

Greetings and all the best for the new year. It's been sweltering here in Blackheath and we're not really used to such hot weather. We've actually had days with temperatures in the mid 30s, which is rather unusual. Thankfully it usually cools down a bit at night, so we get a bit of relief.

Since the excitement of Grug Day we've been enjoying the festive season and all there is to do. We had a very different Christmas Day – the first without Melissa. She had to go to Brisbane and we planned to have our family Christmas the following weekend. So we were at a loose end on Christmas Day. However, we read in the local paper about a community Christmas lunch put on by the Kinship at Christmas Foundation at the Blackheath Community Hall. So we volunteered for that. It was a very different, but quite rewarding experience. There were about 200 guests who ranged from older people who live alone and wanted company on Christmas day, young families with small children and a few backpacker tourists. Lunch was delicious and Santa came and gave everyone a bag of lollies. Everyone, including us volunteers went away satisfied and having made new friends.

So welcome to my fifteenth newsletter. It's taken a while to get January into gear, but here goes.

ONE-DAY COURSES @ PINEROLO

Our One-day Courses on **Creating Children's Picture books** have been hugely successful and are entering their eight year. The first for this year will be on **Saturday 12 April**. We are very fortunate to have **Libby Gleeson** – one of Australia's most successful writers. Libby has written over thirty children's books, among them some highly successful picture books.

Come along and learn everything you ever wanted to know about picture books but were afraid to ask.

The courses are open to authors and illustrators (published and yet-to-be published), librarians, teachers, editors and others. **Bookings are essential.**

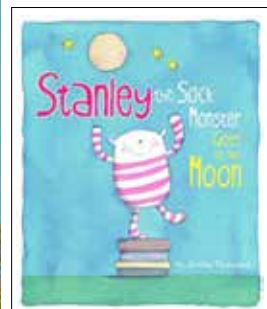
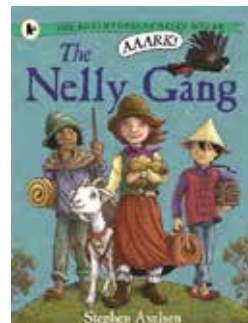
Information and booking forms are available at:
www.pinerolo.com.au/PDF/Gleeson.pdf

ILLUSTRATORS IN RESIDENCE

The Pinerolo Illustrators in Residence Program enters its third year this year. So far there have been nine illustrators staying at Pinerolo for a week each. It has been a pleasure to meet them all and to watch them work, enhancing their knowledge and skills and developing more confidence in their work. Spending a week here, surrounded by original artwork by some of Australia's best illustrators and having access to the large library, is a unique opportunity not available anywhere else. The aim of Pinerolo is to build on this program, to enable this work to continue and this valuable contribution to the development of Australian children's picture books to be more widely acknowledged and utilised.

The illustrators have agreed that acknowledgement to CAL and Pinerolo will be added to the imprint details on their books when published. In fact, there are already two books published with an acknowledgement note on the imprint page: Stephen Axelsen's *The Nelly Gang* (Walker Books) and Jemma Robaard's *Stanley the Sock Monster Goes to the Moon* (Five Mile Press).

Look out for them!



ILLUSTRATORS IN RESIDENCE 2014

Five illustrators have accepted the invitation to spend a week here at Pinerolo this year. They are:

Jo OLiver (April)

Belinda Elliott (May)

Lachlan Creagh (June)

Dub Leffler (July)

Angela Sunde (October)

We welcome visitors while they are here, so come and meet them and see how they work.

We are grateful to the Copyright Agency for funding this program

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VISITORS

We're always pleased to welcome visitors, especially from interstate. So it was special cause for celebration when Ann James (wonderful illustrator – I have a piece of her artwork in my collection) and Ann Haddon came to visit in December. They are proprietors of BOOKS ILLUSTRATED in Melbourne so we had a lot of mutual interests to talk about. Be sure to visit them when you're next in Melbourne.



OPEN DAYS FOR 2014

Pinerolo participated in The Blue Mountains Art Network series of Open Days last year and became one of the destinations for people to visit on their trek around the mountains. This was useful, as it set a timetable for us to work towards. This year's trail will be extended to 2-day weekends, to give visitors a chance to visit as many studios as possible, also to spend the weekend in the Blue Mountains.

This year's four planned Open Weekends are:

Sat/ Sun, 26/27 April

Sat/ Sun, 28/29 June

Sat/ Sun, 11/12 October – this weekend aligns with the second weekend of Leura Garden Festival.

Sat/ Sun, 29/30 Nov

There goes another year! Dates may change so watch this space for further details.



DISCOVERING NATIONAL TREASURES
11TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA
CANBERRA 15-18 MAY 2014

CBCA CONFERENCE

It has been a pleasure and a challenge to participate in the organisation of the 11th National Conference of the CBCA. The program was finalised before Christmas and registrations are beginning to roll in. It's all very exciting and I urge you to book early to ensure a place in this very important conference.

The full program and registration details are available on the conference website:
www.cbcaconference.org.au

NEW PICTURE BOOKS

It's always good to see new picture books. What's even better is to welcome a new reader into the world. Shannon Melville, one of our Illustrators in Residence in 2012 has given birth to a beautiful baby girl, Poppy. Congratulations to Shannon. Here are some new baby books to celebrate:

BABY BEATS by Karen Blair (Walker Books). Babies learn to clap their hands very early. This lovely book explores fun ways to make simple music and move to the beat.

HEY BABY! by Corinne Fenton (Black Dog Books). This would be a perfect book for little Poppy. It's a welcome paperback edition of a delightful love letter to a new baby, illustrated with very appealing photographs.

And some others:

THE BROTHERS QUIBBLE by Aaron Blabey (Penguin). Aaron Blabey's playful, quirky humour never disappoints. This fun book about learning to live with a new baby brother is very true-to-life and a realistic look at family life.

CHASING SHADOWS by Corinne Fenton & Hannah Sommerville (Ford Street). This poignant story of a girl's gradual acceptance of a new puppy, whose playful love chases her shadows away, subtly addresses the problem of depression. The poetic prose is combined with atmospheric watercolour illustrations.

JOURNEY by Aaron Becker (Candlewick). Through this magnificent wordless picture book the reader follows a girl on an extraordinary journey. The illustrations demand careful examination inviting participation in this fantastic adventure. Highly recommended.

MIDNIGHT, THE STORY OF A LIGHT HORSE by Mark Greenwood & Frane Lessac (Walker Books). This prize-winning team has produced another memorable picture book, this one to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. It's the story of a young soldier and his beloved mare.

THE POPPY by Andrew Plant (Ford Street). Another First World War story, this remembering one of Australia's greatest victories at the French village of Villers-Bretonneux, which became 'The town that never forgets'. Stunning and dramatic illustrations.

YIRRUWA YIRRILIKENUMA-LANGWA/WHEN WE GO WALKABOUT by Rhoda Lalara & Alfred Lalara (A & U). This story told in the Anindilyakwa language of Groote Eylandt and English, illustrated with traditional paintings originally done on bark, is an insight into the life of an Indigenous community in this remote place. Highly recommended.

So the first month of 2014 is almost over!

Best wishes for the rest of the year – and don't forget to visit Pinerolo whenever you are in the Blue Mountains. And just because I like him so much, I've left the picture of Grug here from the previous newsletter.



Margaret Hamilton AM