

2021 CBCA NSW Branch Annual Report

Liz Bowring, President

In the spirit of reconciliation, CBCA NSW Branch acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people today. We acknowledge their culture of storytelling and honour this tradition through the work of CBCA NSW Branch.

The highlight of the 2021 year for me has been the way in which the volunteer members of our NSW Branch and our Sub-branches have produced outstanding outcomes in response to the challenges of a year of uncertainty and lockdowns. It may seem strange, but in many ways the challenges and restrictions of 2021 have been a catalyst for CBCA NSW Branch. During 2021 we met many challenges with the question 'does this fit with the purpose of our organisation?'. We have challenged 'what we do' and 'the way we do things' and we have searched for evidence and found recommendations of best practice.

As you know, the role of CBCA NSW Branch is to support the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, Notables, Shortlist and to promote CBCA Book Week.

'We strive to achieve a positive social impact by engaging the community with quality literature for young Australians.'

To do this, we provide services to our members through our programme of events, our newsletters and our website and social media, thus nurturing a vital and dynamic community promoting quality Australian books to young readers.

To assist funding our programs we have obtained registered charity status. Initially the Register of Cultural Organisations informed us that CBCA NSW Branch had been approved Deductible Gift Recipient Status, which meant that donors to CBCA NSW Branch would be eligible to receive tax deductions on donations from 6 July 2021 when giving to our Donations Fund. This was followed by confirmation of our Registered Charity status. The application process has taken a couple of years and has been very complex and I thank those on the committee (and who were on the committee) for pursuing this. There is a 'donate' button on the home page of the website to assist those wishing to do so.

The wonderful *Old Worlds, New Worlds, Other Worlds: Stories, Poetry and Plays for Children* anthology was another highlight of the year. To see an eager Sub-branch come up with an idea to support local writers and illustrators, put out an expression of interest to all our NSW members and receive an overwhelming response with works submitted within a month was truly amazing. With teamwork and expertise, the group had printed copies on hand to be launched by our Patrons at the State Library at the end of May, with over 100 excited members and their families in attendance.

We have welcomed the formation of another Sub-branch in the vital and creative Canterbury Bankstown Inner West area. It is gratifying to see our NSW Branch members identifying how they can support the purpose of CBCA through local programs and events. I encourage members living in the area to contact the organising committee via the CBCA NSW Branch website. We have improved communication between the Branch and Sub-branch level with the appointment of a liaison officer early in the year.

We applaud the moves by the National Board in responding to our Branch concerns. We felt we were losing ownership of the CBCA Book Week theme, as other unaligned businesses produced and sold merchandise and

other content in competition with CBCA. Holding and owning our brand has become a priority at the National level, allowing CBCA the first opportunity to promote Book Week themes and associated activities.

The financial impact of COVID in 2020, and continuing lockdowns and uncertainties were to bear fruit in 2021. We received nothing from the range of government support packages, we were able to hold few events face-to-face, and our members and other customers began to tire of online content. Face-to-face courses used to draw large audiences and provided substantial and reliable additions to our main income source, membership fees. With the removal of this opportunity our income has been substantially reduced. The most significant flow-on has been on our ability to fund staff. In June we farewelled Felicity Jagavkar, who we had relied on to manage the business and events for more than a decade. The office tasks were divided amongst the committee as we aimed to understand the operations of the office. The executive searched for economies and efficiencies, whilst continuing to run our program online. We worked out what essential skills we needed and advertised the administration/accounts position for reduced hours, 10hrs per week, commencing in November. The NSW Branch is operating with a tighter and more economical business structure

Despite having a vital and highly engaged membership we continue to have trouble filling executive positions at the Branch level. A significant problem occurred this year when our treasurer resigned in September. We informed our members of the need to fill this vacancy, however we have spent months without a treasurer. The pressure on the existing committee members has been enormous. It is a fact that committee positions need to be filled for CBCA NSW Branch to continue operations. Ideally there needs to be succession in place to maintain the NSW Branch committee and for skills to be passed on smoothly. While we are seeing exciting growth at the Sub-branch level, members need to help maintain the Branch. Please consider joining the committee.

We questioned our role in providing professional development for teachers. The opportunity to obtain NESA accreditation again has been put aside for further consideration, but at present we do not have the capacity to meet the exacting NESA's assessments with the current commitments of the committee.

Our website is our key communication device. Members should be able to find everything they want easily. Events are hosted on the website. Some are free to members, and some require purchasing access. While live events are great, pre-recording is convenient, reliable and enables us to source interesting presenters from across Australia. We have had great support from content producers, authors, illustrators and publishers, often brought to us from publishers and other industry professionals such as teachers and librarians. A substantial section of the website is password protected and for members only. The plan for 2022 is to streamline this and ensure this member benefit is only available to genuine members. We retain our mobile phone and will reply to messages when someone is in the office, however email communication is our preferred mode of communication.

We have had significant involvement with our vice regal Patrons the Governor of NSW, the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC and her husband Mr Dennis Wilson. They have shown great interest in our programs, came to the State Library of NSW to launch the Anthology and have provided humorous and light-hearted video for the website to promote our programs. For me another highlight of the year was to represent CBCA NSW Branch along with Past President Gail Erskine at the Government House Christmas Party.

I wish to thank all the CBCA NSW Branch Committee for their generous contribution of time and skills. Everyone on the committee rallies at events and contributes passionately during meetings.

I wish to thank Alison Manno (treasurer April -September) Judith Radin, Natalia Bragaru, Peter McInnis, who resigned from the committee at the AGM, for all their contributions.

I also want to thank our wonderful Sub-branches and their committees who offer fabulous programs and reach out at a local level. I've enjoyed the Zoom opportunity to meet with you as often as possible. A special thanks to Wendy Fitzgerald who has liaised between the NSW Committee and the Sub-branch Presidents, keeping everyone up to date. You will find the Sub-branch Presidents Annual Reports pp 9 - 14.

Together we achieve wonderful things.

2021 Committee

Executive Committee:

President: Liz Bowring

Treasurer: Alison Manno (April-September)

Vice President: Wendy Rapee

Secretary: Sue Bates

Past President: Gail Erskine

Public Officer: Toni Field

CBCA National Board Director: Wendy Rapee



Committee Members: Cathy Drury, Denise Cramsie, Jackie Hawkes, Viv Nicholl-Hatton Laurel Reynolds, Terry Fahy

Sub-Branch Liaison: Wendy Fitzgerald

NSW Judges appointed in 2021 for the 2022-23 CBCA Book of the Year Awards : Sheryl Cootes, Kathryn Eyre, Margot Lindgren, Alex Wharton

Office Volunteers: Nigel Van Reyk and Li Gin (Thank you for your generous contributions)

I would also like to acknowledge the continued support of publishers, authors and illustrators and our bookshop members. Together we ensure that CBCA NSW Branch can continue to offer the varied and exciting programs created by our volunteers.

We maintained the office in the Writing NSW Rozelle precinct although no one was able to work there for several months due to lockdowns and COVID restrictions.

We wish to give special recognition to **Felicity Jagavkar**, our business and event manager, who resigned from CBCA NSW Branch on June 10th, 2021. Many accolades for Felicity flowed in as people shared many fond memories from their interactions with her either by email, phone or at events. Felicity has been a committed and enthusiastic supporter of CBCA NSW Branch and she has overseen the development of CBCA NSW Branch in both a professional and personal manner. Over the past 11 and a half years she has grown the role immensely. Hers will be difficult shoes to fill. On behalf of you all I wish her all the best in her new endeavours.

Activities

Kid's Corner is the newsletter for children and young adults and those who work with them. Published on the website, it is jam-packed every month with current information about books, their authors and illustrators. Each edition features a guest cover design by an established or aspiring illustrator and a regular column from Ursula Dubosarsky, the Australian Children's Laureate. Produced 11 months a year by Jackie Hawkes, Terry Fahy and Marion Silk (ex-committee).

iRead is the monthly newsletter about the happenings of CBCA NSW Branch, National CBCA and of the NSW Branch Sub-branches. It has been edited by Laurel Reynolds and is emailed to all members and subscribers. **iRead** came out 11 months in 2021.



Social Media

Our Facebook, twitter and Instagram pages are managed by members. Liz Bowring has been coordinating content since June. Ashleigh Meikle has been reposting to Twitter. There has been an increased use by Sub-branches of the Facebook and Instagram account to promote current events.

<https://www.facebook.com/CBCANSW/>

<https://www.instagram.com/cbcansw/>

<https://twitter.com/cbcansw>

Events

February:

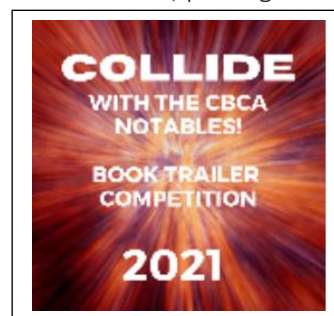


It was decided to pair **Night of the Notables – Notable Night In** with the **Collide! Book Trailer Competition** launch. We felt that directing the children to the Notable list would give exposure to the Notable books and engage more children in evaluating these wonderful books as they search for their book to feature as a trailer. We secured generous funding from **Rotary North Sydney** for prizes for the **Collide!** competition, some medallions, and books – of course. Thank you, Rotary North Sydney. The event was held online with guest presenters Philip Bunting and Margot Lindgren. We encouraged viewers to share the fun on social media, posting their

Notorious NSW Notable List Lovers photos. The prize was a bundle of books thanks to Dymocks Children's Charities and Scholastic.

Notables Coordinator: Laurel Reynolds

Collide! Coordinators: Sue Bates, Toni Field



The final **Story Scoop!** was loaded onto the website. This collaboration between CBCA NSW Branch and SCBWI Australia East & New Zealand had commenced in August, 2020. Story Scoop! presented short videos of authors and illustrators with new work which gave an insight into the inspiration, creative choices, artwork and the story behind their stories. Featuring three segments including: Illustrators Corner, Picture Book Nook, Junior Fiction Gems, Middle Grade Magic and Sneak Peek.

June:

Gail Erskine has taken a section of the [AAA: Poetry: exploring Inner Worlds](#) conference to Bronte Public School as a 3-hour professional development session. Wonderful opportunities can be tailored for schools to purchase a staff development session. Unfortunately, COVID lockdowns prevented further PD in schools for 2021.

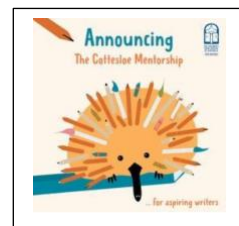
July:

We celebrated NAIDOC Week with free online presentations for members from Boori Monty Pryor, Helen Milroy and Diane Lucas and Ben Tyler. These authors and illustrators explain how Indigenous storytelling should be incorporated into teaching to 'heal Country, heal our nation'. The presenters provided insights to their creative process and explained the appropriate use of their story/illustration when working with children. They offered guidance to suggested activities; written, artistic and oral using their work. Coordinator: Liz Bowring

The Aspiring Writers Mentorship Program was offered again in 2021. The Cottesloe Mentorship is designed to give emerging writers the kind of development given by publishers. CBCA NSW Branch thanks Cathie Tasker for her generous sponsorship in providing the Cottesloe Mentorship to the annual winners of the Aspiring Writers Mentorship Program for the next five years.

Notice was given in July to contributors to prepare their submissions.

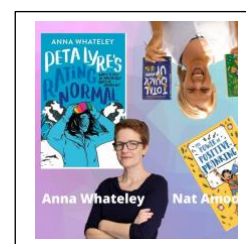
Coordinators: Gail Erskine, Alison Manno, Viv Nicholl-Hatton, Denise Cramsie



August:

Kid's Book of the Year Award event was held on Friday August 20, 2021 @ 11.15 - 12.00 the morning of the announcement of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards. We had two sessions: Anna Whateley for the Secondary students and Nat Amooore for the Primary students. Students from across NSW reviewed titles from the Older Readers & Younger Readers category of the 2021 CBCA Book of the Year Awards Shortlist. Coordinator: Gail Erskine, Viv Nicholl-Hatton.

Winners of the **Collide! Book Trailer Competition** were also announced at the **Kid's Book of the Year** Award event. The book trailers are so clever and are on the website for public viewing. Thank you to our ambassadors and judges Nathan Luff, Deborah Abela and Tristan Bancks. Coordinators: Sue Bates, Toni Field



This event was timed so that viewers were able to watch the online announcement of the CBCA Book of the Year Winners. As an online presentation there is flexibility to view after the event which is available on the website.



September:

We commenced informing members of the upcoming membership changes.

October:

November:

After a few difficulties caused by the lockdown on November 8 the Longlist for the Aspiring Writers Mentorship Program was announced. CBCA NSW Branch believes that the integrity of the judging process is paramount, and all it was important to have a face-to-face meeting of the judges. Thanks all those who aspire to be children's authors and who entered the Aspiring Writers Mentorship Program for 2021.

At a live online event the November 30 2021 Cottesloe Mentorship was awarded to Bryoni Trezise for her Middle grade novel, *This is the Sound of Theodora Itch*. She receives the mentorship from the well-known and respected editor, Cathie Tasker. In addition, she receives **The Charlotte Waring Certificate**. The two runners up were Kirsten Ealand for *Periwether Pemberton*, and Jemima Parker for *Daisy and the Sandwich Disaster*. Both of which are Picture Book manuscripts. They receive support from Fremantle Press.
Coordinators: Gail Erskine, Alison Manno, Viv Nicholl-Hatton, Denise Cramsie

December:

Zoom does not replace getting together for a catch up, and so the CBCA NSW Branch committee had a great Christmas dinner together for our December meeting.

Membership

Significant research and planning have gone into the issue of membership. Why do people become and remain members? Do people see the need to be a member of CBCA? Are we aligned to our member needs? Is our billing process easy to use and effective? Notification was given that there would be a change in the mode of payment – moving to a calendar year in 2022, using a single click payment process.

We identified the mode of payment of membership as being a difficulty, with our existing sign up being overly complex and out of step with current practice. We have also been advised that calendar memberships are the most effective, saving the organisation time and money with targeted renewal periods. The membership committee (Gail, Toni and Liz) investigated the options. No memberships were processed in November and December and the systems on MYOB and the website were set up for implementation in 2022. Notification was given to members that there would be a change in the mode of payment – moving to a calendar year in 2022, using a single click payment process.

We are emphasising the special member benefits with our password-protected member lounge. While much of our information is freely shared with the public, there are special, high-quality resources only available in the Member Lounge. This year there are no accurate membership statistics available to report on.

Merchandise

The design of the merchandise by Shaun Tan was widely applauded. It had an appeal for both young adults and children. It inspired contemplation and discussion. COVID-19 disruption posed additional problems to the management of the merchandise. There were no face-to-face events to display and promote the merchandise, and schools were closed for many months with online schooling. The distributors, located in Brisbane, were also closed for a long period. Our current system of predicting sales, producing orders for schools, double-handling materials was already proving to be unsustainable.

The offering of discounts was also questionable as we were barely covering costs. Many purchasers were already choosing to buy directly from the CBCA e-store as well.

Orders were eventually filled by Nigel and Liz. Overdue invoices were sent for outstanding payments during November and December.

It was decided that 2021 was to be the final year of NSW Branch selling on of merchandise, and from now merchandise will remain with the National CBCA, who produce the merchandise, and sell directly through the CBCA e-store. Sales will be by direct payment.

Sub-branch Reports

CBCA NSW Branch Blue Mountains Sub-branch President's report

Welcome to our AGM as we reach the conclusion of our seventh year of operations and promotion of children's literature in the mountains – and another crazy year of Covid lockdowns it has been!

Once again, many of our plans were halted by the ever-changing Covid situation. We were unable to recognise local Notables authors: Steven Herrick and Freya Blackwood, due to restrictions.

Our Little Free Libraries (nine libraries) have had a quiet year as several have been packed away until Covid restrictions ease. Thank you to Kristen, for keeping an eye on stock in the libraries that are still operational.

We had two very successful dinners: one at Lawson with Dub Leffler who entertained us with his stories and description of the 2021 Notables books that he illustrated, *Strangers on Country* and *Bindi*. We rounded the year off with a Xmas dinner, at Le Petit Chalet, where we were delighted to have Libby Hathorn as our guest as she discussed her CBCA Book of the Year, *No, Never!* And introduced her latest book, *The Best Cat, the Est Cat*.

Thank you to the committee for your perseverance during this challenging year and still being here!

Looking forward to a much better year and an exciting program in 2022.

Sheryl Cootes, President

CBCA NSW Branch Canterbury Bankstown Inner West Sub-branch

CBCA NSW Branch Canterbury Bankstown Inner West Sub-branch (CBIW) is a new sub-branch officially approved in late October 2021. Background History

- In Feb 2021 initial enquiries were made about the possibility of starting up a local CBCA NSW Branch Inc sub-branch for the LGA's of Canterbury/ Bankstown and the Inner West. Over the next few months, Jemima Shafei-Ongu gleaned interest for like-minded children's literature lovers. A number of interested creatives met over zoom for two casual meetings (25th July and 29th August, 2021).
- On 3rd October, this friendly group of vibrant CBCA members met online for the third time and, with the facilitation of Wendy Fitzgerald, voted in role holders.
- On 12th October 2021, CBCA NSW Branch committee meeting approved the establishment of the Canterbury Bankstown/inner West group and a starting fund of \$250 was granted.

Role holders of CBCA NSW Branch CBIW Sub-branch:

President: Jemima Shafei-Ongu

Vice President: Angie Schiavone

Treasurer: Kristian Aus

Co-Secretary: Liz Ledden

Co-Secretary: Gemma Patience

Core member: Denise Kirby-Jousif

Meetings

- 12th Oct – Role holders nominated and voted in
- 14th Nov – First official face to face meeting: Outfield Café, Ashfield.

NSW Branch event participation

- 10th Nov – Happy Hour Zoom/ welcome and information sharing event
- 27th Nov – End of year dinner at Wendy Fitzgerald's place

Sub-branch set up

- Oct/ Nov – Google drive development: Jemima Shafei-Ongu and Kristian Aus
- Mid Dec – Logo and poster design by Kristian Aus
- 21st Dec – bank account set up, CBA Leichhardt – Kristian Aus and Jemima Shafei-Ongu

CBIW events

- 10th Dec – end of year Dinner at Lazeez, Lakemba. We had a lovely dinner socialising and strengthening connections. Attended by all role holders and Lisa Nicol.

Plans for 2022

- Newsletter establishment
- 'Meet and Greet' picnic with local community: Marrickville Library lawn
- Promote Shadow Judging
- Support Night of the Notables and Shortlist awards via social media promotion and participation
- Support with NSW Branch Sub-branch handbook
- Support with NSW Branch Sub-branch administrative systems
- Zine establishment and participation in local zine fair (Marrickville)
- Build relationships and network with local libraries
- Build relationships and network with local bookstores
- Build relationships and network with local librarians/ schools
- Continue to promote and network with other organisations such as Writing NSW to grow membership, and participation of future events
- Further development of internal resources e.g. Sub-branch website, banner
- Children's event: tba
- Adult event: tba
- Fundraising research (and possible events): tba

I would like to thank Kristian, Angie, Gemma, Liz and Denise who have generously volunteered their time and talents to establish a solid group from scratch. Their kindness, cooperation, creativity and enthusiasm is the essence of our strength. I look forward to growing an inclusive community together.

I would also like to thank Wendy Fitzgerald for her help with establishing our sub-branch and ongoing assistance and NSW CBCA Inc for the exciting things they do to link children with literature and look forward to a fruitful year in 2022.

Jemima Shafei-Ongu

President

Jemima Shafei-Ongu, President

CBCA NSW Branch Central Coast Sub-branch President's report

With 2021 underway in a new meeting venue, the outdoor setting at San Churros where Dub Leffler shared his latest works in progress and his exciting international exhibition in the US our branch started the year on a happy note. We had several new attendees; it was great to see so many new faces.

In February our local Central Coast branch had a small but noisy *Notables Night Party* at The Entrance Public School. We enjoyed Margot and Philip's talks perched on lovely big stools. After the reveal we all rushed around Sharlene's library so that she has a great display ready in the morning. Lots of fabulous Australian books to talk about – it only makes you appreciate more the talented creators we have here in Australia.

For our March AGM, once again we enjoyed the outdoor evening ambiance at Erina Hive. After a short AGM meeting where all positions were filled our growing group enjoyed an interesting talk from Sarah Davis. Sarah shared her creative processes past and upcoming picture books. She also outlined her role at Walker Books. May saw our small group return to face to face with appropriate distance. We invited author Barry Jonsberg to join us on Zoom from Darwin to discuss his amazing writing career. This meeting held at Gosford East Public School enabled us to see Barry together on the big screen. We held a brief meeting before we enjoyed a great talk and Q & A session.

Various members of the committee presented at our *June Mad Hatters Tea Party Notables Event*. This presentation was held at Gosford East Public-School library. The event attracted some new faces, and the reviews of different

categories provided some great interest and discussion. Suitably hatted up, the evening was a great success with a delicious spread of food and plenty of tea!

August CBCA Book Week Announcement: Our subbranch held a special celebration Zoom meeting with the attendees toasting the winners and sharing thoughts on the fabulous video presentation from the South Australian Branch. We did not hold a formal meeting but enjoyed a short presentation from Sue Whiting publisher, author and great CBCA member. We congratulated local honour book mentions for Dub Leffler & *almost* local Liz Anneli who popped in for a chat and toast! I shared the CBCA SA video with my IFLA Facebook page – this has hundreds of librarians across the world.

In September – we hosted a *Talk Like a Pirate Day* Zoom. Special speaker Penny Morrison shared her fabulous Pirate book *Captain Sneer the Buccaneer* to our dramatically dressed audience. It was hard not to hold a live event with children again this year. We hope that our branch can re-establish a collaborative event with Central Coast library in the future.

October saw us back on Zoom. Linda Harrison has joined our branch this year. Linda has an extensive career in early childhood and is now developing some fantastic resources with the ABC. She brings a great insight into the use of picture books in the preschool years. Yvette Poshoglian shared her latest creations and what is happening. In November Christopher Cheng shared his education background on our Zoom. He has published across numerous genres and age groups with titles published in multiple languages. He spoke about the three titles he published in 2021!

Thank you to the core team who add so much fun to every event. 2021 has been busy with regular meetings in person or on Zoom keeping our group engaged and informed. Our speakers have been marvelous sharing their time and internet connections! We have planned another full year of meetings and events as we look forward to reading, discussing and promoting Australian Children's literature!

Claire Stuckey, President

CBCA NSW Branch Eastern Suburbs Sub-branch President's report

In the Eastern Suburbs, 2021 was the year of our anthology project, moreover it was the year of fidelity, fearlessness, and friendship.

We are passionate about talking and sharing children's literature. As such, we remained resilient to the many impacts the pandemic had on our community. Our February AGM held in person at the Woollahra library, however, our subsequent 2021 events were held virtually, communications were positive and outreaching; building on our initial inroads we had made with local libraries, bookshops, and creators in the previous years. These virtual events included author-children's events and several presentations with many well-loved authors and illustrators in our area. We identified a need for active support of all of our stakeholders as morale was faltering with the global uncertainty around every aspect of the book industry. Continuing to develop local relationships will remain one of our main goals for 2022.

This seed that was Amanda Liber's anthology idea blossomed in a wonderfully 1000 foot 'project of joy'. With the anthology team comprising (in alphabetical order); Liz Bowring (President of CBCA NSW), Elizabeth Cummings, Susanne Gervay, Libby Hathorn, Amanda Lieber, Gemma Patience, and Wendy Rapee (National CBCA Chair), a celebration of well-known, well-loved as well as emerging and new creative talent was captured within the pages of this inaugural anthology based on the 2021 Book week theme; *Old Worlds, New Worlds Other Worlds*. The anthology was launched by the CBCA patrons and Governor her Excellency Margaret Beazley and Mr. Dennis Wilson. Remarkably we were fortunate to enjoy a face-to-face event with 100 attendees including 59 of the 71 contributors, and many children; with the launch falling in between COVID lockdowns on 28th May at the State Library of NSW. The anthology contained a forward by the Governor as well as a history of the CBCA contributed by our editor-in-chief; Margaret Hamilton; we were so honoured and grateful for their support. Another important aspect was the advice and expertise of our cultural advisor Jasmine Seymour who not only contribute creative works, but also curated our very own acknowledgment to country in Dharug and English translation for the book.

To set out on this project with the right intention of inclusivity and respect was a fundamental principle for the team and one we believe will be a role model for our young people and for those inspired to create similar projects in the future.

With many of our members experiencing success through publications and awards during this year (Libby Hathorn, Susanne Gervay, Antonia Presenti, Alexa Moses, Nathan Luff, Victoria Mackinlay, Patricia Bernard to name a few) we feel that we are in a strong position to continue to contribute to quality children's literature into the future. It is important to note that a key area for development is to grow membership in our local TL and education sectors. The pandemic has made it hard to connect with this cohort and we acknowledge that involvement and support from schools and their staff is a vital component in helping to build CBCA goals.

Elizabeth Mary Cummings, President

CBCA NSW Branch Illawarra South Coast Sub-branch President's report

From the Sub-branch notes:

Linked in with the South Coast Writer's Centre- do story workshops for them.

7th Aug- Fundraiser at Ryan's Hotel in Thirroul- cheese and wine- speakers- the art of storytelling through words and songs. Money raised will go towards school author visits. Nearly sold out.

19th Aug- Kid's event- literary lunch with Sue Whiting and other authors. They will look at streaming Sue's workshop to local schools.

They have applied for grants from council, clubs and are getting sponsorship from a local magazine. They received \$1,200 from Blue Scope.

A vibrant new committee with 3 teacher librarians.

2nd September meet and were joined by local YA author Claire Zorn who discussed her new release '*When We Are Invisible*' - she was fabulous and so generous with her time. Claire will be one of our panellists for our "The Art of Storytelling" fundraiser with Josh Pyke, Gary Lonesborough and Elana Stone - postponed (again!) to February 2022. We have been invited by Wollongong City Council to participate in the Global Learning Festival 2021 - a worldwide, week-long event (8-12 November). Picture book author Karen Hendricks will present a preschool storytime and author chat.

3rd Nov Zoom meeting with guest presenter Katrina Nannestad *We Were Wolves* Katrina was an excellent speaker and answered many questions about her writing.

Wed 10 Nov 10.30am - Storytime with Karen Hendricks via Zoom, as part of the Global Learning Festival

For
Kate O'Mealley, President

CBCA NSW Branch Newcastle Sub-branch President's report

It's hard to believe that I am reporting on a second year of life hugely disrupted with Covid! For our sub-branch, this has meant a chance to hone those tech skills we developed in 2020. We are now experts on Zoom! We again were forced to curtail our outreach activities and many of our members spent time isolating at home due to Covid. Yet despite this our members thrived; with new books released and awards received.

We hosted seven events throughout the year, keen to maintain a momentum with regular meetings. Our March AGM was also a chance to view Newcastle Libraries new Digital Library. With a humanoid robot reading excerpts from members books, a huge digital screen, complete with an interactive map produced by Liz Anelli, and a digital Memory Box to showcase rare books and photos, the evening was a huge success.

Our April meeting met at Toronto Library and 'zoomed in' Nat Amooore, Liz Ledden and Kate Simpson from One More Page. They gave us a fabulous presentation on the how to's of podcasting.

We explored the CBCA Shortlist at our June meeting at St Therese's Primary School. Thank you to the CBCA members who prepared presentations. We also enjoyed looking over their very impressive new school library. Our last face-to-face meeting was held in July at Newcastle Library. Katrina McKelvey gave an excellent presentation on delivering successful school visits. This was a topic that attracted quite a lot of discussion. We were then treated to Liz Anelli showing us around the stunning exhibition for her then short-listed *Dry to Dry: the Seasons of Kakadu*. We were thrilled when her book went on to win the Eve Pownell Award.

We met online during September and October. It was a delight to have Belinda Murrell and Kate Forsyth join us for our September meeting. *Searching for Charlotte* is a fascinating story of their research into their great, great grandmother. As always, it was just delightful to spend time with them!

Victoria Mackinlay joined us online for our last meeting, with strategies on 'making Google work for you'. This was excellent, especially for those who already had a good grasp of how their websites were set up.

We concluded the year with our Christmas Party at Nikki Bolton's beautiful heritage home in Bolwarra. Nikki treated us to a wonderfully decorated table and delicious food. We relished being back together again and appreciated her hospitality.

We did commence planning an outreach event mid-year when signs were that we were leaving Covid behind us. A one day *Storyfest* was to be offered to a disadvantaged school, utilizing our CBCA members. This has now been deferred to Term 4 2022.

Online presentations were not sort out in the way they were during the first lock down, many schools and individuals choosing to prioritise coping and mental health over an overload of online content. Most schools were also closed to the public. This has been difficult for many, and I know that our members are looking forward to again being with children, being able to enthuse, to promote their books, and to feel that they make a difference. 2021 did however, have exciting moments for many of our members with new titles released by Liz Anelli, Jess Black, Jenny Blackford, Jenni Goodman, Lynn Jenkins, Kirrili Lonergan, Katrina McKelvey, Suzanne Masson and Paul Russell. Two of Katrina's books are now up also up on YouTube in AUSLAN.

We were thrilled that Liz Anelli's book *Dry to Dry* (written by Pamela Freeman), was awarded the Eve Pownell Award. It was a fitting culmination of her time in Australia.

We are also delighted that Leila Rudge has two books on this year's CBCA Notable list and that *Winston and the Indoor Cat* was shortlisted in the Early Readers category this week.

Festivals have been few this year, but our members have again been active. Katrina McKelvey presented at the Little Scribe Mini-Writing Festival, Jess Black at the Step into Stories Festival in Toowoomba, Liz and Katrina at the Newcastle Writers Festival (online), Katrina, Kirrili, Lynn, Deb, Paul, Liz and Nikki at Lake Mac Libraries', Write Here!, and Julie Swane at the AAA.

Thank you to our enthusiastic and dedicated committee; Vice-President Lillian Webb for work with our Facebook page and producing our eye-catching flyers, Secretary Jenni Goodman, for accurate and prompt minutes and the fabulous newsletter that you developed, Treasurer Ruth Higginbottom, and committee members Katrina, Kirrili, Nikki and Liz for your support and encouragement during the year.

We have a great program planned for this year, and I look forward to being able to encourage our local authors and illustrators, promote them to schools and be involved in a number of community events where we again reach out to children.

Julie Swane, President

CBCA NSW Branch New England North West Sub-branch President's report

It's been a busy year for our sub-branch, despite lockdowns and other Covid19 restrictions and uncertainties.

Throughout 2021, we had a number of excellent presentations, in person and online, on various aspects of children's books, from sub-branch members and guest presenters: this is a tradition of our sub-branch, where our

monthly meetings always feature one of these presentations. This year, presentations ranged from a talk on refugees in children's literature, an illustrated survey of counting books, a discussion of useful video and internet links about children's books, and a presentation on the unique Inside Story book project, see more about that here: <https://www.unitedpublishersofarmidale.net/inside-story.html>

In August, we had our customary discussion of the CBCA Awards shortlisted books, ably led by former Awards judge Dr Heather Fisher. And our final meeting for 2021 featured a presentation on children's books about the environment. Held at my place outside of Armidale, it was followed by a very convivial pot-luck lunch to which everyone had brought a contribution.

In May we welcomed visiting author-illustrator Gabrielle Wang and local illustrator Sandy Flett, who visited schools as part of the annual Booked In festival, in collaboration with the New England Writers' Centre. Gabrielle also presented a workshop for adults, facilitated by NEWC, on creating children's fiction. You can see a couple of pics from her school presentations below.



In 2022, we look forward to more excellent presentations at our meetings and are delighted that our 2022 Booked In featured author-illustrator will be the wonderful Sami Bayly, whose award-winning and internationally-published books are loved by so many readers. It's a bonus for us that Sami not only lives locally but is a new member of our sub-branch and a great supporter of CBCA.

Also in May, we will be taking part in the launch of Inside Story, both a national online launch and a local celebratory in-person event. To give it its full title, *Inside Story: the wonderful world of writing, illustrating and publishing for children*, is not only a fantastic, unique resource guide for aspiring writers, illustrators, editors and designers, but also a beautiful illustrated showcase for contemporary Australian children's books. It's definitely worth looking out for in your local bookshop!

Sophie Masson AM, President

CBCA NSW Branch Northern Sydney Sub-branch President's report

Our main activities for our last financial year were as follows

- **Meetings**

3rd Feb- We had a planning meeting at Wendy Fitzgerald's house.

10th March – Event 1- AGM at Forestville RSL. Guest speakers- Wendy Blaxland, Jacque Harvey and Belinda Murrell.

17th April- CBCA NSW Branch AGM at Stanmore Public School- Kristin D and Wendy F attended.

5th May- Zoom committee meeting

9th June- Event 2- Focus on the library at Gordon Library. Kristin D interviewed Ursula Dubosarsky and children's librarian Joanne Potter. Elizabeth Cummings did a mini-launch of the Anthology.

7th July- Committee meeting on zoom.

8th September- Meeting on zoom

20th October – Zoom Event- Kristin in conversation with Paul MacDonald. Also, Kristin produced a video showcasing authors of newly released books.

1st December- Xmas drinks at Wendy F's house.

- **Due to Covid these events were cancelled**

21st July- Great Debate between authors and illustrators. Who is more important, Authors or Illustrators?

7th September- Lunch with the Stars at St Pats in Manly. Guest speakers- Louise Park and Susannah McFarlane and 18 other authors and illustrators, 200 kids, authors and teachers.

Wednesday 20th October. A focus on Diversity panel

24th November- Casual Xmas Drinks at Terrey Hills Tavern.

We continued our segment called Book Babies/ member news, where members introduce their newly published books and tell their news to the audience. This proves to be a popular segment.

- **Author Afternoon Teas**

We had no Author afternoon teas in schools due to Covid restrictions.

- **Warringah Library Services Young Writer's Competition**

On 3rd August, some of our members were again invited to be judges in this writing competition. It was on zoom. Belinda Murrell and Wendy Fitzgerald were 2 of the judges.

(Lindy Batchelor started this competition 8 or 9 years ago.)

- **Travelling Suitcases**

Ashling Kwok and Teresa Souter looked after the suitcases, but they are in isolation due to Covid. We have 5 travelling suitcases. Oliver Phommavanh, Belinda Murrell, Louise Park, Jan Latta and Kate Forsyth.

- **Donations and Grants**

We supported the release of the anthology by the CBCA NSW Branch Inc Eastern Suburbs Sub-Branch, raising money through the sale of these books at our meetings.

- **Plans for 2022**

Hopefully we will be able to host events in person again in 2022.

Our aim remains to help inspire children, librarians and parents with enthusiasm for books and reading.

We have some terrific things planned for 2022. (See dates below)

These events happen because of the generosity, good will, creativity and hard work of our committee members. Thank you to all the 2021 committee.

Kristin Darell, President