

Hullabaloo!

Newsletter of the Children's Collection at the Sibthorp Library, Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln

Volume 3, Issue 1, January 2007. Compiled by Janice Morris and Emma Sansby. Please direct all comments to hullabaloo@bishopg.ac.uk

The End of Count Olaf?

With the publication of Lemony Snicket's final **A Series of Unfortunate Events** book, 13-year old Rachel Conway gives us her thoughts on the series (and earns herself a £5 book token in the process!):

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"The last of the 13 book-long series is now finally out and suitably called 'The End'. Lemony Snicket, an author writing under a supposed pseudonym, has woven into the series

his 'supposed' life and family. He follows the tracks of three orphaned children. The children are constantly pursued by an evil count with a strange tattoo on his ankle. The children are looking for a mysterious company called the UFD, as the UFD may have had a connection with their parents' deaths. Who knows?! Everything is going to be revealed in this last book.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this series, with a nail-biting cliffhanger at the end of each book, and would recommend it to any mystery lover!"

Awards Roundup

The **Blue Peter Book Awards** were announced in November. Winner of 'The Book I Couldn't Put Down' category was *Blood Fever* by Charlie Higson (Puffin, £6.99); winner of 'Best Book with Facts' was *Spud Goes Green* by Giles Thaxton (Egmont, £4.99); and winner of the 'Best Illustrated Book to Read Aloud' was *Lost and Found* written by Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins, £5.99).

Gold medal winners of the **Nestle Smarties Book Prize** were: in the 5-and-under age group, *That Rabbit Belongs to Emily Brown* by Cressida Cowell & Neil Layton (Orchard, £10.99); in the 6-8 age group *Mouse Noses on Toast* by Darren King and David Roberts (Faber, £9.99); and in the 9-11 age group, *The Diamond of Drury Lane* by Julia Golding (Egmont, £6.99).

The **Waterstone's Children's Book Prize** (previously Ottakars), was won by newcomer Tom Becker for *Darkside* (Scholastic, £6.99), about a gruesome parallel world run by Jack the Ripper's children (yikes!).

Welcome!

...to the latest issue of Hullabaloo! On January 17th Bishop Grosseteste was lucky enough to host the Award Ceremony for the **Lincolnshire Young People's Book Awards**. To celebrate the occasion Janice and I decided to dedicate a significant chunk of this issue to the Awards and to a related subject that we feel strongly aboutreading for pleasure!

Emma & Janice

The Children of St Francis School ReadON

Reading for pleasure is something that the children at St Francis School in Lincoln evidently enjoy doing! St Francis is a day school with residential facilities for children with physical disabilities and medical problems and they've very kindly sent us copies of their Library newsletter 'ReadON', which has been published to coincide with the re-launch of their School Library.



The newsletter is jammed full of fantastic ideas. Emma and Janice especially like the birthday celebration/donate a book scheme whereby parents celebrate their child's birthday by giving a book to the School Library: a special bookplate indicates whose birthday it celebrates and the child receives a combined birthday and thank-you card!

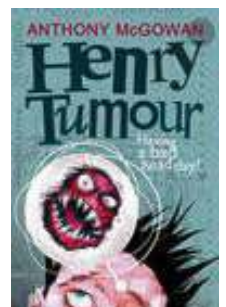
St Francis School is organising a Book Week starting on 26th February 2007 and would welcome visits from any Bishop Grosseteste students interested in sharing their favourite books with the children. Contact Maxine Graville on 01522 526498 for more information.

The **Costa Book Award** (formerly sponsored by Whitbread) has been won by Linda Newbery for the haunting *Set in Stone* (David Fickling Books, £12.99).

The **Booktrust Teenage Award** was won by Anthony McGowan for *Henry Tumour* (Definitions, £5.99), a controversial book about a boy whose brain tumour talks to him.

The **Eleanor Farjeon Award** has been won by Wendy Cooling, founder of Bookstart.

The **Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation** went to Anthea Bell for her translation from the German of Kai Meyer's *The Flowing Queen* (Egmont, £5.99).



And finally, want to know who won the **Lincolnshire Young People's Book Award**? Turn to page 2!

The Lincolnshire Young People's Book Award

An enjoyable time was had by all, including Emma and Janice, at this year's LYPBA Award Ceremony, which took place here at Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln on the evening of Wednesday January 17th. In attendance were children from 54 of the county's schools, invited guests, and guest authors Pete Johnson (who was also nominated for the award) Helena Pielichaty (pictured below signing books), and Chris White (pictured right mid-performance!).

Pete Johnson gave a lively and engaging account of the journey he took to becoming a writer, and talked about some of books he has written. Helen Pielichaty presented the Awards, and also spoke about how much writers value awards and recognition. And finally, Chris White got everyone laughing and singing along to his fabulous poems. In fact Janice and I were more entertained by the four boys sat in front of us, all of whom thought Chris was the best thing since sliced bread, than by Chris himself!



Before each award was announced groups of children from St Faith & St Martin CE Junior School in Lincoln and William Farr School in Welton spoke about the nominated books in each category, providing a summary of each story and then reading excerpts of reviews written by other children.

So, who were the winners? **The 9-11 category was won by Michael Morpurgo for *The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* and the 12-14 category was won by J.K Rowling for *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*.** Congratulations to both authors.

Shadowing the Award

As we reported in the last issue of *Hullabaloo!*, students on the BA Primary Education and PGCE Secondary programmes at Bishop Grosseteste shadowed this year's LYPBA. The PGCE group even voted for their own overall winner, Anthony Horowitz's *Raven's Gate* (extracts from both groups' reviews can be found on the opposite page).

The PGCE group also made some interesting observations about the shadowing process, and what they feel they've gained from the experience...

"The task of shadowing was both interesting and informative. We have all learnt more about the process of reviewing books: primarily that there are a number of considerations when preparing to write a review of a book and also that each book will make different demands on the reviewer. Shadowing the award has meant that we have learnt more about books for teenagers, something that is very useful to us in our quest to be English teachers at secondary school, but it has also given us a deeper experience. We have had to learn new skills, working as a group from a distance and communicating by a new method, through Blackboard [the University College's virtual learning environment]."



Lincolnshire Young
People's Book Award

Top Tips for Budding Reviewers

As a result of their experiences shadowing the LYPBA the PGCE Secondary students came up with the following advice about writing a book review:

- Provide an objective overview of the book from which the reader can gain an idea of its subject and genre. For works of fiction a summary of the content should be undertaken, without giving a detailed plot summary. An introduction to characters, themes, setting and a broad outline of the story is sufficient.
- Consider for whom the book is written and, therefore, who the appropriate audience is likely to be. The reviewer could state how successful they think the book will be at reaching its target audience.
- The structure of the book should be discussed, along with the style of the author. Other distinctive features (such as the use of footnotes as in *Ptolemy's Gate*) could be discussed, and whether their use was effective.
- Let the reader know whether you feel the book is worth reading, if the topic is interesting or important, and whether it offers any new perspectives or insights. As a reviewer it is appropriate to give an opinion on whether you would recommend reading the book; even if you do like it you may still offer suggestions on how it might have been improved or on who else might like it.
- Other useful information to note is if the book stands alone or if it is part of a set or a trilogy.

Why not use the above advice to write a review for us? Send your review to hullabaloo@bishopg.ac.uk and if we publish it you'll receive a £5 book token.

Reviews of the Shortlisted Titles

A wonderful book giving an insight into living through the war in a rural area, with a good twist at the end. I would definitely recommend this book to others (and already have).

*Annabelle Fisher on Michael Morpurgo's **The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips***

I liked the humour and the use of abbreviations in it. The book was easy to read. However, I did find it very similar to other thrillers.

*Alison Langden on Anna Dale's **Dawn Undercover***

It contains action, danger, factual information, friendship, courage and love—something for everyone!

*Anon on Elizabeth Laird's **Secrets of the Fearless***

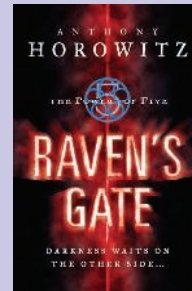
The pace is fast and furious at points and tension is present in many scenes, particularly when the uneasy balance between demons and men is destroyed, which leads ultimately to a dark finale.

*Tracey Kennedy on Jonathan Stroud's **Ptolemy's Gate***

The characters were believable and varied yet the author made me care about them all. A super book.

*Pádraig McKenna on Pete Johnson's **Trust me, I'm a Troublemaker***

Anthony Horowitz, author of the phenomenal *Stormbreaker* series is on top form with this first in a series of five books. The main character, Matt Freeman, a 14-year-old boy, is orphaned at the age of eight after his parents are involved in a fatal car crash. His aunt, Gwenda Davies, and her husband, begrudgingly take him in but never warm to the boy who is 'nothing but trouble.' Matt struggles to fit in at school, and is labelled 'weird' by the other pupils. Desperate for acceptance, Matt slides into delinquency after a warehouse burglary goes horribly wrong. From this moment, Matt's life changes forever.



By permission of Walker Books

Raven's Gate is a fast-paced and thrilling read. Think *Stormbreaker*, *Buffy*, *Village of the Damned*, and *Northern Lights* and you'll be somewhere close to imagining the scope of this highly recommended novel. With all this in mind, our final book choice was made because of the sheer enthusiasm *Raven's Gate* evoked. It was not the prestige of the prize that influenced our final choice but the strong recommendation that came from the readers.

*The PGCE students who shadowed the Award, on the book they voted their winner: Anthony Horowitz's **Raven's Gate**.*

I really like this book, it has a great plot and follows well from the last book. It was very powerful in that I nearly cried at the end. This book has my backing all the way.

*William Kinnon (age 12) on J.K. Rowling's **Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince***

The plot is reminiscent of something you'd find in Rowling's 'Harry Potter', Pratchett's 'Discworld' or Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings', or even a mixture of all three. Even though I found it quite predictable, I still enjoyed reading it and found myself hooked - much to my chagrin!

*Samantha Taylor on Joseph Delaney's **The Spook's Curse***

The Rights of the Reader

In light of our coverage of the LYPBA which encourages reading for pleasure, and amid fears shared recently by many of our leading authors that in the pursuit of greater levels of literacy, amidst all the tests and targets, children no longer read for pleasure, we thought it seemed timely to refer to Daniel Pennac's *The Rights of the Reader*. First published in France 15 years ago, the book described the reluctance of French children to read for pleasure and argued that the constricting nature of the French education system was to blame. Pennac's brilliant solution, designed to reawaken the love of reading in all children, was presented as a Bill of Rights (see opposite).

A new translation of the book, illustrated by Quentin Blake, was published last year and is accompanied by a fantastic poster which can be downloaded from www.walkerbooks.co.uk/Downloads/The-Rights-of-the-Reader-poster

Pennac's Rights of the Reader:

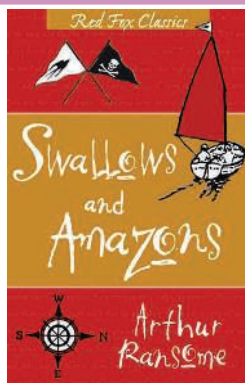
1. The right not to read.
2. The right to skip.
3. The right not to finish a book.
4. The right to read it again.
5. The right to read anything.
6. The right to mistake a book for real life.
7. The right to read anywhere.
8. The right to dip in.
9. The right to read out loud.
10. The right to be quiet.

When I was a nipper...

This issue, lecturer Jean Wickham tells us about her childhood reading habits:

"As a child I was a voracious reader, walking or cycling three miles there and back to the local library at least twice a week. A lot of my reading was prompted by teachers at my primary school in Bradford, although I can vividly remember sitting reading with my Grandad. It must have been one of my library books as there were few books at home.

I liked to read about people— Eve Garnett's *The Family from One End Street* springs to mind – although I wasn't averse to a good story. I can remember reading many of the classics – *Heidi*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Black Beauty* to name but a few. I was also a fan of Enid Blyton's *Famous Five* and *Secret Seven* stories, possibly because there were a



lot of books for me to read in the series.

A visit by my favourite aunt to Switzerland (quite an event at the time) led me to read Mabel Esther Allen's *Seven in Switzerland and Other Stories*.

Another book to strike a chord was *Swallows and Amazons* by Arthur Ransome; a book I subsequently recommended to my own son, followed by a family holiday messing about in boats.

These books and many others, although not essentially politically correct today, provided me as a young child with a route into another world – something echoed by my Dad as he was often heard to say 'You'll not get a word out of her when she's got her nose in a book!'. I have to say that is often the case today, once I find the time to focus on reading for pleasure."

First words

Winner of the First Words Competition in our last issue was Fiona Coulson (now a two-time winner!) who receives a £10 book token for correctly spotting that our quote came from **Peter Pan in Scarlet** by Geraldine McCaughrean. This issue's first words are:

"The hour was late."

Identify the book and e-mail your name and your answer by February 28th to hullabaloo@bishopg.ac.uk and a £10 book token could be yours.

Just the knowledge that a good book is awaiting one at the end of a long day makes that day happier.

Kathleen Norris

Museum of Childhood re-opens



Nearly 4000 visitors joined Children's Laureate Jacqueline Wilson (pictured left) on December 9th at the reopening of the Museum of Childhood.

Part of the V&A family, the Museum was closed for some time whilst work was carried out on the £8.2m redevelopment project, the final phase of which included a new entrance space and gallery and the expansion of the museum's educational facilities.

A museum has occupied the building on Cambridge Heath Road in Bethnal Green for over 130 years, but it wasn't until 1974 that childhood became the main focus of its collections. Now housing objects dating as far

back as the 16th century and including books, games, toys, dolls & dolls' houses, costumes and furniture, the Museum provides a great day out for all the family.

There are currently two book-related exhibitions being shown at the Museum. The first, 'Happy Birthday Miffy', celebrates the creation 50 years ago of the iconic Miffy character by Dutch author and illustrator Dick Bruna.

The second is entitled 'Alfred and the Pirates: The Making of a Children's Book' and describes how part-time children's author Irving Finkel (whose day job is being a Curator of the Ancient Near East at the British Museum), commissioned Northern Irish teenager Emily Donegan to illustrate his book, having been won over by her winning entry in a 2003 Blue Peter poster competition!

Entrance to the Museum of Childhood is free. The Miffy exhibition runs until March 18th 2007 and the Alfred and the Pirates exhibition to April 15th 2007.

Farewell Philippa Pearce OBE (1920-2006)

Philippa Pearce, best known for the enchanting story *Tom's Midnight Garden*, died of a stroke on December 21st. She was 86.

Raised in the Mill House in Great Shelford near Cambridge, Pearce was the youngest of four children.



When her father retired from milling Pearce felt as if her childhood had come to an end: "I began thinking of writing a story based on the house and the garden and this feeling of things slipping away". And so it was that her most famous book came

to be written. It won the 1958 Carnegie Medal and quickly became a cherished childhood favourite. Francesca Dow, Managing Director of Puffin, describes it as "for many people a desert island choice of children's books".

Pearce's other books include her first, published in 1955, *Minnow on the Say*; 1978 Whitbread Children's Award winner *The Battle of Bubble and Squeak*, and 1983 Carnegie runner-up, *The Way to Sattin Shore*. Her work has been described by the British Book News as "sharp with the tang of unmistakable, original, undiluted talent."

In 2004 Pearce published her first full-length novel for 20 years. *The Little Gentleman* tells



the tale of a little girl's discovery of a 300-year old mole, cursed in

1702 to live for eternity. (Intrigued?, we are!). The book was very well received, and has been particularly recommended for reading aloud.

Though Pearce moved away from Great Shelford, to London where she wrote school radio programmes for the BBC, she did return later in life to reside in a house which was built by her grandfather, right opposite the Mill House in which she grew up and which inspired her to write her famous work.