



The Centre
for Children's Literature

BOOK LINKS QLD INC.

2014- 2015 Report

Mission

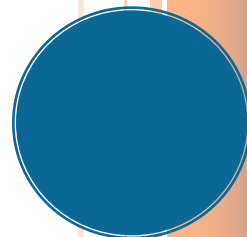
Link people and groups throughout the community with stories and experiences to build literacy and learning; so as to enrich lives.

Objectives

- **Establish and grow vibrant spaces** (fixed, flexible, and on line) to nurture communities where children and young adults are exposed to literature; stimulated to be imaginative and artistic; and where stories and their creators are valued.
- **Support networking, events, learning, and an appreciation of story** for children and young adults throughout the community.
- **Promote authors, illustrators and storytellers** for children and young people.

Jenny Stubbs

10/10/2015



Book Links Qld Inc.

2014- 2015 Report

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

This has been a relatively quiet yet successful year. Key events have been delivered, support for emerging writers and illustrators has increased, new partnerships have developed and another Travelling Suitcase is travelling nationally.

Events



Romancing the Stars, held 19 February was once again a successful event in our calendar. Despite the threat of a cyclone the majority of people who booked made it to the event, including all twenty authors and illustrators plus seventy guests.

The evening, chaired by Andrew King included the mass launch of books by authors and illustrators published January to March and a tribute to founding member Beth Green who passed away suddenly in December 2014. Peter Taylor provided music from his book *I'm a Creepy Crocodile* and Tristan Savage did a stand-up comedy segment.

The Terrace at State Library of Queensland was a wonderful venue and there was a real buzz to the night. It is difficult for some authors to meet socially and network, so for some it was the first time they had met each other. For the guests it was a great opportunity to find

out about the latest books published in Queensland for children and to meet their creators. The artwork on display by four of the illustrators really added to the ambience. Book sales were provided by The Library Shop. The event was planned in partnership with State Library of Queensland.

The Inaugural Book Links Lecture in Children's Literature held on the 25 June at the State Library of Queensland was planned in partnership with the Queensland Writers Centre. We had a full house with 80 people attending.

Reading the wider world: Books as bridges for young readers was the topic discussed by Dr Robin Morrow who was introduced by Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright.

Dr Robin Morrow is the President of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Australia. In her address, she reflected on her experiences of the first years of opening and running a children's bookshop in Beecroft 40 years ago and the lack of Australian content at the time. Since then through the influence of the CBCA (Children's Book Council Australia), teacher-librarians and booksellers this has changed to the many Australian children's books available these days. She warns, however, not to close our minds to international books, to look for the best quality books for children and most of all to recognise and advocate for the 'right of every child to be a reader'.



Robin talked about the importance of children to have access to and read books with characters that represent them, in their own language and suitable to the child's age and stage. She acknowledged the role that books have for children in building bridges to other lives in place, time and experience.

Robin shared many Australian books that represent children's race, gender and disability during her talk. The loss of Indigenous languages in Australia was discussed. She also mentioned how the representation of girls has come a long way in Australia and how she is frustrated on the divide of the muscly blue and the sparkly pink sections in bookshops that is happening now. She highlighted the 2015 The IBBY Collection of Books for Young People with Disabilities. Robin does feel that Australian publishers have excelled in books on refugee experiences.

She sees the big issue we are facing now as needing more books translated from other countries into English. Fifty percent of books translated worldwide are translated from English where only three percent of books translated worldwide are translated into English.

'Our job as adults is to broaden children's horizons and offer different books.'



The BIG Draw, A Book Week Event for children was planned in collaboration with State Library of Queensland, Brisbane Illustrators Group, Write Links and CBCA Qld Branch. The BIG Draw was brilliant. Kids did turn up and had a wonderful time. In the Knowledge Walk area of State Library we had a number of illustrators helping children interpret the stories written by Write Links members. They were all members of the Brisbane Illustrators Group B.I.G. with Kerrie Frousheger, Katherine May, Peter Allert and Sona Babajanyan at the tables. Lucia Masciullo, Tanya Hempson, Anil Tortop and Jack G Kennedy took turns at the tables but also dropped in to the Parlour to do live demos of their illustration techniques using both traditional tools and tablets. Passing traffic could watch as it was beamed on to the screens behind. Lachlan Creagh worked on a long scroll showing the process of creating a picture book as he worked on a large storyboard for a new picture book.

In the Corner Andrew King showed his Engibear sculptures and read his books to the young audience, while Peter Taylor used puppets to engage the children with *I'm a Creepy Crocodile*.



Rebecca Sheraton and Lucia Masciullo at work.



Write Links members working on a story.

Travelling Suitcases

Following a request from ACLA to develop a Travelling Suitcase for Children's Laureate Jackie French, we applied for funding and received support from Arts Qld and the Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network.



Pamela Rushby developed a script and produced the film which was made by HUMAN. The two man film crew flew to Canberra with Pamela to shoot the film at Jackie's property in the Araluen Valley. At the same time Jenny Stubbs visited the Lu Rees Archives in Canberra to research and gather materials for the case.

The first Jackie French Travelling Suitcase was sent to Mt Gambier Library and was launched by Jackie for National Simultaneous Storytime 27 May. Jackie French later used the video at the Early Childhood Conference she was speaking at in WA.



Seven more cases were assembled and sent to each state and territory except Tasmania. (They were not able to participate this year)

A blog post was published on Arts Qld website for Book Week <http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/blog/index.php/travelling-suitcases/>

Write Links

Write Links is flourishing, this is our third year and we have been able to actively support emerging and established children's writers and illustrators in and around Brisbane. Members travel from as far as the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast to attend.

Attendance at our monthly four-hour meetings at SLQ has been consistent and our membership is slowly increasing. There is a steady core of regular members, with an average of 25 people attending per meeting. Over the course of the year 58 different individuals attended.

All regularly attending members are financial Book Links members, with those attending less than twice not needing to be financial. We have 141 members in our Facebook group. This group is kept small on purpose and all members are vetted by admin before being approved.

Requests to join Write Links this year came through the contact form on the website (15), and through our closed Facebook group (once a week roughly) as well as word of mouth.

There have been many success stories this year with writers and illustrators making valuable contacts, signing contracts for book or with agents and launching books through traditional methods and through self-publishing or hybrids of these.

Our presentations this year were varied:

- Facebook and Dropbox for authors by Sam Sochacka and Yvonne Mes
- Anil Tortop from Tadaa! Books and Sue Wright from Tiny Owl Workshop talked about different ways of publishing
- Samantha Wheeler and Elizabeth Kasmer talked about their residencies through May Gibbs and Varuna
- Peter Taylor presented on 'Preparing and pitching for Conferences'
- Andrew Robertson demonstrated how to get the most out of Scrivener, software for writers
- Karen Foxlee talked about her road to publication
- Angela Sunde held a collaborative writing workshop
- Anthony Puttee from Book Cover Café talked about self-publishing and book covers
- Kelly Hart from Better Scribe presented on critiquing
- Sheryl Gwyther talked about writing short stories
- Nicholas Lochel talked about how to self-publish successfully

Though there are other organisations that benefit children's writers and illustrators such as SCBWI and CBCA, our group is unique in that it offers face to face critique groups.

During our networking sessions we shared our writing successes, challenges and aspirations. We also used this opportunity to prepare for and debrief after conferences and offered support and encouragement where needed.



This year saw a few additional activities:

- Author photos at the Botanical Gardens with Julie Langland in March
- Short story competition organised by Melanie Hill and judged by Mia Macrossan, this year we had a \$100 first prize courtesy of Book Links through Mia and a \$50 book voucher courtesy of Jocelyn Hawes. There were 8 entrants. Our winner was Sherlyl Gwyther and the honourable mention went to Jacqui Halpin. We would like to continue this next year but limit entry to unpublished Write Links members.
- Several Write Links members blogged for the Story Arts Festival Ipswich blog
- Development of a collaborative picture book, 'Tuck Mucks Up' and short story, 'Lost in Loopy Land' for the Big Draw. Alison Stegert is currently in the process of exploring ways to have this published.
- Several members will be attending the Writers Group Convention on the 8th of November to represent Write Links and network.
- The development of promotional material badges and bookmarks which were used during writing conferences and other events.

Our website has about a 100 page views a day. I wrote 7 blog posts this year and added several member profiles.

We will continue in a similar format next year and plan to support emerging and established creators of children's literature in Brisbane and surrounding areas with the support of Book Links.

(Yvonne Mes, Write Links Coordinator)

A State of Writing and other Partnerships

Book Links remains a Partner Organisation of A State of Writing. Jenny Stubbs addressed a meeting with QWC staff to explain more about what Book Links does.

Making Connections

Jenny Stubbs was invited to give a presentation to ArtsConnect Ipswich at their AGM on Sunday 22 February about creative places visited while overseas. The presentation was based on the Book Links 2014 AGM presentation with a focus on Book Benches.

A short time after the presentation she met with the daughter of an ArtsConnect member who was working on a university project at QUT in interior design. The student had an interest in education and the story museum provided the stimulus to develop the interior design concept for such a space.

Skills audit

A skills audit was conducted during the year to identify skills of Book Links members that we may be able to call upon in the future.

Professional Development

On Wednesday 25th March, Andrew King and Jenny Stubbs attended an *Ideas into action Forum* organised by Arts Qld. The aim of the forum was to help support arts business and arts and cultural organisations. Exercises helped to focus on unique selling points and to refine pitching skills. Guest speaker Sarah Cobb is a director of Caribblue and has worked with arts based businesses.

Young Writers Project

Book Links applied for a grant to fund writing workshops in schools but were not successful. We decided to proceed with this project on a cut down scale focusing on just one school. Because Martii Maclean had done a lot of work developing the materials to run the project, it was decided to just focus on Eight Mile Plains State School.

The project began on Friday 31 July and ran for 4 weeks. James Moloney ran the first writing workshop which focused on writing a fantasy story. Students enjoyed their sessions and hope to see the stories in print by the end of the year.

Social Media

Online Presence

Our website, booklinks.org.au provides information to members and the public. Sam Sochacka continues to manage the Facebook page and the Twitter account and works hard to give us an active online presence. Statistics were very high during our major events, especially *Romancing the Stars* with the majority of visits occurring in January and February.

Facebook Statistics

- October 2015: Likes – 452 (Oct. 2014: Likes - 286)

Website/WordPress Blog

- Number of visitors Oct. 2014 – Oct. 2015, 7,370 (5,777 in 2013-2014)
- 2015 – 58 people following blog by email (2014 – 39)

Twitter

2015 – 408 followers and 234 tweets

2014 - 236 followers and 82 tweets

Membership

Book Links currently has 72 financial members made up of 6 corporate and 66 personal members. Membership figures are about the same as in the previous year.

Book Links continues to provide discount offers for members from the following bookshops: A Lot of Books Ipswich, Books@Stones, Rosetta Books Maleny, The Book Garden, The Book Warehouse and The Library Shop (SLQ), Brisbane.

Financial Report

As at 30/06/2015 Book Links had \$9,238.41 in its bank accounts. The income and expenditure statement for the last financial year shows that Book Links has operated at a financial loss of \$126.86.

Income (\$12,176.48) and expenditure (\$12,303.34) both increased from the previous financial year; this is consistent with the additional activities that Book Links undertook.

The primary source of the income increase was the Arts Queensland Grant for the Jackie French Travelling Suitcases (\$7,600.00); this money will all be spent on the project with acquittal due in YEJ16. Donations and sponsorships also increased as did membership fees.

Our functions and workshops generated more income than in the past couple of years but were more expensive to run (primarily due to changes of venue) and so did not generate the profit of the previous years. A small amount of funds were used to support Write Links activities and advertising (\$402.56).

A number of administrative banking issues were sorted out during the year and we now have electronic banking capabilities.

(See Appendix for Income and Expenditure Statement)

Successes

Our strategic plan has been adopted and in looking at this plan we can say that we have achieved or are working towards the majority of the actions outlined in it.

1. *Redevelop and maintain the website* – Redevelopment completed. Website is being maintained. Online donations have been added.
2. *Develop and implement a marketing plan for Book Links products, programs and events* -. A brochure has been developed to invite people join as *Friends of Book Links* and to make donations.
3. *Generate financial and in kind support* – A grant was received for the Jackie French Travelling Suitcase from Arts Qld and additional funds from the Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network. Qld Writers Centre partnered with us to deliver the Annual Lecture in Children's Literature. State Library of Qld provided venue and management support for Romancing the Stars and The BIG Draw.
4. *Develop and promote products and resources* – DVDs for the Children's Laureate Jackie French's Travelling Suitcase have been produced. A Travelling Book Case has been built to be used for book swaps to raise money for organisations such as Indigenous Literacy Foundation. We continue to provide other resources such as ReadUp! online.
5. *Research and lobby for a children's centre based on story* – Meeting held with student to develop ideas for interior design of centre for children as a university project.
6. *Up-skill Book Links committee members* – Members attended workshops on fundraising.
7. *Identify and promote Book Links specialist advisory services* – Met with QWC to explain purpose of Book Links and discussed future consultation with SLQ staff.
8. *Maintain and enhance mutually beneficial partnerships* – Read Up! program in partnership with Moreton Regional Libraries, met with QWC and SLQ staff to seek opportunities to collaborate, had a presence at StoryArts Festival Ipswich, worked with SLQ, CBCA Qld and Brisbane Illustrator Group on BIG Draw and Future Libraries Conference, cross promoted events of partners.
9. *Develop and implement a Book Links promotional plan* – new *Friends of Book Links* brochure developed and used at conferences and events.
10. *Maintain and expand the Book Links calendar of programs and events* – Events presented as per annual calendar. Write Links continues to provide a vehicle for engaging with and supporting emerging authors and illustrators.
11. *Develop, implement and maintain a Strategic Plan* – Strategic plan completed and reviewed.

Annual Targets

Table 1 Book Links Performance Indicators

Measuring Our Progress	Annual Target	Outcome
<p>Increase in reach (the number of people attending / participating in programs and activities)</p> <p>(Additional activities offered brought a roughly proportional increase in numbers of attendees.)</p>	20%	150%
<p>Increase in number of programs and activities offered.</p> <p>As well as Romancing the Stars, additional programs and activities were run or supported this year: Annual Lecture, Writing workshops for students, The Big Draw, Story Arts Festival Ipswich (Travelling Bookcase).</p>	20%	150%
<p>Increase in membership</p> <p>An increase from 67 to 72 financial members.</p>	20%	7%
<p>Increase in fundraising to maintain current program and develop new programs</p> <p>A grant \$8,000 was secured as well as some smaller donations and additional funding of \$5,137 from the Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network. In 2014 only \$100 of funding was secured.</p>	20%	1300%

Appendix 1: Finances

BOOKLINKS (QUEENSLAND) INC.

ABN61948979764

Trading Profit & Loss Statement

Financial Year 1st July 2014 to 30th June 2015

Income	YEJ2015	YEJ2014	YEJ2013	YEJ2012
Functions / Workshops	\$2,253.50	\$1,753.10	\$1,604.00	\$4,786.00
Grants & Donations	\$8,104.41	\$100.00	\$-	\$1,293.75
Interest Received	\$172.07	\$151.90	\$-	\$0.06
Membership	\$1,540.00	\$1,305.00	\$1,040.00	\$962.00
DVD sales	\$106.50	\$229.00	\$2,975.50	\$9,515.50
TOTAL INCOME	\$12,176.48	\$3,539.00	\$5,619.50	\$16,557.31
Expenses				
Advertising	-\$473.00	-\$962.48	\$-	\$2,497.43
Auditor / Accounting fees	\$0.00	-\$231.00	\$231.00	\$220.00
Depreciation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$718.40	\$179.60
General expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.95	\$17.65
Email, internet & website	\$0.00	-\$13.00	\$59.00	\$59.00
Functions & Travel	-\$2230.75	-\$1,111.26	\$662.82	\$592.64
Gifts	\$0.00	-\$250.00	\$425.00	\$241.99
Insurance	-\$670.00	-\$660.00	\$626.72	\$-
Postage / Post Box	-\$135.75	-\$279.03	\$113.40	\$1,020.40
Professional Development	\$0.00	-\$120.00	\$618.00	\$-
Rent	-\$882.00	-\$798.00	\$882.00	\$1,260.00
Stationery Supplies	\$0.00	-\$38.14	\$52.30	\$-
Travelling Suitcases	-\$7461.03	-\$194.70	\$1,270.73	\$25,095.22
Office of Fair Trading	-\$48.25	\$0.00	\$45.00	\$59.85
Write Links	-\$402.56	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	-\$12,303.34	-\$4,657.61	\$5,720.32	\$31,243.78
OPERATING PROFIT / (LOSS)	-\$126.86	-\$1,118.61	-\$100.82	-\$14,686.47