
The Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature

Belle Alderman

Lu Rees Archives

University of Canberra

Current Scene

A modest idea can achieve extraordinary results where there is vision and resolve. This was the case with the Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature. In 2011, an external expert assessed the significance of the Archives, reporting that in its 40-year existence, 'it has established a firm reputation among researchers, students, bibliographers, librarians and the general public as one of the most important collections of children's literature in Australia' (Powell, 2011, p.1).

Before tracing the modest idea behind the Lu Rees Archives, its current achievements as identified in Powell's *Assessment of Significance* are highlighted.

- *The book collection from 1960 to the present is comparable to the collections found in the National Library or some of the State libraries.*
- *The overseas translations, now numbering 2,700, are described as 'one of the strongest in the country', with the Archives often holding the only copy.*
- *Author and illustrator files, now numbering 406, are an 'extraordinary resource and one that has been greatly valued by researchers.'*
- *The Archives holds a 'strong collection of original artwork' described as a 'valuable resource documenting the way in which particular books were created.'*
- *The Children's Book Council of Australia National Children's Book Week original artwork from 1984 is described as having 'considerable value to researchers studying the artistic development of particular illustrators and to others studying the messages and ideas inherent in the artwork and slogans.'*
- *The Walter McVitty Photograph Collection featuring photographs of 158 Australian children's authors and illustrators offers a 'significant resource for researchers, in bringing together in one place images of many of the most important figures in Australian's children's literature from the mid-19th century to recent times.'*
- *The audiocassette collection spanning the years 1975-1998 features authors, illustrators, publishers and others in the children's book world. Powell quoted well-*

known bibliographer, Kerry White, who said 'in the last 30 years just about everyone with prestige, influence or notoriety in the Australian children's book world has attended as a speaker.' Powell described these tapes as a 'valuable source for literary historians.'

- *The creators' papers, manuscripts and artworks collected by the Archives are 'among the most important children's writers and illustrators of the last thirty years.'*

(2011, pp.4-11)

Key People

How did the Archives arrive at this point? What has been learned along the way? What is the Archives' vision for the future?

Key individuals have fostered the development of the Lu Rees Archives. The inspiration for this collection can be traced back to Lu Rees, whose life experiences gave her an appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage. She worked for Colonel J.L.Treloar from 1931 on Australia's involvement in war, and then for the Australian War Memorial Board from 1938 to 1955. In that year she was appointed the Canberra Manager of F.W. Cheshire Bookshop, a position she kept until she retired in 1968. This experience, she said, 'opened up a contact with a wide range of authors and publishers and for the first time I was brought in close touch with children's books, their authors, illustrators and publishers' (Rees 1981, p.3). Lu Rees was a bookseller who read the books she sold. She was also aware that Australian children's literature was viewed worldwide as an emerging field of importance.

Maurice Saxby (2004), Australia's preeminent children's literature historian, wrote about the many forces in the 1950s and 1960s which fostered the emergence of Australian children's authors and illustrators to prominence both within Australia and overseas. Lu Rees read and admired the works of Ivan Southall, Nan Chauncy, Patricia Wrightson, Joan Phipson and others who were at the forefront of the Australian children's literature scene in the 1950s and 1960s. She wrote letters to them, and they responded. Always an avid letter writer and record keeper, Lu Rees filed away this correspondence, while continuing her interest in the broader field of Australian literature as the Secretary of the Canberra Fellowship of Australian Writers from 1950 to 1975. In this position she initiated the publications *Australian Writes*, *Australian Signpost* and *Span*, all related to Australian literature. Lu Rees was thus heavily involved in Australian history and literature and understood the importance of preserving the products from these for posterity.

Lu Rees continued her interest in Australian children's literature and in 1957, became the first President of the ACT Branch of The Children's Book Council of Australia. There she continued to expand her interest, knowledge and influence. She initiated many community, national and international projects relating to Australian children's literature. These she documented in her history of the ACT Branch of the Children's Book Council (Rees 1978?) .

Throughout the development of the Lu Rees Archives, significant events have also shaped its future. The impetus for the Archives occurred in 1974 when the Commonwealth Government provided a grant of \$500 to each Branch of The Children's Book Council of Australia. Lu Rees, then president of the ACT Branch, proposed to all the branches of the Children's Book Council that a national collection of Australian children's literature should be formed, featuring files about the work of Australian children's authors and illustrators along with their books. All the branches agreed. Lu Rees donated her personal collection of a few hundred books as the beginning. Members of the ACT Branch continued to develop both the book collection and the author and illustrator files over the years.

A second auspicious year was 1979, which celebrated the International Year of the Child. Lu Rees proposed that this national collection should also include the translations of works by Australian children's authors and illustrators. The idea was met with some scepticism—a good idea, but was it possible? Lu Rees wrote letters seeking help. Authors, illustrators and publishers sent her their spare translations or their overseas publishers' addresses. Funds from the International Year of the Child Committee enabled the purchase of Ivan Southall's personal collection of 83 translations to add to the national collection.

Yet with success came problems. The collection as a whole had grown to some 1,000 books and 60 files with materials about authors and illustrators. Increasingly, people asked if they might use this collection, but this was difficult as the collection was housed in private homes. The time had come to consider a future home for the collection. While various ideas were discussed, Belle Alderman, academic at the College of Advanced Education and member of the ACT Branch, suggested the College Library as a possibility. A more public location would mean that students, researchers and the community could have easier access. Support from an academic library might foster future developments. Negotiations began with the Foundation Librarian, Victor Crittenden, and administrators of the College. Support was strong. The corporate file at the College records the negotiations, including a letter from the ACT Branch President, John Tyrrel, who expressed his delight that the College Library would be preserving for posterity the unique collection which 'we (John and his colleagues) have been privileged to acquire and which we expect to augment as the years go by' (Tyrrel, qtd in Crotty 2005, p.6)

The Chairman of the College Council, Douglas Waterhouse, accepted the collection at a ceremony held on 15 July 1980. Conditions of use and access were informally agreed upon by both parties, with the Children's Book Council ACT Branch to retain ownership of the collection and the Library to house, catalogue and provide support in various ways. At that time, the collection was formally named the Lu Rees Archives in honour of its founder.

This 'gentlemen's agreement' between the ACT Branch and the College worked well for the developing collection. Both the College and the ACT Branch contributed as interests and resources allowed. Victor Crittenden's strong interests in Australian literature, special collections, and rare books, offered the Lu Rees Archives special expertise. He strongly supported the Archives from

1980 until he retired in 1986. During this time, he appointed a full-time librarian who looked after both the College's own children's literature collection and the Lu Rees Archives. Books were added, gaps were filled and items were catalogued. He continued to develop the files, and created a simple system to index the items added. He wrote letters to authors, illustrators and publishers and encouraged donations. He recognised that the Archives needed promotion and support and so initiated *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes Books and Authors* journal in 1981. Its purpose, he explained, was to 'keep people informed about the Archives in a similar way to how Lu kept people informed by her numerous letters' (Crittenden 2005, p.8). His own interest in 19th century Australian literature was reflected in his many journal contributions on such writers as Jessie Whitfeld, Marcus Clarke and James Lionel Michael, while the journal's associate editor, Carol Mills, contributed articles on illustrators such as D.H. Souter, Frank Mahony, and Eirene Mort. The journal continues. Its latest issue is number 32.

Until her death, in 1983, Lu Rees continued to work on behalf of the Archives. Her last major contribution reflected the idea that the Archives was always seen as a growing collection, which would continue to represent the development of Australian children's literature. Lu Rees' long-term contacts with Australian publishers ensured that this letter-writing project would meet with success. She wrote to all Australian publishers with a children's list, initially pointing out the Archives' achievements, then concluding, in her inimitable style, with a request for help.

The greatest help any publisher could give us would be to donate the new Australian children's books as they are published. This would allow us to keep abreast of the growing field as it happens and to devote what time and money we have to filling in gaps in the collection from years past. This suggestion might seem too much to ask, but anything you could do toward this would be helpful.

(Rees, 1981)

Australian publishers have continued to donate their children's books to the Archives since 1981. This has ensured that the book collection continues to reflect the current and past scene. The collection of 23,000 books is now an invaluable historical collection for posterity.

Victor Crittenden was responsible for two other important initiatives while the Archives was under his supervision. In 1983 he initiated a management committee, which soon became formally constituted with a convenor and minutes, and representatives from the National Library and ACT public library. Its terms of reference have always included overseeing policy decisions and controlling the Archives' funds. Through the papers and archives of this Committee, the Lu Rees Archives itself has been documented, all the while ensuring accountability and considered decision-making.

Changed Environment

The arrival of a new librarian in 1987 brought about major change for the Archives. All specialist librarians' positions, including the audiovisual librarian, map librarian, and children's literature

librarian, were abolished. This meant that from 1987, the ACT Branch took on responsibility for the Lu Rees Archives. They provided enthusiastic support when requested, but the lack of onsite staff was a detriment to sustained development.

Faced with change and a desire to manage its future, the Lu Rees Archives Management Committee appointed a subcommittee to assess the historical development, current status, and future development of the Archives. The Subcommittee Report (1987) asserted, within its 95 pages, the Archives' value to the communities it served, and detailed how the Archives documented and preserved Australian children's literature for posterity. The report provided the Archives' first considered statement of purpose: 'it aims to provide resources for the study and research of Australian authors and illustrators, including both the literature and the historical and cultural context in which it was created' (Subcommittee Report 1987, p.5).

A more formal relationship developed between the College and the Archives. A written Agreement was drawn up between the ACT Branch and the University of Canberra (constituted as a University in 1990) in June of 1991. Renewed in October 2003, this Agreement remains in operation. The Agreement details sponsorship support by the Library, management responsibilities, access, security, and termination and dissolution arrangements. A feature of the Agreement was that both parties could contribute in additional ways not stipulated while the basic support expected of each organisation was outlined.

A series of recommendations from this Subcommittee Report (1987) included such areas as promotion within the College and externally to the community, the nation and to the world; resource allocation; usage; space; preservation; and staffing. Twenty-five years on from this report, most of its recommendations have been met with several exceeded. New directions have taken the Archives on different routes than the Report envisioned. One such direction was developments in technology, which have enabled the Archives to interpret, document, provide access and promote its collection far beyond the report's recommendations. Technology remains an ongoing challenge for the Archives as it continues to pursue appropriate solutions.

Promotion and Access: Round One

Promoting and providing access to the Archives' unique and valued author and illustrator files is an early, but ongoing, example of how the Archives embraced enabling technology. By 1987, these files numbered 171. While the book collection had been catalogued and was accessible, the files were inadequately indexed and not easily accessed. The following year, 1988, an application for a grant to the College was successful. For the next 18 months, the Archives' took its first step (one of several in succeeding years) in choosing and customizing an online database to provide access and to promote its collections. This aspect of enabling technology is traced through succeeding years in order to demonstrate continuing efforts to document, provide access and promote the Archives' resources internally and externally to ever widening communities.

The project's first phase involved an investigation of file contents, how individual items had been categorised and whether these were still appropriate. Victor Crittenden had supervised the categorisation of all the file materials into five categories: Review, Article, Biographical note, Bibliography or Miscellaneous. As the files grew, the miscellaneous category was often used for disparate items. It was necessary to analyse all the materials in the 171 files, and ensure there were appropriate, discreet categories. Two researchers spent many hours pouring over the file material and eventually developing 29 categories. Today, the Archives still uses these categories to index its file materials, with an addition of one category, Teaching Resources. Several categories are no longer used, particularly those relating to the authors' papers and manuscripts and illustrators' artworks. These are now treated as collections and documented to allow easy discovery and access.

Phase two involved re-categorising all the file material. ACT Branch volunteers who were knowledgeable about Australian children's literature completed this. Earlier in the project, currently available databases were examined to discover the one which would best serve the Archives' purpose. Would it be the Australian Bibliographic Network or the Australian Literary Database used by the Australian Defence Forces Academy or the Australian Schools Cataloguing Information Service (ASCIS) database? ASCIS was selected because it was felt that the Lu Rees resources sat most comfortably with the other 300,000 records (at that time) serving the needs of the then 6,000 schools across Australia. ASCIS also offered a number of unique and desirable features, and was the Committee's choice (Alderman 1989).

Phase three involved entering the file material on the ASCIS database. Margaret Hyland, Lecturer in Information Retrieval at the Canberra College, supervised this aspect of the project and has described it in detail. (1988, pp26-29) The data entered indicated what was available in each of the 117 files. The information included the types and numbers of materials in each file, listed all awards won, detailed all translations, identified illustrative and literary style for each creator and assigned ASCIS subject headings to the creators' body of work. The database was available using the technology of the time: a computer, a modem and a telephone.

As a by-product of the online database, a book was produced which included the same information (Alderman & Hyland 1988). It was marketed and sold to provide wider access, while acknowledging that a publication could not capture the constant additions to the files. From 1990 through 1994, ASCIS provided staff and computer time so that the Archives could continue providing access to the resources, at which point they discontinued all online resources other than their cataloguing information. The description of this project demonstrates the amount of effort and determination involved in achieving just one of the recommendations in the 1987 Subcommittee Report. This recommendation was the production of a guide to the collection. With this publication, the files on authors and illustrators, together with the catalogued books could provide an in depth view of each creators' work.

Evolving Scene

Even though, from 1987, the Library no longer provided staff to the Archives, the Archives continued to be supported in various ways. The Management Committee continued to meet regularly and guide developments. The Lu Rees journal continued publication with Peter Clayton, the Associate Librarian, editing the journal, and the Library covering production and distribution costs. Another invaluable contribution by the Library was their investigation into whether the Lu Rees Archives might be eligible to receive gifts of property through an Australian Government scheme known as the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme. Introduced in 1987, this scheme was intended to encourage individuals to donate their cultural products to eligible institutions with the donor receiving a taxation deduction for the value of their donation, thus reducing their income tax paid in the year of donation.

In 1988, the Lu Rees Archives qualified under this scheme, now known as the Cultural Gifts Program, which is sponsored by the Australian Government's Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport. Since this program's establishment, over \$622 million worth of visual and decorative arts, Indigenous arts and cultural artefacts, social history and scientific collections and archival material have been donated to Australia's eligible institutions. (Cultural Gifts Program 2012) Since the Archives' first cultural gift was received in 1992, 36 cultural gifts of authors' papers and manuscripts and illustrators' artwork and a publisher's archive have been received. Their collective value is over \$1,500,000. These gifts have added immeasurably to the Archives' research capacity and its value in preserving and making available unique cultural products by Australian children's authors, illustrators and publishers. The Archives has also qualified as a tax-exempt charity, which is an important status when applying for grants and also to ensure that income generated fully benefits the Archives.

Staffing and Volunteers

The ACT Branch intended to contribute to the management of the Archives from 1987. Not having a knowledgeable person regularly onsite in the Archives was a distinct drawback. Research queries took too long to answer. Supervising visits by researchers was difficult to arrange. Those accessing the collection lacked expert guidance. Acknowledgement of donations lagged behind. Time consuming tasks such as identifying gaps in the collection and searching for needed materials were simply not undertaken. There was a distinct need for staff to be present in the Archives on a regular basis.

Having taken on the role of acknowledging donations and a range of necessary tasks for the Archives from the mid 1980s, Belle Alderman proposed a solution to the staffing problem. As all the Book Council Branches had initially agreed to the formation of a national collection of Australian children's literature in 1974, then they might now consider financial support for part-time staffing for the Archives. A document detailing the Archives' history and achievements, its potential and its needs was presented to the Annual General Meeting of The Children's Book

Council of Australia in 1990. The Branches agreed that funding should be provided to the Lu Rees Archives and approved a percentage of the profits from their Children's Book Week merchandise. While this funding was appreciated, the amount would vary each year, which would make attracting ongoing staff and planning work very difficult. Annual reports about the Lu Rees Archives continued to be presented at each Annual General Meeting. In 1993, it was agreed that a set amount would be provided, independent of the merchandise, so that security of staffing could be assured. In 2012, this national body augmented their funding so that a half-time position of administrative officer for the Archives was approved.

The part time paid staff was not the only expertise available. The ACT Branch continued to undertake various projects under the supervision of Laurie Copping. He began his record of volunteers and tasks in the mid-1980s. The Volunteer Book continues still as a record of work undertaken by various individuals. It provides a fascinating insight into what can be accomplished through volunteers.

There are advantages and disadvantages of using volunteers in any organisation. Volunteers may mask the need for paid, professional staff. Volunteers require supervision and well planned projects. Volunteers may not provide the required skills, ongoing commitment, or the time required to accomplish what needs to be done. Volunteers, on the other hand, can add immeasurably to an organisation's achievements. Carefully chosen, supervised and rewarded, they add a richness to what is possible to achieve. The Lu Rees Archives' volunteers are invariably highly skilled in their respective fields of expertise, including conservation, museum studies, librarianship, education, art, literature, digital media and, more unusually, accountancy and linguistics.

Institutions such as the Australian War Memorial, National Museum of Australia, National Film and Sound Archives, and the National Library of Australia all have volunteer programs. The Lu Rees Archives attracts its volunteers through word of mouth, the ACT Branch membership and a Lu Rees Archives web page, 'Helping Out at the Lu Rees Archives'. Since 2009, the calculation of annual volunteer hours equates to more than a full-time position.

Belle Alderman began volunteering through the ACT Branch of the Children's Book Council from 1975. More formally, when the Lu Rees Archives came to the College and while Victor Crittenden was still the Librarian, he relinquished letter writing to authors, illustrators and publishers to Belle Alderman. From the late 1980s, she was writing many letters, participating in Archives' volunteer projects and hosting visits to the Archives. This coincided with her academic pursuits of teaching and research in Australian children's literature at the Canberra College, later the University of Canberra. Upon retirement in 2005, a notice appeared in the Lu Rees Archives journal.

Retirement means I will have more time and space to continue my commitment to the Archives—continuing with the Cultural Gifts Program; writing many, many letters to authors, illustrators and publishers; hosting visits to the Lu Rees Archives and much more. All these activities have always been a joy, perhaps described more accurately as a passion. Who would be so foolish as to end such an enjoyable activity?

(Alderman 2004, p.4)

Since 1990, an honorary, non-remunerative position of Collections Development Manager has existed in the Archives to oversee developments. Belle Alderman has occupied this position since its establishment. Between 700-1,000 hours are donated annually to accomplish this position's various responsibilities. The Manager's responsibilities include: leading policy development, setting future directions and strategies to achieve these; seeking and acknowledging donations; supporting the Cultural Gifts Program; negotiating collaborative ventures; applying for grants; participating in outreach programs; providing leadership and guidance to the Lu Rees Archives Administrative Officer; and liaising with professionals in children's literature. Succession planning regarding this role has been considered.

Promotion and Access: Round Two

The Subcommittee Report (1987) deemed promotion and access as important for the Archives. The Archives' first endeavours into databases to promote and provide access to its resources took place in 1988 using ASCIS, which was chosen to provide online access to schools. This however limited access to a specific, though large, group of educators.

Serendipity can bring benefits when carefully considered. The Archives' location in an educational institution has particular advantages in terms of expert advice and expertise. A University of Canberra computing studies student, Craig Smith, approached the Archives in 1994. As his final year project, he offered to customise Filemaker Pro computer software as a database for the Archives' author and illustrator files, thereby making these accessible onsite and potentially more widely, at no cost. Over 1994 and 1995, the formatting of entries in the author and illustrator files were standardised then migrated to the Filemaker Pro database. Filemaker Pro served the Archives well for a few years. The potential remained to provide access to these records more widely though the newly developed Lu Rees Archives website, created by a University of Canberra information retrieval team of students in 1997 (Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature).

The Archives decided against exploiting its own database more widely. Instead, the Archives was invited to join an exciting national venture in 1998 which would provide access to Australian literature through a world-class database available through the Internet. The partners in this venture included seven Australian universities: the Australian Defence Forces Academy (ADFA) at the University of New South Wales; the University of Canberra (Lu Rees Archives); Deakin University; Flinders University; Monash University; University of Queensland; University of Western Australia plus the National Library of Australia. AustLit: The Australian Literature

Resource (as it is now known) aimed to provide a single access point on Australian literature, with each institution contributing its particular database collection. This meant bringing together the collective institutions' 370,000 individual works of 'creative and critical – Australian literature published in a range of print and electronic sources – and more than 60,000 Australian authors and literary organisations, from 1780 to the present day' (Meyers, 2001, p.25).

The Lu Rees Archives contributed 12,800 records about Australian children's literature to this collaborative venture, which was launched in 2001. Collaborating with knowledgeable institutions with far greater potential for development, expertise and access to funding was a good decision. Today, the AustLit team includes 10 Australian universities who contribute to the current 751,088 works and 134,687 authors and literary organizations (AustLit, 2012). Other Australian universities have since joined the partnership, and through this collaboration the study and research into Australian literature is greatly enhanced. The Lu Rees Archives continues to add records relating to Australian children's literature, and in this way, has ensured that children's literature is viewed alongside all Australian literature.

As with all Lu Rees Archives' database ventures, AustLit was not a perfect solution. It did not include the Archives' entire collections, such as its authors' papers and manuscripts and illustrators' artwork, and a number of the categories, which were outside the scope of AustLit's interests. A specialised database was created for the Lu Rees Archives by AustLit. This database utilized Encoded Archival Description, a world standard in archival description. Problems remained in providing access to the wide range of resources held by the Archives, mainly due to limited staff resources. Providing access and promoting the Archives' resources is a never-ending work in progress. The Lu Rees Archives is currently investigating databases with the capacity to provide full access to all its resources.

Community Connections

The Subcommittee Report (1987) recommended that the Archives make greater efforts to promote itself to wider communities. It also recommended collaborating with individuals and organizations to achieve greater impact. The Archives has pursued these recommendations vigorously and successfully. The Archives continues to work closely with its host institution, the University of Canberra, and also the Canberra Institute of Technology, the Australian National University, the Australian Catholic University, secondary schools and professional associations. A small sample of these connections include:

- Workshops on picture book creation for ACT school teachers and teacher librarians
- Workshops for secondary students studying the writing and illustrating of picture books
- Workshops for Graphic design and creative writing students working on picture book creation
- Displays and supervised assistance to literary studies, children's literature and creative writing students studying authors and illustrators files

- Working with education students comparing resources for Aboriginal studies and cultural diversity
- Workshops for Conservation Studies students documenting the condition and content of the Archives' framed artworks
- Working with Heritage Preservation students assessing the condition of collections and also creating disaster plans
- Working with Museum Studies students creating public exhibitions and programs using the Archives' collections
- Working with English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) to enhance the written and spoken English of Japanese students through comparing English and Japanese editions of Australian children's picture books

The Archives also regularly provides internships and work experience for students from the University of Canberra, Canberra Institute of Technology, Australian Catholic University and Charles Sturt University. Such experiences benefit the students but also the Archives in engendering interest and promotion of its endeavours.

Collaborations with a range of organizations have been frequent over the years. These raise the Archives' profile and promote its resources through various programs using the Archives' resources (in parentheses). Examples include:

- National Library of Australia (Pixie O'Harris collection)
- National Gallery of Australia (17 artworks)
- The National Museum of Australia (Bushranger exhibition & a three-year speakers' program to celebrate Walter McVitty Publisher)
- Canberra Museum and Gallery (John Winch & David Miller artworks)
- ACT Public Library (exhibition of 57 artworks and unpublished material)
- May Gibbs Trust (developing programs for visiting authors and illustrators)
- National Maritime Museum (Walter Stackpool artworks)
- State Library of Victoria (artworks & manuscripts for the Look! touring exhibition)
- ACT Writers Centre (providing writers who share their craft in workshops)
- ACT (public) Libraries (developing exhibitions and educational programs featuring Lu Rees resources)
- Kangara Waters Retirement Facility & Calvary Retirement Community (providing a year-long program, Story: Mental stimulation, self-reflection and reminiscence, social interaction and personal wellbeing for seniors through Australian children's literature)

Preservation

Another recommendation of the 1987 Subcommittee Report was to ensure an ongoing program of preserving the Archives' resources. This recommendation has mainly been pursued through the following grants:

- Improve the Primary Housing of Works of Art on Paper' (1994)

- Preservation Rehousing and Training of Volunteers in Small Archives (2001)
- Preserving and Promoting the Lu Rees Archives Artwork for Research and Exhibition Purposes (2010)
- Production of a Significance Report and a Preservation Needs Report by external experts who examined the Archives (2011)
- Digitising audiotapes about Australian children's literature in order to preserve, promote discovery and deliver access (2012, tbc)

Conclusion

Over the years, the Lu Rees Archives has listened carefully to those with expertise who speak about the Archives' potential and where it might position itself in the field of Australian children's literature. The Archives deliberates through its Management Committee, made up of community experts from organizations with like-minded interests. The Archives aims to listen and learn, cooperate and collaborate. Not everything desired can be achieved due to the limitations of available resources. What do we need and want? A short list includes staff, space, and secure long-term funding.

Lu Rees, the founder of this now significant collection, never let limitations be a daunting factor. She sought ways and means to get around, make a way through, or find a new approach to achieve the ultimate aim of creating a national collection of Australian children's literature. This same doggedness is characteristic of those currently propelling the Lu Rees Archives into the future. With time, what is important will be achieved. The Archives knows where it has been and carefully documents developments and achievements in its annual reports (The Children's Book Council of Australia ACT Branch and The Library, University of Canberra. Lu Rees Archives Annual Report, 2000-). It operates under a strategic plan for the future, and marks off annual achievements in each year's action plan (The Children's Book Council of Australia ACT Branch and The Library, University of Canberra. Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature Strategic Plan, 2011-2015). The Lu Rees Archives grew out of a modest idea and has already achieved significance. Its potential is limited only by its present resources.

References

- Alderman, B. (1989) 'Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature: A Guide to the Collections', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 11, 7-12.
- Alderman, B. & Hyland, M., (Eds) (1989) *Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature: A Guide to the Collections*. School of Communication, Canberra College of Advanced Education, Canberra, ACT.
- Alderman, B. (2004) 'Retirement Message', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 26, 4.
- AustLit (2012) The Australian Literature Resource. Available from: <http://www.austlit.edu.au>. [Accessed 26 May 2012].

- The Children's Book Council of Australia ACT Branch and The Library, University of Canberra (2000-) 'Lu Rees Archives Annual Report'. *Available from:* <http://www.canberra.edu.au/lu-rees/publications/annual-reports>. [Accessed 26 May 2012].
- The Children's Book Council of Australia ACT Branch and The Library, University of Canberra (2011) Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature Strategic Plan, 2011-2015. *Available from:* http://www.canberra.edu.au/lu-rees/publications/strategic_plans. [Accessed 26 May 2012].
- Crittenden, V. (2005) 'My 25 Years with the Lu Rees Archives', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 27, 8-9.
- Crotty, A. (2005) 'The 25th Anniversary of the Lu Rees Archives at the University of Canberra Library', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 27, 6-7.
- Cultural Gifts Program (2012) Australian Government Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport. *Available from:* <http://www.arts.gov.au/cgp>. [Accessed 27 May 2012].
- Hyland, M. (1998) 'The LUREES Project', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 10, 26-29.
- Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature (2012). *Available from:* <http://www.canberra.edu.au/lu-rees>. [Accessed 29 May 2012].
- Meyers, M. (2001) 'AustLit: Lu Rees Archives Data Migration', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 23, 25-29.
- Powell, G. (2011) 'Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature: Assessment of Significance', Report, 18pp.
- Rees, L. (1978?) *A Brief History of the Canberra Branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia, 1957-1978*. Canberra?, Canberra Branch of the Children's Book Council?
- Rees, L. (1981) Letter to Australian children's publishers, 17 December 1981.
- Rees, L. (2001) 'The Children's Book Council Collection of Children's Books by Australian Authors', *The Lu Rees Archives: Notes, Books and Authors*, 1, 3-5.
- Saxby, M. (2004) 'Researching Australian Children's Literature', *Australian Library Journal*, 53, 1, pp81-91. *Available from:* <http://www.alia.org.au/publishing/alj/53.1/full.text/saxby.html>. [Accessed 26 May 2012].
- Subcommittee Report (1987) Children's Book Council of Australia, ACT Branch Canberra College of Advanced Education / Lu Rees Archives, Management Committee. Canberra College of Advanced Education, Canberra, ACT.



Biographical Note

Dr Belle Alderman AM is Emeritus Professor of Children's Literature and has been Collections Development Manager (now Director) of the Lu Rees Archives of Australian Children's Literature since 1990. She was an academic at the University of Canberra from 1973 to 2005, teaching,

researching and publishing in the fields of children's literature, creative writing, librarianship and archives. She was awarded the Nan Chauncy Award, the Dromkeen Medal and made a member of the Order of Australia (AM). These awards mainly relate to her service and contributions to children's literature.