

## Poetry for children

By a happy conjunction of events, the current issue of *IBBYLink*, on poetry for children, is being put together during the same period as the celebration of the latest CLPE award for a book of poetry for children, won for the second year running by Roger McGough. It is good to see an increasing realisation of the importance of children becoming aware of poetry, for, as presenters of the award (last year Estelle Morris, Minister for the Arts, this year Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion) have observed, poetry is a vital element in nourishing the imaginations of young children.

The whole question of poetry for children can, however, be a contentious one. Should they be given – and in the past made to commit to memory – poems originally written for adult readers, or should they have a diet specially composed for them, which may be regarded as inferior to ‘proper poetry’? Are all subjects relevant to young readers, or should children be preserved from poems which do not present a positive attitude towards life? Should young children be given mostly humorous verse, rather than that on more serious subjects? Does it matter if poetry uses language that is far from the everyday? How far can what children themselves write be described as poetry? I can’t claim that this issue of *IBBYLink* even attempts to answer all these questions, though the article by Anne Harvey, a distinguished anthologist, may certainly stir some readers to challenge her views about the suitability or otherwise of some topics. Richard Tysoe’s account of his experience both of writing poetry for children and of encouraging children to write is likely also to be of interest to educationalists. Additionally, the lists of poetry books, both already in print and newly published, offer resources to those who want children to encounter more poetry.

A long experience of teaching English literature in Higher Education has taught me that there are many adults, including those with a passion for literature, who are afraid of poetry, probably because as children they were made to feel that they lacked the expertise to analyse it properly, or perhaps were given a diet comprised too exclusively of a kind of poetry that did not appeal to them. I always remember a session with a group of teachers who had the old qualification of the Certificate in Education, who were studying for an in-service B.Ed. degree, and taking a module on Literature in the Curriculum. At a session about poetry for children, two spoke, with some passion, about their own experiences as school pupils. The first one stated that she always hated poetry at school because it was all that Keats and Wordsworth kind of stuff. She only came to enjoy it when one teacher gave them some up-to-date poetry about things that meant some-

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## A Place for Poetry

Anne Harvey

Earlier this year, a poet friend sent me a copy of a general letter that had been sent to poets (and would-be poets) by an editor requesting poems for forthcoming anthologies. My friend (who must remain nameless) thought at first that the suggestions for subjects were a parody of the typical, cheap, vulgar publications which are invariably all that one finds on the POETRY shelves of bookshops. From a wide choice of the editor's requirements I have picked a few:

Skeletons monsters vampires  
fangs injections  
devils cannibals nursery rhyme rip-offs  
knickers  
silly stories sick toe-nails  
lavatories dog-poo  
cowpats nose-hairs dandruff...

I think that's enough, and you know as well as I do that many children enjoy these topics and are pretty good at making their own rude and nasty verses. As Flanders and Swann once sang in a skit on 'kids': 'Mum's out...Dad's out...let's talk rude... PEE...PO...BELLY...BUM...DRAWERS...'

The question is, do children need adults to provide such writing for them, or might adults be expected to introduce them to ideas that stretch their minds and imaginations?

I am not naive enough to suggest that we feed to-day's young on a diet of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Masefield, de la Mare – although I have introduced those four to junior school classes on 'poetry days' and received lively, intelligent response. My own grand-daughter, on hearing Wordsworth's 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' was convinced that the poet must have been inspired by his own surname. What I am suggesting is that children deserve as much quality in poetry as Jamie Oliver has determined they get in food.

I don't think it is an over-generalisation to suggest that today 'Creative Writing' has taken over in schools from 'Poetry Appreciation'. You would be hard put to find a child of junior school age who has not written a poem, illustrated it, and had it displayed on a board headed

POETRY. You would find it less easy to meet a child who knew about poets, past and present, who knew something of the craft and mystery of poetry, or who had learnt some poems 'by heart'.

There are, of course, good, lasting, anthologies for young readers, their contents well-chosen by discerning editors such as Anne Fine, Roger McGough, Michael Morpurgo and James Berry. These do not reach enough children. It is not easy, publishers will say, to sell slim volumes of poetry by a single poet, unless the slim volume is comic and very contemporary.

The American Catholic Library Association has, for its motto, words written by Walter de la Mare in 1942: '...only the rarest kind of best in anything can be good enough for the young'. I think of these words whenever I see examples of shoddy writing, especially in poetry.

I want children to be stirred and moved and delighted by words, to discover, as Edward Thomas wrote in his poem 'Words', that words can be 'tough as oak', 'precious as gold, as poppies and corn'. I want children to find out that the following writers were right when they said...

Poetry gives room to think and dream...  
(John Betjeman)

If a line of Poetry strays into my memory it sends shivers down my spine...  
(A.E.Housman)

The poet is something much more exciting and interesting than a conjuror: he is not trying to entertain by means of illusion or tricks, but to discover for himself and he hopes for others, some truth about experience and the world he lives in...  
(Elizabeth Jennings)

The real work of a writer is to enrich a child's heritage of words... not diminish it...  
(Rumer Godden)

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# Writing, Publishing and Performing Poetry for Children

*Richard Tysoe*

I began writing poems when I was in primary school. I know that the Rupert Bear cartoons in the newspaper were part of the initial inspiration. When I was only five, I found the rhyming couplets beneath each picture a faster way to read the story than ploughing through all the text. I was critical even then of the occasionally strained use of English to make the rhymes work, but took note that the same story could be told in different ways. But writing poetry myself? I remember my uncle's scathing reaction I was seven or eight, when I told him I had written a poem. He took down a large tome from a bookshelf, and showed me formidable pages of small-print, columns with never a picture between. He did not sit down with me to read the book aloud, but jabbed a finger on the opened page: 'Poetry, eh? That's poetry!'

I was not put off from trying; I just did not show any further works to Uncle Bill. My mother and my big sister were much more appreciative. I was very competent at rhyming verse by the age of twelve, and experimented much with unusual rhyme schemes and parodies, including a version of 'Red Riding Hood'; it was however a technical exercise rather than a poem to treasure.

Real poems have to have something more magical about them. They must stir memories, conjure up pictures, touch emotions, make us laugh, move us. And they should never be boring.

Most of the poems in my first book were written to share with children in a middle school during the seventies, though the poems often recall my own childhood days in the 1940s. I was a science teacher in the Middle School, and children sometimes found the concept of 'the water cycle' amusing, asking 'Can you ride it, sir?' So I wrote a poem with this title, riding with the joke, from sea through rain and river, back to the sea.

I tried many publishers with my collection of poems for children. The responses were usually complimentary, but regretfully my submissions 'did not fit their lists'. A song I wrote at this time, 'One World', was picked up somehow by the compilers of the Christian Aid Song Book and

seems still to be travelling round the world. However, my other poems found no doorway to the wider world, until in 1991 I decided to publish the poems myself, with my own illustrations. The first edition of *The Watercycle Ride* was without colour, knocked out a hundred at a time through the local printers. I got on my old bicycle and visited just about every school around. Teachers loved it, and I was soon employed in poetry workshops in schools. I offered to tie in with whatever topics classes might be pursuing with appropriate poetry; this gave me some challenging themes to write upon: space, music, ghosts and ancient Greeks were some of the tougher tasks. I soon had the material for a second book, but this time it had to be a smarter book with colour in the cover, that I could offer for sale through bookshops

I was somehow guided to ProPrint, of Peterborough, who specialised in helping struggling poets to produce their work. The book was *Riding the Elements*; a galloping Roman chariot on the cover had four horses to represent the four elements of alchemy. The book has four sections: 'Matters of Air – Water – Fire – Earth', each section introduced by 'Notes from the Alchemist'. Here are the notes for the section on earth:

All we can handle, hold or eat  
Comes from the Earth beneath our feet.  
Deep in the dust that drinks the rain  
Are the seeds we set: our hope of gain.  
Roots in the dark  
where the soil seems bare  
Will soon grow green  
as the shoots seek air.  
And millions of living creatures toil  
Just under the surface, working the soil.  
The soil feeds each family, beast and bird;  
Don't say dirt but a fairer word!  
Earth is the giver of metals and stone;  
Under our feet is all treasure known.

This book also includes some noisy or visual contributions which children helped to write in school poetry workshops. There are scares, adventures and fun.

Often when working in schools I will take my guitar along with me. Not that I am an accomplished guitarist, but some of my poems are really made to sing, like 'The Tower of Babel', and 'My Feet Just Went

on Marching', both in *Riding the Elements*; the latter was written as a request from a primary school teacher for 'a marching song for Roman soldiers'. If I am presenting a poetry entertainment to a large audience, particularly if the whole school or year group is sat on the floor of the assembly hall before me, then joining in a chorus, standing perhaps to stamp or sway, can give a welcome change of position as well as a chance to participate in the show. Limericks are fun to sing, easily taught and remembered – something the children can instantly carry away with them when they leave the hall.

Song is not always so appropriate for poetry workshops in smaller groups. Usually with primary school age children, as I lead them into making their own poetry, I show them other poetry methods apart from rhyme. We will collect and share words associated with our chosen subject, perhaps watching an appropriate model such as a burning candle or a falling leaf. Thus with one six-year-old class, we watched a leaf 'twirling, twisting, twizzling down'. Children recognise far more words than they would normally use themselves with confidence. A visual model such as this encourages members of a group each to contribute useful words to a pooled resource: a board full of words on the classroom wall.

I have a lot of fun with puddles in class. We can't introduce the real wet stuff onto the story carpet, though in many primary schools there is a carpet of just the right size to represent the puddle in 'Stepping Stones', from *The Watercycle Ride*. I step gingerly from one imaginary stone to the next, keeping my wobbling balance by throwing my arms out wide, whilst reciting the poem. I have followed this activity through with children on the floor of the school hall by spreading sheets of paper across to represent the stones and bricks. Then they could all cross the puddle dry-footed. Another fun poem I usually act out is from *The Watercycle Ride*: 'Journey of a Puddle'.

If I were a puddle in the street,  
I shouldn't wait for the wind or heat  
Of the sun to warm or fry me dry  
Till my puddling days were done, not I.  
I'd creep or swim to the nearest drain  
Before the sun, straight after the rain,  
Then I'd strike out boldly for river or sea,  
The only places where puddles are free!  
I'd leave the gutters and streets  
behind me

And hide in the deep where the sun  
couldn't find me!

I usually begin this recitation lying out flat across a chair: puddles always lie flat. I stretch out a creeping arm, then roll off the chair to go down the drain. I strike out boldly with swimming motions upon my knees at floor level, finally finishing on my back in the deep, my hands making waves above me. I was once invited to read this poem to a class of young teenagers learning English in Germany. I think they were very astonished to find me 'swimming' beneath their row of desks in the classroom. So was my friend, their teacher! Perhaps I should have warned him. I think their English lessons were usually a bit more staid. We are still friends.

In many of my poems I find myself acting out the part, hardly conscious that I am doing it. Reading 'The Earthworm' in *Riding the Elements*, my arms stretch, wriggle and shrink, slip and slither along with my envisaged worm. But infants can sometimes get over-excited at too dramatic a presentation! Better to finish on a song we can all join in.

I know children still play in puddles, and leave their wellies stuck in the mud. Some experiences are universal. And you know, and I know, that the magic of books is real.

A book is a magic carpet  
Flying me to far off lands.  
A book is a magic door  
Opening into different worlds.  
Sitting at home  
I explore the Earth;  
Sitting at home today  
I travel through time;  
Sitting at home or sitting in school  
I can go anywhere -  
Anytime.

('Book Magic' from *Riding the Elements*)

*The Watercycle Ride* ISBN 0 9522876 2 5 and *Riding the Elements* ISBN 0 9522876 1 7 are both available from Richard Tysoe, 5 Warden Abbey, Bedford, MK41 0SW

## Recommended Collections of Poetry for Children

*Pam Robson*

The poetry books in this list are not only 'magic' but also highly entertaining. Ages suggested are only intended as a guide.

### Single Poet Collections, 7-9 years

Colin McNaughton, *There's An Awful Lot of Weirdos in Our Neighbourhood*, Walker, 0744590884. An hilarious collection of witty rhymes in which McNaughton uses word play to great advantage. Full colour cartoon style illustrations are also by this talented author/illustrator.

Michael Palin *Limericks*. Red Fox, 0099266245. A rib-tickling collection of limericks created by the TV personality; black and white cartoon style artwork by Tony Ross.

Robert Louis Stevenson *A Child's Garden of Verses*, Puffin Classic, 014036692X (first published in 1890). This version is illustrated in black and white by Eve Garnett, and includes old favourites such as 'From a Railway Carriage', 'The Cow' and 'Land of the Counterpane'. 'Picture-books in Winter' is a delightfully repetitious poem. Headed sections, contents page and index.

Benjamin Zephaniah, *Wicked World*, Puffin, 0141306831. These outstanding rhythmic poems are designed for performance. Meaningful statements about equality, global themes encompassing many countries and cultures, with fascinating geographical and ethnic detail.

### Single Poet Collections, age 9-12

John Agard, *Grandfather's Old Bruk-A-Down Car*, Red Fox, 0099301407. A rhythmic collection of verses, raps and riddles about favourite objects – from old wellies to stamp albums. Children will relate to these fun rhymes about everyday things that hold special meaning for someone.

Charles Causley, *All Day Saturday and Other Poems*, Macmillan, 0333413422. This lively, witty collection pays tribute to the familiar styles of the nursery rhyme and the limerick, with effective use of rhyme and rhythm. The poet's home territory of Cornwall features strongly. Black and white artwork by Anthony Lewis, reminiscent of Edward Ardizzone. Contents page and index.

Charles Causley, *Going to the Fair*, Puffin, 0140369902. This superb collection of 60 poems is wonderful reading matter. Causley writes with wit and perception. In 'Out in the Desert', he cleverly creates a rhyme for the word 'sphinx'. In 'I Love My Darling Tractor' he employs personification to excellent effect. Other super verses include 'Jack the Treacle-Eater' and 'My Mother Saw a Dancing Bear'.

Tony Mitton, *Plum*, Scholastic, 059054456X. An excellent collection of both humorous and thought-provoking verses in bold print, illustrated with black and white artwork. The poet provides background detail for many of the entries, some of which ('St Brigid and the Baker', 'Leprechaun Legend', etc.) are Irish in theme. Metaphor is well used in 'Tree Song'. There is even a poem about nits! A child-friendly collection, with contents page and index.

Brian Patten, *Gargling with Jelly*, Puffin, 0141316500. Hilarious black and white cartoon style artwork extends and enhances this amusing and clever collection. Many of these poems have a serious message for the reader. 'The Newcomer' is a hauntingly memorable poem about river pollution, and 'Looking for Dad' will elicit tears.

Brian Patten, *Thawing Frozen Frogs*, Puffin, 0141316519. Humour and philosophy combine in this thought-provoking collection. 'It's Poisoning Down' paints a sad picture of the effects of acid rain. Other favourites are 'Sad Kisses', 'Mrs Siatic and the Bullies', 'Aphasia' and 'The River's Story'. The title poem is so nauseating that children will love it.

Michael Rosen, *Centrally-Heated Knickers*, Puffin, 0141306718. A collection of zany but thought-provoking poems, all of which relate to science. Interesting facts follow some of these verses. 'By Mashed Potato' is a humorous presentation of the application of food energy. Titled sections are thematically organised under headings such as 'Environment', 'Design and Innovation', 'Chemistry' and 'Physics'.

Steve Turner, *The Day I Fell Down the Toilet*, Lion Publishers, 0745936407. A humor-

ous yet thoughtful collection of over 70 poems, organised thematically into ten headed sections and using word play to advantage. 'Green' issues appear in the section 'Messages to the World', and 'Television News' is an indictment of the growing indifference to tragedy. Black and white artwork by David Mostyn. No index.

### Single Poet Collections, 12 and over

Robert Cormier, *Frenchtown Summer*, Puffin, 0141307145. Short lines of narrative verse, in the first person, organised into chapters to create a lyrical poetic narrative that is almost a novel. The discourse reveals the emotional struggle of a young boy to get close to his father, in the American town of Frenchtown. Eugene's self-awareness grows as he contemplates his surroundings. A haunting tale of a small world seen through a child's eyes, with resonances of Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*.

Ann Ziety, *Bumwigs and Earbeetles & Other Unspeakable Delights*, Red Fox, 0099539616. Poems about nasty things, written with feeling so that young people will relate. Free verse and rhyme; some are simply hilarious, others more thoughtful. 'Washing Up' voices the anger of those females still tied to the kitchen sink; 'Neighbours' airs grievances about noise pollution; and 'Anatomy of a Poet' has a vocabulary all its own.

### Anthologies, 7-9 years

Jennifer Curry (ed.), *Animal Poems*, Scholastic, 0439968550. A superb anthology of animal poems organised thematically e.g. 'Shining of Their Wings' and 'Small, Smaller'. Contributions from well known poets and from children. Classic poems include an excerpt from *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. There are also ethnic verses such as the Navajo 'Song of a Bear'. Various poetic forms include picture, shaped, and rhyming poems. Some verses are humorous, some more profound.

### Anthologies, 9-12 years

Tony Bradman (ed.), *A Stack of Story Poems*, Corgi, 0552527092. There are 12 slapstick narrative poems in this anthology. Themes include knights, boggarts, ghosts and pirates. Authors include Malorie Blackman, Kaye Umansky and Colin West.

James Berry (ed.), *Classic Poems to Read Aloud*, Kingfisher, 0753401207. A large jacketed volume of poems from many cultures. There are eleven thematic sections with headings such as 'Magic and Mysteries' and 'Faces of Love'. Full colour plates by various artists, and black and white line drawings by James Mayhew. Traditional and modern verses, and an interesting collection of proverbs. Contents page and indexes.

Paul Cookson (ed.), *Tongue Twisters and Tonsil Twizzlers*, Macmillan, 0330349414. An hilarious anthology by a wide range of poets, with much use of alliteration and rhythm, and a shaped poem by Dave Calder called 'Pyramid'. In 'Double Trouble Twins', Ian Souter makes use of the prefix 'double' to alter word meanings.

Pie Corbett (ed.), *Custard Pie*, Macmillan, 0330339923. A real mixture of poetic styles in this hilarious anthology of 'poems that are jokes that are poems'. Lots of made-up words enhance the humour. 'Poems for the Verbally Confused' by Andrew Peters pokes fun at expressions such as 'caught the bus'. Peter Nixon's verse about apostrophes will amuse confused language students.

Jennifer and Graeme Curry (eds.), *The Complete School Verse*, Red Fox, 0099417545. This fun title is two volumes in one. It is an excellent teaching tool for language learning and demonstrates various poetic styles. 'The English Language' by H. Hemsley and 'Writing Right' (Anon) make use of homophones. There are thematic sections such as 'Out of School', 'Poems about Bullying', 'Children's Games'. Poems are by children and by established poets, new and old.

Michael Rosen (ed.), *Classic Poetry: An Illustrated Collection*, Walker, 0744532809. An outstanding large format anthology of classic verses, ancient and modern, particularly well organised with clear structural guides making it accessible for children. A chronological contents page contains pictures of poets and their dates adjacent to page references. Indexes provided, plus notes about each poem and biographical details about the poets, who range from Shakespeare to Judith Wright. Full colour artwork makes this a volume to cherish.

Alison Sage (ed.), *The Hutchinson Treasury of Children's Poetry*, Hutchinson, 0091767482. A large illustrated anthology of poetry with an introduction by Michael

Rosen. The volume is divided into four sections according to age group, ranging from nursery rhymes for the very young to verses for older children. An eclectic anthology of over 300 poems with artwork by various illustrators, including Arthur Rackham and Kate Greenaway. 'I Asked the Little Boy Who Cannot See' (Anon) is a poignant poem about a blind boy's perception of colours.

### **Anthologies, 12 and above**

Judith Elkin & C. Duncan (eds.), *Free My Mind: An Anthology of Black and Asian Poetry*, Puffin, 0140365109 (Currently out of print). An impressive anthology with poems by children and established poets, including John Agard, James Berry, Grace Nichols and others. The book is well organised in sections, with contents pages and an index. 'Young, Gifted – But Black' by Valerie Noble is a clever indictment of racism.

Anne Harvey (ed.), *Criminal Records*, Puffin, 0140365508. This thought-provoking anthology for the teenage reader looks at both the wrong-doer and the victim, many poems being about actual crimes, mostly serious in tone. Poets include Carol Ann Duffy, Vernon Scannell, Leo Aylen. Stevie Smith and Yevgeny Yevtushenko; subjects murder, police brutality, child abuse ('Baby Dies in Cupboard'), peeping Toms, burglary, vandalism, arson and football hooliganism. Contents page but no index.

### **Picture Book Poetry**

Sue Ellis (ed.), *The Sun is Laughing: A Collection of Poems*, Walker, 0744569982. This is an outstanding picture book anthology with poems by well known poets and illustrations by various artists. Ideal for the very young, with large, bold, well-spaced print, and illustrations matching the mood of the poems. Poets include Christina Rossetti, James Berry, Edward Lear and Colin McNaughton. The first poem, by James Berry, 'Isn't My Name Magical', sums up the value that we place upon our own names. This is a significant, multicultural anthology and it is fun.

Shirley Hughes, *Rhymes for Annie Rose*, Red Fox, 0099464918. A superb collection of poems about Hughes' young characters, illustrated by the author in her inimitable style. The themes, urban and rural, seasonal and personal, are ones to which small children can relate: 'Monday Morning Dance' about washing day; 'Feet', a wonderful child's-eye view of the world; and 'Night Flight', a lovely fantasy that takes Annie over the roof tops in her cot.

*I Never Saw A Purple Cow*, Walker, 0744577535. A full colour picture book format with cartoon style artwork, for a lovely collection of animal nonsense rhymes, zany verses, anonymous re-vampings of nursery rhymes, limericks and general nonsense, with some wonderful examples of word play. Well known names include Edward Lear, Hilaire Belloc and Lewis Carroll. Attractive end papers make this a visually pleasing publication.

Reeve Lindbergh, *The Circle of Days*, Walker, 0744572843. A very large format picture book which is highly illustrated with minimal rhyming text in bold print, a verse adaptation of 'The Canticle of the Sun', a hymn of praise by St Francis of Assisi. Superb artwork in collage and oils both enhances and extends the words.

Molly Manley, *Lola Tortola*, Macmillan, 033372688X. A collection of Caribbean limericks in a picture book format. Impressive bold images in collage-style artwork.

Judith Nicholls, *Earthways Earthwise*, Oxford, 0192722484. Excellent picture book anthology of poems about conservation. Poems by children and adults are organised into thematic sections. Contributors include Kit Wright, John Agard and Judith Nicholls. 'Ten Tall Oak Trees' by Richard Edwards is based upon 'Ten Green Bottles'. 'Our Tree' by David Harmer highlights the irony of the difference in time it takes for a tree to grow and that taken to cut it down.

## The Poetry Library

Miriam Valencia

The Poetry Library was founded in 1953, with the aim of promoting modern and contemporary British Poetry. Since then it has grown to include over 80,000 titles. It attempts to acquire all poetry published in English in this country (including translations), as well as a selection of work from other countries. Funded by the Arts Council and housed at the South Bank Centre, the Poetry Library offers both lending and reference facilities to the public. It serves as an information source for those interested in poetry throughout the country: whether it be an expectant father looking for a suitable poem to celebrate the birth; an academic interested in the bibliographical details of a small press magazine; a grandmother who remembers only one line of a poem she wants to hand down to her granddaughter; or a Valerie Bloom fan who wants to know what to read next.

### The children's collection

While the Library as a whole celebrated its fiftieth birthday two years ago, the children's collection is relatively youthful. In 1989, the Signal Collection of children's poetry books was moved from its home in Book House to the Poetry Library in the Royal Festival Hall. This collection forms the core of what is now a comprehensive collection of children's poetry books published in the UK since 1980, as well as a good selection of earlier publications.

According to Flaubert, 'poetry is a subject as precise as geometry'<sup>a</sup>. At the Poetry Library, however, we avoid too strict a delimitation of what is poetry for children. We want the collection to be diverse and inclusive. We collect: nursery rhymes from around the UK and from other cultures; poetry books written or marketed for teenagers; verse novels; action rhymes; song lyrics; and picture books where the story is told in rhyme, or where there is a rhythmic or typographical aspect to the text that we feel gives it a particularly poetical character. These come in different formats, including board books and big books, compact discs, videos and audiocassettes. We also have a collection of books on teaching poetry.

School visits have been an important part of the Library's work for over twenty

years. Visits are tailored to individual classes and can include an introduction to the Library, group poetry reading by a member of Library staff or by the young people themselves, and one of a variety of structured activities designed to introduce young people to different types of poetry, get to know the Library, and most of all to enjoy an experience of reading poetry books and sharing poetry. Writers who have contributed to the Library's bank of activities for school groups include Sandy Brownjohn, Fred Sedgwick, and Moniza Alvi, as well as Library staff past and present. Of course, some of the most valuable time children have in the Library is spent curled up on our beanbags, immersing themselves in what John Agard called 'vessels of delight'<sup>b</sup> – our poetry books.

The Library is fortunate to work with the Education and Literature departments of the South Bank Centre on projects such as the Imagine festival (see [www.rfh.org.uk/imagine](http://www.rfh.org.uk/imagine)) and the Poetry Lounge (see [www.rfh.org.uk/poetryint](http://www.rfh.org.uk/poetryint)), and *Fifty Strong* (see [www.rfh.org.uk/main/generalinformation/education.asp](http://www.rfh.org.uk/main/generalinformation/education.asp)). The presence of the Library in a leading arts centre gives a prominence to children's poetry that we might otherwise struggle to achieve. Other partners in recent years have been the Poetry Society, who have delivered INSETs for primary school teachers at the Library, and Brixton and North Lambeth EAZ, with whom we provide a book box programme to help teachers make poetry a strong presence in children's lives.

### The Poetry Library's future

Visitors to the Royal Festival Hall will know that a redevelopment project means that the building will be closed between July 2005 and January 2007. The Library closed its doors to visitors on 1 April, and much of the collection will be in storage for the duration of the refurbishment. Library staff will continue to answer enquiries and provide information by telephone, email, fax and letter.

We are delighted, however, that our children's collection will remain available during the Library closure. The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (see

www.clpe.co.uk) has generously provided space for our children's books. Together, we will create a 'poetry zone' that will enable the Poetry Library and South Bank Centre Education to continue to work with schools and family learning groups. Anybody interested in visiting the Poetry Library at CLPE should contact Miriam Valencia by email at [mvalencia@rfh.org.uk](mailto:mvalencia@rfh.org.uk) or by telephone on 020 7921 0664.

When the Festival Hall reopens, it will boast a purpose built education centre with a direct link to the Poetry Library. We look forward to providing young people with an even better experience of poetry in these improved facilities. You can read more about the redevelopment project at [www.rfh.org.uk/main/transforming/future.asp](http://www.rfh.org.uk/main/transforming/future.asp) and about the Poetry Library at [www.poetrylibrary.org.uk](http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk).

For Eleanor Farjeon, poetry makes us 'See, hear, and feel something that prose / Cannot'. Its form, rhythm, and magic can invite new readers. Its brevity and repetition can give beginning readers confidence. It can help children give voice to their worries and their joys. We are proud to play a part in bringing children and poetry books together, and look forward to the exciting changes and challenges ahead.

#### Notes

- a Letter to Louise Colet, 14 August 1953, in *Correspondence 1853-1856* (1964)
- b 'Happy Birthday Poetry Library', found in *A Stone's Throw from Embankment* by John Agard (Royal Festival Hall, 1993)
- c 'Poetry', found in *Blackbird Has Spoken* by Eleanor Farjeon (Macmillan Children's Books, 1999)

## The CLPE Poetry Award

*Ann Lazim*

In 2002 the Centre for Language in Primary Education (CLPE) became an independent charity, having previously been linked with the Inner London Education Authority and subsequently the London Borough of Southwark. CLPE was founded in the 1970s to provide in-service training for primary school teachers in the subject area of language and literacy. A reference library of current children's literature has grown with CLPE and includes a large collection of poetry for children. CLPE has also produced a number of publications related to poetry: *Hands on Poetry: Using Poetry in the Classroom* by Sue Ellis; *A Year with Poetry: Teachers write about Teaching Poetry* edited by Myra Barrs and Michael Rosen; *Look No Hands*, an audio cassette of James Berry reading his poems; plus four anthologies of poetry by children in local schools.

CLPE's independence coincided with the ending of the Signal Poetry Award after 25 years. Carrying on the excellent tradition begun by Aidan and Nancy Chambers seemed an ideal way of publicising the centre's relaunch as the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education as well as promoting an important branch of children's literature which is undervalued in terms of awards.

The first CLPE Poetry Award was presented in June 2003. The judging panel

that year and in 2004 was made up of Michael Rosen and Morag Styles, chaired by Margaret Meek Spencer. Volumes of poetry for children or young people, which can be a single poet collection or an anthology, first published in the UK in the preceding year, are eligible.

The first winner was *Under the Moon and Over the Sea* (Walker Books), an anthology of Caribbean poetry, edited by John Agard and Grace Nichols, themselves both distinguished and popular poets, and illustrated by Cathie Felstead, Jane Ray, Satoshi Kitamura, Christopher Corr and Sara Fanelli. The runner-up was a collection by Allan Ahlberg, illustrated by Fritz Wegner, devoted to poems about football and entitled *Friendly Matches* (Puffin). In 2004, the situation was reversed and the award went to a single poet collection, Roger McGough's selected poems *All the Best* illustrated by Lydia Monks (Puffin) and the runner-up was an anthology for older children chosen by Carol Ann Duffy *Overheard on a Saltmarsh* (Macmillan Young Picador).

In *Signal* an article written by the judges always accompanied the announcement in print of the award and reviewed in detail the books they had been given to consider. These became valuable critical summaries of the year's publishing output of poetry for children in the UK. CLPE is continu-

**STOP PRESS!**

The winner of the CLPE Poetry Award 2005, announced on June 6th, is *Sensational!* edited by Roger McGough

ing this wider consideration of the current children's poetry scene by publishing an annual pamphlet about the award.

For the third year running, on June 6th 2005 the award is presented in the Royal Festival Hall's Chelsfield Room, an occasion which is a good platform to celebrate and promote poetry for children. It is sponsored for the second year by Mr and Mrs Pye's Charitable Foundation. Margaret Meek Spencer is chairing a new judging panel, made up of poets Valerie Bloom and Tony Mitton, who have both previously been shortlisted for the award.

The **shortlist** for 2005 is as follows:

John Agard & Grace Nichols (editors):  
*From Mouth to Mouth* (Walker)  
James Berry: *Only One of Me*  
(Macmillan)

Seamus Cashman (editor): *Something Beginning with P* (O'Brien Press)  
Stephen Knight: *Sardines* (Macmillan)  
Roger McGough (editor): *Sensational!*  
(Macmillan)  
Adrian Mitchell: *Daft as a Doughnut*  
(Orchard)  
Brian Moses (compiler): *Blood and Roses. British History in Poetry* (Hodder)

For further information about CLPE and the Poetry Award see [www.clpe.co.uk](http://www.clpe.co.uk)

Contact Ann Lazim, Librarian at CLPE and administrator of the CLPE Poetry Award at [ann@clpe.co.uk](mailto:ann@clpe.co.uk)

A more detailed article about the CLPE Poetry Award appears in the most recent issue of IBBY's international journal *Bookbird* Vol. 43 no. 2, p.46-49

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## CLPE Poetry Award Ceremony 2005

*Pat Pinsent*

At a ceremony at the Royal Festival Hall on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2005, a presentation was made to Roger McGough by Andrew Motion, the Poet Laureate, for *Sensational!*, a collection by a range of poets on the theme of the senses. After a welcome from Julia Eccleshare of CLPE, Margaret Meek Spencer, Chair of the Judging Panel, spoke about the decision to describe the titles on the shortlist as 'Honour books', rather than runners-up, since all the writers and editors had done so much for poetry for children. Andrew Motion went on to acknowledge the value of a prize which rewards writing for children at a vital stage in their development as creative individuals, before too many examinations and pressures give them less time to think imaginatively. Roger McGough, in accepting the award (which he had also won the previous year for his single author collection *All the Best*) claimed that this year's was a 'gift' as so much of the work had been done by his Macmillan editor and the poets who had risen so well to the opportunity presented to them. He finished by reading 'The magic of the brain' by Jenny Joseph, a poem which celebrates the roles of all the senses.

The booklet celebrating the 2004 CLPE Poetry Award was also available at the Festival Hall during the evening. This is an invaluable compilation which includes some very pertinent remarks from Myra Barrs and Sue Ellis about the value of poetry for children, the text of Margaret Meek Spencer's speech from 2004, and a description of the short-listed texts. There are also short articles, reprinted from other publications, by Morag Styles on 'Collecting, Selecting and Anthologising Poetry', and Michael Rosen on 'A Way with Verse'. A very useful little book – contact [info@clpe.co.uk](mailto:info@clpe.co.uk) for further information about it or the award.

### **A Useful Resource**

R.Auchmuty, S.Biggs, S.Phillips & J Wotton, *The NCC Book List of Children's Series Fiction*, The New Chalet Club, 14 Marina Court, Alfred St., London E3 2BH, 2004. A comprehensive list, from Aiken to Yolen.

**Note:** We would appreciate offers from readers to review books received, for publication in future issues of *IBBYLink*, especially those relating to the themes of the issue concerned.

## *The Storm Lion of Penzance*

Troon Harrison (illustrated by Mark Foreman) (Published by Ian Grant, 2005)

Set in the Cornwall of one hundred years ago, this book tells the story of how nine-year-old Thomas must overcome his fear of the sea and play his part in saving his uncle's fishing boat when it is torn loose from its mooring during a terrible storm. But *The Storm Lion* is about much more than this. It is a beautifully told story that deals sensitively with themes such as the death of a father, coping with change and finding the courage to face and overcome one's private fears.

Mark Foreman's wonderful illustrations help pull the reader into the story and imagine life as it might have been one hundred years ago in the fishing community of Penzance. They also heighten the dramatic moments of the tale and help convey Thomas's changing emotions. The cover illustration of Thomas and the lion running along the beach in the middle of the bleak and terrifying storm is perhaps the most striking image in the book – the contrasting blue and yellow tones of the double page spread demand attention and the picture is full of movement, energy, hope and personal achievement. The narrative gaps and cleverly composed illustrations leave the reader wondering whether the bronze lion really did come magically alive on that stormy afternoon a century ago, or only in Thomas's imagination. Either way, the lion statue (that still sits on Penzance promenade looking out to sea) features as the symbol of courage, hope and positive action and helps nine-year-old Thomas overcome his sadness and fears and move forward with his life.

**Natasha Baker**

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## BOOKS RECEIVED

### *Picture Books from Frances Lincoln Publishers*

John Agard & Jenny Bent, *Wriggle Piggy Toes*, 1 84507 084 4. Verses for the very young, with lively illustrations by an artist of Jamaican origin.

Niki Daly, *Ruby Sings the Blues* 1 84507 099 2. A young girl learns how to please her listeners instead of deafening them.

Peter Geissler & Almud Kunert (Translation into English Verse by Anthea Bell) *Yours and Mine*, 1 84507 323 1. Surreal and intriguing.

Amanda Hall, *Prince of the Birds*, 1 84507 102 6. Beautifully illustrated, set in Moorish Spain.

Mick Manning & Brita Granström, *Yuck* 1 84507 088 7. An introduction for the very young to the diverse, and to us revolting, diet of babies of other species.

Jessica Souhami, *The Little, Little House*, 1 84507 108 5. A colourful retelling of an old story.

Lani Yamamoto, *Albert*<sup>(2)</sup> 1 84507 111 5. The second in a series which introduces philosophical concepts, this time that of the flux of time, to five-year-olds.

### *Books from Tamarind Limited*

Annie Dalton, illus. Carl Pearce, *Ferris Fleet, the Wheelchair Wizard*. 1 870516 73 7 An adventure in outer space for young readers.

Gill Lobel, illus. Kim Harley, *The Day Ravi Smiled* 1 870516 76 1. Set in a riding school for the disabled.

Lucy Markovitch & Jo Blake, *A Safe Place*, 1 970516 76 1. The pictures as well as the text tell the story of a present that is nearly lost.

## IBBY NEWS

**Ann Lazim (Chair of British section of IBBY and member of the executive committee)**

### Hans Andersen Awards 2006

The British nominees for the Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2006 are:

*Illustrator* **David McKee**, author/illustrator of classic picture books such as *Elmer* and *Not Now Bernard* as well as the recent thought-provoking books *The Conquerors* and *Three Monsters*.

*Novelist* **Philip Pullman**, best known for the hugely successful trilogy *His Dark Materials* and also writer of novels for younger children, such as *The Scarecrow and His Servant*, shortlisted for this year's CILIP Carnegie Medal.

The names of all the nominees will be released soon – watch the IBBY website [www.ibby.org](http://www.ibby.org) for information.

At their meeting at Bologna in April this year, IBBY's Executive Committee elected the Hans Christian Andersen Awards jury which will be chaired by Jeffrey Garrett. They are:

- Vasja Cerar, editor for teenage fiction at Mladinski Knjiga in Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Lona Gericke, a children's librarian from Bellville, South Africa, and a member of the Executive of SACBF, the South African Children's Book Forum.
- Grazia Gotti, cofounder of Giannino Stoppioni children's bookstore in Bologna, Italy.
- Maija Korhonen, head of the children's department at Kallio Branch Library, Helsinki, Finland
- Angela Lebedeva, senior lecturer in children's literature at the Sholohov University of Education in Moscow and executive director of IBBY Russia.
- Bill Nagelkerke, coordinator of children's and young adult services at Christchurch City Library, New Zealand
- Parnaz Nayeri, children's book reviewer and translator in Tehran, Iran
- Isabelle Nières-Chevrel, professor of general and comparative literatures at the University of Rennes, France
- María Cecilia Silva-Díaz of Caracas, Venezuela, currently editor at Ediciones Ekaré in Barcelona.
- Junko Yokota, professor of reading language arts at National Louis University, Chicago, and past president of USBBY.

The jury will meet to make their decisions just before the Bologna Book Fair in March 2006 and the winners will be announced at the Fair.

### IBBY Honour List 2006

Every two years IBBY produces an honour list of books nominated by national sections in the categories of writing, illustration and translation and published for the first time during the preceding three years. The books form part of a travelling exhibition which is launched at the congress and there is an accompanying annotated catalogue. The British section committee will soon be considering which books to put forward for the 2006 Honour List. Accompanying this issue of *IBBYLink* is a nomination form inviting UK IBBY members to put forward their suggestions. Our honour book for translation in 2004 – Daniel Pennac's *Eye of the Wolf* translated by Sarah Adams – went on to win the Marsh Award. Our other nominations last time were *Naked Without a Hat* by Jeanne Willis for writing and *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Book?* by Lauren Child for illustration.

### Tsunami Relief Fund

As reported in the last issue of *IBBYLink*, IBBY has initiated a worldwide voluntary collection among its National Sections to support children's literature projects in the Asian countries that were affected by the tsunami on 26 December 2004. Donations

are still needed for this important work and can be sent to the following bank, marked with the phrase 'Help for children in the Tsunami region':

Basler Kantonalbank, Postfach, CH-4002 Basel, Switzerland  
Account: IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People)

For donations in Swiss Francs: Bank Account number 16 566.242.46  
IBAN: CH38 0077 0016 0566 2424 6  
BIC (SWIFT address): BKBBCHBB

in Euros: Bank Account number 16 5.414.137.37  
IBAN: CH66 0077 0016 5414 1373 7  
BIC (SWIFT address): BKBBCHBB

in US Dollars: Bank Account number 16 5.401.382.71  
IBAN: CH29 0077 0016 5401 3827 1  
BIC (SWIFT address) BKBBCHBB

### **International Children's Book Day**

ICBD is celebrated each year on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the birthday of Hans Christian Andersen. Each year a different IBBY National Section sponsors a poster designed by an illustrator from their country and with a message from one of their authors. India sponsored the 2005 poster. Next year it will be Slovakia and in 2007 New Zealand.

Also on April 2<sup>nd</sup> this year, IBBY's new website was launched. Do pay a visit to [www.ibby.org](http://www.ibby.org). Quite a number of National Sections have their own website which is linked to the international one. The UK does not have its own site yet but this is something we hope to remedy in the near future.

### **New National Sections of IBBY**

Turkey has just re-established its National Section after a hiatus of two years. The latest country to join the IBBY family is Mongolia.

### **Funding for IBBY's work and projects**

Two significant donations were reported to IBBY's Executive Committee at their recent meeting in Bologna. An anonymous donor in Basel has made a contribution which will be a considerable help in meeting the costs of running the IBBY office there over the next five years. From Japan, a businessman, Mr Yamada, has given a large donation to the Tsunami Relief Fund. He is also prepared to provide some funding for IBBY projects and plans are underway for a campaign, The Child's Right to Become a Reader, which will encompass the development of several projects. More information about this should be available after the EC meets again in Bratislava in September.

IBBY President Peter Schneck has recently visited China, Korea and Japan, where he met Mr Yamada who runs a bee farm, and the project fund is definitely being established.

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### **Jacqueline Wilson: Children's Laureate, 2005-2007**

There is no doubt that the institution of the Children's Laureateship has done a good deal in raising the profile of children's literature over the past six years. All of the holders – Quentin Blake, Anne Fine and Michael Morpurgo – have, in their individual ways, used the prestige of their position to foster children's reading. The new laureate, whose appointment was celebrated in a ceremony at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts – an appropriate setting for someone many of whose books have been televised – will be no exception to this. Jacqueline Wilson has already done a great deal to encourage children to read, not only through the popularity of her books, but also because of her accessibility to her young audience and her response

to their concerns. Her acceptance speech emphasised her awareness of the need for children to become hooked on books early in life, and in particular she stressed the value of adults reading aloud to them as part of this process.

After a welcome from Chris Meade of the Book Trust, Jeff Jacobs, Director General for Young People and Communities, and James Heneage, Managing Director of Ottakar's, voiced their support for the laureateship. Michael Morpurgo, outgoing laureate, kept his audience held (despite their suspense in waiting for the announcement) by reading a section from one of his short stories, and promising that now his own stint was over, there would be more writing, less talking. Sir Christopher Frayling, from the Arts Council, then fulfilled the predictions of many people in the audience by announcing Jacqueline Wilson's name, while Nicolette Jones acted as herald for the new laureate by reminding us of how she had already been for a long while an unofficial ambassador for children.

There is no doubt that the appointment of someone who has become the most-borrowed author from public libraries, but remains so very approachable and sensitive to children's interests, will be very popular with adults and children alike. Our congratulations and best wishes for the two years of her laureateship!

**Pat Pinsent**

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### **Hans Christian Andersen Celebrations Down-Under**

As I was already in New Zealand, the Australian IBBY section invited me to Sydney to take part in their very interesting meeting in honour of Hans Christian Andersen's birthday. The many contributions were under the heading of 'Fairy Tales', including a major lecture by Maurice Saxby, and a panel hosted by him, centred on the IBBY connection, as the two Australian HCA award winners, Patricia Wrightson and Robert Ingpen (with Maurice as their spokesman) and I originally met when I was chairing the HCA jury in Bologna in 1986. The present Australian IBBY section president, John Foster, spoke movingly about IBBY's work. Since Ena Noël's death, they are having some difficulties with keeping IBBY's image bright (and its funds coming in) throughout this vast country.

In New Zealand, the IBBY section president, Wayne Mills, lecturer at Auckland university, is conducting the year-long international Storylines scheme at schools (the Oxford team is a recent winner) in celebration of the HCA anniversary. They are also sending a juror to the next HCA jury meeting. When I met Wayne in March 2004, he was feeling quite discouraged by all the expenses involved (including the fares, of course), but by now his dedication has blossomed. He is showing great enthusiasm and initiative.

**Patricia Crampton**

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### **Hans Christian Andersen at the British Library**

A rich and diverse collection of material is on display in the British Library Pearson Gallery, in an exhibition which runs from 20<sup>th</sup> May to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2005, to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Danish storyteller Hans Christian Andersen. The first thing to be noticed on approaching the main part of the exhibition is a huge paper-sculpture-style white swan with wings outstretched in flight, which is suspended overhead. It is a motif which appears on all the publicity relating to the exhibition, and is a reference to the Danish writer's story about the ugly duckling who eventually transforms into a beautiful swan. This story is said to parallel Andersen's own metamorphosis from humble beginnings to successfully published and critically acclaimed storyteller. Indeed the overall theme of this exhibition is the drawing of parallels between his life and his fairy stories, and in so doing revealing the 'dark side as well as the innocence of his vision'.

The paper-model swan motif is also a reference to Andersen's skill at making paper-cuts which he used to entertain his patrons and their children. Two examples of these are shown. Also on display is a pop-up version of one of his stories, entitled *The Brave Tin Soldier: An All-Action Treasure Hour Pop-Up Book*, from the 1970s, which is opened at the page where, as the big fish gapes, the reader/beholder can pull the soldier down into its belly. I suspect that, with his love of paper sculptures, Andersen would have appreciated this daft piece of picture-making and paper engineering by Vojtěch Kubašta. Nearby is an edition of Andersen's *Fairy Tales* (1924) illustrated by fellow Dane, Kay Neilson, whose stylised pictures have an Aubrey Beardsley-like quality. As one walks around this exhibition, it is fascinating to compare the variety of styles used by the many artists who have been inspired by Andersen's stories.

Although the exhibition focuses particularly on Andersen's life and his reception in Britain, it also provides a comprehensive guide to his life and work as a whole. There is a section devoted to Andersen and the theatre, for, although he never realised his childhood dream to 'act, sing and dance in front of an audience', his love for the theatre remained with him all his life. As the section on 'Andersen on stage and screen' points out, his stories have a strong visual appeal. The supernatural elements lend themselves particularly well to the artificial magical world of ballet and animated film. Thus there is a continuous screening of the Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger film *The Red Shoes*, based on Andersen's story and choreographed by Robert Helpmann. The actual shoes worn by prima ballerina Moira Shearer in the film are displayed also. A pop-up book and ephemera related to the Walt Disney animated film version of Andersen's story *The Little Mermaid*, released in 1989, also appear. I was especially interested to discover that the artists who worked on the animation were inspired by the several sketches in pastels and water colour prepared by Kay Neilson when Disney first considered making an animated film, in the 1930s.

The section on Andersen and the Romantics reminds us how those themes beloved by that movement, the supernatural, immortality and the quest, are present in the Danish writer's story 'The Snow Queen', and there are several beautifully illustrated versions shown. On display in the section about Andersen in Britain is a copy of the first book of Andersen's tales to be published here, a translated edition of his novel *The Improvisator* (1845); the first English translation of his fairy stories: *Wonderful Stories for Children* (1846); and, as the first illustration of an Andersen story by a British artist, the steel etching of John Leech's picture for 'The Little Mermaid' which appeared in translation in Bentley's *Miscellany* magazine of April 1845.

There is an Andersen and Charles Dickens section which draws parallels between the Danish writer and his contemporary who publicly acknowledged the importance of the fairy story tradition. Both wrote about the poverty and exploitation they saw in the cities of their respective homelands and both depicted in their stories the innocence of childhood. Books by both these authors, as well as others who wrote on similar themes, such as Charles Kingsley and Hesba Stretton, are on display.

Andersen travelled extensively in Europe and in the East, and the published accounts which he recorded in diaries are to be seen. He was fêted at home and abroad, although his homeland was slow in according him the praise he deserved; it is interesting to note that it was in Germany, home of the Brothers Grimm, that he was acclaimed first.

This highly informative and fascinating exhibition has a wealth of early editions, illustrated books, original manuscripts, and artwork and ballet costumes from the Royal Opera House; there are also interactive exhibits such as 'puppets, pulleys and projections.' It is, as the publicity states, 'a free exhibition for people of all ages'. I can thoroughly recommend it.

**June Hopper**

## Patricia Crampton to speak at WORD Festival

Patricia Crampton has been asked to speak on Literary Translation at the WORD Literary Festival in Aberdeen (13-15 May), with Boyd Tonkin, Peter France and Jenny Erdal. She plans to include a serious puff for IBBY!

## Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award

Philip Pullman recently went to Sweden to receive the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award which he won jointly with Japanese illustrator Ryoji Arai.

A number of organisations in each country are entitled to suggest recipients for this award. British IBBY is putting forward the names of Shirley Hughes and Diana Wynne Jones for next year's award.

## Bookbird

The international IBBY journal is now edited from Ireland by Valerie Coughlan and Siobhán Parkinson. Their first issue includes some serious examinations of picture books, notably on the question of the acceptability of certain themes, such as death and cruelty, for young children. The international arena is well served by items such as a review of children's literature research in Germany, and a discussion of children's literature awards in Canada, together with book reviews and a description of the IBBY Congress in South Africa in September 2004. The editors welcome articles on any theme relevant to children's literature (send to [bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie](mailto:bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie)). For details of how to subscribe write to [journals@utpress.utoronto.ca](mailto:journals@utpress.utoronto.ca)

## Books to enjoy with the under fives

This is the title of a new leaflet prepared by the Federation of Children's Book Groups. Relevant to the topic of this issue of *IBBYLink* is the inclusion of a list of 'Poems and Rhyming Stories'. For details of how to obtain copies visit [www.fcbg.org.uk](http://www.fcbg.org.uk)

## Study children's poetry at MA Level

The MA in Children's Literature at the University of Roehampton includes two modules on poetry for children: 'Verse and Voice' for students on campus, and 'Poetry written for Children' for Distance Learning students. Either (but not both!) can be taken as part of an MA or Graduate Certificate or Diploma; singly for assessment as an Associate student; or audited. More details from [PatPinsent@aol.com](mailto:PatPinsent@aol.com)

## In memoriam Antonia Forest

Antonia Forest, an author of high quality school and historical stories, was recalled at St Botolph's, Bishopsgate in the City of London recently, by a mass in celebration of her life and work, and walks covering the territory where some of her characters lived. Forest's school fiction is too often neglected, but enthusiasts claim that it has more to offer the discerning reader than that of her better-known contemporaries.

## Childhoods today: fear and freedom in growing up

This conference was held at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park, 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> June, 2005, and attracted an international multi-disciplinary audience. The implications of the 'bedroom culture' which results from a combination of the tendency for children to have their own individual televisions and computers, and the fears which prevent them having the freedom to play outside as previous generations have done, were discussed by historians, psychologists and sociologists, while a literary perspective was supplied by Anne Fine, former children's laureate. It is hoped that some of these issues may be explored in future conferences.

## CONFERENCES and OTHER EVENTS

**No Child is an Island: The Case for Children's Literature in Translation** • Annual IBBY Conference at Froebel College, Roehampton University. Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2005. Plenary Speakers include Emer O'Sullivan, Anthea Bell, Sarah Adams, plus other translators and authors; workshop topics covering a large range of countries and languages. Registration Forms will be sent out to IBBY members in September; for further details contact PatPinsent@aol.com or L.Atkins@roehampton.ac.uk

**Children's Literature International Summer School (CLISS)** • 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2005, National Centre for Research in Children's Literature, University of Roehampton. Speakers include Anthea Bell, Malorie Blackman, Ruth Bottigheimer, Clare Bradford, Lynne Vallone. This is not a conference but a concentrated period of study, during which it is possible to attend sessions on several of the modules for the Roehampton MA in Children's Literature. Contact Laura Atkins, national Centre for Research in Children's Literature, Froebel College, University of Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, SW15 5PJ (L.Atkins@roehampton.ac.uk) for details.

**Hans Andersen Bi-centenary** • 8-10 August, 2005. A conference in celebration and reappraisal at the British Library, in conjunction with an exhibition. Speakers include Ruth Bottigheimer, Dag Heede, Johan de Mylius, Maria Tatar and Marina Warner. More details from Professor Kim Reynolds, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, KimReynolds@ncl.ac.uk

**Children's Literature in Education** • 35<sup>th</sup> Celebratory Birthday Conference of the quarterly journal. 3<sup>rd</sup> September at the Trent Park Campus, Middlesex University Looking back over 35 years of children's books, speculating about the future and – well – celebrating. Speakers include Victoria de Rijke, Chris Hall, Margaret Mackey, Mike Rosen, David Rudd, Posy Simmonds and Nick Tucker with a team of celebrity readers and, probably, live children. Details from: Carolyn Pitkin, School of Lifelong Learning and Education, Middlesex University, Trent Park Campus, Bramley Road, London N14 4XS. Telephone: (0)20 8411 6363. email: c.pitkin@mdx.ac.uk

**'The Shock of the New: Innovation in Children's Books'** • Children's Writers and Illustrators Group of the Society of Authors. Friday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September, St Catherine's College, Oxford. Speakers include Michael Morpurgo, Sara Fanelli, David Fickling, and a wide range of authors and illustrators. Contact enid.stephenson@3-c.coop or write to her at 21 Royd Terrace, Hebden Bridge, HX7 7BT

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July 31 – August 3 **IRA: 14<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Reading**, Zagreb, Croatia. Literacy Without Boundaries, including IBBY seminar. Information from: congress@event.hr

September 19 – 21 **Asian Conference on Storytelling** at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India organised by the Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children (AWIC) which represents the Indian Section of IBBY. Email awicbooks@yahoo.com

September 20 – 30 **ASSITEJ: 15<sup>th</sup> World Conference and Festival of the Arts for Young Audiences**, Montreal, Canada (International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) Information: www.montreal-2005.com

October 19 – 24 **Frankfurt Book Fair** with IBBY participation at the stand of the German Section of IBBY (Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur)

October 28 – 30 **6<sup>th</sup> USBBY Regional Conference**, Callaway Gardens, Pine Mountain, Georgia Children's Books: Messengers of Peace Information from: usbby@reading.org

## The Children's Bookshow 2005 – Children's Literature in Translation: *Outside In*

The Children's Bookshow, *Outside In*, will be touring the best writers and illustrators from Austria, France, Italy, Greece and Sweden in the autumn of 2005. It will begin at the British Library in National Children's Book Week – October 3<sup>rd</sup> to October 10<sup>th</sup> – and will end in November at L'Institut Français in London.

This year's theme, *Outside In: Children's Writers in Translation*, has been chosen to introduce British children to the richness of other cultures, to broaden their horizons, and to understand lives and cultures other than their own, through poetry, stories and pictures. Events with writers from abroad will be held in theatres in cities throughout England including London, Sheffield, Manchester, Leicester, Newcastle, and Oxford, and at the same time, a series of schools workshops on the same theme, *Outside In*, will be given free to schools using writers, poets, translators, storytellers and illustrators. A book, *Outside In: Children's Books in Translation* with an introduction by Philip Pullman, will be published by Milet Publishing Ltd to coincide with the tour.

The National Centre for Research in Children's Literature, the University of Roehampton, in conjunction with the British section of IBBY, will be holding a conference on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2005 entitled, *No Child is an Island: the Case for Children's Books in Translation*.

One of our well known children's writers, David Almond, has this to say about children's literature in translation:

One of the things I love about writing for children is that they don't know the categories yet. They don't know that they're supposed to think that something 'foreign' is something difficult. When we're young, everything beyond our mother's lap is 'foreign': all those people, all those places, all those objects, all those words. But that huge constantly expanding foreign realm is a source of delight. Being a child, growing up, is a process of moving outwards, a process of exploration and discovery. We make the unknown known. We turn the foreign into our familiar place. We play. We learn the world and its words through play. That's why children's bookshelves are such joyous and experimental places – where flaps pop up and animals talk, and dreams mix with the everyday. What better place to put books that lead us beyond our own shores and our own language?

This is the aim of *Outside In*: to extend that 'source of delight, that process of exploration and discovery' and take children to places 'beyond our own shores and our own language.'

For further information: contact Siân Williams email:sianwilliams2000@hotmail.com telephone: 020 8 960 0602

### Events venues and writers proposed:

**Oxford Tuesday October 4<sup>th</sup>** • 1pm *Museum of Natural History* George St Oxford OX1 2AG Stefan Casta (Sweden) and Nicolette Jones (Children's editor *Sunday Times*). Booking: Borders 01865 203 901 or from the Borders bookshop 11 Magdalen St Oxford

**Manchester Thursday October 6<sup>th</sup>** • 10am and 1.30pm *The Library Theatre* Central Library St Peter's Sq Manchester M2 5PD www.manchesterpoetryfestival.co.uk www.librarytheatre.com 0161 236 711 Matthew Sweeney and Owen Sheers (also doing translation workshops in schools from Romanian and Welsh)

### October 6<sup>th</sup> is National Poetry Day

**London Friday October 7<sup>th</sup>** • *The British Library* 96 Euston Rd London NW1 2DB Christine Nostlinger (Austria) Nicolette Jones booking: 020 7 412 7222 www.bl.uk (awaiting confirmation)

**Cheltenham Saturday October 8<sup>th</sup>** • Details to be confirmed

**Ilkley Literature Festival, 7<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October • Details to be confirmed**

**Sheffield Tuesday October 18<sup>th</sup> • 1pm** *The Crucible Theatre* 55 Norfolk St Sheffield S1 1DA Michael Rosen, Hervé Tullet Booking: 0114 249 6000 [www.offtheshelf.org.uk](http://www.offtheshelf.org.uk) 0114 273 4400

**Newcastle Northern Children's Book Festival November 7<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> • Daniel Morden** (Grimm's Tales) Oliver Wilson-Dickson, venue to be confirmed

**Leicester Tuesday November 22<sup>nd</sup> • 10.30am** *The Phoenix Arts Centre* 21 Upper Brown St Leicester LE1 5TE Andrew Fusek-Peters (Eastern European poetry for children) [www.phoenix.org.uk](http://www.phoenix.org.uk) booking: 0116 255 4854

**London November 23<sup>rd</sup> • 6.30pm** *L'Institut Français* 17 Queensberry Place London SW7 2DT Erik L'Homme, François Place, Michael Morpurgo [www.institut-francais.org.uk](http://www.institut-francais.org.uk) Booking: 020 7073 1345 or 020 7073 1307 or [bdl@ambafrance.org.uk](mailto:bdl@ambafrance.org.uk)

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### Other conferences

**The Power of Reading • Conference at Centre for Literacy in Primary Education,** Webber Street, SE1 8QW, July 1<sup>st</sup> 2005. Speakers include Michael Morpurgo and Julia Eccleshare. Contact [info@clpe.co.uk](mailto:info@clpe.co.uk)

**International Society for Research in Children's Literature Congress, 2005 • Trinity** College Dublin August 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>

**Stories for Children, Histories of Childhood • 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> November, 2005,** Tours, France. Contact [rosemary.findlay@univ-tour.fr](mailto:rosemary.findlay@univ-tour.fr) or [sebastien.salbayre@univ-tours.fr](mailto:sebastien.salbayre@univ-tours.fr)

**Cartooning Life? Graphic Novels and YA Literature • MLA Conference,** Washington DC, December 27-30<sup>th</sup> 2005. Contact [t.mielke@worc.ac.uk](mailto:t.mielke@worc.ac.uk)

*continued from front page*

thing to them in their daily lives. But then her neighbour, who had obviously been to a very different school, erupted with her own experience. She had always hated poetry at school because it was all humorous verse about everyday topics, and she only came to enjoy it when they were presented with some Romantic poetry which seemed to her to be the real thing. I couldn't have engineered such a splendid example to illustrate to the group the need to expose children to a wide variety of poetry. Fortunately, today there is no difficulty in finding sufficient examples of both anthologies and single poet collections that have material to stimulate everyone. If this is presented at a stage when demands for critical analysis (a process, incidentally, which I myself very much enjoy but which needs to be used sparingly among young readers of poetry) are not made, it can engender an appetite which hopefully may be sustained throughout life.

**Pat Pinsent • Editor**

The autumn issue of *IBBYLink* (copydate July 31<sup>st</sup>) will be devoted to the theme of **Science Fiction and Dystopias** for young readers. Articles, and reviews of appropriate books, old or new, would be welcomed, but we also plan to include items not directly on this theme.

Contributions to [PatPinsent@aol.com](mailto:PatPinsent@aol.com)  
or Pat Pinsent, 23 Burcott Road, Purley CR8 4AD

The Spring 2006 issue will consist mainly of summaries of papers given at the November IBBY conference, on the theme of **Children's Literature in Translation**, but other articles etc. would also be welcome, by the beginning of January 2006.