

The Federation of Children's Book Groups

# Newsletter

Summer 2017



## AND THE WINNER OF THE 2017 CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD IS...

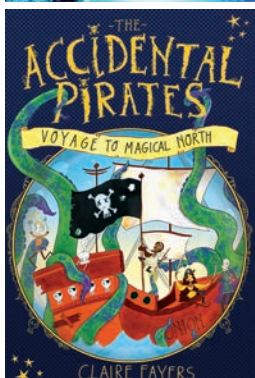
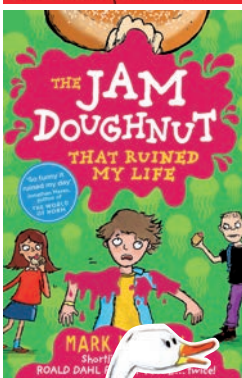
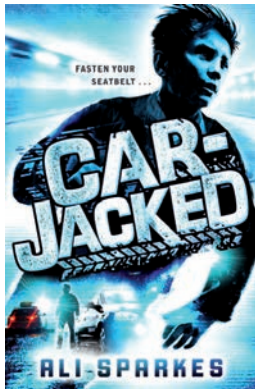
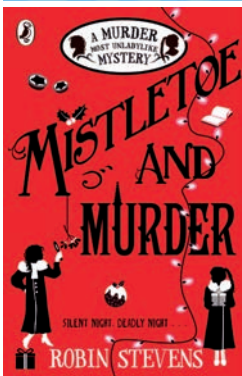
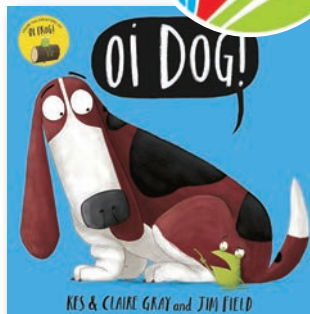
*An Eagle in the Snow*, written by four-times overall winner Michael Morpurgo and illustrated by previous winner, Michael Foreman. The winner of the Younger Children's category was *Oi Dog!* written by Kes Gray and Claire Gray and illustrated by Jim Field; the Winner of the Older Reader's category was *One* by Sarah Crossan.

There was a real buzz as all the children and their adults anticipated the result of 2017's Children's Book Award after the casting of 150,000 votes over 18 months. Feet drummed, party blowers resonated, there were whoops and cheers as our incomparable Master of Ceremonies, Steve Cole, introduced the children of Solihull CBG to announce the winner and present the glorious silver trophy to Michael Foreman. Michael Morpurgo sent a video from sunny Crete and reminded us all that the Award's uniqueness lies in its exclusive focus on children throughout.

Nearly 60 children were thoroughly entertained by Steve on his ukulele and with his tales of how he turned into the Incredible Hulk on a regular basis during his childhood weekends. There was a true party atmosphere throughout. Our Top Ten authors as well as Korky Paul (a past winner) and Jo Cotterill (Top 50 author) signed books, chatted to the children and shared the fun of the day.

We would like to thank our sponsors: the Rail Delivery Group, Nosy Crow, Tales on Moon Lane for the bags and all the publishers for the goodies and for their support. And, of course, all the Testers and the children!

Visit our web site [www.fcbg.org.uk](http://www.fcbg.org.uk) to download our 2017 Pick of the Year, to catch the blog about the day and to see the video of the ceremony. Make sure you are part of the Award next year and follow us on Twitter @CBACoordinator.



OVERALL WINNER & WINNER  
YOUNGER READERS CATEGORY

## inside

- Conference 2017
- NSSM round up
- Ipswich CBG 40th Celebrations
- News from the Groups





# FCBG CONF

**Kate West**, a member of Reading Children's Book Group 'Getting Reading Reading' and Lily, her 11 year old daughter, helped to organise and attended this year's Annual Conference at The Oratory School, near Reading. Here is their personal account of the weekend.

The weekend of the 2017 FCBG conference brought with it glorious sunshine, a fantastic location, delicious food and of course a host of children's books. Although I had been to several previous conferences, this was the first time my eleven year old daughter, Lily, joined us.

Helping set up on the Friday was a great opportunity for us both to have a sneak peek at the publishers' stands and Lily was made to feel so welcome by everyone. She was delighted with the time publishers took to speak to her and she came away with lots of proof copies of new books to try out. When she returned to school she was the envy of the classroom when she took out her pre-publication copy of the brand new **Alex Rider** book courtesy of the lovely reps from Walker books.

The Oratory School was such an amazing backdrop for the conference and we both spent some time in the beautiful grounds dipping in to our new books. Thanks must be given to the staff who made sure our needs were met throughout the weekend.

The range of authors, illustrators and publishers was fantastic. It was great to see so much inclusivity and such a variety of speakers talking about the importance of diversity. **G.R. Gemin** spoke about tales of heritage and family being handed down through generations as well as a message of immigration and acceptance. This was a theme that was echoed many times over the course of the weekend.

Listening to so many speak about books in translation, the representation of different cultures and acceptance of variety was a poignant and timely reminder that the children's book industry has the power to influence the lives of the growing generation. With that comes the responsibility to ensure every child has the chance to find stories relevant to them in libraries, schools and book shops.

It was such a treat, as always, to be able to meet and chat with so many lovely people. As always the conference was an opportunity to catch up with old friends from other FCBG groups, as well as meet new, like-minded people.

Lily had the chance to meet some of her book glitterati and a huge highlight for her was seeing the illustrator **Martin Brown** bringing characters to life in his own well-loved style. **Caighlan Smith** also spent ages with her, writing a list of YA books she'd personally recommend to somebody just making her first steps into this area.

**Jo Cotterill's** pre-dinner strawberry quiz was a real triumph. The climax, of course, was the dressing up competition where **Team Chris** and **Team Zoe** were given the task of creating strawberry flower fairy costumes from tissue paper and tape. As couturier to Zoe I was hugely disappointed with the result but we all agreed that Chris's pantaloons were truly spectacular!



WRITE  
AROUND  
THE  
WORLD  
BROADENING  
HORIZONS



# CONFERENCE 2017

I was lucky enough to be sitting next to **Nicola Davies** and **Petr Horacek** for the gala dinner which was an utterly gorgeous evening. Both authors were so warm and friendly and then to top that off with a speech from our **Children's Laureate Chris Riddell** has to be any children's book enthusiast's idea of the perfect night out!

All in all the weekend was a real success and I for one am already looking forward to our 50th anniversary conference next year.



## THE FEDERATION GIFT

EVERY YEAR THE GROUP WHICH IS HOSTING THE CONFERENCE CHOOSES A LOCAL CHARITY TO BE THE RECIPIENT OF THE FEDERATION GIFT. **READING CBG** CHOSE A LOCAL HOSPICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Federation of Children's Book Groups gifted over £300 worth of children's books to **Helen & Douglas House** at their recent conference held at the Oratory School.

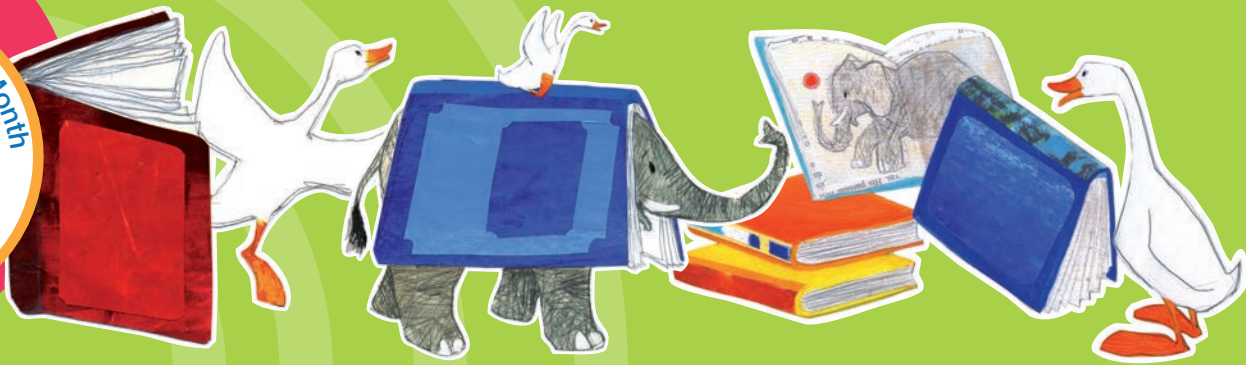
**Wendy Bridge** represented the hospice and was assisted by **Sarah Stuffs** in choosing a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books for the children and teenagers at the hospice. Wendy Bridge said, "Bringing books and children together' was something I heard someone say when talking about the Federation and today I am able to take a huge variety of colourful, diverse and exciting books for the children at the hospice. The care team will be able to read to the children and introduce them to some really exciting adventures and show them pictures of things sadly they may never get to see in real life."

# Save the DATE

OUR GOLDEN JUBILEE CONFERENCE  
will be hosted by  
Hertfordshire Children's Book Group at  
Queenswood School, Hatfield  
Friday 13th April to Sunday 15th April 2018.  
More details will be released on the  
FCBG website and in UpdaTed.







# NATIONAL SHARE A STORY MONTH (NSSM): PICTURE A STORY

Our theme this year aimed to celebrate the power of illustrations by encouraging the sharing of picture books, the enjoyment of pictures in museums and art galleries and the writing of stories using pictures as a starting point or as part of their telling.

Each Federation book group was sent a pack of ideas, to be used as a starting point to arrange events and activities in homes, schools or communities during the month of May.

Many Federation Book Groups, as well as schools, libraries, families and community groups, organised events and festivals sharing stories on riverbanks and in nursing homes, community centres and conservatories. The Wildlife and People Trust in Alderney held a *Hungry Caterpillar* event in their amphitheatre; youngsters were involved in all sorts of activities from Salford to Ipswich to Reading. There have been drawing and writing competitions too and we are looking forward to judging the entries. We were supported by publishers, and many authors and illustrators joined in the events.

Ipswich CBG was impressed with the standard of entries they received for their Picture a Story Writing Competition organised as part of National Share a Story Month. **Chris Riddell** and **Linda Davies** were delighted to present the prizes to the winners.

The FCBG website featured related blogs throughout the month, Chris Routh took on the task of celebrating an Alphabet of Illustrators daily on Twitter and FCBG Facebook posts highlighted a picture book every day.

NSSM seems to take on a life of its own and it is wonderful to discover that groups and organisations, both small and larger, share stories and reading throughout the month. All will be celebrated on the NSSM page of FCBG website and we shall publish the list of Facebook picture books too.

Now we have to think of a theme for next year!  
Happy reading....

**Louise Stodhart**  
NSSM Co-ordinator 2017



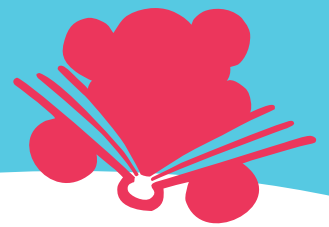
IPSWICH CHILDREN'S  
BOOK GROUP

National Share a Story Month  
Writing Competition  
Picture a Story

May is National Share a Story Month, co-ordinated by the Federation of Children's Book Groups to celebrate stories in all their forms - told through words and pictures. Do you have a favourite picture? It could be a famous painting, photograph or an illustration in a much-loved book. Have you ever chosen your picture and written a story behind it?

Stories should be a maximum of 500 words. Three age categories will be used. Prizes will be presented. Closing date: 31st May.

# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS



## 40 YEARS AND STILL GOING STRONG: CONGRATULATIONS IPSWICH!

### IPSWICH CBG SHIRLEY IMLACH & JAYNE GOULD

2016 saw Ipswich Children's Book Group celebrate 40 years of bringing children and books together. Established in 1976 by **Marjorie Taylor**, who had read about the work of the Federation of Children's Book Groups, the committee was soon organising a range of events to follow the stated aims of promoting books and reading to as wide an audience as possible, attracting a membership which included families, teachers, librarians and booksellers. This has been the make-up of the group ever since, with an increasing number of schools joining.

The events which took place during our anniversary year are also a reflection and development of those which have been organised over the previous decades, from author visits to book fairs, quizzes to book themed parties.

We were delighted that **Ruth Fitzgerald**, writer of the *Emily Sparkes* series and ICBG member, accepted our invitation to be our Anniversary Author and that we were able to adopt BLISS as our charity of the year.

The year opened with a visit by some committee members to the annual FCBG conference, where a number of specially designed congratulatory cards were signed by speakers including **John Boyne**, **Phil Earle** and **Curtis Jobling**.

The first anniversary event was the children's programme of the inaugural **BooksEast Literary Festival**, held over the weekend of 13th-15th May. Audiences were entranced and entertained by **James Campbell**, **Tracey Corderoy**, **Ruth Fitzgerald** and **Kevin Crossley-Holland**.

Celebrations were marked by cake and balloons!

Several open-air events followed, with book group stands and activities at the **Solstice Storytelling Festival** at Sutton Hoo, marking Beatrix Potter's

150th birthday at a Holywells Park Activity Day as well as their Christmas event.

Chantry Library hosted parties to celebrate **Roald Dahl 100** in September and **Harry Potter Night** in February, with clever costumes, games, crafts and lots of fun. The Friends of the Library provided refreshments including Dumbledore Delights, Bagshot Bites and Wizarding Wonders for everyone. [http://www.eadt.co.uk/news/spellbinding\\_events\\_across\\_suffolk\\_celebrate\\_harry\\_potter\\_night\\_1\\_4874944](http://www.eadt.co.uk/news/spellbinding_events_across_suffolk_celebrate_harry_potter_night_1_4874944)

ICBG was one of the groups chosen to take part in the **Jean Russell Storytelling Project**, reaching out to vulnerable and less privileged children through the power of stories. The storyteller, **Anna Conomos** worked with children from Suffolk Young Carers enabling them to have fun listening to stories and learning how to tell stories themselves in workshops, by creating the end of a locally-based story and performing to the rest of the group.

Past and present committee members met to reminisce, pore over scrapbooks and toast the future at a party in November.

CATHY CASSIDY



The year culminated in two author visits. On 3rd February, exactly eight years to the day, **Cathy Cassidy** was welcomed back to Ipswich. After a busy day visiting Stoke and Claydon High Schools, she entertained an appreciative audience at the Ipswich County Library talking about the importance of day dreaming and her latest book *Broken Heart Club*.

On the 8th February, 200 children from Clifford Road, Morland and St. Helen's were entertained and inspired by **Sam Gayton**, author of *Herculeas*

and *His Royal Whiskers*, with an afternoon of story creating and telling, rap and book signing.

Great fun and the third event in a week!

**World Book Day** was celebrated with a fascinating evening with **Garry Parsons** drawing and talking about his books. He answered lots of questions and by special request drew a 'tiger-shark'. He also kindly gave a WBD illustration to the new Broke Hall School Library as well as an excellent portrait of Jayne their Librarian, who is past chair and honorary lifetime member of ICBG.

Most recently, **Chris Riddell** was welcomed back to Ipswich. The audience for this **'Ask the Laureate'** event had a great range of questions which he answered with his wonderful drawings supplemented by his gentle wit.

He was followed by **Linda Davies** and it was fascinating to hear her talk about the background to her novel *Longbow Girl* as well as seeing her own longbow but gladly no arrows were fired! It was also good to hear there are more stories to look forward to.

This event was also the prize-giving for the **Group's NSSM event**, a photo of which appears on page 4 of the newsletter.

We are already busy planning events for the coming months and looking forward to the next 40 years!

**As you no doubt know, the Federation of Children's Book Groups is celebrating its own 50th anniversary during 2018 - see the back cover.**

GARRY PARSONS



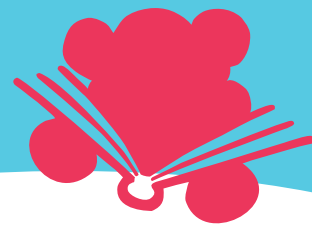
CHRIS RIDDELL



HARRY POTTER NIGHT



# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS



## SOLIHULL CBG

PHYL GAUNT

SCBG has had an action-packed few months: In November a 'Non-Fiction November' book-making workshop took place with a local school. The children made pop-up and moving books to use with their themes of 'bears' and 'space'.

They welcomed **Ciaran Murtagh** and **Elen Caldicott** on two separate visits during November, and **Chris Higgins** visited in January.

Their major event this year was a World Book Week spent in Waterstones, Solihull promoting the World Book Day books with local schools.

The children brought their vouchers along and almost every child went home with a book. Some children had never visited the book shop before and it certainly provided the wow factor for many of them.

Kate, the librarian at St Alphege Infants School, sent an e-mail of thanks: "I just wanted to say a MASSIVE THANK YOU to all of you for the story telling sessions at Waterstones last week! All the feedback from staff and children was so positive and it really got so many of our children really excited about reading. I was lucky enough to come to three of the sessions and it was such a joy to see how much the children enjoyed themselves."

Bringing children and books together is always an enjoyable experience!

## DUNDEE CBG

MARGARET BLOW

To celebrate Scottish Book Week at the end of November, the Dundee and Area Children's book group arranged various events for local Primary and Secondary Schools.

First, author **Michelle Sloan** talked about her book *The Revenge of Tirpitz*. With props ranging from Churchill hats to ships, Michelle and the pupils brought this incredible story about the WWII battleship and the 'Shetland Bus' to life. The pupils will certainly remember this event in history. In primary schools, last year's winner of the Children's Book Award, **Pamela Butchart**, had classes in stitches whilst talking about her books. Film maker and author **Matt Dickinson** gave inspiring talks to hundreds of pupils about his Everest experiences and passed on tips about film making.

## SOUTH BUCKS CBG

JANICE SAUNDERS

### Non-Fiction event October 2016 - Chocolate Extravaganza

Tickets for this Saturday afternoon event more or less sold themselves so popular was the choice of topic! **Alex Woolf**, author of *The Story of Chocolate*, spoke first about the history of chocolate and illustrated his talk with some excellent visual aids. After the children had participated in some activities, including lolly, kebab, book and box making, **Mark Hawtree**, a local food historian, was able to re-use Alex's slides in his engaging and entertaining account of chocolate-making. Chocolate tasting and hot chocolate drinking were all well received and the Traidcraft stall was busy selling a variety of fairly-traded chocolate.

There were 23 children and teenagers present. Between them, they represented 9 nationalities, spoke 8 languages and attended 10 different schools. This is a richness which is enormously heartening.

## LINCOLNSHIRE CBG

HAYLEY SANDERSON

**Korky Paul** delighted primary school children in Lincolnshire over a two day trip, by visiting four schools and by holding an intimate evening event in a local library.

Korky drew the children into his imaginary world of amazing illustrations by creating new creatures whilst teaching the children how to draw and paint. He also read to them from his fabulous *Winnie the Witch*, *Sir Scallywag* and *Professor Puffendorf* books. Some of the children also got a sneak preview of the new *Winnie the Witch* animation series which is due for release on TV in the near future!

Korky's visit was a fun-packed, busy few days which was thoroughly enjoyed by all!

## READING CBG

CHRIS ROUTH

**Getting Reading Reading** was really busy preparing for the **Federation's annual conference** - lots of planning meetings and site visits, setting up and hosting. Around 15 members helped with and attended the conference including two new members who joined during the run up. The Group also organised two events for National Share A Story Month. The first was the Children's Book Group visit to the full-size replica of the **Bayeux Tapestry at Reading Museum** to link with the Picture a Story theme. They also worked

in partnership with the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens to organise and deliver 'Story Day' as part of the annual Reading Children's Festival programme. This involved three well-attended book sharing sessions, a story trail around the gardens and reading and voting for the Children's Book Award.

READING CBG



## TOP TIPS: IDEAS FOR RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

*If you are starting a book group, or looking for new ideas to refresh or develop your group, other groups will often have suggestions which can inspire you.*

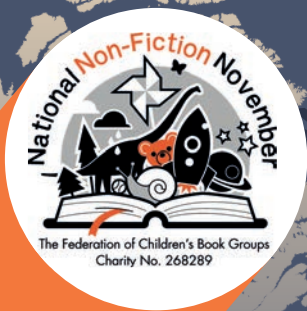
*Thank you to Reading CBG for sharing their experience in this edition:*

The local public libraries are always keen to put on events for children but don't always have the staff to do so. Our volunteers work with them to put on activity sessions, quizzes, and most recently our monthly children's book group. This benefits both sides - we get a free venue and they get an event to encourage library footfall.

*If you have tips which help your group to be successful, please share them for the benefit of new and existing groups by contacting*

[diane.gaunt@abbotsholme.co.uk](mailto:diane.gaunt@abbotsholme.co.uk)





# NATIONAL NON-FICTION NOVEMBER 2017

## THE WORLD AROUND US

During the month we will be celebrating reading non-fiction books for pleasure and highlighting books that explore local, national and global environments and their flora and fauna. The aim will be to encourage the development of children's curiosity about the natural world, as well as an eagerness to find out more. As always we will be providing practical ideas and activities on the FCBG website and are working in partnership with publishers to offer competitions, quizzes and giveaways, some of which will be exclusively for our Children's Book Groups. Here are some examples of what will be on offer:

- The month will be launched with a creative challenge inspired by Nicola Davies and Emma Sutton's book *Lots: The Diversity of Life on Earth* (Walker Books)
- There will be an opportunity to bid for your Book Group's logo to be redesigned by illustrator Fatti Burke (*Facts!*, Bloomsbury)
- There will be competitions to win author visits including Dr Nick Crumpton (*The Amazing Animal Atlas*, Flying Eye Books) and Andy Seed (*Anti-Boredom Book of Brilliant Outdoor Things to Do*, Bloomsbury)
- Our month of non-fiction themed blogs will include several from Franklin Watts & Wayland, each of which will suggest practical activities linked to the featured books
- All of our groups will be able to request multiple copies of the *Beautiful Birds Colouring Book* to use for activities, as the basis of a local colouring competition or for prizes (Flying Eye)
- Resources will be made available on the website, including those created by Zoe Toft last year, plus downloadable posters (Franklin Watts & Wayland).

Keep an eye on the website for updates and make sure to follow #NNFN on Twitter throughout the month for more exciting giveaways.

## LIFETIME HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS

Each year, the Federation celebrates the outstanding contribution to the mission of 'bringing books and children together' of a select few colleagues by awarding them a Lifetime Honorary Membership.

This year we acknowledge the work of:

**SHIRLEY IMLACH AND DIANA ROGERS**

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

### PLANNING FOR FCBG'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IS NOW WELL UNDER WAY:

- We plan to launch the year with a new booklist of FCBG's 50 Favourite Books
- The FCBG logo will be redesigned to incorporate 'Golden Anniversary'
- Our Golden Jubilee Conference will be hosted by Hertfordshire Children's Book Group at Queenswood School, Hatfield, from Friday 13th April to Sunday 15th April 2018
- We will be inviting our Children's Book Groups to contribute to a special series of blogs to run alongside our regular blogs
- Our national initiatives will be temporarily renamed Golden Children's Book Award (GCBA), Golden National Non-Fiction November (GNNFN) and Golden National Share a Story Month (GNSSM)
- A celebratory event for children will take place in Birmingham on Saturday 3rd November 2018 at the Conservatoire
- We will also be spotlighting the history of the Federation with a publication to complement a special set of display boards (which groups can book) and dedicated pages on the website
- In October 2017, we will be providing a pack of resources to support local celebrations and events organised by the Children's Book Groups.

We will be sending out more details every month in the **UpdaTed** newsletter which is sent by email to a nominated member of each group, intended to be circulated to all group members.



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**JUNE**  
24th

The Little Rebels Book Award

**JULY**

30 June - 2nd July

UKLA Book Award winners announced at annual conference

5th

Branford Boase Award announced

14th

CLIPPA winners announced

28th - 30th

Telling Tales at Shakespeare's Globe

28th - 30th

YALC at Olympia, London

**AUGUST**

12th - 28th Edinburgh Book Festival

**SEPTEMBER**

28th National Poetry Day

**NOVEMBER**

All month National Non-Fiction November organised by FCBG

22nd

SLA Information Book Award winners announced

Royal Society Young People's Book Award winners announced

Deadline for the next issue is Friday 20th October 2017

**Next Issue:** National Non-Fiction November

Ideas to support your group's celebration of the Federation's 50th anniversary

Please send group news (including photos, general news, features and ideas) to **Diane Gaunt**, [diane.gaunt@abbotsholme.co.uk](mailto:diane.gaunt@abbotsholme.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter @FCBGNews and on Facebook and don't forget our website: [www.fcbg.org.uk](http://www.fcbg.org.uk) where you can subscribe to our blog!

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## SPREADING THE WORD

The next Executive meetings will be on **8th July** and **14th October 2017**. All meetings are held in London. Please contact Jane for further information at least two weeks in advance if you would like to attend as an observer.

One of the most important jobs for any Chair is spreading the word about the FCBG and its work. We get invited to a lot of book launches and events. On 7th June I attended the announcement of the Children's Laureate in Hull along with many people from the world of children's books. It's always lovely to be at an event like this because everyone has the same wish: to see children reading and enjoying books. It also gave me the opportunity to catch up with past Chairs Sinead and Martin Kromer and David and Jenny Blanch which is always a pleasure.

I spend a lot of time at book launches talking to publishers and authors about our work, particularly NSSF, NNFN and CBA. Last week I attended the launch of Anthony Horowitz's latest book about Alex Rider and was able to speak to some authors about coming to conference next year. I can't reveal names yet but Ros Bartlett is working on a very exciting programme. Justin Somper also told me about plans for this year's Roald Dahl Day that he hopes the book groups will want to be involved in. We'll be sending out information in UpdAted later in the year.

I attended two very different events on the same night when I went to the launches for first time author Lorraine Gregory's book, *Mold and the Poison Plot*, and past CBA winner Patrick Ness's *Release*. I always tell everyone to make sure their publishers submit their books for testing for the CBA and remind them that it's often the only way children can discover new books, particularly now that so many libraries have lost their budgets.

By the time you are reading this I will have represented the Federation at the SLA/YLG conference. It will be very interesting to be on the other side of the stand in the exhibition for once. I'm planning to make the most of the time speaking to the publishers about our conference next year and our plans for the 50th celebrations.

**Jane Etheridge**  
Federation Chair



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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THE FEDERATION OF  
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