



THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA W.A. BRANCH (Inc)

CBCA President's Annual Report 2016 (Compiled by Sue Stopher)

The CBCA WA Branch has had another successful year with our commitment to engage the community with literature for young Australians. There was no AGM in 2016 as we realigned its date to allow for the new January to December financial year which is now in line with the national organisation. The last AGM, in November 2015, saw us farewell Aniek Ragan as President, Frances Nababan as Secretary and Karina Oliver as Treasurer. The new elected Executive consisted of President Sue Stopher, Vice President Felicia Harris, Secretary Elizabeth Allen and Treasurer Suzanne Pearse. It was a milestone year for committee members, Gay Tierney and Elizabeth Allen, who celebrated 30 years as committee members. We were sad to farewell several committee members at Christmas: Sue Wyche, Gay Tierney and Ruth Nitschke who has shifted to Canberra.

Each year, we have five main events: A Night with our Stars, Make Your own Story Book, the Judges' Talks, Book Week Dinner and the Annual General meeting.

A Night with Our Stars (ANWOS)

Joanna Andrew was the 2016 Convenor of ANWOS. On Thursday 3 March 2016, 17 presenters and an audience of about 155 people enjoyed the 13th A Night with our Stars celebration of talented West Australian authors and illustrators.

There was a vibrant mix of brand new and experienced presenters – 9 picture book creators, 6 junior fiction writers, and 4 young adult authors. Sadly, two presenters, Dianne Touchell and Michael Scott Parkinson were unable to attend the event, but the other new presenters contributed wonderfully to the tone of the night: Sigi Cohen's whole speech rhymed and made us laugh, Corina Martin shared the family story of the toast tree, Kelly Canby's quirky story (and dance) intrigued many. Kylie Howarth drew on musical inspiration, Davina Bell championed the anxious and introverted and Brendan Ritchie was amazed his first book ended up being set in Carousel.

It was lovely to welcome back regular supporters Julia Lawrinson, Meg McKinlay, Karen Blair, Kyle Hughes-Oggers, Sally Murphy, Danny Parker, Deb Fitzpatrick, Sean E. Avery and James Foley, and to see Geoff Havel back again, too. Karen and James generously donated the sketches they did during the evening to raffle at the Children's Book Week Dinner. There was a lot of laughter and camaraderie this year, and the sharing of interesting stories behind the books really engaged the audience.

WA now has so many talented children's literature creators that we are not able to invite everyone to present, but on the night titles published during the year by Frané Lessac, Sally Morgan, Gabriel Evans, Wendy Binks, Ambelin Kwaymullina and Rebecca Laffar-Smith were highlighted. The audience came from as far afield as Donnybrook, Ellenbrook, and Warnbro, and the presenters from Dalyellup and Margaret River.

Jan Nicholls was a wonderful MC who did many other things in the background. Once again, all the committee members helped behind the scenes to ensure all the details were covered.

Support from Fremantle Press in the year of their 40th anniversary was much appreciated with several of their authors and illustrators featured in the program. The 'wine sponsor' came through again this year with some additional wine purchased by the branch. Westbooks supported the event capably, but could have done with more stock for some of the titles, and another staff member to assist. The venue was once again excellent and will be booked for next year.

All the participants gave very positive feedback about the evening, and the design of the promotional material by the new graphic designer was very attractive.

Eve Pownall Award

During 2016, WA had the privilege of judging the Eve Pownall Award. Our three judges, Chloe Mauger, Felicia Harris and Helen Adam met with facilitator Sue Stopher at Trish Montgomery's home to decide which books would be on the Short List and then the winner. It was a very enjoyable day and our judges did a fabulous job as did hostess Trish.

WA Award Coordinators

April 2016 was the CBCA Book of the Year Judges' Meeting in Melbourne and was the final active and coordinating task of the two year term by the WA Award Coordinators Sue Wyche and Trish Montgomery. With the change of format, the Notables were released at that time and the Short List Announcement took place at the Sydney Conference and the Awards ceremony hosted by the NSW Branch. With the change in the judging panels and process the National Awards Committee now administer the Book of the Year Awards.

Judges Talks 2016

Gay Tierney convened the organisation of the two Judges' talks for 2016 on Wednesday 8 June on a cold, winter's evening. Thirty-seven people attended the Judges Talk at Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE), Leederville. Judges Anne-Marie Strother, Bev Jacobson and Felicia Harris (Eve Pownall) discussed the titles on the 2016 Short List as well as the books that made the Notables. It was a pleasure to see some new faces in the audience as well as many regular attendees.

The next evening, the 9 June, 27 people braved the rainy weather to meet at A H Bracks Library, Melville to hear Anne-Marie, Bev and Chloe Mauger (Eve Pownall) discuss the Short List and Notables. Attendees were able to browse the Short List and Notable books at both venues while enjoying refreshments.

Thanks to Felicia Harris and Helen Willison for their assistance with the use of The SIDE library and Lee Beazley and Jo-Anne Monaghan for their assistance at A H Bracks.

We thank Judges Anne-Marie Strother and Bev Jacobson, Felicia Harris, Chloe Mauger and Helen Adam for their work as 2016 judges. In 2017 there will be two WA judges, Margaret Merga judging Older Readers and Ruth Campbell-Hicks judging Early Childhood. As a result, it is anticipated that there will be changes to how the Judges' Talks are offered in WA as each judge will only read one category.

2016 Make Your Own Story Book Competition and Awards Ceremony

This year the Make You Own Story Book Competition was convened by Denise Robins. There were 16 volunteer judges reading and discussing 900 entries from 75 individual children, 23 public schools and 34 private schools.

The competition concluded on the 21st August with the recognition of the prizewinners at the Awards Ceremony at The Literature Centre in Fremantle. During morning tea, the guests viewed the winning books and were photographed by Jan Nicholls.

Welcoming presentations were given by Denise Robins (MYOSB Coordinator), Jenny Botje, Senior Education Officer for The Literature Centre, and Sue Stopher (President Children's Book Council WA Branch).

Guest speaker, award winning local author Elaine Forrestal shared her writing experiences and concluded with some simple yet excellent tips and advice for new writers. Prizewinners Kate Lucas; author of *Indigo Rose* and three time prize winner Kate McQueen; author of *Only One Me*, spoke of their personal writing experiences to a very appreciative audience. Photographer Jan and many proud parents brought out their cameras to record the special occasion as Elaine and Sue presented the prizes. Each winner carried away a Healthway's bag containing a certificate, book voucher and Book Week and Healthway Go for 2 & 5 merchandise. Winning entries and photographs have been placed on the CBC website.

The Make Your Own Story Book Competition sponsors were Healthway, Department of Culture and the Arts, Lotterywest and The Literature Centre. Our supporting bookstores were Beaufort Street Books, Child Education Services, Crow Books, Millpoint Caffe Bookshop, The Lane Bookshop, Crow Books, Oxford St. Books and WestBooks.

Membership

Membership Officer Ruth Nitschke fulfilled this role until 7th December due to her resignation and leaving the state. Incoming membership officer Sharon Coppin met with Ruth and the treasurer to address issues including possible production of yearly membership invoices/receipts via MYOB, read-only access to the Branch bank statements to check for membership payments and early bird incentive awards. In the future a MYOB module will be purchased in order to enable bulk invoices and receipts to be created and bulk mailed to members. The Early Bird Incentive for membership has been evaluated and will not be continued as it has proved that we get little value for money. Membership Fees will remain the same for 2017 but will need further review for 2018. Ruth recommends that the committee needs to continue to consider provision of benefits for all our members.

Grants and Regional Centres

Mary Gimondo and Nola Allen very capably organised the support that the community received for Children's Book Week. CBW 2016 was celebrated nationally from the 20th to the 26th of August 2016 with the theme "Australia: Story Country". This year, 31,390 children, parents, teachers and librarians celebrated CBW in thirty metropolitan (23,710) and country regions (7,680) in 86 libraries and community resource centres (CRCs) across the state. Students from 262 schools – 111 schools in country regions and 151 schools in metropolitan regions – participated in CBW

events. 1,989 Aboriginal children attended CBW events in metropolitan, regional and remote communities. A total of 26,818 children attended 711 author/illustrator sessions and workshops, performances and preschool story time sessions in CBW programs conducted throughout the state.

Eighty-six public libraries and community resource centres (CRCs) conducted CBW events in cities and towns in 17 metropolitan regions and 13 country regions from Augusta to Manjimup, Gosnells to Joondalup, Broomehill to Kalumburu. In addition to the positive outcomes for libraries and schools, there are a number of ongoing community, economic, social and health benefits resulting from CBW including:

- Strengthened link between the importance of literacy and good nutrition in supporting children's learning and creativity
- Strengthened relationships between local schools, communities and public libraries
- Increased access to high quality literacy and literary events for children in isolated and remote communities
- Introduced WA creators - authors, illustrators and artists – to a wider audience

For the first time, a competition *A Recipe is A Story, Too!* promoting the healthy eating message was conducted, attracting entries from schools and individuals. Lawyers, Clayton Utz, generously offered their services pro-bono to develop the terms and conditions for the competition.

The 2016 CBW program was generously supported by the State Government of Western Australia through the Department for Culture and the Arts, Healthway Go for 2 & 5 and the Western Australian Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia.

Book Week Dinner

The 2016 Book Week Dinner was a wonderful event with 120 attending the dinner at the Claremont Yacht Club. Having committee members making a personal approach to colleagues and friends seemed to make a difference. Among the guests was quite a number of authors and illustrators with their friend, Frane Lessac, the pumpkin. It was a fun evening and I think everyone enjoyed it and there was an excited buzz about the evening. MC Grant Stone certainly earned his dinner by controlling the crowd. The food was beautifully fresh and pleasing to most people.

James Foley presented a wonderful show with an insightful and funny presentation about his career as an author and illustrator. It's great to have exposure to our talented local authors. One guest said she is going to book him to come to her school; she hadn't seen James present before.

The Book Week Dinner was organised by Sally Woffenden and Dee Cunninghame; both doing it for the first time very successfully. They were supported by our very industrious committee members.

The Muriel Barwell Award

The biennial Muriel Barwell award is presented at the Book Week Dinner. Muriel's contribution to children's literature in Western Australia as the owner of WA's first children's bookshop, Haddons, has been enormously significant and the CBCA WA Branch proudly named this Award after her. Convenor Sue Wyche, along with committee members Gail Spiers and Sue Stopher formed the judging panel.

Celia Cole, a long-time bookseller with an amazing knowledge of children's and young adults' literature was presented with this award by Muriel Barwell herself. Celia's citation is available on the WA branch website.

Merchandise

Eve Morrissey was the Convenor for this year's CBCA Book Week merchandise. The whimsical and colourful artwork by Shaun Tan featured on this year's merchandise. Its references to well-known and loved Australian titles was enjoyed and provided a great foundation for displays, in school and public libraries.

The bunting, which replaced the banners, proved very popular. The Handbook containing information on the Short Listed titles as well as teacher's notes and photocopiable work sheets was an excellent resource. The A3 colouring-in poster was a good idea but too expensive for most people to order in quantity for class or story time activities.

Unfortunately, the implementation of the National EStore has meant that some orders have not been placed with the Western Australian Branch. This means less income for the Branch to use to promote children's literature and our local authors and illustrators.

Committee members again gathered together to help organise the merchandise for distribution.

CBCA WA Branch Newsletter

Jan Nicholls has been the Newsletter Editor this year and has done a wonderful job with each issue full of interesting stories. The newsletter is published in electronic format five times per year with issues emailed to members in February, April, June, September and November. The newsletter is also uploaded to the WA Branch website where it has been archived since 2012. As well as covering all the CBCA WA Branch events and functions the Newsletter aims to promote WA authors, illustrators and publishers by advertising forthcoming titles, reporting on book launches and featuring author profiles. In addition, we endeavour to keep our members up to date with relevant developments and news in the wider world of children's literature. Feedback from readers has been very positive and complimentary.

In order to encourage reader feedback and support our loyal member bookstores, we introduced a competition in each 2016 issue with the prize being a \$25.00 gift voucher from Beaufort Street Books, Bookcaffe (sadly, now closed), Child Education Services, Millpoint Bookcaffe and Westbooks. This initiative was a little slow to start with, but as momentum built with each successive issue the reader response grew. The competition will continue in 2017.

Thanks to everyone who submitted reports, photos and articles over the year and most especially to Chloe Mauger and Denise Robins for their timely and expert proofreading.

Facebook

Jan Nicholls, supported by Jo Andrew, moderates the WA Facebook page. At the beginning of the year the group total stood at 506 and at the time of writing there are 570 members. Whilst this number is very gratifying it is more than double the number of actual financial members so to ensure the long-term viability of the WA Branch we need to be able to convert the virtual to the real. To this end, a pinned post regularly inviting new Facebook group members to join as fully paid-up members is being considered.

Owing to its instant nature and wide reach, Facebook is the ideal medium for announcing WA Branch events, celebrating book awards, publicising the work of authors, illustrators and publishers, promoting book launches and alerting folks to relevant, breaking news in the wider world of children's literature in between our regular newsletters which are published five times per annum.

The WA Branch Facebook page is also an excellent medium for acknowledging the support of our CBW sponsors such as Healthway and the Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) especially with numerous posts in July and August in the lead up to Book Week. The amazing response to these posts continued well into September and Healthway are reportedly very happy with our social media profile.

CBCA WA Branch Website

One again, our Branch website has been well managed by Aniek Ragan. She has regularly uploaded new information to keep the site up to date. The Branch was pleased to hear that our website is underway to be migrated to mirror the national website as well as Queensland.

Our website attracts a lot of visitors with up to 10,000 hits a quarter, depending on which activities are currently listed.

Book Discussion Group

Gail Spiers has led the Book Discussion this year and her mother, Myrtle, continues to welcome us to her home to meet. Throughout the year, we read 10 Australian novels for young adults. Geoff Havel and Dianne Wolfer both paid a visit to chat about their books: Dianne's *The Shark Caller* and Geoff's *Dropping In*. Again, we met in May to present and discuss the short list books and it's always a fun night.

Partnerships

We have continued to build relationships with our CBCA WA Branch Supporting Book Stores program where they give our members at least a 10% discount for supporting them. During the year, Paperbird in Fremantle and Dymocks in Busselton joined the group.

We continue to meet monthly as a committee at Lotterywest's Oasis House in Nedlands. Thanks go to Chloe Mauger for being our representative on the house committee.

Our membership is our largest resource and we really appreciate the schools, libraries and individuals who become members of CBCA in WA and how they participate in the organisation's activities throughout the year.

Children's Book Council of Australia (WA Branch) Inc.

Annual General Meeting, Wednesday 5 April 2017

Treasurer's Report for period October 2015 to December 2016

For this Annual General Meeting we have a financial period of 15 months. The change was voted on at a Special General Meeting on 16 March 2016. The new reporting audit year will be 1st January to 31st December in line with the National body.

The Branch has finished the year with a deficit of \$3,989.15 of expenditure over income.

The deficit was partly due to the longer 15 month reporting period and general increases in insurance, postage, and administration costs.

The following is a brief summary:

- Membership is down \$574.52 with subscriptions bringing in \$11,372.76
- Insurance costs went up and we paid \$1,627.58 to CBCA as a result of the new National arrangement and more comprehensive insurance cover.
- Oasis House rent was \$6,620.40. We have been advised there will be a rent increase in 2017 but have not been informed of the amount.
- Printing and photocopying costs continue to decrease with the online delivery of the newsletter and promotion of competitions and events.
- Merchandise sales remain our greatest fundraiser with a profit of just over \$14,000. The Shaun Tan artwork proved very popular.
- The Judges Talks almost broke even with only a small loss of \$26.22
- The Book Week Opening & Dinner ran at a deficit of \$617.16 and ANWOS a deficit of \$625.76 both of which were budgeted losses.
- The Grants Program has seen \$79,041 distributed to Public Libraries for Children's Book Week Programs.
- The Branch provided a registration to the 12th National Conference held in Sydney in May, (\$450.00) one to the Celebrate Reading Conference held at the Fremantle Literature Centre in October (\$495.00) and a ½ day Author visit during Book Week (\$300.00) as part of the EARLY BIRD membership incentive raffle. (\$1,245.00) The committee decided that this did not represent good value for money and would not be repeated.
- Funds raised from the ANWOS (\$390.00) and the Book Week Dinner (\$552.00) raffles were donated to Dads & Kids Connect, the CBCA Lifetime Achievement Awards Fund and Buk bilong Pikinini.
- The Make Your Own Story Book competition cost \$2736.74. This is offset in part through the Children's Book Week Grants Program.
- Cost of gifts went up over \$700.00
- Bookkeeping costs decreased \$ 800.00. In 2017 these costs will increase as we are seek support to transition to an online system of invoicing and receipting of memberships and merchandise.

The decision was made not to raise the cost of membership fees or event charges for 2017. This however may need to be reassessed for 2018. With a change in the State Government, WA's

current economic climate and some uncertainty with future funding we will need to remain vigilant about how we spend our member's funds.

Despite the small deficit for this reporting period we are in a sound financial position and confident we will be able to meet all our financial responsibilities.

The audited accounts are provided as a separate document.

Suzanne Pearse

CBCA WA Branch Inc.

Treasurer