



New Zealand Historical Fiction Term One, 2005

New Zealand authors have produced some outstanding work that embraces the impact of events, both national and international, on New Zealand's short but eventful history. Reading is an exciting way for young people to gain insight into the lives of our forebears and the effect that events have had in shaping our nation. We have included some titles that have appeared in other recommendations as we felt they also fitted well into this category.

Contributors to this booklist are – Kerry Aluf, Carol Ardern, Helen Beckingsale, Anne Coppell, Bronwyn Fox, Lois Huston, Lorraine Orman, Frances Plumpton, Rosemary Tisdall.

booklist

After the War
Bob Kerr
Mallinson Rendel 2000
ISBN 0908783515



A simple story, *After the War* follows the life of a New Zealand family after the father comes home from war in 1945. Each page is a snapshot five years further into the future. The story is illustrated with instantly recognizable New Zealand products, such as a Bell tea, Weetbix and Agee jars. Readers watch how the little girl grows to adulthood, the encroachment of suburbia and how the way of life changes. This picture book is very easy to read, but its main strength lies in the familiarity and details of its illustration. Recommended. Ages 3 and up. LH

Come Back Ginger
Dorothy Butler
Ill. Lyn Kriegler
Reed 1987
Reprinted Little Mammoth 2004
ISBN 186948049X



In 1845 Kororareka (now known as Russell) was under threat of attack by Hone Heke. Catherine, her four brothers and their mother are to be evacuated by sailing ship to Auckland. Her beloved ginger cat goes missing but arrives at the beach, just as they are to board the longboat, with an unusual bird in its mouth. The first mate manages to remove the dead bird from the cat's jaws. Catherine does not understand his mysterious comment 'we may make something beautiful of this one yet' but is given a special gift as they leave the ship. Lyn Kriegler's detailed illustrations depict well the dress and lifestyle of that early immigrant family. The story is based on an incident that actually occurred and three generations of the family treasured 'the bird in the glass box', which was later donated to the Russell Museum by a great granddaughter of the main character Catherine Flowerday. Recently reprinted this story will be enjoyed by 4 – 7 year olds. CA

Isabel's Upside-Down Day

Rosamond Rowe
Ill. Linda McClelland
Reed Publishing 2000
ISBN 1869488342

Set during the Hawke's Bay earthquake, this book details an important event in New Zealand's history. Isabel was just starting school when she is thrown to the ground by the first jolt. Fleeing with other terrified school children, Isabel finds her family unhurt but her house, her uncle's house and her father's grocery store have all major damage. Windows are broken, chimneys have collapsed and walls have fallen down. Water mains have burst. Benjie, her favourite bear is missing. Life seems upside-down to Isabel. Based on a true account, this book brings to life the confusion and worry of a sudden catastrophe. It also shows warmth and compassion, and how people work together to help each other out. Recommended. Ages 4 and up. LH



The Immigrants

Alan Bagnall
Ill. Sarah Wilkins
Mallinson Rendel 2002
Hb
ISBN 0908783728

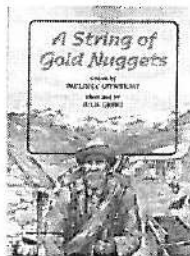
When Maria's mother dies, the young girl stows away on the sailing ship, Toroa, hoping that she will find her father in New Zealand. Once on board she notices a flock of silver eyes, tiny birds that she had fed from her kitchen in Sydney, fluttering in the rigging. The boat is caught in a fierce storm, but Maria and her precious birds eventually arrive safely in their new land. This simply told story presented in picture book format with colourful naïve style illustrations, received the 2003 Russell Clark award. 7+ FP



The Treaty

Mere Whaanga
Te Tiriti
Liz Hunkin
Scholastic NZ 2003
Hb ISBN 186943580X

This beautiful picture book tells in bilingual text how the Treaty of Waitangi became the founding agreement between Maori and Pakeha, and its effect on succeeding generations. The text is sensitive and expressive. The artwork is outstanding with evocative, detailed watercolours as well as map and document collages. This book should be in every school and public library and will also be treasured by many families. Also available in softcover. 8 to adult. CA

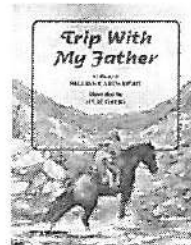


A String of Gold Nuggets

Pauline
Cartwright
Ill. Julie Greig
Bridge Hill
Publishing 1997
Pb ISBN 0
47303831 5

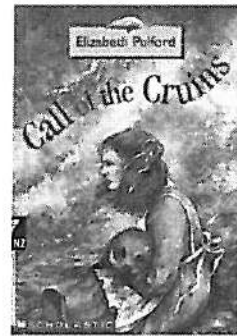
Also: Trip with my Father

ISBN 0473038307
Two collections of five short stories, each set in Central Otago during the goldrush era of the 1860s. Each story briefly but vividly portrays an aspect of these fascinating times.



'The Craftiest Trio' highlights the danger of ambush and robbery faced by miners as they travel from their claims to the bank with their gold. 'New Chum' considers the pitfalls of buying a claim from a smoothtalking swindler. 'Trip with my Father' follows the perilous journey to the goldfields a young boy makes with

his father. These stories have previously been broadcast on National Radio's EARS programme. Suitable for 8-10 yrs. KA

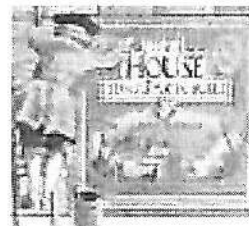


Call of the Cruins

Elizabeth Pulford

Scholastic 2000
ISBN 1869434714

When twelve year old Emeline Malone finds an injured baby seal, she determines to do all that she can to save it – even though she knows that it could lead to trouble. Both her father and brother hunt seals for a living and so she must keep its care secret from them. This is an engaging story with an interwoven theme of the legend of the Cruins (sea-people). 9-11. BF



The House That Jack Built

Gavin Bishop
Scholastic 1999
ISBN 186943434X

The traditional rhyme is used as the thread to link Gavin Bishop's interpretation of the colonisation of New Zealand. The detailed illustrations in aqua, sepia and crimson tones depict the development of New Zealand in the early 19th Century. Maori mythology and perspective are effectively interwoven with the impact of immigrants. This multi-layered sophisticated picture book received the 2000 New Zealand Post Book of the Year Award. 9+ CA

A Canoe in the Mist

Elsie Locke

Cape 1984

Hb, ISBN 0224022563 o.p.

Although Lillian and her mother lived at Te Wairoa on the shores of Lake Rotomahana, the young girl had never visited the famous Pink and White Terraces that visitors flocked to, from all around the world. Her opportunity came when she befriended eleven year old Mattie who had travelled with her parents from England. As their tourist boat crossed Lake Tarawera, the mist lifted and the tourists could see a waka in the distance. Little did the girls know that as well as the breath-taking sights they were to see that day, they would also experience a terrifying night of cataclysmic destruction. Elsie Locke has based this story on historical fact and although sadly long out of print copies are still available through many libraries. 11+ FP

When the War Came Home

Sarah Eil

Scholastic 2002

ISBN 1869435281

To die of the 'flu seems inconceivable to today's children,



but in the aftermath of World War 1, it was real and happening. Set in Auckland, 1918, Jimmy Kavanagh's father is missing in action. Sickness is striking down friends and strangers alike, and food is scarce. Jimmy's mother decides to remove herself and the younger children to the country to help her sister and to protect her children from the influenza epidemic, but Jimmy must remain in Auckland with his uncle Rory. Jimmy is the man of the family, the wage earner, and jobs are not to be lightly given up. At first Jimmy views his independence with excitement, but soon must cope with reality of an epidemic that seems to have no cure.

A very readable story, balancing the horror of the influenza epidemic with courage and adventure. 11+. LH



Abandon Ship! The Diary of Debbie Atherton, Wellington, 1968

Shirley Corlett

Scholastic New Zealand

Pb ISBN 1869436067

Two stories run side-by-side in this *My Story* title which focuses on the sinking of the Wahine. The more recent story is that of 12-year-old Debbie who ends up sailing on the fateful trip. The older story is contained in a diary written by Debbie's great-great-great-great grandfather, who was the doctor aboard an emigrant ship coming to New Zealand in 1841. The stories interconnect at the end with a supernatural twist. LO



Journey to Tangiwai: The Diary of Peter Cotterill, Napier, 1953

David Hill

Scholastic 2003

ISBN 1869434994

An absorbing account of 13 year old Peter Cotterill's everyday life in 1953. The story offers a snapshot of post-war New Zealand, and documents significant events of the day. Peter's scout troop wins the chance to travel to Auckland to compete in the National First Aid Competition and the story culminates in their fateful train trip on Christmas Eve and the disastrous train crash at Tangiwai.

12+ BF

The Swap

Wendy Catran

Lothian Books 2004

ISBN 0734406541

Twin stories intertwine in this new book by Wendy Catran.

Sakura is a Japanese child. She and her family live on a small Pacific island, but after the attack on Pearl Harbour, she and other Japanese are removed from their island home and sent to New Zealand. They are considered 'enemy aliens' and are interned, separated from their menfolk and restricted in their movements. Maree is a New Zealand child. She glimpses Sakura, and is curious, but life moves on and she soon forgets. The story moves into the fifties. Maree is a teenager, and looking forward to her brother Alan's return from fighting in Korea. Imagine the consternation when Alan returns to his family bringing a wife – a Japanese wife. I found this story telling in its rendition of inter-racial relationships, and the prejudice that exists even today. Suitable for girls, aged 12 and up. LH



Tiggie Tompson all at Sea

Tessa Duder

Penguin 2001

ISBN 0141313234

This is the middle book of the Tiggie Tompson trilogy. Although it is set in 1999, at the end of each chapter is an account of the life of Eliza Matthews, a nineteenth century girl who travelled steerage to New Zealand 150 years earlier. Tiggie is playing her part in a television drama and becomes closely identified with her story. Eliza's voice forms a separate narrative, as well as linking with Tiggie's life, and tells of the reason she came alone to New Zealand, the privations of the voyage and the appalling conditions which the single women were forced to endure. 12+ HB



Cross Tides

Lorraine Orman

Longacre 2004

ISBN 1877135925

Sixteen year old Bel, whose life is in turmoil, goes to stay with family in the Marlborough Sounds. There her life becomes entwined with that of Lizzie, who had lived in the region in the days of whale hunting. An immensely readable book, this well crafted story provides great insight into the realities of the life lived by both the Maori people and the whaling community of that era. A multilayered story that will be enjoyed by all. 13+ CA



The Fat Man

Maurice Gee

Penguin 1994

Pb

ISBN

01413101609

When Colin Potter first met the fat man bathing in the local creek, little did he realize that this would be the start of a terrifying series of events that would threaten his family. The fat man was determined to seek revenge from his former classmates, one of them Colin's father, who had bullied him unmercifully at school many years previously. Set in the mythical township of Loomis during the depression, the landscape of this thriller can be seen in Henderson today; the Opunake Stream running along Milbrook Rd, and Bellevue House, Colin's grandparent's boarding house has been moved and restored as The Falls Restaurant. AIM Book of the Year Award, 1995 Esther Glen Award, 1995 13+. FP

Letters from the Coffin Trenches

Ken Catran

Random House 2002

Pb, ISBN 1869415094

Seventeen year old Harry and his friend Jessica are caught up in the romance of war, engineering Harry's escape from Christchurch to travel by train to Wellington, where he enlists in the Army. Harry's letters to Jessica, which begin on his train journey, and follow his journey with the ANZAC troops to the front, and Jessica's responses as she moves from schoolgirl to one of the nursing contingent at Alexandria, Egypt form the basis of the book. The letters change dramatically in tone over the months, as Harry experiences the reality of army with his fellow soldiers as they are confined in the narrow deep trenches. And Jessica, in her turn, evolves from a high-spirited teenager to a capable, compassionate nurse exposed to a multitude of horrors as she cares for the men invalidated from the war.

This readable book should give many teenagers a greater understanding of the experiences of young men and women in a conflict that resonates in the history of our nation. FP



Jacko Moran, Sniper

Ken Catran

Lothian Books 2003

Pb, ISBN 0734405510

Jacko Moran is one of the soldiers in Harry's platoon in 'Letters from the Coffin Trenches'. The war continues for Jacko as the company now moves to Flanders, France 1916. Jacko's reputation as a sniper grows and his bravery earns him the Victoria Cross. Catran's portrayal of war following Jacko's life in the trenches of no-mans-land and his growing alienation as he loses his friends amidst the chaos of battle, mud, shellfire, and desertion is riveting. Threaded throughout the book are glimpses of what life was like in New Zealand for

the returning soldiers. This is the first in a quartet of books following the Moran family through four generations of army service. Winner of LIANZA's Esther Glen Award. 13+. KA



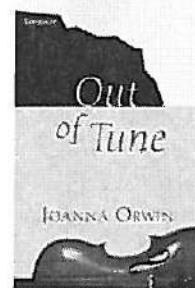
Robert Moran, Private

Ken Catran

Lothian Books 2004

Pb, ISBN 0734406886

It takes the harsh reality of the World War Two battlefields for Robbie, son of war hero Jacko Moran to finally understand his father. Like his father, Robbie earns a medal for bravery and excels as a sniper while fighting in Greece, North Africa and Italy. Next book in the series is Vinnie Moran, Regular.13+. KA



Out of Tune

Joanna Orwin

Longacre Press

Pb, ISBN 1877135909

Jaz is having problems coping with her parents (father has lost his job) and making friends (do they think she's cool enough?). The only solace she finds is in the pages of a diary written by a 19th century ancestor, Maggie, when she migrated with her Shetland Island family to remote Stewart Island. Jaz finds strength in the way Maggie faces up to the trials and tribulations of life in such a tough, brutal place. A convincing and absorbing read for teenagers. LO

The End of the Harbour

Elsie Locke
Deed Printing
Pb, ISBN 0473078422

In 1860 the land wars in Taranaki were causing tension between Maori and Pakeha in the small settlement of Waiuku on the southern-most point of the Manukau Harbour. Two boys, one Maori, one Pakeha, are drawn into the dramatic events that follow. 9+ FP

Jacky Nobody

Ann de Roo
Methuen 1983
ISBN 0456031006

This book was the New Zealand Children's Book of the Year, 1984, and although it is out of print it is still available in many public libraries. Set in the 1840s, at the time of Hone Heke's rebellion, it is the story of Jacky Nolan, adopted by missionaries, who finds that he is not a Pakeha as he thought, as his mother is the daughter of a Maori chief. He is torn between his newly discovered Maori heritage and the life on the mission station where he has been brought up and bewildered by the growing conflict between the two cultures. This would be a good read aloud for classes studying New Zealand history and the signing of the treaty of Waitangi. 9+ H.B.

No One went to Town

Phyllis Johnston
Price Milburn and Company Ltd
1983
Pb ISBN 0705507505

The first in a series about a pioneer family living in the Taranaki region. Every incident is based on fact. The family all work hard, even May, who is just five years old. The only time any one went to town was when someone was badly injured. Ordinary accidents were treated at home - when Claude gashed his leg using a forbidden axe, Mother had to stitch up the cut with black cotton as he lay yelling on the kitchen table. New Zealanders from nine to ninety will be fascinated. RT



You've got guts, Kenny Melrose
Shirley Corlett
Scholastic, 2004;
ISBN 1869435907
Kenny and his sister, Char, have been sent to Briden

Orphanage by their mother and there has been no sign of her returning to claim them. It is the 1920s in New Zealand, and the Great War still affects many, and the Great Depression is on its way. Kenny realises that he is being punished for something he knows nothing about - something his dead father did. Eventually the children are taken in by an aunt and uncle. The uncle, their father's brother, barely speaks to anyone - and has nightmares from the War. A moving look into this period in New Zealand history. Ages 10 and over. AC



The Champion
Maurice Gee
Puffin 1989
ISBN 0140341609
Although out of print this title is worth finding in libraries.

It is 1943 and 12-year-old Rex's life is about to get interesting when his mother offers to take in a convalescent American soldier. Rex has definite ideas about what the soldier will be like but Jackson isn't at all like Rex imagines. First of all - Jack is black - secondly, he admits to not being heroic. The climax is stunning, and the content makes you aware of the insidious nature of racism. Gee's characters, as always, are wonderfully drawn in all their human frailties. Ages 10+. AC



Finding Father: The Journal of Mary Brogan, Otago, 1862
Pauline Cartwright
Scholastic 2004
ISBN 1869436334

A lively story that recounts the adventures of 13 year old Mary Brogan. She disguises herself as a boy and runs away to the Dunstan Goldfields. This is an attempt to find her father whom she hasn't seen for

over seven years. Includes archival photographs and historical note about the Dunstan Gold Rush. 10+. BF

The Runaway Settlers

Elsie Locke
Ill. Anthony Maitland
Jonathan Cape 1965
Reprinted Hazard Press 2004
ISBN 0140304746

It is 40 years since this classic was first published. Mrs Small and her six children leave her drunkard husband in New South Wales and secretly sail to New Zealand under the name of Phipps. This pioneer family found work in the Governor's Bay area and their many and varied experiences make this a fascinating read. Fine descriptive passages and plenty of dialogue move the story along well. 1860's New Zealand is accurately depicted in Anthony Maitland's pen and ink illustrations. Inaugural winner of the Children's Literature Foundation of New Zealand's Best Loved Book Award. Reprinted in 2004. 10+ CA

Earthquake: The diary of Katie Bourke, Napier, 1930-31.

Janine McVeagh
Scholastic NZ 2003
ISBN 1869436555
The first part of this diary focuses on what it was like to be part of a single parent family during the depression. Katie's mother does cleaning and washing to support her family and Katie herself tries to contribute to the family income. Today's children, used to social promotion at school and secondary education for all, are shown what it was like to have to pass Proficiency in order to go on to secondary school. Katie's story also illustrates the discriminatory attitude towards Catholics, which prevailed in New Zealand in earlier years. The devastation of the earthquake is well described but is almost secondary to Katie's concerns about her future. 10+ HB

A Better Life: The Diary of Ivana Ivanovich, Dargaville, 1924-25

Amelia Batistich
Scholastic New Zealand
Pb, ISBN 1969436032

This title in Scholastic's *My Story* series looks at a Dalmatian family living in the Far North. Based on Amelia Batistich's own childhood, the diary of 11-year-old Ivana provides an intimate look at life in the 1920s – silent movies, long-drop toilets, wood-burning ranges, knee-to-neck bathing suits, goods arriving by steamer, a future wife being brought out from Dalmatia. Best for girls of about 10 or 11. LO

A New Song in the Land: The Writings of Atapo, Paihia, c. 1840

Fleur Beale
Scholastic New Zealand
Pb, ISBN 1869436113

The latest title in Scholastic's



excellent *My Story* series, this is a brave book that will probably cause quite a stir. It's written from the point of view of a

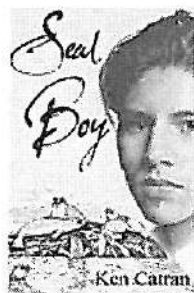
Maori girl who is taken as a slave by an enemy tribe and threatened with death. Atapo runs away to find sanctuary with the missionaries in the Bay of Islands. She witnesses the historic signing of the Treaty of Waitangi before she returns to her rightful position in her own tribe. Atapo's exciting story provides a unique focus on the events surrounding the Treaty. LO

Seal Boy

Ken Catran
Random House
NZ
Pb ISBN 1
86941 611 2

A fast-moving historical drama about a rich boy from

Boston who's kidnapped and taken on board a whaler. Eventually he goes ashore at Kororareka, but an attack by the local Maori finds him taking refuge aboard a disreputable sealing vessel. He ends up hiding



on a remote Chathams island, living side-by-side with a small seal colony. Boys of about 10 to 14 will love this adventure-packed yarn. LO



No Safe Harbour.

David Hill
Mallison Rendel 2003.
ISBN 0908783760

Those of us old enough to remember the Wahine disaster will never forget the newspaper accounts of so many tragic deaths. David Hill tells the story from the point of view of 15 year old twins on their way home from a family funeral. Today's teenagers will be able to relate to the typical sibling rivalry between brother and sister which gradually gives way to concern for each other and for those around them as it dawns on them that things are not going to be all right for many of those on board. The graphic description of the twins' struggle for survival will hold teens attention and give a clear idea of the horror of being caught up in a disaster. 11+. HB



Alex

Tessa Duder
Puffin 1989 ,
1996, 2003
ISBN 0195581695
This award winning tale of 15 year old Alex's

determination to be herself despite the restricting social conventions of New Zealand in the late 1950s is as appealing to today's teenagers as it was to their parents when it was first published. Alex is a champion swimmer and this is the first in a quartet of novels following her to the Olympic Games in Rome and on to university.

The other titles in the series are **Alex in Winter**, **Allesandra-Alex in Rome** and **Songs for Alex**. 11+ HB

Lin and the Red Stranger
Ken
Catran
Random
House NZ
2003
ISBN



1869415779

This is a story depicting the harsh conditions on the New Zealand goldfields of Otago in the 19th century. Lin is a Chinese servant girl, bewildered by the strange wild place and the discrimination meted out to the Chinese by the other miners. Her story is intertwined with that of Declan, a wild young Irishman who is on the run from the law and who is given a new chance in life by Lin's resourcefulness. This is good adventure story as well as showing part of our history which is not often told. 11+ HB

The Mangrove Summer.

Jack Lasenby
Oxford University Press, 1988.
ISBN 0195581946

This is the story of a New Zealand family whose father is a prisoner of war in Germany. The children become convinced that a Japanese invasion is imminent and that the adults will not take evasive action so they hide out in the bush with tragic results. In a way it is the classic situation found in many children's adventure stories, where children fend for themselves without adults, but in a true historical setting. The atmosphere of wartime New Zealand is portrayed as one of determination to carry on as usual and of intolerance for any deviation from the expected course of action such as conscientious objection. Esther Glen Award 1989. 11+ HB