

Planning a major document project

Prepared and presented to
SeniorNet Writing and Publishing Group
by Lindsay Rollo, August 2013

Believe it or Not

Start the project by thinking
about the end product

Nobody writes in a vacuum

Every project has a physical or electronic form as the end product:

Letter or email message or diary note

A4 spiral bound item

Family history or memoire in book/booklet form

Quarterly club bulletin distributed electronically as

PDF or word processor document or a blog on the web

Every end product has to be
assessed against these criteria

Audience :: Number of copies :: Distribution

The audience has a direct influence on the number of copies required and the method of distribution

A4-size documents, less than 50–60 pp., spiral bound, self-printed or bureau produced, distributed by hand, post and courier are usually an acceptable cost to be born by the author.

PDF electronic distribution to club or association members is largely costless (except for the editor's time and frustrations) regardless of number distributed. The same applies to long .PDF documents.

Distributing printed books incurs charges for production and distribution. Consider product physical size as it affects paper size and costs and packaging (envelope or carton) size and charges.

Page Size

While A4 is the national common paper size, it is not an attractive size for reading long documents.

Go to a public library, or the National Library, and look for examples of items similar to what you plan to do.

Then check with a printer(s) about available paper sizes that will have the least cut to waste.

Having settled on a paper size get a modest quantity cut for page test purposes with your own printer.

Paper Type

If you are self publishing consider using something other than photocopy paper.

It has a relatively rough surface and does not hold detail well.

Offset paper has a smoother surface.

Coated (shiny surface) papers hold detail well but can be tiring to read in quantity. This paper type also influences type face choice.

Page Format

Don't use word processor default format settings:
they are almost certainly unsuitable for long documents

Think about alternatives to A4 single column format.

Very few publishers use other than traditional book sizes. Why ? Convenient heft to hold and economy.

Landscape format, with two equal or unequal columns can provide attractive, flexible presentations. Again look about you to see what might work for your project.

Type face and size

There are other type faces than Times NR and Arial

For long documents, use a serif type. It's not an accident that newspapers, quality magazine, and book publishers all almost invariably use serif type for the text.

Most word processors provide at least two serif typefaces

More can be found on the web:

<http://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/list/style/Serif/50/50>

[http://openfontlibrary.org/en/search?category= serif](http://openfontlibrary.org/en/search?category=serif)

How to choose your font

Open an A4 page in landscape mode with minimum margins

Format for two columns, 1cm gutter

Create a 7–10 line block of standard text

Paste the text four times on a page, well separated

Now select each block in turn and apply a trial font to each block

Hold the printed sheet at arm's length to view

Compare the sharpness of the text examples and their density

Check the differences in the number of words turned over to a new line — this is a measure of economy

For the reader's benefit — choose clarity over economy

Crimson

From these sources I gradually adopted visual rhetoric as the typographic equivalent to the changes of pace, of voice, of volume, of asides, that characterize good public speaking. The format of a contents page is ideally a good indication of the structure of a document. The choice and format of the headings, subheadings, indenting, and other devices are valuable indications on the page of the relationships between the elements of an extended text. These visual signals in text correspond to the verbal and physical gestures of a speaker and constitute the visual rhetoric of the document.

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Libre Baskerville

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PermiumSerif

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Timos

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Four samples from the *Font Squirrel* site, applied to a uniform text block.

The first number below each block is the number of lines in the block;

the second value is the average number of characters in complete line.

Type Size, Line Length, & Leading

These three elements determine the legibility of your document

Single column line length about 68–72 characters, including spaces

Multiple columns between 40 to 60 characters, including spaces

Adjust type size to achieve these formats: use half points

Leading (line spacing) is adjusted for all fonts to provide visual cohesion between lines in paragraphs:

Too much: the eye loses connection with the next line

Too little: the eye cannot easily separate out the next line

Illustrations

The number, nature and size of illustrations clearly influence planning.

A few black and white or colour illustrations will not prove too difficult to handle

If there are a lot of small illustrations, typically head and shoulders of family members or sports persons in a club history, consider the advantages of using a two-column display
If the project is to be commercially printed colour images will need to be converted to from RGB to CMYK format — incurring a separate charge.

In-text image location signal

< Uncle Bill homecoming.jpg about here >

Beware program image defaults

Default settings for captions are usually aimed at formal documents with numbered captions.

Frequently the defaults invoke a different typeface to that chosen for the text. The second typeface may not fit well with your text face, both in size and character.

Look carefully at the default styles and modify them or create new ones to achieve visual harmony between text and captions.

Be consistent in the text wrap around images: usually no wrap will be better than side wrap.

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Head and shoulders
Uncle Bill Smith
UBS.jpg

Uncle Bill Smith at Burnham Military Camp, Christmas 1939

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Using text boxes to indicate size and location of images helps decision making about page appearance without inflating file size too much

Family Group on Porch to welcome Uncle Bill Smith 1946

Welcome UBS.jpg

An example:

of a larger image in a
double column format
and

using a footnote to reduce
detail in a caption

Welcome home party for Uncle Bill Smith at 41 Princess Street in September 1949.

*He's the only one in uniform; Aunt Joan is on the far left.**

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*L to R: Aunt Joan, Sybil, Sam, Uncle Bob, Peter, Uncle Bill. Bill Jnr, Wendy, Aunt Peggy, Francis, Father.



Considerable judgement must be used in selecting wrap options:

Square and contour wrap can create near unreadable lines if the image occupies a majority of the width of the text block

Behind and in front of text can make text obscure caused by contrast issues.

Depending on the proportions of image to text block width, wrapping text around an image may create undesirable short lines with poor inter-word spaces.

Practical Issues: File Management

Set up a master folder for the project

Create sub-folders for preliminary pages, each Chapter or section, appendices, etc

If appropriate, create sub-sub-folders for each chapter or section: one for text; one for images. Use in-text location signals to cut down file size.

Substitute pre-sized images for location signals at the final stages of assembly, before creating an index.





Far left: working files for each chapter, with code letter to indicate completed checks, e.g. spell check; double word spaces; en dash for hyphen in values, etc.

Centre: Master chapter files ready for printing

Left: progressive amendment of files for web display.

Similar set of files for amendment in the PDF folder

Practical issues: **Styles**

Styles are preset design elements

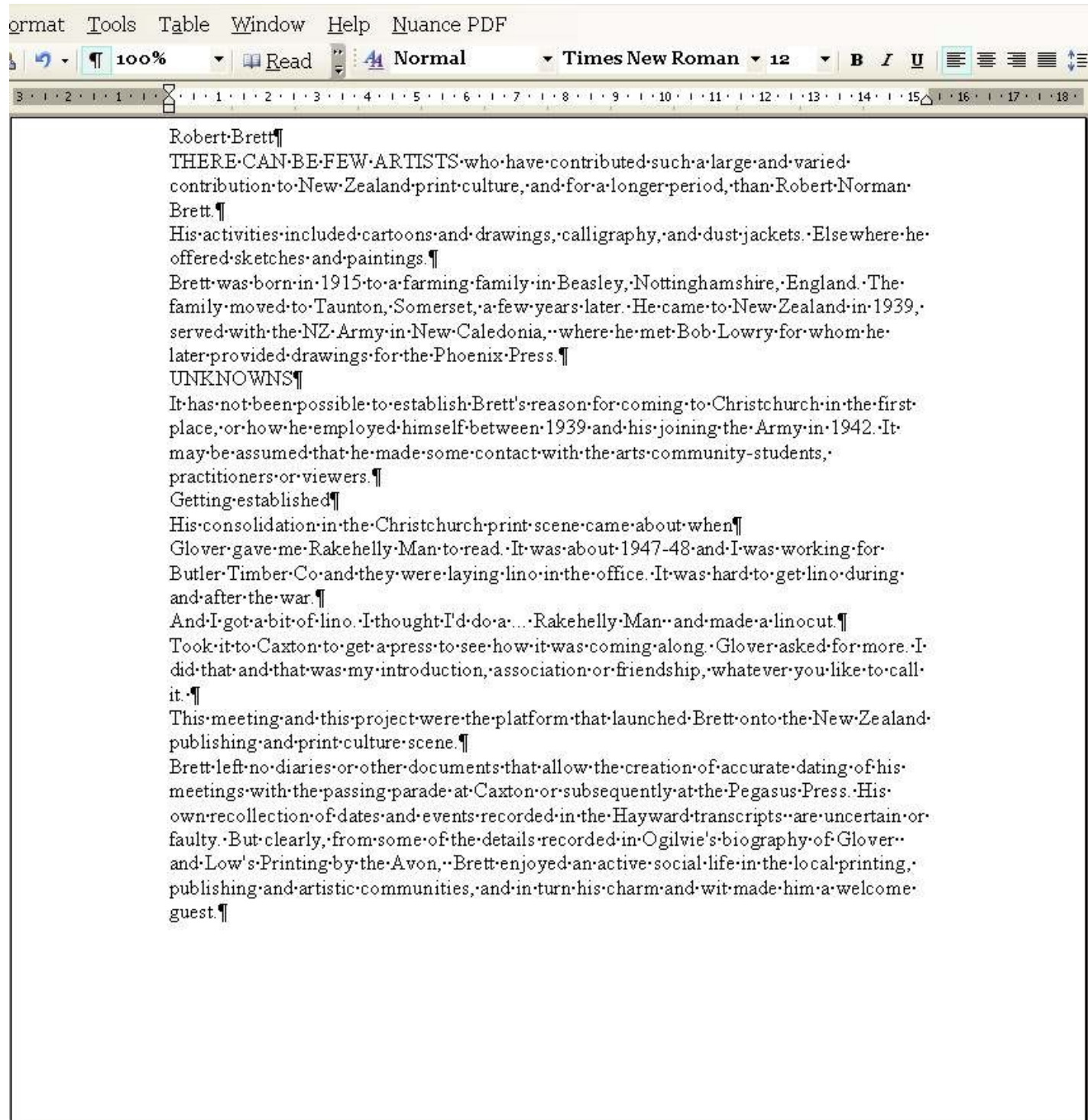
Using styles ensures consistency throughout a project.

Chapter heading styles can include Table of Contents codes that include page numbers, etc.

Similarly centre or shoulder heading styles can be integrated as sub entries in Tables of Content

Image styles can control wrap, caption format and font attributes.

Spending time working out styles beforehand saves time and frustration, particularly in big projects.



Unformatted text material saved as ASCII plain text.

Robert Brett

THERE ARE FEW ARTISTS who have contributed such a large and varied contribution to New Zealand print culture, and for a longer period, than Robert Norman Brett.

His activities included cartoons and drawings, calligraphy, and dust jackets. Elsewhere he offered sketches and paintings.

Brett was born in 1915 to a farming family in Beasley, Nottinghamshire, England. The family moved to Taunton, Somerset, a few years later. He came to New Zealand in 1939, served with the NZ Army in New Caledonia, where he met Bob Lowry for whom he later provided drawings for the Phoenix Press.

UNKNOWN

It has not been possible to establish Brett's reason for coming to Christchurch in the first place, or how he employed himself between 1939 and his joining the Army in 1942. It may be assumed that he made some contact with the arts community—students, practitioners or viewers.

Getting established

His consolidation in the Christchurch print scene came about when

Glover gave me Rakehelly Man to read. It was about 1947–48 and I was working for Butler Timber Co and they were laying lino in the office.

It was hard to get lino during and after the war.

And I got a bit of lino. I thought I'd do a... Rakehelly Man and made a linocut.

Took it to Caxton to get a press to see how it was coming along. Glover asked for more. I did that and that was my introduction, association or friendship, whatever you like to call it.

This meeting and this project were the platform that launched Brett onto the New Zealand publishing and print culture scene.

Brett left no diaries or other documents that allow the creation of accurate dating of his meetings with the passing parade at Caxton or subsequently at the Pegasus Press. His own recollection of dates and events recorded in the Hayward transcripts are uncertain or faulty. But clearly, from some of the details recorded in Ogilvie's biography of Glover and Lowry's *Printing by the A*

Chapter heading

Opening paragraph of new chapter

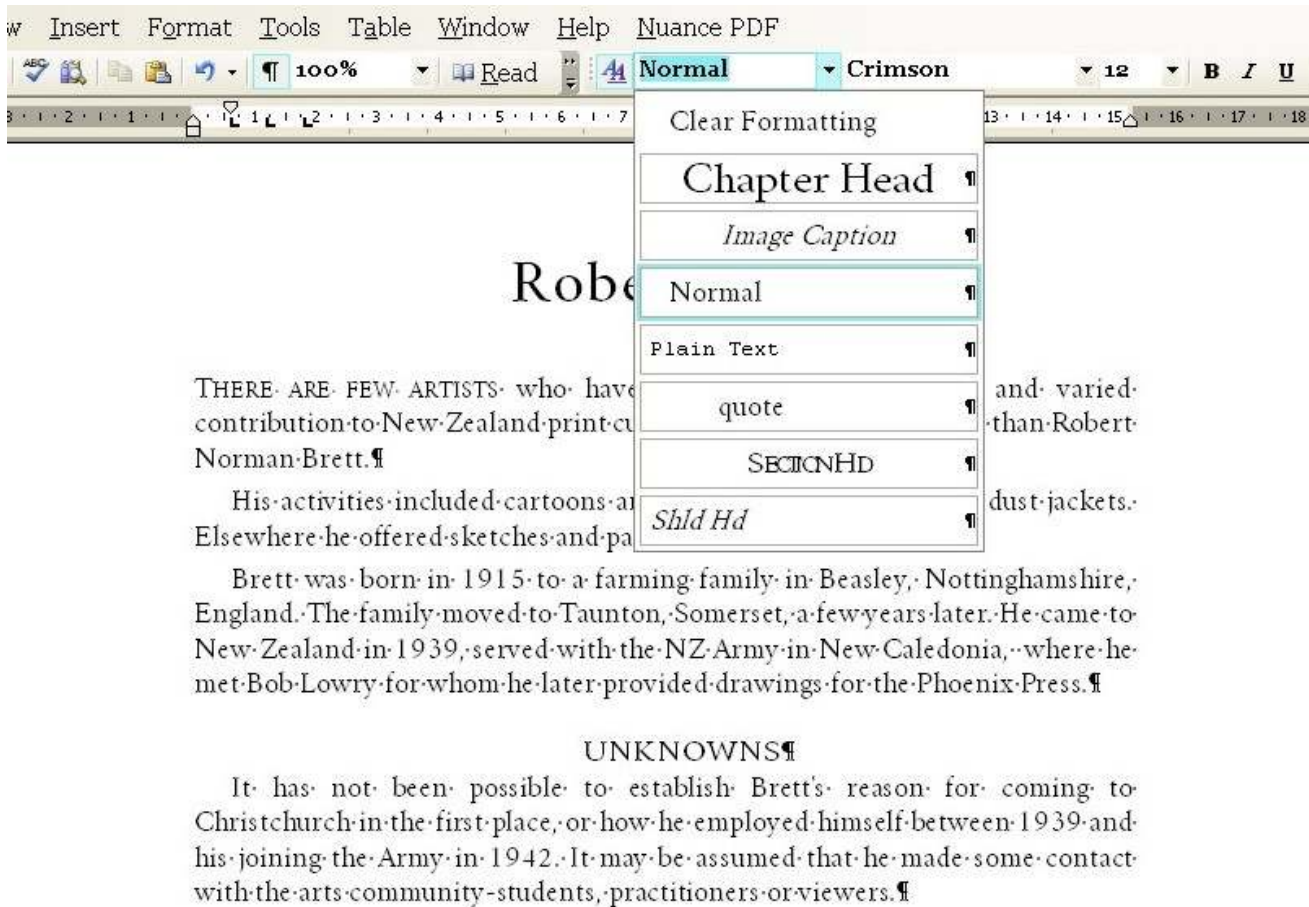
Normal

Centre headings

Shoulder heading

Quotation

Six styles applied to the plain text in the previous view



Note: The normal style will automatically be applied to any typed text. It would only be applied to inserted text that is intended to be part of the main narrative.

Select the appropriate text and click the relevant style from the drop down list.

Styles are easy to create and can include position and spacing elements

Sanity Saving & Frustration Avoidance

When you stop to think,
or the phone rings
or there is any other distraction
get in the habit of striking

Ctrl + S

to save your current work.

Set up a backup system for all
files to an external storage device