

Newsletter Volume 5 Issue 1

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About the National Centre's grand vision...

The National Centre for Australian Children's Literature's (NCACL) recently made a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Canberra's National Institutions.

The submission details the Centre's long-term vision to be a national institution that supports, promotes and celebrates Australian children's literature as an essential element of Australia's cultural heritage.

The NCACL has much to offer to the young people of Australia, their parents, teachers, librarians, students, all people and organisations associated in any way with literature and literacy.

The NCACL will be able to do this more effectively in a permanent home, which is suitable for purpose and accessible to all. Digital delivery will enable us to engage with people worldwide.

The NCACL has the will, the skill and the literary assets. As set out in the submission what is needed is a permanent National Centre – in the Parliamentary Triangle. It is a vision, not a reality as yet, but dreams only become reality where there is a will, dedication and effort. Read the submission [here](#). The NCACL submission is number 17 and it comprises 2 documents which can be accessed by clicking on each of the PDF attachments.

What do we ask of you? When the opportunity arises, raise the concept with your local member of the Australian Parliament and persons of influence. The NCACL would also be pleased to receive supportive comments if you wish to make them. Comments can be sent to Belle.Alderman@canberra.edu.au

Finding Japanese translations

The National Centre was delighted by a present from Sharon van Baalen, a valued volunteer! Sharon travelled to Japan for three weeks recently. So we told her that she **MUST** bring back for us Australian children's books translated into Japanese!

Easy? Not on your life! Turns out that Japanese bookshops with children's books are SO much bigger than those in Australia. Books are not organised by author or country of origin. All she could do was try and spot familiar jacket covers! Lucky for us she persisted.

We were fascinated by the Japanese translation of '***Do not open this book***'. The jacket cover was in Japanese. Remove the jacket, and there's the English title featured! That was also true for a couple of the other titles. One more she's promised us is Shaun Tan's '***The Red Tree***'.

What a fabulous present! Volunteers are such special people. Below is a selection of the books Sharon brought back for the Centre.



Sharon van Baalen displaying Japanese translations of *The Treasure Box* by Margaret Wild & Freya Blackwood, *Eric* by Shaun Tan, *A River* by Marc Martin, *Old Pig* by Margaret Wild & Ron Brooks, *Do Not Open This Book* by Andy Lee & Heath McKenzie.

Sharing the Inside Story

Join our appeal

We here at the NCAACL are determined to safeguard the papers and manuscripts of Australian authors for young people. We do this because these collections are of heritage value for posterity. We also know that the creative process is fascinating to people of all ages and interests.

We ensure that these collections survive the enemies of paper, live on safely in archival folders and boxes and ultimately, share their secrets of the creative process for those interested.

Secrets, you ask? There are infinite choices to be made when creating a story for young people. Where did the idea come from? Why choose animals rather than human characters? Faced with three perfectly good endings, how was THE one chosen? Did the author and illustrator collaborate? Why did the book designer choose a landscape format? What role did the editor play? How was the book marketed? What were the negotiations for translations? These essential questions lie quietly hidden until the 'inside story' is revealed.

The NCAACL takes enormous pride in revealing that inside story. We do this by arranging, describing and creating a guide to authors' papers and manuscripts.

There is work involved in creating such a guide. We remove staples, rubber bands and other harmful enemies of papers, rehouse material and label folders, put folders in boxes and create a guide to the entire collection. There are costs involved.

What are these costs?

We are grateful that the University of Canberra provides us with our archival supplies. In our experience, the process of arranging, describing and documenting an author's papers takes around five hours per box. An average-sized collection of an author's papers is around 17 boxes. While we do our best to keep up with arranging and describing authors' papers and manuscripts, we need your help. We have successfully used a professional service whose hourly rate is \$60.50. To complete one author's papers and manuscripts, including a guide to these, would cost approximately \$5,143.

We invite you, as our friend, to support our 'inside story' project. Our call for help may seem like a lot to ask, but a little support from a lot of people will help us achieve our goal to create more guides to authors' papers.

[Here](#) is the link to our donation form available for printing if you wish to contribute in this way. Please indicate your name and 'Finding Aids' on the form. You may also donate using EFT to this project online [here](#). Please include the following details: your surname, first initial, finding aid (i.e. AldermanBFindingAid). As the NCACL is an income tax deductible gift recipient, you will be able to claim your donation to us as a tax deduction for the 2017-2018 financial year. Thank you for considering our appeal.

Best wishes
Dr Belle Alderman AM
Emeritus Professor of Children's Literature
Director, National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc
27 May 2018

Remembering Margaret Balderson





Vale Margaret Balderson

Karen Balderson recently visited us, bringing treasures from her late aunt, Margaret Balderson. Imagine our excitement to peer down into a very large box of translations, newspaper reviews, letters and various material about Margaret's work dating from the 1960s and including a precious medal won for her first book, ***When Jays Fly to Barbmo*** (1968).

With this book, Margaret became the youngest writer to win The CBCA Award, the first to win with a non-Australian setting and the first Australian to be honoured (runner up) for the British Carnegie Medal.

When Jays fly to Barbmo is set in Norway during the Nazi occupation. She based the book on two years living and travelling in Norway. A true adventurer, she backpacked around Norway and also travelled in Asia, the Middle East and other Scandinavian countries.

Books became an enduring part of her life as she served as librarian in Norway, Nowra Public Library, Ashfield Municipal Library, O'Connor Boys and Girls' Library and at Frensham School.

Her second book, ***A Dog Called George*** (1975) also was honoured in The CBCA awards. Children loved this book, especially the 'real George' (dog) that tagged along with her during her talks in schools. After retiring she volunteered to 'take a dingo for a walk' at Merigal, the Dingo Sanctuary at Bargo. Margaret Balderson died on 23 May 2017.

Karen Balderson is pictured above with Belle Alderman. Pat Dixon is pictured organising reviews and articles about Margaret's work.

So how many editions of Storm Boy are there....?



The National Centre has 40 different editions of 'Storm Boy' including ones in Chinese, Dutch, Finnish, French, German and Russian. Many have been signed by Colin Thiele as his family have long been supporters of the National Centre and donated their collection some time ago.

We have a wish list on our website for titles missing from our collection of Colin Thiele books. While we have been collecting missing titles for years, we still have a few missing.

Ainslie Primary School, Canberra's oldest, spotted our wish list and a title that we did not have. The principal, Wendy Cave, on the right, is a past student of Belle's.

Belle gave a talk explaining why the National Centre is collecting these missing books. Belle pointed out that we want to ensure we have all the different 'Storm Boy' books published so that in the future children could see how the same story was presented over the years to attract new readers. The National Centre greatly appreciates Ainslie School's interest and donation and thanks Wendy Cave, Principal and Annette Medhurst, teacher.

The National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc gratefully receives monetary donations into its Gift Fund. Such [donations](#) enable us to pursue a range of activities and to achieve short and long-term goals. [Annual reports](#) provide details about many of these achievements.

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