

The 2018 Leila St John Award
for distinguished services to children's literature
in Victoria
is presented to
Kathy Kozłowski

Graduating with a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Librarianship, Kathy's first job was as a children's librarian in 1967 at Camberwell Waverly Regional Library. During that time she was also part of the selection panel for the CBCA publication "Australian Children's Books: a selected list".

Kathy worked for Albert Ullin at The Little Bookroom for 17 years. In 1974 she went on a six week buying trip through Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey, including a visit to Bologna Book Fair. Meeting with publishing houses and industry experts to discover the best quality children's books available in the languages of these countries for migrant children in Australia to enjoy. The collection of books Kathy brought back were exhibited at The Little Bookroom later that year.

The middle 70s saw her at Penguin Books, reading and advising on manuscripts to publish for the Australian Puffin List. When she resigned, the publishing director Bob Sessions said he was very sorry to lose her and referred to her as 'a damned good children's bookseller'.

She was instrumental in the publication of *The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek*, a book published in 1978 that has never been out of print! Sitting next to Jenny Wagner at a conference, Kathy read the manuscript. So impressed, she sent a telegram to Penguin. They in turn offered Jenny a contract with Ron Brooks as the illustrator.

In 1995 Kathy was a judge for the Children's Book Section of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Awards and in 2007 for the Young Adult section of the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards. She is currently a judge for the CBCA Crichton Award for new illustrators of children's books.

Kathy has spent over 50 years working with children's books, both in Australia and in London. She has worked tirelessly to promote children's literature and press beloved books into the hands of as many children as possible.

The years have seen Kathy working in libraries, bookshops and for children's publisher Walker Books; volunteering countless hours to the Victorian Branch of the CBCA; helping authors and illustrators just starting out and reaching out to disadvantaged children.

Kathy is an incredible asset to the book world and an invaluable resource for so many parents, grandparents and children. She has always been a passionate advocate for quality children's literature and her contribution to the Australian children's literary landscape is outstanding.

