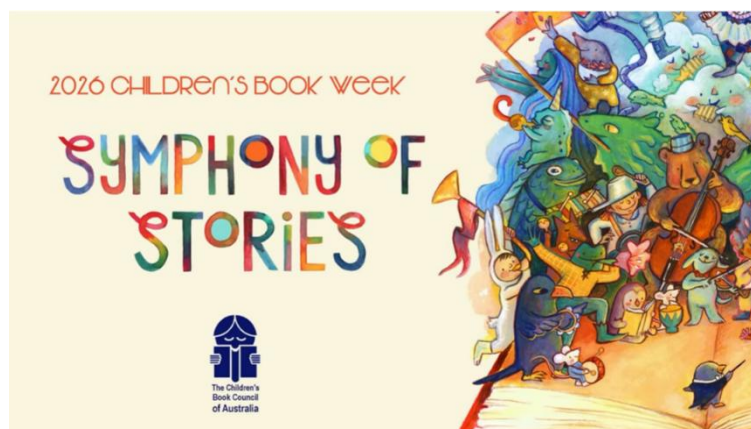




CBCA Tasmania Newsletter

Term 2 2026

The Children's Book Council of Australia (Tasmania Branch) Inc.,
PO Box 113, Moonah, TAS 7009 (tas@cbca.org.au)

From the Desk:

Steve Martin, President Tasmanian Branch

On May 1st, The Examiner reported that West Tamar Council has overwhelmingly voted to support Rosie's Reading Tasmania in operating Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This program gifts free books monthly to children aged 0-5, fostering early literacy and a love of reading during critical developmental years. While the motion passed nearly unanimously, Councillor Caroline Larner opposed it, expressing concerns about children needing more physical play and realistic toys and stories based on brain research.

The CBCA TAS Branch welcomed the positive council decision and highlighted its own ongoing partnerships with Rosie's Reading Tasmania, including the *Read Aloud To Your Child Every Day* campaign. Rosie's Reading also has support from Parliamentary Friends of Children's Literacy and from Her Excellency Sam Mostyn, Governor of Australia.

Recently the Examiner Newspaper published the following (follow up) article featuring Dion Lester, CEO of the Local Government Association of Tasmania. Dion Lester emphasized the wide-ranging role councils play beyond waste management; highlighting their strategic importance in community wellbeing and development. Dion Lester stated, 'Councils should support programs like children's reading that contribute to improved long-term outcomes for the community. While Councillors see council through the 'roads, rates and rubbish' lens, Mr Lester said, it was limiting for those communities. Focusing only on core services risks overlooking opportunities to strengthen communities, respond to emerging challenges and deliver the full value local government is intended to provide.' This presents an opportunity for our members to consider approaching their local council for support.

In other news, the branch expressed gratitude to outgoing patron HE Barbara Baker and has formally requested new Governor HE Caroline Wells to become the branch's patron.



Support for creative funding through a Legislative Council motion by Hon. Ruth Forrest MLC, was also reinforced through a letter from our Branch - and was championed by Michael Gaffney MLC.

'With the lowest arts funding per person in Australia, shrinking grants, and no CPI indexation, organisations are being asked to do more with less...and then less again. Meanwhile, children's authors and illustrators keep showing up in classrooms, libraries, and community halls, doing what they do best, sparking imagination and encouraging young minds. This motion sensibly asks for restored real funding, proper indexation, multi-year support, and the return of the Tasmanian Strategic Touring Fund. It also calls for the arts to be treated with the same steady hand as sport funding, a perfectly reasonable request, given both sectors boost wellbeing, community spirit, and pride in Tasmania.'

We're not asking for a stadium, we're asking to help develop the people who will one day design it, build it, and market it. That starts with creativity, and creativity starts in childhood.

We support this motion because Tasmanian children deserve stories that reflect their world, illustrations that brighten their day, and creators who can afford to keep creating, for them, and for the future they will one day shape.'

Contents of our letter was reported in Hansard.

The Branch recently conducted four 2026 Book of the Year shortlist presentations around the state. Our Book of the Year judges: Anna Davidson, Mark Macleod and Kym Diprose, provided valuable insights. Congratulations to all attendees - celebrating the vibrant Tasmanian children's literature community - and a big thanks to all venue hosts and committee member Jennie Bales for leading the organisation of these events.



Steve Martin OAM
President



Membership Renewals

Purchase your 2026 [Personal or Institutional Membership](https://cbcatas.org.au/membership/).

These subscriptions not only support CBCA Tasmania Branch but also help to keep you informed about what is happening in CBCA Tasmania and in Australia.

<https://cbcatas.org.au/membership/>



Membership Benefits

- Discounted entry at ticketed events for Personal/Concession members. Institutional membership covers all staff at the institution for the discounted member rate determined for each event.
- Free e-merchandise available from the [eStore](#). A discount code will be sent to you once your membership has been processed.
- Access to quality [merchandise](#) available via the [eStore](#).
- Eligibility for schools and home-school teams to participate in the annual Southern Tasmanian Primary Readers' Cup competition.
- Professional Development events such as the Book of the Year Award Judge's Talks.
- Information about author and illustrator tours, speakers and other events.
- Advance access to our regular newsletter.
- Providing financial support to the CBCA Tasmania, which is a volunteer organisation, to meet its ongoing costs and fund activities to benefit its members.

2026 Children's Book Week Merchandise Free for all MEMBERS!



Visit the [eStore](#) to download your [FREE 2026 Planner](#) , purchase [back to school items](#) and to purchase your 2026 Book Week Merchandise and [Member Products](#)

A Discount Code will be emailed to Members once membership payment has been received. Can't find yours? Email tas@cbca.org.au to have it re-sent.

Northern Primary Reader's Cup

Late May saw 108 excited children and accompanying school staff plus many families gather at Hagley for the 2026 Primary Readers' Cup event. With 20 schools participating – a new record – the buzz was palpable. Schools came from as far afield as Cressy, Exeter, Beaconsfield, Scottsdale, Ringarooma and Flinders Island.



Above: The five books read by each team

Student teams commenced their reading in Term 1 with the books covering a wide range of themes and text types. An inhouse competition in each school identified a winning team to attend the Hagley event. The event has three distinct parts:

- An Extra Challenge: an on-the-spot, 10-minute task based on an additional book – *If I was Prime Minister* by Beck and Robin Feiner
- The Quiz: harder than the one completed back in each school – that tested knowledge of the five books
- Creative response about one of the books: songs, dioramas, plays, and PowerPoint presentations.



After a captivating and entertaining evening Longford Primary School was announced as the winning school, with new-comer Ringarooma finishing 2nd, and Flinders Island taking out 3rd place.

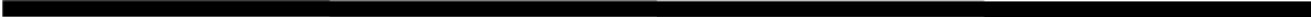
Teams sitting at the front of the audience with blankets, cushions and snacks, watching each other on stage (Photo credit – Jessica Marston).

It was a pleasure to represent CBCA Tasmania at this annual event that celebrates reading, literature, teamwork and camaraderie. Fellow member, Carol Fuller, and I, prepared and judged the Extra Challenge and the organisation provided book vouchers sourced from Petrarch's Bookshop in Launceston to all participating teams. A more detailed report by the coordinator, Jessica Marston can be viewed on the [CBCA Tasmania blog](#).



Longford Primary School, holding their CBCA Tas Branch sponsored Petrarch's Bookshop voucher, a set of the books supplied by the School Libraries team, and the trophy! (Photo credit – Jessica Jackson)

Jennie Bales
CBCA Tasmania Committee member



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Mark talked about the sense of natural language emerging in Picture books, and that authors can tell a good story in prose without just rhyming it all. He also mentioned the huge variety of themes in the PB category: Humour, Environment, Culture, Endangered species and Grief. Mark noted that there are some amazing new illustrators emerging in this year's titles and also the importance that End Papers are making

in contributing to the story. Anna (as a first-time judge), was enlightening about the process of judging, and how the criteria such as language, illustration, plot, setting and characters all play a deciding factor in their decisions. It was encouraging to note several Tasmanian connections in the Early Childhood category also. So, whether or not we all agree with the judge's decision on the short list or on what the winner will be, the conversation about books and reading remains very relevant, especially in school library land.

Jo-Ann Wolf
(CBCA Committee)

From the North West

Our group was small but very engaged with the book sharing that was on offer. Once again we were hosted by Bev and Tamryn in their beautiful Leighland Christian School library. We were also treated to a delicious afternoon tea; good food always adds to an occasion.

2026 Book of the Year judges Kym Diprose (Younger Readers) and Mark Macleod (Picture Book and New Illustrator) were able to offer insights into the



criteria that guide their decision about which books are worthy of the Shortlist. They also shared some of the features that made a book stand out to reach the Shortlist selection (whilst very cleverly giving us no hints to which could be the winners – I would not like to face them in a 'Would I Lie to You' scenario). It was also useful to be reminded that the New Illustrator class is to be judged just on the illustration aspect of the book. I can't imagine how hard it is to constantly remind yourself that the quality of the story does not have any influence on the integrity of the illustrations in this category.



The judges' comments were enhanced by Life Member, Nella Pickup. Nella avidly reads the notables (not just the short list) each year and brings considered thoughts to these workshops. She and Jennie Bales (CBCA Committee) attended the Hobart Workshop the week prior and was able to share the comments made by Early Childhood judge, Anna Davidson.

It was evident that those who attended were passionate about children's literature. We all went away with enthusiasm to read additional titles, to revisit ones that we may have discounted, and to continue to provide meaningful literary experiences for young people.

If you missed attending this session, CBCA members can download the 2026 Notables Booklet from the e-store.



Felicity Sly
(CBCA Committee)

From the North – Primary

The 2026 shortlist brought nearly twenty people out on a cold and rainy winter's afternoon in Launceston, and after hearing from renowned Tasmanian children's literature experts, it was worth the soggy shoes!



Hosted by Jenny Johns and lead by Dr Jennie Bales, Jessica Cross, Nella Pickup and Jessica Marston who shared their thoughts and valuable insights into the shortlist and notables in a session that included and encouraged discussion and participation. A real treat for a group of like-minded folks who love a robust conversation about books!

Over a hot cuppa and plate of something moreish we discovered themes of mental health, darkness and light, family and connection. From fish to frogs, broccoli to birds, crocodiles to Christmas, prawns to parents and eggs to the environment! We poured over fabulous illustrations and end papers!



We discovered that titles were well suited to their categories yet had the depth and quality to be used for older readers.



With slightly dryer shoes (and a thought spared for our first woman in parliament) we left with a warm satisfaction only a good book discussion can give and enthusiasm to share our new-found knowledge with our staff, students and families.

Dawn Clarke
(CBCA Committee)

From the North – Secondary

The second round of talks in Launceston, hosted by David Morris in the wonderful library serving Scotch Oakburn Senior College, was just as soggy but equally engaging, as those interested in Secondary books, publishing, reading and learning gathered to a wonderful high tea! Led by Carol Fuller, the group of a dozen participants engaged in a deep and enlightening discussion around young adult publishing – reflecting on current trends, and at times, narrow and predictable representations, drawing on a number of the short list and notable titles to illustrate

thoughts and encourage deeper discussion. With both Nella Pickup and Jennie Bales occasionally prompting, it was a rewarding book discussion. We all agree that Barry Jonsberg's *Darkest Night, Brightest Star* was the better example of quality writing, and have our fingers crossed that it successful.



The latter part of the agenda involved Jennie sharing a number of titles drawn from other categories that have a place in the secondary library and classroom, with a few favourites known to the group. *A Loo of One's Own*, by Tasmanian born Eleri Harris was a popular choice along with *Once I Was a Giant* by Zeno Sworder. Knowledge gained from attending the Judge's talks was disseminated, especially Mark's coverage of both the Picture Book and New Illustrator categories, and ideas and suggestions for encouraging teachers to enrich lessons with picture books were shared. Jessica Marston, who had led the Primary talk on the Eve Pownall books added her wisdom as well.



In conclusion - Tania Honey shared her reaction to the discussion:

"I cannot begin to tell you how wonderful last night's meeting was. It was just the medicine I needed; to be surrounded by like-minded, awesome, amazing colleagues who 'get me'. What a breath of fresh air, a booster to morale and a renewed hope for the future."

Jennie Bales
(CBCA Committee)

(Note all images taken by Jo-Ann Wolf and Jennie Bales and used with permission)

CBCA Blog

Don't miss out! The [CBCA Tasmania Blog](#) offers curated insights into local events, highlights new book reviews and local author content. Explore all the latest news and keep up with many literary events around the state by following along on the CBCA Tasmania Blog. Read this excellent submission by Lyndon Riggall [What Do We Do With Good Books By Bad People](#).

Southern Primary Readers' Cup

Get your teams ready and registered! Registrations close 14 August 2026. Register interest by emailing tas@cbca.org.au

This year the program will consist of 8 quizzes and a 10-minute time limited creative challenge. This is a fabulous way for all primary students – not just ‘good readers’ to read, and to share the enjoyment of what they read. For more information email tas@cbca.org.au or check out the [2026 Southern Primary Readers' Cup Information Booklet](#).

Venue: Dodges Ferry Primary School

Date: Friday 11 September 2026

Time: 10:30am – 1:45pm



The six nominated books are:

- *Spiro* by Anne McGregor
- *How to Move a Zoo* by Kate Simpson & Owen Swan
- *Bob and Dob* by Sean E Avery
- *To & Fro* by Anton Clifford-Motopl
- *Something Terrible: Tim Tie-Your-Shoelaces* by Sally Barton & Christopher Nielsen
- *Timeless* by Kelly Canby

Happy Reading!

Little Explorers book packs (ages 4-8)

With a Little Explorers book pack, curious kids are never short of a book!

Each [Little Explorers book pack](#) brings together five carefully selected books on an early learning topic making it easy for children and their carers to discover stories and explore ideas together.

The packs include tips for shared reading at home and easy activities based on the topic.

Find them at [selected libraries](#) or [place a hold](#) for pickup at your [local library](#).

Choose from four topics, each with its special character:

You, me, everyone



Space



Living things



Our planet



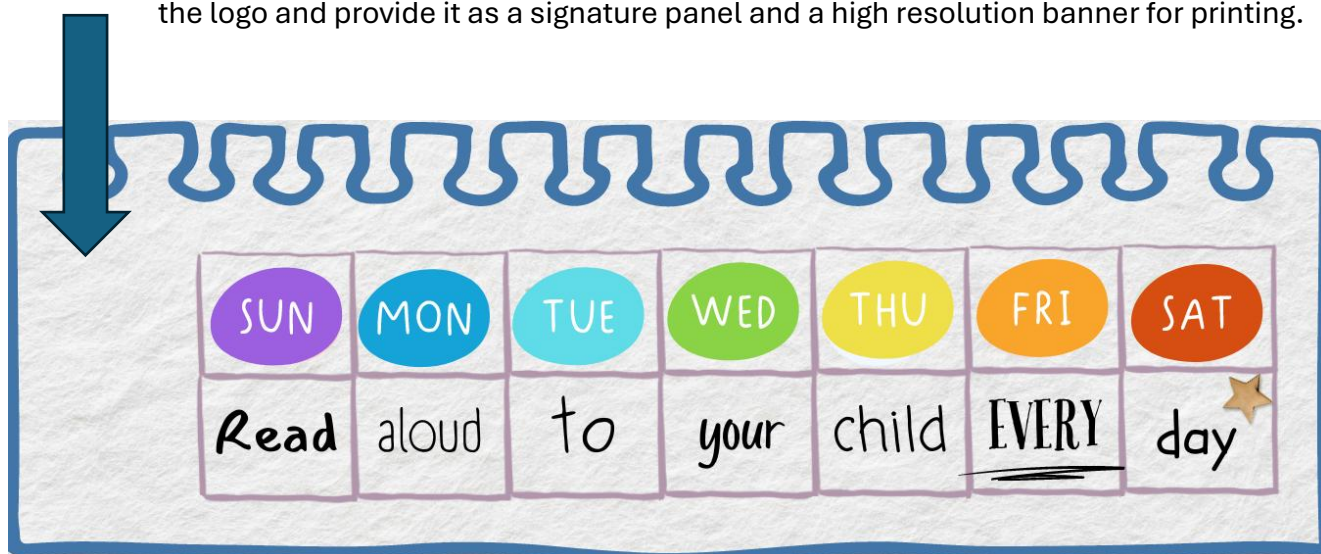


INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



[IBBY Australia](http://www.ibby.org.au) has a unique role, promoting Australian authors and illustrators and their books at an international level; and also working towards international understanding through quality literature for young readers. Activities include celebrating International Children's Book Day; nominating authors and illustrators for the Hans Christian Andersen Awards and for Honour Books; supporting the Children in Crisis Appeal; nominating books for the IBBY Disabilities List and the Lampedusa Silent Books List, and awarding IBBY Australia's biennial Ena Noël Award to encourage emerging authors and illustrators. Members receive a quarterly electronic newsletter.

PUT YOUR LOGO IN THIS SPOT - email your logo to tas@cbca.org.au and we will personalise the logo and provide it as a signature panel and a high resolution banner for printing.



The [ACLF](http://www.aclf.org.au)'s vision is to enrich the lives of young Australians through the power of story.

The ACLF's mission is:

- to promote the value and importance of reading
- to raise the profile of books in the lives of Australian children and young adults
- to respond to identified needs and issues in the children's & youth literature national landscape
- to champion the cause of young Australians' reading in a consultative, collegial and inclusive way within a cultural framework that showcases the best of Australian Literature for young people, and
- to undertake selected national projects that will promote these objects nationally.

Calendar of Events

21 August 2026	2026 Book of the Year and Shadow Judges Winners Announced
22 – 28 August 2026	Children's Book Week Symphony of Stories
August 2026	80th Anniversary of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards
11 September August 2026	Southern Readers' Cup (Primary) 10:30am – 1:45pm Dodges Ferry Primary School

If you have any dates suitable for inclusion, please send them to tas@cbca.org.au

The CBCA Tasmania Blog



Are you ready to write?

Jennie is always looking for new contributors and expanding ideas and experiences around children's literature. If you have:

- a story to tell about your engagement with kids' books
- a writing or illustrating process to share
- reviews of some great books shared with the kids or
- the magic of access to a room of books

why not share it on the blog?

Check out examples on the blog itself — <http://cbcatas.blogspot.com/> — and be inspired.

Contact Jennie via tas@cbca.org.au with "EOI: CBCA Blog Post" in the subject line.

All expressions of interest will be forwarded to Jennie and she will get back with some guidelines (200 to 300 words is a good baseline) and discuss a date.



Reading Time is a great source of information and reviews <http://readingtime.com.au/>

Donate to the CBCA

Help us grow a national culture of celebration of story.

Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible.



Gift Fund Donation
From \$0.00 AUD



Donate to the CBCA Award Foundation
From \$5.00 AUD



Donate to the CBCA Gift Fund
From \$5.00 AUD



Awards Foundation Donation
\$0.00 AUD



Donate to the CBCA Gift Fund: Shadow
Judging 2024 Program
From \$5.00 AUD

Find out about Benefactors [here](#).

History of the CBCA Awards Foundation

The original prize for the Children's Book of the Year Awards was a camellia if the winner was female or a handshake if male.

Government funding supported the Awards for some time (1966–1988). This was followed by commercial sponsorship (Angus & Robertson, Penguin Books Australia, Collins Dove and Franklin Watts in 1988; Myer-Grace Bros. 1989–1993; Angus & Robertson 1994; Reed Books Australia, Australia Post and Social Book Clubs 1995) which made it possible to offer substantial monetary prizes of up to \$10,000 per category to the authors and illustrators of winning and honour books.

The challenge to secure commercial sponsorship for the Awards prize money led to a decision at the end of 1995 to set up the Awards Foundation with the aim of raising \$1,000,000 to enable the CBCA to support the Awards prizes in perpetuity.



The CBCA Awards Foundation

*Proudly Funding Prizes for the
CBCA Book of the Year Awards*

Benefactors

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CBCA NSW Branch Inc
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Laurie Copping OAM
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In memoriam

Jean Chapman • Max Fatchen • Beryl Moncrieff Matthews • Christobel Mattingley • Jill Midolo • John Moffat • Narelle Oliver • Jan Ormerod • Eve Pownall • Marion E Robertson • Gregory Rogers • Sebastian Walker • Cassandra Weddell • Maisie Williams, Garah, NSW

Donations to the CBCA Awards Foundation are tax deductible and can be sent to:

PO Box 1163, Fyshwick ACT 2609.

<http://www.awardsfoundation.org.au/>

(Dec 2025)