



# 2023 Annual Report

## Friends of Storylines Incorporated Ngā Pou o te Whare Waituhi Tamariki o Aotearoa

*Hereafter referred to as 'Friends'.*

As members we are here to celebrate our achievements and acknowledge the amazing work that is accomplished by all those who work towards the advancement of Aotearoa New Zealand children's literature.

2023 has been a year of change and challenge with exciting opportunities and new initiatives. Nothing that the committee initiates or accomplishes can happen without the continued support and organisational skills of our Executive Officer, Anne de Lautour and Operations Manager, Vicki Cunningham. The 'Friends' thank you for your energy and commitment.

We continue to look for ways to spread the good news of events, story tours and awards to raise the profile of 'Friends' and the Storylines Trust. This is currently done with our excellent e-newsletter and the postings on the various social media platforms. There is a need for a member with an interest in promotion to support the Management Committee with this so please contact us if this is you or you know of someone who has a passion for Aotearoa New Zealand children's literature.

The Story Tours continue to be a resounding success and now that we have completed our three-year cycle, schools are looking forward to us visiting their regions again. With over 32,000+ students, 264 schools/ECE/Libraries and community groups visited in a 12-month period we receive many glowing reviews from students and staff alike, e.g.

"We were very lucky to be able to offer this tour to our kids in the community. Most of our schools in Opotiki have no school library and have very limited access to resources. This type of tour is a new and exciting thing for our kids and shows them

some of the creative jobs and opportunities out there they could pursue in their own lives.”

As we said farewell to Ben Brown as Te Awhi Rito New Zealand Reading Ambassador, we thank him for his contributions to our events including our Annual General Meeting in 2023, and Story Tours. We wish him well in the future. With the appointment of Alan Dingley, we have also had the pleasure of his company at the Storylines Notable Book Awards presentation in November and know he will contribute greatly to the Story Tours he is included on in 2024.

Manuscript Awards continue to receive steady numbers, but the balance between awards changes yearly, e.g. the Storylines Tessa Duder Award had 13 entries in 2021 and 32 in 2023. The ongoing work of the judges, drawn from the publishers and Storylines members, is essential for the continuing growth of children’s literature in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our thanks to all who participate in this time-consuming role.

Storylines Notable Book Awards continue to attract a high quality of local authors and illustrators. The judges do an amazing job evaluating each submission, which as you can appreciate, is a lengthy job. I would encourage anyone who has a passion for children’s literature to apply to become a judge when applications are called for, it is a very rewarding opportunity to be part of it. For the first time we held the Storylines Notable Awards presentation separately in November at the National Library in Stanley Street, Auckland. This was a very successful event where authors, illustrators, their whānau and Storylines members attended and had a delightful afternoon celebrating and discussing books. This will be continued in 2024.

One of the biggest changes we have seen in 2023 is the beginning of separating out our awards and other events. The Storylines Margaret Mahy Medal & Lecture Award included the manuscript awards and a segment by Te Awhi Rito New Zealand Reading Ambassador Ben Brown. As can be seen, the ‘Notables’ were held separately for the first time. Unfortunately, we received no nominations for the Storylines Betty Gilderdale Award, but look forward to receiving nominations from the wider membership this year. A change to this award is to try and have the ceremony in a city nearer the recipient to make it easier for whānau and friends to attend.

The first event in 2023 for us was the Storylines Saturday Sessions with the first being held in Auckland in March and the second in Christchurch in October. A big thank you to the sub-committees who worked with local members to get these up and running. Those who attended really enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to speak with published authors, illustrators, and editors. Any ideas for further events are always welcomed as we endeavour to support our Aotearoa New Zealand children’s literature whānau and look for

ways to place them at the forefront of people's minds when purchasing or engaging with the amazing publications published every year.

Have you ever thought of becoming part of the Management Committee? We have a diverse team whose common goal is to promote New Zealand Children's literature. We come from many different areas in New Zealand and meet via Teams online which means distance does not have to be a barrier to participation. If you are interested in supporting the Management Committee, please contact us through our website.

The Storylines Management Committee for 2023:

Anne Kayes

Bridget Mahy

Helen Beckingsale

Helen Villers – Minutes

Kaaren Hirst – Chairperson

Leonie Agnew

Libby Limbrick – Financial overview

Pearl D'Silva - Membership Secretary

Susan Bridges

Tessa Duder

Vanessa Hatley-Owen

Zac McCallum

The "Friends" would not function effectively and efficiently without the enthusiasm and commitment of these people. They bring their energy and commit a large amount of time to the cause. Thank you to their whānau for giving us their time. It is much appreciated by the authors, illustrators and tamariki of Aotearoa New Zealand. Thanks also to Christine Young, Chairperson of the Storylines Trust and Trustees for their vision and leadership.

Ngā mihi nui,

Kaaren Hirst

Chairperson

Friends of Storylines Ngā Pou o Te Whare Waituhi Tamariki