

*The 2020 Leila St John Award
for distinguished services to children's literature
in Victoria
is presented to
Christine Oughtred*

Christine Oughtred is a powerhouse of ideas. Her passion for getting books into children's hands and encouraging teachers, librarians, parents, grandparents and carers to read and share books with children is enormous.

With the Geelong Regional Library, she coordinated the successful Geelong Children's Book Festival which ran for nearly 20 years in various guises. She is currently completing her PhD on an innovative and important area of digital children's literature.

Christine was instrumental in starting the Geelong Regional Branch of CBCA VIC Branch and has worked tirelessly in her role on the committee for many years since 1997. This included two years as the Victorian CBCA Book of the Year Judge, Victorian President from 2015 until 2019, and since then is the current Victorian Vice President.

Whilst serving as President, Christine almost single-handedly coordinated the 2018 State Conference, *"Reimagine! New ways with Literature"*. This successful event featured more than 20 guest speakers and was attended by over 150 people.

During this time, she has been a most collegial and supportive committee member, acting as a mentor for many people joining the committee and ensuring that all members concerns and needs are heard and acted upon.

Christine has a wonderful way with words when it comes to encouraging others and is always kind and respectful to all. She shows initiative and is not afraid to roll up her sleeves and get to work. She participates with enthusiasm, commitment and a strong vision – not to mention with bucket loads of tenacity and lashings of grace and good humour. She is diplomatic, kind and warm.

An outstanding role model and colleague, Christine is well-deserving of the Leila St John Award.

Her long-standing commitment to children's literature in Victoria is astonishing and admirable, and the outcomes of her work will have an impact on the industry for many years to come.

