



Children's Book Network

Annual Report for 2014





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INTRODUCTION

Children's Book Network (CBN) is about exactly what it says – children, books and networking.

Persuading children and books to be friends is a challenge worldwide. Motivation to read is decreasing in the face of competition from a dozen different media types. But a child – or a person – has to be able to read before any screen, however interactive. Reading, in this information age, has become a critical skill. More important even than that, books are a place of imagination and freedom, where anything can happen and anything is possible. Reading is amazing. But only by enjoying reading will our children learn to read well – and enjoy reading more.

Founded late in 2011 by writers Gcina Mhlophe, Lesley Beake and Sindiwe Magona, CBN continues to work passionately to bring the excitement of books and reading to children, to make reading cool.



HOW WE WORK



When CBN conducts a workshop, we take dynamic, exciting and challenging ideas with us. We work with communities in the rural Cederberg Mountains and in the informal settlement at Red Hill, above Simon's Town. We work with children who do not have a happy experience of books and reading. We aim to change that.

A typical workshop might include drummers, a performance poet, motivational speakers, writers and illustrators and young mentors. Activities range from photojournalism to map-making, writing poetry, observing, debating just sitting quietly, listening – and reading. Our participants listen with their whole being. The pictures of them on our website are echoed by our memories of their eyes – bright and interested, focused and often moved or amused. This approach can change the way children think about books and stories, about reading.

Books are at the core of every workshop – books, and texts taken from books that may be too long or too difficult in their entirety. We want our children to hear beautiful words, beautiful ideas. We want to switch them on to reading and the pleasure and fun of it as well as the usefulness. Each workshop includes time for silent reading and carefully chosen books that relate to the workshop theme.

The process has to be given time – we like to hold workshops over two full days with a story event somewhere in between. It needs follow-up. We need to go back - frequently. In Clanwilliam, for example, we alternate the workshops between children in Grades 5, 6, and 7 (our target age group of ten to twelve year-olds) and have Saturday Story sessions where anyone in that age group can come and take part in related activities. In addition there is a story celebration associated with each workshop, which may be attended by a much larger number of children.

Our website is also critical – and will become more useful as time passes and more work by children is published there.

For information of any kind, but most particularly details of our three main focuses – Children, Books and Network - please go to the following links:

- www.childrensbook.co.za/children
- www.childrensbook.co.za/books
- www.childrensbook.co.za/network



OVERVIEW OF 2014

We feel we are going in the right direction. More children keep coming and many return over and over again to our workshops. We can see the difference in their attitude and response to books and reading. We continue to build relationships with other reading and cultural organizations and work with them.

In some ways 2014 was a difficult year. We lost Richard Parsons after a long illness, a dear friend, supporter and board member who was part of CBN from the first day. We shall miss him.

This was also the year of transition from a group of volunteers to a more established organization with the correct structures in place. A great deal of time and energy has been given to governance and financial matters and we have been extremely fortunate to have the advice and guidance of Roy Zazeraj in this. At first stating firmly that he could not be on the board, Roy is now our chairman and has introduced two other members of Newlands Rotary Club to CBN's board as well.



- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/09/08/cbn-loses-fine-friend

We welcomed Swedish Visitors, introduced iPads and Rock Gongs into the workshops, recruited staff and trustees and held a fundraiser and launch party. There were many fun and successful workshops as well as other events. It has been a busy year in every way.

In 2015 we will be working closely with the Clanwilliam Dam Community Project (CDCP) that will facilitate many CBN workshops in Clanwilliam. Negotiating this cooperation took a good deal of time and energy.

Rotary Clubs Newlands and Cape of Good Hope continue to take a strong interest in CBN and Rotary Skellefteå in Sweden has renewed their support for the coming year. We have further support coming in from Book Clubs in South Africa and through a network of storytellers in the USA. We have also enjoyed support from Rotarian Dudley Smith in Britain and his daughter Rose Bundock in Kalk Bay. The network continues to expand.



- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/11/25/clanwilliam-dam-and-cbn

WORKSHOPS

Workshops are the core activity of CBN and we are using the experience gained from three years of workshops to make Toolboxes – kits of reading materials and activities that will help to spread the work CBN is doing.

The Cederberg Winter Workshop is given in more detail below. The others are accessible on our website, with links provided.



Cederberg Stories

We held two major workshops in Clanwilliam this year and several smaller events. As always we started and ended each session with stories and books on the themes we were working with. This means books are read, discussed and enjoyed on six different occasions (sometimes more) in each workshop day.

The first two-day event was held at the end of February and was on the theme of Family History, facilitated by Professor John Parkington. There were twelve participants from Grade Seven on both days.

For our Winter Workshops twenty-five children from three schools in the Cederberg took part in a four-day workshop at Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project (CLLP) between 30 June and 3 July. It was quite an experience.



- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/03/02/family-history-workshop
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/07/07/rock-gong-workshop-clanwilliam
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/08/15/writing-songs-children-cederberg-and-red-hill
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/08/09/shadow-puppets-story-telling
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/08/21/clapping-games-and-chords

Red Hill

We held three extended workshops with the children of Red Hill, one with Swedish students, one with the theme of the Snow Goose and one with the Rock Gongs and musicians.

Swedish Visit

Swedish visitors: Philip Cohen of Rotary Skellefteå brought a teacher and four 18 year-old students to visit CBN at the beginning of March. They experienced a workshop with the children of Red Hill at Simon's Town library facilitated by Anele Mhlahlo, Phumla Gqobaka and Lesley Beake. The young people worked together on shared experiences of being young in a difficult time. The first day was far more successful and we heard many connections being made over lunch, but the visit to the informal settlement had a profound effect on the Swedish visitors and they found it difficult to overcome feelings of guilt about the lives they led in comparison to these living conditions. The Red Hill children made a spirited and emotional speech to reassure them.

In hindsight, the Swedish youngsters and their teacher should have been better prepared (they had not looked at our website, for example) and it would have helped CBN if they had communicated what they wanted to achieve. But a connection was definitely made. The visitors auctioned the letters on a keyboard to raise funds to buy two much appreciated iPads for CBN. Results are impossible to measure in this case, but we think an effective connection was made.

- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/03/03/workshop-swedish-students-simons-town
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/03/25/tour-around-red-hill-swedish-students
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/03/25/redhill-and-swedish-children-work-together



The Snow Goose

Almost every book and text we have worked with in the last two years has been African. This time we decided to show the participants how books can help them fly – like the Snow Goose in Paul Gallico’s 1941 novella.

This workshop was different in many ways. We were introducing the iPad project to Red Hill children, taking them out of Africa and into the cold world of the Arctic tundra and the English winter, challenging them to read and listen.

Several things stand out about this workshop. Firstly the ability of children - children who don’t read for pleasure - to relate to a story from outside their immediate experience. (Never underestimate children.) Secondly their instant empathy with the technology (which some of us, on a sliding scale related to age) had struggled with.



- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/05/24/may-workshop-red-hill-children

Music with rock gong, guitar and cello

On 16 and 17 July children from Red Hill informal settlement attended a CBN workshop at Simon's Town Library. Seventeen children attended on both days, with some changes in the group after day one, and they travelled on two minibus taxis to the venue.

There was an exciting programme involving making and performing a play with shadow puppets, composing and performing songs, writing short stories on the iPads and making music with rock gongs and musicians. The rock gongs were specially brought, by UCT, from the Karoo and a selection was chosen by Emily Hallinan who had worked with them and the children in Clanwilliam a week previously. There was a strong musical team of facilitators including croc E mores (who facilitated on both days), John Woodland and Robert Jeffrey with his cello on Day Two.

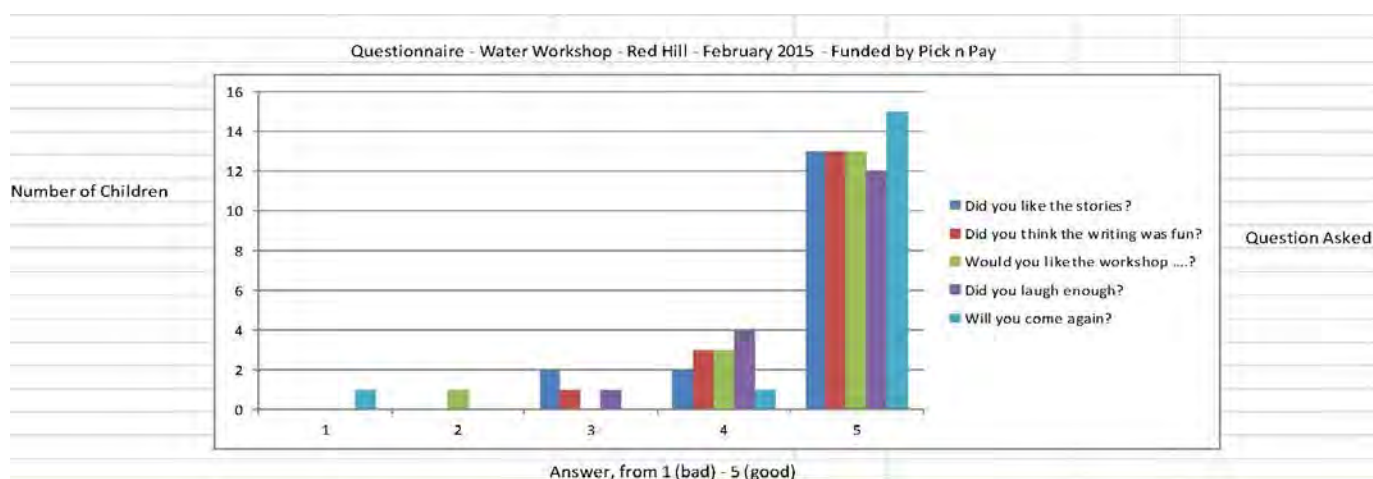


- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/07/23/red-hill-winter-workshop-2014

Water Workshop

This short workshop was funded by a donation from Pick n Pay supermarket and recruited publisher Fiona McGregor from Cambridge University Press, who has been a loyal supporter of CBN since the beginning. She brought some non-fiction books with her from CUP's Rainbow Reading series and showed the children that you can do anything with books – demonstrating the truth of this with a fun yoga class, which was enjoyed by everyone, especially our driver Denzil Jehoma.

The graph created from answers to the post-workshop questionnaire, and the picture on the next page are testament to the success of the event.



- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2015/03/02/red-hill-water-workshop



There never seems to be enough TIME. Our friends and facilitators give freely of this most valuable commodity, but we always expect more of ourselves and there are frustrations associated with the fact that we never have enough setting up or debriefing time before and after events. Workshops take every last ounce of energy we have, but it is always worth it.

EVENTS

Saturday Stories

Children in Clanwilliam are frequently invited to Living Landscape on Saturday mornings where they share stories with Lesley Beake, this has become a regular occurrence and the children now announce their (early) arrival by hammering the rock gongs. This initiative will continue into 2015.

Listening Beautifully

In July we held our first fundraiser and launch event at the Centre for the Book with Gina Mhlophe, Anele Mhlahlo, croc E moses and Sindiwe Magona who all gave magnificent and rousing presentations. Cambridge University Press displayed the Rainbow Readers that we use extensively in our workshops and there was a display of children's artwork and writing.

- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/11/04/lovely-review-our-fund-raiser

Book Presentation and donation

We were able to treat the children in Red Hill to a special afternoon when Dianne Hofmeyr visited to present an interactive reading of her book *The Name of the Tree is Bojabi* in conjunction with her publisher, Human and Rousseau. She donated multiple copies of the book to CBN and these will go to Red Hill and Clanwilliam.

- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/09/15/dianne-hofmeyr-presents-name-tree-bojabi



Archaeologists' Workshop

As part of their outreach programme, students from the Archaeology department of the University of Cape Town with ASAPA (the Association of SA Professional Archaeology Students) ran their own workshop with the children of Clanwilliam in conjunction with CBN.

The children were provided with snacks, then story-time, crafts and activities. They had lunch and a reading session where each student was paired up with a child to share stories.

- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/11/24/clanwilliam-workshop-%E2%80%93-fun



War Horse

We joined forces with international theatre organization Assitej to take eleven teenagers (young men) to a performance of War Horse. None of them had ever been to a theatre. They were very moved and thoughtful when they came out after the performance and most gave it the maximum score for *everything* when they were asked to complete an evaluation sheet. Four days before the performance the group attended a theatre workshop giving them some background to the story and the play – which is based on a children's book by Michael Morpurgo.

Funding for the transport to and from the Artscape and for the lunch snacks for both events was from Rotary Cape of Good Hope. Transport for the Workshop was funded by Assitej South Africa. The report Lesley Beake wrote on the momentous occasion can be found below:



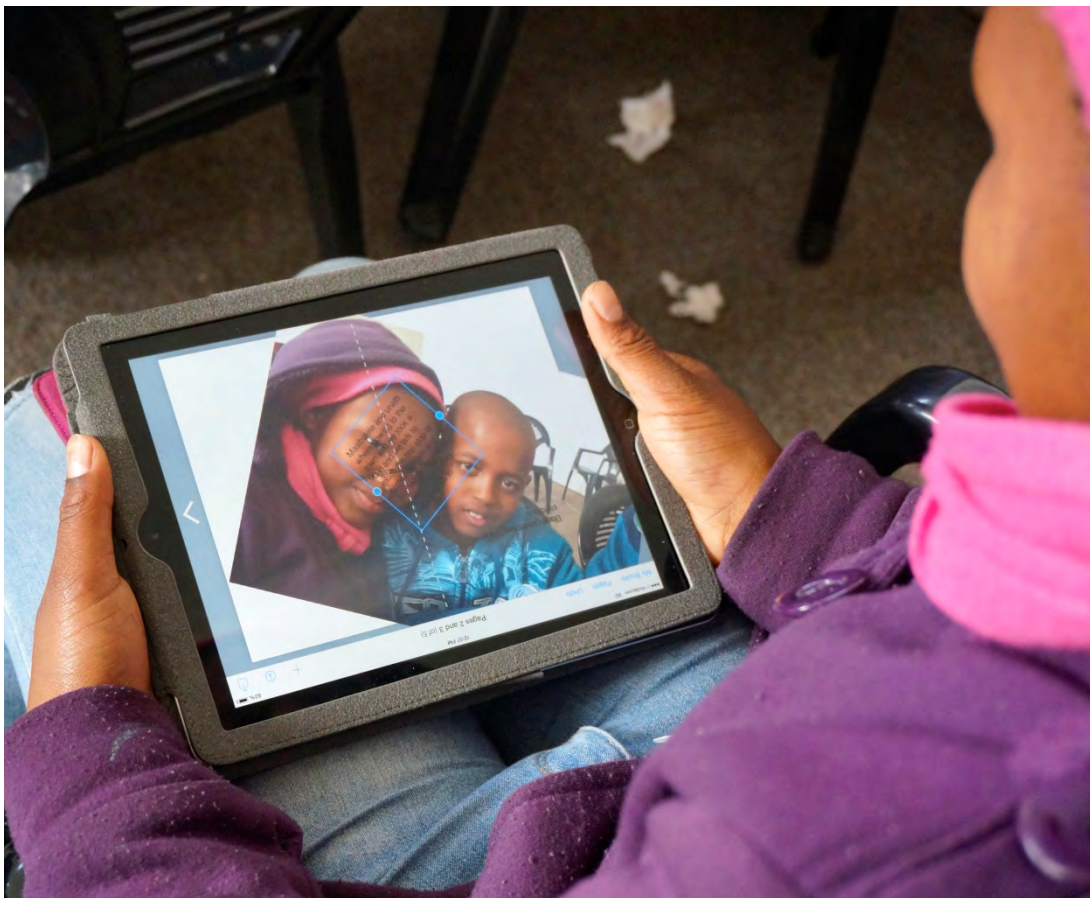
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/12/11/war-horse-and-red-hill

WEBSITE

Our website is constantly updated with new articles and information about our plans and workshops as well as with news about other organizations. We have a daily unique visiting statistic in excess of 45 people per day. Our social media is also very active, with over 440 Facebook 'likes.'

We would like to extend the reach of the website so that it becomes:

- More child-friendly – publishing more work by and for children.
- A place where librarians, teachers and parents can find inspiration and material through the Toolboxes on the site that tie into our workshop themes.
- More social media interaction with children



NETWORK

Other organizations

During 2014 we worked with reporters from Children's Radio Foundation, the Clanwilliam Dam Community Project, Book Dash, Inyathelo, Help!, FunDza, Sharjah Book Fair, Talekani and others, as well as many individuals who have shown great interest and support, and we are looking forward to endorsing these relationships further.

Rotary

Rotary continues to be an invaluable support for us both near and far.

Rotary Cape of Good Hope will always be a friend of CBN. Through them we have been introduced to Rotary Newlands who have been very supportive as well as providing us with three new trustees. We are particularly grateful that their club Treasurer has agreed to handle bank transfers for us until our account can be opened.

Rotary Skellefteå are also once again raising funds for us and we deeply appreciate their encouragement.



PROJECTS

We had a great boost initiating our iPad project borrowing iPads from Digicafe (suppliers of Mac products in Cape Town) which we first trialled at a workshop during a visit from young people from Sweden as part of a Rotary Skellefteå initiative. These are thoroughly enjoyed by children at all our workshops.

For more information about the iPads, please see the following links:

- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/03/10/digicafe-and-rotary-skelleftea-comes-ipad-party
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/03/26/considered-words-4

TOOL BOXES

This project is creating teaching packs for other organisations and individuals to use. This could include activity suggestions (with props), books, training, information on the challenges, games and warm-up exercises and variations on the activities depending on group size and demographics.

This concept is already underway. Storytellers in the USA are raising money (projected \$2 000) and collating material for a theme on Rivers and we are working with the department of Archaeology at UCT on the theme of Time. Both of these will be core themes in the Clanwilliam project.

We are also talking to the Sharjah Children's Reading Festival (in the United Arab Emirates) about the possibility of developing a toolbox for them on the theme of Friends.

This material will appear on the website (free) and also in actual workman's toolboxes which could be sold as part of our fundraising, or donated by interested funders.

You can read more about our ideas via the following link:

- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2015/01/04/toolboxes-%E2%80%93-extending-reach-cbn



ROCK GONGS

In conjunction with the University of Cape Town we have collected ringing rocks from the Karoo. In July 2014 we worked with children in the Cederberg and in Red Hill and with musicians from Cape Town including Robert Jeffrey, Anele Mhlahlo, croc E moes and UCT choir, to produce music with rocks and we hope to turn this into a much larger project.

Children's voices, humming and clapping will be recorded to form part of the rock gong project and we are looking for a composer to write an anthem for the children of South Africa.

For more information about the Rock Gongs see the following links:



- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/05/28/children%E2%80%99s-book-network-and-rock-gong-project
- www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2014/08/21/clapping-games-and-chords

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Governance

Early in the year, under the guidance of Richard Parsons, we began the process of formally registering CBN with a Trust Deed. Lesley Beake, Richard Parsons, Anele Mhlahlo and Sindiwe Magona were the founding trustees. Once this process was complete we then began the NPO and PBO registration processes.

When Richard passed away this meant changing the deed to reflect the three remaining trustees and slowed our progress. It also prevented the opening of our own bank account. We now have a new group of trustees in place: Roy Zazeraaj (Chairman), Lesley Beake, Anele Mhlahlo, Kenny van Aardt and Mike Walwyn who have kindly stepped in to assist a smooth transition into a formally fledged entity.

Our first official board meetings have been held and accounts audited. Anyone who would like to view our accounts should contact: info@childrensbook.co.za

Management

Lesley Beake continues as Director, assisted by Rosemary Bangham. They also have the support of various friends and facilitators during workshops. The amount of work involved in running CBN highlights – again - the issue of operational costs, which are desperately needed before we can continue and grow.

We need to seriously consider a structure that could function in the absence, for whatever reason, of the founding director. We need fresh input and direction – and more, younger members of the team.

BUDGETS & FUNDING

The budgets are included in the following pages. We have tested these costs over nearly three years practical application and they reflect reality. Without funding to cover these, CBN will falter.

These figures have been scrutinised by DGM Trust's assessors (twice) one of whom has said that our operational costs are 'cut to the bone'.

We have also had input from Inyathelo (The South African Institute for Advancement) who agree our projected operational budget is within reasonable expectations.

We are extremely grateful to Dudley Smith who provided funding for us throughout 2014 and an anonymous European donor who sponsored the winter workshops. Also to the Swedish students who visited us during the year, the Archaeology students who made donations as well as running a workshop, UCT, DGMT and other donors who wish to remain anonymous. We could not do this without you. Thank you.

Our funding proposal for 2015 is available as a separate document and our audited accounts are available on request.



Funding requirements for 2015

OPERATING COSTS

Personnel Costs

		Monthly	Annual
LB	Director	R20,000.00	R240,000.00
RB	Administrator	R12,000.00	R144,000.00

Running Costs

Telephone and data	R1,000.00	
Stationery and supplies	R1,000.00	
Insurance	R1,000.00	
Photocopying and printing	R200.00	
Computer Consumables	R2,000.00	
	R5,200.00	R62,400.00

Travel Expenses	R2,000.00	R24,000.00
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Finance and Governance costs

Book-keeping	R2,400.00
Auditing (inc. courier)	R1000.00

Marketing

Printing posters and flyers	R3,000.00
Annual Report & Funding proposals	R2,500.00
Website and multimedia	R2,500.00

TOTAL | R481,800.00/Year



BUDGETS FOR WORKSHOPS

Large workshops 6 X 3-day @ R10, 000 per day	R180,000.00
Small workshops R10, 000 each X 8	R80,000.00
School and library visits @ R1000 each X 12	R12,000.00
Workshops for facilitators 10 X R5000	R50,000.00
Toolbox kits for librarians & teachers 20 X R2000	R40,000.00
Developing and publishing children's work	R30,000.00
TOTAL	R392,000.00

Admin costs @ 10%	R39,200.00
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TOTAL | R431,200.00

ANNUL BUDGET

Operating Costs | R481,800.00

Workshops | R431,200.00

TOTAL | R481,800.00/Year



Funders so far include:

- Assitej South Africa
- Cecil Jowell Charitable Trust
- Clanwilliam Dam Community Project
- Clawer Boots International
- DG Murray Trust
- Help the World to Read
- Hugh Clarke and his wife Mary Cadogan
- Jay Heale
- Parsons Family
- Pick n Pay
- Redham College
- Rotary Cape of Good Hope
- Rotary Skellefteå
- Smith Family
- Stellenbosch University
- Swedish Arts Council
- University of Cape Town with Government of W. Cape
- Individual anonymous donors
- We would also like to express gratitude for all the smaller donations made over the year, those who attended our fundraiser, donations in kind, discounts offered and endless willingness on the part of the public to help.



CONCLUSION

This year has been hard - but we got through it. We know now that we have the capacity to go from strength to strength and to grow and improve exponentially.

What we learned in 2014:

- We offer something of great value that is not being done by other organizations
- We can work with those groups to expand our reach
- Quality is more important than quantity. Numbers of children in workshops cannot be increased. We need to reach more children by other methods – like the toolboxes.
- The children we work with are desperately eager for input and responsive to every kind of activity and stimulation
- Nobody can expect to set up and register a Trust, NPO, PBO and bank account in a matter of weeks!
- Rotary is an invaluable source of amazing people with a full range of useful skills
- We need strategies for the future management of CBN



STAYING IN CONTACT

Our website is: www.childrensbook.co.za We are constantly reporting on our activities here and you can sign up to receive our newsletters at the bottom of the page.

We have an active Facebook page that you can 'like' if you want to hear more about us. Please feel free to share our news far and wide:

www.facebook.com/ChildrensBook

You can also email us on info@childrensbook.co.za if you have any questions, suggestions or funding opportunities.

Thank you to all of you have supported us throughout and thank you to all those who have joined us recently. We are looking forward to sharing the impact of our collective work.

2015 is going to be an amazing year. We are looking forward to it immensely. Join us!



THANKS

Our sincere thanks go to:

Anele Mhlahlo (Violinist and facilitator)

Angela Bidden

Asanda Lobese (Children's Librarian, Clanwilliam)

Assitej South Africa

Association of South African Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology Students

Books for the World (Rotary Newlands)

Buyiswa Ponti (Red Hill Community)

Cambridge University Press

Cecil Jowell Charitable Family Trust (SA)

Cederberg Municipal Libraries

Centre for the Book

Children's Radio Foundation

Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project

croc E moses (Performance poet and musician)

DG Murray Trust

Denzil Jehoma (Transport)

Di and Dave Mohr (photographs and spreadsheet advice)

Dianne Hofmeyr

Dudley Smith (UK) (funding and advice)

Emiline Jacobs (Clanwilliam Library)

Emily Hallinan (Archaeology student and workshop facilitator)

Fiona McGregor

Fundraiser helpers

Hugh Clarke and Mary Cadogan (Ireland)

Jay Heale (Book Editor)

Lizel Koopman (Children's Librarian, Clanwilliam)

Liezel Hofman

Members of the Swedish CBN support group

Natalie Leens (Senior Librarian, Cederberg Municipality)

Patricia Manzana (Red Hill Community)

Philip Cohen (Sweden)

Phumla Gqobaka

Principal and staff of Elizabethfontein Primary School



Principal and staff of Sederberg Primary School
Professor John Parkington
Richard Parsons (SA) and the Parsons Family
Robert Jeffery (cellist and facilitator)
Rose Bundock (Support Red Hill)
Rotary Cape of Good Hope
Rotary Newlands
Rotary Skellefteå (Sweden)
Roy Zazeraaj
SIDA (Swedish aid agency)
Simons Town library
Swedish Arts and Culture
University of Cape Town and W Cape Provincial Government









