

Newsletter Number Twenty-four, OCTOBER 2015
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NEWSLETTER NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR

Is the year disappearing for you as well? Somehow once daylight saving begins, the days speed by. Before we know it Christmas will be here. And guess what our Christmas cards will feature? Snow at our place of course!



This is the terrific logo of The Children's Book Council NSW Blue Mountains Sub Branch. They are going from strength to strength. There's a committee meeting this weekend, where they will be discussing their upcoming celebration of children's

books at Katoomba Library on Saturday 21 November, 1 - 3pm. They are committed to raising the profile of local authors and illustrators and engaging children in a broad range of literature. Come along that afternoon, bring children, and join in the fun.

LAUNCHING MOON

I was honoured to be invited to launch **MOON**, a new picture book by Mark Zurbo and Sadami Konchi, published by Windy Hollow and had huge pleasure doing so. The launch was at Gleebooks on 26 September. It is Sadami's first picture book and I predict the first of many. The beautiful watercolours illustrate the moon in all its moods, shedding its light over the Australian landscape. Sadami is also having an exhibition of her work. It opens next Wednesday night, 21 October at 6pm, at Chrissie Cottee Gallery, Pidcock St, Camperdown and runs until 2 November. Come and see the beautiful paintings from **MOON**.



At Gleebooks l to r: Sadami Konchi, me, Matt Zurbo, Helen Chamberlin, Ann James with two young readers.

PICTURE BOOKS @ PINEROLO



Our latest one-day course on 10 October was a great success. Some people were even here for the second time. It was especially wonderful to have Glenda Millard here for a few days and for her to be so generous with stories of her writing life and the background to her books.

Comments in our visitors' book were hugely complimentary: 'informative and joyful. A complete celebration of picture books.' 'An inspiring place . . . I have learnt so much.' 'A privilege and a pleasure to be involved.' 'Beautiful place, incredible artworks and great advice.'

What a difference a couple of months makes!



FEED THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR!



Everybody must have heard of Eric Carle's bestselling book **THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR** which has sold over 125 million copies – one every 30 seconds. Now there's a game based on the book. It's marked for 2 to 4 year olds, but we adults had fun playing it. There's a board, 4 caterpillar pieces, 20 butterfly pieces and a pack of cards. The first player to build a beautiful butterfly is the winner. For new readers who don't yet have the book, I would suggest a copy of the book plus this game. Hours of fun on Christmas Day!

Check out the range at UGames: www.ugames.com.au
Facebook: ww.facebook.com/UGamesAustralia

NEW BOOKS

I've been receiving review copies of so many beautiful picture books, this will turn out to be a bumper issue of the newsletter. There are so many ideas here for Christmas presents – for all ages. Take a note of the ones you like the sound of.

Firstly though, I'd like to share three magnificent books which are not picture books, but so worth having:

KIDGLOVZ by Julie Hunt & Dale Newman (A & U). This is an epic graphic novel which Dale worked on here at Pinerolo as Illustrator in Residence. It was amazing watching her work and the result is superb. 288 pages of hand-drawn pictures illustrating a graphic fable of friendship and freedom. It's a fascinating read. Highly recommended.

RICH AND RARE, edited by Paul Collins (Ford St). Another epic book. This time such a rich collection of stories, poems and pictures by some of Australia's most successful authors and illustrators. A book to dip into any time there's a few free moments. The cover alone, by Shaun Tan, is worth the price of the book! Highly recommended.

THE SINGING BONES by Shaun Tan (A & U). This beautiful production features sculptures based on fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm. Every spread of its 192 pages features a breathtaking sculpture by this incredible Oscar-winning artist. An added bonus is the introduction by Philip Pullman. Highly recommended.

NOW FOR THE PICTURE BOOKS

BAMBOOZLED by David Legge (Scholastic). It's great to see classic books republished for a whole new generation. This is the 21st anniversary edition of this prize-winning book. It is still relevant for today's readers and the illustrations are beautiful. Highly recommended.

BEING AGATHA by Anna Pignataro (Five Mile Press). I'm a big fan of Anna so am really enthusiastic about this book. It's a beautifully realised story about being different and being yourself. Highly recommended.

BLUE WHALE BLUES by Peter Carnavas (New Frontier). A simple, playful story about feeling depressed – and getting over it in imaginative ways. Big, bold, very appealing illustrations. Recommended.

CAN A SKELETON HAVE AN X-RAY? by Kyle Hughes-Odgers (Fremantle Press). Many of life's unanswerable questions are raised in this fascinating book. The intriguing and detailed ink and watercolour illustrations demand several readings. Highly recommended.

CHRISTMAS AT GRANDMA'S BEACH HOUSE by Claire Saxby & Janine Dawson (Five Mile Press). This is a very entertaining Aussie version of the twelve days of Christmas, with all the chaos and summer family fun we all remember from our childhoods. Recommended.

CHRISTMAS PEG, THE by Cameron Williams & Matthew Martin (Penguin). We all try to be good so Santa will leave lots under the tree. For Wal, it's difficult and he gets nothing. After he tries really hard to be good his luck changes. Fun for Christmas! Recommended.

CROCODOLLY, THE by Marin McKenna (Omnibus). This follow-up to **OCTOPUPPY** presents an imaginative and very amusing way to care for a really unusual pet, until it is discovered for what he really is. Recommended.

DANDELIONS by Katrina McKelvey & Kirrili Lonergan (EK). A special story about a father and daughter and her love of blowing dandelions to the wind. The gentle illustrations are just right for the tone of the story, encouraging readers to find their own dandelions and watch them fly away. Recommended.

DEAR DAD, I WANT TO BE JUST LIKE YOU by Ed Allen & Simon Williams (Scholastic). This was perfect for Fathers Day but would be a great Christmas present as well. It includes actual letters, to pull out of little envelopes, from all sorts of animals to their fathers and concludes with a blank letter in an envelope for the reader to write a note to their own father. Recommended fun.

EYE TO EYE by Graeme Base (Penguin). The incomparable Graeme Base has produced yet another masterpiece. This magnificent book, big enough to share across two laps, is a must for anyone to share with a child. The text is simple and the illustrations are exquisite. Highly recommended.

SCHOOL VISITS

Here at Pinerolo we welcome school groups. Now that the weather is warmer, why not schedule a visit soon?

Where do picture books come from?
How are they written?
Who draws the pictures?
Listen, Look and Learn at Pinerolo.

Children are invited to choose their favourites from the large collection of original artwork, to fill in an activity sheet and even to buy books to take home. \$10 per child. Bookings essential. 47878492 or hamiltonbooks@iprimus.com.au

THE MICE AND THE SHOEMAKER by Gabriel Evans (Five Mile Press). This beautiful book, with its paper engineering, nostalgically brings back Christmases past. It's a retelling of a traditional tale with gorgeous pop-ups and lift-the-flaps to provide hours of fun. Highly recommended.

MY DAD IS A GIRAFFE by Stephen Michael King (Scholastic). Multi award-winner, Stephen never disappoints. This gentle and fun book is about loving a tall dad and imagining him as a giraffe. And didn't we all look up to our dad? Gorgeous illustrations, as ever. Highly recommended.

THE NAUGHTIEST REINDEER AT THE ZOO by Nicki Greenberg (A & U). This second book about Ruby the Reindeer sees her creating chaos at the zoo in this very Australian Christmas book. Thank goodness it ends with 'Peace on Earth!' Highly recommended.

NO WAY YIRRIKIPAYI! (ILF). This wonderful book was written and illustrated by children from Milikapiti School, Melville Island, during a series of workshops with Alison Lester. It was published by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. A fantastic effort. Recommended.

PIRANHAS DON'T EAT BANANAS by Aaron Blabey (Scholastic). Is there ever a month without a new book from this best selling creator? Young readers will love this entertaining and totally original story. Great fun. Recommended.

UNDERNEATH A COW by Carol Ann Martin & Ben Wood (Omnibus). Madge, the good-natured, friendly cow becomes a rain shelter for the farmyard animals. What happens there is very entertaining. The illustrations capture the different characters beautifully. Highly recommended.

WE ALL SLEEP by Ezekiel Kwaymullina & Sally Morgan (Fremantle Press). A mother and son collaboration, this book is a celebration of animals and people sharing the world, illustrated in strong and clear colours reflecting the landscape. Highly recommended.

WHAT DO YOU WISH FOR? by Jane Godwin & Anna Walker (Penguin). Perfect for Christmas morning – the magic and wonder of Christmas wishes beautifully presented by this award-winning duo. Recommended.

THE WHITE MOUSE by Peter Gouldthorpe (Omnibus). Nancy Wake was an Australian who joined the French Resistance during World War 11. The Gestapo called her the White Mouse. This extraordinary book, illustrated with graphic artwork by one of our multi-award winning illustrators, is a tribute to this brave woman, the most decorated Australian woman of World War 11. Highly recommended.

SPECIAL MENTION

Worthy of special mention is Tania McCartney. She not only runs Kids Book Review and the 52-week Illustration Challenge, but she's also a prolific author of children's books. Her publisher EK books sent me a batch of her picture books recently. They are such an impressive contribution. How she finds the time, I don't know. Choose which of these books suits the child in your life: **PEAS IN A POD**, **TOTTIE AND DOT**, **A SCOTTISH YEAR**, **AN ENGLISH YEAR**, **AN AUSSIE YEAR**. All are quality hardcover picture books and illustrated very appealingly by Tina Snerling. **AUSTRALIAN KIDS THROUGH THE YEAR** is illustrated by Andrew Joyner.

Last, but by no means least - Three new Grug books!

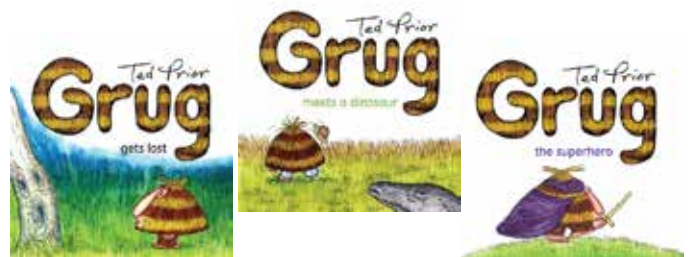
GRUG THE SUPERHERO

GRUG GETS LOST

GRUG MEETS A DINOSAUR by Ted Prior (S & S).

I'm so proud of Grug! Since I first published him in the 1970s he's become a classic, now much-loved by a whole new generation. Get these new adventures for under the Christmas tree. Incidentally, I've seen several Grug cakes on Facebook, but just recently I saw a crocheted Grug! Everyone should have one!

Visit his website: www.mygrug.com



So, I'm sure you'll agree that there's something for every child in this list of wonderful children's books. Make Christmas morning very special by putting some of these at the bottom of the Christmas tree.

Thank you for reading my newsletter. I enjoy keeping in touch.

Margaret Hamilton AM

