

**Andy Griffith in Darwin for *Books Alive***

Take one slightly eccentric storyteller, mix him with over 100 excited children and adults, and what is the result? A great fun evening's entertainment! That is exactly what happened when award winning children's author Andy Griffiths visited Casuarina Library, the Northern Territory's largest library, on Tuesday August 5.

Right from the opening Andy held the captive audience in the palms of his hands by asking "how do you annoy parents?", followed by siblings, and finally your teacher, which drew the biggest cheers of all. The children then proceeded to throw all manner of responses to Andy, proving they are not short on ways to annoy. At times Andy himself found this out, with one particular boy doing his utmost to do just that.



**Andy with Casuarina Library staff, from left: Mary Hamon, Barbara Hickey, Michele Donohue and Karen Conway.**

Andy held the audience captivated with his drawing examples and how he takes a seemingly simple scenario and turns it into something out of the ordinary, all the time asking the children questions of what may happen next. The result was questions flying from every corner of the room, comments and almost non-stop laughter. When asked if he included any of his own family in the stories Andy said he "squished his two younger sisters into one", as he also did for the teacher in his books. This was just one way Andy described how he goes about his writing.

The evening did not finish with the 45 minute talk and laugh fest. Andy spent almost another hour personally signing books for each child, speaking to them and drawing a personalised cartoon. The queue just never seemed to diminish! By taking his time with the participants Andy Griffith proved why he is adored as a writer, and many of the parents appreciated the time he took with their children. Earlier in the day Andy visited Karama Library, another one of four DCC Libraries, where he addressed several school groups.

Andy's visit was part of the *Books Alive* program, with Casuarina Library also hosting its ambassador Michael Robotham on 14 August.

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