

next meeting

30 November
6.30 pm

End-of-year dinner
at
Ethiopia Down Under
Pearce

Join us for the end-of-year dinner

The last meeting of the year for the Canberra editors is our end-of-year dinner. Read more about the restaurant, the guest speaker and how to register and pay on page 4.

Report from the UK SfEP Conference, Oxford

Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE

Since I last saw many of you at the Canberra Society of Editors AGM and the IPEd conference in Sydney, where my book *Working Words* was launched, life has been hectic. I am currently in the UK, having attended the 22nd Annual Conference of the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP), sold the books I brought to sell and enjoyed the last of a beautiful English summer. It is now well into autumn, with cold nights, crisp days and trees starting to colour like the exotic trees in Canberra. It's a beautiful time of year.

The two-day conference on 25–27 September was interesting and attended by some 150 members. It was held at St Catherine's College—a relatively new college dating from the 1960s, among the 'dreaming spires' of Oxford University—and was chaired by newly-elected SfEP President, Wendy Toole.

Much of the conference looked to the future of aspects of the publishing industry in Britain (and, by extension, the world) in the current climate of financial crises in Europe, changing technology and learning to cope with change. Opening the conference, the Witcombe lecture was given by Angus Phillips, director of Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies, Oxford Brookes University. He referred to the old learning method known as 'sitting next to Nellie', contrasting this with the e-learning we are faced with today. There are new devices, new platforms and independent publishing methods—teachers are only one step ahead of students. Terminology is changing all the time too—we have e-books and p-books (the latter being print books), enhanced e-books with audio or video, 'born digital' meaning e-publication first, and even 'mooks' which are hybrid book-magazines. It seems that a PhD is becoming more of an education-level requirement in the industry.

**Elizabeth with
Wendy Toole, the
new SfEP president**



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February meeting

History and development of SfEP

Val Rice will be the Society's guest speaker at its first meeting in February 2012. Her talk will cover the history and development of Society for Freelance Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) from its first meeting in 1988 to the present day.

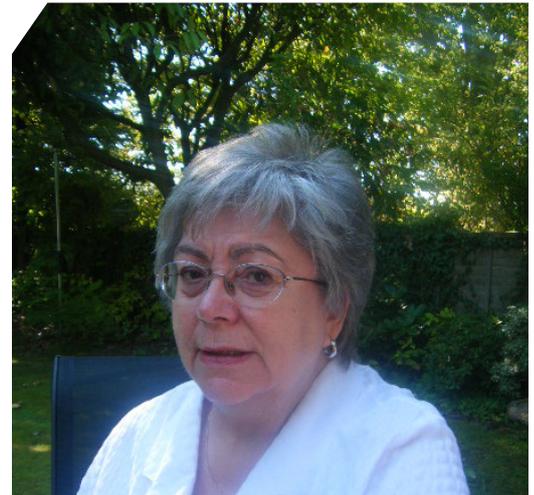
Val joined the SfEP in 1995 and is now an Advanced member. She has also been awarded the City and Guilds Licentiate'ship in Editorial Skills (LCGI). She originally trained as a bilingual secretary at the Lycée Français de Londres and worked as a secretary before training as a teacher of shorthand and typing at Pitmans Central College in London.

Val taught business studies, IT and secretarial skills in secondary schools and tertiary colleges. She also worked as an examiner for Pitmans, the London Chamber of Commerce, the Royal Society of Arts (now OCR) and Edexcel (London University) and wrote shorthand speed examination passages for OCR. She ran her own secretarial centre from 1984 until 1988 providing secretarial training, editing and word processing services. She also worked with her husband to set up his chartered accountancy practice in the same premises and acted as his office manager.

In 1999, Val was elected to the committee of the Society for Freelance Editors and Proofreaders and became treasurer in 2001. Following the society's incorporation and its re-launch as the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) in 2003 she became finance director and company secretary.

She retired from SfEP in September 2007 and she was awarded honorary membership. Valerie's booklet—*Starting Out: Setting up a small business*—was published in 2006 and the first in a series of SfEP guides. She is now working on the third edition.

Now Val concentrates on copy-editing and development editing but spends as much time as possible with her husband and family, including three grandsons. When she comes to Australia she will visit her youngest son and his wife in Sydney and meet her new granddaughter who is due to be born in January.



Val Rice

SfEP Conference, Oxford (continued from Pg 1)

The lecture set the tone for much of what followed. I attended some workshops and a seminar that focused on change: first, the influence that social media and networking are having and can have in future for editors and others; second, an introduction to some of the new devices such as Kindle, Android tablets and smartphones (would you really want to read a book on one?); third, some thoughts on proofreading and editing on-screen, including marking up PDFs, websites and e-books; and a seminar that gave an overview of the digital publishing climate, including illustrations from a book commissioned specifically for the iPad (Solar System), which was spectacular.

Other topics included software editing, marketing your services, editing fiction, indexing, rewriting, managing the stresses of being a freelancer and copyediting for digital media.

I was given time on Day 2 to tell delegates a little about IPed, which was well received, with a number of enquiries and suggestions afterwards for closer links between IPed and SfEP.

Apart from the informative sessions, the conference was notable for great networking, excellent meals and a very productive marketplace at which *Working Words* caused considerable interest. The next SfEP conference will be in the ancient city of York in September 2012. We can look forward to a talk about SfEP—its history and where it is today—from Val Rice, an Advanced member of SfEP, in February.

Hilary Cadman

I also attended the SfEP conference and, like Elizabeth, found it a fascinating two days of meeting fellow editors, attending some excellent workshops and seminars and eating fabulous food (St Catherine's is renowned for its meals).

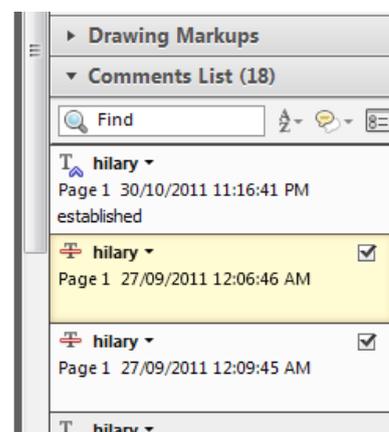
I particularly enjoyed a workshop entitled 'Keeping on keeping on', described as 'a highly interactive session for freelancers who have been working for themselves for several years'. It was good to hear from Melanie Thompson, the workshop leader, and the other participants about how people keep themselves motivated and deal with issues such as marketing, networking, training, professionalism and self-management. There was general agreement that Twitter and LinkedIn are the social media tools to use for work, with Facebook best reserved for personal use. The session prompted me to set up a work-related Twitter account and use it to 'follow' some of the science editors I met in Oxford.

Also useful was the workshop 'Proofreading on-screen: the way forward?' led by Anne Waddingham. The main focus was on marking up PDFs using Adobe Reader X, which is free and has a wide range of mark-up tools. One issue is that sometimes the mark ups don't show up particularly well on-screen, e.g. the insertion mark is a small blue arrow that doesn't stand out well against the text (as shown in the figure below). As a result, designers often miss some of the changes on a marked-up PDF. What I learnt from the workshop was that the changes can be viewed as a list of 'comments' at the side of the screen. Each comment can be electronically ticked, as shown below. In future, I will ask designers to tick each comment as they deal with it to ensure that they pick up all the required changes.

- ~~sporting installations – which can be extended to include outdoor stadiums;~~
- ~~elevators and internal staircases in any building – including residential premises.~~

3.3 Exemptions

3.3.1 There are few explicit exemptions in the law that permit smoking indoors. Hotels and similar businesses are permitted to designate a maximum of 25% of the total number of hotel rooms as smoking rooms, and the law sets conditions that must be complied with. These include having mechanical ventilation able



Finally, Anne Waddingham mentioned a free on-screen ruler (available from <http://www.arulerforwindows.com/>) which can display as a ruler or a reading guide. The ruler can be used with graphics to quickly and easily measure objects on the screen, whereas the reading guide is useful for working through a document on-screen line by line.

The user can easily switch between the ruler and reading guide modes and can choose different 'skins' – the default is wood grain, but also available are stainless steel, transparent plastic and yellow. It is also possible to vary the ruler's length, the orientation and the placement of markings.

End-of-year dinner 2011
Ethiopia Down Under, Pearce
Wednesday 30 November, 6:30 pm

We will celebrate 2011 with our end-of-year dinner at Ethiopia Down Under at the Pearce shops. On offer is a generous sampling of everything on the menu. Vegans, carnivores, palates spicy and bland will all find something they can enjoy. Coffee, roasted onsite by the restaurant, is also included.

Wine-writer Chris Shanahan is to be our after-dinner speaker. Chris is a writer and editor who has specialised in wine selection, marketing and communication. After 30 years in liquor retail, Chris joined a government agency where he has edited for the past few years. He has been *The Canberra Times'* wine columnist for 26 years and its beer columnist for six.

Cost: \$27 (includes a glass of champagne on arrival, but BYO all other alcoholic drinks). Dessert optional for about \$10 extra (payable on the night).

Please **RSVP** online at <<http://www.editorscanberra.org/dinner-2011/>> and pay **by 28 November**.

Canberra Society of Editors

Community CPS Australia

BSB: 805 022

a/c: 0342 3503

Description: your last name AND the word 'dinner'.

Gil Garcon

The November general meeting and dinner is a good opportunity to chew a committee member's ear about what you want the society to do and consider. Come along and tell us. The committee is the workhorse of the society, but it is your society and can achieve its objective for you only to the extent that you interact with it, its committee and your fellow members.

Another way for you to share your professional opinion and knowledge is to write a piece for the newsletter. That's what it's there for, and the livelier the views and debate, the better the experience for all of us. You're an editor, so you can't be word-shy. And you've got the whole summer to draft something.

Until then, I look forward to seeing you at the dinner. Chris Shanahan will be quite entertaining and the restaurant offers an epicurean experience that is great value for money.



Correction to email address for the treasurer

In last month's issue of *The Canberra editor*, the email address of our treasurer, Tracy Harwood, was listed incorrectly. Her correct email address is now against her name. We apologise for this error and any inconvenience it may have caused to members who tried to contact her.

October review of the Standards

At the Society's general meeting in October, members discussed the draft revision of the Australian Standards of Editing Practice (ASEP). The outcomes of this meeting are contained in the insert of this month's newsletter, and can be found as a PDF on the Canberra Society of Editors website.

October and the ASEP review

A discussion about the draft revisions to the Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP) was the focus of our October general meeting. With only a dozen or so people there, we decided to restrict discussions to practical, high-level issues rather than spending time in the detail of individual points. Ted Briggs, who was part of the group who wrote the draft revision, provided valuable background. Martin Holmes took notes of the main decisions.

Structure

Our first (and longest) discussion was about the proposed changes to the structure (see table). The draft follows closely the Canberra Society of Editors' Commissioning Checklist, which some believed to be widely used throughout Australia. There was some debate about the merits of this approach, particularly the overlap between substantive editing and copyediting. It was also noted that the Commissioning Checklist may not be as widely used as we think and might change in the future, for example by introducing a task called 'Style Editing' to deal with repeated requests for quotes on this task.

Participants supported a separate section on verification because it would be helpful to identify that this is a distinct task to employers and clients.

There was also discussion about whether the ASEP should seek to duplicate the function of the Commissioning Checklist.

Overall, there was strong support for the draft structure, but not without reservations.

Knowledge (the Canadian Standards)

IPEd had asked whether a section on knowledge should be included. This led to a somewhat clever argument on the differences between knowledge and skills. The general sense was that knowledge was embedded in the document – for instance, it is not possible to 'do' grammar if you don't 'know' grammar. However, some participants later indicated that it is indeed possible to 'do' skills without knowing much at all – grammar used again as an example because of the vast number of Australians who believe they can edit other people's grammar despite their lack of formal grammar instruction.

The meeting concluded that there was no need for a separate section on knowledge, but the reservations of some participants were noted.

Language

The meeting noted the use of active voice compared to the more abstract style of the original ASEP. This is consistent with principles of plain and accessible language and endorsed with little discussion.

New technology

One reason for revising the ASEP was to deal with new technology since 2001 and the meeting discussed how well this had been covered. There was also a general sense that ASEP should avoid relating to any particular technology because it will quickly date the document. Section A3 of the draft covers new technology by implication and other sections include new technology by example. There was a suggestion that ASEP should try to use general examples rather than specific technologies.

Where to from here?

Many important issues were not dealt with, partly due to the amount of time we had. An hour or so was simply not long enough. Some other questions that need discussion are:

- What is the purpose of the standards? Compared with the original ASEP, the draft has more emphasis on its use by employers, educational institutions and accrediting bodies to assess skills of editors. Is this something you support?
- Should the draft revert to the existing ASEP format and structure with minimal rewording and simply incorporate any new information identified through this process?
- Do we need to hold a workshop to work through these issues in more detail?

The feedback I have had in emails and the poor attendance at the meeting suggests that most Canberra editors are generally comfortable with the draft. There are comments about some details which will be included in our response to IPEd.

Participants at the October meeting were asked to go through the draft and the current ASEP and email comments back to me at <cathy.nicoll@atrax.net.au>. I would also value comments from other members.

If there is enough support for a workshop, we would look at holding it in early February 2012. So please email me with your views. The Society can also email you a copy of the draft.

Proposed structural changes to the ASEP

Original ASEP (2001)	Draft ASEP (2011)
A. The publishing process, conventions and industry practice A1 Overview A2 Editing and proofreading A3 Legal and ethical concerns A4 Design, typography and formatting A5 Technology relevant to editing practice A6 Reproduction	A. Professional practice A1 The publishing process A2 Legal and ethical concerns A3 Tools relevant to editing practice A4 Reproduction processes and maintenance procedures A5 Design, typography and formatting
B. Management and liaison B1 Project definition B2 Project documentation B3 Monitoring	B. Management and liaison B1 Project definition B2 Project documentation B3 Project management
C. Substance and structure C1 Appraisal C2 Techniques	C. Substantive editing – substance and structure C1 Appraisal C2 Structure
D. Language and illustrations D1 Clarity D2 Voice and tone D3 Grammar and usage D4 Spelling and punctuation D5 Specialised and foreign material D6 Illustrations and tables	D. Substantive editing – language and illustrations D1 Clarity D2 Voice and tone D3 Illustrations and non-text elements D4 Communication
E. Completeness and consistency E1 Integrity E2 Tools and procedures E3 Text E4 Illustrations and tables E5 Format, layout and reproduction	E. Copy editing – accuracy, completeness and consistency E1 Standard tools and procedures E2 Conventions of English grammar, spelling and usage E3 Accuracy, consistency and clarity of text E4 Accuracy, consistency and clarity of non-text elements E5 Protocols for specialised and foreign material E6 Communication
	F. Verification editing F1 Integrity F5 Format, layout and reproduction

2012 Residential Editorial Program

The seventh biennial Residential Editorial Program will be held at Varuna, the Writers' House, in Katoomba, NSW on 7–12 May 2012. This five-day program offers mid-career editors an exceptional opportunity to develop their literary editing skills with highly respected industry practitioners. More than 70 editors have participated and all confirmed an increased confidence and significant improvement in their work.

Applications for the residential program will close on 9 January 2012.

Guidelines and application forms are available from the APA website, or by contacting Robyn Sheahan-Bright, Program Manager, on (07) 4972 9760 or at rsheahan@tpg.com.au.



News from the Institute of Professional Editors Limited September–October 2011

Ed Highley

The IPEd Council met twice during this period—on 7 September and 9 October. The meeting on 7 September was held in Sydney, just before the 5th national conference and was the first time that councillors had met face-to-face since the previous national conference in Adelaide in 2009. The October meeting was by teleconference.

Setting priorities

At the Sydney meeting, councillors took the opportunity to focus on planning for the next year or so. They resolved that the highest priority activity for the immediate future should be the revision of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice* (ASEP). Kerry Davies AE, freelance editor and president of the Society of Editors (Queensland), offered to facilitate the process and the plan she put to council was accepted. Work began during October with society presidents, IPEd councillors and Accreditation Board delegates receiving a background paper and supporting documentation to allow them to convene meetings of their members over the next few months to discuss the revision and convey their views to the facilitator. IPEd aims to have the revised standards published by the end of June 2012.

Two other activities were accorded high priority: updating and elaboration of IPEd's professional development (PD) register and ongoing promotion of the profession. The PD register is a list of society workshops and courses, run recently or forthcoming, which will form a training database with the potential to be drawn on by all societies with IPEd support. If members of a particular society want to host a training activity successfully conducted in another society, IPEd will—if the presenter is able and willing, and other circumstances permit—provide material support for that to happen.

2011 national conference

The biggest event during the past two months was the national conference held in Sydney. National conferences are held under IPEd's aegis and organised and hosted by the local society—in 2011 the Society of Editors (NSW). There were just over 300 participants in the conference, some 250 of whom were members of one of the seven Australian societies of editors, all of which were represented. They enjoyed an interesting program framed around the theme 'New horizons for editing and publishing'. Six full-day workshops that supplemented the conference program were well attended, with those on 'Writing for the web' and 'Running a freelance business' being particularly popular.

IPEd made two presentations at the conference—one on developments since the last national assembly; the other, by the Accreditation Board, on the results of its survey of preferences for the future form of the accreditation exam. Two papers were prepared and provided in the documentation provided to registrants: a special issue of IPEd Notes covering events over the past two years and a report of the IPEd 2011 national survey of editors. Both papers are on the IPEd website.

IPEd's 2011 AGM was also held during the conference. Despite an early start, it was well attended and included members of all Australian societies of editors.

For an informative and entertaining account of many of the presentations at the national conference, go to Jennifer Beale's article in the September issue of *Offpress*, the newsletter of the Society of Editors (Queensland) at <editorsqld.com> or via the IPEd website. There are also conference reports in the October and November issues of *Blue Pencil*, the NSW society's newsletter.

Overseas liaison

We are grateful to Elizabeth Murphy, a member of the Canberra Society of Editors and an IPEd Distinguished Editor (DE), for making a presentation on behalf of the institute at the 22nd Annual Conference of the UK Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP), held in Oxford on 27 September. In her presentation, Elizabeth covered the organisation of IPEd and how it differs from SfEP, accreditation and the accreditation exam, recent and current IPEd projects, including revision of the guidelines for editing research theses and *ASEP*, and ongoing promotion and advocacy. We hope that Elizabeth's presentation will help strengthen links between IPEd and SfEP to further matters of common interest. Elizabeth's report on the conference is in the November issue of *The Canberra editor*, available at <editorscanberra.org/November2011/>.

New honorary treasurer

Josephine (Jo) Smith AE, Councillor for WA, has been appointed as IPEd Council's new honorary treasurer. Jo brings extensive experience in accountancy and auditing to the position. She replaces Ted Briggs, who retired from the position at the 2011 AGM after two years of sterling service.

Barbara Ramsden Award

At its October meeting, council agreed to continue its sponsorship and judging of the Barbara Ramsden Award for excellence in editing, one of the national literary awards organised by the Fellowship of Australian Writers (FAW), Victoria.

Why XML publishing will need good editors

*For the past two years, **Dave Gardiner** has been developing a single-source desktop publishing setup using extensible markup language (XML). In this article, he outlines some quality and usability issues which editors and publishers could expect when implementing the technology.*

Introduction

XML is a text-based format used for publishing documents in several formats and is similar to the more familiar hypertext markup language (HTML) used for publishing websites. It is one of the formats of single-source publishing, in which textual and graphical content stored in one source format is used to produce different output documents (e.g. PDF, HTML). Single-source publishing covers *unstructured authoring* (e.g. Adobe InDesign, Framemaker) and *structured authoring* (XML-based production).

I was exposed to XML when, as an in-house editor, I had to learn about markup – the different pieces of text coding that are used to add meaning to content, such as 'this is a paragraph' and 'this is a section title'. After several months I began developing a desktop publishing setup.

Desktop setup

I obtained commercial software, <oXygen/>, an XML editor that allows users to format XML in a similar way that Adobe Dreamweaver is used to format HTML content, and RenderX typesetting software to produce PDF documents from XML.

XML is open-source, so I freely downloaded the stylesheets of the particular XML language I needed (DocBook). Stylesheets are essential to produce output documents from XML—specifically, this is extensible stylesheet language transform (XSLT), a variation of XML that, among other things,

creates pages, adds margins, headers and footers, places text and graphics in the pages, and automatically generates page numbers and a table of contents. I started creating XML markup from a scientific book that I had edited with MS Word and attempted to match the style of the published book. I had to change styles in the XSLT stylesheets by customising existing styles with hand-coding. I have found both advantages over conventional desktop publishing as well as shortcomings.

Developing XSLT stylesheets

XSLT is a complex programming language. Typically, you need to spend time modifying standard stylesheets to get the output you want, such as formatting the text for chapter titles. It is not as easy as, say, selecting a paragraph style from a drop-down menu. To change stylesheets (which are text files) by hand-coding, you must understand how the logic of XSLT works and where to find, in the hundreds of stylesheets, the specific lines of coding that change certain text formats. I started working through an introduction to DocBook stylesheets and now, after two years of moderate effort developing customised stylesheets, I'm at a stage of finalising basic formats for PDF, epub and web pages.

Controlling automated production

Once you have converted a Word document into XML, it may take two to three times longer to add markup and edit than a Word document, because you can only see the output of XML coding by 'transforming'. The XML files containing the content, and the XSLT stylesheets that specify positioning and styles of text and graphics, are combined. XML automates the production of documents using preset rules about how content should be placed into pages. An editor can specify, to a degree, how text and graphics should be placed and what text is to be hyperlinked, for example. After transforming, the editor reviews the draft PDF and makes changes to both the XML and XSLT to move text and graphics between pages, and transforms again. It is then an iterative process to produce a near-final PDF.

Quality of PDF documents

The upside of automated typesetting is that many components of a document are generated from the XML markup. The downside is that, with a complex mixture of multi-column text, figures, tables and 'sidebars' (e.g. pull quotes or story boxes), there can be large areas of whitespace left at the bottom of pages, or section headings can be separated from the following paragraph. XML cannot automatically resize figures to fit into a particular space, so it places content into the next available space, thus leaving whitespace where the figure would have been. If an image or table is too large to fit onto a page, XML typesetting will *delete that content* and it will not appear in the PDF. It is possible to lose parts of a document before your very eyes. This is why, with a basic desktop publishing setup, there must be iterative transformations to refine layout through a 'trial and error' approach and to recheck that all material is present.

Solving problems of layout

XSLT stylesheets have some flexibility to set manual spacing, such as leading in body text and above or below figures and tables, which can improve layout. Tables can pose difficulties. It is easy to span a large, portrait format table across several pages with a repeating column header. It is more difficult to span a landscape format table over more than one page because of limitations of current stylesheet standards.

These formatting problems can be solved by splitting the content of a document into different ebook formats – that is a strength of XML. For instance, complex tables and certain graphics can be output into web pages and epub, while a PDF can contain mainly textual content. Visual (WYSIWYG) layout of PDF documents is possible with some XML typesetting software with graphical user interfaces, but users still must have knowledge of XSLT stylesheets to use this effectively.

Implementing the technology

An XML-based desktop publishing setup with reasonably decent stylesheets could be managed by an editor with moderate skills in conventional desktop publishing. Alternatively, some desktop publishers could specialise in XML typesetting and position themselves as document 'finishers'. Software setup costs are comparable to MS Word and reasonable page layout akin to a Word document (i.e. with text wrapping around graphics) is possible.

Further information and resources about XML editing are at xmleditoz.net.au.

New members

New members of the Canberra Society of Editors

- Kate Bagnell
- Emma Field
- Emily Heylen
- Claire Konno
- Beth Thomson
- Dr Linda Weber
- Georgina Wyatt



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The Canberra editor

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Newsletter schedule

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All articles must be in .doc format.

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