



THE CHILDREN'S
BOOK COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA

NSW BRANCH

2022
ANNUAL REPORT

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2022 was a year in which we were still constrained by the covid virus and various lockdowns, however CBCA NSW Branch continued to engage with the children's book community by offering a small range of events - all events were run as online activities until we were finally able to meet face to face at the Aspire & Celebrate in October.

Many thanks to the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales and Mr Dennis Wilson for continuing in the role of joint-patrons of the CBCA NSW Branch. We are delighted and most appreciative of their commitment to the role.

On behalf of NSW Branch, I thank Ms Wendy Rapee, our vice-president, NSW Board Director and the National Chair for her dedication and inspirational vision in leading our national organisation this past year. Her drive and commitment in successfully obtaining the Federal Government RISE grant and the successful implementation of the Shadow Judging Program was outstanding. Other Board members and CBCA staff are to be commended for their commitment and achievements at the national level this past year. In November, all the Branch Presidents and Board Directors came together in Melbourne for a most successful sharing of ideas and strategic planning forum. A new purpose, vision, mission and values statement ensued.

The NSW Branch committee are all volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds, who share both the love of literature and the commitment to promoting Australian voices and quality Australian books. The newly appointed Book-keeper, Sue Tayler, ensured we maintained accurate financial records and assisted with the general running of the organization. In order to restore our financial stability which was severely impacted by covid, a replacement office manager was not viable. The committee has since undertaken these tasks.

Membership

2022 saw transition to a calendar year membership. This meant that all memberships ended as of December 31, 2022. Fees were adjusted accordingly and all memberships were invoiced in February. Thank you to Li Gin who assisted with the follow up of outstanding membership payments and outstanding 2021 merchandise. We are mindful that membership is vital to the continuation of our organization and in November a decision was made to implement in 2023 the membership software program, Hello Club as this will reduce office administration in regard to membership renewals. We are constantly striving to offer greater benefits in order to inspire new members and retain current ones.

Life membership was bestowed on Wendy Rapee, Denise Cramsie and Gail Erskine and this was a lovely surprise for all three.

Very sadly, we acknowledged the passing of Margaret Hamilton AM. Margaret was a NSW life member and a driving force behind the Awards Foundation. She held various national positions during her many years of involvement with the CBCA. In recognition of her outstanding service, NSW Branch was delighted to organise a camellia to be named in her honour. A camellia Margaret Hamilton can be ordered via our website with all proceeds going to the Awards Foundation.

A highlight of this year has been the transformation of the office. Thanks to a Federal Government Community grant, we were able to purchase bookshelves, lounges and a new computer. This was very fortuitous as a donation of first edition CBCA shortlisted books (from 1946) was offered to us by Paul Williams. Of course we gratefully accepted. This combined with The Maurice Saxby Reference Collection, is open (by appointment) to any student or devotee of Children's literature.

Activities

The Notables, the first announcement in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, mark an important date in the Book calendar. Speakers online at the Night of the Notables were Gemma Patience and Josh Pyke who came to us courtesy of Scholastic.

COLLIDE! with the 2022 Notables - Our Book Trailer competition saw increased entries during the lockdown. We thank the Rotary Club of North Sydney for their continued sponsorship which ensured the winners received book vouchers and medals. It was a pleasure to speak at one of their meetings and share the story of the CBCA and showcase some Collide entries. Tristan Bancks, Nathan Luff and Deborah Abela continued to provide hints for the entrants and judged the shortlisted entries. Thank you ! Tristan also donated a subscription to his Young Writers' Story School to the winners.

Anticipate! Appreciate! Applaud! The Shortlist - online Professional Learning Conference
The theme for the AAA was showcasing Contemporary Australian Children's Literature. Speakers were Leigh Hobbs (keynote), Kate Simpson, Katrina Nannestad, Matt Stanton ????? James Layton, Danni Vee

We thank members Victoria Roberts, Paul Macdonald, Claire Stuckey, Cathie Tasker and Sarah Foster for reading so many 2022 published books and selecting their Professional Picks.

Children's Book Week celebrations were presentations with the focus on the Book Of the Year and Shadower's Choice Awards – both great online presentations from the CBCA. As their tenure ends, we thank all the judges and especially the NSW Judges for their commitment to reading and reviewing books submitted for consideration. Great work Sheryl Cootes, Alex Wharton, Kayte Eyre, Margot Lindgren!

Book Week Merchandise

The beautifully designed artwork by Jasmine Seymour ensured there were many vibrant and exciting library displays all over NSW. The exciting new products ensured that merchandise was well supported by our members and friends. The Children's Bookshop very kindly offered books to the value of \$500 for a competition to showcase the brilliant efforts of librarians to dress up and interpret the Book Week Theme via a photo on social media. The winning school was Central Coast Grammar which generously donated the prize to Lismore library to replace books lost during the floods.

Shadow Judging-

Our Branch was delighted that we filled our quota for funded groups easily and had additional self-funded groups, totally 42 in all, covering all the shortlisted categories. The groups were very diverse – from a pre-school, home-schooling group meeting after school in the local

library, with the parents, a parent-run group in their local library, primary and secondary groups run as book clubs, as part of their library program, extension groups or as a whole class as part of the English/TAS curriculum. The mentors who assisted the initial implementation were much appreciated. Facilitators provided very positive feedback. Caringbah High school shadow judges were interviewed on ABC radio and the community group featured in this Guardian news article.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/aug/26/childrens-book-council-australia-kids-judge-prestigious-book-week-awards>

Aspiring Writers Mentorship Program

NSW Branch continued to foster creators with sponsorship from Cathie Tasker for the Cottesloe Mentorship and support from Fremantle Press. Lisa Le Faucheur (W.A.) received **The Cottesloe Mentorship** and the **Charlotte Waring** certificate for her winning manuscript, *Prince Skunk*. The two runners-up were Danielle Cerin for her middle grade manuscript *Violet Bloom Undercover: mission to save the world* and Sally Pilgrim for *Lachie and the Worry Bugs*, a Picture Book manuscript.

The Lady Cutler Award

Rydges Hotel was buzzing with excitement and almost filled to the brim when we were finally able to meet for a REAL event, *Aspire & Celebrate*. This was indeed a special event as the NSW Governor, our patron, attended and presented the Lady Cutler Award to Gail Erskine. Gail was nominated by Margaret Hamilton, who despite her ill health was determined to attend and give the citation. Indeed Margaret was in lively spirits and loved chatting to all her many CBCA friends. Gail celebrated with her family and friends as she received the beautiful Donna Rawlins designed certificate, perpetual vase and exquisite cameo. Thank you to Peribo for its sponsorship. After a delicious meal, everyone, including the shortlisted Aspiring Writers present, were both inspired and delighted by Reece Carter as he told the journey of becoming an author with his debut novel, *A Girl called Corpse*.



Books for readers from five years to teenagers were presented to Natalka Oleksyn, the Coordinator of Blue and Yellow Hearts to be passed on to young people newly arrived from the Ukraine.

"On behalf of Blue and Yellow Hearts and Ukrainian displaced people in Sydney, Australia, I'd like to thank you for supporting our charity and providing wonderful literature for Ukrainian displaced students to appreciate and sink their teeth into as they start to learn the English language."

Sub-branches

Communication between sub-branches is a high priority and I would like to acknowledge and thank Wendy Fitzgerald for being a super sub-branch liaison person and wish her all the best in the future. The dedication and support of our sub-branches means that now the reach of the CBCA is extended to seven local communities, with activities and events for children and adults alike.

BLUE MOUNTAINS

Sheryl Cootes

President

CENTRAL COAST

2022 was a very busy and exciting year for our sub-branch.

In July we celebrated! Two of our members have contributed 25 years of active service. Both Fran Carson and Judy Stapleton joined the CBCA as our branch was inaugurated. Our patron and founding member Heather Fisher joined a large group of locals, and NSW Branch president Gail Erskine to acknowledge these fabulous ladies and their role in the continuous activity of the CBCA NSW Central Coast sub-branch.

August saw our branch party celebrate the winners of the book of the year and launch of local Dub Leffler's latest book with Kirli Saunders -*Our Dreaming*, a fitting launch for the 2022 Book Week theme!

Our regular meetings were attended by authors Ashleigh Barton and Kristen Darrell. Book launches by local creator Sara Acton CBCA VP and Meg Gatland -Veness at the independent Bookface store provided advocacy and vibrancy to our branch. Our numbers have grown with each event. Our annual Shortlist event was well attended with each category addressed after a delicious buffet.

The Shadow Judging program was a wonderful opportunity to connect the CBCA and our branch with the local community. Three different categories were covered by our branch with Fran Carson sharing the Eve Pownell shortlist with a Homeschool Group of families at Kincumber Library. Linda Harrison worked with the Early Childhood teacher at Kooloora Preschool. I shared the Older readers with a group of Home School teens at Erina who loved the books and wondered why they had not discovered these authors before ! The creative responses submitted were amazing with such diversity that I was so proud to share these on the website. Our groups have all shown interest in the 2023 program. We believe that the process promoted the CBCA Shortlist, the organisation and our branch in a positive way within the Central Coast community as it provided an inclusive environment with open discussion lead by professionals.

In October a large contingent from our branch travelled to Sydney to attend the 2022 Lady Cutler Lunch and acknowledge the great contribution our NSW President Gail Erskine has made to Children's Literature through her many professional and organisational roles. We congratulated Gail on the receipt of this prestigious award.

Our Christmas party at the golf club was noisy with a great group celebrating another year of events and fabulous Australian Children's Literature. Our committee is looking forward to 2023 , another interesting year with greater freedom to meet and share.

Claire Stuckey,
President

- **EASTERN SUBURBS**
- **ILLAWARRA SOUTH COAST**

- **NEWCASTLE**

- **NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST**

Sophie Masson
President

- **NORTHERN SYDNEY**

Our NSW Branch committee consists of ordinary people who go to extraordinary efforts to present exciting events and programs and to build member resources.

2022 Committee (elected at the AGM)

President: Gail Erskine Vice President: Wendy Rapee - NSW Board Director

Secretary: Vivienne Nicoll-Hatton Treasurer: Sue Bates

Public Officer: Toni Field

Committee: Mary McNally, Jackie Hawkes, Laurel Reynolds, Denise Cramsie, Terry Fahy, Carmel Grimmett, Kayte Eyre, Leonie Palmer

The digital newsletter, i-Read, is now delivered to all members via Mailchimp and continues to be the main source of communication about NSW Branch activities and CBCA matters generally. Thank you Laurel Reynolds

Our website and social media is a vital part of our communication strategy. Thank you Liz Bowring

Kids' Corner continues to deliver reviews, writing ideas, competitions, and links to interesting book 'stuff' in an appealing format. Thank you Jackie Hawkes, Marion Silk and Terry Fahy,

The continued support of publishers, authors and illustrators and our bookshop members is very gratefully acknowledged. The children's book community is filled with very generous people.

Despite the continual service needed, It has been an absolute joy to be President once more, as I am very passionate about the power of books to change the life of each child. Research tells us that literature, like life, leaves its mark on our minds and bodies. The richer the literature, the more profoundly we are affected.

Gail Erskine
President