

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Gosh, where has the year gone? It's been extraordinary and a huge challenge as the world faces the terrible pandemic. We have been very lucky in Australia that we have avoided the worst, unlike some unfortunate countries. It's still uncertain what the future will hold, and indeed what life in the future will be like. So let's hope we'll be able to celebrate Christmas with our families and friends and look forward to 2021 being a better year for us all.

GOOD NEWS STORY

Pinerolo is usually the venue for children's book events but on 17 October we hosted a very special event, the wedding of our daughter Melissa to Mike Young. The ceremony was at magnificent Hargraves Lookout, followed by the reception here in a marquee at Pinerolo. It was a magical occasion and we are all very happy.



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2020

What a different year, with the Shortlist announcement online and CBCA Book Week postponed. However, it all went extremely well. The presentation of the awards on 16 October was brilliant and I believe it should be announced this way every year. It meant that everyone in Australia could join in, especially schools. You can still watch it: cbca.org.au

It was very special to see all the winners, including Bruce Pascoe who deservedly won the Eve Pownall category for 'Young Dark Emu' (Magabala). Congratulations!

CBCA BLUE MOUNTAINS DINNER, 20 Nov.

The Blue Mountains sub-branch will again hold their pre-Christmas dinner at The Farm, 75 Mort St, Katoomba. \$65 members / \$70 non-members, BYO, with a delicious 3-course dinner. It's very special that the speaker will be **Ursula Dubosarsky**, Australia's Children's Laureate. Ursula will be joined by local award-winner **Tohby Riddle**. No doubt they will discuss a new book they are working on. Places limited. RSVP: stephen.morris36@det.nsw.edu.au / Sheryl Cootes: gacootes@bigpond.com. Ph: 0416 305135.

Pinerolo - 10th Anniversary!

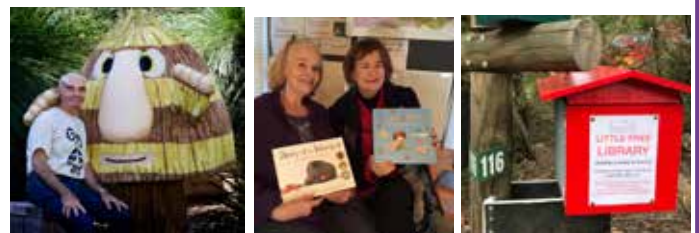
Pinerolo, the Children's Book Cottage officially opened on 10 November 2010. We celebrated with a large open-day party. We had planned a large open-day party for our 10th anniversary but that is not going to happen. Instead, here are a few of the wonderful things we've achieved here:

• COURSES ON CREATING PICTURE BOOKS •

An incredible 48 one-day courses on creating picture books where I was joined by such experts as: Dee Huxley, Wayne Harris, Tohby Riddle, Margaret Wild, Libby Gleeson, Glenda Millard, Freya Blackwood, Lisa Stewart, Julie Vivas and Stephen Michael King. Our most recent was 12 September with Tohby Riddle.

• GRUG DAY: 1 December 2013 •

What an exciting day attended by many families with children who came to meet Ted Prior and Grug himself!



Ted Prior and Grug.

Jackie French Open Day.

Little Free Library

• ILLUSTRATORS IN RESIDENCE •

Funded by CAL: 14 illustrators spent a week at Pinerolo, with daily mentorship.
Funded by WestWords: 5 illustrators, with a 6th booked in. All this has been extremely satisfying as several attendees to the courses and residencies have gone on to have picture books published.

• CBCA BLUE MOUNTAINS SUB-BRANCH •

The inaugural meeting at Pinerolo where Sheryl Cootes was voted President, with a keen committee to help and still going strong. Pinerolo has hosted countless CBCA events and celebrations, plus book launches and book talks, especially promoting our local talented authors and illustrators.

Talks to school groups, showing them how picture books are made have been very special, including a group from Washington University.

Now that Pinerolo is on Airbnb, we're able to share the collection of artwork and books. It's especially exciting when families with children are turned onto books and reading, and they thank us for the opportunity!

Finally, thanks to everyone who has visited, publishers, authors, illustrators, parents, teachers and families. You've made it all worthwhile! See you again soon!

Vale Barbara Ker Wilson AM 1929 — 2020



Barbara Ker Wilson was a writer and editor of children's books. Her influence on the development of children's books in Australia was one of the most significant contributions of the twentieth century. Before moving to Australia in the 1960s she worked with prominent children's authors, most notably discovering Paddington Bear

and working with Michael Bond on that iconic book. She also worked with C S Lewis on *The Last Battle*. Her work in Australia began with Angus & Robertson, where her lifelong love of Indigenous literature began, with the publication of Kath Walker's *Stradbroke Dreamtime*. Then she worked at Hodder & Stoughton Australia. She went on to work at Readers Digest and then UQP. She was awarded the Pixie O'Harris Award for services to Children's Literature in 1997, the Dromkeen Medal in 1999 and an Order of Australia in 2004 for her service to literature as an editor and author and as a mentor to emerging writers.

For me, Barbara was my mentor and friend. I enjoyed so much our time working together, building the award-winning Hodder children's list. She was hugely respected and loved by authors she worked with, so many no longer with us, like Ivan Southall, Mavis Thorpe Clark, Hesba Brinsmead, Ruth Park, David Martin, Jean Chapman and many others. She played a huge part in the shaping of my career in children's books and I'll always be grateful for her mentorship, her friendship and her mischievous sense of humour. She leaves a legacy unmatched in Australian publishing. She passed away peacefully on 10 September.

Announcing! WESTWORDS/PINEROLO ILLUSTRATOR IN RESIDENCE



We received some impressive applications so it was difficult for the selection panel to choose a final. However, Elizabeth Stewart, an aspiring illustrator from Merimbula will be Illustrator in Residence for a week at Pinerolo. The date has not yet been set but it will most likely be after March 2021. I look forward to working with her on

developing her projects and her illustration work.

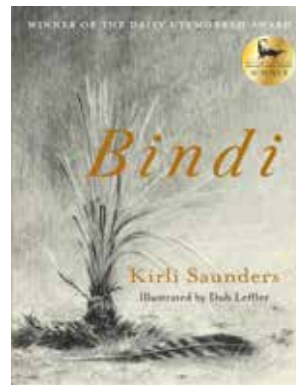
This is a really valuable, priceless opportunity for aspiring illustrators to learn so much and be inspired by the original artwork and the collection of books at Pinerolo. Congratulations, Elizabeth! It's the only residency available to illustrators. Thanks to WestWords for their support.

NEW BOOKS

With ongoing thanks to the publishers who send review copies I feature here this month not only new picture books but some very special books that deserve special attention. With Christmas not very far away, there are ideas here for gift books for all ages.

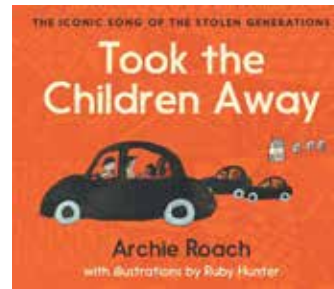
There are also some non-fiction books mentioned in this list. I recommend these to readers. There's an excellent new breed of non-fiction for young readers coming from publishers. In a world where most research is done online, the new non-fiction books extend knowledge to a new level and provide information in new formats that will appeal to all young readers.

SPECIAL MENTION



BINDI by Kirli Saunders, illus by Dub Leffler (Magabala). This wonderful book, winner of the Daisy Utemorra Award, is a verse novel, written using both Gundungurra language and English. It's a moving, sensitive and evocative story of a young girl, her family, her animals, her friends and her Country. In the aftermath of devastating bushfires,

it is written as a call to action for young people to understand their role in conservation and caring for Country. Indigenous illustrator Dub Leffler's (who was an Illustrator in Residence at Pinerolo) exquisite illustrations and the superb production make this book a winner. Available 15 November.



TOOK THE CHILDREN AWAY by Archie Roach, illus by Ruby Hunter (Simon & Schuster). This important book includes the lyrics of this iconic song, with illustrations by his partner and collaborator, Ruby Hunter,

as well as his own memories of his family and historical photographs. It was the last project they worked on together before she died in 2010. A moving and touching tribute that will introduce this song to many new readers.

NEW BOOKS (cont.)

ANEMONE IS NOT THE ENEMY by Anna McGregor (Scribble). When you're an anemone who accidentally stings everyone, finding a friend in a rockpool is not easy. Simple and colourful illustrations in this unusual book.

AUSTRALIA'S WILD WEIRD WONDERFUL WEATHER by Stephanie Owen Reader, illus by Tania McCartney (NLA). A fascinating, detailed and comprehensive look at Australia's weather, which is indeed weird. Illustrations extend the text and combined with the index, resources and word lists, this is an excellent non-fiction book.

Need a break or a peaceful retreat in the Blue Mountains? Pinerolo is on Airbnb. Book on Airbnb.

BACK TO SLEEP by Zoe Foster Blake, illus by Mike Jacobsen (Puffin). Roles are reversed in this amusing story of a fractured bedtime. A bedtime story with a difference and colourful, amusing illustrations.

EVIE IS ALL EARS by Kellie Byrnes, illus by Lesley McGee (Little Pink Dog). Evie is a bilby and she loves school, but she can't hear the teacher. A gentle way of highlighting hearing difficulties, with lovely illustrations.

THE FIRE WOMBAT by Jackie French, illus by Danny Snell. (A & R). The dreadful bushfires a year ago were a threat to many native animals. This moving story of a wombat sharing its burrow with other animals actually happened on the author's property. Evocative illustrations.

GO AWAY, WORRY MONSTER! by Brooke Graham, illus by Robin Tatlow-Lord (EK Books). Anxious thoughts are common before starting school. Archie can't get to sleep because of the worry monster. His strategies for coping will inspire readers, especially with the bright, colourful illustrations.

HELLO JIMMY! by Anna Walker (Puffin). A warm and touching story of a boy and his father, reinforcing their relationship. Another stunning book from this award-winning creator.

HOW TO MAKE A BIRD by Meg McKinlay, illus by Matt Ottley (Walker). This beautiful book about the magic of making a bird is for reading and rereading slowly. Two award-winners collaborate to create something very special. The illustrations are superb.

I WANT TO BE A SUPERHERO by Breanna Humes, illus by Ambelin Kwaymullina (Magabala). Written when the author was 8 years old, this is about wishing on a shooting star. Lively and colourful illustrations.

THE ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF DANGEROUS ANIMALS by Sami Bayly (Hachette). Another fascinating, beautifully illustrated and produced new non-fiction book. Packed with information and clearly designed and set out.

I'M A HERO TOO by Jamila Rizvi, illus by Peter Cheong (Puffin). Readers will relate to this story of one family's way of coping with the pandemic and the changes to their normal family activities. A timely book.

MONKEY MIND by Rebecca J Palmer (Little Pink Dog). Dealing with anxiety with kindness is the theme of this simple yet relevant book. Lively and colourful illustrations add lightness and humour.

NGAGINYBE JARRAGBE My story by Shirley Purdie. Gija translation by Eileen Bray (Magabala). The bi-lingual story of the author's life illustrated with her brilliant artwork. A spectacular picture book highlighting Indigenous life.

PEA + NUT GO FOR GOLD! by Matt Stanton (ABC). Pea is a panda and Nut a flamingo. Their race for swimming gold makes a hilarious picture book. Very appealing and lots of fun.

RUDIE NUDIE CHRISTMAS by Emma Quay (ABC). Rudie Nudie is already a favourite and this new one, especially for Christmas, is delightful. Typically, Rudie Nudie bounces energetically through the pages. Perfect.

SCARY BIRD by Michel Streich (Scholastic). **Note:** local Blue Mountains creator. It's not easy accepting a newcomer but soon this bird is accepted in the aviary. Simple language and illustrations will appeal to young readers, especially those starting school.

THE THANK-YOU PRESENT by Jane Martino, illus by Annie White (Puffin). This appealing picture book is the first of a five-part collaboration between the publisher and the preventative mental health organisation, Smiling Mind.

THERE'S SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT LENA by Sigi Cohen, illus by James Foley (Walker). From the creators of *My Dead Bunny* comes a book about a weird new girl at school and the antics she gets up to, until it gets very scary. Suitably scary illustrations.

THE TREE by Graeme Base (Puffin). Another fabulous book from this major award-winner. A touching story about living together and sharing our natural environment. A book to read over and over again and delve into the beautiful, detailed illustrations.

TREE BEINGS by Raymond Huber, illus by Sandra Severgnini (EK). With a foreword by Jane Goodall, this excellent non-fiction book, illustrated on every page, emphasises the importance of trees and forests to life on our planet. Recommended for all ages.

THE ULTIMATE ANIMAL ALPHABET BOOK by Jennifer Cossins (Hachette). A very impressive collection of hundreds of animals with information about each one crowd into this fascinating book by CBCA award-winner.

THE UNWILLING TWIN by Freya Blackwood (A & R). This multi award-winner never fails to please. This warmly appealing story about identical twins and sibling love has a surprise cheeky twist that will entertain readers. Beautiful illustrations, as usual.



GOOD NEWS!

I found out recently that the US publisher of *B is for Bedtime*, illustrated by Anna Pignataro, had ordered their 17th reprint, bringing their total sales to 200,000.

How incredible is that?

FINALLY

Thank you for reading my newsletter. Three pages this time! I enjoy writing it and spreading the word about children's books, especially picture books.

Keep up your interest in children's picture books and if you get a chance, read to a child in your life. Remember, 'there is no app to replace your lap'!

Also, you are welcome to share this newsletter with others who might be interested. Best wishes to all. Stay safe.

Margaret Hamilton AM