

At last, the February newsletter! What a summer we've had. Floods and bushfires across many areas of Australia. We were on full alert for a couple of days here at Blackheath and it was a bit unnerving. Thankfully, and I hope I'm not speaking too soon, the threat is now over and we can breathe easily. There's a touch of autumn in the air these days. Even the trees have begun to change colour. I look forward to autumn in the mountains, as it's spectacular.

Plans for the year are coming together. Bookings are open for our next one-day course **Picture Books @ Pinerolo**. If you're interested, don't miss out. Also coming up is the 2013 announcement of the **CBCA Shortlist and Notables** at the Menzies Hotel, Sydney. So easy to get to by train and well worth attending. Don't miss that either. The CBCA NSW branch is also holding its **Annual Book Sale** at their office at the Writers Centre on 21 March.

Because I'm now a member of the new National Board of the Children's Book Council of Australia one of my portfolios is National Conferences. Already under way are plans for the **11th National Conference of the CBCA** in Canberra, 16-18 May 2014. Some exciting plans are under way so mark the date in your diary.

## ANTICIPATE! APPRECIATE! APPLAUD!

Tuesday 9th April 2013

The Menzies Hotel, George Street, Sydney  
Time: 9.00am—3.30pm Registration from 8.30 am  
Cost: members \$110 Non-members: \$135



Announcement and Celebration of  
2013 Notable Books and Short List  
for the Children's Book of the Year

Enjoy a day of Professional Development. Award-winning author **James Roy** leads a team of speakers including Victoria Roberts, Melinda McNaughton, Helen Sykes and Margaret Hamilton.

An event for all children's literature lovers run by:

The Children's Book Council of Australia  
New South Wales Branch

For updates and bookings: <http://cbca.nsw.org.au>

## PICTURE BOOKS @ PINEROLO

### Dee Huxley and Margaret Hamilton

Continuing our extremely successful series of one-day courses focussing on creating children's picture books.

### SATURDAY 6 APRIL

\$160 (no GST) inc tea/coffee  
BYO lunch - picnic  
weather permitting

### WE TALK ABOUT

Writing and illustrating picture books. Inspiration, Ideas, writing manuscripts. Approaching publishers and what to expect when your story has been accepted

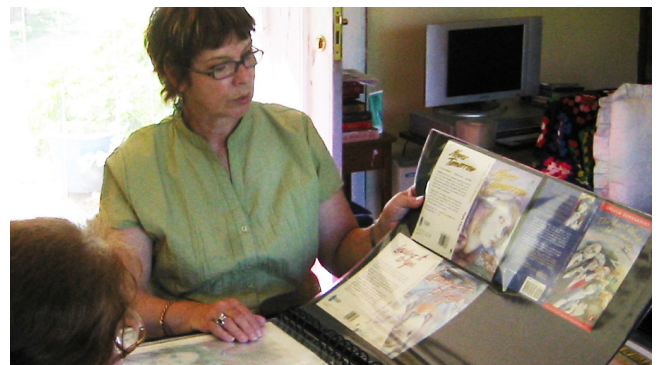
Editing, design and production

Getting started and developing a portfolio  
Creating characters, storyboards and mock-ups  
Materials, techniques. How to develop a picture book  
Authors, illustrators and publishers working together  
Publication is not the end of the story.

### WHO CAN COME

Anyone who has always wanted to make a picture book but has had no formal training.  
Published authors, illustrators and publishers who wish to extend their knowledge and skills.  
Participants are invited to bring their own story ideas, manuscripts and working drawings and will have a chance for discussion during the day.

More information and booking form at:  
<http://www.pinerolo.com.au/PDF/Apr.pdf>



Dee Huxley discussing her original artwork at Pinerolo

## SCHOOL VISITS

I love talking to groups of children and taking them on the fascinating journey from manuscript to finished picture book. Each child is given an activity which makes their visit fun, educational and memorable. Plan a visit with a group soon. [www.pinerolo.com.au/PDF/SchoolVisits.pdf](http://www.pinerolo.com.au/PDF/SchoolVisits.pdf)

## VALE JAN ORMEROD

From her award-winning first book SUNSHINE to winning the Prime Minister's Award for SHAKE A LEG, Jan Ormerod has been one of our finest illustrators, with a special talent for warm-hearted books about babies and toddlers. She died in January but her legacy is a wealth of wonderful picture books. Look out for 101 THINGS TO DO WITH BABY (Little Hare Books).

## NEW PICTURE BOOKS

Recently I served as a Judge for the Australian Publishers Association Design Awards. This was challenging and interesting, as there were some beautiful children's books, but also some that were quite carelessly designed. What I would like to see is a note on the imprint page of all picture books about the medium used by the illustrator. This is useful and educational information for students studying the genre, for reviewers and anyone interested in how picture books are made. So I am trying to spread the word among publishers to make this a routine addition to their books.

I continue to receive new Australian picture books from publishers and I display them at Pinerolo, reading them to visitors and generally promoting them. So I am grateful to publishers for sending them and review as many as I can in each newsletter. Here are the latest. Thanks to everyone for your continued support.

Margaret Hamilton AM

ANZAC BISCUITS by Phil Cummings, illus by Owen Swan (Scholastic). This moving book, linking an Australian soldier facing death in the trenches, with his family at home in their kitchen, traces the making of the iconic Anzac biscuits. A poignant final picture shows the soldier opening the box containing the biscuits his family has sent.

THE CURIOUS EXPLORER'S ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO EXOTIC ANIMALS A to Z by Marc Martin (Penguin). This magnificent large-format book contains not only an alphabet of exotic animals but an information page about them. The illustrations are stylised but splendidly capture the character of each animal and its habitat.

DAISY & THE PUPPY by Lisa Shanahan, illus by Sara Acton (Scholastic). Daisy's parents keep having new babies but she wants a puppy so much she pretends to be one. One day they see Ollie in a pet shop and take him home. The resulting mayhem is a typical family situation. The simple illustrations depict the family chaos beautifully.

DINOSAURS LOVE CHEESE by Jackie French, illus by Nina Rycroft (A & R). A perfect book for all born with 'dinosauritis'. Another winner from Jackie French, and fabulous illustrations of a small child's world inhabited by dinosaurs who eat cheese.

DOG ON LOG by Tania Ingram, illus by Kat Chadwick (Omnibus). This is a challenge to read aloud - a really entertaining play on words, simple and telling. The illustrations follow the action with an understated palette of colours and loads of fun.

GRACIE AND JOSH by Susanne Gervay, illus by Serena Geddes (Ford Street). Susanne Gervay is so good at writing books with heart and this is another one. Gracie's brother Josh is ill but she has a way of involving him in her activities that gives him a new lease on life. The illustrations portray Gracie's joy of life and her love for her brother.

I LOVE YOU TOO by Stephen Michael King (Scholastic). A reassuring expression of love beautifully conveyed in words and pictures by this favourite picture book creator.

JANDAMARRA by Mark Greenwood, illus by Terry Denton (Allen & Unwin). This powerful story about an indigenous hero of the Kimberley portrays a tragic but important chapter in our history. Terry Denton's illustrations, while a bit of a departure from his humorous style, are compelling.

THE LOST TAIL by Patricia Bernard, illus by Tricia Oktober (Ford Street). A vividly told introduction to a colourful celebration in Papua New Guinea. Tricia Oktober is best known for her wildlife illustrations but her colourful work for this book portray the colour and excitement.

MY BIG EASTER EGG HUNT by Rosie Smith, illus by Bruce Whatley (Scholastic). These popular creators have produced another book which is delightful and playful. Very engaging illustrations make this a perfect Easter present, instead of chocolate, for under fives.

10 GREEN GECKOS by Phillip Gwynne, illus by Lloyd Foye (Scholastic). Versions of the '10 green bottles' poem are usually fun and this quirky version is no exception. The big, clear and colourful illustrations enhance the fun.

THE FAIR DINKUM WAR by David Cox (Allen & Unwin). David Cox's warm reminiscences of his boyhood during the Second World War and family life at the time are evocative and moving. A reminder that we should never forget these formative periods of our history.

REMEMBERING LIONSVILLE by Bronwyn Bancroft (Allen & Unwin). An inspiring remembrance of childhood and family life in country New South Wales. Bronwyn Bancroft's vivid and beautiful artwork is a mixture of acrylics, hand-cut drawings and collage. Highly recommended.

SOMEWHERE IN AUSTRALIA by Marcello Pennacchio, illus by Danny Snell (Scholastic). This engaging verse is based on the classic rhyme 'Over in the Meadow'. It takes the reader all over Australia (even to the Blue Mountains!). Appealing illustrations of Australian wildlife.

SPINIFEX MOUSE by Norma MacDonald (Magabala Books). The Spinifex Hopping Mouse is native to Central and Western Australia. This is a cautionary tale about being too daring on adventures. Skillful illustrations and clean, clear design make this an enjoyable picture book.