

The Federation of Children's Book Groups Newsletter

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD IS BACK!

The Children's Book Award 2022 shortlist was announced on 28th February, with children from the 12 Federation testing groups choosing their favourite books from the last two years after a year-long hiatus. The challenges of getting books out to the child judges in lockdowns meant the award did not run last year.

Sarah Stuffs, Children's Book Award Coordinator says: "The challenges of the last few years meant we were unable to run the Children's Book Award last year, but this year the children have had two years' worth of wonderful stories to choose from. We're thrilled to be showcasing their choices in this exciting shortlist that demonstrates the superb talent and creativity in children's books today."

The full shortlist is as follows:

BOOKS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

- *Barbara Throws a Wobbler*, written and illustrated by Nadia Shireen, published by Penguin Random House
- *Octopus Shocktopus!*, written by Peter Bently and illustrated by Steven Lenton, published by Nosy Crow
- *Perdu*, written and illustrated by Richard Jones, published by Simon and Schuster
- *Stella and The Seagull*, written by Gorgina Stevens and illustrated by Izzy Burton, published by OUP

BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS

- *Anisha Accidental Detective*, written by Serena Patel and illustrated by Emma McCann, published by OUP
- *The Griffin Gate*, written by Vashti Hardy and illustrated by Natalie Smillie, published by Barrington Stoke
- *The Highland Falcon Thief*, written by M G Leonard and Sam Sedgman, published by Macmillan Children's Books

BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS

- *The Midnight Guardians*, written by Ross Montgomery, published by Walker Books
- *The Outlaws Scarlett & Browne*, written by Jonathan Stroud, published by Walker Books
- *When The World Was Ours*, written by Liz Kessler, published by Simon and Schuster

Thanks to the generosity of the publishers, all our FCBG groups have been sent copies to enable as many children to read and vote as possible. Additional copies can also be purchased at a discount from our partner supplier Heath Books via this link <https://www.heathbooks.co.uk/federation-of-childrens-book-groups-childrens-book-award/>

The deadline for voting is **Friday 27th May**. The category winners and the author of the best children's book published in the 2020 & 2021 nomination period will be announced at a ceremony in central London on Saturday 25th June, attended by representatives from all our local groups. It will also be live-streamed via the Federation of Children's Book Groups website.

As usual, we are running a blog tour to enable people to discover more about each of the books – all details are available on the website at <http://www.fcbg.org.uk/childrens-book-award/> or follow us on social media: Twitter @FCBGNews or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/The-Federation-of-Childrens-Book-Groups-119682808115620>




**Children's
Book Award**





National Share a Story Month 2022

BELONGING

A sense of belonging is a powerful feeling. Everyone deserves to feel as though they belong and are loved for who they are! Stories offer us another chance to feel as though we belong somewhere!

National Share-a-Story Month is set to take place again this May with the important and vital theme of Belonging. We know how valuable it is for children to feel a sense of belonging in their world, whether through family, friends, clubs or events. Books can offer children another opportunity to feel as though they belong. With the help of our publishing partners, we have many exciting blogs, competitions and giveaways planned. All competitions will be announced soon and we encourage you to get involved in any way you can!

CHECK ALL OF OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS AND WEBSITE FOR UPDATES.



NATIONAL NON-FICTION NOVEMBER

National Non-Fiction November was a hugely successful month of blogs, competitions and giveaways as well as Fact of the Day every day from an array of children's non-fiction books. We had over 70 entries for our competitions. The Superhero Comic Kit competition was judged by author and illustrator, Jason Ford and the winner, Walter from Castle Bromwich Infant and Junior School, is seen here, with his comic creations.

The Design A Protest Banner competition was judged by sister act Alice and Emily Haworth-Booth, authors of 'Protest!' We received some fabulous entries for our Marcus Rashford competition as to why he is a hero.

All winners have been announced and prizes have been put in the post! The theme of Heroes was well received and we had lots of engagement on social media and publishers.

We are already in the planning stages for NNFN 2022. The theme is being finalised and we will be reaching out to publishers soon.

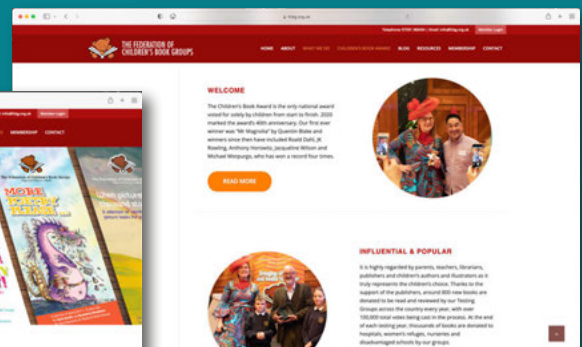
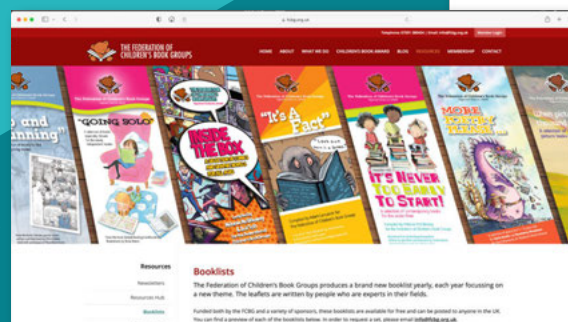
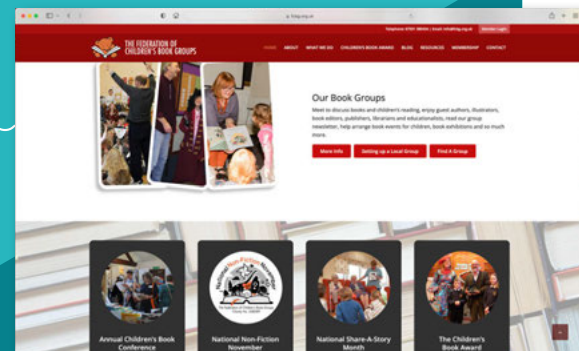
Any questions can be directed to nnfn@fcbg.org



NEW WEBSITE!

After much hard work – particularly on the part of Jane Etheridge and Chris Routh from the National Executive Committee and of Lemongrass- our new website is up and running in time for conference! Do let us know what you think, and please do make full use of the members' area once we have that finalised.

<http://fcbg.org.uk>



NEWS FROM THE National Executive

GOODBYE ROS!

After many years as a stalwart of the National Executive Committee and Dudley children's Book Group, Ros Bartlett has decided to step down and pursue other interests. Her wisdom and experience will be very much missed.



I first met Ros when we shared a table at my second FCBG conference. She had just taken on the role of Chair and was full of enthusiasm, encouraging me to get involved in any way I could. I eventually joined the Exec as the conference representative, working with Ros, amongst others, on the 2011 conference at Worth School. Since then, I've worked with her on many conferences, and she was an invaluable source of support and advice when I became Chair.

Ros is passionate about getting children reading, organising author events through Dudley CBG or on a national level including the two events we held in Birmingham in 2013 and 2018, which would not have taken place without her drive and determination. Her contacts in the publishing world are many and she can always be relied upon to put together a fantastic programme of speakers whatever the event.

I won't be the only one to miss her presence in Executive meetings. Her incredible knowledge and experience have guided many difficult decisions taken over the years. Ros has become a good friend, and I am incredibly relieved to know that she still plans to come to future conferences so we can catch up over a glass of wine, or two, or three.

JANE ETHERIDGE



Occasionally in your life you encounter remarkable people. From my first meeting as a conference rep on the FCBG exec it was clear that Ros was indeed such a person. She was kind, welcoming, and supportive and had this innate enthusiasm and love for all things 'FED'. A perfect colleague, but also it turns out a wonderful friend.

Having worked alongside Ros in all sorts of roles for many, many years it is obvious that her attention to detail, her respect for the authors, illustrators and publishers, her desire to be welcoming to everyone and her commitment to getting children reading is unstinting.

I have so many happy memories. Author events, conferences, fabulous dinners and of course taking the Children's Book Award to the Hay Festival. There is such a long list of events and meetings that wouldn't have happened without Ros' vision. Oh and of course the fun! Ros, what fun we have had!

Her presence on the FCBG exec will no doubt be sorely missed. We would all I am sure be very happy to have Ros' contact list!

I am so pleased that our paths crossed, to have worked and learnt with her and to continue to call her my friend.

JAYNE TRURAN
PAST CHAIR

Ros Bartlett has been the driving force of Dudley Children's Book Group for over 20 years; she is the glue that holds our committee together. Her passion for reading and the desire to share that amongst the children in Dudley Metropolitan area is clear for all to see.

We have been extremely fortunate over the years to welcome many authors to our area and it is all down to Ros. Her championing of children's literature is her legacy and well deserved.

DUDLEY CBG





NEWS FROM

HARROGATE CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

FIONA BRADY

We were delighted to welcome **Hilary Robinson** to our AGM on Saturday, 29 January 2022. Hilary is an award-winning author, radio producer and broadcaster, who has written over 70 picture books including the internationally-acclaimed 'Mixed Up Fairy Tales'. As an author, Hilary's awards include the 2016 Historical Young Quills Award for 'Flo of the Somme', part of a picture book series for which she was also a Carnegie medal nominee. Her radio credits include 'Private Peaceful' for BBC Radio 2, and her series for Barry Humphries 'Forgotten Musical Masterpieces' was listed as one of the top 30 artistic triumphs of 2016 by The Telegraph.

Hilary was talking to us about her 'Poppies' picture books featuring best friends Ray and Ben, during World War I and which are beautifully illustrated by Martin Impey. Martin's video showed us how he builds up his illustrations, from simple pencil lines to the completed pictures. Two of these books are now on the Books For Topics reading list for Key Stage 2 pupils, and would appeal to children from 6 – 12 years old. It was fascinating to learn more about the background to these books and the Great Uncles who inspired Hilary and Martin to produce them. We also had the added treat of a visit by Peace Lily and Ray! With drinks, cakes and book signing included, we had a brilliant morning!



READING CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

CHRIS ROUTH

INAUGURAL CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL

When a new independent book shop opened in Reading just over a year ago, we had no idea what a difference it was going to make to our local Children's Book Group! Luckily, the owner of Fourbears Books, Alex Forbes, was open to ideas, enthusiastic about working together and supportive, and we have been holding a popular monthly book group meeting in the shop since August. By October half-term, we found ourselves helping to organise and run a children's book festival!



We decided to focus on local authors for this first festival and hold all the events in the shop at the beginning of each day by delaying the opening time, except on Monday when we had the whole day as the shop is usually closed. We are lucky to know so many local authors and over six days the programme boasted seven entertaining events featuring **A F Harrold**, **Iszi Lawrence**, **Tim Tilley**, **Kate Poels**, **Holly Webb**, **Pirate Patch** the storyteller and **Fiona Barker**. Our audiences learned a lot about books written by the speakers and enjoyed some amazing practical workshops.



THE GROUPS

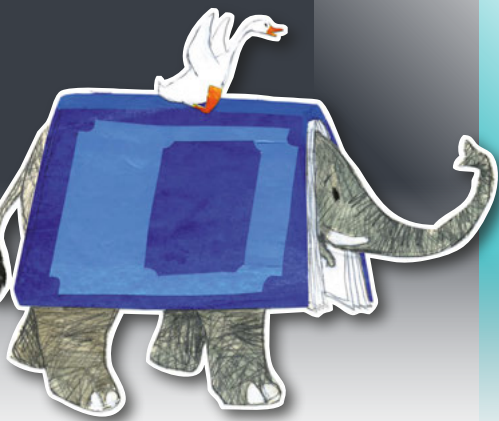


At the suggestion of **Holly Webb**, we ran a competition inspired by her Museum Kittens series. Our lucky winner won a collection of personally dedicated books and a beautiful piece of original artwork by the books' illustrator **Sarah Lodge**.

Though costly in terms of time, we broke even financially thanks to ticket and book sales, plus some generously modest author fees. It was so rewarding to see our speakers and audiences enjoying live events again! Next time (yes we're already planning!), we hope to condense the programme into a long weekend and accommodate larger audiences by using different venues.

For our latest news, follow Reading Children's Book Group on Facebook or @GRRChris on Twitter.





PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

HILARIE MEDLER

The Plymouth Group finally managed to hold an actual AGM after a 2 year delay in January this year at a venue in the Royal William Yard overlooking Plymouth Sound. Tom Palmer was in the city doing workshops in schools so they asked him if he would come along and be guest speaker at this evening event. It was particularly appropriate as his latest book, *Arctic Star*, featured Plymouth in the story. He was delighted to reunite with a lot of old friends and have the opportunity to talk to a mainly adult audience consisting of other authors and teachers about his latest work.

After refreshments, the evening began with the formal part of the proceedings; accepting reports submitted by the officers of the committee and ratifying their roles and other members within it. Several staff from member schools were present and Libby Allman, the group's CBA coordinator, was able to reassure everyone that book testing is alive and well in Devon. This part of the meeting closed with post it notes being shared for attendees to suggest ideas for future children's book events in the area, making the best use of group funds. These ideas will be considered at the next committee meeting.



Tom Palmer was then introduced by Julia Hale, consultant librarian for Plymouth schools, and, one of the named researchers for Tom's book. He told the audience how his book had come about and how involved he had become in the story. His talk was enhanced by part of an interview he had previously recorded with a WW2 veteran, Rolfe Monteith aged 98, who had been on one of the Arctic Convoys and now lives close by in Plymouth. His voice booming out from the screen certainly evoked some of the horrific experiences at sea endured by the men on board and which Tom so expertly portrays in his book. Unfortunately, Rolfe did not serve for quite long enough to receive an Arctic Star medal awarded to British Commonwealth forces who served on these convoys. However, a Plymouth lady and her daughter had come along with her father's Arctic Star medal which was admired by all, so Tom was thrilled to meet them and hear their story.



Questions at the end encouraged Tom to share details of his writing process and to celebrate the achievements of his publisher Barrington Stoke in their efforts to make the reading process more accessible for those with dyslexia. It was a really emotional evening, enjoyed by all who came along.



PLYMOUTH FOOD BANK

It was decided by the Plymouth Group to donate children's books to a local food bank. One of the helpers there reported that children who came along with their parents are delighted to be able to choose a book for themselves to take home. In the photo below you can see Hilary from the Plymouth group taking the books along there.



Other events for the group are in the pipeline; sharing stories in local schools on World Book Day for Plymouth Children in Poverty, and, organising story/activity sessions for children in Keyham (where the shootings took place last year) with funding from Plymouth Together.



IPSWICH CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

SHIRLEY IMLACH

Ipswich Children's Book Group was very pleased to be able to work with **Beverley Birch**, a local, highly regarded and experienced author and editor, on a Suffolk-wide writing competition – A Special Place ... to celebrate the paperback publication of her latest novel *Song Beneath The Tides*. In this, she used her experiences of a childhood in Africa to create an evocative and a resonant sense of place. Young people were invited to think about their special place and to transport readers there by writing about it. The competition was open to pupils in two age categories, 8-11 years and 12 years+ attending a Suffolk school.

The wonderful prizes included critiques of their writing by Beverley, signed books from her publisher Guppy Books and, for the overall winners, a £150 Dial Lane Books voucher for each of their schools generously funded by Beverley herself. The winning entries can all be read on the Ipswich Arts Association website at: <https://www.ipswich-arts.org.uk/events/icbg-writing-competition-results/>



SOLIHULL CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

PHYL GAUNT

November was a busy month for Solihull Children's Book Group. After a prolonged period of inactivity due to the dreaded virus they finally felt able to contact authors and start school visits again.

On 18th and 19th November, **Ross Montgomery** visited St. George and St. Teresa Catholic Primary and Yardley Primary. The prospect of him reading his picture book entitled 'Ten Delicious Teachers', about teachers being eaten by monsters, was almost too exciting to bear.

The children were not disappointed; Ross performed in his usual theatrical style and, accompanied by Sarah Warburton's brilliant illustrations, he had a class full of little monsters in no time at all. Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely and the follow up work occupied a whole year group for at least a week.

On 23rd November, **Petr Horacek** visited Four Oaks Primary. In the morning he did two sessions which included Reception and all of KS1. The children were completely engaged with 'The Greedy Goat', 'The Blue Penguin', 'Silly Suzy Goose' and many more. Petr entertained his audience with his drawings and many funny stories about his grandma, who seemed to have a saying for every situation.

In the afternoon Petr did an Art Workshop with Year One to which every child contributed and had their work displayed on a mural which is now in pride of place in the assembly hall.

Another lovely day confirmed what we already knew: you can't beat having a real live author in school. Let's hope it's just the start of many more visits.

Please send all your group news, and high resolution photos as separate attachments (not built into a Word document) to groupliaison@fcbg.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

April 23	World Book Night
May	National Share A Story Month
May 28	Elmer Day
April	Little Rebels Book Award shortlist
May 13	Pyjamarama Day to kick off National Bookstart Week
June 16	Carnegie/Greenaway – winners announcement
June 25	Children's Book Award ceremony
July 8-10	YALC
July 2022	CLIPPA winner announced Little Rebels Book Award ceremony
13-29 August	Branford Boase Award – winner announced UKLA Book Awards – winners announced
6 October	Edinburgh Book Festival
November	National Poetry Day National Non-Fiction November

Deadline for next issue: 12th October 2022

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Next Issue: Conference report
NSSM report
CBA round-up
And more...

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where you can subscribe to our blog!

Executive Committee

The next Executive meetings will be on Saturday 7th May and Saturday 2nd July 2022. All meetings are held in London (if not, by Zoom meeting). Please contact chair@fcbg.org.uk for further information at least two weeks in advance if you would like to attend as an observer.



CAN YOU PLAY A NATIONAL ROLE IN THE FEDERATION?

We are very keen to talk to anyone who is interested in the possibility of joining the Executive Committee this year. Please contact info@fcbg.org.uk for further information, or talk to a member of the current executive committee during our Conference!

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Dudley CBG

