



AUSTRALIA

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) is a non-profit organisation which represents an international network of people from all over the world who are committed to bringing books and children together

NEWSLETTER No 4 February, 2010

President's Letter

Dear IBBY supporters

Welcome to the start of an important year for IBBY Australia. A resurgence of interest throughout the country is beginning to bear fruit.

First and foremost, there is an opportunity for you to make your support practical by becoming a **Friend of IBBY**. Please do not delay, but fill in the form in this newsletter and send \$25 to become a fully informed, voting member of the section. To follow the principles of IBBY we need a membership of publishers, public and teacher-librarians, parents, authors and illustrators, booksellers, teachers and academics, storytellers, reviewers . . . all who value the availability of quality books for the children of Australia and other lands.

We will keep all Friends of IBBY up-to-date with news of our progress towards autonomy as an independent national section.

International Children's Book Day: as mentioned earlier, we are this year celebrating ICBDay in Australia on Wednesday, 31st March. Watch for library and instore bookshop displays and celebrations, including Launceston as well as around the country.

Posters: these have been sponsored this year by the Spanish section and feature artwork by Noemi Villamuza with the slogan *A Book Is Waiting For You, Find It!* We have a good stock of the posters for sale at \$5 each or 6 for \$25 (plus postage \$4.35). This finely designed, pomegranate coloured poster will enliven the walls of library, office or bookshop and convey its vital message to passers-by. Thanks to Ursula Dubosarsky for the poster tubes, and to Jane Connolly, Joanna Andrew, Elizabeth Hughes, Patsy Jones, Claire Stuckey and others for helping with poster sales.

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Dinners: a number of dinners for International Children's Book Day are planned for around the country. We know of events planned for Brisbane, Fremantle, and Sydney—one in Rose Bay, and another in Beecroft*, where like-minded people will be meeting over a meal and a glass of wine to celebrate the day. Those attending are encouraged to bring and speak (very briefly) about a book from another country or language that has made an impact on the reader; and this is to be followed by a simple ceremony of lighting a candle for world peace. There is still time to get together with some friends for your own local event. And please remember to take some photos to share with us in a newsletter.

Ena Noel Award: the judging for this award is progressing, undertaken by a panel of judges from Queensland, Tasmania and NSW. The winner will be announced later this year. We appreciate the support of all those publishers who entered books by under-35 year old writers and illustrators.

Congress: One of the greatest joys of IBBY membership is the opportunity to attend the biennial international congresses. A number of Australians have already registered to attend this year's congress to be held in September in the city of Santiago de Compostela, the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Spain. With its theme of *The strength of minorities* this promises to be a stimulating congress. The web address is <http://www.ibbycompostela2010.com/> Please keep in touch if you are planning to attend: we would love to have a short get-together of Australians in Santiago, a rare opportunity for us to gather face-to-face. Five people from WA who have registered already have met up to share travel tips.

Haiti: the IBBY Children in Crisis program had already begun work in Haiti with a project to train teachers, librarians and carers how to use the healing power of storytelling and books after natural and environmental disasters. Then came the earthquake in January that caused such havoc and brought death to thousands, and a very uncertain future to millions more. IBBY has been trying to make contact with Haiti colleagues, and is meanwhile accepting funds in trust to help surviving children and their families, making sure they receive books in Creole. Donations can be made through the IBBY website www.ibby.org follow the following link: IBBY Children in Crisis Fund . Heartfelt thanks to those Australians who have already sent donations, such as the generous staff members of Fairfield City Library, NSW.

A special thank you to **Ros Price** for telling us about her experiences in Mongolia, an adventure in the true spirit of IBBY.

With best wishes for 2010

Robin Morrow

*There are some spaces left for the Beecroft dinner; contact Robin Morrow by the end of February if you are interested in attending.

Bookbird: Journal of International Children's Literature

Subscriptions consist of four issues and may begin with any issue. Rates include air freight for all subscriptions outside the USA. Cost to Australians for Individual membership is \$64.60 and Institutions \$114.60. Cheque or money order must be in US dollars and drawn on a US bank. Make cheques or money orders payable to The Johns Hopkins University Press. Payment may be made by VISA, Mastercard, Amex or Discover. Send orders to The John Hopkins University Press, 2715 N. Charles St, Baltimore, MD 21218-4363, USA. Credit card holders may also subscribe via this website:

<http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/bookbird/>

Robin Morrow is the Australian Correspondent for *Bookbird*.

We Invite You to Become a Friend of IBBY

The foremost mission of IBBY (International Board on Books for the Young) is to promote international understanding through children's books.

IBBY was founded in Switzerland in 1953. Today there are seventy National Sections all over the world. The Australian section began in 1966 with Ena Noël as first president, and has from its beginning had a close association with ALIA. www.ibby.org

IBBY encourages the support of those interested in children's books, such as parents, librarians and teacher-librarians, authors and illustrators, publishers and editors, translators, booksellers, journalists and critics, teachers, academics and students.

Activities include the celebration of International Children's Book Day, attendance at international conferences, and the selection of Australian books to be nominated for IBBY awards.

By becoming a Friend you will receive regular newsletters, information about the international world of children's books, and the opportunity to participate in IBBY events and decisions.

IBBY Australia does not seek to compete with other organisations promoting children's reading. The emphasis is on international aspects, both in promoting Australian books to other countries, and in raising awareness here of books from other lands and languages.

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Name _____

Address _____

Tel: (w) _____ (h) _____ Mob _____

Email: _____

Cost: Personal \$25.00 Institution \$100.00

Payment

Please make cheques payable to IBBY Australia.

Electronic transfer

Westpac Bank

Account Name: IBBY Australia

BSB 035-002 Account Number: 18 1992

Please ensure your name is visible in the description box on your payment

International Children's Book Day

In Australia we are celebrating this day on Wednesday 31st March as HC Andersen's birthday, 2nd April falls on Good Friday. We are delighted to announce that we have now printed A2 posters promoting ICBD with its theme *A Book is Waiting for You, Find It!* and they are available from Robin Morrow at PO Box 329, Beecroft, NSW 2119
Email: Robin.Morrow@wordsandphrases.com.au
The cost is \$5 each or 6 for \$25 + Postage \$4.35 Invoices can be supplied on request.

Ideas for celebrating ICBD

- Inviting parents to read an overseas children's book from their own country and in their own language.
- Promoting Australian titles set in other countries
- Promoting good translations of foreign language books
- Having a multicultural day when children dress up in their ethnic outfits and share stories and food from their backgrounds
- Focus on the stories of HC Andersen introducing some of his lesser known tales.
- Emphasise the importance of peace and light a candle for world peace.
- Invite colleagues, friends or family to a gathering, big or small, takeaway or a marvellous feast where those present can talk for about 3 mins about a children's book that has had a great impact on them.

New Member

The IBBY Secretariat warmly welcome colleagues in the United Arab Emirates to the IBBY family. The contact details are posted on the IBBY website under IBBY Worldwide. We look forward to many years of close cooperation across the IBBY world and in particular in the region.

Katherine Paterson

HC Andersen Medal and Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award winner, Katherine Paterson has been appointed as the (US) National Ambassador for Young People's Literature. This is a two year position created to raise national awareness of the importance of lifelong literacy and education.

Christmas Greetings

IBBY Australia received Christmas and New Year greetings from:

The IBBY President, Patricia Aldama, and the Executive members in Basel (Liz Page, Ellis Vance, Forest Zhang)

And from the following national sections

1. BIBIANA, IBBY Book Culture Section & IBBY Slovak Section
2. IBBY Estonia
3. Dutch IBBY
4. IBBY Mexico
5. PBBY – Palestine with the quotation:
I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. Rabindranath Tagore
6. Ahmed Bensaid, Morocco
7. IBBY Uruguay
8. Russian section IBBY
9. Munich Book Castle
10. JBBY (IBBY Japan) wishing a peaceful and TIGER new year

USBBY

The 2010 USBBY International Books Honour List includes *The Naming of Tishkin Silk* by Glenda Millard. Each year USBBY selects an annual list of Outstanding International Books (OIB) for children and young adults which is published in the February issue of *School Library Journal* and as a bookmark. The OIB committee select international books that are published in the US during the calendar year and deemed most outstanding.

2010 BOLOGNA BOOK FAIR

WA author/illustrator Frane Lessac who will be attending the 2010 Bologna Book Fair with her husband Mark Greenwood, was recently interviewed about why she feels it is important to visit other countries, immerse herself in their culture and tell stories that will introduce children to other viewpoints. Her interview can be found at

<http://www.scbwibologna.org/presenters/interviews/frane-lessac.php>

The Australian Publishers Assn will have a stand Showcasing 25 Australian illustrators at the Fair from 23rd – 26th March.

The 2010 Hans Christian Andersen awards for author and illustrator will be announced at the Bologna Book Fair.

IBBY MONGOLIA by Rosalind Price

As you fly towards Ulaanbaatar in autumn, from Beijing, you look down on a vast brown land of mountain and steppe. Not a tree or a bush, not a road or a fence, not a building. Just a stern, beautiful emptiness. As the plane drops lower, you see rough tracks scribbled across the brown, then isolated mushroom shapes (nomadic 'ger' houses, or yurts), clusters of brown dots (herds of sheep, goats, horses, yaks), silver skeins of river, a few fenced enclosures – and then suddenly the chaotic sprawl of Ulaanbaatar, capital of Mongolia, comes into view, obscured by smoke haze from looming power stations.

I went there, in October 2009, to conduct a workshop for Mongolian children's book publishers, courtesy of IBBY. Mongolia has a small but vibrant IBBY Section, driven by the energy and enthusiasm of Dashdondog Jamba – the country's leading writer for children – and his sister Sunjidmaa Jamba. Alongside her demanding job with the World Bank, Sunjidmaa organised the logistics of a workshop for 25 people – including young women fresh out of university, editors, designers, sales people, managers and an academic/consultant.

I arrived, armed with a little research, boxes of the best Australian books, my PowerPoint presentations, sample contracts, and all the confidence I could muster. Over the next four days – across the barriers of language and cultural difference – we had a lively, funny, sometimes clumsy sometimes inspired exchange about publishing children's books.

Australian writers and publishers often moan about our difficult publishing environment, but just think of the Mongolians' situation: a big, land-locked country with poor infrastructure; a population of under 3 million people, many of whom are nomadic, with little disposable income or space for books; a per capita GDP some 35 times less than Australia's; only 20 years' experience of a free-market economy; a minority language (written in Cyrillic script) with few experienced translators and no export market; a school system battered by the transition from socialism to a democracy; few bookshops and libraries; print runs of 500-1,000 copies, and retail prices of US\$2-\$6 for children's books ...

But Mongolian publishers remain buoyant and enthusiastic, keen to produce good books for children. Most publishing houses are first and foremost printers, working to develop a publishing strand to their business. (In the early years of democracy - 1990s - most authors paid for their books to be printed.) Mongolians have a long tradition of written and oral story-telling. Their children's stories are predominantly folk tales, legends, proverbs, wise sayings, riddles and poems – often with overt 'morals' - based on the daily details of nomadic life. There are few contemporary writers or illustrators who specialise in work for children, but the publishers hope to encourage new talent. Publishers are interested in buying and selling rights, and finding partners in the international book trade.

The most valuable parts of the workshop involved close examination of a range of Australian children's books, and group discussions to devise new publishing opportunities. The Mongolians were quick to get ideas and see fresh possibilities in our different forms of story, our design and illustration.

All in all, it was a fascinating experience for me, and – I hope – a useful exercise for the Mongolians. We learnt from each other. My hosts were unfailingly friendly and hospitable. I see scope for Australian publishers, writers and illustrators to support and encourage their Mongolian counterparts, so I'll work towards another visit – perhaps a practical workshop for writers and illustrators? And I hope IBBY Australia will play a part in this.

Mr Dashdondog, their most celebrated writer, is eager to collaborate with an Australian author (as he has done with respected authors in the USA and Europe). He envisages co-writing a story, or 'swapping' translations with other writers. I'd love to hear from any Australian writers who might be interested in a partnership of this kind.

After the workshop, I did a 6-day trip across the steppe, with a resourceful local driver and a charming translator-guide. If anyone would like to see glimpses of Mongolia, go to: www.dabitudo.com (photos by Paul Connor).

Rosalind Price, Publisher of Books for Children & Teenagers, Allen & Unwin, 1986-2007. February, 2010