

LAYERS - simplified presentation by Janet Hickey

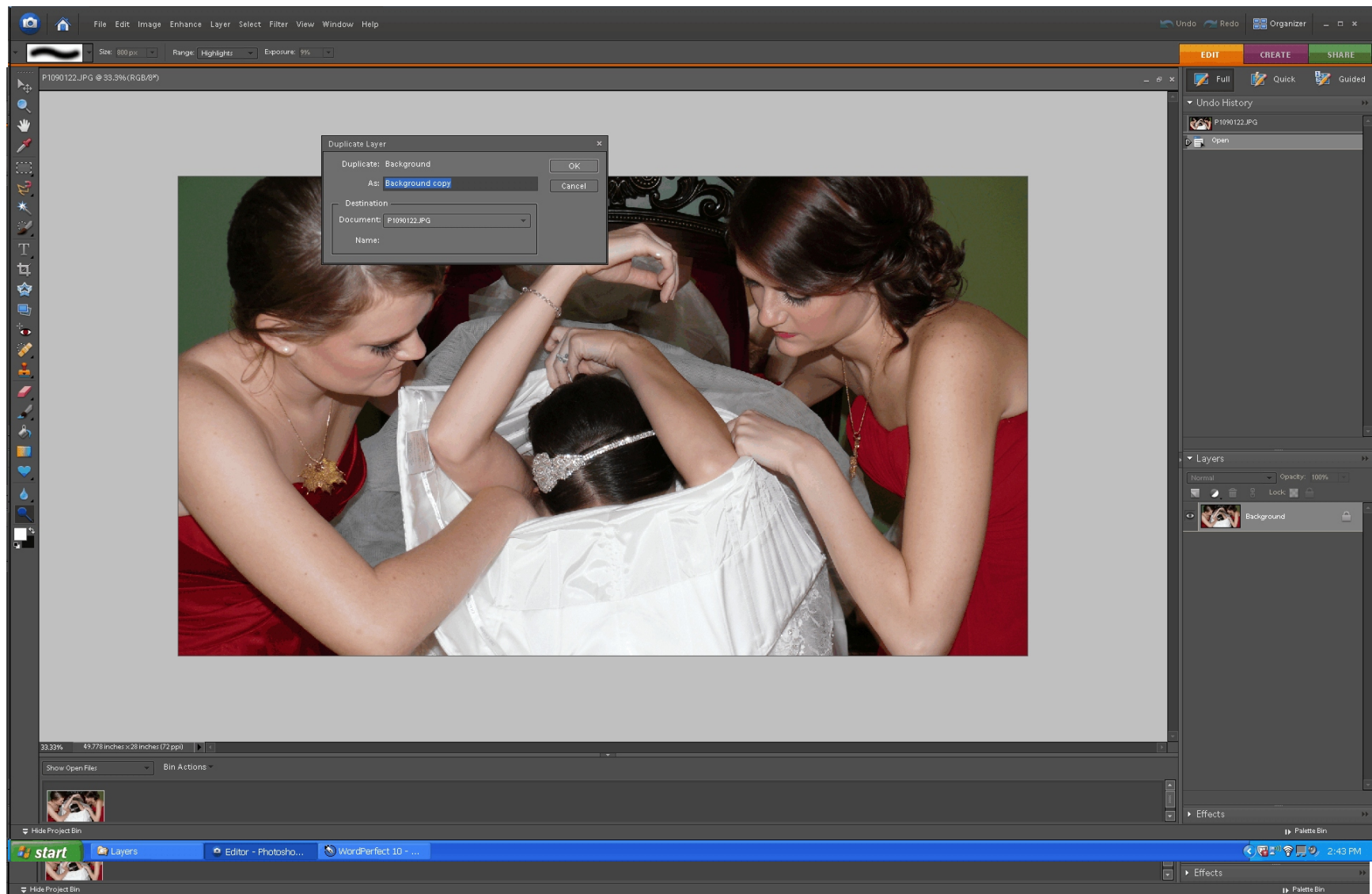
Layers are used for many purposes. Professionals use layers extensively for color corrections, adding additional textures and elements into the image. This tutorial, however, is very simplified and basic.

Open your image.

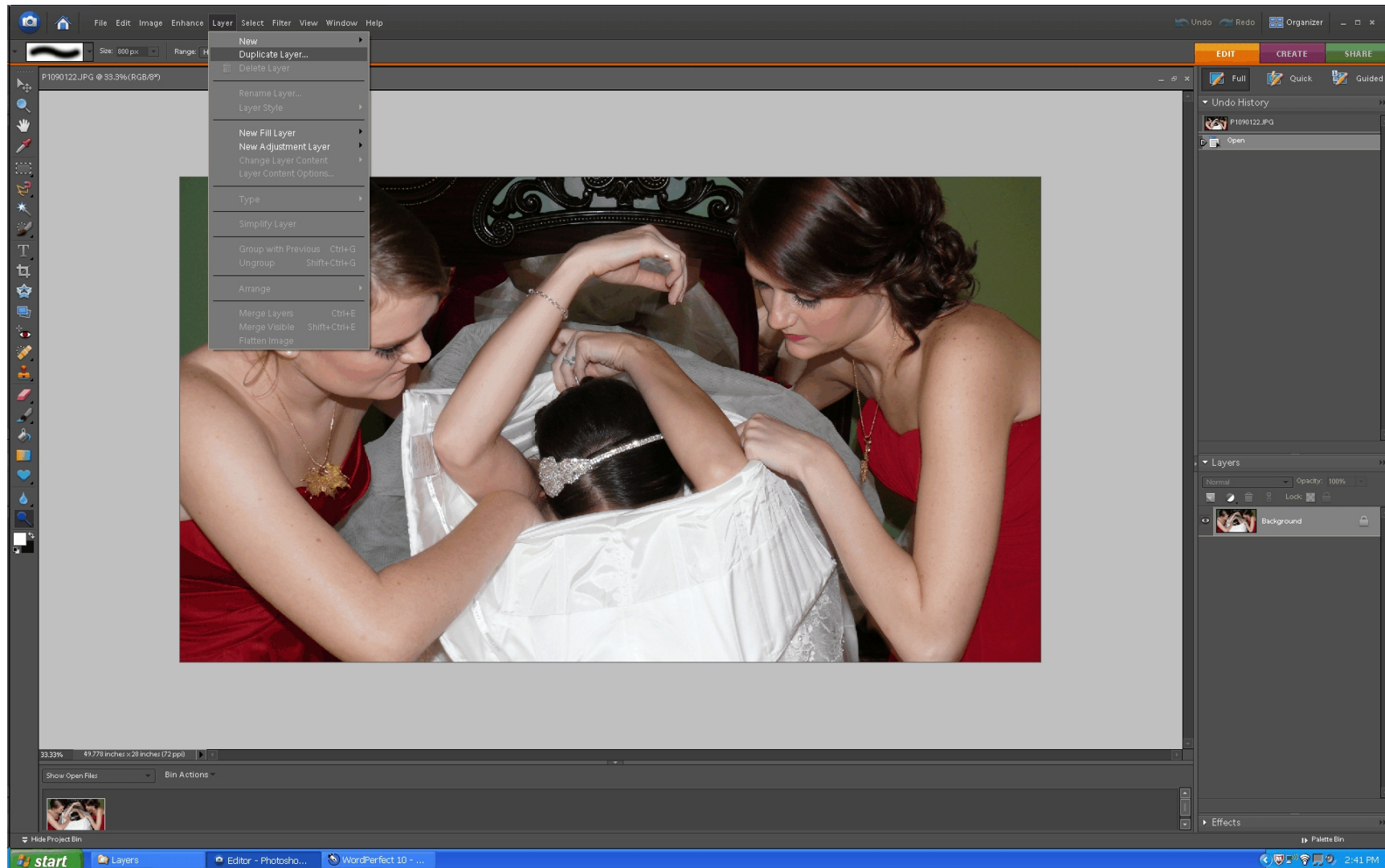
We'll start with a common problem. Often when taking an image, the 'white' is overexposed. If you're not using RAW, and you are using JPG and a fill flash, you might find that 'white' can get close to overexposure. If the white has not been totally blown out, you can usually recover some details.

Create a duplicate Layer (Layer>Duplicate).

You can name the layer(s), if you intend to save the layer(s) for future modification, otherwise hit “OK”.

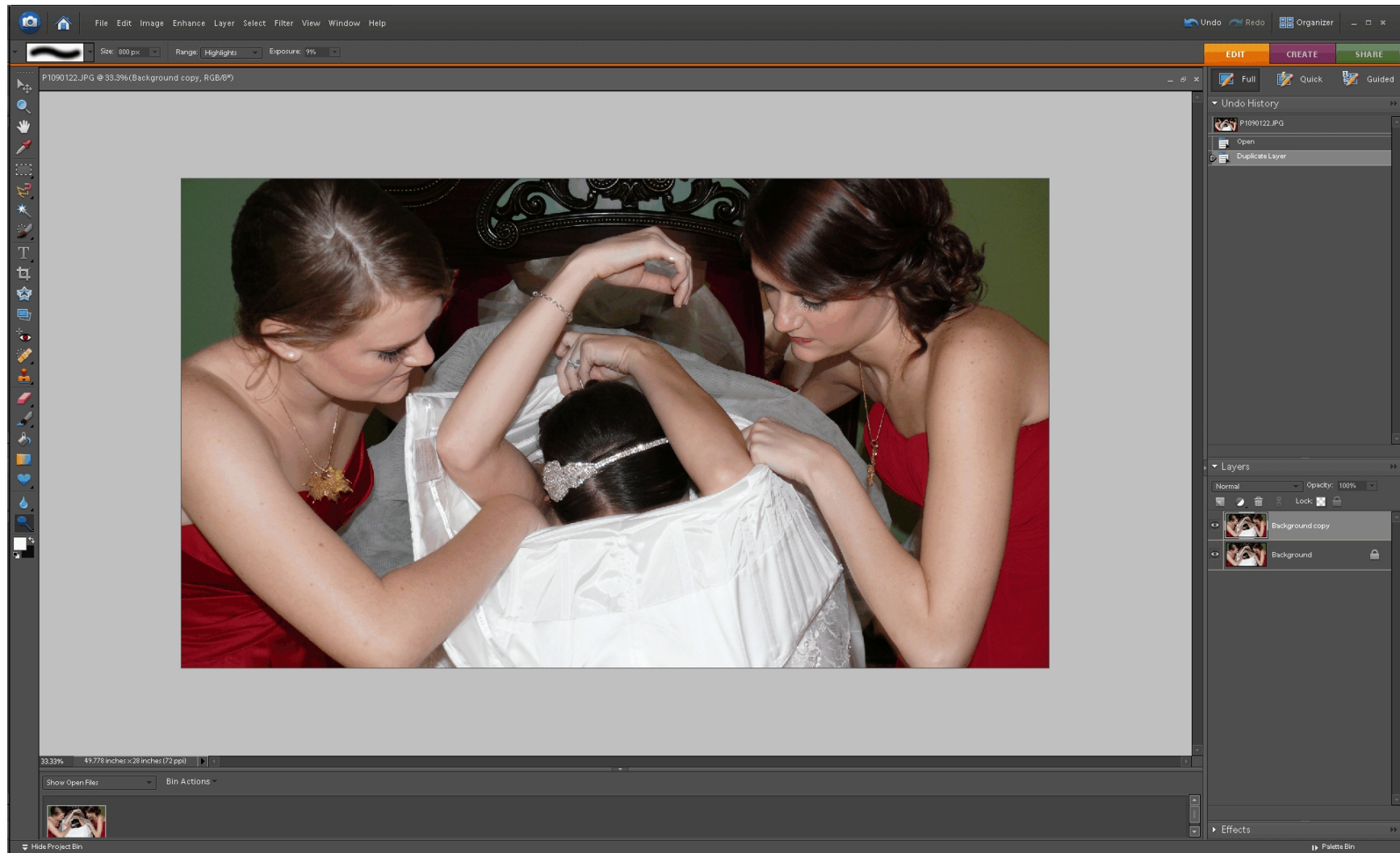


You will see on the right, two layers. The background copy-original is on the bottom and the copy on the top. The highlighted layer



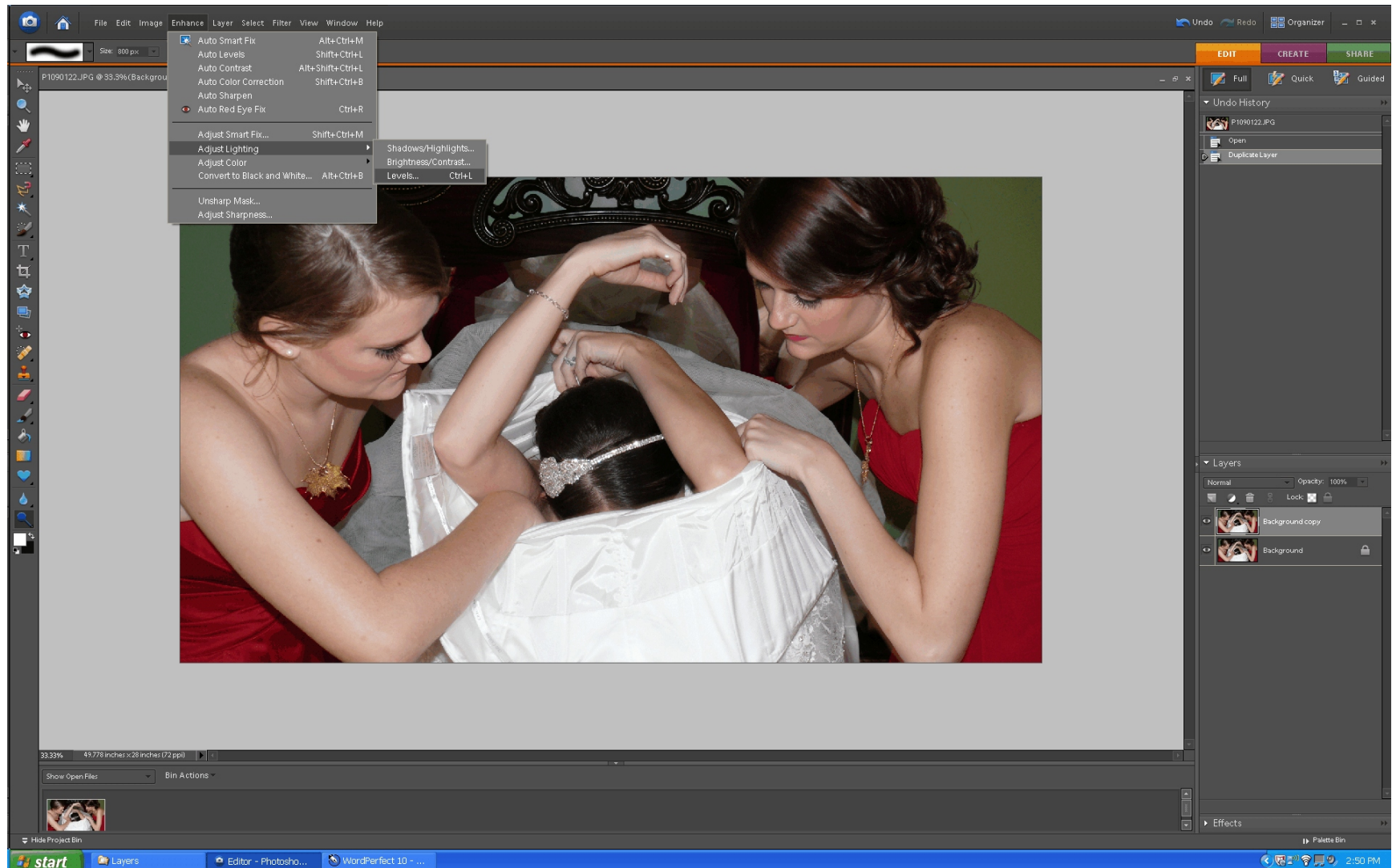
is the one that you will work on.

We want to recover highlights. You work on the top layer. Go to the toolbars at the top and choose Enhance>Adjust



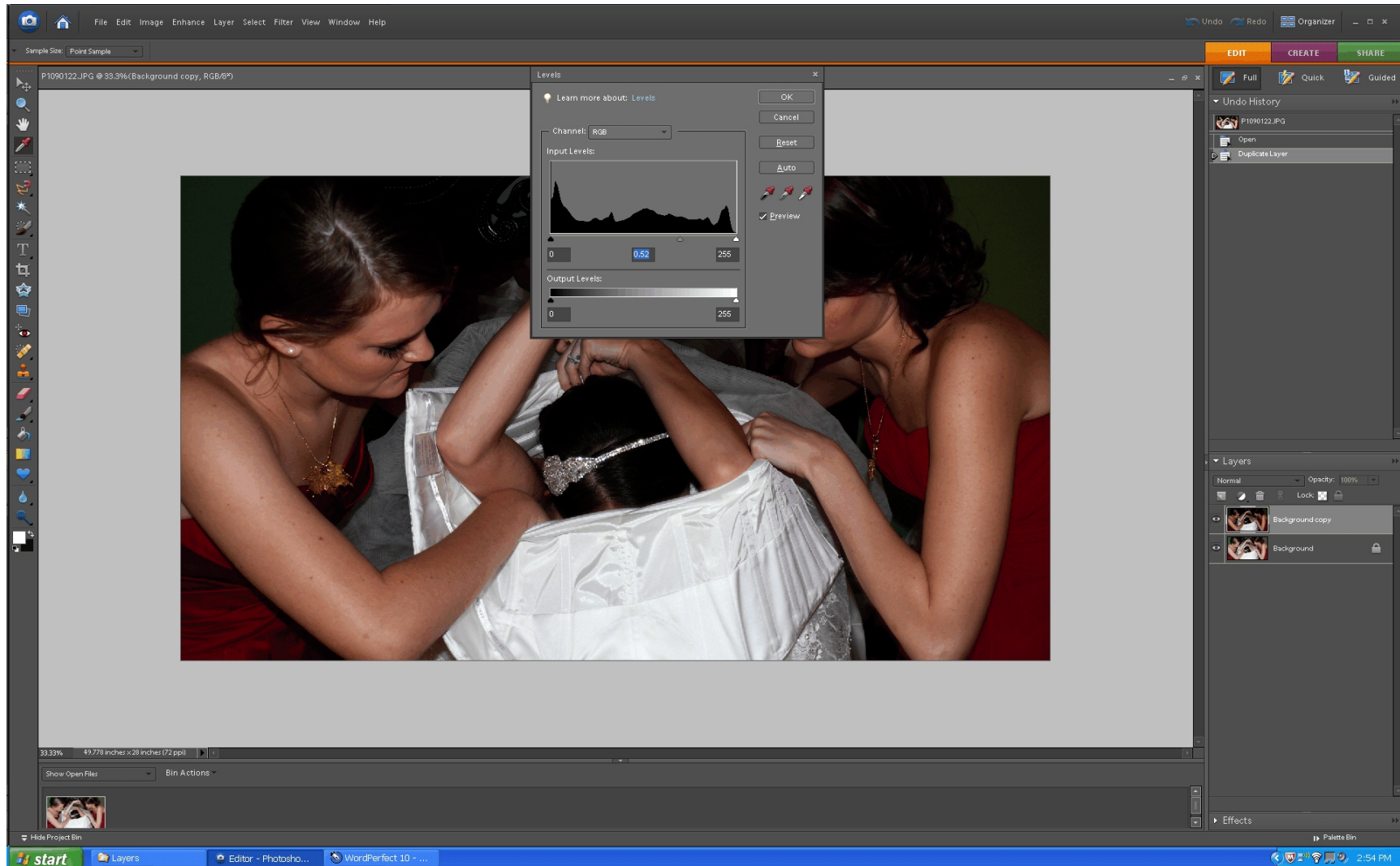
Lighting>Levels.

The top layer is adjusted by using Levels to recover the white highlights. Although the rest of the image is also darkened, we can

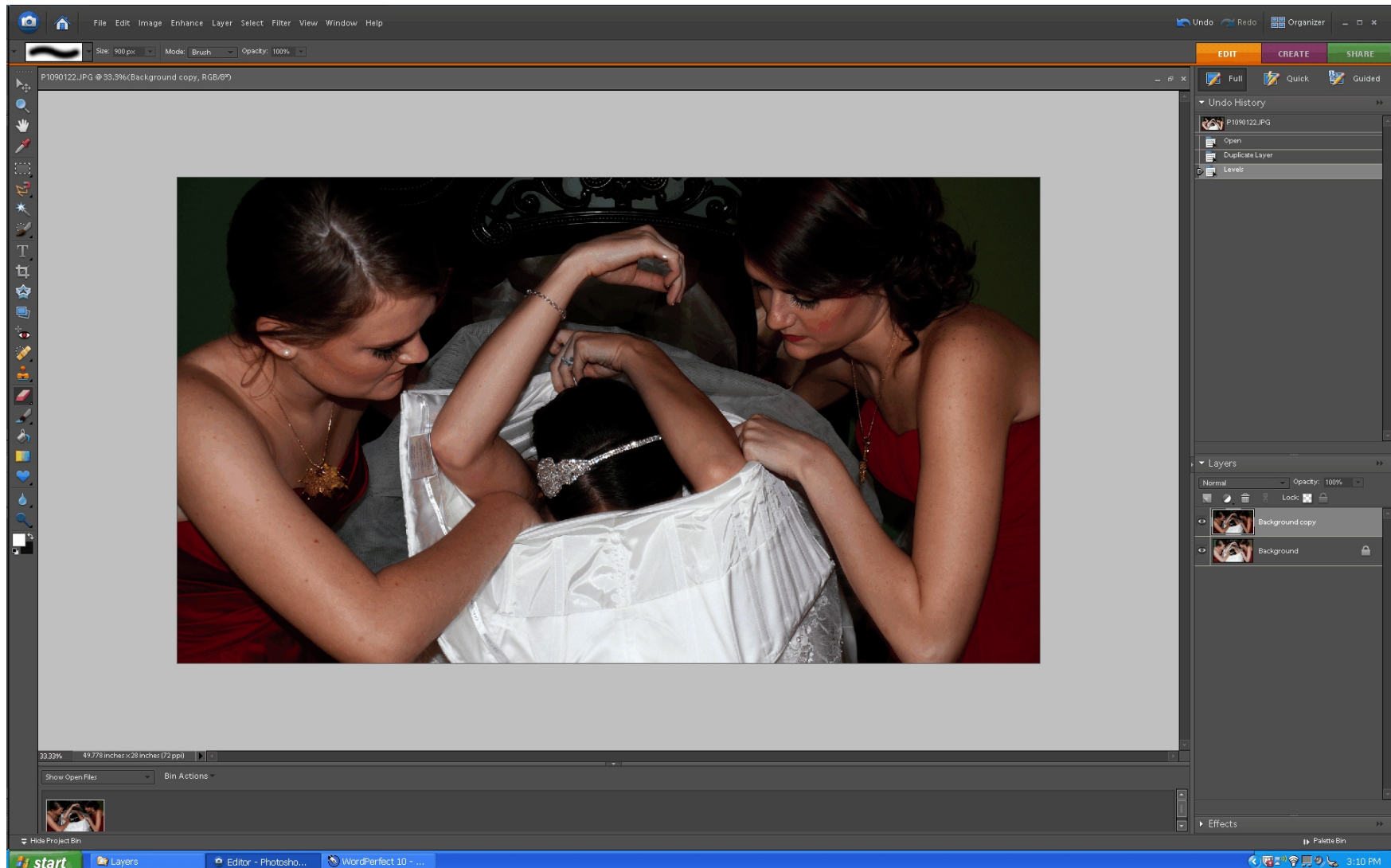


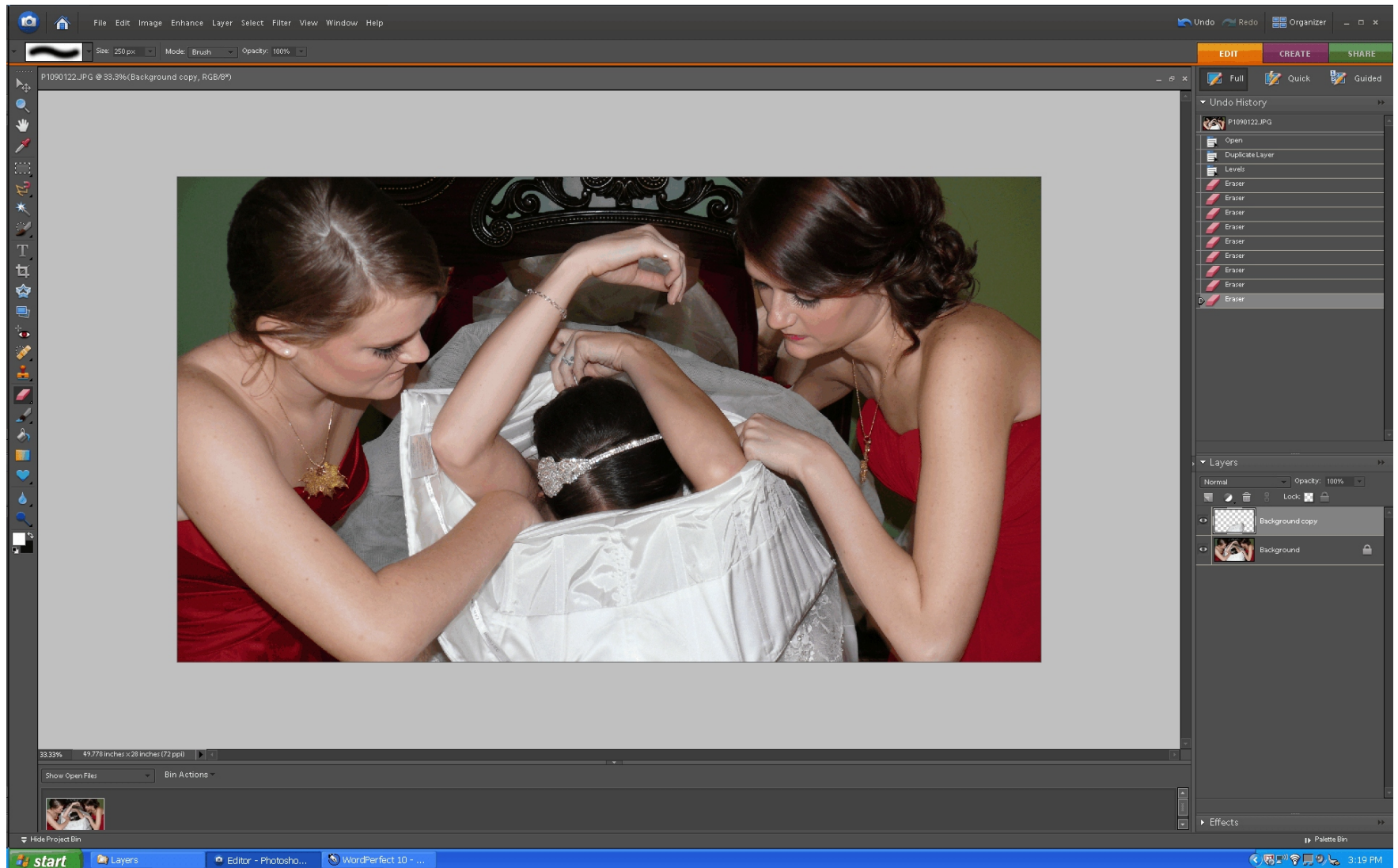
erase portions of the copy to bring the background back.  
Move the middle bar to the right to darken the white dress.

Choose the eraser tool (left toolbar or where ever you've placed it). At the top you have brush size, hard and soft brush settings and

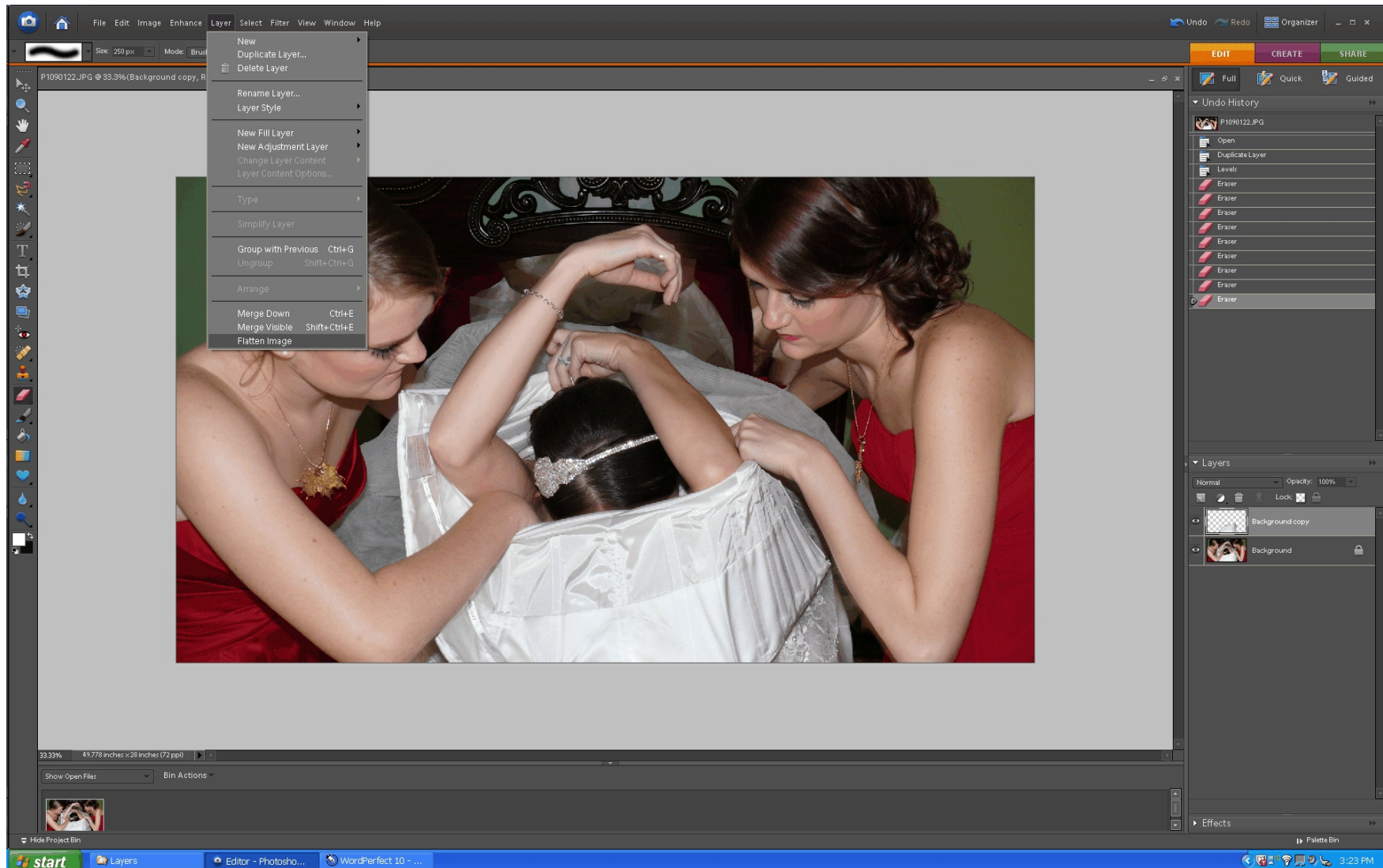


opacity settings. I've chosen a soft edge brush at 100%; I'll be changing the size of the brush while erasing the top layer of this image. Using varying sized soft eraser brushes, I've erased the top layer to reveal the properly exposed bridesmaids in the background layer.





You can see on the layer palette, the portion of the image that still shows the dress (the other parts are erased). It's time to combine these two images. Since I do not intend to keep the top layer on file, I flatten the layers into one single layer (Layer>Flatten Layer).



Now that you have one layer, you can continue to address sharpening, cropping/resizing, adjusting color, etc.

Final image...

