



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

2020 Annual Report

LIFE MEMBERS

Muriel Barwell OAM
Mary Gimondo
Alison Gregg (deceased 01/04/2020)
Grant Stone

HONORARY MEMBERS

Margaret Allen
Stephen Carley
Carolyn Logan
Lesley Reece AM

2020 COMMITTEE

Executive Committee:

President: Jan Nicholls
Vice President: Vacant**
Past President: Sue Stopher

Treasurer: Sheena Matthews
Secretary: Kris Williams
Ex Officio: Chloe Mauger

**N.B. Natalya Hawrylak accepted the position of Vice President at the Branch meeting on 19 August 2020.

CBCA National Board Representative: Angela Briant (resigned June 2020),
Jan Nicholls & Sue North (interim June-August 2020), Tania Longman

WA Judges 2020-2021: Sandi Parsons (Early Childhood), Jan Pocock (Younger Readers)

Committee Members: *Denotes new members**

Liz Allen, Nola Allen, Beck Borona, Sharon Coppin, Lindsay Fletcher*, Mary Gimondo, Felicia Harris, Lorraine Horsley*, Sarah Klass*, Tania Longman*, Tyshana McEwen*, Trish Montgomery, Denise Robins, Gail Spiers, Jane Stanton, Tracey Willis* and Sally Woffenden.

Subcommittees

A Night with our Stars
Archives
Book Discussion Group
CBCA Book Week Dinner & Opening
Donations & Gifts
Facebook
Grants & Regional Centres
Membership

Merchandise
Make Your Own Story Book
Muriel Barwell Award (Biennial - even years)
Newsletter
Penny Hutchens Memorial Fund (Biennial – odd)
Judges Talks
Travelling Suitcase
Website

From the WA Branch President **Jan Nicholls**

It is my pleasure to present this Annual Report to our membership as a record of an unprecedented yet busy, productive and successful year for the WA Branch. March 2020 was particularly challenging as the threat of COVID-19 emerged and the world as we knew it changed dramatically. The pandemic impacted heavily on our annual program especially in terms of the ability to meet safely. Please note that owing to restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the AGM planned for 23 April 2020 was rescheduled to 17 June 2020 where the 2019 Annual Report was tabled.

Our WA Branch Constitution states that Executive positions may only be held for a maximum of five consecutive years so Liz Allen stepped down as Branch Secretary and was replaced by Kris Williams. Denise Robins vacated the position of Vice President to allow for succession planning as my term of office as President comes to an end in April 2021. We thank them both for their service and contribution to the WA Branch. We were delighted to welcome new committee members Lindsay Fletcher, Lorraine Horsley, Sarah Klass, Tania Longman, Tyshana McEwen and Tracey Willis and Natalya Hawrylak who accepted the position of Vice President at the August Branch meeting.

CBCA Book of the Year judges Sandi Parsons (Early Childhood) and Jan Pocock (Younger Readers) survived the first of their two-year term in more challenging conditions than usual and we are sincerely grateful to them for offering their time, expertise and support to CBCA in this important way.

On a sad note we bade farewell to Life Member, Dr Alison Gregg who passed away on 1st April 2020.

Being WA Branch President offers many wonderful opportunities to connect with the wider children's literature community and I was honoured to address the Libraries, Literacy and Learning Group at the State Library and visit some more remote and regional schools in Korda and Dampier.

The Branch continues to support both the Paper Bird Fellowship, a wonderful initiative by Paper Bird Director Jennifer Jackson offering free studio space to an emerging author/illustrator, and The Literature Centre (TLC).

At CBCA National level Angela Briant resigned as WA Branch Board Director in June 2019 and that Board position was temporarily filled by Jan Nicholls (for two meetings) and Sue North (for one meeting) before Tania Longman was appointed. A Special General Meeting called in October 2020 resulted in a major overhaul of the National Board with former Chair Margot Hillel and several other Directors resigning. At the subsequent meeting after the SGM Wendy Rapee and Tania Longman were appointed as CBCA Board Chair and Vice Chair.

The Little Street Library initiative organised by Board Director Cecile Shanahan offered a free library to each state and territory. Mt Barker Public Library was the WA recipient and the LSL was installed at the Kendenup townsite in December 2020.

There was great excitement at the announcement of the 2020 notables and we were especially proud of the nine Western Australians listed. We were further delighted by the inclusion of Meg McKinlay and Karen Blair in the 2020 CBCA Book of the Year Shortlist and thrilled *When Billy was a Dog* written by Kristy Murray and illustrated by Karen Blair was named as an Honour Book in the Book of the Year Awards. Owing to the constraints imposed by COVID-19, the Shortlist and BOTY Awards Ceremony were performed online for the first time in CBCA history. These events were viewed with great positive acclaim and commended for being inclusive and celebratory. We also congratulate Magabala Books on a significant presence in the 2020 Shortlist especially in the CBCA Award for New Illustrators.

COVID-19 had an enormous impact on merchandise distribution and sales with lockdowns prompting the National Board to take the unprecedented step of reallocating CBCA Book Week from its traditional August schedule to the third week in October. Tania Longman, in her first year as Merchandise Coordinator, adjusted to the ever-changing demands as the situation evolved and deserves credit for her stamina.

When we tally the hours committee members devote behind the scenes to administrative work as well as time spent on organising then rescheduling events and activities it really is an impressive total and they rose to the challenges admirably. I thank everyone on the committee most sincerely for their ongoing efforts in an extremely tough year and especially acknowledge the tireless work of the Executive.

Please enjoy reading this record of another busy year for the WA Branch and marvel at the dedication and enthusiasm of our hardworking committee members. They are living treasures and the WA Branch simply could not function without them.

Finance Sheena Matthews, Treasurer

The 2020 financial year, despite the financial, economic and social impacts of COVID-19 nationally, has resulted in a surplus of \$41,515.52, an increase of \$36,589.06 over last year. Income was marginally up over 5.4% however expenses were down by over 24.75%.

The lockdown during the pandemic, although affecting the delivery of our services and events, fortunately worked in our favour. The surplus, due to the extraordinary circumstances, does not represent a fair comparison to the previous financial year.

The rescheduling of CBCA Book Week to later in the year resulted in several Councils and Libraries deciding to either cut the scale of their events or not stage them at all. The ensuing consequence was that not all funds were expended, resulting in a surplus of \$22,779.62. Discussions have been held with the Grant providers regarding the allocation of the surplus to CBCA Book Week related projects in the New Year.

The allocation of grant funding to MYOSB assisted in covering a significant portion of the expenses incurred for the Awards Ceremony resulting in a small deficit of \$294.99.

Membership rose by 16% with an increase in income of \$4,348.97.

Merchandise sales were affected by the uncertainty of post lockdown with most institutions reducing the size of the orders. Although sales were down 12.7%, expenses were down 14.7%, resulting in a surplus of \$5,887. The Branch received a 40% discount for the purchase of merchandise stock from the National office. This discount was not given in the previous financial year and enabled the Branch to achieve and maintain a surplus.

ANWOS was held just prior to lockdown and achieved a healthy surplus of \$3,306.62. The Book Week dinner was held later in the year and was well attended, resulting in a surplus of \$1,495.47. Both events pleasingly achieved improved surpluses over the previous year.

Due to the travel restrictions with lockdown, there were no National AGM expenses incurred in the financial year, as the meeting was held by Zoom. Oasis House gave a 3-month rent moratorium to tenants. This generous gesture led to a decrease in our rental expenses by 25%.

The Committee is fiscally responsible and prudent in managing expenses. Our cash position at the Bank, which includes the trading account, the cash management account and term deposit account is healthy. The CBCA WA Branch is in a sound financial position and able to currently meet all our financial responsibilities.

The audited accounts are provided as a separate document.

Membership Sharon Coppin

Membership renewals were sent out on the first Monday of the financial year. At the end of 2020, there were 290 fully paid members. With the addition of 30 new members this represented a percentage increase of 32%.

Membership Categories	Member Numbers
Personal	80
Concessional	88
Institutional	122

Membership fees increased in 2020.

Category	New Membership fees (incl GST)
Personal	\$55.00
Concessional	\$40.00
Institutional	\$75.00

During 2020, the membership email list was modified to incorporate membership numbers within the institutional membership category. All entries have been tagged for statistical purposes.

Members were reminded to advise the membership officer of any changes regarding contact details. Reminders are sent via newsletters, mailing lists and Facebook.

Oasis Lotteries House Chloe Mauger

The advent of COVID-19 in March brought about a moratorium on rental for the 3 months from March to June as most tenants were working from home and not using the building. In June, Perth Inner City Youth Services (PICYS) took up tenancy of Suite 3, bringing occupancy of the building to 6 tenants

Muriel Barwell Award for Distinguished Service to Children's Literature Gail Spiers

The recipient of the 2020 Muriel Barwell Award was Jennifer Jackson, Director of Paper Bird Children's Books & Arts in Fremantle. Jennifer was presented with the award personally by Muriel at the CBCA Book Week dinner on Friday 16 October. Jennifer joins a growing list of valued 'Muriels': Peter Williams – 2006, Mary Gimondo - 2008, Frané Lessac - 2010, Elaine Forrestal - 2012, Jenni Woodroffe - 2014, Celia Cole - 2016 and Jan Nicholls - 2018.

Website Sarah Klass

After taking on the role of Website Manager in July 2020 Sarah Klass found the existing platform somewhat unwieldy and began investigating more user-friendly alternatives. In the meantime, several of the pages were updated and refreshed and information was kept as up to date as possible. A proposal to change the website platform from Orchard to Weebly will be presented to the committee with a view to implementing in 2021.

Social Media – Facebook and Instagram Tyshana McEwen

We have 1231 Facebook group members (an increase of 152 since 2019) of whom 944 are active. 90% of the group are female with the majority in 45-54 years age range. The majority of members are from the Perth metropolitan area.

Perth	WA	829
Melbourne	VIC	64
Sydney	NSW	48
Brisbane	QLD	21
Mandurah	WA	19
Geraldton	WA	11
Adelaide	SA	11
Canberra	ACT	10
Bunbury	WA	9
Albany	WA	9

Our CBCA WA Instagram page was set up in August 2020 with the aim to provide timely announcements about CBCA events and an interesting, up-to-date, well-curated selection of posts that are relevant to Australian children's literature. We currently have 472 active followers with numbers increasing daily. These include Australian publishers, paid CBCA WA members, authors, illustrators, local libraries, bookshops, teachers, librarians, academics, educators and anyone interested in literature. Instagram traffic increased during CBCA Book Week 2020 and during the MYOSB award ceremony with popular tags such as #cbcawa, #cbca2020 and #cbcabookweek2020.

The tone of posts is friendly, warm, sincere and informed in order to communicate about:

- the CBCA Book of the Year Awards (Notables, Shortlist, Winner and Honour Books)
- what our branch is doing
- Australian children's authors and illustrators and book titles
- research and news about how children read
- other Australian children's book awards

Newsletter Beck Borona

The standard five issues were sent out, as well as six additional interim bulletins provided to keep members informed of updates and changes due to COVID-19 restrictions. My thanks to the proof-reading team of Jan Nicholls, Denise Robins and Chloe Mauger for their support and for helping with the extra mailouts.

Archives Trish Montgomery

The compilation of a historical record of the WA Branch Executive and Committee members from 1987 has been revised to commence from 1975. Now complete, it provides a streamlined method of reference. An electronic copy of the spreadsheet will be maintained by the Archivist and updated copies will be sent to the WA Branch President and Secretary after each AGM.

Inspired by past WA Branch President Sue Wyche, a collection of CBCA Book of the Year Award books had been collected over time. Gail Spiers has enthusiastically taken over the management of this collection. The winning books in each category from 1946 to present day make up the collection. Active measures have been taken to create an awareness of this valuable collection through social media and a display at the recent CBCA Book Week dinner, and also to source the missing 118 from a total of 236 books. Gail's diligence has resulted in donations from Committee members Gail Spiers, Chloe Mauger, Liz Allen, Kris Williams, Jan Nicholls, and Trish Montgomery. Kris Williams is in the process of contacting publishers and authors for donations to the collection and has been successful in obtaining a book from Jackie French. In response to the article in the November newsletter requesting donations from the 1946-1981 category, books were gratefully received from Lesley Reece, Peter Williams, and Margaret Hamilton.

Gail has also made a generous personal financial donation to the WA Branch to facilitate the purchase of missing books when sourced. Thank you to Gail for taking on this project with such dedication.

Thank you also to sub-committee members Sue Stopher and Chloe Mauger for their contribution throughout year and a welcome to Liz Allen who will be joining the group in 2021.

Make Your Own Story Book (MYOSB) Denise Robins

COVID restrictions caused changes to dates to ensure that MYOSB Awards Ceremony could take place during the 2020 Book Week.

- Competition closed: Friday July 24.
Westbooks was the collection point. Thanks to staff Rose, Heather and Michelle.

460 entries received

108 individual entries:

- Primary (79 metropolitan and 13 country)
- 16 secondary (12 metropolitan and 4 country)

18 government schools:

- 15 Primary (11 metropolitan and 4 country)
- 3 Secondary (metropolitan)
- 2 District High School (country)

14 private schools:

- 13 metropolitan
- 1 country

- First sort of entries: Sunday 26 July at Oasis House
- MYOSB judges meeting: Monday 27 July at Oasis House
- 18 judges – 1 new, a mix of teachers, librarians, authors and illustrators.
- Winners were contacted through schools or (individual entries) parents during the beginning of August.
- Sort of (non-winning) entries: Sunday 13 September at Oasis House
- Awards ceremony: Sunday 25 October (last Sunday of Book Week)
All winners (22) attended. Some had been winners in previous years.

The 2020 guest speaker was Michael Speechley, WA author and illustrator of *The All New Must Have Orange 430*, which won recognition as an Honour Book for the CBCA awards, 2019. At very short notice the ceremony was moved to Ambrose Estate as COVID restrictions meant that our usual venue, The Literature Centre, could not seat the required 100 attendees. The venue was provided free of charge. The Literature Centre created a small bookstore, selling books from WA authors including Michael Speechley. Due to the size of the venue the format changed from a morning tea to a lunch, with the ceremony before lunch and a winners' workshop run by Michael Speechley held after lunch.

Catering was provided by the venue and the cost was covered by our sponsor Healthway.

The WA Branch thanks CBCA WA committee members, David Matthews (photography), Kate Boylsen and Ambrose Estate staff, The Literature Centre and our CBW sponsors Healthway and their Go for 2&5 program. Sincere thanks to Beaufort Street Books, Child Education Services, Crow Books, The Lane Bookshop, Millpoint Caffe Bookshop, Paper Bird Children's Books & Arts and Westbooks.

CBCA Book of the Year Awards

Several activities revolve around the announcement of the Shortlist and winners of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards.

Judges Talks Felicia Harris

In 2020 we welcomed two new Western Australian Book of the Year Award (BOTYA) Judges; Sandi Parsons (Early Childhood) and Jan Pocock (Younger Readers). The 2020 Judges met in Melbourne in early February to discuss the Shortlisted books and determine the Winners and the Honour Books which were announced on the 16th October.

The WA Judges Talks planned for 23/24 May were cancelled due to the pandemic and replaced by an online Judges Talk recorded on Wednesday 16th September using the WebEx platform. Both judges displayed a depth of knowledge and were eloquent and informative in their discussion of the shortlisted titles. There were

some technical difficulties with downloading and access to the unfamiliar platform and some problems with access via iPad, which meant distribution was limited. We hope face to face Judges Talks will be reinstated but a new platform will be researched for online talks in 2021.

Chloe Mauer, Sue Stopher and Jan Nicholls were joined on the subcommittee by Tracey Willis in October and I thank them all for their contribution.

CBCA Book Week

CBCA Book Week Opening and Dinner Denise Robins and Sally Woffenden

The announcement of the 2020 Book of the Year winners and the opening of CBCA Book Week was postponed until October 16th due to COVID restrictions. The event was very popular, with the 130 available seats selling out well before the official closing date.

Cristy Burne, with her genius for science and STEM related topics, was the ideal guest speaker to highlight the theme *Curious Creatures Wild Minds*. Her real-life tales, enthusiastic urging everyone to 'get out there and have a go' and obvious enjoyment in all things exciting made for a highly entertaining and humorous performance. She was awarded her own *Science Star* trophy and some dark chocolate in recognition of her amazing talents.

Cristy presented many door, table and raffle prizes donated by local businesses, CBCA WA Committee members and other supporters. The silent auction (Jan Ormerod limited edition print purchased by Sheena Matthews) and raffles raised a total of \$1458 that will be used to support CBCA WA programs in 2021.

The Muriel Barwell Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature was awarded to Jennifer Jackson, owner of Paper Bird Children's Books & Arts in Fremantle. Muriel, with Jan Nicholls (CBCA WA President) presented the award and Jen's achievement was celebrated by an audience that included her husband, Paper Bird family and many WA renowned authors and illustrators.

A follow up meeting was held with Kate Boylson (Ambrose) to discuss the successful event and thank Kate and her staff for their flexibility regarding date changes. The venue was temporarily booked for the 2021 Dinner subject to venue hire fee and other conditions.

First time attendee Monique Aviso from Curtin University library had many positive comments including "I bravely booked a single ticket to attend the Book Week Launch. I was seated with the most welcoming bunch from The Literature Centre, some CBCA WA Committee members, and was close enough to touch Cristy as she bounced past to deliver the keynote speech. I was there to witness the power of storytelling from the people who make it happen. I was not disappointed. Thank you for making my first Book Week Dinner my new annual event go-to."

Merchandise Tania Longman Merchandise Coordinator

The 2020 merchandise range featured beautifully quirky creatures designed by Gwyn Perkins to illustrate the CBCA Book Week theme of *Curious Creatures, Wild Minds* and added colour to school and library displays in a challenging year. Social media tiles, email signatures and website banners were a welcome addition to the resources available to Branches. The decision to reintroduce the CBCA Shortlist poster (after it was removed in 2019) was greeted with enthusiasm from all Branches, as was the move to streamline bookmark choices to two, down from five in 2019.

Free images were made available to all CBCA Members via the website – colouring in posters, bookmarks and add your own creature templates allowing for creativity and flexibility.

COVID-19 impacted heavily on merchandise distribution and sales in 2020. The interstate company producing the merchandise and the warehouse distributing the orders to the Branches were both closed during lockdown and production was halted accordingly.

As a gesture of goodwill the National Office sent sample merchandise packs containing posters and bookmarks to Branches for distribution as they saw fit. The WA Branch elected to distribute these to a range of bookstores, some remote and regional schools and as part of prize packs offered by Noongar Radio in a literacy and reading promotion. Packs were also given to all those who attended the CBCA Book Week Dinner.

Merchandise was delivered to the WA Branch on 10 July. Some members opted to celebrate CBCA Book Week in the original August timeslot, others deferred their celebrations until October. In an attempt to cater for this range of needs a packing day was held on Saturday 18 July and the usual deadline for orders was abandoned. Special thanks to Sheena Matthews, Branch Treasurer and to the merchandise subcommittee members Trish Montgomery, Liz Allen and Jan Nicholls. Thanks to all committee members (and partners) who assisted on packing days.

Sales Analysis 2020 – Total Orders

Client	2017	2018	2019	2020
Public Libraries	49	51	44	40
Independent Schools	41	37	40	32
Catholic Education Schools	61	50	52	31
Government Schools	183	161	159	163
Sundry Sales	10	5	10	4
TOTAL	344	304	305	270

CBCA Merchandise Sales by Item 2020

Item	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Poster – Book Week	963	963	868	791	555
Poster – Short List	333	340	328	N/A	267
Handbook	117	94	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bookmarks – set of 10	770	733	43,180	60,090	40,260
Badge	889	881	1268	1160	772
Book Week stickers	771	828	683	718	677
Bunting	325	402	438	388	306
Pens			432	593	283
Wristbands			200	N/A	N/A
Lanyards					372
Creature Pins					80
Award Stickers	234	193	136	104	94 sets
Shortlist (Individual)					4
Winner (Individual)					6
Notable Stickers	28	59	87	62	32
		\$6775	\$6905	\$6418	\$5887

Note: Donated items are in addition to the figures shown.

Grants program (Metropolitan and Regional Centres)

Mary Gimondo and Nola Allen

Over many years, the CBCA WA Branch has dispersed small grants funding from the State Government of WA and Healthway Go for 2&5 to assist public libraries to run CBCA Book Week (BW) sessions for schools and the wider community. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, BW 2020 was celebrated nationally from 17- 23 October 2020 with the theme *Curious Creatures, Wild Minds* instead of on the traditional August dates. In 2020, **15,763** children, parents, teachers and librarians attended events and participated in workshops held during CBCA Book Week in twenty-one metropolitan and country regions across 65 libraries and community resource centres (CRCs). Thirty-seven high calibre WA children's authors, illustrators and storytellers encouraged their young audiences to be curious and to continually question everything around them. Aspiring young authors and illustrators had the opportunity to work alongside WA children's book creators in hands-on workshops and learn invaluable tips as they shared their writing and illustrating journeys.

While session numbers and attendances were impacted due to COVID-19, many libraries adopted innovative approaches to presenting a rescheduled BW program in October. Twelve libraries in regional and metropolitan areas were forced to withdraw or not submit funding applications due to COVID-19 constraints.

For these libraries and communities that were unable to fully participate in BW 2020, the WA Branch organised an online BW program to be made available in January 2021. The online program will be made more widely available to other libraries and centres in February.

The 2020 CBCA Book Week program in WA is generously supported by the State Government of Western Australia through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Healthway Go for 2&5, the Western Australian Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia and local governments throughout the state.

Events and Activities

A Night with our Stars (ANWOS) Convenor/MC Jan Nicholls

Our 17th A Night with our Stars was held at the Bendat Parent and Community Centre in Dodd Street, Wembley on Friday 13 March 2020 from 6pm-9.30pm. Despite the threat of COVID-19 there were 200 people in attendance and the atmosphere was very positive. Catering was supplied by Butterfly Catering. Five raffle prizes were given away to lucky winners.

174 tickets were sold (111 members/63 non-members). There were 18 Presenters – eight of whom were new. Six of the presenters were published by Fremantle Press. Seven presenters were listed in the 2020 Notables (out of a total of nine from WA). Four guests attended from event sponsor Fremantle Press and four Westbooks staff ran the bookshop. Thanks to everyone for a terrific team effort and to the family members and friends who willingly assisted. Special thanks to the various managers who coordinated their teams so well – Lorraine Horsley/Beck Borona (Floor), Denise Robins (Catering) and Sue Stopher (Bar).

Book Discussion Group Coordinator Gail Spiers

The Book Discussion Group (BDG) met eleven times during 2020 at the University Club, Oasis Lotteries House and via Zoom. The planned Shortlist discussion in April was cancelled because of COVID-19 physical distancing requirements and instead was held via Zoom, a new experience for many of us. Overall attendance was 80 with 21 different people attending throughout the year. The highlight was meeting Rebecca Higgie, author of *The History of Mischief*, who spoke eloquently about her book and the 12-year process of writing it. Of the ten books discussed at regular meetings, two were by male and eight by female authors. The February discussion book, *This is How We Change the Ending* by Vikki Wakefield, went on to win the 2020 CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers. BDG meetings provide opportunities for members to read and discuss the latest Australian YA books, many of which appear on the CBCA Book of the Year Notables List.

Booklinks Jackie French Travelling Suitcase Sue Stopher

CBCA WA took over management of this project from The Literature Centre in 2019. During 2020, a further five picture books and five novels were generously donated by HarperCollins and added to the suitcase. The suitcase is available for loan to WA schools for periods from 4 weeks up to a term. Financial CBCA WA members are given first option for borrowing. The suitcase was loaned to four schools for a term each in 2020: St Stephen's School, Duncraig; Landsdale Primary School; Wongan Hills District High School; and Mandurah Catholic College.

Acknowledgements and thanks

As this comprehensive report attests it has been another busy and productive year for the CBCA WA Branch despite the ongoing challenges presented by COVID-19. The success of our events is due entirely to the tireless passion and devotion of our committee members who believe wholeheartedly in the importance of quality Australian books in the lives of our children and willingly give of their time and expertise to promote them and their creators. Words cannot adequately express my gratitude for their commitment. I would particularly like to acknowledge the Executive team – Vice President, Natalya Hawrylak, Secretary Kris Williams, and Treasurer Sheena Matthews for their enthusiasm and support as well as Past President Sue Stopher and Ex Officio Chloe Mauger for their assistance and input throughout the year. It has been my privilege to lead such a proactive and dynamic Branch.

Jan Nicholls
WA Branch President