

CWIG AGM Report from current Chair: *Shoo Rayner*



Committee

We will be welcoming three new members to the CWIG Committee. Unfortunately, they were unable to attend our recent AGM in December 2018, but we look forward to welcoming writers Robin Stevens, S.F. Said and writer/illustrator Steve Anthony.

That means that we are saying goodbye to three members: Lucy Coats, Miriam Moss and James Mayhew. We will miss their wisdom and cheerfulness as we have tried to work our way through the new realities of publishing. We particularly thank James for his bravery in facing up to Hachette over special sales and thus instigating a very public conversation, which I feel has not yet concluded.

Being on the committee is a wonderful way to get to know other authors and their genres. It's been lovely getting to know you and we wish you all the success with your new projects, which you now have a little more time for.

Campaigns

Reading for Pleasure Award

The CWIG Reading for Pleasure Award is now fully launched and I urge you to get in touch with Jo McCrum (jmccrum@societyofauthors.org) when you have been inspired, following a school visit, by the efforts being made by the school, the librarian, or anyone else who has shown they are working beyond expectation to advance the cause of reading for pleasure.

World Book Day

World Book Day (WBD) has been uppermost in our minds in 2018, following a somewhat confrontational meeting the year before. Following a much better list this year, we feel that our complaints were heard. We have continued to meet with Stephen Lotinga (Publisher's Association), and Tim Godfray (Booksellers Association) in a more positive atmosphere. We have stressed that we would love to see more proper non-fiction, and some poetry on the list. WBD relies on what the contributing publishers are willing to provide. Maybe we need to campaign directly to the publishers?

We were heartened that Dorling Kindersley has come on board, so maybe there will be better non-fiction choice next year. We were also very excited by their Share A Story Campaign, and surprised we were unaware of it. We have offered to join forces to promote story sharing. As authors visiting schools at the time of, and because of, World Book Day, we are, essentially, WBD foot soldiers.

Stephen Lotinga suggested giving us a list of resources to share with CWIG members so we all know what we should be promoting on WBD as we attend and speak to thousands of school assemblies across the WBD period.

Libraries

Dawn Finch has been keeping us up to date with CILIP's new campaign #GreatSchoolLibraries, which has three specific objectives:

- Recognition of school libraries/librarians in Ofsted Inspection Framework
- Creation of a School Library Strategy for England
- Specific investment into school library development.

CWIG are right behind this initiative and are doing our bit promoting the cause to our members and further afield.

Events in 2018

Egmont CEO Cally Poplak and Egmont's Commercial Director Sarah Bates began the year with an essential insight into the latest market and consumer trends in children's publishing. What is currently being published across the trade and how do Egmont publish their writers and illustrators?

Their extensive research was fascinating and a bit like watching a car crash in slow motion. Markets were broken down into children's age groups, showing us where children get their books from at different stages of growing up. It was clear that 'Value' outlets took most of the market.

Figures of where we could expect our royalties to flow from were broken down into three phases - immediate publication, first year and long tail.

We were buoyed by the slide showing that, on publication, we could expect our royalties to come from proper outlets like Waterstones and WHSmith, but this income was described as 'prevailing rate'. When I contacted Cally, she admitted that first publication rates are now a 'Blended Rate', which can mean special sales being organised on publication.

We were all surprised to see special sales mentioned in the publication period. It was explained that special sales and deals might be pursued to gain 'best-seller status'. After publication, only special sales were being considered at deep discounts. Remember to be vigilant and to have your contract checked by the Society, even if you have an agent.

We also had a very good turn-out for the March Lightning Source print-on-demand factory visit in Milton Keynes. I think most members were impressed by the machinery and factory floor and picture book authors reassured by quality.

In July, we went to Harrogate collaborating with Authors North on a joint day conference with a variety of speakers including Niel Bushnell, Patrice Lawrence, Robin Stevens and Robyn Travis, publishers Katie James and Crystal Mahey

Morgan alongside sessions on tax, forensics, research and talks by adult crime authors.

In October, we hosted Cat Weatherill's intensive workshop *How to Present Your Picture-book*. And the year finished with this AGM and talk on writing original plays and musicals, adapting text and a live performance with *The Theatre! Darlings* with Sita Brahmachari, Keren David and James Mayhew.

That concludes my report. Thank you all for your support this year.

Shoo Rayner
7 December 2018