



THE CHILDREN'S
BOOK COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA

SINCE 1945 — YOUR CONNECTION TO STORY

Dreaming with eyes open...

From the desk

April 26, 2021

Dear Branch Presidents and Members,

The National Board met on Wednesday April 20 between Easter and Anzac Day holidays. We hope you all had a safe and restful time.

At our April Board meeting we focused on whether our national website architecture and design are delivering our messages and information easily and effectively, and whether our staffing and financial resourcing requirements are adequate and fit for purpose. This is an ongoing research and discovery project and we thank Kayt Duncan in our office for working with the Communications Subcommittee on this task. Kayt will be reaching out to our branches for feedback. The website is our organisation's front office, so we need to make sure our information is accessible and our purpose and organisational structures are transparent. It is a core service of the National office as the home of our CBCA Awards, and our CBCA Book Week promotions and merchandise.

The year is certainly travelling at a pace— the last 'From the Desk' was disseminated on March 29 on the day of our shortlist announcement. We received such a warm response to Jasmine Seymour's presentation video, we thank you for sharing. Please continue to share its power from our homepage cbca.org.au—it's where CBCA Book Week begins.

Moving onto a critical community event on our 2022 calendar — the **14th National Conference**. We thank you for supporting us while a few details required highlighting on our website, the information is now all here cbca.org.au/national-conference. We look forward to seeing you all again and hope some new fans of children's literature will tag along too. We will welcome you all at a cosy Friday evening fireside gathering.

This conference has a unique flavour. Our creative community of writers and illustrators are not only important because they will speak to us— but this conference also recognises their need to learn, listen, network and commune. So, thanks to our co-curators at SCWBI, the Saturday program includes a special stream of presentations for our creatives running alongside a program dedicated to those who teach and promote Australian children's literature. During breaks we know everyone will enjoy mingling and sharing the inspiration gained from each stream. Saturday night dinner will be awesome with creatives at each table and a wonderful Lifetime Achievement Award recipient speaking *exclusively* to those gathered here. Sunday we all come together to debate and discuss. This year we are running a hybrid conference so you can also join us for the stimulating presentations online—so no one misses out. (Though

secretly we hope a weekend away in Canberra with like-minded colleagues is just the break into the 'new normal' we all need.) 'Dreaming with eyes open...' is the theme and the challenge. See you there.



At our April Board we acknowledged an amazing array of talent who expressed interest in a special one-year appointment of a new Older Readers category, Book of the Year Awards judge. We sincerely thank everyone who applied and we encourage you all to apply same time next year for a new round of judges. Welcome and congratulations Tehani Croft.

As you know we are busy in the office with the *Sun Project: Shadow Judging* and it will kick off with gusto when we inform our successful group of grant recipients from this Friday 29 April. We have been thrilled with the many motivated groups around Australia. The State Coordinators in your branches have done an amazing job spreading the word, we anticipate a good number of groups also joining in as self-funded groups. The dedicated website shadowjudging.cbca.org.au will be up shortly so even those not in the project will be able to view the creative responses by young voices, you can join the program if you feel inspired once we open the doors. So stay close by checking out our homepage cbca.org.au.

The Foundation for Learning and Literacy (FLL) foundationforlearningandliteracy.info/about-us/

The CBCA has been meeting with the FLL regarding a Symposium focused on quality literature in classrooms. It will commence on Wednesday June 8, at 4pm. There will be at least ten presentations scheduled for the same time each month. We will post at cbca.org.au the full schedule and links. The presentations will be free to view.

CBCA is scheduled for October 19.

CBCA PROPOSED LITERATURE EVENT

*"If we want to nurture empathy in our learners so they can understand different perspectives and explore alternative ways of doing, being and becoming, we must ensure rich literature is at the heart of every classroom."
(From FLL proposal)*

Our presentation will offer an insight into our journey in 2022. The CBCA in 2022 is focused on increasing student agency by providing the opportunity for them to join the critiquing of Australian literature for young people and participating in the conversation around what they believe represents quality. Our national rollout of our Shadow Judging Project; as part of our larger Sun Project: Illuminating Quality Australian Children's Literature, will "provide the motivation and engagement for young children to develop and sustain a love of reading." (From FLL proposal)

We know many of our branches have been running their AGMs these last months, we thank you all for participating and for the hard work by a band of dedicated volunteers who have stepped up or remain "stepped up", in positions on your leadership teams. We recognise the time you are all putting into the representing CBCA purpose in your communities.

The National CBCA AGM will take place on May 16th.

Sincere regards

Wendy Rapee, Chair

