity and Style’ ran in the morning and ‘The Biomedical Paper’ and ‘Bibliographic Resources’ ran in the afternoon. On behalf of all the delegates, I would like to say thank you to all the workshop leaders (Stephen de Looze, Alistair Reeves, Alison Rapley and Liz Wager) for four superb workshops – all up to the usual high standard we have come to expect from EMWA.

Despite the fact that the building was in the process of being renovated, the location was very pretty, being in one of the rowing clubs right next to the river Thames. Unfortunately, very heavy rain dissuaded many people from taking a leisurely stroll by the river over the lunch period (or was it the wonderful food that most of us eat far too much of that prevented us moving outside?).

Many thanks to those involved in the organisation of the meeting, in particular Julia



Cooper and Barbara Grossman who put together a great programme. Organising meetings such as this often goes unrewarded but without the hard work of the organisers such events would never run this smoothly. Also thanks to Phillipa Clow who managed to sort out the temperamental heating and the even more temperamental electricity supply that kept all the speakers on their toes as the power to

the overhead projectors periodically disconnected itself.

The Write Stuff

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Finally, I'd like to say that I hope that this is the first of many one-day meetings and that I hope to see many of you again at the annual conference in Dublin in May 2000.

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The EMWA novice, Diana Klein-Franke:

Looking forward to my first EMWA meeting and full of anticipation, I arrived at Henley the evening before the meeting. I was met at the station by a gust of wind, complete darkness and the awful feeling of having landed in the middle of nowhere. Determined to overcome, fighting the wind, I struggled up a dark narrow street with not a soul in sight towards an office with a light. This office turned out to be a taxi office. My feeling of relief turned to despair upon hearing that the next available taxi which could take me to the Leander Club would be free in 3 hours time. Not to despair said the nice lady behind the desk, the club is only a 5 minute walk over the bridge and left at the first turn. Away I went, battling the wind with my luggage. Across the bridge, first left turn and I was met with a construction site...Yes, that was it – the Leander Club – under renovation.

The next morning was very pleasant. At breakfast I met Phillipa and found out that I wasn't the only one with a windy experience the night before. Stephen and Alistair, who had also come from Germany and were the two speakers for the morning workshops, had also been tossed about by the wind. Pamela, who had arrived from France, had insisted on having Phillipa bring her to the club. I found everybody extremely friendly and was made welcome at once by Phillipa. Stephen explained the ins and outs of the Core Curriculum programme, which I was not aware of before. I attended two workshops. I found the morning one given by Alistair very good, as apparently the other members did too. It was well attended. After a short lunch break, I attended Liz Wager's workshop which was also well attended and absolutely brilliant.

The organisation (by Phillipa) was excellent. The only criticism that I can make is, why did the organisers choose Henley for a one-day meeting? Surely, somewhere more central like London would have been just as good and much easier to get to. There were many delegates from continental Europe who attended and we all flew in via Heathrow. The construction work and electrical problems also made life difficult for the speakers.

All in all, the one-day meeting was worth the effort and the super organisation and friendly smile from Phillipa made up for the travelling. I do hope that additional one-day meetings will be organised, but please – not in Henley. How about London? Or somewhere with an underground train station not too far away?

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