

*Arkwright* by Mary Steele. Hyland House.

Captain Chilblain was an old sailor who wanted an animal to keep him company when he retired. He thought of a monkey, but they were too cheeky, a bear too grizzly and a crocodile would eat the wrong things. He did not want a parrot who would moult all over the floor and insult the neighbours. On his last trip the Captain met Arkwright, a giant anteater.

I like the story parts about Arkwright and all the funny illustrations by the author, Mary Steele.

Irene Ng, 9 years old, Punchbowl Primary.



*Little Brother* by Allan Baillie. Nelson, 1985.

I'll start my review off by giving you a short outline of the story. I won't tell you the story, because that will ruin the book, but I'll give you enough information to get you aroused.

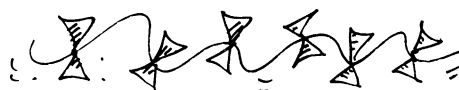
The book is briefly about Muong Vithy and his quest for his brother Mang after they are separated in the jungles of Cambodia. The two brothers are separated as they make an escape from their captor party, and Vithy then tries to find Mang. I won't tell you what happens, only to say that there is a funny but strange twist all through the book, but especially at the end.

Vithy is a young victim of the war in Cambodia. He and his brother Mang were running from the Khmer Rouge. Back at Phnom Penh he had had a happy life with his father, a doctor, his mother, sister Sorei and his brother Mang. Mang and he used to run a small repair shop, fixing bikes and such.

Mang was portrayed as a smart, handsome and strong boy, always better than Vithy. In the war though, Vithy had to be intelligent and ingenious, and most of the things that Mang was.

I think this book should be directed at the 11 to 13 age group, and is especially good for a class to read.

Christopher Alexandrou, age 13 years, Waverley College.



*First There Was Frances* by Bob Graham. Lothian.

The story is about a girl called Frances who lives in the city. Then Graham came, he found a dog and he called it Teak. Then Marisol and Fraser came and then Grandma. Katy the goat came along, guinea pigs called Errol and Beryl. Grandma went to the shops and bought Triller the canary. Nugget the billy goat was next and then came Toyful the alley cat, then baby goats, Ruby, Earl and Curl. The guinea pig babies came. Toyful the cat had a kitten. Then came the horses which meant they moved to the country.

The book is fiction. It is suitable for infants and primary. The illustrations are set out a terrific way. It is a good book to read.

Alison Riepma, 6M, Hurstville South Primary School.

*Burke and Wills* by Roland Harvey. Five Mile Press.

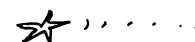
*Burke and Wills* is the story of two early explorers who died in a race to be the first to cross from the south to the north of Australia.

In 1860 the Victorian government offered a big prize for the first expedition to explore the inland of Australia and discover an overland route for the telegraph line. During the race John Stuart represented South Australia and Burke was chosen to represent the Royal Society of Victoria.

Because Burke thought Stuart had already started he left before his expedition was really ready. This led to many problems and their death.

This book has great illustrations, done by the author. It is an interesting book and I learnt a lot from it. I highly recommend it to all children, and, especially if you have a project to do.

Shane Howlett, 11 years old, Punchbowl Primary.



*Little Brother* by Allan Baillie. Nelson.

*Little Brother* is a very enjoyable book to read at the beginning and at the end. It has very good illustrations on the cover and inside.

There is a very good description of the two brothers who are forced to escape from the soldiers in Phnom Penh. I come from this part of the world and I think the story is partly true and partly the author's imagination. It was very hard for some people to leave their country — I was lucky, we left by boat on a river near our house.

I think *Little Brother* is well written and I enjoyed reading it.

Hung Nguyen, 11 years old, Punchbowl Primary.



*The Changelings of Chaan* by David Lake. Hyland House, 1985.

This is the story of John Hastings, the son of an English family. He was an only child and had lost his father during World War 2. His mother was a doctor and she was contracted to help in a small nation by the name of Chaan. John had accompanied her to Chaan and had taken an immediate liking to the area.

One evening at a dinner party John met Arjuna Suhawati the son of the Prince holding the reception. Arjuna, Ajo for short, held a common interest with John, they were both fascinated by the stars and heavenly bodies. John and Ajo soon became close friends and sharing many similar things they entered upon an adventure together. Ajo's uncle who lived in the same building as himself was a magician who had taught Ajo many things.

Now it had come to pass that Chaan had fallen on hard times; they found that they could no longer sustain their way of life while the world advanced. Chaan was coming under intense pressure from a consortium which would bring financial stability and wealth to Chaan. But in doing this they would

## CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARDS

**Book of the Year:** *The Green Wind* (Rigby) by Thurley Fowler, \$1,500; highly commended, *Little Brother* (Nelson) by Allan Baillie, \$1,000; commended, *The House That Was Eureka* (Viking Kestrel) by Nadia Wheatley, \$500, and *The Changelings of Chaan* (Hyland House) by David Lake, \$500.

**Picture Book of the Year:** *Felix and Alexander* (OUP) by Terry Denton, \$1,200; highly commended, *A Piece of Straw* (Colson) by Junko Morimoto, adapted by Helen Cresswell, \$800; commended: *Clive Eats Alligators* (OUP) by Alison Lester, \$500, and *First There Was Francis* (Lothian) by Bob Graham, \$500.

**Junior Book of the Year:** *Arkwright* by Mary Steele (Hyland House), \$1,000.

**Lifton Pugh Award:** *Burke and Wills* (Five Mile Press) by Roland Harvey, \$500.

## And here are the winners . . .

Reviews of shortlisted titles and latest releases follow

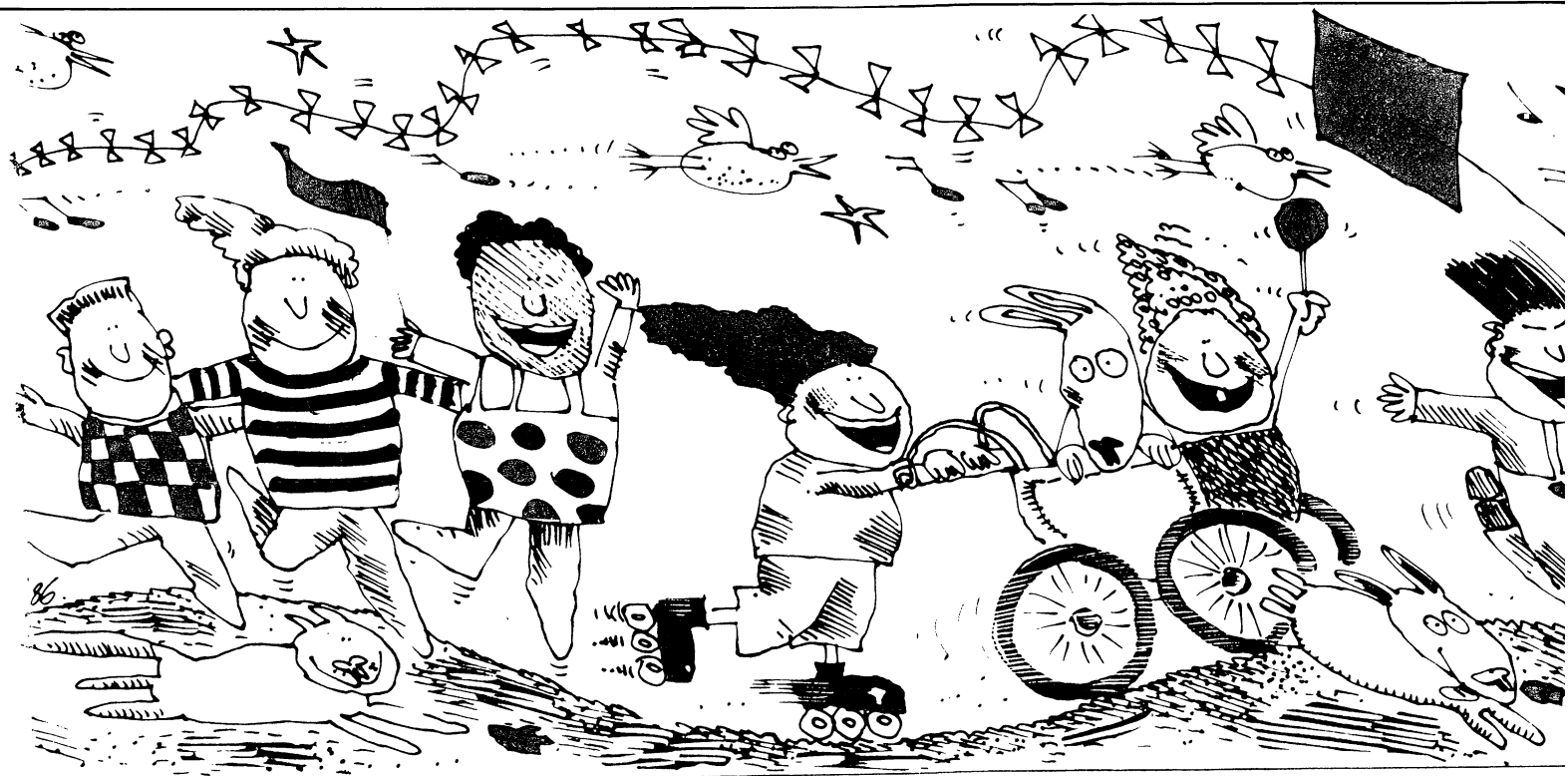
*The Green Wind* by Thurley Fowler. Rigby.

This book is great! It's not like other books which are boring at the beginning and end up exciting — this book has an exciting beginning and an even more exciting ending.

The story is about a girl called Jennifer Robinson who is in her last year at primary school. She's one of four children in a poor family in the year 1948. These children live with their parents in a fruitgrowing community. They hope that this year will be better than the last few. Then unexpected things happen.

Thurley Fowler has done a good job! I would like to recommend this book to you — you'll really enjoy it. Good on you Thurley Fowler!

Helen Jabbour, 11 years old, Punchbowl Primary.



change the atmosphere and the people of Chaan.

Loxman, Ajo's magical uncle, believed that the once proud Kingdom could regain its wealth and stability without accepting the consortium. To do this he needed to find the lost Chaturratna which was all the nations wealth. It was made up of rubies and diamonds and all sorts of precious stones and metals.

The treasure was not of this world but of another, a higher heavenly world. To get to this world it was taken by the Gods to protect it from the invading armies of Burma. To bring Chaturratna back to this world Loxman needed two people he could trust and send upon this great journey to the other world.

Ajo and John took up this task with willingness because they felt this would benefit Chaan, the nation they both loved. The book tells of their adventures on earth and the heavenly worlds. The book is entertaining with a pleasant combination of realism and fantasy.

I enjoyed the book but would recommend it to years 8 and 9 as it is of their levels, with boys experiencing the adventures.

Reviewed by *Robert Trevillion*, age 15 years. Waverley College.

*Brett and Boo and a BMX Bike*

This is a story about a few kids who build a bmx track and practice really hard. They go in for a competition and Kerry the girl in the story comes first and Brett comes second. I think this would be good for girls and boys who are in grades 2 and 3.

Brian read this book over a week, without any prompting from me. He would have bought this book from the Lucky Book Club had he been at school when it was offered.

*Brian Ritchie*, 4th grade and his mother.

*Good Dog Carl* by Alexandra Day. Green Tiger Press.

I feel that this book isn't suitable for young children. It is too realistic to be fantasy. The things that occur between the dog and the baby are horrifying, for example, the dog giving the baby a swim in the fish tank. These examples are definitely bad for impressionable minds of young children.

The actual illustrations are very good, it is a shame they weren't used with a more suitable storyline.

*Pauline Camilleri*, Wentworth Park Pre-school

*What a Catastrophe!* by Wayne Campbe Ashton Scholastic.

This story is about a little boy who goes for walk early one morning. Everyone is asleep. It should have been a short walk but he keeps going till he finds a frog. When he goes home it is time for breakfast and the frog, which he put in his pocket, does not want to miss so it jumps out and lands in the porridge.

The pictures are funny — and the part I like best is when the frog jumps into the porridge.

*Amanda Ng*, 6 years old, Punchbowl Primary



*Mountain Homes* by Althea.

The book is about birds and animals and how they live in the mountains. Each page describes a different home and animal. It also explains the kind of fur or coat the animal has to protect it from the weather. This book is non-fiction.

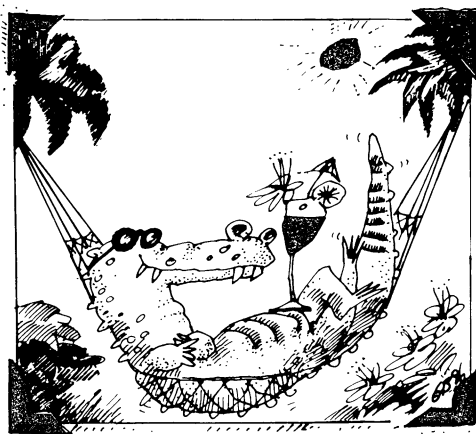
I think this book is good although sometimes a sentence ends where you don't think it is going to end.

The illustrations are very good, the setting is good with the illustration under the writing and the writing either in the sky or background.

*Sarah Flinders*, 5-6/B, Hurstville South Primary School.



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bring back that Darwin feelin' . . .



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*People Might Hear You* by Robin Klein —  
 Making Kestrel, 1983.

Frances, at the age of twelve, was a happy, bright young schoolgirl until she was thrust into the religion of the temple by her Aunt and Mr Tyrell (her Aunt's newly acquired husband).

Lately Frances' Aunt had been acting very strangely, then one day, suddenly she told Frances that she was going to be married, the next day. Her Aunt told Frances that the friendships would be over and that they could start afresh, with this new family. However, her family had an unorthodox religion, that of the temple, which believed it was for everybody living and prepared them for the great war. At first Frances approved of this, but when later she grew to question it, thus turning against her Aunt and their new family.

In this new life of Frances there are many strange situations to be questioned: Why are they not allowed outside during the day or to go at their own will? Why are there no pets allowed? Why can't they go to school? What is this new religion for? These questions aren't answered, except for someone saying "because Father doesn't let us and Father says so."

Eventually Frances rebels because she just can't cope with the new lifestyle and makes attempts to change the situation.

The suspense in the novel is powerful, will Frances escape, can she not only battle the formidable presence of the overpowering Mr Tyrell and at the same time conquer the boundaries of the fortified fortress of the temple, where the doors are not only locked from the outside but also the inside.

The novel is disturbing, in the sense that this religion of the temple might go on somewhere, in Sydney (where the novel is set) or Australia even. The novel provokes thoughts of what might become of us before, during and after the great nuclear war.

As a conclusion the novel is well written, maintaining suspense, religious fanatics and rebelling leaders, it's definitely worth reading for people over the age of fourteen and even those who could appreciate this great story.

It's hard to put down as every page grips you making you want to read more.

*Peter de Szoeke*, age 16 years, Waverley College.



*Shadows in the Mine* by John O'Brien. Ashton Scholastic, 1985.

Philip, a boy on the planet Solem has a robot named Keturah who is a friend and protector. The planet Solem has three types of life, the life zone, the dead parts of the city which is only the parts people have deserted and don't live and the outside atmosphere which is deadly and can kill humans.

When Philip's friend Peter, moves to another planet he is the only child left on Solem. Phillip is bored so he goes to a mine taking Keturah with him. Keturah is a mining robot and can see in the dark and listen to sounds very far away. While they were down there Keturah heard a noise so he went to investigate and told Philip to stay on the main tunnel and not go down any side tunnel. Then the noise stopped and Philip thought Keturah had fixed it. But he heard a noise and it wasn't Keturah's footstep but he couldn't see properly because it was so dark and he could just make out a shadow.

He thought Keturah was dead until he crept up behind him and scared him he told him but Keturah didn't believe him. Then they saw Fingal an old man who took them up to the ground again. While they were walking there was an earthquake and the atmosphere got in and Philip was almost choked by the fumes. So his mother said he would have to stay in the life zone. Then he heard that Fingal was being blamed for starting those earthquakes. So he got a camera, torch and some warm clothes.

He goes to the mine and waits, he finally gets some pictures and other things like metal and that should prove Fingal didn't cause the earthquakes. Then he was caught by the robots and Keturah came and rescued Philip.

Then there was a race to see who was faster. Then they made their way out until there was an earthquake and Keturah saved Philip's life and so he was knocked out.

When Philip awoke Keturah's head was crushed and Philip thought he was dead. Then he heard the robots and men, all the men had come to see what the noise was, and the robots retreated. When he got back his Dad had found oil and there was lots of kids and he found out Keturah wasn't dead because his brain, is in his stomach to last because of rock slides. He also found a friend, Bridie and Philip were very happy.

It is a very sad and happy book because it is very suitable for year 7 and 8. Mainly because it is easy to read and easy to understand, I liked it very much and would recommend it.

Reviewed by *Jamie Hourn*, age 12 years. Waverley College.

**★**

### ADOLESCENTS AND READING

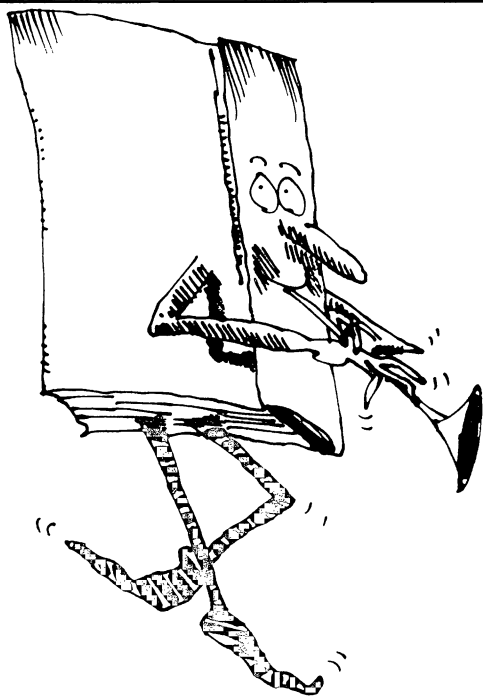
The National Book Council invites students, teachers and parents to a seminar on adolescent reading:

**Place:** Fort St High School, Petersham  
**Date:** Sunday 10 August, 1986  
**Time:** 1.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.

**1.30 p.m. - 2.30 p.m. What are you reading under the desk?**  
 Chair: Rosemary Moon — State Film Library (formerly Consultant, Children's and Young Services — State Library)  
 Panel: Four student representatives

**3.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. Why do we have to read this book?**  
 Chair: Max Delany, Inspector of Schools, NSW Department of Education  
 Panel: Professor G. Wilkes, Sydney University (Chairman — English Syllabus Committee, Years 11 & 12); Ernie Tucker, Maroubra Junction High School (English Syllabus Committee, Years 7 -10); Pat Morgan, Inspector of Schools, NSW Department of Education; plus two student representatives.

**Contact: Brenda Pittard (02) 692 9233**



*Little One* by Emily Sutherland — Landin Press, 1986.

*Little One* is set in modern-day South Australia and is about a teenage girl called Vanessa who becomes an unmarried mother.

Vanessa has a large family consisting of brother, sister, mother, father and stepfather, and the book tells of her own and her family's struggle to come to terms with the pregnancy. When the baby is born, Vanessa then has to decide what to do with the child and faces a difficult choice — whether to give her baby to adopted parents or to keep it and spend her youth caring for a child. Her final decision comes after much soul-searching and self-discovery.

The book itself is well-written and easy to read. It tells the story in a fairly down-to-earth manner and is quite funny in parts. *Little One* is written from two perspectives — firstly from the point of view of Meredith, Vanessa's mother and with excerpts from Vanessa's diary telling her point of view. This enables the reader to see both sides of Vanessa's problem and to view it from different angles — both the 'parent' angle and the 'daughter' angle.

While I found *Little One* interesting, I feel that it would appeal more to girls because it presents the 'unmarried mother' problem entirely from a female perspective. The attitudes of Vanessa's father are not really explored to the same extent as her own and her mother's are. I would recommend this book for anyone over 15, particularly girls.

John Cloonan, age 15 years, Waverley College.



*Bossyboots* by David Cox.

This book is about a girl called Abigail who makes a bushranger ashamed of himself. It is a fiction book.

My opinion: I think it needs a little more description. Young children might like it better than the older ones. The illustrations look more like artist's work. It is set out very well.

Susan Langdon, 5/6B, Hurstville South Primary School.

*My Daddy, I want my Mummy, Knock! Knock!, Smile Please!* Four books by Matthew Price and Jean Claverie. Australia, The Five Mile Press, 1986.

All four books are appealing in their design of hard board with lift-up flaps on each page to add some excitement to the story line.

Christopher was disappointed in the books however. He was not attracted to the water colour illustrations and shows more interest in brightly coloured books. He found them slightly repetitious, although he did like the stream of guests who arrived for the party in *Knock! Knock!*

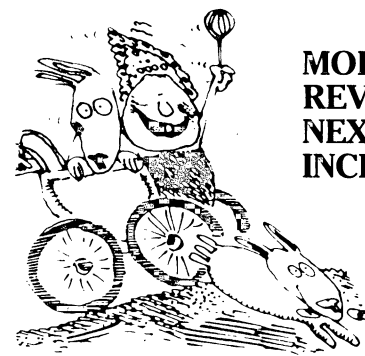
He was confused by the role models portrayed in *My Daddy* and *I want my Mummy*. They were very traditional with daddy providing all the excitement — skiing, flying, riding, etc., and mummy doling out the food and love. In Christopher's house the feeding and loving is shared and it will certainly be mummy who teaches Christopher to ski.

Reviewed by Christopher, aged 7½ months and his nanny Melissa.

*A Tale of Halley's Comet* by Ralph, C. Mark illustrated by Sharyn Madder. Spiral.


Matthew was interested in this book at once as he received it when Halley's Comet was very much in the news. He thought the book a little sad because the old man could not join his friends and was stuck in space himself. The book is well illustrated and has become a favourite.

Reviewed by Matthew, aged 4 yrs 11 months and his mother.



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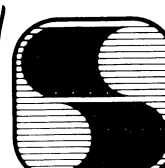
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