

CBCA Tasmania Newsletter

September 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 Tasmania Branch

Tasmania is celebrating a big achievement in Australian children's literature. Devonport-born creator Eleri Harris has been recognised nationally in the 2026 CBCA Book of the Year Awards for her clever and funny nonfiction book ***A Loo of One's Own***.

Eleri has won the CBCA New Illustrator Award, celebrating outstanding new talent in children's book illustration. Eleri's book was also received an Honour Award in the Eve Pownall section, an award given to the best Australian information books for young readers. The Eve Pownall Award recognises books that help children learn about practical topics and the wider community through clear writing, strong research and engaging visuals and *A Loo of One's Own* is certainly a great example of this.

A Loo of One's Own shows how thoughtful, creative storytelling can help young people connect with the places they live, and Eleri's illustrations bring humour, clarity and real heart to an important topic; how public spaces can include or exclude people. Eleri's work also continues a long Tasmanian tradition of strong voices in Australian children's literature. Through our commitment to reading, especially our campaign **Read Aloud To Your Child Every Day**, we see just how much books like this can build curiosity, imagination and creativity for children and families, as well as strengthen connection to their communities.

A Loo of One's Own explores public toilets and what they tell us about fairness, dignity and access. One of the most memorable stories in the book comes from Old Parliament House. For many years, there were no women's toilets near the chambers, so women working in Parliament had to use the men's facilities. To avoid surprises, they placed their shoes outside the door to let the men know they were inside. It's a simple but powerful example of how everyday design can make life easier, or harder, for people.

The book also connects strongly to the legacy of Dame Enid Lyons, Australia's first woman elected to the House of Representatives, who lived at Home Hill in Devonport. Dame Enid worked hard to improve public spaces so women and families could participate fully in community life, and she continued that commitment through her Trust Fund, which supported people experiencing poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, destitution or

helplessness. Eleri's book carries that tradition forward by showing how good design helps everyone feel welcome, included and able to take part in everyday life.
This is a proud moment for Tasmania and a great example of how local creators enrich Australian stories for young people.



Steve: Managing to be in the right place at the right time. This is the inaugural Parliament of Tasmania Book Week celebration, celebrated by staff from Library and Research Services and Engagement and Visitor Services, who used the occasion to donate to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation and the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation.

Photo credit: Kate Roberts
Research Specialist (General)
Library and Research Services
Legislature-General, Parliament of Tasmania

We hope to see you at our AGM on October 31 in the Training Room at Hobart Lending Library at 10.30 am, and at our Platypus Party celebrating 80 years of the Book of the Year Awards at 2pm.
Further information is available in this Newsletter and on our website.



Steve Martin OAM
President



Platypus Party!

80 years
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA
1945-2025

Family Friendly
FREE
Event

Books and



Activities!

Cupcakes!

When

Saturday
31st October
2PM - 4PM

SCAN FOR
MORE DETAILS
& BOOKINGS

Illustrator Jedda Robaard
Pete the Platypus Guardian
and
The TasWater Water Guardians

Where

C3 Convention Centre
Hobart Rivulet

TasWater

80 years

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA
TAS BRANCH

Hobart Rivulet Platypus

RED PARKA



Shadow Judging for the Book of the Year Awards
An Insider Perspective

CBCA has continued to expand the profile and significance of involving students as part of the Book of the Year Awards, through the Shadow Judging program. A dedicated section of the national website https://shadowjudging.cbca.org.au/ hosts podcasts and creative responses from teams around the country. Students were actively involved in this year's Awards event in NSW with student voting results included in the announcements. Tasmanian judge Anna Davidson's blogpost shares some of the highlights of these awards and is included in this newsletter.

An increasing number of Tasmanian schools are involving students in Shadow Judging with teams registered from St Thomas More's Catholic School, The Hutchins School, Fahan School, Austins Ferry Primary School, St Therese's Catholic School, St Helens District High School and Exeter Primary School.

Fahan School share their experiences of Shadow Judging below. The responses of other participating schools can be viewed on CBCA Tasmania blog post: Book of the Year – Students Choices via Shadow Judging (August 21, 2026).

Fahan Junior School Shadow Judging:

Each year our Shadow Judging teams have been made up of unique cohorts of students. Predominantly, they have been Year 6 students, and participation has always depended on the commitments and scheduling demands of that particular year group. Some years are busier than others!

Last year, we had a group of students who simply loved reading. They were reading well above the Younger Readers level and were already immersed in middle-grade fiction, fantasy, and beyond. Some of our students this year are also reading at that level, but they are still very happy to read books in the Younger Readers section. As always, students believe that some of the books selected for the Younger Readers category should perhaps be placed in a separate section of their own. We know that this has been a perennial issue.

This year, once again, we had a very enthusiastic group of keen readers who were interested in developing the language needed to discuss books; beyond simply recounting the story. One group explored the Younger Readers category, while the other focused on the Early Childhood books. However, they were equally interested in the entire CBCA selection, so we dipped into all of the shortlisted titles.

The students met once a week, commencing in Term 2. We used the judging criteria as a guide to help move discussions beyond whether they liked or disliked a book and towards deeper consideration of the story, characters, setting, language, and the worlds that authors and illustrators have created to capture readers' attention.

Lucy: 'I usually read books quickly, but with Shadow Judging I have a reason to slow down. I take more time to notice the details so that I can contribute to the discussion.'

Elsa: I enjoy hearing everybody's thoughts and connecting with people I might not have talked to otherwise. The books are really, really good too.'

Grace: 'Reading, coming to Shadow Judging, and sitting on the couch in the library to discuss the books is really calming. I'm also reading books that I wouldn't usually choose.'

Pippi: 'I don't usually spend much time reading books in the drama genre because it's not my favourite genre. But because these books are chosen for Shadow Judging, I've read them and I've really enjoyed them.'

Rose: 'Reading is nice, fun and relaxing. I like Shadow Judging because it encourages me to read and to try new books.'

We think this is a really powerful process. We have always run a Junior Judging competition at our school, but the Shadow Judging competition provides a particularly authentic and meaningful way for children's voices to be heard.

Meg Denman & Sue Cole
Fahan School

Membership 2026/2027



Purchase your 2026/2027 Personal or Institutional Membership now. Membership expires Dec 31 2027. Memberships 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.

2027 Planner COMING SOON
Free for all members!



Visit the eStore in Term 4 to download your
FREE 2027 PLANNER
2026 merchandise clearance sale coming soon

CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS
2028-2029 JUDGES APPLICATIONS

Applications for judges for the 2028 and 2029 Book of the Year Awards are now open. To learn more about the process and to submit your expression of Interest visit the Judges Application page on the CBCA Website. EOIs close on October 30. Need to become a member to apply? See our 2026/2027 membership offer.

Street Library Australia

Reece High School Junior Council were the recipients of a street library, donated by Street Library Australia. CBCA Tas Member schools were invited to submit an Expression of Interest to install and host a Street Library.



Photo from Reece High School Newsletter

A street library provides a publicly accessible space for sharing books you no longer need. It's a great way to join the sharing economy, bring your community together, and contribute to a more sustainable future, all while promoting literacy. The Junior Council are considering ways in which to decorate it, and what is the best location for it. The School Newsletter has asked for donations of any suitable books to stock the library, which can be dropped at the School Office.

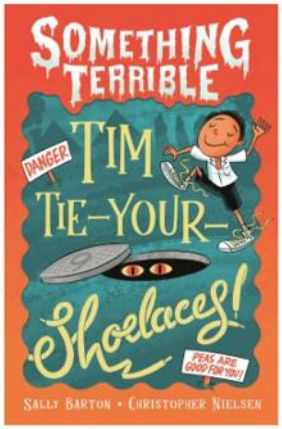
Want to find a Street Library near you? MAP

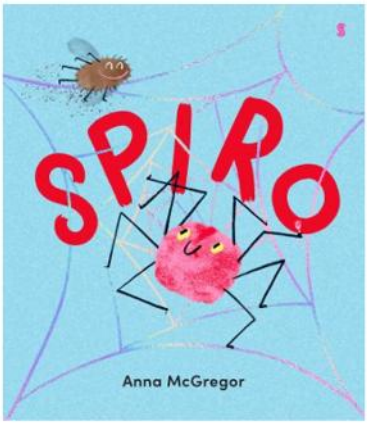
Southern Primary Readers' Cup

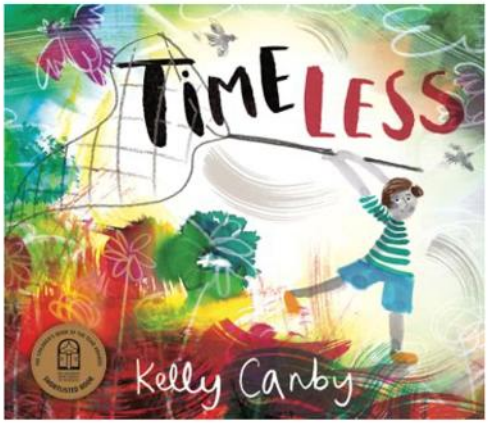
This year the Southern Readers' Cup was hosted by Dodges Ferry Primary School and CBCA Tasmania was pleased to support this event and manage the competition and prize giving. The enthusiastic support from the host teachers at Dodges Ferry ensured a smooth running event. The commitment of teachers and staff from all the participating schools is instrumental in making such events happen as they provide students with the support to stay on track and undertake the challenge. Congratulations to all who were involved.

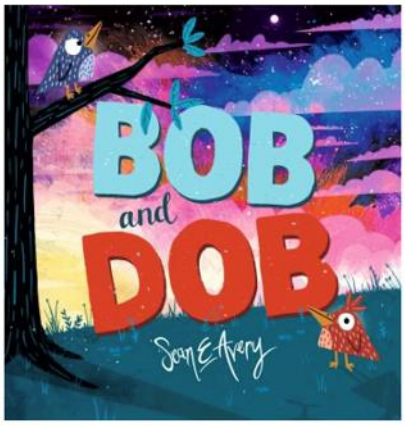
The out of town location made it accessible for some rural schools in the south east of the state to participate and it was wonderful to have teams from Austins Ferry Primary School, Sorell School, Dunalley Primary School and Triabunna District School participating.

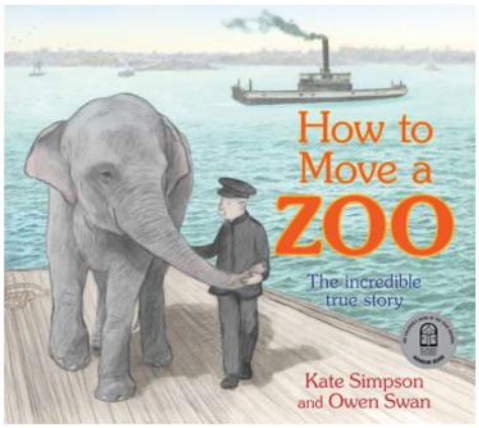
As the Master of Ceremonies, Jennie Bales delivered four rounds of questions relating to the six chosen books. With Dodges Ferry the only team with Readers' Cup experience (they were the 2025 champions) the four new schools did a sterling job drawing on collective memories and collaboration within their teams to tease out many of the answers. The judges, Maureen Mann and Narelle Williams were the quiz markers – a very hard working team. The chosen books were all familiar titles from recent CBCA Book of the Year shortlists.

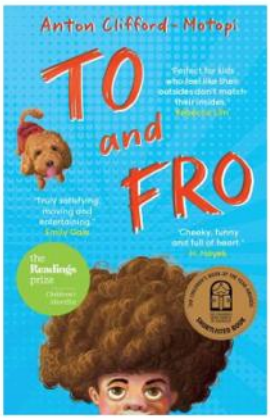












After a short break for lunch, students were geared up for the creative presentations. These provided the supporting teachers and school staff and the students an exciting hour of entertainment. Simple, clever and home-made props were on show, with some teams including interesting and informative PowerPoint presentations; one presented a movie showing time in its many forms. There was also a rap, acting performances and a detailed and intricate diorama. Some teams included more than one medium to share their understandings of one or more of the books, and the audience was entertained throughout.

Congratulations to Dodges Ferry Primary for winning the Quiz component and Sorell School for taking first place in the Creative Performance. These team members each received medals in recognition of their achievements.
With scores combined, Dodges Ferry won the Readers' Cup and it will sit proudly in their school for the next year.





Dodges Ferry Quiz winners ~ Sorell District Creative Winners ~ Overall winners Dodges Ferry

Feedback from two of the Dodges Ferry team members encapsulates the value of this activity.
Sofia: 'For me, the Readers' Cup was an amazing experience. It was an awesome way to share what we learnt from the books we read. Thankyou Jennie for that epic adventure!'
Claudia: 'The Readers' Cup is a great way to learn about books and create new ideas that will turn into a masterpiece.'
Read more in the September 14 Blog. A search for 'readers cup' will bring up other posts celebrating this ongoing event.
CBCA Tasmania supports and encourages Readers' Cup competitions across the state which are conducted in various ways depending on the local coordinators and participating schools. If you are in interested in finding out more about this way of celebrating reading please contact tas@cbca.org.au.

Jennie Bales
CBCA Tasmania Committee Member

Book Week at Rosetta Primary School

At Rosetta Primary School, we were excited to celebrate Book Week, promoting a love of reading through engaging students in literacy activities designed to inspire curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong appreciation of books.

Students embraced the joy of Book Week by dressing up as their favourite character from a book. It was wonderful to see both students and staff bring their characters to life through creative costumes and a shared enthusiasm for reading. Our Book Week Parade was a highlight of the week and was enjoyed by students, families, and members of the wider community.



Throughout the week, we welcomed many special guests to our school who shared their love of reading with our students. Their visits helped inspire young readers and highlighted the importance of books and storytelling in young people's lives.
We had a wonderful week celebrating the joy of books, reading, and learning together.



Happy Book Week!

Pictures supplied by Rosetta Primary School

Book Week – A Different Perspective

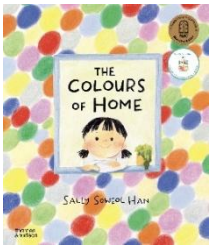
We all know how much fun Book Week can be for the children, but have you thought about what it means to school staff? Not the library staff – we know they are invested! I mean all of the other staff at the school, regardless of their role.
This year across both of the primary schools I work in there was an extremely high rate of adult participation. Some staff like to create a team with a theme, some like to do their own thing. Regardless I saw wonderful interactions between the students and staff, facilitated by a bit of costuming and willingness to get involved.

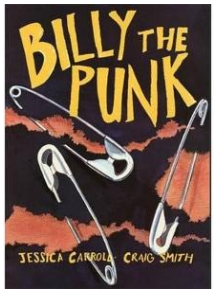


Westbury Primary School Staff – image from Westbury Primary School Facebook page

Some other ways that staff used Book Week to promote a love of reading and books:

- Led by the pricipal – staff shared their favourite books from childhood at 'line-up' (short assembly after recess/lunch) all week. Each day the principal asked some different staff to share the book and the reason it was an enduring favourite. Children were asked if they had heard of, or read the books.
- A staff member with South Korean heritage was able to use shortlisted book ***The Colours of Home*** by Sally Soweol Han, as a gateway to share her family history and traditions with her upper primary class – she was so excited when I showed her the book!
- A teacher tracked down an out-of-print favourite book from their childhood to do a read-aloud of it with their class during Book Week, and talk about why it made such a lasting impression on themselves as a reader. Can you remember ***Billy the Punk*** by Jessica Carroll and Craig Smith (1996)?
- Teachers borrowing books from a display in the staffroom of this year's shortlist in their classroom – just to read-aloud for fun! They were able to ask their classes which ones they voted for in our school voting.
- Teacher-assistants noticing that a particular short-listed book – ***My Nonno Loves*** by Adelle and Claudia Frittitta, really resonated with one of our non-verbal children – and making sure he had access to it in print and also on his iPad via Story Box Hub.
- Staff wearing Book Week pins/brooches. Students loved recognising the characters from Briony Stewart's amazing Symphony of Stories artwork.





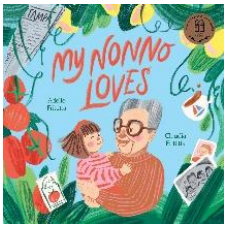




Image from erstwilder.com

So many ways to share the love and power of Book Week! Whether you are in a school or not, how are you going to celebrate Book Week next year?

Jessica Marston
Teacher-Librarian – M.Ed
Hagley Farm School and Westbury Primary School



CBCA Blog

Celebrating the 2026 CBCA Book of the Year Awards

Friday 21 August was a big day in the Australian children's literary world, with the announcement of the 2026 CBCA Book of the Year Awards.
As a teacher librarian, it's always a day to eagerly anticipate; slipping out of class if necessary to check the winners at 12pm, before spending lunchtime with other passionate children's literature enthusiasts, umming and aahing, agreeing and disagreeing over the judges' choices.

In 2026, however, there was a different kind of excitement for me. As one of the 2026 CBCA judges, it was the day that I, along with all the other judges, no longer had to keep the results secret!
Many of the judges were represented at the official Awards Ceremony at the State Library of NSW, and it was a delight to catch up with them in person for the first time since our judges' deliberation conference in February.

The CBCA has worked hard to ensure that student voices are prominent in the Awards Ceremony, so it was wonderful to see students taking on the role of MCs and to hear from Shadow Judges as they shared their thoughts on the shortlisted Younger Readers and Older Readers books.
It was also wonderful to see so many of the shortlisted creators in attendance. As a judge, it was a particular treat to meet authors and illustrators whose work I had spent so many months reading, discussing and debating, and to share in their joy as their books were celebrated so publicly.



Student press interviewing Jo Pankridge - CBCA National Chairperson. Image © CBCA





Award Ceremony Convenors - Alex & Marissa
Award recipients - Anne Donaldson & Cate James
Image © CBCA



Eleri Harris at the Award Ceremony. Image © CBCA

Thank you to the CBCA for putting on such a fabulous event and for bringing Australian authors, illustrators, publishers, judges, readers and, of course, students together to celebrate contemporary Australian children's literature.
And while the 2026 awards may have drawn to a close, the work has already begun for the 2027 CBCA judges. A new wave of incredible books is arriving in our homes, ready to be read, re-read and pored over, with plenty of time to consider their place in the ever-evolving story of Australian children's literature.

Anna Davidson
Head of Library, The Hutchins School
CBCA 2026/27 Judge: Early Childhood category

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.

ASLA Mini-Conference
Island of Ideas: Inspiring School Libraries

On Saturday 19 September CBCA Tas committee members Dawn, Jo and Mark attended the ASLA mini-conference at St Virgil's College. Libraries Tasmania subsidised the event making it free for all (60-70) attendees.
CBCA Tas donated many items from the 2026 Merchandise range and a 2025 Erstwilder Brooch, that were used for lucky draw prizes. Many appreciative noises were made by all recipients of the prizes.
The MC also reminded attendees to join CBCA Tas, and thanked CBCA Tas for generously donating the many items used as prizes throughout the day.
Mark Macleod (2026/2027 Judge) was a guest speaker on a panel of presenters: 'When Authors Behave Badly' – raising the great question of whether an author is a positive reading role model, when they have crossed the Safeguarding line (especially in/for schools).
Dawn and Jo handed out membership forms and Platypus Flyers promoting the 80th Birthday celebration coming up on Saturday 31st October in Hobart.



Mark Macleod, Dawn Clarke and Jo Wolf at the ASLA Mini-Conference

IBBY Australia 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.



Book Selection simplified – quick grab bags of books

Members of Libraries Tas are able to borrow 1 x Baby Book Pack (5 books in a bag – suitable for 0-1 year/red bag, 1-2 years/orange bag or 2-3 years/blue bag) AND

1 x Little Explorers Pack (5 books on themes: Planets; Living Things; Our Planet; You, Me, Everyone for ages 4-8 years)

Not a Member? Join online and then provide photo ID or 2 x non-photo ID pieces of evidence at your visit.

Why read 1000 books before school?

Early literacy skills are an essential building block for lifelong learning beyond primary and high school.

Research shows that reading with a child several times a week develops their literacy skills up to a year beyond their peers.

It's easier than you might think to read 1000 books.

If you read three books a day, you can read more than 1000 books in a year. If you read just one book a day, you will finish in less than 3 years.

Repetition is great for developing early literacy skills, so you can read the same book more than once.

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'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.

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.

Calendar of Events

13 October 2026	**Nic Gill Book Launch 4.30pm at Fullers Bookshop Try Booking**
30 October 2026	**2028-2029 Book of the Year Judge Applications Close**
31 October 2026	**CBCA Tas AGM 10:30 am** **Libraries Tasmania, Hobart Library, Training Room**
31 October 2026	**80th Anniversary Platypus Party 2-4pm** **C3 Convention Centre, Hobart Rivulet, South Hobart** **FREE EVENT RSVP via TryBooking**
1 November 2026	**Entries for 2027 Book of the Year Awards Close**
23 February 2027	**2027 Book of the Year Notables Announced**
30 March 2027	**2027 Book of the Year Shortlist Announced**
20 August 2027	**2027 Book of the Year Winners Announced**
21-27 August 2027	**2027 Children's Book Week**

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

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA Reading Time

Children's book news and reviews from The Children's Book Council of Australia

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



[DONATE HERE]

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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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)***