



**CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA  
WA BRANCH (INCORPORATED)**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2024**





### Our Purpose

To enrich young lives through Australian stories.

### Our Vision

To see a thriving creative world embracing the transformational power of stories, across generations.

### Our Mission

To connect, communicate, celebrate, and advocate for the value of stories.

### Our Core Values

EQUITY DIVERSITY QUALITY INTEGRITY RESPECT

The Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) is a not for profit, volunteer run organisation which aims to engage the community with literature for young Australians.

## Members

It is my pleasure to present to our membership this Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2024.

The WA Branch welcomed new committee members Sandi Parsons and Kelsey Gardner as Website Managers. During the year we farewelled committee members Sharon Giltrow, Ted Slater, Jane Stanton and Kelsey Gardner. We thank them for their work and contribution to the Branch. Joanne Colely was appointed Secretary upon the resignation of Tracey Willis. She was unable to remain as Secretary due to her overseas work commitments. Jen McKay was appointed Secretary.

This year we also moved to committee members being able to attend meetings via zoom when necessary.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Planning Day to discuss our way forward and re-assess our priorities for the coming year was moved to the beginning of 2025. We presented our Children's Book Week® activities which reached many of the WA Regional centres.

Margaret Hamilton AM was an Australian children's literature publisher and author who served as the National President of the Children's Book Council of Australia from 1991 to 1992 and as a National Board Member until April 2017. She passed away at the end of 2022. In honour of her commitment to CBCA, the WA Branch presented a free Children's Literature Lecture in October 2024.

The number of WA groups taking part in Shadow Judging during 2024 more than doubled since the previous year.

The WA Branch continues to actively support, promote and advocate for creatives through promotion on social media, letters of support and assistance with grant applications. Many hours are spent organising and attending WA Branch events, book launches and supporting our partner organisations.

Wendy Rapee, Chair of the CBCA Board, stepped down this year and NT representative Jonathan Howard took on the role for six months.

We thank our partners, supporting book shops, WA creatives and SCWBI for being part of our journey.

Thank you to all committee members for their time and support. Whether behind the scenes or up front, they went above and beyond to ensure the success of our events as well as contributing to the successful running of the WA Branch. Thanks also to the wider CBCA WA membership for the many ways in which they supported the WA Branch throughout 2024.



**Kris Williams**

## CBCA WA BRANCH

### LIFE MEMBERS

Muriel Barwell OAM  
Mary Gimondo  
Grant Stone

### HONORARY MEMBERS

Catherine Clark  
Elizabeth Spencer  
Carolyn Logan  
Stephen Carley

### 2024 COMMITTEE

#### Executive Committee:

<b>President:</b> Kris Williams	<b>Treasurer:</b> Sheena Matthews
<b>Vice President:</b> Kirsty Lightfoot	<b>Secretary:</b> Joanne Colely / Jen McKay
<b>Past President:</b> vacant	<b>Ex Officio:</b> Tracey Willis/ Kelsey Gardner/Jenny Botje

**\*\*N.B.** There was no immediate past President

#### CBCA National Board Representative:

Kris Williams

#### WA Judge 2024-2025:

Nola Allen (Book of the Year Awards Early Childhood)  
Maria Alessandrino (Book of the Year Awards Older Readers)

#### Committee Members: *Denotes new member\**

Liz Allen, Nola Allen, Jenny Botje, Joanne Colely\*, Sharon Coppin, Charmaine Faulkner\*, Kelsey Gardner\*, Mary Gimondo, Felicia Harris, Dia Jacob\*, Lorraine Horsley, Claire Keirath\*, Jenny McCracken\*, Chloe Mauger, Trish Montgomery, Jan Nicholls, Sandi Parsons\*, Denise Robins, Wendy Rudge, Gail Spiers, Tracey Willis and Sally Woffenden.

#### Subcommittees and Team Leaders:

A Night with our Stars (ANWOS)	Jan Nicholls
Archives	Trish Montgomery
Book Discussion Group	Gail Spiers
CBCA Children's Book Week® Dinner & Opening	Kris Williams
Facebook	Jan Nicholls
Regional Centres	Mary Gimondo / Nola Allen
Instagram	Audrey McSevich / Charmaine Faulkner
Judges Talks	Tracey Willis
Membership / Membership Development	Sharon Coppin/Sheena Matthews
Merchandise / eStore	Julie Muir / Gia Jacob
Make Your Own Story Book Awards (MYOSBA)	Denise Robins
Muriel Barwell Award (Biennial)	Gail Spiers
Newsletter	Wendy Rudge
Oasis House	Sharon Coppin
Penny Hutchens Memorial Fund (Biennial - 2023)	Jenny Botje
Shadow Judging	Kris Williams
Website	Sandi Parsons / Kelsey Gardner

## REPORTS 2023 FINANCE

The financial position at the end of the 2023 year was a surplus of \$12,824.25. This was a 57 per cent decrease on the surplus in the 2023 financial year. This was mainly due to a 14 per cent drop in grants and income. Expenses, however, were prudently managed and down 2 per cent. Surpluses were achieved in our major events.

There were 308 members, an increase of 11 members on the previous financial year. Income from membership was marginally up on the previous year by 4 per cent. The marketing service fee, a percentage distribution of WA merchandise sales from the CBCA e-store sales will no longer be received. The last and final distribution was in 2023.

ANWOS continued to be a well-supported and successful annual event for the Branch. There was however, a 43 per cent drop in the event's surplus. In 2023, the event celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ANWOS with a silent auction of original artworks from 33 WA illustrators that contributed significantly to the surplus in 2023. There was no silent auction at the 2024 event.

The Book Week dinner was an equally popular and well attended event and achieved a surplus of \$1,110.67, a drop of 38 per cent on the previous year.

The expenses shown for the Book Week Grant Online Project relate to the 2023 grant allocated to the Online Project in 2024. This project involved the creation of a podcast and videos with creatives.

MYOSBA celebrates the creativity and talent of WA students from Pre-Primary to Year 8 and is well supported. It was generously supported by Sean Avery and the Department of Education resulting in expenses for the event being marginally down on last year.

Expenses shown for Shadow Judging and the Margaret Hamilton event were not incurred last year but are an important part of the branch's activities.

As a voluntary organisation, the balance of providing our members with benefits of membership and achieving surpluses to run events and grow our financial position is a constant challenge in an era of rapidly growing costs. The committee, however, is fiscally responsible and prudent in managing expenses.

The cash position at the bank, which includes the trading account, the cash management account and term deposit accounts is strong. 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

At the end of 2024 there were 308 fully paid members, an increase of 15 on the previous year. There was no increase in membership fees for 2024.

The membership email list was continually updated; and overall changes to include institution names, membership number and tagging have made it easier to edit member details. Work is underway to delete any contacts that appear more than once.

Members are reminded to advise the membership officer of any changes to membership records, including contact details. Reminders will continue to be sent via newsletters, mailing lists and Facebook.

Membership Categories	Member Numbers
Personal	96
Concessional	125
Institutional	87

## OASIS HOUSE

At the beginning of 2024, Oasis House initiated a comprehensive review of its policies and procedures, focusing on identifying any additional policies that may be necessary. This review is expected to continue into 2025 as part of an ongoing effort to enhance organizational protocols.

Chloe Mauger stepped down from her position as a committee member of Oasis House. Sharon Coppin has taken on the role, with Elizabeth (Liz) Allen designated as the secondary committee member to provide support as needed.

The CBCA committee discussed contents insurance, specifically evaluating whether the existing insurance policy held by Oasis House adequately covered all contents, including those belonging to the various associations located within the building. Following these discussions, the CBCA WA Branch resolved to pursue content insurance coverage in 2024 to ensure adequate protection for all assets.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) for 2024 was held on November 20th. During this meeting, it was emphasised that an asset register is maintained for the Oasis House building, providing detailed documentation of all relevant assets associated with the property. This register plays a crucial role in the management and oversight of the building's resources.

## BRANCH SUB-COMMITTEES

### Regional Centres

CBCA WA Branch secured State Government of Western Australia funding of \$75,000 through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries and, together with contributions from the Branch, provided financial assistance to thirty-three metropolitan and country communities to celebrate Children's Book Week® 2024. Our partnership with these communities enables them to leverage further funding from their own local governments, business and the community.

Around 24,000 children, parents, teachers, librarians and the public were enchanted by the theme *"Reading is Magic"* participating in 505 writing and illustration workshops, artist talks, drama, storytelling and Storytime events in 78 libraries, community resource centres and 153 schools across WA from Wyndham in the Kimberley to Mullewa in the Mid-West to Denmark in the Great Southern.

Fifty-two high calibre WA children's authors, illustrators, graphic novelists, performers and storytellers inspired young people as they shared their passion for words, images and stories. These 266 sessions included illustration workshops with 2024 Shadow Judging Picture Book winner, Peter Cheong, Cristy Burne's unique blend of storytelling and science and Isobel Bevis' exploration of Noongar language and place through game-playing.

Many libraries toured artists to local schools or funded the cost of school buses to enable students to attend sessions and visit their local library for the first time. Six outreach programs and tours conducted in 22 regional and remote sites in the Great Southern, Kimberley, Mid-West, Peel, Pilbara and Southwest regions sharing the magic of Children's Book Week® with children in remote communities such as Djarindjin Lombadina on the Dampier Peninsula in the Kimberley, and Warralong Remote Community School near Marble Bar in the Pilbara.

Five new videos and podcasts were added to the Kids Book Buzz program, available on the CBCA WA website and YouTube pages.

## **e-Store / Merchandise**

The e-Store continues to go from strength to strength. The committee made up of Branch representatives meets regularly to work with the National committee on all aspects of the running of the e-Store and type of merchandise available.

During the year it was decided to change the way merchandise was handled and delivered. All merchandise is now held by a central organisation that can pack and send orders directly from the e-Store

In previous years a percentage of final sales from WA branch members was paid to the Branch. It was decided during 2024 that profits from all sales would be kept by National Office to allow continuing development of the e-Store and range of products available to members. During 2024 the e-Store was able to provide up to \$100 worth of free downloads to members including the daily planner. This was welcomed by all Branches.

The e-Store continues to develop and improve the range of products available to members.

## **Muriel Barwell Award**

There were two nominations for the 2024 Muriel Barwell Award for Distinguished Service to Children's Literature.

CBCA WA President, Kris Williams announced Dr Sally Murphy OAM as the 2024 recipient of the award at the Children's Book Week Dinner. We were delighted that Muriel Barwell AM was in attendance to welcome Sally to *The Muriels*.

A special afternoon tea was held for the Muriels on 2 November, and it was resolved to hold a similar event after each announcement in the future.

## **Website**

The website has been actively maintained and updated throughout the year to ensure it remains functional, user-friendly, and relevant. The website team updated the site regularly to show the most recent information and fix any technical problems, making the site easier to use. The team reviewed and revised the content to align with audience needs and introduced new pages to improve navigation and accessibility.

These efforts have contributed to maintaining the website as a reliable and effective communication tool for the WA Branch.

## **Social Media – Facebook / Instagram**

Due to circumstances beyond their control CBCA had to launch a new national Facebook page in July 2024 and the WA Branch responded to the request to help build it up to its previous 350K audience.

The WA Branch Facebook Group started the year with 2595 members increasing steadily each month ending the year with 3091 members – an overall increase of 496.

The top post in 2024 with 9273 views featured Briony Stewart and Kelly Canby with their BOTY gold medals in Sydney. The announcement of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) as the winner of the Astrid Lindgren Award was second highest with 4540 views.

In March the Instagram page had 1022 followers. During 2024 two new committee members offered to assist with Instagram. They will investigate how the account may be best utilised in the future.

## **Newsletter**

Seven issues of the newsletter were published during 2024. On average 58 per cent of members are opening the e-mailed newsletter. This represents a minor reduction of 0.1 per cent on the 2023 figures. Along with newsletters, six other communications were sent to members via mailchimp including e-Store Black Friday sale, Hot off the Press, Spotlight on Events and MYOSB Call for Judges. Engagement for these emails were up one percent to 58.5 per cent opening.

During 2023 we introduced a new 'flip book' styled newsletter to share large amounts of visual content with the membership. Three more flip books were produced in 2024 to celebrate ANWOSA, Children's Book Week® and Christmas. These newsletters continue to be well received with a higher than average engagement.

## **Archives**

During 2024 the processing component of establishing and enhancing the WA Branch Archive Collection continued.

The insertion of newspaper clippings into A3 archive display files covering articles from 1970s to present day which were particularly plentiful during the 80s and 90s, was completed. This comprehensive collection covers CBCA WA activities, MYOSBA, Authors, Illustrators, Children's Book Week® and related items of children's literary interest.

This will be a valuable resource for any historical research and provides easy access to items which can be included in the CBCA WA newsletter. This collection complements the previously completed display file of memorabilia and publicity.

Considerable time has been spent on the Grants and Regional Centres collection which will be accessioned formally in 2025.

The poster collection from 1980 onwards (which includes a donation from 1977) is now documented and organised.

The WA Collection of the Book of the Year Award (BOYA) Winners continues to be updated.

## **Make Your Own Story Book Awards (MYOSBA)**

To ensure MYOSB remained within the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries grant guidelines, the word *competition* was removed from the promotional materials and the website tabs adjusted. The official title is *Make Your Own Story Book Awards* and modelled on the Book of The Year Awards title. The acronym is now MYOSBA.

Promotional materials and the CBCA WA website have been amended to show the new title. Information regarding the new category of story books presented in graphic format has been added to the MYOSBA information.

Westbooks was once again the collection point for all entries.

There were 580 entries received in 2024. This was lower than the number of entries received in 2023.



86 individual entries

- 57 metropolitan (Primary: 48 and Secondary: 9)
- 29 regional (Primary: 26 and Secondary: 3)

494 school-based entries

- 298 government school entries from:
  - 10 Primary (9 metropolitan and 1 regional)
  - 5 Secondary (4 metropolitan and 1 regional)
- 196 non-government school entries from:
  - 17 Primary (12 metropolitan and 5 regional)
  - 2 Secondary (1 metro and 1 regional)

Sorting and judging were finalised by Friday 14 July and winners were contacted through schools or (individual entries) parents.

The Awards Ceremony and author workshop was held on Sunday 18 August at the South Perth Civic Centre Community Hall. The event was attended by 130 adults and children, 24 winners and 106 guests including committee members, judges and authors.

Peter Cheong, guest author/illustrator and winner of the Shadower's Choice Award in the 2024, held a masterclass workshop with the winners.

## CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS AND EVENTS

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

### Judges Talks

The Judges Talk was held in April 2024 at Methodist Ladies College, Claremont.

A total of 27 tickets were sold to members and non-members. Participants listened to a very interesting and enjoyable talk by WA Book of the Year Awards Judges Maria Alessandrino and Nola Allen.

Attendees were provided with a printout of the Shortlisted books to take notes, and copies of the Shortlisted books were available for viewing.

Professional Learning certificates were available on request.

### Shadow Judging

CBCA member schools, libraries and community groups applied to be part of the project to judge one or more categories of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards shortlist. Using the same judging criteria as Book of the Year Awards adult judges, these young voices deep read and discussed the books in their selected category, made a creative response and voted for their favourite books.

WA had 31 groups in 2024, an increase of 13 on the previous year. Groups received a \$50 voucher from the Branch to use towards the purchase of the shortlisted books. Feedback from all groups was that so much was gained from the process.

This year the Shadower's Choice winners were announced alongside the Book of the Year Awards winners. Peter Cheong's *Every Night at Midnight* was awarded the Picture Book of the Year 2024.

## CBCA CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK®

### **CBCA Children's Book Week® Opening and Dinner**

There was a change of venue for the 2024 dinner due to rising costs at the previous venue. The Children's Book Week® Opening and Dinner was held on 17 August 2024 at the East Fremantle Yacht Club. The theme *Reading is Magic* was reflected in the decorations at the Yacht Club.

President Kris Williams announced the Book of the Year Awards winners, congratulating our WA winners Briony Stewart (Winner Early Childhood *Gymnastica Fantastica*), Kelly Canby (Picture Book of the Year *Timeless*) and Peter Cheong (Shadower's Choice Award *Every Night At Midnight*). Congratulations also went to Mark Greenwood and Frané Lessac for their Honour Book *Our Country: Where History Happened*.

Sally Murphy OAM, CBCA shortlisted and awarded author and illustrator, was guest speaker for the evening, and took the audience on a journey of her creative career.

In 2024 the Muriel Barwell Award, which is given every two years to someone who, over time, has demonstrated significant service to children's literature in Western Australia beyond his or her professional commitments, was presented to our guest speaker on the night Dr Sally Murphy OAM.

The 2025 Children's Book Week® Opening and Dinner will be held on Friday 15 August.

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### **A Night with our Stars (ANWOS)**

The 21<sup>st</sup> ANWOS was held on Friday 15 March 2024 at the Bendat Parent and Community Centre in Wembley.

190 guests including Life Members Muriel Barwell and Grant Stone, current Book of the Year Awards judges and past ANWOS convenors, were welcomed by the Branch President. Two delegates from Port Hedland attended the event for the first time.

Fremantle Press, which had seven authors and illustrators present at the event, and Westbooks once again sponsored the evening and provided book prizes for raffles, were well represented on the night.

There were 21 presenters on the program with 13 newcomers, and all acquitted themselves well. Seven of the presenters were listed on the Notables out of 15 in total from WA.

The committee discussed holding another event to be called ATWOS, Afternoon Tea With our Stars, in Bunbury for Regional members in 2025.

A Night with our Stars 2025 has been booked for Friday 14 March 2025.

### **Book Discussion Group**

The Book Discussion Group was very well attended in 2024.

The group met 10 times during the year to discuss Australian Young Adult (YA) fiction, once at the UWA University Club Café and the rest at Roderick House. Published by eight different publishers, six of the titles were written by female authors and four by male authors.

The Branch held two special events during 2024. The first was the CBCA Book of the Year Shortlist reviews presented by CBCA WA members and WA Judges Nola Allen and Maria Alessandrino.

The second was an afternoon tea with shortlisted author/illustrators, Briony Stewart and Peter Cheong. This event took place during Love to Read Local Week in June and was partly funded by Writing WA and the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund.

Briony's picture book *Gymnastica Fantastica!*, went on to win Book of the Year: Early Childhood and Peter's picture book, *Every Night at Midnight*, went on to win the Shadow Judges' Picture Book of the Year Award.

The Book Discussion Group provides opportunities for members to read and discuss the latest Australian YA books, many of which go on to take their place on the CBCA Book of the Year Notable Lists.

### **Margaret Hamilton Memorial Event**

The WA Branch of CBCA held a lecture-style event, entitled *Where the Mild Things Are*, in honour of the late Margaret Hamilton AM, at the State Library of Western Australia on Saturday, 9 November, 2024. The lecture was presented by Meg McKinlay who delivered an insightful and thought-provoking presentation of *Where the Mild Things Are*, which addressed the increasing concerns about censorship resulting in a loss of edginess in contemporary children's literature.

**Kris Williams**

**WA Branch President / WA National Board Member**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

CBCA WA Branch acknowledges our sponsors and supporters and thank them for their continued support of programs and events throughout 2024.

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Department of Education – Premier’s Reading Challenge

Fremantle Press

Westbooks

Typeface

Paper Bird

WA Creatives – for donated art

Gail Spiers

South Perth Library / Community Centre

Cottesloe Primary School

Tranby College

Methodist Ladies College (MLC)

Best Australian Yarn – Seven News Media

The Bell Tower

Sean E Avery

Dr Katrina Stratton MLC

Dr Jags Krishnan MLA

The East Fremantle Yacht Club