

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Provided by Dr Belle Alderman AM

Director, National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc



Mopoke and the Moon: original artwork



Preservation issues: Sticky tape and overlay

The National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc (formerly Lu Rees Archives) was established in 1974 by agreement with all the branches of the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA). Lu Rees, then President of the CBCA ACT Branch, was a bookseller and historian with a deep passion for Australian children's literature. She proposed Australia should have a national collection like other countries worldwide. All CBCA Branches agreed. To increase access, the collection moved from private homes to the University of Canberra in 1980 where it remains. Students, academics, researchers and communities of interest now use the resources.

In 2024, the Centre celebrated 50 years of operation. Today the collection holds over 60,000 Australian children's books with 6,000 of these in 80 different languages. Resources also include illustrators' artworks, authors' papers and manuscripts, publishers' and related organisations' archives plus ephemera. The Centre reaches the wider world through loans of its collections, online exhibitions and databases available through its website at <https://www.ncacl.org.au/>.

The Centre is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient by the Australian Taxation Office. Donors are entitled to make monetary gifts of \$2 or more and receive a deduction on their income tax returns in the year of donation.

Image Citations:

Mopoke and the Moon by L and G Adams, illustrated by Chris Riordan. SRA Australian Legend Series. Sydney, Chicago, Palo Alto, Toronto, Henley-on-Thames, Paris: Science Research Associates Pty Ltd, 1979

The Whirlwind and the Frogs by L and G Adams, illustrated by Chris Riordan. SRA Australian Stories. Sydney, Chicago, Palo Alto, Toronto, Henley-on-Thames: Science Research Associates Pty Ltd, 1979

AUSTRALIAN LEGEND SERIES



Whirlwind and the Frogs original artwork for endpapers



Book endpapers

In March 2024, Graeme Jessep, retired publisher of the Science Research Associates (SRA) series of books for children, contacted Dr Belle Alderman, Director of the National Centre for Australian Children's Literature. He asked whether the Centre would be interested in a donation of all the original artwork for this series of 20 children's books published between 1972 and 1982. He added that he was now 86 years old and imagined the artwork being consigned to a dump bin as his family cleared his home. The series was unique at the time. Each story, presented in full colour, featured anthropomorphised Australian animals engaged in adventures and ever challenged by the Australian environment and each other. The books may not have been published today. Many of these stories belong to First Nations communities who were not credited as authors. These stories offer an historically valuable glimpse into society's changing attitudes, and accordingly the artwork will be preserved at the Centre.

Today publishers like the Aboriginal press, Magabala Books, and several other publishers, feature First Nations authors and illustrators who have created both the story and provided its cultural context.



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CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE** Inc

YOU'RE INVITED TO

FADx

Graduate Festival

OPENING NIGHT

WEDNESDAY
13 NOVEMBER
5PM - 9PM
UC BUILDING 7

The University of Canberra's flagship creative annual event

FADx is the Faculty's annual graduate exhibition. It celebrates the achievements of our graduating students and allows them to display their best work for family, friends, industry and the public.

Come and see the work of our 2024 students in the Faculty of Arts and Design in our annual Graduate Festival.



For those who can't join us on the night, our exhibition is open on 13-14 November from 10am-3pm.

