TCANZ Writers' Forum 2008 - Presenters

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Alison Reynolds

Alison Reynolds is the project manager of the Information Design Centre NZ (IDCNZ) and the Principal Academic Staff member of the online Graduate Diploma of Information Design (GDID) at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology.

Alison has presented at seminars and conferences in NZ, Australia, the US, China, India, and Canada. In 2007, she won the STC Gould Award for teaching excellence.

Dorit Hahn

Dorit works as a Consultant at TACTICS Ltd. She also works as a language tutor for German at Victoria University. Dorit holds a Masters degree in German as a Foreign Language, American Studies and Intercultural Business Communication and is currently studying towards a PhD, investigating reading strategies in a foreign language.

Duncan Sarkies

Duncan Sarkies is best known as the co-writer, with his brother Robert Sarkies, of the hugely successful 1999 film Scarfies. Scarfies was shown at numerous international film festivals including Cannes and Sundance, and on its release in New Zealand quickly became one of the country's highest grossing local films.

Duncan was awarded the 1998 Louis Johnson New Writers' Bursary. His first book is Stray Thoughts and Nose Bleeds (1999), a collection of prose pieces, only some of which fit the description of 'short stories'. Others more closely resemble scripts for a stand-up comedy routine. All are characterised by an eccentric black humour, bizarre and poignant by turns, which can leave the reader (or audience) wondering whether the author is laughing with them or at them.

Emily Cotlier

Emily Cotlier is a Senior Technical Author with the Wellington R&D location of Harris Stratex Networks, Inc. With a Master's degree in Scientific and Technical Communication from Drexel University, she has 15 years of experience in IT, scientific, and engineering communications. For the past five years, managing localizations and translations has been part of her work as a technical communicator.

Gilles Rabaud

Gilles Rabaud is a senior consultant with [simpl](#) who has strong and proven experience in assisting organisations align their business processes to information systems and business strategy. He heads up the Process Optimisation business unit at simpl. Gilles has worked in the IT Industry for more than 20 years, initially as a developer, then as a systems analyst, project leader, IS manager and consultant.

His career has incorporated professional services consulting and delivery, with a strong focus on technology-enabled process improvement. Gilles has lived in New Zealand for almost 10 years. With his wife and 2 children, he has adopted the Kiwi lifestyle wholeheartedly, enjoying sailing, fishing and tramping.

"I'm driven to assisting customers achieve their business objectives through the smart and pragmatic use of Information Technology."

Maryanne Cathro

Maryanne Cathro came to the field of technical communication in 1997 via a circuitous professional route. Since then she has worked documenting software systems, mechanical and electronic products, business systems and processes and has facilitated several major training projects involving up to 3,000 users for a range of private and public companies and government departments. Her particular area of interest as a TC is the impact that communication has on the efficacy of business and business systems and how to make that communication better.

Matt Armstrong

Author-it's Sales Director for Asia Pacific, Matt works with international organisations to re-structure and manage their documentation, content management and localisation projects using the Author-it toolset. With a background in online learning Matt has helped companies gain improvements in their internal processes that knit together with their technology investments to reduce risk, cost and redundancy. Client industries include manufacturing, banking, health, government, education, law, and technology. Matt peppers his calendar with speaking engagements and is a very approachable guy with a big bag of chocolate fish.

Patrick Hofmann (keynote speaker - Day 2)

Trained as a technical writer though working as a visual interaction designer, Patrick Hofmann has turned into 'a man of few words'. For over thirteen years, this vibrant Canadian has helped clients like Sky, HP, Nokia, Motorola, Philips, FedEx, Logitech, and Netgear improve the usability of their products--often by visualising their online, hardcopy, and interface information.

His award-winning work and undying passion for visual language send him around the world, as he teaches companies how to use pictures to improve communication. Having recently developed the post-graduate Information Design curriculum at CPIT in Christchurch, New Zealand, Patrick now works at Google in Sydney, Australia, and soon hopes to complete his first book on visual instruction.

Philip Holder

Philip Holder became a Technical Writer accidentally at Telecom NZ in 1996, and subsequently moved into Business Analysis, particularly information management processes. Previously he has operated 70-ton earthmovers and sharemilked a 200-cow dairy farm.

His experience ranges from technical manuals and CHM Help through usability testing, process improvement and legislative reviews to ITIL implementations, Intranet improvements and Records Management reviews. His recent musings about a Masters in Information Management seem unlikely to eventuate given his chronic procrastination. Outside of work he enjoys sailing and plotting family adventures. He has recently completed a Certificate in Theology.

Pip Fowler

Pip Fowler is a Principal Lecturer in Communication at the Open Polytechnic where she is an e-learning advisor and teaches Writing for the Web and Professional and Technical Writing. Pip is also a co-director of Lasso Limited, through which she makes and helps people make digital stories.

Robin van der Breggen

Robin van der Breggen has been Managing Director of Mavim New Zealand since February 2006. Robin originally joined Mavim at its Netherlands headquarters in 2005 as Sales and Marketing Manager and was responsible for migrating users to Mavim's latest generation of the software. Based in Tauranga, he has been driving sales of the company's software which enables business and government departments to effectively capture, design, maintain, and communicate organisational processes with a clear and consistent approach.

Robin holds a Diploma from Intermanagement College in The Hague and Marketing A & B from the NIMA (Official Marketing Institute in Utrecht). He enjoys being in contact with various organisations and helping them to realise their issues and challenges around increasing efficiency and productivity by improving their information structure and accessibilty. Mavim is developing a platform with their partners like SIMPL, to support businesses with these challenges.

Rowdy Bristol

Rowdy Bristol has worked in the mining industry around the world for over 20 years. He holds degrees in Engineering, Surveying, and a Masters degree in Geostatistics. He has held positions as a mining engineer, geologist, and surveyor on mine sites in North America, as well as a mining engineering consultant at many mines around the world. Rowdy has been with Gemcom Software (previously Surpac Minex Group) for 13 years, and has worked in technical support, software testing, and most recently, documentation. From his firsthand experience using, training, and testing mining software, Rowdy has gained a practical insight into the requirements for help systems and training documents.

Ruth Hamilton

Ruth Hamilton is the director of WritersInc Ltd, a successful documentation company that recently celebrated its 10th birthday. Ruth has extensive commercial experience having worked as a documentation consultant, technical writer and trainer for a wide variety of organisations.

She is highly regarded as a trainer. She has lectured degree students in Technical Writing, and Developing Online and Web Documentation at UNITEC. She is a certified Information Mapping® trainer, and she designs and delivers customised courses for industry.

Tony Self (keynote speaker - Day 1)

Tony Self is a founding partner in HyperWrite Pty Ltd, which was the first hypertext document development company in Australia. Tony has over 25 years documentation experience, including 15 years with online and hypertext documents in WinHelp and HTML formats. He has managed large online documentation projects in Australia and New Zealand. Tony has undertaken roles in technology training design and delivery, and computer-based training development, in Australia and Ireland.

He has spoken at conferences in Australia, the United States, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. In addition to consulting, Tony lectures in technical communication at Swinburne University. He is on the Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) Technical Committee and has recently completed a Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.