

Children's Book Council of Australia ACT Branch



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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Branch Committee 2024



Executive:

President:	Julie Long OAM
Vice President:	Justine Power
Treasurer:	vacant
Secretary:	Colleen Caddey

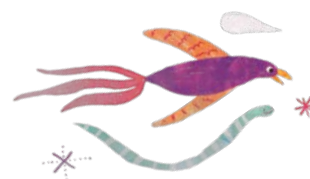
Ordinary Committee Members:

Kirrin Sampson
Veronica Melville

Rachael Hinds
Heather Wilkinson
Catherine Morgans

Other Positions

Archives:	Veronica Melville
Reader's Cup:	Rachael Hinds & Sally Judd
Christmas Book Appeal:	Justine Power & Julie Long
Shadow Judging:	Rachael Hinds
Enews:	Heather Wilkinson
Website:	Catherine Morgans
Facebook/Instagram:	Julie Long, Kirrin Sampson, Catherine Morgans, Justine Power
Love 2 Read:	not operational
Children's Week Committee:	Julie Long
Teacher Librarian Network:	Veronica Melville, Rachael Hind



Appointed Representatives:

National Board Director:	Julie Long OAM
National Centre for Australia Children's Literature Board:	Kirrin Sampson

Public Officer:	Justine Power
CBCA Book of the Year Judges:	none
National eStore Sub-Committee:	Justine Power
National 80th Anniversary Sub-Committee	Colleen Caddey



ACT Branch President Report

As you can see by the monthly recording of our Branch events further in this Annual report, it is evident that 2024 was indeed a busy time throughout the year. This was only possible by the efforts of a dedicated Committee who have willingly put their hands up to manage or assist at events, compiled regular editions of our eNews, kept our membership database running effectively, maintained our website, made sure that our bills were paid, liaised with schools, helped with social media and a number of other tasks that have kept our Branch running efficiently and effectively. Thank you all.



The ACT nearly always has creators whose books are entered in the awards. Some are recognized as Notable books; some go on to be Shortlisted and we have had many that have been winners. For 2024 the ACT was represented by 22 authors and 4 illustrators whose titles were entered. In the Notables List which came out on 27 February were Jack Heath for his novel *If You Tell Anyone, You're Next* in the Older Readers category, Tania McCartney for *Dorrie* in the Picture Book category, Tania McCartney again for *Wildlife Compendium of the World* in the Eve Pownall category, Samantha Tidy for *Wollemi: Saving a Dinosaur Tree* in the Eve Pownall category, Margo Neale for *Songlines: First Knowledges for Younger Readers* in the Eve Pownall category and Kathy Weedon for *Phonobet* in the Short List for New Illustrators. *Phonobet* was produced by NLA Publishing. Congratulations to all these book creators.

Thank you everyone who came to our events and showed support for our efforts. It is wonderful to see the increased engagement of schools with our Shadow Judging and Reader's Cup programmes, both very capably managed by Rachael Hind with support from Sally Judd, Veronica Melville and Renee Jones for Reader's Cup.

A big thank you to our Branch partners whose support smooths the way for us in so many ways - The Book Cow, Street Library, The National Library of Australia, ACT Children's Week Committee and the Australian Booksellers Association.

Julie Long OAM
President



Events

January

Information Marketplace at the ACT Education Directorate's New Educator Induction Day

It was held at the University of Canberra on 16 January and up to 200 beginning teachers were expected to be there. Colleen Caddey and I represented the Branch and had a handout which included our 2024 Branch calendar and membership information. We offered a special concession on Membership for 2024 which was valid for 2 weeks. We took some paper copies of selected pages from the CBCA Annual Planner and two laptops so that we could demonstrate the Planner. We had a selection of Australian children's books and novels as a lucky door prize, as well as past CBCA Children's Book Week® stickers and bookmarks as giveaways. It was very successful; all the stickers and bookmarks were enthusiastically taken and it was exciting to talk to the soon to be teachers about children's books and the events we hold throughout the year.



February

Library Lovers Day

The first social get together will be on February 14 to celebrate Library Lover's Day. We are meeting at Paperchain for a glass of bubbles to celebrate the day and an opportunity to purchase books to add to our own Libraries. Then we are moving on to Caph's restaurant to have dinner and talk all things books. The Committee were looking forward to seeing many members either at Paperchain or Caph's or at both!!!!



Night of the Notables

Join us to celebrate the 2024 CBCA Book of the Year Awards Notables List.

Drinks and nibbles provided!

Booking required

Tuesday 27 February
6pm-8pm

Find the Notables in the Book Cow shelves and be the first to share with your class.

The Book Cow
47 Jardine Street KINGSTON www.bookcow.com.au Ph 02 5100 2730

The Children's Book Council of Australia's 2024 Book of the Year Awards

Reading is Magic

NIGHT OF THE NOTABLES
TUESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2024

Notables Night

The Notables Night was held at the Book Cow Kingston and attended by 24 people including teacher librarians and authors and illustrators. The announcement was watched, and attendees had the opportunity to network and purchase books. It was preceded by Maura Pierlot's book launch for *Alphabetter* and this seemed to work well.

April

Short List Showcase and Judge's talk

This event was cancelled and information from Colleen and Rachael was posted via video for interested members to access.



AGM Dinner

The AGM, held at Ollims restaurant in the Mercure Hotel, was well attended and we elected an enthusiastic Committee for 2024, albeit still looking for a Treasurer. Thank you to the 18 people who came and Lori Korodaj for her inspiring talk about her various roles as a Librarian. Attendees had time to browse a selection of the 2024 Children's Book Week® merchandise which included some samples of the themed fabric which has been introduced this year.



May

Teacher Librarian Professional Learning Community Conference

Justine and Julie spent two enjoyable days representing the National Board and the ACT Branch at the TLPLC Conference at The Pavilion in Canberra. Our Trade table was the most colourful, decorated with samples of the 2024 Children's Book Week® merchandise. Many delegates used the large or small social media frames to have their photo taken. It was wonderful that many of the Conference Committee were Branch members and hopefully we picked up a few new members from our networking.





National
Simultaneous
Storytime

Bowerbird Blues by
Aura Parker



June

Creatives Workshops for Shadow Judging teams

In 2024 we had 19 groups involved in the CBCA's Shadow Judging program. Groups explore a category of the CBCA's Shortlist and 'shadow' the judges, analysing the books, creating responses to the texts and making their own selection.

On 21 June, a group of primary school Shadow Judges gathered at St Monica's Primary School to participate in a creative workshop with local author **Catherine Meatherringham**. Catherine shared her story with the students and ran a creative wiring session. Thankyou to Veronica Melville for hosting this fun event.



On 1st August a group of primary and secondary Shadow Judges gathered at Merici College to participate in a creative workshop with local author **Jack Heath**. The group enjoyed a fascinating talk by Jack about his journey and writing process. Thank you to Ann Blakey for hosting the session.



July

Kids' Lit Quiz World Final in Canberra

Teams of 4 students aged 10-13 have arrived in Canberra to compete in the World Final of Kids' Lit Quiz. They have travelled from Canada, Thailand, Indonesia, USA, New Zealand and South Africa. Australia is represented by Canberra Grammar School. Local MP David Smith addressed the students and also spoke on behalf of Federal Education Minister Jason Clare.



August

Launch of 2024 Mint Book and Coin.

Justine Power and Julie Long attended the launch of the Royal Australian Mint 20th anniversary “Where Is the Green Sheep?” coin and book and coin set. The launch was attended by Judy Horacek and Leigh Gordon, CEO of the Mint, resplendent in a suit that matched the lime green colour of the missing green sheep. There were pre-schoolers who were given splendid party hats to wear and a special room where they could design and decorate their own sheep coin.



CBCA ACT Branch Book Week Announcement

We welcomed local book creatives Stephanie Reeder, Cate Whittle, Jacinta Froud, Krys Saclier, Cesar

Alvarez, Maura Pierlot, Sandra Bennett and Emma Janssen to the stage to be recognised and Stephanie showed the audience her shiny gold Winner's medal for winning the Eve Pownall Award in 2016 for *Lennie the Legend: Solo to Sydney by Pony*.

The live cross to the National Announcement worked amazingly well and the two onscreen presenters did a fabulous job guiding the audience through not only the Winner and Honour Books but

also the Shadow Judging Winners.



Shadow Judging students presented some of their creative efforts. There were Bento boxes, animations, a play, a live violin performance, examples of folded book art, a quiz on the Shortlisted Picture Books, digital artwork created on Canva, blacked out poetry, redesigned front covers, book reviews and



chalk drawings from the following schools – St Monica's Primary, CGS Junior School, St Matthews Primary, St Thomas Aquinas Primary, Forrest Primary, CGS Senior School and Merici College. Thank you to the teachers and teacher librarians who encouraged the students to present their creative responses and to guide them through the Shadow Judging process. Thank you to Rachael Hind who coordinated the 19 ACT Branch Shadow Judging teams.

CBCA ACT Branch Book Week Lunch.

Ten children's book lovers stayed on after the Announcement ceremony to enjoy a meal and conviviality at Bookplate, the restaurant in the foyer of The National Library, with a backdrop of Leonard French's beautiful stained glass windows.



October

Readers Cup



Our first Year 7/8 Readers Cup competition was held on 23rd October at Canberra Grammar School. 9 teams participated in the tight competition. Thank you to Renee Jones and Terri Robb for organising and running the event and Julie Long and Justine Power for judging. Thank you also to The Book Cow providing a pop-up book stall for the event.



First place: Canberra Grammar School Team 2

Second place: Merici College Team 2

Third Place: Trinity College Team 1

Our 5th Year 5/6 Readers Cup competition was held on 25th October. It was our biggest competition so far with 40 teams participating from all around Canberra. Thank you to Veronica Melville for hosting and scoring, Sally Judd, Fiona Matchett, Bernadette Aitken, Julie Long and Justine Power for judging. Thank you to Leisha from Book Passion for providing a pop-up book stall for all of the keen readers.



First place: Radford College Team 2

Second place: Hughes Primary School Team 1

Third place: Canberra Girls Grammar School team 2



CBCA visited Parliament House



October 9 at Parliament House for Parliamentary Friends of Children's Literacy meeting with like-minded people and some politicians.



November

Christmas Book Appeal

This year we gave books for children in need to 11 organisations.

Kids in Care ACT

Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre (Supported Playgroups)

Anglicare Specialist homelessness Service Goulburn

Pams Pantry

Louisa Domestic Violence Service

Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre

Canberra Hospital Foundation

The Farm In Galong

Roundabout Canberra

Doris Women's Refuge

Community Services #1



We packed and distributed over 1000 books, each stickered with CBCA ACT Branch book plate.



Thanks to the volunteers that distributed, stickered and packed the bags for us.

Books were given to vulnerable children within the services. Multicultural, Koori, domestic violence survivors, neo-natal – so we gave baby board books, Bluey books, early readers and wonderful picture books.

Thanks also to the many book donations we received in particular Stephanie Owen-Reeder, Julie Long, Kirrin Sampson, Colleen Caddey, Justine Power, without these donations we would not be able to offer these gifts to the young children in the ACT



region so that they can share the joy of reading and have their own special book.

December

Branch Christmas Dinner.

After a celebratory drink and nibbles at The Book Cow, members adjourned to the Saffron restaurant for an evening of good food and festivity. In the spirit of Christmas, each member brought a gift of a wrapped book to give.

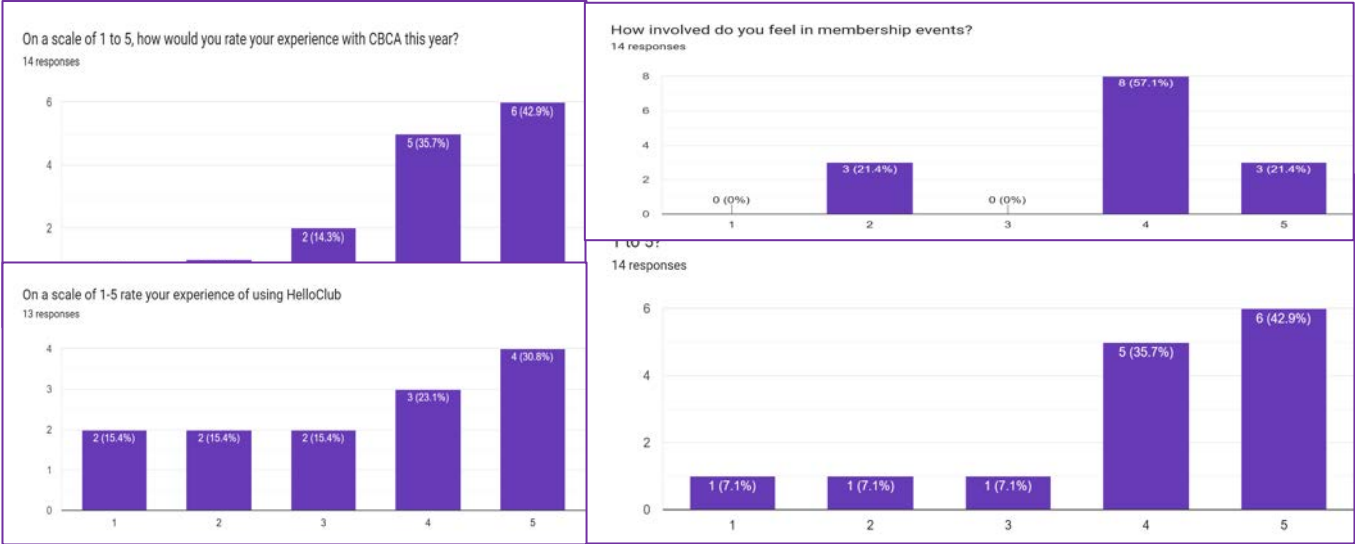


Member Survey

In November 2024 all members were invited to participate in a survey via a link distributed in eNews. The purpose of the survey was to provide members with an opportunity to voice their opinions and make suggestions about the events, networking opportunities and professional resources provided through CBCA ACT. The survey contained 27 questions, encompassing short paragraph answers, 1-5 likert scale, drop down menu selection and multiple response options.

15 members responded and their results of the survey were mostly very positive, however, a number of things were identified and have been incorporated into our 2025 calendar of events and services to be provided.

Some responses that are indicative of the general trend of the survey are shown below.



Schools, libraries, and literature more broadly are facing unprecedented challenges. To support you are there any resources, products, or supports that you feel should be a focus for CBCA ACT (14 responses)

- Discount at bookstores
- More events for students to be involved in - even after school author workshops/talks or an author festival, PD events for teachers/TLs
- I am very concerned about the lack of teacher librarians (qualified preferably) in our ACT public schools
- I feel they offer great things already.
- networking
- As a volunteer reading tutor, I would like to give all the students in my class a bookmark to stop them from turning down the corners of the pages.
- Would be great to have some connected experiences with other organisations, entities, e.g. ALEA, ASLA, ALIA, NCACL - would be very happy to help with this.
- advocacy for physical books and literacy time in ALL schools and trained library staff
- Updated lists of current local creators that could be approached to share their passion and talents willingly
- having easy to access lists of books on various topics - in a database, that can be searched
- Books for Readers Cup students.
- More child centred events and more PL for teachers.

What types of events or offerings would you like more of? (14 responses)

- Author/illustrator talks.
- PD for teachers/TLs, author events for kids to help reduce costs of author visits
- Author/illustrator events
- I don't know
- Bookish social events
- Presentations of good reads for children.
- Online sessions with authors and illustrators
- High school/teenage focus
- Am happy with it.
- Local creatives being involved in local events as much as possible
- bookclub, author/professional talks (zoom or live)
- Book launches, PD inservices, free resources
- Something for kids and families
- Child centred.

Looking further into this through all the responses, some areas for further development were identified.

To address this;

- We have placed book chat sessions into the calendar for 2025 for those not involved in schools or who are retired.
- A list of local creatives is currently being researched, updated and will be shared with members via the website and through eNews.
- We have 4 local creatives confirmed as CBCA ambassadors for 2025 and they will be involved in various events.
- We have also added events and resources that will engage young readers beyond involvement in Reader's Cup and Shadow Judging. For example, 80th Birthday Book Adventure, 80th Passport linked to the ACT.
- Other online sessions will be made available for specific target audiences
- A Hello Club online tutorial session has been scheduled for early 2025 to address this identified need.

2024 CBCA Book of the Year Awards

From the CBCA Chair

Welcome to the 2024 Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year Awards Report. The Book of the Year Awards are now in their 79th year and are a testament to the enduring magic of reading, where CBCA continues to enrich young lives through Australian books and celebrate the transformative power of stories that inspire and connect readers of all ages.

Our Shortlist for this year has produced Honour and Winning books that demonstrate the incredible diversity and richness of storytelling. From evocative narratives for older readers to imaginative tales that enchant younger minds, these books capture the magic that reading offers.

I extend my gratitude to the 15 individual volunteer expert judges for their commitment to celebrating and rewarding books of literary merit. As a national group, they embody CBCA's mission to connect, communicate, celebrate, and advocate for the value of stories. Their dedication ensures that we continue to highlight the best in children's literature. I also wish to thank the Awards Committee for their unwavering vision and effort. Led by Awards Convenor Marissa Caluzzi, this team works diligently to ensure the BOYA are run smoothly and professionally, enabling these stories to flourish and reach young readers across Australia.

Finally congratulations to all the Shortlisted, Honour, and Winning authors and illustrators. Your dedication to crafting stories that ignite curiosity, empathy, and joy is truly commendable. Your books serve not just as stories, but as companions, teachers, and sources of comfort for countless children across Australia.



Jonathan Howard
CBCA National Chair
jonathan.howard@cba.org.au



THE AWARDS BY CATEGORY

2024 Entry Numbers by Category:

Older Reader: 68
Younger Reader: 146
Early Childhood: 126
Picture Book: 201
Eve Pownall: 75
New Illustrator: 40

Unique Publishers: approximately 155

First-time creators: 121 authors, 70 illustrators, 59 author/illustrators

First Nations creators: 32 authors, 19 illustrators, 7 author/illustrators

Authors & Illustrators by State

State	Authors	Illustrators
ACT	22	4
NSW	242	160
NT	10	14
QLD	85	55
SA	43	33
TAS	19	14
VIC	191	151
WA	53	53

Entry Statistics 2014-2024

Category	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
OR	61	77	63	64	71	78	63	55	62	65	68
YR	152	128	130	117	128	121	125	128	129	162	146
EC	95	59	94	89	101	121	135	100	111	132	126
PB	122	122	131	115	130	149	168	179	179	211	201
EP	46	48	52	54	41	51	71	60	72	92	75
NI	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	31	42	48	49	45	40
Total	476	434	470	439	471	551	604	570	602	707	656

Please note, the total entries includes titles entered across multiple categories.

THE 2024 CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR WINNER & HONOUR BOOKS

OLDER READERS



YOUNGER READERS



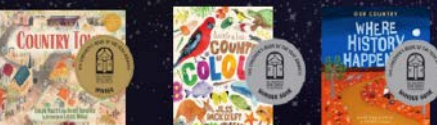
EARLY CHILDHOOD



PICTURE BOOK



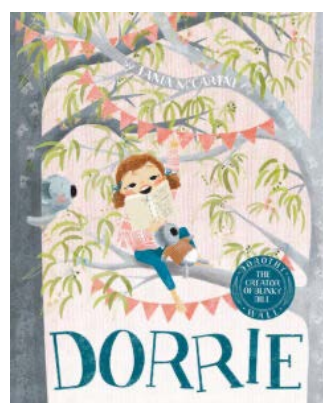
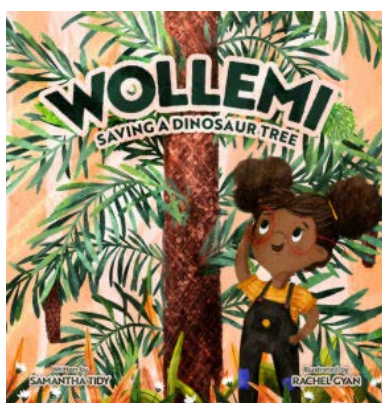
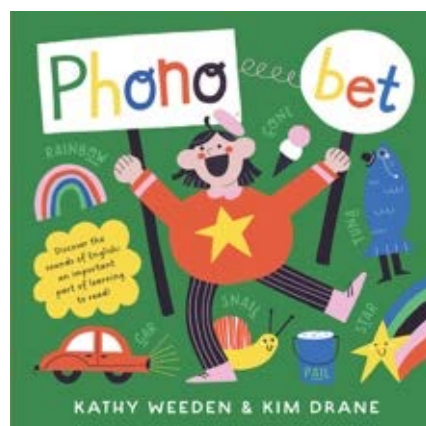
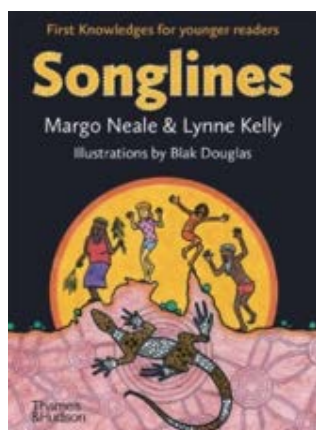
EVE POWNALL



NEW ILLUSTRATOR



ACT Notables



CBCA Children's Book Week Merchandise



Thank you Heather for the gift of a book cover made with 2024 Children's Book Week fabric and quilted with magic stars!!!



Communications

eNews

We have had another busy year of eNews. Our number of subscribers remains steady, but the number of opens has marginally increased. HelloClub is being used more for event updates, but we are still using eNews for general information about the events. We have received many positive comments about the content of eNews. ENews remains an efficient method of getting information to members and non-members.



CBCA ACT Branch eNews

2024 Issue 1 : January 2024

Website

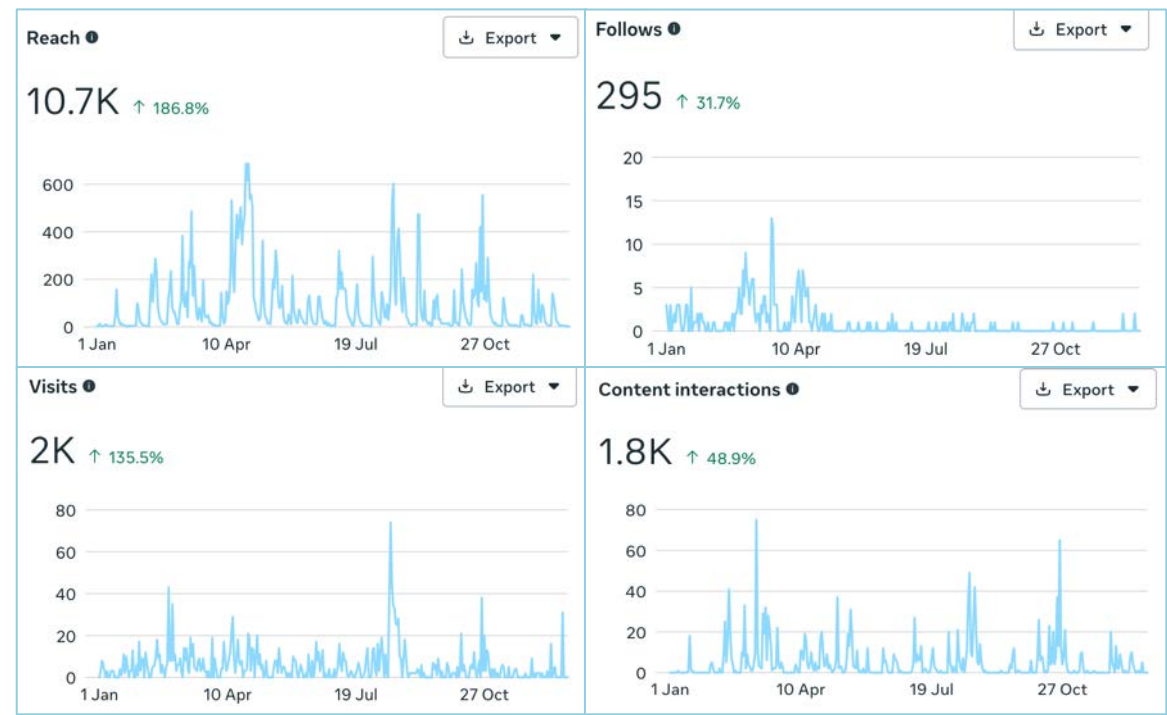


The CBCA ACT website has continued to evolve over 2024. The biggest change was moving the website to a new platform. The move to Wordpress was a national project, undertaken to ensure the stability and security of the National and State websites. This change meant a delay to CBCA ACT website changes in the second half of 2024.

Another significant change to alleviate duplication has been to move most event details from the website to CBCA ACT's membership system Hello Club.

Social Media

Facebook Insights



Facebook gave us 271 net followers increase with over 2,025 followers. Our followers are most active at 12am PST on Tuesdays. We had over 11.8K views with interactions of 1.8K which is up 49% on the year before. The month of October our busiest time.

Our top posts were:



A successful Year 5 and 6 Reader's Cup at St...

25 October 02:04



Thanks to an ACT Children's Week gran...

23 October 03:03



Today at Parliament House for...

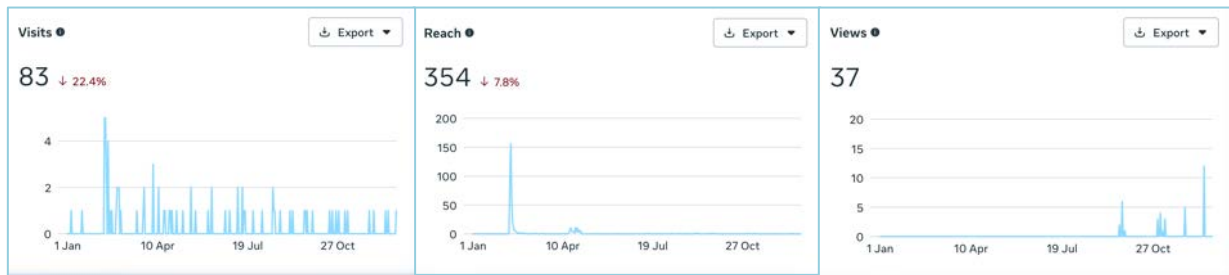
8 October 22:38



Christmas dinner at Saffron in Kingston...

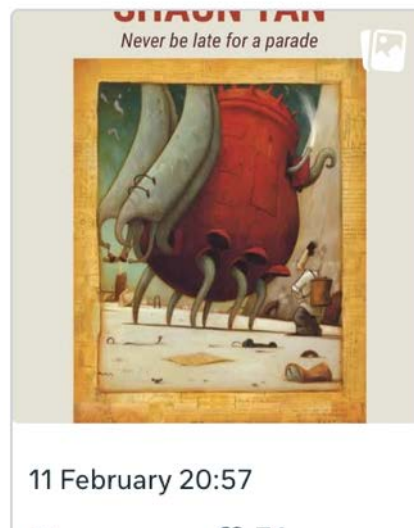
3 December 11:44

Instagram Insights



Overall we have 710 Followers. We had 37 Views and a reach of 354 which was less than the year before.

Top content by views



Membership 2024

Total Members – 102

Concession (Partner Organisations) - 8
Concession (seniors and Students) - 7
Individuals - 28
Individuals (Authors or Illustrator) - 13
Institution (Organisation or Library) - 4
Institution (School) - 33
Life Members - 9
Casuals (not counted in membership figures) - 49

Membership has again increased in 2024.

This is largely due to schools who are keen to participate in Readers Cup and Shadow Judging where they must have School Membership to participate.

Although 32% of our members are casual (used to attend an event) most schools and individuals continue to support the work of CBCA by renewing their membership. We have 7 members who have been inactive for a year. We had 33 new members

2025 we hope to reach out to members on our membership database who have not renewed or had contact for some time to see if we can reconnect. We also want to support our members with some HelloClub training, so that everyone can get the most out of the program.

In Memoriam

Stephen Matthews

Wednesday, 2 October 2024 **taken from Books+Publishing**

Publisher Stephen Matthews has died, aged 78.

Matthews founded the independent publisher Ginninderra Press in 1996 in Canberra, later moving to Adelaide. He received an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for service to publishing in 2021 and a Centenary Medal for his 'contribution to the writing community and ongoing support for local authors' in 2003.

Ginninderra Press owner Debbie Lee writes:

I first met Stephen as a young publisher's representative, when he was the manager of the ANU Co-op. It was the heyday of publishing, when hardbacks preceded paperbacks, literary fiction and nonfiction titles were piled high, launches de rigueur and sales abounding.

As a bookseller, Stephen was discerning and erudite and as well-read as they come. Perhaps not surprising given his Cambridge University education in the classics, moral science and philosophy. Stephen taught high school history both prior to emigrating to Australia and for some years upon his arrival. Subsequently, his joy in books radiated in the writing of reviews, author profiles and articles for the *Canberra Times* and the *Australian Book Review*, as well as assessing manuscripts for large publishing houses, and judging literary competitions and awards.

As mainstream publishing began to contract, with acquisitions and mergers upsetting the status quo, Stephen somewhat counterintuitively saw an opportunity. In 1996, Ginninderra Press was born, with the express mission of publishing new and emerging authors, relative unknowns, writing in eclectic, not always fashionable genres, books that did not necessarily have a commercial orientation, but books that mattered, nonetheless. Traversing poetry, memoir, history, novella, anthology and nonfiction prose, the primary criteria—that these were titles in which Stephen believed.

Over the course of the next 28 years, taking in a move from Canberra to Port Adelaide in 2008, the milestones have been many. More than 3,000 titles have been published, and more than 300,000 books sold. Awards have rolled in and accolades ensued. In addition to publishing via traditional means, Stephen adopted print-on-demand, enabling global access for the Ginninderra Press list. He also lovingly compiled a series of chapbooks (20-page, stapled books of poetry) by hand, such was his dedication.



Welcome to CBCA ACT Branch

If you have any questions, please contact one of the committee members below

CALENDAR

ACCOUNT

PROFILE

FEEDBACK



While many Ginninderra Press titles constitute meditations on the human condition, much of the list has been intentionally geared toward matters of social, cultural and political concern. In 2003, in response to the devastating Canberra fires, Stephen commissioned *How Did the Fire Know We Lived Here?* raising over \$73,000 for the cause. In March this year, Stephen's swansong, *Telling Australia's Truth*, comprised 120 poems by Ginninderra Press authors, expressing the shame, sadness and disbelief that was felt by many after the result of the Voice referendum.

In *Rays of Light: Ginninderra Press—The First Twenty Years* [edited by Joan Fenney], one contributing author referred to Ginninderra as 'a small but significant publisher of small but significant books. Stephen's wife, Brenda—herself a prolific poet—talks about the sense of community and of giving back or 'paying it forward'. In 2021, Stephen Matthews was officially recognised with an Order of Australia Medal for his service to publishing. His contribution to the writing community and support for local authors has indeed thrown 'little rays of light' across Australia. It is an honour and a privilege to be carrying Ginninderra Press forward and so his remarkable legacy may live on.

When Stephen was in Canberra, he was a huge supporter of the ACT Branch and produced many publications on Children's Literature.

Meredith Wright

Taken from Marion written by Karen Viggers

There were some sad losses in the ACT in 2024 in relation to the writing and bookselling community. Marion Halligan, John Stokes, Gemma Carey, and local much-loved, long-term Canberra bookseller, Meredith Wright who died of a rare cancer in late October.

I want to tell you a little about Meredith and pay tribute to her tremendous contribution to the Canberra book industry over many years. Even though I wasn't close to Meredith, I always felt warm and welcome in her presence. She was a wonderful, generous, cheery, positive and friendly person. Meredith came to Canberra in the 1980's to work at Collins at Woden Plaza, which was then one of the flagship Collins stores in all of Australia. She made the place shine and, during her time there, promoted a dizzying array of

books and authors including the huge Harry Potter launches. It was at Collins Woden that the book-buyers of Canberra came to know Meredith and appreciate her passion for selling them the perfect book. These customers followed Meredith loyally throughout her bookselling career.



Image: Tania McCartney Book Launch party at Dalton's, 2009

Meredith took on her own beautiful bookshop, buying Dalton's in Civic from Margaret Dalton. That's when I first met her. I loved that shop – even though it was in a tricky position that wasn't easy to find. It had beautiful wooden panels, a lovely atmosphere, and was close to the ANU (where I was completing my PhD).

When my first novel was published, in 2008, I was clueless, and I had no idea what to do in terms of publicity and connecting with booksellers. But I did arrange to visit Meredith at Dalton's, and that was the first time we really spoke. She was so lovely and helpful.

Unfortunately, a perfect storm was developing in the book industry, with the Global Financial Crisis, Amazon and the Book Depository's predatory cost cutting, and the Borders/A&R market domination. Things became very tough for independent bookshops and Meredith had to close her shop.

During that time, however, Meredith sold books at many community events across the local region. Always connecting with book buyers and making friends wherever she went.

After a short stint at the National Library Bookshop Meredith found her perfect bookselling position with Alison and Richard Kay at Dymocks Canberra City. It was here that she really found her people and consolidated her connections and friendships with many Canberra readers and authors.

When Alison and Richard retired, and Dymocks City became a company store, the new management, for unfathomable reasons, didn't want to employ Meredith. She was devastated by this, but eventually settled happily among books at beautiful Paperchain, bookselling with her husband Steve Belton. For me, this is a nice circle, because Paperchain has a similar atmosphere of wood and warmth that I so loved about Dalton's.



Deb Stevens tells me that, over the many years during which Meredith sold books in Canberra, she was one of the lynchpins in the Canberra bookseller community. I imagine it was her supportive and friendly style that helped bond the booksellers together. She was also a champion for authors, and the connection she made with authors and their books made such a difference for both readers and writers when it came to selling books.

As a writer, I love to hang out in bookshops, and it always makes me laugh that I'm so bad at conversation in bookshops, because I can't stop looking at all the books around me. But I did still manage to become friends with Meredith while *in* her bookshop. For me, connecting with booksellers and developing friendships is one of the great joys in writing. I think it was the same for Meredith. I didn't get to see Meredith towards the end of her life, but Deb Stevens told me how, even when Meredith was in hospital and in serious decline, she continued to find joy in her family and friends. The end of life is a very sad time – it's hard to say goodbye to people we love, and yet Deb said this time with Meredith was a wonderful period of honouring friendships.

I will forever remember Meredith's sunny welcoming smile. She always had time to talk to people and make them feel special. She will be very sadly missed as a friend, colleague, fellow booklover and above all a passionate bookseller who loved people, books and community in equal measure. Meredith did not want a funeral and her family held a small party after she left us on October 30th. Meredith touched so many lives and now her friends, colleagues, customers and authors can farewell a much loved Canberra identity. We will share memories, stories, say lots or simply enjoy listening.

Meredith was the guest speaker at the 2022 CBCA ACT Branch AGM, she was a long-time support of CBCA and had a great love of children's books and their creators.

Laurie Copping Award

ACT Branch was proud to announce the 2024 recipient of the Laurie Copping Award for distinguished service to Australian Children's Literature in the ACT and surrounds.

The 2024 Laurie Copping Award for Distinguished Service to Children's Literature in the ACT was presented to the National Library of Australia and accepted by Luke Hickey, Assistant-Director General of the Engagement Branch of the National Library (which oversees sections that include Public Programs, Education, Exhibitions and Publications).

Congratulations to the National Library of Australia

Previous Winners:

- Rachael Hind
- Stephanie Owen Reeder
- Tania McCartney
- Mollie Bialkowski
- Lynne Babbage
- Laurie Copping OAM
- Jill Gamble
- Julie Long OAM
- Kath McDonald
- Lu Rees
- Eleanor Stodart
- Belle Alderman AM
- John Tyrrel
- Leanne Ford



Partnerships

CBCA National Board Report

As the ACT Director on the National Board, I attended monthly Zoom meetings and presented a monthly report on the activities of our Branch. In my role as a member of the National Partnerships subcommittee, I liaised closely throughout the year with representatives from the Royal Australian Mint, Dreamworld, Yoto and Street Libraries. Other members of the Subcommittee worked with Storybox Library, Zart Art, Echelon, Merchandising Libraries and Spencil. During the year, the National Office collaborated with Erstwilder to produce a unique CBCA Book Week brooch based on the “Reading Is Magic” image. Partnerships is always looking for ways to engage partners and sponsors, as well encouraging interested members to join the subcommittee.

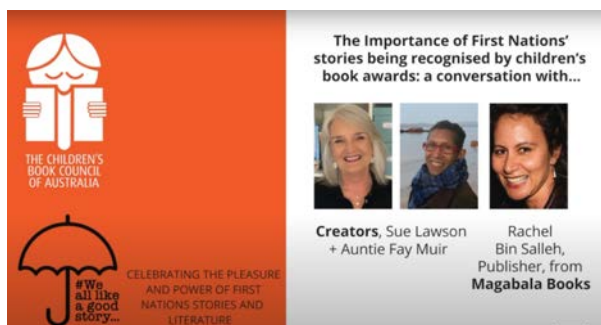
Justine Power and I represented the National Board at the refurbished Mint to launch the “Where Is the Green Sheep?” book and coin. There was a large cuddly toy green sheep, and the Mint CEO was dressed in a lime green suit. Judy Horacek was in attendance, and she drew sheep and read the book to a large group of excited pre-schoolers. You can imagine the fun. The close partnership with The Mint continues in the lead up to the production of the next book and coin set for 2025.

Justine Power and I also represented the National Board at the Canberra Teacher Librarian Professional Learning Community Conference in Canberra. We were able to have a display of 2024 Book Week merchandise, a “Reading is Magic” Photo frame for people to take pictures and lucky door prizes. The Branch Office was very helpful sending items to our Branch to facilitate this and we promoted CBCA to many Teacher Librarians.

All events surrounding the CBCA Book of the Year Awards process were once again announced online. This enabled the Notables, Short List and then the Winners to be transmitted to a huge audience in an entertaining and informative way. The results of the Shadow Judging by children were announced as part of the Book of the Year Awards for the first time and this added a new level of excitement to the ceremony. Congratulations must go to the team from the National Board that made this possible, along with the Awards coordinators

The National Chair, Wendy Rapee, stood down from her role in the middle of the year and NT Director Jonathan Howard stood in as interim Chair for the remainder of the Year. There were several other changes throughout the year at the Branch Office and Directors and Independent Board members. There is huge excitement in the air as plans unfold for celebrating the 80th year of CBCA in 2025.

Once again national supported:

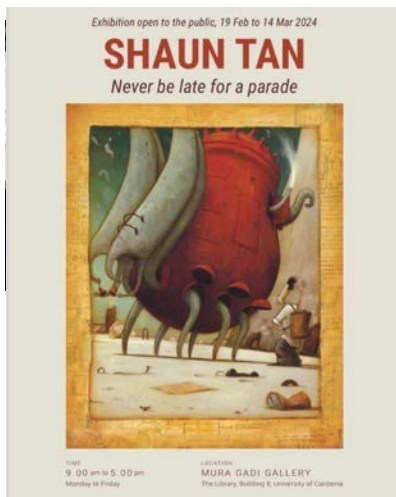


National Centre for Australian Children's Literature (NCACL)

Following its enjoyable 50th birthday celebrations early in 2024, NCACL continued with hosting a series of visits and events and in the following 12 months, including some special exhibitions and activities involving The Blue Gum School.

NCACL and CBCA ACT commenced a review of their governance arrangements during the year to better reflect the current relationship between the organisations - the review remains ongoing at this time.





Shaun Tan Exhibition

Opening on Monday 19 February at UC Library (Mura Gadi Gallery) until 14 March. View 22 framed works by Shaun Tan. Monday to Friday 9-5. Cabinets of ephemera, story boards etc too.

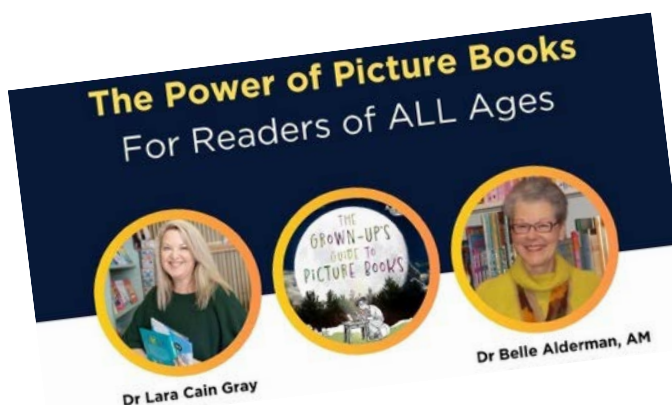


Telling Tales Inside Australian Children's Literature

March 11, UC Bldg 1

Speakers: Ann James AM (author-illustrator), Christopher Cheng (author), Eva Mills (Allen & Unwin Head of Publishing for Children and Young Adults) and Sally Allen, educator, EAL/D and teacher librarian at Canberra's early childhood schools

Living Lives: Autobiographies, Biographies & Memoirs: 2024 Literature Symposium presentation



Alison Lester art work and ephemera as well as delightful works of art and delightful descriptions about each one by 3-5 year olds from **Blue Gum pre-school**. Great advocacy for NCACL on 666 ABC by a teacher and children from Blue Gum Pre-school. There is an exhibition of their art work at Mura Gadi gallery, ground floor of UC Library. Children's Week, 9-5.



NCACL celebrates 50 years of championing Australian children's stories

Written by Suzanne Lazaroo, taken from UC News

14 March 2024: The heart of a nation can be found in its stories – and for half a century, the [National Centre for Australian Children's Literature](#) (NCACL) at the University of Canberra has helped keep that heartbeat steady with its tireless work of celebrating, collecting and cataloguing Australian children's books.

Headed and run by NCACL Director Professor Emerita Belle Alderman AM and a dedicated staff of volunteers, the Centre has a collection of about 58,000 Australian children's books.

"About 6,000 of these have been translated into 79 languages, which we think beautifully illustrates the appeal and importance of Australian children's stories," said Professor Alderman.

"The Centre is also home to hundreds of original artworks, authors' and publishers' papers, ephemera – toys, boardgames and more – all built on children's books."

NCACL volunteers have also painstakingly compiled and curated several free-to-access databases: [Picture Books for Older Readers](#), [NCACL Cultural Diversity Database](#), and [NCACL Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Resource](#).

Today, the Centre's collection is valued at \$12.8 million.

While the archives are open to all, University of Canberra students and staff enjoy particularly convenient access to the archives for research, and to gain valuable professional experience via Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and internships.

The Centre marked its 50-year milestone with a week-long celebration of workshops, a panel event, guided tours of the Centre's collection and a cocktail event gathering authors, partners and well-wishers, all focused in and around its home in The Hub, at the University's Bruce campus. Delivering the welcome address at the anniversary event, the University of Canberra's Interim Vice-Chancellor Professor Lucy Johnston acknowledged the long connection shared by the University and the Centre.

"It is only apt that I start from the beginning – in the form of a story," she said.

"In 1974, the Australian Government gave \$500 to each Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia. Lu Rees, then-President of the ACT Branch, proposed that there should be a national collection of Australian children's books, and the ACT Branch began that collection, housed in their homes."

In 1979, the collection had outgrown these homes – and the then-Canberra College of Advanced Education (CCAEC, which would become the University of Canberra in 1990) stepped forward to provide a new home for the Centre.

"They knew the collection would be of interest to students in education, literary studies, cultural heritage, communication, public relations and languages," Professor Johnston said. "And so the collection of 1,000 books and 80 collections of material about its creators came to the then-CCAEC."

Renowned author and illustrator Bob Graham – whose relationship with the Centre spans his own decades-long career – delivered a typically evocative welcome address, saying that the 50th anniversary had rendered him "a big brown bear standing in a stream, snatching at salmon ... swiping at memories".

"NCACL is an extraordinary resource of cultural importance to the arts in Australia and is run with such dedication and expertise by Belle and the volunteers," Mr Graham said. "Its archives hold my life laid

out in a bibliography – seeing such fundamental parts of the [book creation] process, it almost seems more 'real' than seeing the finished product has been."

As part of the celebrations, Christopher Cheng – award-winning author, NCACL Ambassador and co-chair of the International Advisory Board for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) – launched *Behind Secret, Sealed Doors*. Written by Emma Janssen, the book stars her daughters Sophie and Niome, as they explore all the magic NCACL has to offer.

The celebration event was filled with meaningful moments, community connections and opportunities for book-lovers.

Mr Graham and Rose Howes – who has volunteered for over 30 years at NCACL – were presented with awards for their service and collaboration; Dr Malcolm Beazley AM, Director and Founder of

the [Australian National Museum of Education](#) (ANME) also presented Professor Alderman a memento for the collection. And both Kingston-based independent bookstore The Book Cow and SCBWI members set up book tables for browsing and buying.

NCACL's Acting Chair Mr John Faulks captured the spirit of the occasion – and NCACL – in his address: "The thing that most distinguishes humans from machines is the imagination, and we are the tellers of things we imagine and things we observe ... knowledge locked away is knowledge lost. NCACL works to make it accessible to all."



Member Authors and Illustrators

New Releases



Photos: CBCA ACT members' 2024 book releases

February - Alphabetter, Maura Pierlot
 March - Spider Wars, Dr Gina Newton
 May - Our Home, Catherine Meatherningham
 June - Tracks in the Mist, Sandra Bennett
 July - The Real Cowgirl, illustrated by Sussanah Crispe
 July - Superheroes for a Day, Craig Cormick OAM
 July - What Noise does the Baby Make?, Jacinta Froud
 September - Too Many Acorns, Sussanah Crispe
 October - Hey Diddle Diddle, Judy Horacek
 November - Spirit of the Warriors, James Knight
 November - Molly & Maple, Barbie Robinson
 December - That Book about life before Dinosaurs, David Conley's



Other Happenings:

Rhian Williams was ABC local radio talking about Children's books Monday afternoons.

Megafauna talks by Bronwyn Saunders at the Botanical Gardens

June: ACT Literary Awards:

WINNER David Conley, That Book About Space Stuff

Highly commended **Barbie Robinson** and **Ian Robertson**, *Phoenix and Ralph*
WINNER - PICTURE BOOK Jackie French and **Danny Snell** (ill.), *The Turtle and the Flood*

WINNER - NONFICTION BOOK Tania McCartney, *Wildlife Compendium of the World*

WINNER - OLDER READERS Gary Lonesborough, *We Didn't Think It Through*

Highly commended **Emma Janssen**, *Strong Little Platypus*

Highly commended **Amelia McInerney** and **Lucinda Gifford** (ill.), *Neil the Amazing Sea Cucumber*

Highly commended **Kathy Weeden** and **Kim Drane** (ill.), *Phonobet*

Highly commended **Rhian Williams** and **Martina Heiduczek** (ill.), *Surprise at the End of Onkaparinga Lane*



Tania McCartney - Winner of the Nonfiction Children's Award

July: Congratulations Jackie French, whose book "The Great Gallipoli Escape" has been Shortlisted in the 2024 ACT Book of the Year Award. It is suitable for younger and older readers - 224 pages.

August: ACT Libraries celebrated CBCA Children's Book Week

Get ready for a spellbinding adventure from 17 to 23 August!

Magical Wardrobe Alert: Dust off your wizard hats, fairy wings, and dragon scales! Dress up in your most fantastical attire during the week to show your support.

Join us for a range of magical activities in branch:

- Story Time Takeover
- Scavenger Hunt



- Magical Book Displays
Let's make this Children's Book Week truly magical!

October: Ann James awarded 2024 ASA Medal

Saturday 12 October is Love Your Bookshop Day. This year's theme celebrates the special role bookshops and booksellers play in inspiring our imagination, and championing books and reading. This message is brought to life



with beautiful illustrations by Copyright Agency member Jade Goodwin.

The Book Cow turned 4 years old!



International Day of People with Disabilities. The Book Cow, Libraries ACT event last night about disability representation and what makes 'good' representation in books. Local authors Yenn Purkis, **Craig Cormick OAM** and Liam Adams spoke about the importance and challenges of writing stories that represent people with disability in complex, real-world ways. Informed by their own personal experiences and perspectives it was a thoughtful and provoking discussion. The diversity and strength of our local disability community is so amazing!



Member Schools

Congratulations **Amaroo school** for getting in to the spirit of Children's Book Week®

Enjoy a magical meal deal for just \$10!

As part of Children's Book Week "Reading is Magic" celebrations at B2 on 21 August the canteen will have a magical meal deal for all children from K – 6. Choose from:

- Possum Magic Meatballs and Spaghetti
- Chicken Little Tenders
- Dragon Masters Dagwood Dogs
- Wings of Fire Fried Rice

All meals come with:

- Wombat Stew Jelly Cup with worm lollies
- Thelma the Unicorn Popping Candy
- Water or Juice



Ngunnawal Primary School
Library display of the Platform 9¾

St Matthew's Primary School, Page

Look who made the Canberra Times today! Three students from our Shadow Judging team were interviewed about their experience with the Shadow Judging program.



A lovely Street Library launch in September at **St Thomas Aquinas in Charnwood**. It had a real community feel to the event.



Finance

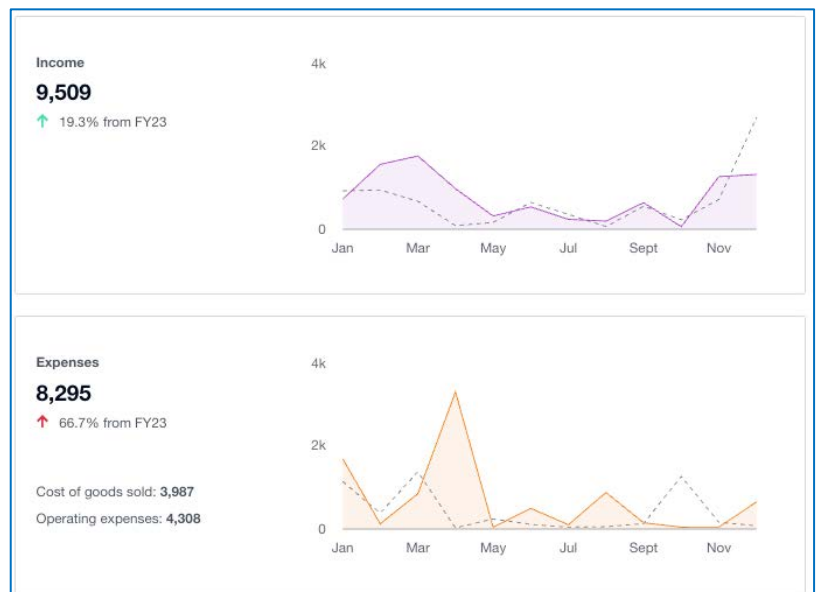
The full financial report was audited by an external CPA for the AGM. The Management Committee confirms that the association is financially viable with more than sufficient reserves to operate for 10 years given current annual expenditure.

Summary of Income Statement

	2024	2023	2022
Trading Income	\$9,509	\$7,974	\$8,779
Cost of Sales	\$3,987	\$6,102	\$6,048
Gross Profit	\$5,522	\$6,102	\$6,048
Operating Expenses	\$4,308	\$3,104	\$4,322
Nett Profit	\$1,214	\$2,998	\$1,726

Notes:

- Income includes:
 - some membership fees for FY2025 prepaid
 - reduction in fees for Readers Cup as entry fees were included in School Membership fees.
- Increased operating expenses includes:
 - new trophies for new section of Readers Cup,
 - bad debt of Readers Cup fees not paid from FY2022 and
 - remaining GST no longer payable.
- Donations made to NCACL and CBCA Ltd of \$1,750



Summary of Equity Statement

	2024	2023	2022
Opening Balance	59,067	56,069	54,343
Current Year Earnings	1,214	2,998	1,726
Total Equity	60,280	59,067	56,069

