

## 13 Tips for Family Historians Marketing a Memoir

### Hazel Edwards

Family historians or 'genis' have special challenges. How should they shape their stories? And how can they share them?

A 'memoir' is a slice of life, not a whole history. It may be autobiographical (about you) or biographical (about a relative) or it may be a special period or place. But generally your prospective readers will already be interested, because it's about THEM even if the link is tenuous.

Unless your subject has broad interest, you'll be self-publishing for a family reader rather than submitting to a traditional publisher.

The 'indie' world of self-publishing is full of memoirs which are shorter versions of autobiographies. What will make yours stand out? Assuming you've written it as well as possible, why might the media give your book any attention?

Often the 'indie' author has to be the publicist too. With only 24 hours in a day, time and energy management matters.

1. Have a generic description of less than 100 words which you can attach to any media. Could be the BCB (back cover blurb) like this but needs to be written in the style (and tone) of the book.

Not Just a Piece of Cake –Being an Author

Hazel Edwards has a cake-eating hippo on her roof, an OAM for Literature and thousands of book-children, as well as a real family, Plus the Hazelnuts she has mentored and a readership in thirteen languages.

Using 'anecdultery', Hazel explains why writing, longterm, is mentally risky but vital culturally and contributes to a non-boring life. The hippocampus is where memories are kept, even those of Antarctica, where Hazel was an expeditioner. She shares her author quest and the quandary of how much to reveal.

2. Put a hi-res magazine quality author photo ( & cover) on your website under Media Resources for easy download. Saves time, looks professional and controls the quality of the visuals.

3. Have a marketing strategy and tick off which worked and why the others didn't. Bad timing? Wrong sort of place?

4. A Media Release is a significant single page used in many ways. Tight, informative writing. No gush. Make sure it is not too hi-res for emailing, especially the cover.

Needs information such as ISBN, price, where available, format, tiny bio, blurb and cover with your phone contact details for interviews.

5. Compile an up-to-date list of your PR contacts and offer each a slightly different angle. What is the local interest?

6. Don't overlap. For example, the ABC radio will only interview you once. Which is the most appropriate audience area with the greater impact for your subject matter? Regional? National? Community radio? Drive-time? Middle of the night? With limited print review possibilities, online or radio is faster.

7. Prepare and aptly label so you can find PR material quickly. E.g. How long? 400 words? 1000 words? 50 or 100 word bio? Lo or Hi res photo? Where used before? Don't have 10 different ones labelled Final Version.

8. Drop box is useful especially for hi-res photos or long manuscripts. You can email the link to the file on dropbox which saves you printing out or separately e-mailing the big attachment.

9. Prepare a sheet of points or one-liners useful for when interviewed.

Use humour. Link to title. Tell an anecdote against yourself related to researching the memoir.

10 Describe what your book is about in one sentence. Use the title. Hint at the conflict.

e.g. Via anecdultery, 'Not Just a Piece of Cake; Being an Author' shares the risks of being an author longterm when you also have a family.

11. Don't agonise over what you HAVEN'T written about. Save that for the next project.

12. Expect a 10% return on PR initiatives.

13. Enjoy the process of sharing the significant ideas you've discovered in your research and writing. But use humour and be succinct.

BIO: Hazel Edwards OAM has published 200 books in various genres but is best known for the classic picture book series, 'There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake'. She runs workshops on 'Writing a Non Boring Family History' and 'Authorpreneurship; The Business of Creativity'. Her memoir is 'Not Just a Piece of Cake: Being an Author' (Brolga) and latest adult mystery is 'Celebrant Sleuth: I Do or Die' (BookPod).