

iBbY IRELAND

No. 11

January 2009

Welcome to iBbY iNfO and Happy New Year!

iBbY iNfO is the electronic newsletter of iBbY Ireland, the Ireland section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). We hope you enjoy this bi-monthly newsletter about upcoming events of interest to children's literature. All suggestions of events and information relevant to the world of children's literature are welcome for inclusion in future issues of the newsletter. **The next issue of the newsletter will be in early March.**

IBBY Ireland news: iBbY Ireland is delighted to announce that we have twinned with the IBBY Zimbabwe National Section. We are very glad to have created this exciting partnership and we hope to support some of their local community-based projects on literacy and storytelling. The IBBY Zimbabwe committee is energetic and committed to the promotion of children's literature and bringing books and children together. However, within the current political context, they are obviously encountering many logistical and political difficulties. We at iBbY Ireland hope that through this twinning we can offer valuable support and links with the international community for this recently established branch of IBBY and we will keep you posted about future events and news about this connection.

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Report on the 'CONNECTIONS: Children's Literature and Culture' conference, the First All-Ireland Symposium of The Irish Society for the Study of Children's Literature (ISSCL), which took place on Saturday 22nd November in Belfast, by Valerie Coghlan, President of iBbY Ireland.

Hosted by the School of Languages, Literatures and Performing Arts in Association with the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen's University Belfast on November 22, 2008, it was widely agreed that this event was innovative and timely in the development of the study of children's literature on this island. Martina Siefert, assisted by Pádraic Whyte, both QUB, put together a stimulating programme that gave many insights into current developments in the field, and equally important, provided an opportunity for people to meet and talk about their areas of interest. The keynote presentation, 'S is for Spaniard. The representation of foreign nations in ABCs and picturebooks', was given by Professor Dr Emer O'Sullivan (Leuphana University, Lüneburg): Professor O'Sullivan discussed the construction of national identity in books for young readers, examining the portrayal in pictures and texts of representatives of Spain in picturebooks, especially ABC books, from the 19th century until the present, and the relationship between the images presented specifically to children and their counterparts in other literary and popular contexts. After this stimulating and highly enjoyable opening, a brief resumé of their research was presented by a number of doctoral students and others, and chaired by Pádraic Whyte; this showed the wide range of research into children's literature taking place in Ireland, with topics ranging from adolescent girlhood in the fin-de-siècle, children's Shakespeares: text and production and storytelling and children's television, to investigations into Alsace, Italian, French and German children's books. The day continued with opportunities – which were taken – for participants to join in a discussion led by members of the ISSCL committee: Mary Shine Thompson, Amanda Piesse, Ciara Ní Bhroin, Martina Seifert, Celia Keenan, Valerie Coghlan and Pádraic Whyte. A little downtime was deservedly awarded to participants when Colin Bateman arrived to read from his current fiction for children and for adults. This provided an excellent finale, and the committee is grateful to Hachette for sponsoring Colin's visit to ISSCL.

It was agreed that this symposium of The Irish Society for the Study of Children's Literature should be the first of many, perhaps held at different locations around the country. From it, we can conclude that children's literature is in a healthy and progressive state, and that the opportunity for more dialogue between practitioners is to be encouraged. Queens University was a most welcoming venue for the first symposium, and particular thanks are due to Martina Siefert and to Dr Eamonn Hughes, Senior Lecturer at the School of English and Assistant Director of the Institute of Irish Studies for hosting the event.

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Upcoming conferences and call for papers relating to children's literature:

The ISSCL annual conference, *Nation Translation Migration*, will be held at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra from Friday 6th and Saturday 7th February. The keynote speaker will be Maria Nikolajeva. What can children's literature or culture tell us about concepts of nationhood, and changing concepts of national and cultural identity? How has children's literature responded to or perhaps even driven ideas of globalisation, of recuperation of local ethnic identity, of multiculturalism, of hybrid identity? What can we learn about the relationships between cultures by examining which children's texts have been translated into which languages? What can we learn about the identity of children's literature by looking at the way texts have been 'translated' from one medium to another? From text to text (e.g. from novel to picturebook or vice versa), from text to film (or vice versa) from text to internet (and vice versa)? How has children's literature responded to its readership's 'migration' to online communication, fan fiction, participation in online roleplay? For full details please visit the ISSCL website www.isscl.com or contact the secretary Amanda Piesse at apiesse@tcd.ie. Everyone with an interest in children's literatures and cultures is very welcome to attend.

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The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children's Literature international online journal invites papers for a special issue on national literatures. Papers on all representations of national cultures, images and values through children's and young adult literature are welcomed. How are indigenous peoples represented in national literatures? Do national literatures reflect their cultures of shape them? How do national literatures function as external ambassadors, offering a nation's face to the world, or as internal ideologues, interpellating children and teens as model citizens? The deadline for papers is 1st March 2009 for inclusion in the June 2009 issue. More information is available from www.the-looking-glass.net

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Articles on the Fiction of Boy Detectives are invited for a collection of essays. Much has been written about the figure of the girl sleuth, embodied by such popular figures as Nancy Drew, Judy Bolton, Trixie Belden, Cherry Ames, and Vicki Barr. Their male counterparts, however, have received far less critical attention. This collection looks to correct that oversight and strives to create the first edited collection of critical articles specifically on the popular figure of the boy sleuth in twentieth and twenty-first century text and film. The girl sleuth has often been described critically as a forever girl, a feminist figure who at her heights nonetheless embodies the full zenith and potentiality of girlhood. Though unhampered by traditional roles to the extent the girl sleuth is, the boy sleuth must still balance boyhood and manhood, pleasing parents and embracing (or rejecting) patriarchy, sleuthing/spying activities and first dates, first crushes, and soda shop romances. This collection looks to comprehensively examine the boy detective and his genre from a wide variety of critical perspectives. Series explored may include, but are not limited to, the Rover Boys, the Hardy Boys, Tow Swift, Ted Scott, Bomba the Jungle Boy, the Three Investigators, Christopher Cool, Rick Brant, Tom Corbett, Ken Holt, Don Sturdy, Encyclopedia Brown, and the Power Boys. Please send completed articles of 5000 words to the editor at the mail or e-mail address below on or before April 1, 2009. All articles should adhere to MLA style and citations. ADDRESS: Dr. Michael G. Cornelius, Chair, Department of English and Mass

Communications, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave, Chambersburg, PA 17201 or e-mail at mcornelius_at_wilson.edu

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Essays are solicited for Vol. 41, 2010 of *The International Journal of Canadian Studies* for a special issue, 'The Politics of Childhood'. Childhood constitutes a territory where inescapable social issues are expressed. Whether these are the only-child politics in China, or the politics aimed at combating poverty and violence, the child is the object of an unprecedented judicial framework since the end of the twentieth century. How to fight against child poverty? What possible measures could suppress this phenomenon? Likewise, the stakes with regard to education are unprecedented in a context where a knowledge economy is at the forefront of economic development. And where are we regarding the creation of governmental programs aimed at taking charge of early childhood? A number of countries have equipped themselves with family-based policies at increasing birth rates and fertility rates. What is at stake in these pronatalist policies? How to evaluate their impact and effect? Finally, what readings are found on the theme of childhood in the fields of literature, the arts, and cinema? You may send your paper (20-30 pages), along with an abstract of 100 words or less, by March 1st, 2009 to the International Journal of Canadian Studies, 250 City Centre, S-303, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6K7, Canada. Email: guy.leclair@iccs-ciec.ca

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A two-day international conference, 'Childhood in its Time: The Child in British Literature', will be held at Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, Kent, UK on Saturday and Sunday 28-29 March 2009. This conference seeks to trace how the history of childhood in Britain is reflected and portrayed in literature from the medieval period to the present day. The conference is particularly interested in how literary childhood is represented within its historical period and in how such representations develop over time. More information is available from the conference website at <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/arts-humanities/english-language-studies/ChildhoodInItsTime.aspx>

Recent award-winning children's books:

The winners of the 2008 Glen Dimplex New Writers Awards, in association with the Irish Writers' Centre, were announced in November. Sally Nicholls has been named Glen Dimplex New Writer of the Year 2008 for her book *Ways to live forever*, published by *Scholastic Children's Books*.

Ways to Live Forever, first published in January 2008 to award-winning acclaim, is a debut novel from Sally Nicholls, about an eleven year-old boy dying of leukaemia. The awards are made to the best first book published in the last year in Ireland and the UK by an author within each of the following five categories: Fiction, Biography/Non-fiction, Poetry, Children's Book and for the best first book published in any genre in the Irish language.

Each category winner received a cheque for €5,000, with a further €20,000 going to Sally Nicholls for winning the overall prize.

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Anthony Horowitz will present the Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation 2009, at a ceremony at the English-Speaking Union, London, on 20th January 2009. The Award of £2000 will go to the winning translator. The Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation was designed to spotlight the high quality and diversity of translated fiction for young readers and is presented biennially. Since its inception, in 1996, there has been a steady increase in the number of children's books translated into English and published in Britain. For the current award the list of submissions has increased substantially and includes books translated from Chinese, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Icelandic, Italian, Spanish (including an entry from a Cuban author), Swedish and Yiddish. For information about the 2009 shortlist, see <http://www.esu.org/page.asp?p=1835>

Upcoming events relating to children's literature:

From 10 February 2009, The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children will present the world premiere theatre production of *The Giant Blue Hand* by Marina Carr and directed by Selina Cartmell. Following on from the sell-out success of *Beware of the Storybook Wolves* in 2008, The Ark is excited to present another world premiere production which is suitable for ages 7+ and their families. Acclaimed playwright Marina Carr has had her work translated into several languages and produced in America and Europe. *The Giant Blue Hand* tells the story of the adventures of two young boys and their encounter with the mysterious giant blue hand. Along the way they will meet Aunt Farticus Fume in pink Wellingtons and Queen Dalia the Empress of Dreamers, in an adventure where "*children must be braver than adults if they are ever to recover those they love.*" The cast includes Don Wycherley, Catherine Walker, Cindy Cummings, Robert Donnelly, Patrick Gibson, Jack Gleeson and David Martin. For more information and booking please contact 01.6707788 or see www.ark.ie

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To celebrate the launch of her debut young teen novel, *Amy Green, Teen Agony Queen: Boy Trouble*, Sarah Webb will undertake an Irish tour during February. She will visit schools and libraries all over Ireland, including a two-day tour of primary schools in Co Mayo. The library events include:

Writing Magic Workshop - Thurs 5th Feb Castletymon Library 10.30 to 12.30

Writing Magic Workshop - Mon 9th Feb Ballyroan Library 10.30 to 12.30 am

Mums and Daughters Book Club Thurs 19th Feb 6.30 to 8.00 Balbriggan Library c/o

Assumpta Hickey

The mums will talk about what they were like as teenagers and will be asked to bring photos of themselves as teens, and any clothes they have from then too! They will also be asked to bring or talk about books they loved as teens. The daughters will then talk about their favourite books. Each mum and daughter will be asked to read any Jacqueline Wilson title and also *Amy Green, Teen Agony Queen: Boy Trouble*, if they can before the meeting and discuss their thoughts on the books from their different perspectives. It should be a fun and informative evening! If you are interested in these events, future events, or a possible school visit please contact Sarah at sarahsamwebb@hotmail.com

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World Book Day will take place with many events across the UK and Ireland. See www.worldbookday.com for more information and support material for schools etc.

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