

Children's Book Council of Australia  
ACT Branch

CURIOUS CREATURES,  
WILD MINDS



Artwork by Gwyn Perkins | © 2020 The Children's Book Council of Australia

#CBCA2020



**ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

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# Branch Committee 2020

## Executive:

President:	Julie Long OAM
Vice President:	Dawn Shield Kirrin Sampson
Treasurer:	Rob Smith resigned 4th November <i>Justine Power filled vacancy</i>
Secretary:	Rowan Simpson 20th August <i>Veronica Melville filled vacancy</i>
Membership Officer:	Justine Power

## Ordinary Committee Members (5):

Colleen Caddey  
Heather Wilkinson  
Maura Pierlot  
Veronica Melville  
Jennifer Ferdinand resigned 20th August  
*Catherine Morgans filled vacancy*

## Events Committee:

Outreach program:	<i>Rosemary Thomas</i>
Reader's Cup:	<i>Rachael Hind</i>
Christmas Book Appeal:	<i>Rosemary Thomas, Julie Long OAM, Dawn Shield</i>

## Marketing Committee:

Facebook:	<i>Julie Long OAM, Kirrin Sampson &amp; Justine Power</i>
Enews:	<i>Jennifer Ferdinand, Heather Wilkinson</i>
Website:	<i>Kirrin Sampson &amp; Catherine Morgan</i>

## Partnerships Committee:

National Centre for Australia Children's Literature:	<i>Julie Long OAM</i>
Love 2 Read:	<i>Julie Long OAM</i>
Children's Week Committee:	<i>Julie long OAM</i>
ALIA:	<i>Kirrin Sampson</i>
SCWBI:	<i>Maura Pierlot</i>
Teacher Librarian Network:	<i>Veronica Melville</i>
Catholic Education Office:	<i>Colleen Caddey</i>

## Ex- officio:

National Board Director:	<i>Julie Long OAM</i>
Archives:	<i>Vacant</i>
Public Officer:	<i>Norma John</i>
CBCA Book of the Year Judges:	Lucy Long – Eve Pownall category Margaret Bromley – Eve Pownall category

# ACT Branch President Report

Like many AGM reports that will be written for 2020, our Branch report will be smaller than usual. On reflection, it is remarkable that Zoom has been mastered by many and enabled us all to keep in touch and collegially hope for better times to come in the course of the year.

Children’s books still remained in the forefront throughout Canberra, as children went on neighbourhood walks inspired by “We’re going on a Bear Hunt”.



Spirits were raised by the arrival of the Book Week merchandise and the generous decision by the National Board to give some items free to members, in time for Book Week.

Another National Board initiative was to partner with the Little Street Library organisation which resulted in each Branch receiving a free street library. The ACT ran a competition and the Macgregor Primary School entry was chosen. The Library was launched on the Book Week Awards announcement day. The students who won the design competition were on hand to explain the significance of their paintings and the school leaders talked about the importance of the Street Library to the school community. Norma John managed the ceremony beautifully and I was thrilled to be asked to cut the ribbon to officially open the Library.



We have made great progress with improving and updating our website, thanks to Kirrin Sampson and Catherine Morgans. This has been a goal for several years and it is wonderful to see this becoming a reality. Our Facebook profile and followers continue to grow. Our next communication goal is to send out a more regular eNews and this is currently on the way to being achieved.

I would like to thank all the committee members, Branch members and their partners for the support that helped deliver the streamlined events and programs throughout 2020.

**Julie Long OAM**



## Outreach, Events & Education

CO-VID19 and smoke and storms meant 2020 was a year like no other in CBCA history. Along with the National CBCA and other branches many of our events and meetings were held on-line or postponed till 2021. Things had improved towards the end of the year and Julie was able to visit Weston Creek Childcare Centre to read Christmas stories to the three- and four-year-old rooms.



### Notables Night

The celebration was held face to face at Canberra Girls Grammar Junior School Library.

### NCACL's Indigenous Database

In 2020 the National Centre for Australian Children's Literature (NCACL) was pleased to launch its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Resource which was made possible due to a grant from the Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

This new Resource is similar to the previously launched Culturally Diverse Database (CDD) but with the grant money the NCACL was able to expand the search capabilities as well as include links to teacher resources.

Currently there are over 350 books in the Resource with more being added as they are published. Although it initially targeted birth to Year 8 readers. It is currently being expanded to include students to Year 10.

Detailed annotations include details of the many First Nations authors and illustrators who are included in the Resource and the search engine includes different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. There are many bilingual books included.

It is hoped that this Resource will be of value to all educators as well as those interested in books by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The detailed website gives clear instructions about the Resource as well as further information.

<https://www.ncacl.org.au/resources/databases/welcome-to-the-aboriginal-and-or-torres-strait-islander-resource/>

<https://www.ncacl.org.au/resources/databases/welcome-to-the-ncacl-cultural-diversity-database/>

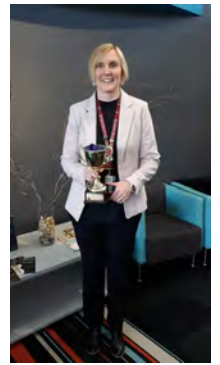


## Readers Cup

The 20 teams that took part in our ACT inaugural Reader's Cup competition enjoyed the experience and all had read the 5 chosen novels carefully. The winning school was Hughes Primary Team 1 and the students were presented with an engraved Cup and individual medallions. Mother Teresa School Team 2 came second and they received runners up medallions and Radford College Team 1 came third. Huge thanks to Rachael Hind who initiated this event and

worked hard on the organisation which resulted in such success.

**Rachael Hind, Coordinator**



## AGM

Our AGM was finally held face to face at 7 Maxworthy Street, Kambah on 20 August to great acclaim, with a display of the Book Week merchandise. 12 people attended and there were 7 apologies. The 2019 Annual report was presented including the audited financial accounts.

A motion was passed unanimously changing the constitution to allow for virtual attendance at meetings and for electronic voting. Should there be another pandemic or natural disaster our AGM can now be held on-line.



Elections for the office bearers and committee were held with many positions filled with new faces and acknowledging the work they had been doing filling casual vacancies with the AGM being held six months later than normal.

## Christmas Book Appeal

The Christmas Book Appeal was scaled down this year and we were able to make use of books that we had in storage to fill requests from The Canberra Hospital, Doris Women's shelter, Beryl Women's, Louisa Domestic Violence service (Queanbeyan). The stock was boosted by a huge donation of 352 children's books from Tania McCartney and 373 from Rosemary Thomas via the Book of the Year Awards entries this year.



## 2020 CBCA Book of the Year Awards

In a year which demonstrated how difficult the world can be, the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards have recognised thought-provoking and uplifting stories that allow young people to take on all challenges.

The 2020 CBCA Book of the Year Awards announced Friday 16 October were chosen from a record 517 entries across six categories.

CBCA National Chair, Emeritus Professor Margot Hillel OAM, said, 'Lockdowns and school closures have given many children and young people more time to read in 2020.

'Whether they are seeking solace and reassurance, or simply the escape of a gripping plot, well-told Australian stories are there for them,' Professor Hillel said.

'It has been another exceptional year for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, with plenty of writing to entertain, touch the hearts of young readers and help them gain empathy and new perspectives.'

**The CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers**, *The Little Wave* by Pip Harry, which is expertly told in verse, revolves around three primary school children from the beach and outback. The support they find in each other delivers an emotional stability which helps them transcend grief, poverty and bullying.

**The CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers**, *This is How We Change the Ending* by Vikki Wakefield, is a gritty story about a suburb in decline where the main character, Nate, learns to hide his intellect and emotions. His love for his younger brothers, stepmother, and even his abusive father, is a driving force that enables the powerless to become powerful.

**The CBCA Book of the Year: Early Childhood** was won by *My Friend Fred*, written by Frances Watts and illustrated by A. Yi. Animals often feature strongly in the early childhood category, and in this book they demonstrate just how different good friends can be. The CBCA judges said *My Friend Fred* is full of energy and movement and comes to a very satisfying surprise ending.

**The CBCA Picture Book of the Year** was won by *I Need a Parrot*, a witty book written and illustrated by Chris McKimmie. The CBCA judges said that with very few words and deceptively simple drawings, this book gives readers lots to ponder and discuss about our desire to keep and cage pets.

**The Eve Pownall Award** was won by Bruce Pascoe for *Young Dark Emu: A Truer History*. The CBCA judges said this beautifully produced book presents a powerful argument debunking the notion of *Terra Nullius* which positioned Indigenous Australians as nomadic hunter gatherers. This younger readers' version of *Dark Emu* is an engaging discussion, accessible to primary school and young adult readers.

**The CBCA Award for New Illustrator** was won by *Baby Business*, illustrated and written by Jasmine Seymour, which tells the story of a smoking ceremony performed to welcome a baby to Country. The judges were particularly struck by Seymour's depiction of smoke and her use of line, texture and colour to represent culture.

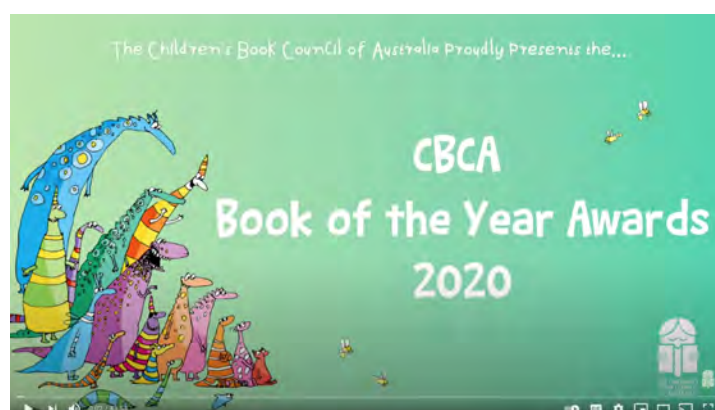
Overall, the judges noted the increase in new creators appearing in many categories (170 in total) and the record number of unique entries (517), and said this augurs well for the future of Australian children's literature.

Usually awarded in August but postponed for the first time in its 75 year history, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the CBCA Book of the Year Awards were announced on Friday October 16 at noon AEDT in an online film event that can be viewed at the [CBCA YouTube channel](#).

This announcement also launches CBCA Book Week, running from 17 to 23 October. In 2020 the theme is Curious Creatures, Wild Minds. The 2021 theme will be announced at the end of CBCA Book Week on Friday October 23. **CBCA Media Release.**

## On-Line Announcements

In keeping with the uncertainty of COVID-19, the Awards Announcements were held online.





## CBCA Book Week

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and many schools still remote learning. CBCA Book Week was moved to October.

Our Branch was fortunate to be able to have our CBCA Book

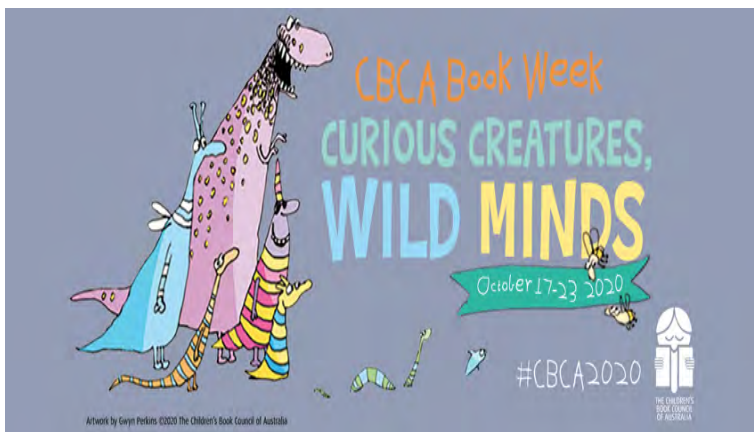


Week dinner face to face in the Carlton Room at Olyms Hotel. 10 people attended and 5 people apologised. There was a display of all the Shortlisted, Winning and Honour books for everyone to browse. Gina Newton became our impromptu guest speaker and gave a wonderful overview of her two books that were due to be launched the following week – "Hold On! Saving the Spotted Handfish" and "Combat Wombat to the Rescue". Maura Dand won the raffle prize of a box of books. Thank you to Rosemary Thomas for bringing the display of books and to



Maura Pierlot who planned and organised the venue.

## CBCA Book Week Merchandise



CBCA National Board provided incentive merchandise packs for all members. Each pack contained one Shortlist poster and a pack of 10 bookmarks. they were for all financial CBCA members, whether they have purchased merchandise or not. The packs were a gesture of goodwill and are particularly aimed at those members who are unable to buy the *Curious Creatures, Wild Minds* merchandise.

# Communications

## eNews

Mailchimp is still being used for the distribution of eNews. The eNews is becoming more regular, generally coming out once a month. The eNews includes information of interest for members from a variety of sources. In the future email will be used as another form of communication with members and non-members for events and flyers, separate from the monthly eNews. The eNews was sent out to 240 subscribers.

**Heather Wilkinson**

## Website

Progress on updating and streamlining the CBCA ACT website began in September 2020. Initial efforts focused on restructuring the site to move outdated details to make way for fresh and current information. Changes filtered across the whole site and will continue to as we become more familiar with Orchard CMS software features.

Future website development will:

- refresh author/illustrator profiles with a new format,
- expand profiles to include members working in the field of children's books,
- encourage social media to be directed to the website for the single source of truth,
- promote CBCA ACT and National goals and events,
- engage, promote and celebrate CBCA ACT members, and
- create a gallery of CBCA ACT photos.

**Catherine Morgans**

## Social Media

### Facebook

Page Likes 648, Page Followers 1079

Top post - Last 12 Months

**2020** 22 Oct

Post about St Monica's students participating in the inaugural Readers' Cup

448 Reach 67 Engagements

We have continued to add events to the Event functionality, with a good response, and also opted for some limited paid promotions, to increase awareness.

**Kirrin Sampson**

# Partnerships

## National Board

The events of 2020 affected the National Board in many ways but most of the challenges were met by creative thinking and collegiality. When face to face events began to be cancelled, the National Board moved rapidly to online presentations of the Short List announcement and the Awards Announcement. These required many new learning curves to be mastered and resulted in professional, engaging and worthwhile ways to share information and help our members and Partners to feel involved in the eventual Announcement.

The Merchandise Sub Committee returned to offering a Shortlist poster and this was well received. Overall, the Merchandise sold well despite the difficulties in changing the date of the release of the Winning and Honour books and problems with COVID affecting the distribution process.

Later in the year, there were changes made to the membership of the Board. Margot Hillel (Chair) and Rosemary Thomas (Deputy Chair) were farewelled, and Wendy Rapee and Tania Longman (Deputy Chair) became the new leadership team. Members of the Board have met frequently via Zoom, which has taken over from Teleconferences as the preferred way of maintaining effective communication and keeping on top of tasks.

## Book of the Year Judges

As a CBCA Eve Pownall Judge I have personally really enjoyed making a contribution to the promotion of quality children's literature. In the last two years I have appreciated the production of beautifully crafted well researched non-fiction books for children. I've noticed an increase in the number of well written scientific books for young readers. And I'm very excited by the number of works by Aboriginal creators in this category. These books will change the perceptions of generations of young readers towards Indigenous knowledge of our shared history and the environment. These books are crucial to the potential of lifelong appreciation of literature for our children. I've really enjoyed sharing my passion for great books for children with all the other CBCA judges across Australia. I also want to acknowledge the diligent and enthusiastic mentorship of Rosemary Thomas as the previous Convenor of the Awards.

**Margaret Bromley.**

## Archives

As this position has been unfilled during this period no work has been done. The physical archives were moved from the Scout Hall in Kambah to Kirrin Sampson's garage until such time as a new location can be found.

## Finance

The full financial report was audited by an external CPA for the AGM. The Management Committee confirms that the association is financially viable with sufficient reserves to operate for 12 months.

## Summary of Equity Statement

### Movements in Equity

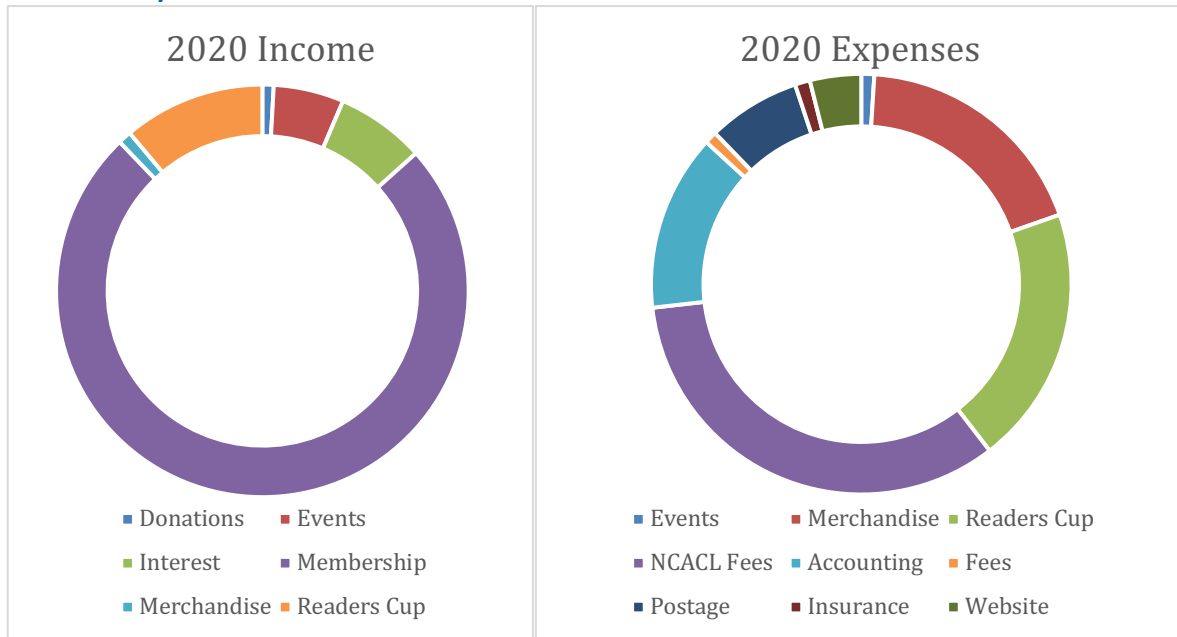
As at 31 December 2020

	31 Dec 2020	31 Dec 2019
Opening Balance	51,081	52,604
Current Year Earnings	2,051	(1,523)
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>53,132</b>	<b>51,081</b>

### Notes

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements and the accompanying Compilation Report.

## Summary of Income Statement



## Membership

For the 2020 year there were 50 financial members down slightly from 2019. This included 7 Life Members

**Belle Alderman AM**  
**Lynne Babbage**  
**Julie Long OAM**  
**Mollie Bialkowski**  
**Rosemary Thomas**  
**Stephanie Owen Reeder**  
**Tania McCartney**

There were 7 schools, 1 institution, 21 individuals and 14 concessional members comprising of students, associate organisation and seniors.

There were 16 new or returning members. There were 19 members in 2019 who did not renew their membership in 2020, most of these members were school based and would have been affected by COVID-19 restrictions within their schools to participate in extra curricula activities.

## Membership Survey

During the later months of 2020 the committee surveyed members both current and past via survey monkey.

We asked about membership and events held and found useful information for planning events in the coming year. Generally, members were satisfied with events and activities of the branch. Highlighting need for better communication, easier membership renewal and timing of events as areas we could improve.

Membership fees and cost for events was thought to be about right. The CBCA Award announcements and Book of the Year events were highly valued, as was the importance of networking with others.

90% wanted communication via email

77% wanted on-line bookings for events

54% of members were teacher/librarians and 23% authors/illustrators