

## Book Discussion Group 2014 Highlights

### CBCA Book of the Year Award Shortlist Discussion

In April the group met to discuss the 29 titles shortlisted in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, four of which we had already read in our Book Discussion Group meetings. Everyone came along prepared to talk about several titles providing the group with a great overview of the books on the shortlist. The shortlist can be found at <http://cbca.org.au/ShortList-2014.htm>.



Gail Spiers, Loretta Young, Trish Montgomery, Sally Woffenden, Gay Tierney, Karen Goddard, Marian Hillam, Diane Henderson, Ruth Nitschke, Sue Wyche and Jan Nicholls

### **Guest Author: Elaine Forrestal**

It was a pleasure to welcome Elaine Forrestal to the Book Discussion Group in July to talk about her latest book *To see the world*. Based on extensive research into Louis and Rose de Freycinet's voyage on the Uranie to measure the equator (1817 – 1820) this novel brings history to life for younger readers. *To see the world* will be included in Elaine's PhD in Creative Writing along with an expanded version of Rose's life for adults.

*Loved hearing Elaine talk about her research including reading Rose's journals, visiting key locations in France and meeting the descendants of the de Freycinet family.*

Gay

*I found the talk enlightening as I had found the book a little light in detail. I wanted to know more about the scientific side of the voyage and the background to it happening and also the development of the relationship between Rose and her husband. It is good to know there will be an adult version of the story in the not too distant future which I'm sure will include more of this information.*

*Ruth*

*The depth of Elaine's knowledge and interest in her main characters is inspiring, as is her commitment to research. I find it difficult to decide if she is an historian who has written a book for children or a writer who is an expert historian. She excels as both.*

*Di*



**Sharon Coppin, Sue Stopher, Aniek Ragan, Ruth Vertigan, Elaine Forrestal, Marian Hillam, Di Henderson, Gay Tierney, Trish Montgomery, Jenni Woodroffe, Karen Goddard, Ruth Nitschke, Myrtle Spiers**

### **Guest Author – Jen Banyard**

In September we were delighted to welcome Jen Banyard who talked to the group about becoming a children's author and the process of writing *Riddle Gully runaway*, her third novel published by Fremantle Press.

When a friend died young, Jen determined to manage her time more effectively and set about becoming a fiction writer instead of wondering about it. *Spider lies* was published in 2009, *Mystery at Riddle Gully* followed in 2012 and this year *Riddle Gully runaway* was published cementing Jen's reputation as a writer of humorous adventure stories for younger readers.

Flashcards played a role in planning *Riddle Gully runaway* as did serendipitous events such as the discovery of a raven's nest on a walk and a chat with a psychologist at a social occasion. Jen shared her writing journals with the group and explained that her editing process begins with typing sections from the journal.

Just before publication a number of titles including *The rollercoaster kid* and *Riddle Gully robbers* were considered before *Riddle Gully runaway* was selected. Jen worked with Gail Spiers to produce Australian Curriculum-linked Teachers' Notes which are available at [www.jenbanyard.com](http://www.jenbanyard.com).

Now that Jen has completed her PhD in Creative Writing at UWA she is writing a third and final novel set in Riddle Gully, a town inspired by her sojourns in Dwellingup.



**Sharon Coppin, Marian Hillam, Karen Goddard, Jenni Woodroffe, Myrtle Spiers, Gay Tierney, Gail Spiers and Jen Banyard**