

The Centre  
for Children's Literature

## BOOK LINKS QLD INC.

*2022- 2023 Report*

### Mission

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

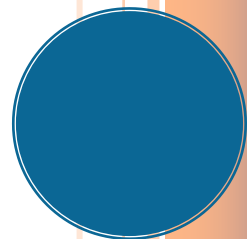
### Objectives

**Establish and grow vibrant spaces** (fixed, flexible, and online) 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.

Jenny Stubbs, President

7/10/2023



# Book Links Qld Inc.

## *2022- 2023 Report*

### OUR HISTORY

In 2004, the Queensland Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia celebrated its 50th anniversary. During that year members were keen to develop commemorative projects to celebrate this key milestone, whilst furthering the aims of the CBCA in Queensland in some distinct way.

A small group of dedicated and passionate lovers of children's literature took this opportunity to explore the establishment of a Children's Literature Centre in Queensland.

The outcome determined that initially establishing presence through the provision of wide ranging literary inspired activities, aimed primarily at school age children and others who have a strong interest in children's literature; namely librarians, parents, teachers, students and researchers, should precede and in turn support an actual physical centre.

In response, Book Links was registered as an Incorporated Association in February 2006. Book Links QLD Inc. is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Status. In 2017 a Symposium was held to examine literature-based centres for children in other states and to reignite support for a literature centre for children in Queensland.

Book Links administers two sub-groups, Write Links and StoryLinks.

**Write Links** was formed in April 2013 in response to a need to encourage and assist writers embarking on writing for children. Write Link members network, share information, motivate and support each other in working towards achieving personal writing goals. Write Links coordinates several critique groups: picture books, junior fiction and young adult fiction.

**StoryLinks** is a children's book review site which was established in March 2018. It publishes Book reviews, reading lists on a range of topics, interviews and runs short story writing competitions for children and adults.



## OUR PEOPLE

### Executive



Jenny Stubbs  
President



Danielle  
Freeland  
Vice-President



Tyrion Perkins  
Treasurer



Kayt Duncan  
Secretary



Marie  
Fletcher  
Membership  
Secretary

### Coordinators



Maria Parenti  
Newsletter Editor



Mia Macrossan  
StoryLinks Coordinator



Yvonne Mes  
Write Links Team



Rebecca Sheraton  
Write Links Team



Sandhya Parappukkaran  
Write Links Team

### Responsible Persons

Jenny Stubbs

Dr Andrew King

Rachel Nolan

Dr Cherri Ryan

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PATRON



GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND

**Message from the Governor of Queensland**

As Governor of Queensland and Patron of Book Links (Qld) Inc, I wish to reaffirm my support for Book Links, a remarkable organisation that has been making a profound difference in the lives of children and young people through the power of storytelling since 2006.

In a world filled with distractions, their ongoing efforts to inspire generations of children and young people to appreciate literature in all its forms is nothing short of inspiring.

As a volunteer-run, not-for-profit organisation, Book Links continues to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to its vision, mission, and objectives.

In fact, it has met and surpassed many of those initial objectives, including the establishment of vibrant spaces for literary exploration, networking support, events, learning, and the promotion of authors, illustrators, and storytellers.

This work is seen in initiatives such as the annual Book Links Awards, the StoryArt Exhibition, the Young Writers Competition and Workshop, the Book Links Mentorship program and the Narelle Oliver Lecture series, whose audience includes many teacher-librarians, whose role in our education system will have a profound impact.

As a partner organisation of A State of Writing, you are part of a dynamic initiative that connects writers, readers, and ideas, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of children's and youth literature.

We know that literacy can shape the future in profound ways. Your mission to connect people and groups in our communities with literacy and learning is not just noble, it is an essential service if we are to build a brighter, more literate future.

By enriching lives through the magic of stories, you are fostering a love of reading and learning that will benefit individuals and communities for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Jeannette Young'.

**Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM**  
Governor of Queensland



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR VICE PATRON JACKIE FRENCH

### Real Life Among the Pages

The best place to find real life is between the covers of a book. The right book, of course, one where the author sees the world as it is, without the 'second thought' that ignores all they find uncomfortable, and then shares the vision and the experience.

Each of us only has one life, but when we read a book we share the lives of every character, every time and place and challenge of philosophy or humour.

The sounds and images on the screen don't do that – literally. Daydream or read about eating ice-cream, and the 'eating ice-cream' areas in your brain will light up, the neurons firing and connecting. You can taste the ice-cream in a book.

Increasingly, and terrifyingly rapidly, the lives of our young people are being removed, and replaced not just by screen lives of movies and social media, but their very thought processes made redundant by AI.

University lecturers these days routinely use computer programmes to pick out plagiarism and 'essays for hire', but many quietly admit that the real problem is that their students see nothing wrong in having an AI think for them. After all, their decisions are already mostly made for them by whichever curated social media stream they follow; their 'off time' is dictated by whatever is being streamed; their food is preprepared; their choice of food is carefully cultivated by advertisements and cooking shows; their view of the world shaped not by their own or their friends and family's thought, humanity or compassion, or even Uncle Roger's arguments with Dad on the veranda, but by memes spat out by algorithms.

Young people live in a world of narrow experience, and even narrower choices – unless they have books.

How many social media or movie streams does the average young person have easy access to? A dozen? And of those most will give similar world views. How many books can a young person choose to help shape their world? A million? Ten million?

If they have been touched by the magic of Book Links the answer is unquantifiable, because once they have been given a hunger for books, the vitality, stimulation, sheer immersion in a world the reader creates at the same time as the author, they will spend their lives hunting the books they need among humanities 8,000 years of books and even longer heritage of stories.

Young people's world has narrowed. In that same time Book Links has thrived, creating both readers and writers. I'd like to say that humanity's need has led to Book Link's growth, but instead I suspect it is due to the committed core who dedicate their minds, hearts and 112% of their free time to its continued growth. I can only plead 'Keep going' and say inadequately 'thank you.'

If young people only know the narrow world of curated screen life, they can't understand the present. If they can't understand where they are now, they can't imagine viable ways to go forward.



If they haven't shared determination, loyalty and heroism within the covers of a book – emotions that won't translate into their mind and life experience from anything they see on screen, no matter how dramatic – they are unlikely to be able to face the challenges of the next decades or hundreds of years.

'Book Links' is just two words. Whole libraries could be written on each of them – the power of books, the potency of social linking, good people coming together to celebrate and to create, not just books, but a future where we do not just survive but thrive, with joy and with stories.

Jackie French



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **Overview**

2022-23 has been a very productive year. All regular annual activities have been run as planned and been well attended. An additional and successful writers' retreat was added to the program. The retreat's success paved the way for a similar Illustrators retreat that is currently scheduled for November.

Our "Working with children" policy and procedures have finally been completed enabling the planning of events for children which have been on hold since Covid-19 and new government regulations impacted our programming.

We received a grant from Arts Qld to provide an artist in residence and exhibition in the Write Gallery at The Lighthouse Toowoomba coming up in November 2023.

We experienced technical complications during a number of hybrid events impacting on the quality of online event participation. These issues are now resolved, and we look forward to delivering reliable and improved service to our regional and interstate members.

Jenny Stubbs

***Promoted emerging and established authors, illustrators and storytellers for children and young people***

**Caroline Magerl Exhibition**

7 - 30 October 2022



*Caroline Magerl in conversation with Nette Hilton*

Book Links supported the exhibition of illustrations by Caroline Magerl in The Write Gallery at The Lighthouse Toowoomba.

An opening event was held on Friday, 7 October followed by the Book Links AGM on Saturday, 8 October. Caroline Magerl presented an interactive tour of the exhibition allowing people to join in via ZOOM.



The exhibition was open for 21 days and 116 hours of volunteer time were provided by The Lighthouse to open the space.

It was seen by 333 children and 5 workshops were provided with 2 funded by Book Links.

53 pieces of art were sold.

274 people watched the Quirky Lecture online and there was a 20,230 person reach on Facebook and Instagram.

The final event of the exhibition was Caroline Magerl in conversation with author Nette Hilton.

## Book Links Story Arts Brisbane Conference

22 - 23 October 2022



Book Links StoryArts Brisbane was a huge success. During the weekend **The Book Links Mentorship** was announced and panel sessions with publishers and book creators provided information and motivation for emerging authors and illustrators.

The Library Shop staffed the bookshop with a range of 33 titles including local authors attending BSAB and sold \$1,133.41 in value across the weekend.

We reached our booking goal for BSAB with a total of 141 attendance registrations. Localised Brisbane flooding on the Saturday regrettably prevented a small number of registrants from attending.

Attendee feedback was very positive. Publishers also found the event fruitful requesting submissions from a handful of attendees some of which have resulted in offers of publication.

BSAB manuscript feedback sessions with Nicola Santilli postponed to 6-7 May were in high demand and booked out.

## Big Lit Quiz

26 November 2022

The Big Lit Quiz was held at Moreton Bay College with Mia Macrossan as Quizmaster. We raised \$500 to donate to IBBY Australia. Representatives from CBCA and SCBWI joined Book Links members at this annual event to raise funds for key charitable organisations that promote Australian children's literature nationally and internationally.





## Romancing the Stars

Sunshine Coast 28 October 2022

Brisbane 23 March 2023

2023 was the 12th year of Romancing the Stars in Queensland. We were able to deliver the Sunshine Coast event at Immanuel Lutheran College in October 2022 followed by the Brisbane event in March at St Peter's Lutheran College Indooroopilly. Both events were well attended and feedback from participants was very positive. This continues to be a popular event in our calendar.



Romancing the Stars – Brisbane 2023



## Woodlands Retreat

20-21 May

The retreat at Woodlands of Marburg was well attended with over 20 people across the 2 days, including 20 for dinner in the mansion. There was very positive feedback and the group asked for it to become an annual event. The retreat was unstructured, and attendees created their own groups as required or worked on their own. We are now running an extra retreat in November for illustrators.



## Narelle Oliver Lecture

24 May 2023

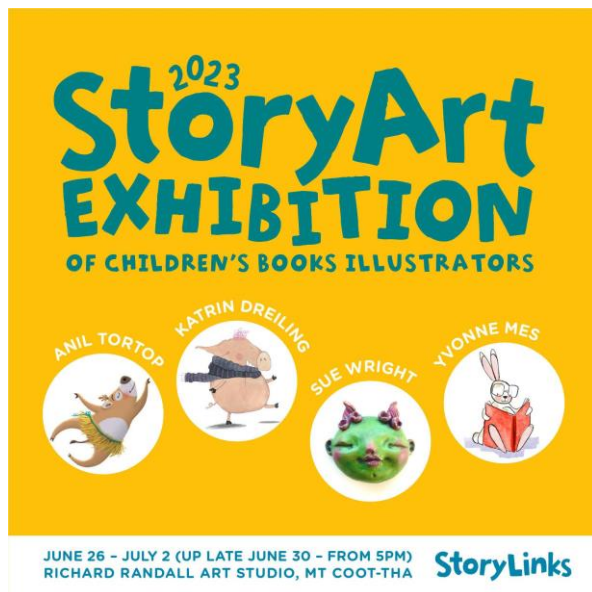


**The Narelle Oliver Lecture** was held at St Aidan's Anglican Girls School. A large audience of teacher-librarians, authors, illustrators and community members interested in children's books was honoured to have the Australian Children's Laureate, Gabrielle Wang, give the 2023 Narelle Oliver Lecture.

Gabriele shared stories about her role as Children's Laureate, and her meeting with other Laureates from around the world at the Bologna Book Fair earlier in the year. Other topics covered were racial prejudice, that we all deserve a chance to tell our unique stories and the need to provide opportunities and support for those with hidden potential.

## Story Art Exhibition

26 June - 2 July 2023



The exhibition was held at the Richard Randall Gallery and was curated by Mia Macrossan and run with the assistance of Ayesha Uddin.

The aim of this annual exhibition is to raise awareness of the quality of children's book illustration, to support the artists on show, and to sell their books and artwork. A secondary aim is to promote the work of Book Links and StoryLinks.

Across the week we had 712 people check out the illustrations of Anil Tortop, Katrin Dreiling, Yvonne Mes and Sue Wright.



It was artists Anil, Katrina and Yvonne first time publicly exhibiting work, and all enjoyed good sales. Many thanks to Mia Macrossan and Ayesha Uddin for all the hard work and time they put into making this a success. Ayesha is taking over management for 2024.

We continued our partnership with Where the Wild Things Are bookshop who supplied us with titles by the artists to sell on commission.





## OUR CURRENT PROJECTS

### Book Links Mentorship 2022



In its 4th year, the Book Links (Qld) Mentorship competition has again attracted excellent submissions. At the start of BSAB 2022 Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright announced the winner of the Book Links Mentorship. The winner was R. M. Little for “Saltwater and Ash”, a YA novel set in near future Melbourne. Robyn offered a second prize to Melissa Salisbury for “Hiding Henrietta Honeyman”, a humorous JF story.

The winner will receive a 12 hour mentorship and the second prize winner will receive a three-hour appraisal and consultation.

The winner of the 2023 mentorship will be announced at the 2023 AGM.

### History Award

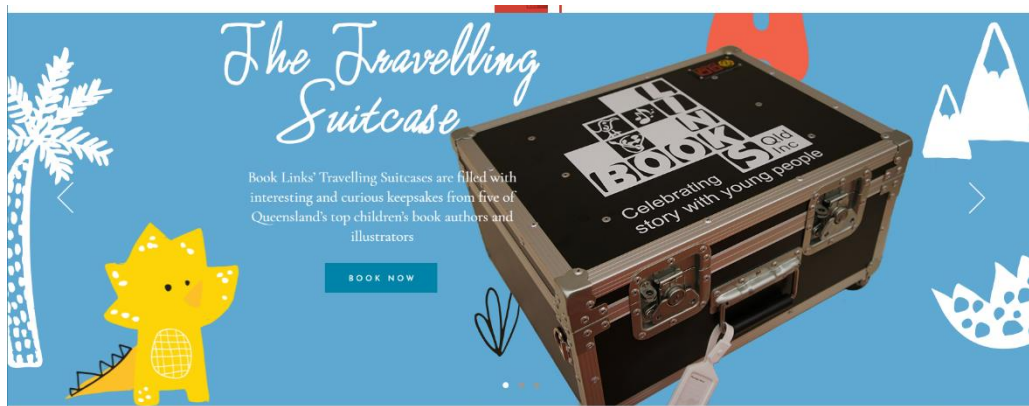


Book Links’ annual award for children’s historical fiction is for books published in a calendar year. The judges for 2023 were Annaleise Byrd, Sarah Custance and Mia Macrossan (chair). The 2023 winner, Katrina Nannestad’s “Waiting for the Storks”, was announced 19 July via ZOOM with shortlisted authors and judges attending and taking part in a Q&A.

There were 31 books entered, 5 more than in 2022. A longlist of 9 and shortlist of 4 has been published on our website. These books excel at developing an understanding and appreciation of history for young readers.

The shortlisted titles have been reviewed on StoryLinks and authors’ interviews published.

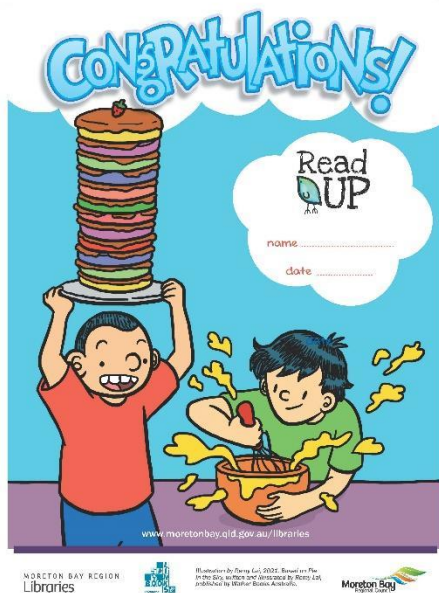
## Travelling Suitcases



Book Links' "Travelling Suitcases" are filled with interesting and curious keepsakes from 6 of Queensland's top children's book authors and illustrators. They include their books, edited manuscripts and a DVD of the artists at work. Activities to use in the classroom and in public libraries are included to extend Literature and Arts learning.

Distribution of cases increased slightly with the Narelle Oliver case being a feature at the CBCA Qld Readers Cup regional competition in the Brisbane South Region. One case travelled to Far North Qld but others stayed local as pick-up is easier.

## Read Up



ReadUp is a library loyalty scheme for library members originally designed for public libraries but made available via Book Links for anyone to use.

Children earn certificates for visiting the library. These have been created by award winning Queensland children's book illustrators.

The resources were developed by Moreton Bay Region Libraries and have been made available online via the Book Links website to all libraries through our partnership.

## Membership

Many thanks to Membership Secretary Marie Fletcher for keeping track of memberships this year and communicating with members. We continue to use Try Booking to accept memberships online and collect data on members. Membership remains stable.

2023 membership as of 7 October:	2022 membership as of 8 October:
134 Personal members	158 Personal members
5 Family members	9 Family members
9 Corporate members	7 Corporate members

The following bookshops provide discounts for Book Links members: A Lot of Books - Ipswich, Books@Stones, Riverbend Books, The Book Warehouse, Little Gnome Bookshop, The Library Shop (SLQ) – Brisbane, Big B Books - Gold Coast, Under the Greenwood Tree - Mount Tamborine, The Little Book Nook – Palmwoods and Scrumptious Reads.

## The Website, Social Media and the Newsletter



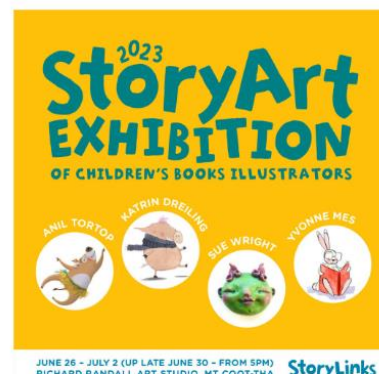
### Winner of the 2023 Book Links Award for Children's Historical Fiction

PRESENTING The Book Links Award for Children's Historical Fiction WINNER – 2023 Waiting for the Storks by Katrina Nannestad Congratulations to all the shortlisted Authors and Publishers for 2023 Watch the presentation on YouTube Judges' comments When Polish Zophia becomes German [...]



### Narelle Oliver Lecture 2023: Gabrielle Wang

Report by Zewlan Moor A large audience of teacher-librarians, authors, illustrators and community members interested in children's books was honoured to have the Australian Children's Laureate, Gabrielle Wang, give the 2023 Narelle Oliver Lecture at St Aidan's School on 24 [...]



### StoryArt Exhibition 2023

2023 Book Links Exhibition: StoryArt Date: Monday 26 June – Sunday 2 July, 2023 Venue: Richard Randall Art Studio, Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens, Brisbane Time: Open Daily from 10:00am – 4:00pm, Friday night Up-Late from 5pm. Book here for the [...]

[Read more](#)

The current Book Links website has been edited throughout the year to keep it up to date with news, events, resources and projects.

Since the 2022 AGM, the website stats for Books Links are:

Total users: 7.6K, Total page views: 18668

Top 10 pages:

1. home page: 11,701
2. /programs/children-and-ya/writing-competitions: 2449
3. /author-visits: 671
4. /get-involved/membership: 670
5. /programs/awards: 605
6. /historical-fiction-awards-2023: 579
7. /whats-on/events/about-bsab: 557
8. /whats-on/events/romancing-the-stars: 539
9. /programs/children-and-ya/fun-stuff-for-young-writers-and-illustrators: 521
10. whats-on/bookings: 365

The Book Links Facebook page has had some growth, with followers increasing from 1,824 to 1,906 and 1545 likes. Page reach was 6,367 down on last year's figures. The greatest page reaches were 30 October (469) Nette Hilton in conversation with Caroline Magerl and 25 May (1023) the Narelle Oliver lecture.

Book Links Instagram has 794 followers up from 647 in 2022 with 160 posts.

Our newsletter has been issued regularly after each meeting, edited by Maria Parenti. This year the number of subscribers increased from 395 to 456.

Ten newsletters were sent to subscribers via MailChimp and 2 special edition newsletters were sent to children, families and schools providing them with relevant information.

## OTHER

### Partnerships and Strategic links

#### The Lighthouse Toowoomba

Book Links continues to cross promote events with the Queensland Writers Centre, The Children's Book Council of Australia, the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, The Lighthouse Toowoomba and other like organisations.

Following on from the Caroline Magerl Piano Fingers exhibition in October 2022 the partnership with **The Lighthouse Toowoomba** continues with our artists in residence and exhibition coming up in November.

We have not been able to find volunteers to occupy the Book Links office space, so we will use hot desk spaces in the centre as required.

#### Queensland Writers Centre

Costs have risen for the use of our spaces in the QWC and it has been recommended that we increase membership to help cover these costs. Being in the same area as CBCA Qld



helps with sharing resources and supporting each other's organisation. State Library staff have brought back regular meetings with Level 2 tenants so we can share details of our programs.

### **Brisbane City Council Libraries**

Due to occasional issues with accessing SLQ spaces when needed, including a recent clash with Brisbane Writers Festival, we have further developed our relationship with the Brisbane City Council libraries and were able to move one of our Write Links workshops to Brisbane Square Library. We have also set up an illustration workshop for children at one of the BCC libraries in October and hope to run more events for children in library spaces in 2024.

### **The Future**

We will continue using ZOOM as a way of reaching out to our regional and interstate members and integrate it into face-to-face events wherever possible.

We will look for other venues for exhibitions as alternatives to the Richard Randall Art Studio as we are not guaranteed bookings for this space.

We will plan for our next biennial conference in October 2024 and investigate other options for Romancing the Stars events.

Book Links aims to continue its current partnerships and collaborations with other like-minded organisations.

### **Thanks**

I would like to acknowledge and thank all members of the management committee for their dedication and hard work: Danielle Freeland (Vice-President and BSAB Coordinator), Kayt Duncan (Secretary), Tyrion Perkins (Treasurer and Travelling Suitcases coordinator), Marie Fletcher (Membership Secretary), Yvonne Mes, Sandhya Parappukkaran, and Rebecca Sheraton (the Write Links Team), Mia Macrossan (Story Links Coordinator, Awards Committee), Maria Parenti (Newsletter Editor).

Special thanks also to the judges for the history award Mia Macrossan, Sarah Custance, and Annaleise Byrd. Also to Lara Cain Gray for managing the Mentorship program, Mia Macrossan for managing the adult short story writing competition and the new team currently working on the children's story writing competition, Melissa Salisbury, Yvonne Mes and Sophie Beros.

**Jenny Stubbs**

President Book Links QLD Inc



## STORY LINKS REPORT

The website has continued to grow in 2023 with a slow but steady increase in subscribers.

### Reviews

To date we have posted 1202 items, of which I have written 724 the remaining contributions coming from a small team of reviewers, whose numbers and members continue to fluctuate.

The reviews are the most read of our posts each week. I aim for 3 to 5 reviews a week. It is this part of the site that requires the most work.

### Interviews

I did 10 interviews this year with Wendy Orr, Alison Rutstein, the artists exhibiting in this year's StoryArts Exhibition at the Richard Randall Art Studio - Yvonne Mes, Katrin Dreiling, Anil Tortop, and the four shortlisted authors in the Book Links Award for Children's Historical Fiction – Pamela Rushby, Felice Arena, Claire Saxby, Katrina Nannestad, and emerging author Zewlan Moor as well as the recipient of the Nan Chauncy award, Jenny Stubbs.

### Reading Lists

Dajo and I have cut down on producing these as it is very time consuming. Instead, I now look for and publish other lists from other respected websites, eg. NCACL – Drawing Words A Database of Picture Books for Older Readers. To date we have 53 Reading lists on the website.

### News

Here we publish items of interest to our readers such as Resources for Earth Day, Nature Book Week, Children's Literature Award winners, both Australian and overseas, Book Links news. This could be developed a bit more.

### Competitions

These are on the website but managed by other people. I would like to be kept informed of changes made to these pages when they occur.

Social Media – managed by Anna Byrd

143 subscribers of which 75 read and open our review email each week, which is considered an excellent response.

Facebook No. of followers: 824 (+151 in past year)

Accounts 'reached' in past month: 832 (with 21 posts)

Accounts 'engaged' in past month: 129 (with 21 posts)

Instagram No. of followers: 1248 (+417 in past year)

Accounts 'reached' in past month: 235 (with 1 post)

Accounts 'engaged' in past month: 25 (with 1 post)

Note Reached = people who saw our posts (eg. while scrolling) Engaged = people who liked/ commented/ saved/ shared etc

## Conclusion

The website continues to grow albeit slowly. It has a small group of about 100 who read the posts regularly. Publishers are engaged with the reviews and look for them. Occasionally I see a quote from one of our reviews on a publisher's or author's website. I am satisfied StoryLinks is fulfilling its role of advocating for quality children's literature and supporting the work of Book Links.

Mia Macrossan – Coordinator/Managing Editor



## WRITE LINKS REPORT

The year 2023 saw in-person Write Links meetings proceed in full swing. Our hybrid meeting offerings were sometimes fraught with a few issues, but we continue to learn and update our computer knowledge and have encouraged more volunteers to help with the technical side. Write Links is still growing and still going strong.

Attendance has been sturdy, similar to previous years, turnout increasing months we have a guest speaker.

Attendance this year varied between 20 to 45 members per meeting. As usual, we continue with a steady core of regular members and with a regular influx of new members most months.

The online meetings have gone smoothly and according to our usual schedule:

- 1 hour professional development
- 1 hour networking
- 2 hour critique groups.

The critique groups continued meeting in person, and at times it has been tricky to accommodate online critique members joining in to an in-person critique for various reasons, including it being too noisy, whether or not someone in the group has brought a laptop to the meeting and confusion on who makes the Zoom link to join. It was suggested that those who wished to critique online, would speak to the relevant coordinator, and work out the best option.

I would like to thank Alison Rutstein who has taken over the Picture Book Critique Group and is doing a brilliant job of coordinating. I would like to welcome and thank Sophie Beros who has come on board as the technical operator during meetings. Sophie's help is much appreciated. We are all thrilled and grateful for the return Yvonne Mes back into an active role in Write Links. Rebecca Sheraton and I will continue to be part of the support team, helping to plan and run Write Links smoothly. We continue to grow and evolve and are appreciative of the help extended by Danielle Freeland and Jenny Stubbs.

Congratulations to Jenny Stubbs on winning the 2023 Nan Chauncy Award for her outstanding contribution to the field of Australian literature. We are so proud of your



tireless work in Book Links and Write Links and are extremely grateful for your support in our writing journeys.

I would like to thank our critique group facilitators for their dedication to organising monthly critique sessions:

Alison Rutstein –Picture Book Critique Group  
 Karen Tyrrell–Junior Fiction Critique Group  
 Pym Schaare–YA Critique Group  
 Justine Lawson–Illustrator Critique Group

As the Write Links website support, I would like to thank every person who volunteered to write a blog post on the sessions at our meetings. The time and effort put into creating a post is much appreciated and their hard work means the website is updated with fresh and informative content.

Also, thanks to Rebecca Sheraton her support in admitting new members to the FB group and emceeing our meetings.

And, of course, many thanks to Jenny Stubbs and all of the Book Links Committee for all their support in matters big and small in relation to Write Links.

Our Facebook group has gained 61 new members over the past year, which brings us to 399 Facebook members. It was nice to see current members inviting their writing friends to join. As ZOOM has opened us up to a wider audience, there have been requests to join from beyond QLD. This has positive and negative implications. A wider audience means more support for children's authors and illustrators and an increase in recognition and profile of Book Links and Write Links, but it may also dilute meaningful engagements between members. It is hard to gauge why people join our FB group, (even though we have our questions as part of the process) when they don't meet face to face as there are several Australian FB groups for children's picture book authors and illustrators already in existence. We will continue monitoring this development as Write Links' aim is to respond to the needs of our members.

There have been many success stories among Write Links members. With members launching their debut books or successive books. Seeing Write Links members supporting each other during book launches shows how supportive members are of each other.

Our presentations this year were as usual based on members' feedback and requests:

Nov 5 – Review of BSAB and Sandhya Parappukkaran on The Benefits of Writing Mentorships. (20)

Dec 3 – Voice in Picture book biographies by Zewlan Moon and Reflections & New Year writing plans by Rebecca Sheraton. (24)

Feb 4 – Sound in Stories creative writing activation by Yvonne Mes (35)  
March 4 – Workshop with Judith Rossell (40)  
April 1 - Getting the most out of Writing Conferences by Yvonne Mes (28)  
May 6 – Compelling Characters with Gus Gordon (40 + 14 online)  
June 3 – AI in Publishing by Liss Caldwell (31)  
July 1 – Mt Cootha – Getting Published in Children’s Magazines by Annaleise Byrd,  
Melissa Salisbury and Ayesha Uddin & Reader’s Theatre (32)  
August 5 – Creative writing activation and collective wisdom by Yvonne Mes (27)  
Sept 2 – Using Instagram as a kid-lit creator by Annaleise Byrd and Victoria Ellen (40)

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.

We have customised the new Write Links website to be consistent with Book Links. The new website link is: <https://writelinks.booklinks.org.au/>

Looking ahead to next year:

Write Links will continue in a similar format next year and plan to support emerging and established creators of children’s literature in Brisbane and further afield with the support of Book Links through critique sessions, networking sessions and access to professional development sessions.

Sandhya Parappukkaran

Write Links Coordination Team Member

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & THANK YOU

Book Links QLD Inc. would like to thank our members, supporters, partners and the many volunteers that are involved in the planning of events and the continuation of our projects. Thank you for giving your time, resources and donations and your ongoing support to Book Links and Children's Literature.

### Supporters and Partners

Jackie French  
 The Children's Book Council of Australia – Qld Branch  
 Queensland Writers Centre  
 State Library of Queensland  
 Voices on the Coast  
 Brisbane City Council Libraries  
 Moreton Bay Region Libraries  
 The Lighthouse Toowoomba  
 Local Book Shops  
 Moreton Bay College  
 St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School

### Successes

Points to note from our strategic plan which has been updated to 2023 - 2025.

1. *Maintain the website/s* – The three websites continue to be well maintained and continually reviewed: Book Links, Write Links and Story Links.
2. *Generate financial and in-kind support* – We received an Arts Qld Grant to run the Artists in residence and exhibition in Toowoomba November 2023. Venues were provided for free by schools hosting Romancing the Stars and Big Lit Quiz events.
3. *Develop and promote products and resources* – We continue to provide resources such as ReadUp! Online, links to resources for children on reading and writing and resource lists developed by Story Links.
4. *Research and lobby for a children's centre based on story* – We continue to look for opportunities to promote the concept of a center. Meetings have been held with Sequel Books who are interested in supporting us.
5. *Up-skill Book Links committee members* – Members gained professional development via Write Links sessions. Materials to support working with children have been created.
6. *Maintain and enhance mutually beneficial partnerships* – Read Up! program in partnership with Moreton Region Libraries has been updated. Partners' events are promoted via the calendar and newsletter. Partnership being developed with Brisbane City Libraries. Meetings for Level 2 tenants have been attended throughout the year. Publishers have continued to support our events, providing us with books.

7. *Develop and implement a Book Links promotional plan* – We continue to take part in the trade fair at the Future Libraries Conference. Program information is sent to a range of contacts such as Pass-it-on and Buzz Words as well as via social media channels.

8. *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. Online calendar is maintained. A retreat has been added to the calendar.

9. *Maintain a Strategic Plan* – Strategic plan requires updating for 2023 - 2025. This was completed.

10. *Develop and implement Operational Organisation Blue Card Portal and policy* – Policies have been created.

11. *Develop a Succession Plan* – this has still to be developed.