

Preface

To be awarded Honorary Membership of the South Australian Branch of the CBCA, a person needs to be

- recognised as a Luminary of South Australian Children's literature – currently and instantly recognisable to the wider children's literature community,
- and if a creative have a quality body of work over a period of time that has been recognised in awards.

This year's recipient meets these stringent criteria and joins our three other worthy recipients – the late Christobel Mattingley, Mem Fox, and last year's recipient Phil Cummings.

Citation

Janeen Brian has been a prolific, much loved, awarded and highly recognised South Australian author of children's literature across a wide range of genres for more than 30 years from 1991 to the present.

Her bibliography includes more than 100 titles, many still in print., and includes two new releases in 2020.

She is translated and published world-wide, and has works available in a variety of formats including e-books.

She writes across range of age groups from babies to adults, but with a focus on younger children.

This flows from her deep understanding of the needs of pre-school to primary aged children from her early work as a junior primary and primary teacher and teacher librarian.

Janeen's published works for children range from picture books, novels, short stories, non-fiction, plays and poetry through to structured scripts for school reading schemes and short novels for emerging readers.

However, she has also been a prolific contributor of poetry and short stories to magazines (including the NSW Education Department's School Magazine), and scripts for TV programs and commercials including Here's Humphry.

Many of her books utilize poetic devices and use rhyming or free verse, often as a vehicle for humour in picture poetry books or stories in rhyme.

More recently her novels for primary children have won acclaim.

The quality of Janeen's work has been recognised in a range of awards over many years.

In 1997 'Pilawuk – When I was young' was recognised as an Honour Book for the Children's Book of the Year Awards. This ground-breaking book looked at the life of a young Aboriginal girl who was part of the Stolen Generation. Janeen brought her story alive in the structured 32-page format of a reading series for younger readers.

This was followed by Where does Thursday go? (2001), Hoosh! Camels in Australia (2006) and perennial favourite I'm a Dirty Dinosaur (2014) as CBCA Book of the Year Award Honour Books.

Since then Janeen has had other books recognised on the CBCA Notables list including That boy, Jack (2014), Where's Jessie? (2016), I'm a hungry dinosaur (2016) Little Chicken, Chickabee (2017) and Yong – The journey of an unworthy son (2017)

Janeen's contribution to the field of children's literature goes beyond her writing to a prominent role in promoting literacy and a love of reading to the South Australian community.

She has been an Ambassador for the Premier's Reading Challenge for many years, and currently has 31 books on its reading list.

She is also an Ambassador for the Little Big Book Club (Raising Literacy Australia) and is a regular participant in reading festivals and programs.

She is a sought after presenter at school celebrations for her enthusiastic, interactive and engaging workshops which inspire young readers and writers

Janeen also contributes to the adult children's literature community through her involvement with Ekidnas, SA Writers' Centre, ASA, IBBY and SCWBI.

She has been on the selection panel for The May Gibbs' Children's Literature Trust Fellowships in South Australia.

She has been and remains a long term and valued member of the Children's Book Council of Australia (SA Branch) and this year, (~~after her nomination had been received~~) she has joined the CBCA SA Branch committee and has been a driving force in initiating events that promote SA children's book creators and bring books and children together.

Janeen's contributions to children's literature and reading goes far beyond the borders of South Australia and Australia.

In Janeen's words '

"... my books give children the chance to escape to new places in their imagination, to have a friend in a book, to gain empathy because they relate to main characters and their problems, and also to develop creative problem solving, because they often question how they would've tackled such situations."

She has been significant over many years, prolific, and recognised by awards, but more importantly she is loved by both the children for whom she writes, and the adults who share her works with them.

We are pleased to recognise her as an Honorary Member of the Children's Book Council of Australia (SA Branch) as a luminary in the field of children's literature in South Australia.