



BfK Briefing - January 1991

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A New Head for the CBF

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Wendy Cooling has been appointed as the new Director of the Children's Book Foundation. Currently Deputy Head of Fulham Cross Comprehensive School in London, she took up her new appointment at Book House in January. Her previous involvement in book activities include advisory teaching on library skills and independent learning, compiling children's packs and guides for the National Trust together with titles for Puffin in conjunction with Madame Tussauds? and research into the role of the school library across the curriculum. All this, of course, in addition to the book-ish preoccupations expected from a teacher of English. She comments, 'I'm very happy indeed to join the CBF and look forward to using my experience and enthusiasm to extend its role, especially with the National Curriculum in mind.' **BfK** has already encountered Wendy's enthusiasm at the Puffin Bookshop in Covent Garden - and very encouraging it was. Good luck to her!

Bernard's Dodgem

Filming is now complete on the BBC's latest Bernard Ashley serial - dramatised by the author himself from his popular Julia MacRae/Puffin novel for young teens. The cast includes Trevor Peacock and a Grange Hill 'star' ... transmission is in February and March 1991. Worth a note in your diary, says **BfK**.

Obituary

DODIE SMITH

3rd May 1896-24th November 1990

Best known for plays like **Autumn Crocus** (1930) and **Dear Octopus** (1938), along with her novel **I Capture the Castle** (1949), Dodie Smith was also the author of an authentic children's classic, **The Hundred and One Dalmatians** (1956), which was turned into a full-length animated cartoon by Walt Disney five years later. A sequel followed in 1967 called **The Starlight Barking**, though this was less successful than the earlier tale, inspiredly old-fashioned of *Pongo* Missus and their persecutor Cruella de Vil.

A former actress, Dodie Smith lived for many years in a multi-beamed seventeenth-century cottage in Finchingfield, Essex with her husband Alec Beesley who died in 1988. She was endlessly curious about changing times .. but always very much her own person. Her first invitation to appear on **Desert Island Discs** was cancelled by Roy Plumbly when she insisted on a long and loud Beatles record. In her eighties, she produced four very popular volumes of autobiography.

These, like her last children's book, **The Midnight Kittens** (1978), offered a combination of innocence, moral certainty and immense charm which was her hallmark.

Authorbank Directory

The Children's Book Foundation offers this new Guide - the Authors and Illustrators willing to visit schools or participate in book events, giving full details of the sessions they offer - including preferred age-range, group-size, what they have to offer and how to contact them. It's free to CBF members, £4.50 otherwise.

Details from Jean Egbunike, Children's Book Foundation, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QZ (tel. 081-870 9055).

Tell Me Another One!

Ace storytellers Grace Hallworth and Liz Weir offer a video showing how it's done

. or, in the case of Liz Weir (acting her socks off), how it's notdone. Aimed at librarians and teachers, this twenty-minute video will help anyone improve their storytelling technique by following a few practical steps. The basis of your next INSET day asks **BfK**? Compared with the cost of hiring a visiting speaker, worth every penny of £25 - with repeat performances to order. There's no better way to demonstrate how stories can be shared through picture books. Highly recommended.

Available from: Remploy Limited, London Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire.

Irish Guide to Children's Books 1980-90

With a preface by Clodagh Corcoran introducing the Irish Children's Book Trust, this compilation by Lesley Reece and Gabriel Rosenstock covers the full age-range from beginning readers to school-leavers, discusses traditional Irish Legends, Folk and Fairy tales, includes non-fiction, books in Irish, a section on illustration ... and contributions from a variety of Irish writers such as Tony Hickey, Carolyn Swift and Martin Waddell/Catherine Sefton. What more could be asked for? Not to be missed - and, at £2.00 a copy for more than 170 pages, excellent value.

Enquiries to Clodagh Corcoran, Chairwoman, Irish Children's Book Trust, Bookhouse Ireland, 65 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

AWARDS UPDATE...

Since the November **BfK** went to press, news has come in on the following:

Smarties Prize

Overall winner, and 9-11 Category: **Midnight Blue** by Pauline Fisk, Lion Publishing, 0 7459 1848 4, £7.95

6-8 Category: **Esio Trot** by Roald Dahl, ill. Quentin Blake, Cape, 0 224 02786 7, £6.95

0-5 Category: **Six Dinner Sid** by Inga Moore, Simon & Schuster, 0 7500 0297 2, £6.99; 0 7500 0304 9, £2.99 pbk

Whitbread Children's Novel

AK by Peter Dickinson, Gollancz, 0 575 04894 8, £10.95

Emil/Kurt Maschler Award

Winner: **All Join In** by Quentin Blake, Cape, 0 224 02770 0, £6.95

The Federation of Children's Book Groups

Why not learn with your child about the magic of storytelling and the

love of books. Join us in The Federation of Children's Book Groups

or join us at our annual conference ...

23rd Annual Conference

5th to 7th April 1991

Nightingale Hall, University of Nottingham

Conference Organisers:

Jan Sanderson

31 The Green, Radcliffe-on-Trent

Nottingham NG12 2LA

Tel. (0602) 333003

Dinah Wilcox

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