Discovering XML for editing

There seems to be a stirring about the 'next big thing' for publishing. XML (extensible markup language) is starting to creep into editors' vocabularies. Dave Gardiner explores the pros and cons of a publishing workflow model in which editors play a greater role through their expertise in XML.

XML is being touted by various players in publishing as the next format for producing publications.

Editors may have come across XML through Word 2007, which can save word processing documents in Microsoft's version of this language. They may have used XML in a publishing organisation or had exposure through desktop publishing software. 'Single-source publishing' is the term used to describe the workflow based on XML technologies, where content stored in one source is used to produce publications in several formats and for various media—print, web, PDAs and so on.

Despite years of marketing spin that has promised XML will result in greater efficiency and reduced costs for producing publications by 'reusing content', implementation of single-source workflow has been limited to large publishers—and even then is used primarily for typesetting, practically at the end of the process. But is XML useful across the whole workflow, particularly for one-off publications?

I am setting out to explore how the format can be used more effectively, by implementing it at the start of the process—with editing.

My first taste of XML came two years ago when I produced RSS news feeds for a web portal. It did not make much sense to me at the time. I just downloaded a news feed from another website, worked out where to put the text and 'tags' (elements that define the title, date and news), and uploaded the XML file to 'go live'. I had some HTML experience, so the structure of XML code was not totally foreign and because XML is a text-based format,

I could modify files in a text editor. Then I landed a job as an editor with a publishing house and had to learn to edit publications using XML. I learned a new language and new terms: chunks, elements, attributes, nesting, validation (see box on page 7). Despite using XML every day, it took six months to become comfortable with it and there were still many aspects of markup I needed to discover.

Now 18 months down the track, I understand how XML can be used to its potential—and on the other hand,

Inside

Next meeting: Tuesday, 1 June 2010

The Four Ages of Publishing

The trade book publishing industry has changed a lot in the past 50 years but in many ways it remains the same. Having spent almost five decades in the industry, publishing consultant Richard Smart is in a great position to give an overview of Australian publishing. In an interactive session (he welcomes as many questions as you can muster), Richard will talk about his career and offer observations on developments in the trade books' scene. As he has made the transition from editor to publisher, via just about every department, Richard will discuss the role of an editor in a 21st century organisation.

Richard Smart was a director of The Australian Publishers Association (APA) from 2002 to 2010 and convenor of the APA's independent publishers' committee. He now acts as a publishing consultant to the association. He has worked for several major companies in Australia and overseas (Ure Smith, Angus and Robertson, Collins, Macmillan, ABC Books and Choice Books) and now runs his own publishing and consulting business, Richard Smart Publishing. Richard was a member of the APA's training committee for ten years and of Publish Australia's inaugural committee. In 2007 he was on the Australia Council's assessment panel for their Literature International Market Development program.

Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. $15 for members; $20 for non-members and those who do not RSVP; $10 for holders of a current concession card or student card. Non-members who book and do not attend must still pay.

Please RSVP to (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or by email to the address membership@editorsnsw.com by Friday, 28 May 2010.

July meeting: Winter Dinner Tuesday, 6 July 2010 (see page 8)

where it is just plain awkward.

Editing with XML gives you wider exposure to the publishing workflow because you need to consider how text should appear in the final product in much greater detail, and consequently add elements and attributes to that text. At a basic level, the editor starts to format text for output—traditionally the domain of the desktop publisher. Yet, even with an enterprise-wide XML publishing system that aims to reduce the turnaround time for producing documents, the workflow continues to parallel the conventional stages of production.

It is still necessary to work with Word documents in the early stages of editing, as authors may need to review edits in 'track changes' and a Word document may go back and forth between author and editor until a final draft is achieved. Once past this stage, editors then mark up the text in XML 'chunks' (files). This is effectively typesetting the text—the editor takes on the role of desktop publisher by copying and pasting from Word documents, and also specifying appropriate elements and attributes that aid in defining the final appearance of content. A draft PDF document is then generated, printed, proofread, with more corrections made to the XML to modify incomplete markup, and a press-ready PDF is the end result. It is a laborious process, one that is probably similar amongst large publishers.

Editing workflow

There are inefficiencies in such a workflow right from the start. Granted, an XML workflow is only as good as the software implemented to manage the content but the need to edit initially with Word, (because authors provide and need to review edited material in this format) is merely transplanting conventional editing practice into a single-source workflow—there is no time-saving solution at this stage. Subsequent typesetting of content by the editor, and generating PDF documents that are sent to authors for review, bring about further delays. Although the XML files may contain all the text and graphics, producing a draft PDF or RTF is necessary for authors to review. This is termed 'roundtripping'—moving from one format to another then back —just to take in edits.

While such a workflow might be sustainable on a large scale, as in publishing houses, it is not likely to work well when scaled down to single users or very small teams. The current state of XML software makes it almost feasible for editors to start moving into single-source publishing to supplement word processing-based editing. Almost, because although there are many well-developed and affordable editing and authoring packages that approach the basic functionality of word processors, there is no effective workflow that would reduce the time to produce documents.

Model of XML publishing workflow
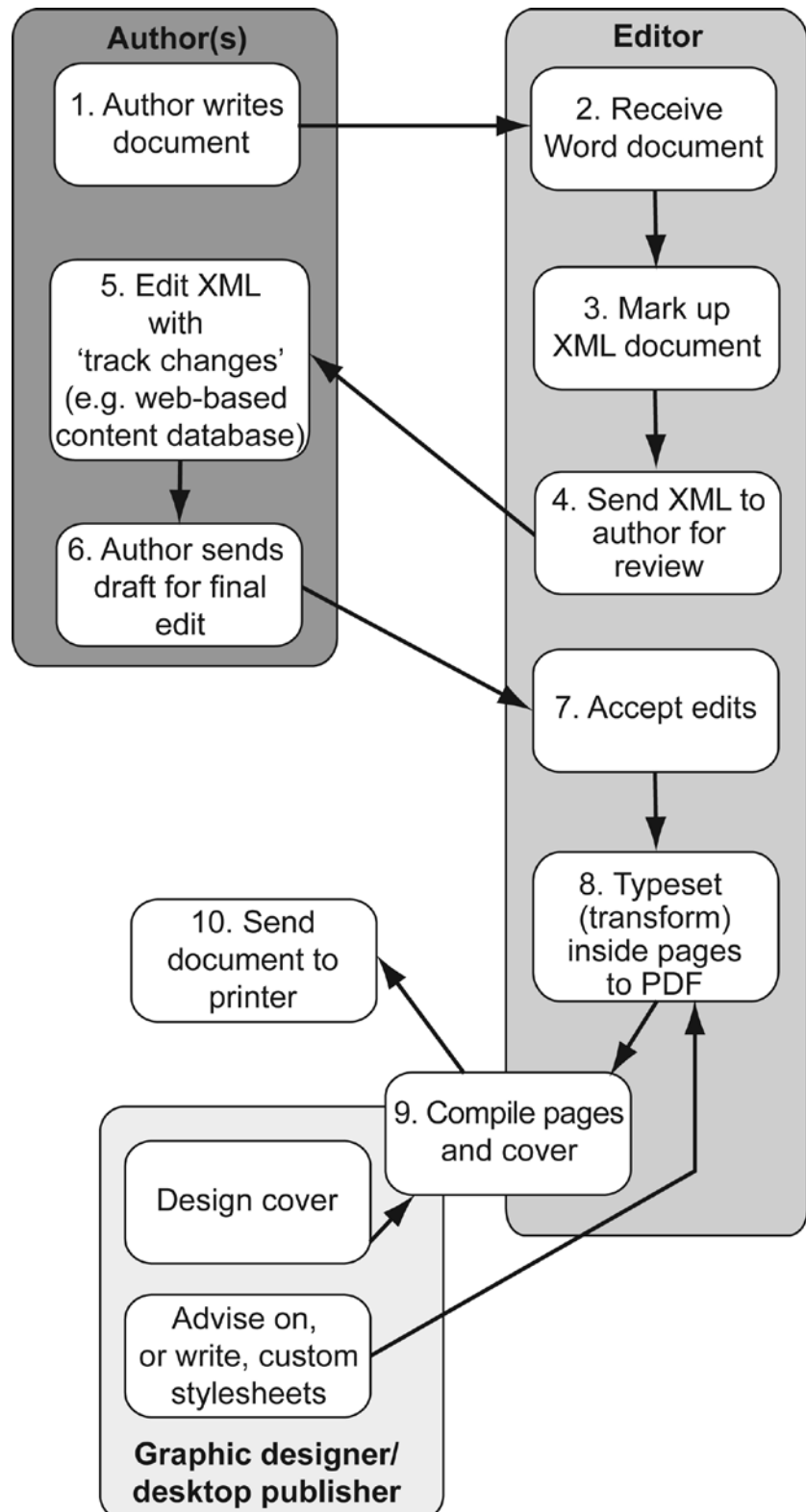
Extending services with typesetting

If editors are to implement XML, they would need to include typesetting in their services—not only because XML standards and supporting publishing businesses are yet to be developed, but also because production time is most likely to be reduced only when editors control the whole production process. The process of structured editing involves marking up content, which encroaches into the typesetting stage. There is a much larger aspect of formatting XML content for presentation—that of developing customised stylesheets. These are text-based files that define the style of text and tables, the layout of pages, and even how things like widows and orphans are displayed—in fact, everything that affects final presentation. I discuss these later.

The diagram shows a publishing workflow model that commences as usual with the author sending a document to the editor. The departure from conventional editing is that the document is marked up as XML. The document must remain as XML to avoid roundtripping, so reducing the time to take in edits, and assumes the author has access to XML authoring software for reviewing the content. The editor would control the whole production process for expediency—because in a conventional workflow, a desktop publisher would typeset the document and set up styles with advice from the author, and this requires accurate scheduling to meet the press deadline. There are inevitable delays as the desktop publisher manages several publications and liaises with the editor.

The rationale for devolving the typesetting stage to the editor is that during editing markup, XML documents are partly formatted by selecting appropriate elements and attributes—ensuring valid document structure, for example, is one aspect of formatting for presentation. Because the editor's markup partially achieves formatting, XML can encourage the editor to complete the formatting, by applying stylesheets to generate press-ready PDF documents. An additional consideration for editors is the need for expertise in document design, preparation of graphics and development of stylesheets, which

means collaboration with a desktop publisher would be required. Another imperative for the editor to assume greater control over production is that the infrastructure and expertise within the publishing industry has not yet developed to support XML production—so with very few XML publishers and practically no stylesheet designers, editors (who are increasingly diversifying into desktop publishing and graphic design) are probably best placed to start building the framework for XML publishing.

This XML publishing workflow model could be adapted for use by freelance editors, as a first step in

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'If publishers need to make their move to a digital workflow faster than anticipated, there may be increased demand for editors with XML skills.'

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developing a framework within which XML editing for one-off publications becomes feasible. Far from being a 'tried and tested' approach, it is intended to spark discussion about how XML editing could be developed, what publishing players might be involved and, importantly, why editors should consider XML as an adjunct to their specialist services. Following are some points explaining why XML needs to be developed at the 'grass roots' level at the same time that it is also gaining strength in the higher echelons of publishing houses.

E-books and digital publishing

The growth in marketing of e-books is obvious. Book retailers have established sales and distribution channels for e-books in response to consumer demand. Numerous websites and blogs about e-books appeal to authors wanting to exploit this market (google 'writing e-books'). And the recent Digital Revolution Symposium held by the Australian Publishers Association showed how large publishers are handling the challenge of digital products. But where is the talk about editors 'getting on board'? After all, we are a critical part of the workflow —we get involved right at the start of

the publishing process. With publishers saying they are committed to digital publishing, just who will ensure that digital content is produced to a high standard?

While neither closely scrutinising the media about trends in editing nor having expertise as a commentator, I do perceive a 'top-heavy' approach to developing digital publishing. Of course, large publishers have the resources and markets to justify the move to a digital workflow, which is why much discussion currently focuses on the mass market. Publishers occasionally outsource to freelancers, and if publishers need to make their move to a digital workflow faster than anticipated, there may be increased demand for editors with XML skills to take up that workload. This is not just supposition—at the Digital Revolution Symposium in February, Stephen Page of Faber and Faber stated that 'editors have to make e-books' and 'we have to become experts in XML, we have to know how to use the technology. And so our project editors, the people who make the books, are, over the next 12 months, going to undergo training that will turn them into people who can do XML corrections'. It would be efficacious for some freelancers to be skilled enough to handle outsourced work when this does happen in Australia. We need some indication from publishers now about this potential work in the long term so editors can better gauge the demand and 'skill up' in relevant technologies accordingly.

The market

Apart from preparing for potential outsourcing from publishers, is there demand from other sectors of the market for XML editing? It appears not a great deal at present, as a few freelancers with XML skills I have approached are not receiving regular work. One exception is the technical communication market, where tech writers use XML authoring to prepare documentation for online help and IT manuals. This is one area worth looking at more closely to determine emerging trends.

Acquiring skills

A proposal for editors to start skilling up—and to collaborate in small, multi-

IPEd notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors Limited, April–May 2010

At its two most recent meetings—all meetings are being held by teleconference during 2010—the IPEd Council has been planning for a busy year. Several substantial projects are in the pipeline, in all of which the council will be seeking the active engagement of the members.

An IPEd Occasional Papers series has been launched. Details have been published in all the society newsletters and are also posted on the IPEd website. This series aims to encourage editors and those working in editing-related fields to share their ideas, views and reflections on editing as theory, as practice and as a profession. It is a high-level professional endeavour that the council proposes to link to a special presentation at each biennial national conference. Get your writing caps on.

The council's Communications Committee has sought tenders from four design firms to redevelop the IPEd website and a decision is imminent. We are seeking a major redesign of the site to improve its functionality and information, and present images aligned with the principles, standards and aspirations of our profession. As mentioned in the March IPEd notes, the SA society is lending IPEd $5,000 under very generous terms to support the website work, which will cost more than $10,000.

The current website has served IPEd well. We acknowledge the enormous contribution by Mike Purdy of the Canberra society in building and maintaining it.

The Accreditation Board is focusing on requirements for re-accreditation and will soon be seeking assistance from editors accredited in 2008 to provide feedback on its proposals. The board is also reviewing the exam development model and investigating the possibility of delivering the exam onscreen, a major undertaking that may require some specialist outside assistance.

Also in gestation is a national register of professional development opportunities. This activity is focusing first on the training activities of the societies, enlisting the assistance of their training officers. The net will then be cast wider, to other agencies and the tertiary education sector. A major aim is to identify training events by individual societies that, with IPEd support, might be transportable, so that members across the country can

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Tiered membership

The society's tiered membership system will work as follows:

Categories

This membership year (2010) the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. will offer members the option of three categories:

1. Existing members (as at 31 December 2006) can remain an ordinary member at the current fee ($75/85) with the current entitlements; or

2. Existing and new members can become a professional editor member at the current ordinary fee with the current ordinary entitlements, provided you have two years' experience in a paid editing role and can supply two letters confirming your experience; or

3. Existing and new members can become an associate member at a reduced fee ($55/$65) with reduced entitlements (an associate member cannot vote at an election, cannot become an office bearer and cannot be listed in the *Editorial Services Directory*).

Phasing in a new system

Before January 2011 all ordinary members will be asked to choose either:

1. Professional editor member status; or

2. Associate member status.

Four years should be sufficient time for those seeking professional status to gain professional experience if they do not already have it.

Experience

Professional editor members must have at least two years' in-house experience as an editor or the equivalent freelance or part-time experience. For example, if you worked half-time as an editor for four years (part-time or freelance) then that would be an acceptable equivalent to two years full-time work as an in-house editor. Professional experience must be in a paid editing role. As professional members may have had career breaks, there is no limit on how long ago the professional editing experience was obtained. Professional editor members will be asked to provide details of their experience and two letters (in English) that can be checked by a subcommittee appointed for this purpose. The subcommittee will simply confirm the statements supplied by the third parties. The letters can just be a statement of the years of experience in an editorial role. See the essential ***Professional Editor Membership form*** for more details about requirements.

Corporate Associates

A new category of Corporate Associates is also available. Publishing companies and other businesses and organisations that support the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.'s aims can become Corporate Associates. For an annual fee of $400, Corporate Associates of the society will receive five copies of *Blue Pencil* each month and two copies of the current *Editorial Services Directory*, five free admissions to each monthly meeting and two free admissions to one special event per year, such as the Christmas dinner. The usual member rates on professional development courses and workshops will apply for up to five attendees from the Corporate Associate organisation (a saving of approximately $95 per person).

The Committee
Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Workshop report:
Publishing and editing children's picture books

On Thursday, 22 April The Society of Editors (NSW) held the first day of two popular children's book editing workshops, presented by Mark Macleod.

'What can you possibly have to edit in a picture book?' is the question many a children's picture book editor has been asked. Mark Macleod showed us precisely how much there is to consider. Although the manuscripts are short, there are plenty of narrative traps for the unwary writer; there are two creative people for the editor and publisher to deal with (author and artist); and defining 'the reader' is more complicated than it first appears.

It is a pleasure to be taught by someone who is passionate about what they do and as he has not only edited, but also written and published children's books, Mark Macleod's expertise is deservedly renowned. This workshop attracted a range of attendees, from editors who had never touched a picture book but wanted to learn about the genre, to people who had already written or published in the field. There was something for all of us to learn no matter our background and everyone was quickly drawn in by Mark's enthusiasm and boundless knowledge.

He covered the nuts and bolts of putting together a children's book: How do you hook the reader in the first place? How do children respond to language? And just who is it you are writing for —the parent or the child? This last question seemed hard to resolve at first. As Mark read various popular picture books it was clear that all of us were as charmed by the stories as any child would be. Yet we found repeatedly that not just writers but even publishers and parents make certain assumptions—not always accurate— about what children want to read and what it is that they will respond to in a book.

The fundamental difference between working with adult books and working with children's picture books, quite apart from the length of the narrative, is the pictures. How does the collaboration process work between author, artist and editor? We got the chance to try putting pictures and words together in a meaningful way but that is actually the easier part. Mark pointed out some of the considerations an author and publisher have at the beginning when matching an artist to an author and how that might ultimately affect how and when the book is published. And, of course, while 'editing' an artist or an illustration involves similar techniques to editing text, there are some important differences and considerations to keep in mind.

All these aspects were dealt with when author Lisa Shanahan joined the class and gave us a personal account of putting together a children's book. From imagining to writing to finding a publisher to working directly with an artist and heading out to

> 'It highlighted the difference between what messages adults think children are taking away from a book as opposed to what they are really seeing and how they are affected by the books they read.'

schools with the finished book, Lisa shared her experience of children's book publishing from the author's perspective. This was a fascinating glimpse at things from the inside as she first read one of her books and then showed us some of the details that the artist had put in; not only pointing out things that we, as adults, had missed, but also explaining how an adult audience experiences the story differently to an audience of children. This proved to be key to understanding a lot about editing and publishing such books.

Given the opportunity to dissect a manuscript ourselves with these discussions behind us, some of the concepts became clearer. But how easy is children's book publishing and editing in the real world? The realities of publishing houses and the impact of other departments on editing and selecting manuscripts to publish were considered, with much of this valuable insight into publishing houses applying to any genre. The impact of conservatism and political correctness was also discussed: how that has changed people's perceptions about what is acceptable to publish, to sell and to place in schools. Looking at these differences from a child's perspective as well as an adult's was particularly interesting as, again, it highlighted the difference between what messages adults think children are taking away from a book as opposed to what they are really seeing and how they are affected by the books they read.

By the end of the day many of us felt that we had a better insight into what children were looking for in a book, as well as what parents, teachers and even booksellers might be looking for. With a better knowledge of the artistic and production process, the editors among us felt better equipped to face those deceptively short manuscripts in the future; while the publishers and writers who had joined us for the day also had a much better idea of their audience and market, and all of us came away full of new ideas and perspectives on publishing and editing in general.

Abigail Nathan
Committee member

The second workshop on children's publishing and editing, focusing on books for older readers and young adults, will be held on Thursday, 21 October 2010.

Copy deadline for the next issue of

Blue Pencil
Tuesday
8 June 2010

skilled groups to provide some form of 'technical bridge' between authors and publishers—may be required to generate interest in e-book publishing from existing clients. If freelancers are not available, publishers will need to stretch their in-house resources to handle the workload. XML editing will progress slowly if momentum only trickles from the top down.

One factor that makes it easier to start learning XML is the relative affordability of editing/authoring software. There are free open-source XML editors, which allow you to become familiar with concepts. Several hundred dollars will get you some reasonably well-developed and supported editing software, while $2,000 or more is required for software suites that also handle stylesheet design and database management to integrate with a content management system. You may then need to consider buying typesetting ('transformation processor') software that lets you produce output for PDF, HTML and epub formats—another several hundred dollars. But if editors work in groups for the proposed one-stop editing/typesetting service, then overall costs could be shared. Editors working on their own may not need to buy both editing and transformation software—there is likely to be demand for only editing/markup services, while transformation of XML content could be handled by a publisher, for example.

Editors would choose what XML services to provide. Adopting XML is a huge undertaking, as there are several schemas that editors may need to become familiar with just for editing—and if typesetting is also considered as part of the service, the basics of XSL and XPath must be learned to be able to modify document design to clients' specifications. Editors must specialise in various aspects of XML, as it is not realistic for individuals to be proficient in everything. For instance, one could be a specialist in DocBook editing, or DITA stylesheet design, or epub usability testing.

How do editors learn XML?

There are various training providers (one has an introduction to XML with InDesign) but be careful with your choice of training. I have undertaken a few short courses by specialist training organisations and was confused by the complexity of material presented, and the lack of relevance for editing and publishing. The material was too high-level and technical, as it was pitched at programmers and developers. I thought I had a head start with 18 months full-time experience in XML markup, but even that did not give me enough knowledge to fully comprehend the training material. There appear to be few entry-level courses for editors (although a graduate technical communication course that includes XML was established this year), so it would be a matter of sharing relevant knowledge amongst editors to acquire the skills.

More time for editing

The proposed workflow model is an initial framework based around the need to demonstrate how XML could be handled across both the editing and typesetting stages. This is because editing a document in XML realistically takes two to three times longer than editing using a word processor, due to the need to add valid markup (XML tags) to the content for various output formats. One advantage of this extended editing time is that editing could continue almost until a publication is ready for press, which is great for multi-authored documents that require constant liaison with writers, or where copyright permissions might take some time to obtain. One must consider the combined stages of editing and typesetting to assess the feasibility of XML, because the basic editing and content markup stage encroaches some way into the typesetting stage. The real challenge is to then complete the production process with typesetting, to ensure that XSL stylesheets are developed sufficiently so that presentation of documents meets clients' requirements, and that the time to transform content is minimised. I feel it would be very easy to blow out the time involved to modify customised stylesheets for each document, and consider that some form of 'standard layout' may very well be required for some documents (such as reports) to keep to schedule.

One major drawback of typesetting using the text-based stylesheets is the time it takes to preview the effects of changes to text and page styles. It involves transforming XML content into a PDF, proofreading, making changes to stylesheet code and transforming again. This might be done dozens of times to fine-tune the layout of a document (whether you use a basic desktop setup or an enterprise-wide publishing system); hence the need for standard document stylesheets that minimise the time required for typesetting edits.

Why learn XML?

So, after outlining how I think XML editing could unfold—and I certainly welcome other perspectives, as this is very much a collaborative arena—why should editors learn XML? My motivation was the belief that there will be a market for freelancers soon. The happenings amongst large publishers are a sign that XML is coming and I am hopeful that research to develop the skills and processes needed will help to bring those markets to fruition soon. By developing efficient processes, services and products at the grass roots level, it may be possible to approach prospective clients with 'trial services' and generate demand while keeping in step with publishers' requirements. In the meantime, research and development into XML editing needs to continue, and editors are invited to collaborate on this work.

For resources about XML editing in Australia visit www.xmleditoz.net.au.

Dave Gardiner runs a freelance editing business, Red Lettuce Communications. He has experience in academic editing and website writing as an in-house editor, and has edited government reports and PhD theses as a freelancer. Dave is currently a part-time, in-house project editor with a legal publisher, and edits XML-based online and looseleaf print products using DocBook schema.

Guide to XML terminology

Attribute: A specific feature of an element that provides finer control of how that element is to appear in a transformed document, or how an element is to be handled. For example, a <link> element placed around the text 'Table 2.1' can have an attribute 'linked' in the tag, which specifies the name of the bookmark to link to; by clicking on the text in a PDF document, the user can jump to that table elsewhere in the document.

Chunk: An alternative name for an XML file that contains content, such as a chapter of a book. Chunks (parts of a document) can be combined into a larger document, or each can be transformed to produce individual chapters. 'Chunking' refers to how files are broken down into smaller, more manageable sections for display as web pages.

Element: Text-based code, written within angle brackets in an XML document, that affects how text is interpreted by stylesheets and therefore how it is presented in a transformed document. For example, a paragraph in an XML file using DocBook schema would have the tag <para> at the start, and </para> at the end. 'Element' is used interchangeably with 'tag'.

Epub: A standard format for publishing electronic books for display on handheld e-book readers, based on extensible hypertext markup language (XHTML) and cascading stylesheets (CSS).

Nesting: The arrangement necessary for certain elements within other elements for document markup to be valid, according to the rules of the schema being used. For DocBook, the elements to mark up an image must be nested in the order: <mediaobject> <imageobject> <imagedata> </imagedata> </imageobject> </mediaobject>.

PDA: Personal digital assistant. A mobile device that functions as a personal information manager and can connect to the internet.

RSS: Really Simple Syndication. An XML file format that web browsers use to display news items. A web manager can create and upload RSS files to their website so that web users who subscribe to their news feed can be alerted to news items.

RTF: Rich Text Format. Microsoft document format that allows word processing documents to be read on different computer systems.

Schema: Defines the 'building blocks' of an XML document, that is, the characteristics for elements and attributes that can appear in a document, and rules governing the structure.

Stylesheets: XML files that define every aspect of document layout and content presentation, which are interpreted by a transformation processor to create a readable document. Schemas are distributed with standard stylesheets but users can create customised stylesheets to modify things like the dimensions of master pages (margins, columns, headers, footers), text fonts, line and paragraph spacing, and position of graphics.

Tag: See 'element'.

Validation: Checking that the elements, attributes and values in an XML document conform to the rules of the schema, and that they are declared (defined) properly. Validation ensures that elements are correctly placed with respect to other elements, so that the content can be transformed.

XPath: XML Path Language. Coding in an XSL stylesheet that is used to select particular elements relative to other elements, so that styles can be applied to text. For example, an XPath expression can be written to 'select the first letter of the first word of the first paragraph that follows a chapter tag'; this expression can be followed by character styles to define the typeface, font size and colour for a drop capital for every chapter in a book.

XSL: Extensible Stylesheet Language. A broad term to describe the different types of coding used to transform XML content into PDF, HTML or epub documents. The term XSL is used interchangeably when referring to XSL Transformation (XSLT–coding to specify content styles), XSL Formatting Objects (XSL-FO–used specifically to produce PDF documents) and XPath, used to select elements.

gain access to the, often formidable, skills and experience held by particular individuals and societies.

The March IPEd notes mentioned that judging for the 2009 Barbara Ramsden Award for excellence in editing had been completed. The winner, announced at the National Literary Awards ceremony on 19 March, was *Grand obsessions: the life and work of Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin*, written by Alisdair McGregor, edited by Nicola Young and published by Penguin Lantern. The judges, Stephanie Holt (Victoria) and Virginia Wilton (Canberra), also highly commended *Darwin's armada* by Iain McCalman, edited by Meredith Rose (Penguin Viking), and *Smoke in the room* by Emily Maguire, edited by Emma Rafferty (Picador). IPEd looks forward to continuing its sponsorship of this award.

Another important national award in the profession is the Beatrice Davis Editorial Fellowship managed for the Literature Board of the Australia Council by the Australian Publishers Association. The fellowship is named after the distinguished Australian literary editor and honours her contribution to Australian letters. It offers the recipient an attachment to the editorial department of a US publishing house or houses, and a literary agency, for up to 12 weeks. The winner of the 2009 fellowship was Alexandra Nahlous, an editor with Allen & Unwin. The NSW and Queensland societies, which have been among the financial sponsors of the award for some years, have agreed that it would be appropriate for IPEd, as the national body, to take over this role on behalf of all the members.

At their 11 April meeting, councillors considered IPEd's budget for 2010–11. They noted that the institute will end the current fiscal year in a sound financial position. In light of rising operational costs and the aforementioned project activities, however, they agreed that it would be prudent to increase the member levy for 2010–11 from $20 to $25 per society member. This will be the first increase since October 2006, when the seed fund that supported the work leading to the incorporation of IPEd on 22 January 2008 was established.

Ed Highley
Secretary
www.iped-editors.org

Freelancers lunch, Monday, 21 June

Freelancers' lunches are back starting in June at the Shakespeare Hotel, 200 Devonshire St, Surry Hills (walk up Devonshire Street from Central Railway). No need to RSVP—just turn up. The mains are $10 to $12. The date is Monday, 21 June 2010. The time is 1.00 p.m. All welcome. Forget any freelancer troubles you might be experiencing and network convivially. See you there!

2010 Walkley Non-fiction Award, closing date 30 June

The award celebrates excellence in non-fiction writing. Entries can encompass subject matter including true crime and biographies through to political analysis, business writing, war reporting, investigative journalism and foreign correspondence.

Authors must be Australian citizens or residents of Australia. Titles can be an edited collection of no more than five authors. The writing can be about Australian or international subject matter and/or historical in context.

First round entries (for books published between 1 September 2009 and 30 June 2010) close 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 30 June 2010. Second round entries (for books published between 1 July 2010 and 31 August 2010) close 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 31 August 2010.

Byron Bay Writers Festival, 6 to 8 August

Early bird tickets for the festival are now on sale. The festival program will be available online from Friday, 4 June. For more information visit the festival website: www.byronbaywritersfestival.com.au.

Indigenous Literacy Day, Wednesday, 1 September 2010

The Indigenous Literacy Project is a partnership between the Australian Book Industry and The Fred Hollows Foundation that raises funds to purchase and supply books and other culturally appropriate material to remote communities where the Foundation works.

The fourth Indigenous Literacy Day will be held on Wednesday, 1 September 2010. For more details about the project visit the website at www.worldwithoutbooks.org/.

Calibre Prize announced

The results of this year's Australian Book Review (ABR)/CAL Calibre Prize for an Outstanding Essay were announced on 30 April.

The prize was jointly awarded again this year, with $5,000 going to both Lorna Hallahan for her essay 'On Being Odd' and David Hansen for his essay 'Seeing Truganini'. The prize was judged by James Ley and ABR editor Peter Rose.

Kibble Literary Award shortlist

The titles in the running for this year's $30,000 Nita B Kibble Literary Award for women writers are:
- *The Real Possibility of Joy* (Josephine Emery, Pier 9)
- *The China Garden* (Kristina Olsson, UQP)
- *The Ghost at the Wedding* (Shirley Walker, Penguin).

The awards are designed 'to benefit women writers of a published book of fiction or nonfiction classified as "life writing", to advance Australian literature and to help provide incentive for women writers'.

The winners will be announced on Wednesday, 2 June.

2010 July Winter Dinner
Tuesday, 6 July
6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m.

William Blue Dining
Northpoint, 171 Pacific Highway, North Sydney

Three course menu for $40 including wines ($30 including soft drinks) in a private dining room.

See the flyer in this issue for more details and to make a reservation. Space is limited.

Don't miss a night of good food, good fun and good company.

Have you used your free meeting voucher for 2010?

All members received a voucher with their 2010 renewal entitling them to free admission to one of the society's monthly meetings.

Don't let your voucher go to waste. Come along in June for Richard Smart's talk on The Four Ages of Publishing. Light supper, drinks, good company and conversation always provided.

Follow the Society of Editors (NSW) on Twitter: http://twitter.com/ SocEdNSW

NEW MEMBERS

Nicola Wilson
Geof Barrington
Ally Chumley

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.
PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007; Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999
www.editorsnsw.com.

Blue Pencil

Editor: Denise Holden
Assistants: Nicky Shortridge, Moira Elliott, Catherine Etteridge and Julie Harders.
Printer: Complete Design, Marrickville
Published: 11 issues a year (combined January/February issue)

Your comments and contributions are welcome. Mail them to the Editor, *Blue Pencil*, Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007, or email the Editor at bluepencil@editorsnsw.com.

Copy deadline for the June issue is Tuesday, 8 June 2010.

The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or insert, are those of individual authors, not of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Advertising rates

Full page $375; half page $200; one-third page $125; quarter page $100 one-sixth page, $75 (half of one column). Inserts: $200 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 400. Please note that the committee reserves the right to decide whether advertisements are appropriate for this newsletter.

Membership

Membership of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. is open to anyone working as an editor for publication (print or electronic documents) and anyone who supports the society's aims. Membership is available in different categories.

Membership runs for a calendar year. The 2010 fees are $75 for ordinary member or professional member renewals; $85 for new professional members; $55 for associate member renewals or $65 for new associate members. Interested organisations can become corporate associates for $400 per year.

To obtain a membership application form visit the Society of Editors (NSW) website—www.editorsnsw.com, phone (02) 9294 4999 or write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007.

Listing in the *Editorial Services Directory*

The *Editorial Services Directory* is available online at www.editorsnsw.com/esd. New listings and updates can be added quarterly as follows:
• online only: July (deadline 30 June); October (deadline 30 September)
• print and online: January (deadline 31 December); April (deadline 31 March).
The cost is $40 per year ($20 for new listings received from April to September) in addition to the fee for membership of the society. New listings should be submitted using a template available from the administration manager at membership@ editorsnsw.com.

Committee meetings

All members are welcome to attend the society's committee meetings, generally held on the second Tuesday of each month. Please contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.
2010 COMMITTEE

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2010 Workshops
Workshops planned for later this year:
• Plain English
• Punctuation
• Advanced Copy Editing
• Editing Adult Fiction
• Publishing and Editing Children's Books (Older children and young adults)

Professional development
Manuscript Assessment and Reports
Date: Thursday, 19 August 2010
Time: 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
Presenters: Mark Macleod and Jude McGee
Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney
Cost: $195 for members, $290 for non-members (includes lunch and refreshments)
Please register by Thursday, 29 July 2010.

How do editors and publishers decide which manuscripts to accept for publication, which to send back for more work and which to reject? And how do they deliver the news tactfully and honestly? This interactive workshop with two publishers will introduce the skills needed to assess manuscripts and to write a reader's report for agents, publishers and authors. The day will be divided between adult fiction (Jude McGee) and children's books (Mark Macleod).

Mark Macleod is a highly respected children's editor and publisher. He has been children's publisher for Random House, ABC Books and Hachette Livre. Jude McGee is an editor and publisher experienced in adult fiction and non-fiction. Most recently she has been a publisher at Random House and Allen & Unwin.

Grammar Essentials

| Book early to avoid missing out on this popular course |

Date: Saturday, 4 September 2010
Time: 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
Presenters: Pam Peters, Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, Macquarie University.
Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney
Cost: $195 for members, $290 for non-members (includes lunch and refreshments)

Editors often feel that they need more grammar, but how much is enough? What they need for the purposes of professional editing is enough grammar to:
• make the most of dictionaries, style manuals and other language references
• understand and explain the variable points of current English usage
• capitalise on language resources for cohesive writing
• enlarge their repertoire for managing stylistic change.

The workshop is designed to be interactive and to allow for discussion of the ins and outs of usage as they arise.

Workshop information

Registration
To register for workshops use the enclosed form or download one from the society's website and send it to the administration manager, Anna Rauls. Please note that workshops require a minimum of 10 registrations by the closing date to proceed. The society reserves the right to cancel workshops if there are insufficient enrolments.

Payment for workshops
To secure a place you must send payment with your registration form. Workshops fill quickly and we often have people on a waitlist for courses. Please contact the treasurer if you need a tax invoice.

Regional members
Regional members living more than 200 km from Sydney may receive a 40 per cent discount on the cost of the society's workshops (excluding computer-based workshops).