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THE CANBERRA

# editor

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Newsletter of the Canberra Society of Editors

Volume 19 • Number 9

October 2011

next meeting

26 October  
6:00 for 6.30 pm

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Emeritus Faculty  
Building 3T  
Fellows Lane Cottage  
ANU

## The Standards

At the October meeting, Canberra editors have the chance to review the proposed changes to the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*.

We will go through the proposed Standards and the original ones with the aim of getting your ideas. Do you agree with what is suggested, or do you have other suggestions to improve the document?

If you are new to the society, this is a good chance to find out more about the Standards and how they relate to editing practice in Australia. Further information about the Standards is in this newsletter.

## Launch of *Working words* The launch of our life ...

... is the publication of Elizabeth Manning Murphy's book, *Working words*, the society's first publication and its author one of our own living treasures.

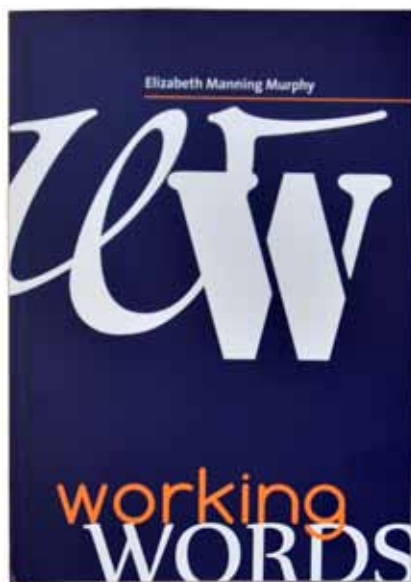
Elizabeth is one of Canberra's—and Australia's—most experienced editors, consultant in communication skills and trainer in effective writing. She is one of the Canberra Society of Editors' early members and has made an enormous contribution over the years, sharing her experience in many ways.

*Working words* is the result of ten years of articles Elizabeth wrote for the society's newsletter, *The Canberra editor*. Members often asked her to write bits and pieces about many aspects of editing, writing, grammar, plain English and working from a home workplace, and she became a valued and regular newsletter contributor.

The articles she wrote have been so popular that publishing them in book form was something the CSE had been talking about—and Elizabeth had been considering—for some years.

In 2009 the society bit the bullet and formed a publication team. Two years later, the book was launched at this year's national IPED conference in Sydney in September.

'I've written about ten books and this is the first time any of them has been given a proper launch,' Elizabeth said. 'And not to do it by halves, we've already had a pre-launch in Canberra with the Canberra Society of Editors, and yet to come is a promotion in England at the Society for Editors and Proofreaders conference in Oxford.'



Elizabeth describes *Working words* as a book for dipping into—not a textbook, but a companion to books on grammar, style, punctuation, plain English, editing and the business of being a freelance writer or editor. The book has a place alongside the dictionaries and more formal texts on the bookshelves of editors, writers, teachers and anyone interested in making words work.

**Cover of *Working words***

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**'Launch of our lives (continued)**

Many of the "chats" happened as a direct result of requests from working editors, would-be editors and people who didn't learn the "whys" and "wherefores" of English grammar at school,' she said. 'It's in a chatty style with a few fun pieces dotted among the pages—'itchypencils'. Have you ever wished you had a pencil handy when you saw something itching to be written down or corrected? That's 'itchypencilitis'!

The book launch at IPEd was a great occasion for all involved and Elizabeth thanked the members of the publication team—Cathy Nicoll, Ara Nalbandian, Virginia Wilton, Tracy Harwood, Ted Briggs, Martin Blaszczyk and designer Carina Manning—who were also present.

'I'm proud to be the first CSE author to make it into print in book form with the CSE itself as publisher,' she said.

From the Canberra Society of Editors, thank you Elizabeth.



**Elizabeth at the Sydney launch**



**Ted Briggs introducing Elizabeth**



**A satisfied customer**

The Canberra editor would like to thank Jacqui Smith, editor of *Blue Pencil*, for permission to use photos taken at the IPEd conference.

**Correction**

**Correction to 'Cloud computing for editors'**

**Kim Wells**

The article 'Cloud computing for editors', which appeared in the March edition of the newsletter, noted that Acrobat.com is not available in Myanmar. In fact, Acrobat.com can be accessed in Myanmar—I misunderstood that my correspondent in Yangon, who accesses the internet from a café like the majority of Myanmar, was wary of additional costs and perhaps the wrath of people waiting should he attempt to learn how the application operated while taking his turn at a computer. Few there have the luxury of the internet in their own homes, but, with this happy new development, my correspondent has now successfully accessed data lodged in the 'cloud' via Acrobat.com.

## Report on the AGM

### *Gil Garcon*

We definitely set a new CSE record this year with two attempts at an AGM. I can't say two AGMs because that would be a contradiction as well as untrue, since the meeting we held in August turned out to not be an AGM.

### *August meeting*

The August meeting was festive because we launched Elizabeth's new book, convivial because we were little more than a quorum, and jovial because the small band of committed members who were there readily volunteered to fill all committee positions. Most warming was the number of student and younger members who joined the committee or took on greater tasks. It was a memorable experience.

### *Welcome and thank you*

We welcome new committee members Abigail, Megan, Emma and Leanne.

Special thanks to colleagues who retired from the committee for the contribution they have made over the years:

- Claudia Marchesi has been a pillar of strength and commonsense for the last two years, with a wealth of wisdom from her previous experience on the committee and as a past president.
- Eris Harrison performed meticulously as secretary, upholding not just good records but good governance in our decision making.
- Larissa Joseph retired during the year after working for many years on accreditation and Kirsten McNeill replaced her until the AGM. Ted Briggs has taken over that onerous task.
- Helen Topor has been our public officer for some seven years and handed over to Ara Nalbandian. Helen remains on the committee as a general member.

Special thanks to Tracy who is staying on as treasurer, Kerie and her newsletter team who will continue in that role, and Martin who has handed over training to Megan. The rest of us shuffled around and will provide continuity of vision, skills and corporate memory.

Thanks also to those who made the effort to be there on the night to make sure we had a quorum, and to those who offered to help in other ways.

While some of us counted and recounted the members during the night and saw we did indeed have just one or two more than a quorum, checks after the meeting revealed that we were not all full members. Thus, we did not have the required 20 full members in the room. The need to reconvene the AGM kept your committee and outgoing office bearers busy, most of it falling on Cathy even though she resigned, as did Eris, at the next committee meeting. Martin and I became temporary office bearers until the AGM.

### *September meeting*

The September AGM was a painless affair, possibly fuelled by some fine wine that our acting caterer, Leanne, brought along. Cathy took the chair and led the meeting through all the statutory items, including the election of the committee that had nominated at the August meeting and whose names you received in the mail. Tracy gave us an updated treasurer's report. The AGM was a breeze and consequently another CSE record.

The meeting passed the motion for the membership fee rise but disquiet about the increased associate member fee resurfaced. It is something that your committee will have to review, and we might come back to you with a more attractive fee for associate members who do not benefit professionally from the society but benefit the society by their presence, support and advocacy. It's fair to say that full members need them and greatly value their contribution.

A big thank you to all full members who made the effort to attend the AGM so we can continue to exist as a society, even when other events meant they could not stay for the general meeting.

After the AGM we continued with a general meeting so those who went to the national conference and Style Council could share some salient points. We covered only a couple of points because the discussion snowballed, but Megan will follow up on some training needs raised by the discussion.



**New committee**

You will find the names and contacts of your new committee here and on our website. Please make use of them—your committee, that is. Help us shape the way ahead, be it training, guest speakers, IPEd, catering, accreditation, education, the freelance register, governance or anything else that will benefit the society and editors in general.

**Looking ahead**

The big event for us next year will be our 20th anniversary in May 2012. Let's start thinking about how we should celebrate. We can begin by contacting former members, particularly those who were with us at the Australian Defence Force Academy auditorium on that auspicious occasion. The society has made a massive difference to our profession by helping and promoting editors over those 20 years.

**Seeking contributions****Kerie Newell**

Many changes have occurred to our society since the last issue of *The Canberra editor* in August. We have a new committee (with new president and new and old names), and CSE has published its first book, *Working words*.

For the newsletter, however, CSE has lost one of its most valued contributors, Peter Judge, who asked for a rest from preparing those wonderful words. Finding someone with Peter's linguistic experience and enthusiasm will be very hard.

On a positive note, the IPEd conference brought together the newsletter editors from all state societies. The result is a national network and agreement to use articles from other state newsletters. To maintain copyright and intellectual liability, we will obtain the author's permission to reproduce and the original publication cited.

Next month, *The Canberra editor* will begin 'Out and About', a column with information about ACT and national events of interest to all editors. So if you are aware of any award, training course or conference, please send it to the newsletter.

Before leaving you, I must mention several members who have retired from the society—Colin Watson, Joe Massingham and Joan Merrell. Colin and Joan were founding members of CSE and many will know Joe as one of the ACT's great poets and writers. Thank you all for your great contribution.

**New fee structure****Cathy Nicoll**

Membership fees for the Canberra Society of Editors increased as a result of an almost unanimous vote at the AGM (only one abstaining vote, none against).

- Fees are now:
- \$85 for full members
- \$70 for associate members
- \$30 for student members
- \$225 for corporate members.

Your membership fees cover the costs of running the society, such as the cost of meetings, speakers, training, venue hire, catering, newsletter production, website and IPEd.

Many of these costs have increased in the past 15 years. The previous committee tried to reduce running costs as much as possible, for example by changing webhosting arrangements and by moving towards e-newsletters.

Even so, the society had been running at a deficit and eventually would have run into financial problems if we had failed to act. You might be interested to know that this is the first fee increase since at least 1997, when I joined the society.

As outgoing president, I am relieved to see the society's financial situation guaranteed for the future.

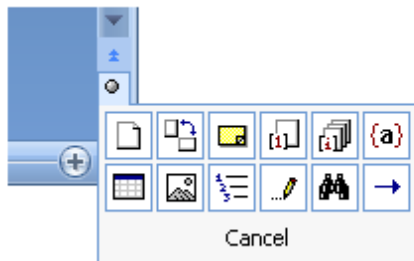
## A faster way to navigate in MS Word

**Hilary Cadman**

I think I must have tunnel vision, because I used MS Word for years without noticing the button and arrows that appear on the vertical scroll bar at the bottom right-hand edge of the window. Eventually, one of the bright young things I used to work with noticed how laboriously I navigated my way round a document; she kindly alerted me to this invaluable set of features, which I now use constantly.



The button goes by the elegant name of Select Browse Object, and the arrows above and below it are called the Previous and Next chevrons, respectively. Clicking on the button produces a box containing a set of images that represent different elements of a document.



The layout of these images varies from one version of MS Word to another, but in the figure below, the top row represents fields, endnotes, footnotes, comments, sections and pages, and the bottom row represents the 'go to' function, the 'find' function, edits, headings, graphics and tables.



Imagine you receive a document and want to remove the figures and put them in a separate file, but only some of the figures are labelled. The quickest and easiest way to find the figures is to click on the Browse by Graphic image (highlighted in the figure above), then use the Next chevron to move from one graphic to another, working from the start of the document to the end (or click on the Previous chevron to go in the opposite direction).

### Checking comments

I find the Select Browse Object button particularly useful for checking comments. Before sending an edited document to a client, I like to check that all the comments I have added are clear and concise, and contain no errors of grammar or spelling. Using the Browse by Comment function allows me to move quickly from one comment to the next, and thus check them as a set. I also use this function to ensure that I have removed all comments from the final draft of a document (if there are no comments in the document, then nothing happens when you click on Browse by Comment).

## **Find**

The Select Browse Object button is also useful when searching for a particular term, because it avoids the need to have the Find dialogue box on the screen. For example, I have one client whose style is to use 'programme' except when referring to computer programs. To check that the usage is correct throughout the document, I need to search for the term 'program'. To do this, I open the Find dialogue box, enter the term 'program' in the Find what box and click on Find next. Once I have found the first instance of this term, I close the Find dialogue box and instead use the arrows above and below the Select Browse Object button to navigate through the document, to find all other instances of the word 'program'.

## **Find out more**

A useful article about this MS Word feature is *Getting from here to there in Word documents*, by Frank C Rice (<http://tinyurl.com/3wnvv9z>).

If you have not yet tried these features, experiment with them. They can save a lot of time and effort.

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## **News from the Institute of Professional Editors Limited (IPEd) July–August 2011**

### ***Ed Highley***

The IPED Council met twice during the period covered by these notes, both meetings by teleconference. Two major surveys, preparations for the 2011 national conference and IPED's AGM were finalised. Summary details of these and other major activities follow.

### ***National survey of editors***

IPED surveyed Australian editors from June to August, using an online questionnaire widely advertised by IPED, the Australian Publishers Association and the state societies of editors. There were 345 responses. The survey built on and expanded surveys conducted by Pamela Hewitt AE at previous national editors' conferences, and at the joint Canberra Society of Editors/Australian Society of Indexers conference in 2001, making this the sixth snapshot of the profession. The report on the survey's findings will be distributed to participants in the national conference in Sydney in September, and is also available to societies of editors' members on the IPED website ([www.iped-editors.org](http://www.iped-editors.org)).

### ***Online exam discussion paper***

The three accreditation exams held so far have been, for logistical necessity, pen-and-paper, whereas it is clear that many potential candidates would prefer to take the exam onscreen, since that is how they now work, day to day, as editors. The IPED Council and Accreditation Board therefore prepared a discussion paper to canvass responses to a range of suggested options for the form of future exams. This was distributed widely during July and August and its findings will be presented at a session of the national conference, and later on the website. The paper can be read on the IPED website.

### ***Annual financial statements***

The IPED Council has received the company's annual financial statements from its auditor, Houston & Hanna Chartered Accountants. The statement will be tabled at IPED's AGM on Friday 9 September and will subsequently be placed on the website. They show IPED to be in a relatively sound financial position and, for the first time, perhaps able to entertain some substantial proactive promotion of the profession during the coming year.

### ***Website minder/manager to be sought***

Traffic on the website has been steadily increasing. Between mid June and mid July this year, for example, there were 1740 visits, over 50% of them from new people. Also steadily increasing, is the time taken to update and maintain the site, tasks that have so far, like the vast bulk of IPED work, been done by volunteers. The IPED Council has determined that the time has come to appoint a paid, part-time web minder who has the requisite technical skills and familiarity with the discipline and business of editing. Details of the position are advertised here and on the IPED website.

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## Position vacant—IPEd web minder

The Institute of Professional Editors Limited (IPEd) seeks a part-time web minder to join its team of voluntary workers. The website is at <<http://iped-editors.org>>.

It is estimated that fulfilling the role will require, on average, between 2 and 5 hours per week.

IPEd would like you to:

- upload information to the website as requested by IPEd's company secretary, councillors, committees and member societies of editors
- identify material of value and interest to editors and add this to the website
- update the website as required and archive out-of-date information
- maintain the website's members' database.

The person we are looking for will:

- have experience with website content management systems
- be an editor and a member of an Australian society of editors
- support IPEd's objectives.

Applications should be sent to [info@iped-editors.org](mailto:info@iped-editors.org) by the close of business **Friday 11 November**.

IPEd exists to advance the profession of editing by planning and implementing an accreditation scheme and other nationally focused activities that support Australian societies of editors and their members, and editors in general.



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## Have we lost you? Are you now an ex-member?

### *Gil Garcon*

It's easy to think you are still a member when in fact you no longer are for whatever reason, mishap or oversight. The constitution rules that if you have not renewed by 1 August you are no longer one of us. You don't want that and neither do your colleagues.

If you don't renew:

- your name comes off the freelance register
- your vote doesn't count
- you will pay full fee for functions and training
- you might even have to re-apply for membership from scratch.

Please check to see whether you have renewed. If you are unsure of your current status, check whether you are still on the freelance register (if you've asked to be on it), or contact the treasurer, Tracy Harwood.

Next year, we will remind you in May to renew and will encourage you to do so by 30 June, so that you will have all of July as a buffer before your membership lapses.

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## Don't forget Christmas in November

The last meeting of each year is always the Canberra Society of Editors' Christmas dinner. So, place **Wednesday 30 November** in your diary.

Christopher Shanahan, an editor, marketing communication specialist and wine connoisseur, will be this year's guest speaker.

Details of the venue and cost are being organised, so keep your eye on the website.

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## Revising the Australian Standards for Editing Practice

Collectively, Australian editors have reviewed the standards twice—in 2005 and 2010—and it is time to finalise the revised document. A review need not presume that a document must change; however, working groups have identified areas that could benefit from some change.

The two prime areas of focus have been:

- active wording that provides skills-based as well as knowledge-based standards
- inclusion of new technologies in terms of editing tools as well as publishing processes and formats.

Other aspects to consider include the overall structure of the document, inconsistencies and duplication or omission of some points.

So bring your ideas along, and be part of what I am sure will be a vigorous discussion. If you can also bring your copy of the original Standards, it will help discussions.



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### The Canberra editor

Published by the Canberra Society of Editors  
 PO Box 3222 Manuka ACT 2603  
 20th year, number 7  
 © Canberra Society of Editors 2011  
 ISSN 1039-3358

Opinions and statements in signed articles are those of the author.

### Newsletter schedule

The next newsletter will appear in November 2011 and for that issue the copy deadline is 26 October

The editor welcomes contributions by email to: <kerie.newell@bigpond.com>.

All articles must be in .doc format.

If undeliverable, please return to:

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