

JUNE NEWSLETTER

I know, there was a newsletter due in June but somehow events overtook me. I don't know how everyone else feels but I feel seriously overwhelmed by the pandemic, the Greater Sydney lockdown and all that entails.

Pinerolo as an Airbnb destination was fully booked for the school holidays and we were looking forward to meeting the families who would spend their time here reading. That's what's so satisfying about listing Pinerolo on Airbnb, I get to share the collection of artwork and books with families and inspire them to read together. All the bookings for the school holidays were cancelled, so I hope we'll be able to meet those families at another time. Paradoxically, Airbnb have awarded me yet another Superhost status and have sent a voucher for me to use for a stay anywhere I choose. This of course, in these lockdown times, is impossible. At the moment, I can't think of anywhere else to be, as Blackheath is so beautiful and we feel fortunate to live here with all the space and fresh air.

BLUE MOUNTAINS WRITERS FESTIVAL

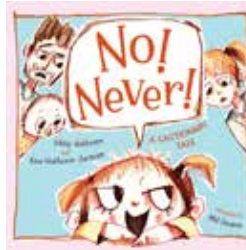
There's a group of us from the CBCA Blue Mountains sub-branch helping to get a program together for young readers for the Blue Mountains Writers Festival. It's looking very exciting and I do hope it can go ahead. The festival will be held on 22-24 October. The program will be announced on 31 August and tickets will go on sale then. <https://www.bluemountainwritersfestival.com.au>

CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The other reason that August is important is the CBCA Book of the Year Awards on Friday 20 August. These are the most influential awards for children's books in Australia. The Shortlist was announced in April and has generated a huge amount of interest. Creators, schools and libraries, not to mention publishers, eagerly await the announcement of the winners. If it is online, as it was last year, it will be fabulous as that means the whole of Australia could hook into this important and groundbreaking event. Also available is the fabulous 2021 merchandise with artwork by the incomparable Shaun Tan. Such lovely items and spectacular posters for sale on the website. The theme for 2021 is *Old Worlds, New Worlds, Other Worlds*. Keep in touch on cbca.org.au

Libby Hathorn in the Blue Mountains

Libby Hathorn is one of Australia's major award-winning authors, with more than fifty published books. Her list includes many beautiful picture books and she is also renowned for her fiction for older readers.



Most notably, Libby's picture book *NO! NEVER!* illustrated by Mel Pearce, is Shortlisted for the 2021 Book of the Year: Early Childhood category as well as the CBCA Award for New Illustrator.

Pandemic permitting, Libby will be speaker at the CBCA Blue Mountains dinner on 3 September and will join me at Pinerolo on 4 September for a one-day course on creating picture books. Watch out for announcements about both these events: www.pinerolo.com.au

CBCA BLUE MOUNTAINS SUB-BRANCH

Also pandemic permitting, the CBCA Blue Mountains sub-branch will go ahead with the dinner at The Farm on 3 September. The guest speaker at that will be the incredibly brilliant Libby Hathorn and it's something special to look forward to. Libby will be staying here at Pinerolo and I plan to have a one-day course on creating picture books here the next day, 4 September. I'll be preparing a flyer and booking form for that shortly.

APPLY NOW! 2021 WESTWORDS/ PINEROLO ILLUSTRATOR IN RESIDENCE

Don't delay. Get your application in for the 2021 WestWords/Pinerolo Illustrator in Residence. If you are an aspiring illustrator with much to learn or if you are working on a project and need time and space for that work, check out the application form on the WestWords website or www.pinerolo.com.au/PDF/WW_Pinerolo_App_Form.pdf

A FUTURE FOR PINEROLO - 10 YEARS ON

Now there's something important I'd like to share with you. You will probably remember that Max and I gave our publishing archives to the State Library of NSW. This was an impressive collection of files from fifteen years of independent publishing. Also, the State Library then sent

an oral historian to interview me. It took two days but there is now an oral history at the library.

Anyone who's been here will have seen the incredible collection of original artwork from picture books. This has been accumulated over decades in children's publishing. I had told the State Library that the artwork would be bequeathed to them when the time came. However, the dreadful summer of 2019/2020 made me realise that, if we were seriously threatened by bushfires, there's no way we could save the collection from total catastrophic destruction. So, we have been in discussions with the State Library about them taking the collection sooner rather than later. I feel responsible for the collection. It is unique and very valuable and represents several decades of Australian children's publishing. It's important that we ensure its safety for future generations. It's also important because there are many picture books being produced these days digitally. This means that there is no beautiful original hand-done artwork to hang on the wall. My collection represents an important period in publishing and it would be a total tragedy if it was lost. As you can imagine I've given this a great deal of thought. I love every piece of artwork and it will be a wrench to see it go. But I know this is the right decision. We have had very good meetings with the State Library and discussed a timetable for this transition.

One thing I want to do before the artwork goes to the State Library is have an open day where everybody can come and view the artwork, if they haven't seen it already, or take this opportunity to see it all together one last time. Considering schedules it's looking like my open day: **Arrivaderci Pinerolo**, might be on a weekend in late September.

NEW BOOKS

In these trying times what better thing to do in lockdown than read good books. Here are my recommendations, including beautiful picture books to share when homeschooling children.



HOW TO BE AN AUTHOR by Georgia Richter & Deborah Hunn (Fremantle Press). This is an indispensable and very practical reference for anyone who aspires to be a published author. Whether you're dreaming of writing for adults or children, it will point you in the right direction.

ELIZA VANDA'S BUTTON BOX by Emily Rodda. (HarperCollins). I love promoting local Blue Mountains authors. Emily has done it again — another wonderful, entertaining fantasy story for young readers.



NEW PICTURE BOOKS

THE ABC OF CUDDLES by Sophy Williams. Illus by Gavin Scott (Albert St). Everyone loves cuddles and this book is an alphabet of them from Airport to Zzzz. A lovely book to cuddle up with at bedtime.

THE BARK BOOK by Victoria Mackinlay. Illus by Beth Harvey (ABC). Large print and very simple text, with lively illustrations make this a perfect picture book to share with a new reader.

THE CAT THIEF by Pat Simmons. Illus by Liz Duthie (Little Pink Dog). Olive desperately wants a cat but it's not a good idea to take other people's. Then comes the perfect solution. Engaging and colourful illustrations.

THE COLOUR OF MUSIC by Lisa Tiffen. Illus by Matt Ottley (MidnightSun). Shortlisted for CBCA Picture Book of the Year, Ottley has produced another superb picture book. The text connects music with colours, emotions and the world we live in.

GROWING PAINS by Alison McLennan. Illus by Melissa Johns (EK). Finn's new tree must get growing pains too, feel the cold, but the tree pays back with comfort. Colourful collage illustrations.

THE INCREDIBLY BUSY MIND OF BOWEN

BARTHOLOMEW CRISP by Paul Russell. Illus by Nicky Johnston (EK). A very inquisitive boy grows up asking lots of curious questions and finally finds his place in the world. Engaging illustrations follow his progress.

THE INSIDE DAY by Jane Martino. Illus by Annie White (Puffin). This the fourth story in the five-book series, each celebrating mindfulness. A good book to read in these lockdown times. Gently illustrated.

MR BAT WANTS A HAT by Kitty Black. Illus by Laura Wood (New Frontier). A crazy bat who wants a hat is the theme of this amusing story. Energetic and colourful illustrations.

MR MING AND THE MOONCAKE DRAGON by Kathy Creamer. Illus by Amy Calautti (Little Pink Dog). This is a long story which will challenge young readers but they'll be satisfied as they follow the mid-autumn mooncake festival.

RAJAH STREET by Myo Yim (Walker). An unusual picture book about a small boy's favourite things. His favourite day is Wednesday — garbage day. The illustrations reflect the story.

THIS IS NOT A BOOK! by Kellie Byrnes. Illus by Aska (EK). This small boy is in denial. Although this is not a book he takes readers through amazing adventures. Entertaining and energetic illustrations.

WHERE THE HEART IS by Irma Gold. Illus by Susannah Crispe (EK). This touching story is inspired by a true story about a penguin. Gentle, involving illustrations.

WHO FED ZED? by Amelia McInerney. Illus by Adam Nickel (A & U). Another very entertaining book from Amelia. Equally zany illustrations involve readers from start to finish.

FINALLY

I hope you've enjoyed this newsletter. Feel free to pass it on to others. Feedback welcome! Best wishes to all. Stay safe. Thank you for your interest and support.

Regards

Margaret Hamilton AM