From the President

Contents

In the past several weeks, three events of special significance for Society members have occurred—the accreditation exam, the rise in membership fees, and the federal budget.

Nineteen Canberra candidates sat the national accreditation exam on 3 May—the highest proportion of any editors' society. I hope you all performed to your own satisfaction and felt that the Society's exam workshop had helped your preparation. I look forward to learning that each of you will soon become an Accredited Editor, and that this status will translate into greater client confidence in you and the profession and into higher reward for your professional skills.

At a packed general meeting on 30 April, members all but unanimously supported a resolution to increase CSE membership fees for 2014–15, as the fairest and most reasonable way to meet the higher levy imposed by IPEd to help fund the transition to a new 'direct membership' national organisation with paid professional staff. The new fees were emailed to you and posted on the website just after the meeting, and are set out again in the 'membership renewal' article. I hope that you will continue to support your society during this transition period, as we strive to provide the services you expect and pay for—especially networking and professional development and support.

We may find ourselves testing the strength of that networking and professional support in the coming months if the Federal Government keeps its Budget promise to put federal departments and agencies to the knife and slash thousands of jobs. While we should 'prepare for the worst but hope for the best', it is hard to imagine that in-house and contracted editors will escape the carnage. I would like to think that CSE members will look out for one another and be ready to offer some time and a comforting ear and whatever other mutual support they can. History should tell us that this will pass; but it will be painful, and worse for some of us. Let us all help our society play a role in making it less so.

This edition of *The Canberra editor* has plenty of material that should keep you turning the pages. For that we can thank Farid Rahimi, who has stepped up to the crease after our editor, Kerie Newell, had to step down in order to look after her health. Please join with me in wishing Kerie good fortune, resilience and good humour as she strives to restore some semblance of normality in her life. And let us collectively thank her for her years of contribution to the society in various capacities, especially in recent times to the newsletter and *Working words*.

What do we have to look forward to in the next few months? How's this for starters?

We move to a new 'home' for our monthly general meetings—the Ferguson Room in the National Library—starting in May.

Our Meetings Coordinator, Pam Faulks, has assembled an engaging array of speakers and panels for general meetings stretching into next year! One of those is a quiz night jointly with the ACT Writers Centre and hopefully the Indexers, too—most likely in September. That should be fun!

Professional Development Coordinator, Malini Devadas, is planning more workshops for the rest of 2014, as well as another networking event, this time a breakfast. Our two casual luncheons were well attended and very enjoyable.

And we are planning some fun activities to mix with the usual conviviality at our members' dinner straight after the Annual General Meeting on 27 August.

The next edition of *The Canberra editor* will have all the details of the AGM, as well as a summary of the committee positions to be filled at the AGM elections. I'd like you to seriously consider standing for committee. We would especially like to welcome some of our newer members into committee roles, especially helping with the newsletter, professional development, and treasury, among others.

Please think about it.

Alan Cummine
President

write|edit|index

A national conference for editors, indexers, and publishing professionals. Canberra, Australia, 6–9 May 2015

Hosted jointly by the CSE and ACT Region Branch of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI) on behalf of the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) and ANZSI

Our website is now live. Check it out here: writeeditindex.net.au

Call for papers—less than one week remaining

The conference committee is inviting expressions of interest to present papers on broad topical areas about editing and indexing.

The conference will focus on contemporary and emerging issues in editing and indexing, including but not necessarily limited to:

- Best practice/innovative practice in editing and indexing
- Research relevant to editing, indexing, publishing
- Digital publishing
- E-books
- Information technology developments and trends
- Information accessibility
- Education and professional development
- Professional issues
- Business practices
- Editing/indexing particular formats/document types/publications types
- Taxonomies/controlled vocabularies in indexing
- Industry trends
- Case studies.

Expressions of interest (up to 200 words) in presenting a paper or participating in panel or roundtable discussions are due by **Friday 30 May 2014**.

You are welcome to share this notice with interested friends and colleagues.

The committee reserves the right to select papers appropriate to the program.

Please send your submissions to writeeditindex@gmail.com

Mentoring—the national scene

We now have a new 'home'

CSE has had to leave the Fireplace Room because of renovations to Gorman House.

General meetings from 28 May onwards are being held at the National Library, in the Ferguson Room on the 1st floor (above the shop). It's a smaller room, but it is air-conditioned, and well equipped with audiovisual equipment and comfortable chairs. There is plenty of parking at night. Lifts or stairs will take you to the first floor.

The exception is the AGM on the last Wednesday in August, which we usually combine with a relaxed and enjoyable dinner at University House. You'll receive a separate announcement about that.

So, on 28 May, 25 June and 30 July, we look forward to seeing you at the National Library. Come along and help christen our new 'home'.

Eris Jane Harrison
CSE Secretary

The mentoring program for editors initiated by the Canberra Society of Editors, has now spread to most of Australia; so we feel justified in labelling it as the National Mentoring Program for editors. As of May, the ACT and all states of Australia but one are now on board, with Ted Briggs AE and Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE continuing as Joint National Coordinators.

Local coordinators are currently, in order of their states coming on board:
ACT: Katrina Tidy, mentors@editorscanberra.org
WA: Kerry Coyle, kcoyle@westnet.com.au
Qld: Roberta Blake, roberta.r.blake@gmail.com
Vic: Davina Dadley-Moore, mentorship@editorsvictoria.org
Tas: Sheelagh Wegman, wegmans@internode.on.net
SA: Katy McDevitt, katy@kmeditorial.com

Local State or Territory coordinators are vital to the success of the program. We always need mentors with a variety of skills and knowledge that they would be prepared to share with mentees. Mentors and prospective mentors need to be members at any level of a society of editors and need to be experienced editors with good background expertise in copy editing but perhaps with specialised knowledge in any other area of editing or related skills. State and Territory coordinators have information about the program and you apply to them to be a mentor or a mentee.

Mentors and prospective mentors who have not mentored in this program before are asked to attend at least one workshop on mentoring before they take up their first pairing with a mentee. These workshops are free and participants attend in person or by Skype. Several workshops have been held in Canberra, and more will be held as required.

First Melbourne workshops for mentors

The first workshops for mentors to be held outside Canberra were in Melbourne on Saturday 24 May. Elizabeth ran two successful workshops with the assistance of the Victorian Coordinator, Davina Dadley-Moore. Both events were fully subscribed.

Further workshops

Mentors' workshops are planned for Brisbane (late August) and possibly Adelaide (November). Check with local coordinators.

For mentees

If you could use some guidance in copyediting, proofreading, setting up a freelance business, or any other aspect of editing and related topics, register as a mentee through a local coordinator. In the ACT, information is on the Canberra Society of Editors website—or check with Katrina Tidy.

A mentoring tip

Here's a snippet from the *Guidance Notes on Mentoring* that you may not have read:

> A *mentor* is in a two-way mutually beneficial relationship with a *mentee*. A *mentor* aims to help the *mentee* to develop personally, provides advice, shares experiences and wisdom, guides the mentee to make his or her own decisions, but never does work for the mentee. A *coach* is engaged to provide strategies and to help the '*coachee*' to learn and develop skills for a very specific goal. A *teacher* imparts knowledge and skills to a student and sees that the student does the practice to develop those skills and assesses the results of the teaching at all stages.

We think it's important to understand the difference between mentoring and any other form of professional development—there are overlaps, of course, but the thing about mentoring is that the mentee is in the driver's seat! Think about what that means for the partnership.

Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE
emmurphy@ozemail.com.au

Ted Briggs AE
tedbriggs@grapevine.com.au
Joint National Coordinators

Happenings with IPEd

The 2013 IPEd Prize winner announced

Meredith Bramich has been announced as the 2013 IPEd Prize winner for her essay, *Editing in the 21st century*, which provides insight into the topics of editing and publishing through analysis of a carefully selected job advertisement. The essay was written for a Postgraduate Certificate in Editing and Electronic Publishing at Macquarie University.

The judges commented that the essay was written in an accessible and engaging manner usually seen from senior writers and editors. It was well structured and well written with a clear argument successfully illustrated by secondary sources and concrete examples. The text was well edited and proofread, and references were consistently styled. The judges felt that the essay was strong, clearly argued and cogently written and offered an intellectual journey which didn't disappoint.

The entries were judged by Robin Bower AE, Bruce Robins AE and Anne Ryden from the Society of Editors (WA) and Agata Mrva-Montoya from the Society of Editors (NSW).

Meredith's essay is available on the IPEd website.

Together with the other six Australian societies of editors, we are now working with the Council of the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) to effect the transition to the direct membership model of the national body favoured by all the societies in the vote conducted in November last year.

The vehicle for carrying forward the many changes needed is Working Party 4 (WP4) of the IPEd Council, which is led by Rosemary Noble AE from Editors Victoria and draws its membership from all the societies. Our delegate is Elizabeth Murphy DE. The working party has five project teams, which again draw on all the societies. The teams (our delegates in brackets) are covering matters relating to the following aspects of the structure and function of the proposed new national body: Legal and governance (Col Roberts), Finance and operations (Maree Petersen), Membership (Anna Boots), Communication (Sue Pavasaris), and Professional development (James Dixon AE). We will keep members informed of progress in the activities of WP4 and its teams.

The many members who came to the April general meeting of the society will already know that those present voted overwhelmingly in favour of increased membership fees for 2014–15, in order to cover an increased contribution to IPEd to fund the aforementioned activities. The new scale of fees has been broadcast to members by email. The next big step in the transition process is for the societies and IPEd to ratify a memorandum of understanding, the nub of which is that we will all work together in good faith and to a specified set of rules to see the business through to completion. Your committee considered the memorandum of understanding (MoU) in some detail at its May meeting and has asked IPEd to clarify a few matters.

During February, applications were sought from among society members for the new, paid position of IPEd Communication Officer. Mary-Ann Came AE, a member of the South Australian society, has been appointed to the position, winning through what was, as expected, a strong field. Over the past month or so, Mary-Ann and the IPEd Council have been working to finalise a communication strategy for the Institute and have agreed on the following as the initial, highest priority objectives:

- to communicate to editors and potential editors the benefits of membership of an IPEd society of editors
- to promote to practising editors the value of gaining IPEd accreditation
- to develop close relationships with publishers and other players in the communication business in order to raise the profile of the editing profession and provide information on the value that professional editing adds to written communication
- to help WP4 communicate with members and promote the benefits of the 'direct membership model'.

Ninety-one candidates sat the fifth IPEd accreditation exam on 3 May, the largest number since the first exam was held in 2008. There were 15 CSE candidates (16%, compared with around 10% of all societies' memberships); our members clearly see the desirability and benefits of accreditation. Four non-members also sat the exam in Canberra. Under the rules of the scheme, this was the year that those editors accredited in 2008 had to seek renewal of accreditation. All 85 AEs who applied for renewal were successful.

Applications have been called from among the members of the societies for the position of IPEd Company Secretary, consequent on the decision of current secretary Charles Houen to resign at the 2014 AGM. This is an important and interesting job; give it some thought. Charles will continue to contribute to IPEd and the profession by, among other things, leading two of the five WP4 project teams.

Ed Highley
CSE IPEd Councillor

Membership—it's renewal time again

A members-only area on our website

You may have noticed some website changes in the past month or so—we've finally implemented your ideas based on your feedback last year.

Don't worry if we haven't picked up on everything you suggested. There's still more to come. Next in line is a members-only area that is planned for the end of July after the membership renewal season is over. Once that is working, we'll start on the Directory of freelance editors and implement some of members' excellent suggestions to make it searchable.

Virginia Cooke is looking after our Facebook page. If you're on Facebook, 'like' the page, and consider adding your posts from time to time.

If you have any other idea for the website or anything else, please send them to me using the website contact form. We've still got all your feedback, but who knows, maybe the time is now ripe for your contributions.

Cathy Nicoll
Webminder

CSE membership year runs from 1 July to 30 June. The changes afoot at IPEd have meant an increased levy per member. As a result, our April general meeting approved the necessary increase in membership fees for the 2014–15 membership year.

The new fee schedule applies forthwith for all new and renewing members:

Professional	$135
Associate	$105
Student	$45
Corporate	$270

A broadcast email with renewal details and a payment link will be sent to all members in early June. For early birds and eager beavers, this information is already on the CSE website.

Membership of the Canberra Society of Editors offers many valuable benefits. All categories of members are entitled to:

- access the Society's website and its resources, and our Facebook page
- attend the monthly meetings to enjoy informative guest speakers and expert panels, and network with fellow editors and colleagues
- attend the Society's other networking events
- receive *The Canberra editor* published regularly throughout the year
- receive frequent broadcast emails about relevant subjects, events and job opportunities
- access the Society's mentoring program
- join and take part in the Society's discussion group 'canberraeditors' on Yahoo
- access the members' section of the website of the IPEd, our national body that represents and advocates for the editing profession.
- receive substantial discounts for professional development workshops, including those conducted by other editors societies
- receive discounted registration for the IPEd accreditation exam, and the biennial national IPEd conference (to be held in Canberra in 2015).

In addition, full professional members are eligible for a free listing in the Society's *Directory of freelance editors*, and may vote and hold executive office on the management committee, where they can have more influence in supporting and guiding the Society and the editing profession.

Linda Weber
Membership Secretary

SfEP online courses

IPEd.
To advance the profession of editing

Member discounts for Australian societies of editors
6 April 2014

IPEd is pleased to announce that members of all Australian societies of editors are now eligible for a 35% discount for online training courses, in proofreading, copyediting and grammar, offered by the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP), our UK counterpart.

Introduction to proofreading (P1) is ideal for those starting out in their career and takes about 10 hours to complete online. Proofreading Progress (P2) serves as both a refresher course and a way to develop skills further in proofreading. In P2, you will be assigned to an experienced personal tutor who will provide written feedback on two exercises and a final assignment as well as telephone or email support. (We already have one tutor in Australia who works with SfEP.) Successful completion of either P1 or P2 will qualify you to join the Australian mentoring scheme offered by the Canberra Society of Editors; successful completion of P2 will qualify you to join the SfEP mentoring scheme.

Introduction to copyediting (CE1) and Copyediting progress (CE2) were launched in December 2013. CE1 is ideal for anyone starting out in a career in copyediting and will take about 15–20 hours to complete. CE2 is both a refresher course and a way to advance your skills. For CE2 you will also be assigned an experienced personal tutor who will provide written feedback on the first two exercises and a final assignment—for which you may choose between two exercises—as well as telephone or email support. Successful completion of either CE1 or CE2 will qualify you to join the Australian mentoring scheme offered by the Canberra Society of Editors; successful completion of CE2 will qualify you to join the SfEP mentoring scheme.

Brush up your grammar is for those who've forgotten or are hazy about the rules of English grammar. It's suitable for anyone working with text and hoping to make confident decisions in what they write or edit. The online course should take about 20 hours to complete.

Note: As some differences exist between British and Australian standards for copyediting and proofreading marks, a PDF of the Australian mark-up symbols will also be available.

Course information and online booking

More information on the courses and booking details are on the SfEP website.

Under Online courses, Step 1, select 'IPEd member' to show the course fees in sterling.

P1 and CE1 are £107 or about A$193 each. In the payment section, apply the code IPEDSCT1403.

P2, CE2 and Grammar are £161, or about A$290. In the payment section, apply the code IPEDSCT1404.

A handling charge of £3, around A$5, will be applied to credit card payments.

To enable verification of your membership with your Membership Secretary, please insert 'Canberra Society of Editors' in the bottom section (where it asks you to specify an organisation requiring you to take this course). Also let your Membership Secretary know that you have registered.

The IPEd Exam

(At Canberra Grammar during Saturday afternoon rugby)

Like a silent movie, it is, this rugby.
Players dart, sprint, leap, thump,
   thrust and all in silence.
Parents, siblings, pals gesticulate,
Emote like mummers.

They're outside; I'm in.
The double-glazed silence protects
The candidates from adrenaline
   outside.

As it does the players from the
   angst inside…

Anonymous contributor

Working with individual authors

At our March monthly meeting, Kaaren Sutcliffe, an established author and accredited editor, shared her experiences and tips about working with fiction and non-fiction authors. This was a lovely segue from the February panel who discussed 'Your freelance business'.

If you would like to find out more about Kaaren's presentation, her PowerPoint slides are available on the society's website.

Kaaren's motivation to become a fiction writer can be blamed on CS Lewis—when she learnt that he was dead and that there was not going to be a Volume 8 of the Chronicles of Narnia, a young Kaaren decided to write it herself. But then life distracted her from writing for a while until a friend advised her to ' … just start when you have an idea'. This led, to Kaaren's surprise, to her writing her first fiction novel, *The Pegasus Touch*—book one in a two-part fantasy series. Kaaren now concentrates on editing (you get paid for it!) rather than writing, but listening to her talk about how she works with authors and how she encourages them to use words effectively, would have left one in no doubt as to her writing talent, too.

Kaaren's editing work comes from a number of sources: the majority come from the ACT Writers Centre. Other sources include referrals from colleagues in the Canberra Society of Editors, word of mouth or from workshops and talks she gives. She has also been an in-house editor in two government departments.

Kaaren warned authors about a number of issues—she revealed that each of the four publishers who produced her books either closed their list or went bankrupt. The most inconvenient being the bankruptcy of a Melbourne-based publisher in between the release of books two and three of her second fantasy series. Fortunately, she found another publisher to take on book three so readers could find out how the story ended.

Professional development news

April and May were quiet months on the professional development front as many of our members were busy preparing for the IPEd accreditation exam. I am currently investigating workshops for the rest of 2014. Topics include use of the bibliography and reference management software, EndNote, and 'Using social media to promote your editing business'. As usual, contact me with suggestions for training and professional development.

STOP PRESS: I have lined up Hilary Cadman to run a half-day workshop on EndNote on Friday 8 August. Please email me ASAP to secure your place. Information about how to register using TryBooking will be emailed to members in the coming weeks.

A networking breakfast at Bees and Co Café in Yarralumla is imminent—check your emails for details to come soon.

Malini Devadas
Professional Development Coordinator
malini@grapevine.com.au

Kaaren highlighted the differences between working with a fiction writer and a non-fiction writer. As an editor of academic works, but a lover of fiction, I was mesmerised as Kaaren demonstrated how an editor can encourage fiction authors to 'maximise' and 'lift' a scene. As she read the before and after paragraphs, you could not hear a breath in the room, let alone a pin dropping; but we could all see how the excerpt was improved with the additional details, more dialogue, and by 'showing', rather than 'telling' the reader.

Kaaren also shared how her editor's report and feedback might look like: she suggested opening with positive comments and then highlighting areas that could be improved. Kaaren also noted that it is important not only to point out what is not working, but why, and to provide examples of what you want the author to achieve, and to offer options. Finally, you should note that the feedback is only your view.

For Kaaren, some of the most enjoyable aspects of working with individual authors includes seeing how the authors develop new skills and the opportunity to read things she wouldn't otherwise read.

As Kaaren Sutcliffe entertained and educated those of us—sipping our wine in the Fireplace Room at Gorman House—lucky enough to be able to make it to the March 2014 meeting, I thought how lucky those authors are who pick Kaaren Sutcliffe to edit their work.

There was so much to learn from Kaaren—and I have to admit to being so entranced by her words that I sometimes forgot to take notes for this summary. However, I managed to take in her key messages:

Find out whether the author intends to submit their work to an agent or publisher, or whether they wish to self-publish. Work with them to achieve a high standard of work.

Ask for an extract of work before quoting so that you gauge how much work is required.

Ask for a synopsis of author's work so that you know that the author knows where the story heads.

Establish a time-line that suits both the author and you, the editor.

Never assume that an author isn't going to 'make it', as you can't tell how hard someone will work or how persistent they may be.

Pam Faulks
Meetings Coordinator

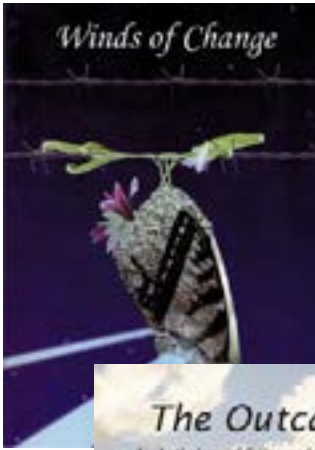## Editing anthologies— with a touch of the supernatural. . .

Join us for the May CSE General Meeting in the Ferguson Room—upstairs at the National Library of Australia—from 6 pm on Wednesday 28 May for a special panel presentation, courtesy of the Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild.

Editing an anthology or collection of works requires more than your average editing skills. How do you pull it together? What's involved in deciding which stories make it and which don't? And how do you keep track of style throughout the collection? And how do you edit species from other planets and worlds with all their unique and out-there conventions?

Four experienced editors of speculative fiction collections will talk about how they pulled their collections together and how working with multiple authors differs to working with just one.

Tehani Wessely was a founding member of *Andromeda Spaceways Inflight Magazine* in 2001 and started her own boutique publishing house, FableCroft Publishing, in 2010. Now firmly entrenched in Australian speculative fiction and independent press, she also judges for several national literary awards and reads far more in one genre than is healthy. Since 2002, Tehani has edited numerous stories, novels and the award-

winning debut collection *The Bone Chime Song and Other Stories* by Joanne Anderton. In her spare moments, she works as Head of Library in a Canberra boys' school and enjoys spending time with her husband and four children.

Elizabeth Fitzgerald is the owner of Earl Grey Editing and has been a freelance editor since 2004. Her work covers a wide variety of forms ranging from epic poetry and fantasy novels through to research proposals and university theses. She graduated from the University of Canberra in 2008 with a Bachelor of Communications (Honours) and majored in Creative Writing and Literary Studies. She edited the CSFG collection *Winds of Change*.

Nicole Murphy is a writer, editor and teacher of writing. She has sold eight novels and a collection of novellas to major publishers, and more than two dozen short stories. She edited Issue 25 of *Andromeda Spaceways Inflight Magazine*, the CSFG anthology *The Outcast* and ran a 12-month editing and publishing venture—called *In Fabula-divino*—for new writers. Her day job is as a conference organiser; she also organises science fiction conventions. She is currently the convenor of the Aurealis Awards, Australia's premier speculative fiction awards.

Maxine McArthur is the author of three science fiction novels and numerous short stories. She has worked as an editor of academic theses and papers at the Australian National University since 1996. From 2010 to 2013, she edited performance audit reports at the Australian National Audit Office with Kaaren Sutcliffe. She has also edited long fiction works (such as Peter Raftos's *The Stone Ship*) and does manuscript assessment for the ACT Writers Centre. In 2004, she edited the Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild's fourth short story anthology, *Encounters*, with Donna Hanson.

Kaaren Sutcliffe
Vice-president

TANGAVULU (10): Storytellers and their stories

Guest speaker, Dr Debbie Hill, and CSE Meetings Coordinator, Dr Pam Faulks.

Having just voted ourselves a membership fee hike on a chilly Canberra autumn evening, we were all ready for a more engaging topic set in a warmer clime as we welcomed University of Canberra linguist Dr Deborah Hill to outline her latest project working with speakers of the Longgu language of Gaudalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

Tangavulu is the first book of Longgu stories to be printed in Longgu and English. Deborah discussed the decisions that contributed to choosing the ten stories for inclusion. She explained that with a language and its community rich in stories and storytellers, what happens before an oral story is written down is as important as the process of producing the written version of the story and translating it into English. This includes consideration of the differences between oral and written language, and the social context of the language.

Longgu's 3000 speakers belong to five clans living in three main villages on Guadalcanal, which is 9 hours journey from the capital Honiara. Stories were traditionally told on the verandah of the family home, but this practice is fading—the demographics is noticeably thin in the middle-age group, partly due to the negative effects (e.g. diabetes and heart disease) of a 'modern diet' of processed foods and poor healthcare. This makes the *Tangavulu* project particularly important for preserving traditional stories that might otherwise be forgotten when the current storytellers, the elders, will have passed away.

Deborah explained the care taken to ensure *Tangavulu* has relevance and broad appeal to Guadalcanal. For example, great effort was made in selecting the stories—some were excluded on political grounds (e.g. to avoid references to recent turmoil), others were included because they featured a clan totem (e.g. a giant) or were identified with a paramount

Life Member, Virginia Wilton, and long-standing committee member, Ara Nalbandian.

clan chief, or because they depicted different genders and a range of ages. Even the choice of the title was very deliberate as 10 is a significant number in Longgu; thus the choice of *Tangavulu* reinforces the value of cultural practices and ideas expressed in stories at a time of rapid social change.

We heard how stories were initially recorded (usually the first time storytellers had heard their own voices!), before being transcribed into Longgu and then translated into English. Care was taken not to be proscriptive by 'standardising' the English form, but to retain distinctive cultural features such as word repetition and Longgu vocabulary for familiar artefacts and ideas.

Deborah's interest in, and affection for, the Longgu speakers of the Solomon islanders shone clearly throughout her presentation and I'm sure I wasn't the only one in the room who was inspired to pick up a copy of *Tangavulu* to enjoy on a wintry evening in front of the fire.

Mike Wilkins
Treasurer

Editing across borders—part 1

By John Linnegar, 6th IPEd National Editors Conference, Perth 2013

If any or all of the expressions below sound foreign to you, then you have just been exposed to South African English (SAE) in all its diversity:

- *constition; koeksister; bunny chow; tsotsi; vuvuzela; just now; sharp, sharp*
- *eish!*
- *Howzit, my china!*
- I *did buy me a jean,* but *I'm thinking* I *nogal* made a mistake.
- After the *indaba,* he *send* me the document he *promise* me.
- Don't drive through the red *robots* without stopping; the *traffic cops is* monitoring you.
- I'll be with you *now-now, né.*

These are all examples of the influence of local and foreign languages on the language (SAE). Pronunciation by non-native speakers, words adopted from their native tongues, the application of native-tongue rules of morphology and syntax, spelling, punctuation, and South Africa-specific lexicon are all illustrated here. In this paper, I attempt to illustrate the factors that exert an influence on the form and shape that English has as a lingua franca in South Africa.[1]

SAE is a rich *banket* (i.e. accumulation) of many linguistic influences dating back to British occupation from the early 19th century:

- Standard UK English and several dialects,
- Dutch and Afrikaans
- Malay
- Indian English
- French
- Portuguese
- nine official indigenous languages of South Africa (11 official languages in all).

The 11 different official languages represent five different language families with limited mutual intelligibility; so the need for a widely used lingua franca is clear.[2]

Lexicographer Jean Branford describes SAE as 'a mixed bag … a lingua franca among those to whom English is, and many to whom English is not, their mother tongue'.[3] This makes SAE a diverse, rich, colourful and vibrant language, even discounting modern external ('foreign') influences.

In this linguistic microcosm, SAE is the lingua franca (though only the fifth most spoken language countrywide).[4] It's the language of education,

business and government. Most young South Africans eschew their mother tongue in favour of English—the language that, they believe, will get them places. As a result, despite the fact that SAE is the world English closest to Standard British English, it is nevertheless heavily influenced (and altered beyond recognition) by its non-native users.

Because of our linguistic diversity and complexity, for English native speakers in South Africa, 'editing across borders' is second nature: while we model SAE on UK (as opposed to US) English (crossing other 'borders' by standardising on reference works from elsewhere in the English-speaking world), we editors have to understand the several Englishes written and spoken by non-native-speaking authors as well as their cultural origins.

For instance, Afrikaans speakers and black Africans who speak isiZulu, isiXhosa (Nguni languages), Sesotho, Setswana (Sotho languages), and so on, are all required to produce documentation in English (for instance, identity documents), as are users of SAE who are heavily influenced by the idiom, syntax and morphology of the other official languages … And we also have to ask the question, 'Is this or that word "foreign" to SAE or not?', because our response will determine our editorial treatment of such words. Fortunately, we have the *Oxford South African Concise Dictionary* to come to our rescue.[5]

And so there's much work to be had editing across cultural, linguistic and national borders in our country. This makes it important for us, inter alia, to understand where our writers are coming from both linguistically and culturally if we are to do justice to conveying their meaning effectively through our intervention in their texts at the levels of structure, wording, meaning and presentation (spelling and punctuation).

This paper therefore explores the opportunities and challenges that present themselves to text editors in South Africa as a multilingual and multicultural society in which English is the lingua franca. Our challenges typically come from Afrikaans, our nine indigenous African languages, and South African Indian English.

Roots of South African English

As Martin Bragg points out in *The Adventure of English*,[6] the story of the English language can be said to reach back millennia: 'the billion-tongued language of Modern English … arrived', he says (p 1), from fifth-century Friesland, became settled in what was to become England, and then became overlaid with Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. But it has its roots—like other Western Indo–European languages such as German, Frisian and Dutch (and, of course, Afrikaans much later)—in the Sanskrit of four millennia ago. Later, French was to become the language of the English court and to exert a strong influence on the spoken and written word in the British Isles.[1]

An event of great importance to the spread of English as a global language occurred from 1580: in that year, Sir Francis Drake set out on his epic circumnavigation of the globe, a feat that not only changed the British worldview but also paved the way for English to spread worldwide. On its journey from the eighth to the 21st century, English has displayed an almost unique characteristic: it has borrowed from French, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Indian, Chinese, Malay and scores of other languages wherever Britons have made landfall.

This is the essential difference between English and the Afrikaans of South Africa: like French, Afrikaans is protective and prescriptive; English, in contrast, is 'this hungry creature' (to quote Bragg[6]), acquisitive and expansive, with nary a consideration for protecting itself. And as it has expanded its lexicon and increased its global reach, so it has found it expedient to be less and less prescriptive, more and more accommodating—probably its greatest strength.

To a white-skinned Afrikaans speaker from the north, the word '*koeksister*' is a plaited sweetmeat that's deep-fried then soaked in syrup.

To a coastal Afrikaans speaker (typically of our so-called Coloured community with its Malay roots), a '*koesister*' is more doughnut-like, coated with coconut after deep-frying.

A *rondavel* (or *rondawel*) referred to a traditional circular African dwelling with a conical thatched roof.

There are also some important differences between two Afrikaans dialects: that of the northern interior provinces (e.g. Gauteng, Free State) and that of the coastal provinces, such as the Western Cape and Eastern Cape. For example, to a white-skinned Afrikaans speaker from the north, the word '*koeksister*' is a plaited sweetmeat that's deep-fried then soaked in syrup; to a coastal Afrikaans speaker (typically of our so-called Coloured community with its Malay roots), a '*koesister*' is more doughnut-like, coated with coconut after deep-frying. The distinction—and which product you purchase—lies essentially in the pronunciation of the word!

Spelling challenges

The humble '*koeksister*' raises the matter of another important challenge for text editors in South Africa: spelling. '*Sister*' is derived from '*siss*', the onomatopoeic word for the sound of dough sizzling in hot fat; '*suster*', on the other hand, while sounding very similar, is the equivalent of the English '*sister*'. The ignorance around this distinction is widespread; so editors really have to have their wits about them!

Spelling based on pronunciation

The way many Africans in South Africa pronounce English words (it would appear to be a peculiarly South African phenomenon not witnessed in neighbouring Botswana, Zimbabwe or Zambia), based on their native-tongue sound formations, can lead to particularly odd spellings (and word misusages), especially when oral recordings are transcribed. The 'e', 'i', and 'ie' sounds are particularly problematic: long internal vowels tend to be shortened ('fern' becomes 'fen'; 'lead' becomes 'lied' or 'lid'); conversely, short internal vowels tend to be lengthened ('bit' becomes 'beet'; 'lift' becomes 'leeft'; 'asset' becomes 'assert'). In our national parliament, the language practitioners who have to transcribe debates and meetings have drawn up a list of more than 300 commonly mispronounced or misunderstood words to help them discern the correct word and meaning in context ('further', 'feather', 'fatter', 'father' and 'farther', for example, are often mistaken one for the other).

In addition, the second syllable of polysyllabic words tends uniformly to be stressed ('constitution' becomes 'constition', for instance, one syllable being dropped altogether). Editors of transcriptions of parliamentary debates and meetings, in particular, have a torrid time deciphering these contortions.

Morphology/vocabulary

In contrast to both English and Afrikaans, the indigenous Bantu languages (Nguni and Sotho groups mainly) do not have a longstanding written tradition—they are mainly oral languages of a rural people that made quite heavy borrowings from the lexicon of the colonisers, specially the farmers who trekked into the interior of South Africa from 1836, and missionaries after them. Most Africans formed master–servant relationships with the colonisers; so it would have been in their interests also to acquire the language of their masters.

The SAE word *rondavel* (or *rondawel*) referred to a traditional circular African dwelling with a conical thatched roof, widely used at least until the Seventies. The word derives from Afrikaans (*rond*) for 'round' and Malay (*dewala*) for 'wall', and the building originally had no windows—only openings: *ifenstile*, *ifasitele*, *lefastere* (window) and no tables to sit at: *itafile*, *itafula*, *tafola* (table); nor were there utensils such as forks and spoons—*ifolokwe*, *imfologo* (fork), *icephe*, *ilephula* (spoon).[7,8,9] So the Afrikaans words for these items were adopted (*fenster*; *tafel*; *vurk*; *lepel*) and treated according to the indigenous-language rules for word formation and spelling.

Where English influenced morphology, we have examples of pronunciations approximate to the English such as *isipunu* (spoon), *itebhula* (table), *iwindi* (window).[7,8,9] These examples are from isiXhosa (Eastern Cape), isiZulu (KwaZulu-Natal) and Northern Sotho (Free State).

The principal problem and challenge facing these indigenous languages is their relative isolation, the relatively small number of native speakers (except for isiXhosa and isiZulu), and their lack—to this day—of authoritative published dictionaries/word lists and rules of grammar and spelling of the kind that both English and Afrikaans have had for many years. Other than what missionaries who worked among local Africans compiled in the 19th century, such reference works are few and far between—a major handicap for authors and editors alike. Consequently, editors really struggle to do justice to texts in these languages, there often being disagreement about the correct prefixes or spellings, or even the morphology, of words.

These were among the earliest linguistic 'border crossings' between the languages of South Africa. In the 'new' South Africa (that is, post-1994), the situation has become more complicated for language practitioners, as code-switching and code-mixing have virtually become the order of the day. In many of our local TV 'soapies' and in some fiction, for instance, the characters may use more than two languages interchangeably in dialogue: English, Afrikaans and at least one of the indigenous languages (usually isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho or Setswana). This requires text editors and proofreaders to be linguistically agile and versatile in order to ensure that the intended meaning is portrayed correctly.

… to be continued in the next issue of The Canberra editor. List of references will be supplied at the end of the last part of this manuscript.

Taking in the shortcuts

In the February/March issue of *The Canberra editor*, I introduced some keyboard shortcuts that help navigating through a Microsoft Word document. Functions of some of those can be extended by combining the Shift key—this achieves text selections. Selections can be overwritten by typing text with no need to press the Backspace or Delete buttons—thus avoiding an unnecessary keystroke. Selections can be moved by cutting or copying (Ctrl + X or Ctrl + C) and pasting (Ctrl + V) to different parts of a document, to a different split window (Alt + W + S) of the same document, or a different document (Alt + Tab—activates alternate windows).

Farid Rahimi
Acting Newsletter Editor

Shortcut	Function
Ctrl + Shift + up arrow	Selects text before cursor position to beginning of a paragraph
Ctrl + Shift + down arrow	Selects text after cursor to end of a paragraph
Ctrl + Shift + left arrow	Selects one word to left of cursor
Ctrl + Shift + right arrow	Selects one word to right of cursor
Shift + Home	Selects text from cursor to beginning of line
Shift + End	Selects text from cursor to end of line
Ctrl + Shift + Home	Selects text from cursor to beginning of document
Ctrl + Shift + End	Selects text from cursor to end of document
Ctrl + Shift + F9	Updates fields in a document (e.g. EndNote bibliography fields)
Ctrl + Shift + C (compare with Ctrl + C)	Copies formatting of selected text or selected paragraph mark (¶)
Ctrl + Shift + V (compare with Ctrl + V)	Pastes copied formatting to selected text

Comical collections

More new members in 2014

A warm welcome to these recent new members!

Professional

Duncan Beard (April)
Shirley Byrne (May)
Marcus Francis (April)
Nigel Harding (May)—A special welcome back for a founding member!
Marion Mapham (May)
Julia Smith (April)
Moira Smith (February)

Associate

Katherine Crane (April)
David Day (April)
Diana Glazebrook (April)
Rachael Jennings (February)
Rosemary Nichols (April)

Student

Melissa Collins (April)

Your committee 2014

President Alan Cummine

Vice-President Kaaren Sutcliffe

Secretary Eris Jane Harrison

Treasurer Mike Wilkins

Professional Development Coordinator Malini Devadas

Membership Secretary
Linda Weber

Acting Newsletter Editor
Farid Rahimi

Meetings Coordinator
Pam Faulks

Public Officer Linda Weber

Webminder Cathy Nicoll

IPEd Councillor Ed Highley

IPEd Accreditation Board Delegate Ted Briggs

Committee members

Tristan Viscarra Rossel

Lindsay Nesci

Dallas Stow

Non-committee member

Catering Coordinator
Karen Hosking

Please send all correspondence via the CSE website.

From time to time, most of us get emails that make us smile or even laugh out loud. They are usually from friends and circulating widely. Some are exceedingly clever. Recently, I received one containing 'Nine thoughts to ponder'.

'What a wonderful coincidence!' I thought, since our President had just asked me at our last general meeting to start a regular short column for *The Canberra editor* of 'selections from such collections'.

There are some very clever emails circulating that have a language or editorial flavour, and I'll select plenty of these in future. For this edition, please accept this more philosophical offering of thoughts that we could all ponder to make life simpler and to take things with a pinch of salt as we go through the trials (and joys) of our respective (and no doubt respectable) daily lives!

Thought number 9. Death is the number 1 killer in the world.

Thought number 8. Life is sexually transmitted.

Thought number 7. Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Thought number 6. Men have two emotions: hungry and horny, and they can't tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich.

Thought number 5. Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

Thought number 4. Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.

Thought number 3. All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Thought number 2. In the 60s, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.

Thought number 1. Life is like a jar of jalapeno peppers. What you do today might burn your bum tomorrow.

...and as someone recently said to me: 'Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last that long'.

Keep smiling!

Ara Nalbandian

Schedule for next newsletter

The next edition of *The Canberra editor* will appear in July 2014. The copy deadline for this issue is Wednesday 18 June.

The editor welcomes contributions by email at newsletter@editorscanberra.org.

All articles must be in .doc format.