

The HU4K Focus



2012-2022

Newsletter 3/2025

Hello to all volunteers and welcome to the third newsletter for 2025. A warm welcome to all new volunteers.

Following on from Bunbury's VNE (Volunteer Networking Event) in May, Margaret River and surrounds held a VNE on the 7th August, 2025 with Susan Kokir, a Registered Specialist Teach speaking about Dyslexia. Susan is passionate about sharing her expertise on Dyslexia and provided a wonderfully informative talk for our volunteers.

I can hardly believe we will all be planning for Christmas. Stay tuned for your respective Christmas luncheons/functions details coming up soon. Save the date listed below.

Thank you most sincerely to each and every one of our valued volunteers. Your commitment and dedication to helping children to read is admirable. You are all VIPs.

Enjoy this latest offering of your Focus newsletter and the last one for 2025. Warmest wishes for the festive season from the HU4K team.

Finally, an Ancient Greek proverb to ponder: "A society grows great when people plant trees under whose shade they know they'll never sit".



Photo above from the Margaret River VNE held on 7th August 2025. Volunteers Lyn (left) and Terry (right) with presenter Sue Kokir.

Top 10 Most Beautiful Libraries in the WORLD

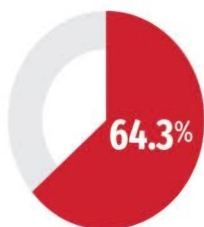
After 2 months of voting, passionate library lovers voted on the world's most beautiful libraries. The top 10 on the list are:

1. Library of Trinity College, Dublin
2. State Library of South Australia
3. Abbey Library of St. Gallen, Switzerland
4. Duke of Humfrey's Library, Oxford UK
5. Admont Abbey Library, Austria
6. Cuypers Library, Amsterdam, Netherlands
7. State Library of Victoria, Australia
8. The Royal Portuguese Cabinet of Reading, Brazil
9. Wiblingen Abbey Library, Ulm, Germany
10. Sainte-Genevieve Library, Paris. France

Of all the magnificent libraries in the world, how delightful that two Australian Libraries made the list. www.1000libraries.com

Volunteers in Australia

Percentage of the population aged 15 and over who volunteer



Total Australian residents aged 15 and over who volunteer



SAVE THE DATE:

Margaret River & Augusta Christmas function is to be held Friday 28th of November.

Bunbury & surrounds Christmas function is to be held on Monday 15th December at the Eaton Hive, Chatterhouse St, Eaton.

Busselton Christmas function is to be held on Friday 19th of December.

Keep an eye out through your normal contact channels for details.



HU4K Focus invited Jenny Norris from Donnybrook to participate in the *Spotlight* segment for this newsletter. Many thanks to Jenny for joining in the fun.

How long have you been a HU4K volunteer? I have been a volunteer with Hands Up 4 Kids for 5 years.

What do you like most about being a volunteer? I love seeing the progress in the children's reading throughout the year.

Where did you grow up? I grew up in Fife Scotland, learning to read phonetically in the early 1950's. Old is new again 😊

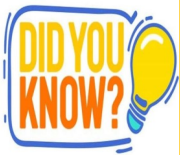
What was your favourite childhood book? We had a wide variety of books in our house, but Enid Blyton books were top of my list.

What is your favourite comfort food? Chocolate needs no preparation and savoured slowly always hits the spot.

What are you reading right now? I am currently reading *Rachel's Holiday* by Marian Keyes.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what would you take with you? A wide brimmed hat, shoes, glasses, a bottle of water, a sheet of plastic to collect more water and any book would be better than none.

Any tips or advice for new HU4K volunteers? Listen and encourage the child, if possible, liaise with the teacher and enjoy the adventure.



Your eyes look in different directions when reading!

Incredible, but true! When reading, each of our eyes looks at a different letter 50% of the time.

The lines of sight can both intersect and diverge.



What do you call an old snowman?

Water

Timely Travel Tips

Scams are only increasing and they are becoming more sophisticated catching out even the savviest computer person. If it seems too good to be true, then it most likely is!

For volunteers who may be considering travel in the holidays here are a few tips to keep in mind:

Fake holiday rentals – holiday homes that are not actually real. Once they have your deposit they disappear.

Timeshare Scams – you are offered an amazing deal on timeshare but you have to pay big money up front. As above, the property may not actually be real.

“Free” holiday offers – Nothing is life is free! You have been told you've won a holiday but to claim it you need to outlay money? That is not a prize!

Dodgy Travel Packages – heavily discounted packages that require upfront payment only to find the trip doesn't exist or wasn't what it was purported to be.

Fake Airline Tickets – scammers sell fake airline tickets, that leave victims out of pocket and nowhere to go.

Phishing Emails – we are all accustomed to scam emails now, but there are travel ones that cleverly look real but may not be. They will be seeking personal information.

What to look out for? Up front fees, price seems too good to be true, you are being pressured into making a decision, the communication is incorrect (ie grammar etc).

What to do? Research the company, contact the company, ask a friend or family member to look at it. You can find out more on the Australian Government's *Act Now. Stay Secure.* website: <https://www.actnowstaysecure.gov.au>

Braille Literacy

A recent ABC online article by Dr Amanda Tink at the University of SA and Dr Ben Whitburn, Assoc Professor of Education at the University of Southampton was insightful into the learnings of sight impaired children. Although modern technology has provided children who are blind with ways to learn through audiobooks and screen-reading software the article explains there is actually significant benefits for children who are blind to learn braille.

Decades of research has demonstrated that blind children who use braille to spell have better phonological awareness and can decode texts same as their sighted students. It has also shown to increase academic success, and thereby better self-esteem.

A single cell of braille comprises of six dots arranged in two columns of three, creating a tactile pattern that allows for 64 possible combinations. It was invented by Louis Braille who invented it in 1852.

If you would like to read more, you can find the article: <https://www.abc.net.au/education/braille-literacy-and-achieving-equal-access-for-blind-children/104626706>

"You can find magic
wherever you look. Sit
back and relax, all you
need is a book."-

Dr. Seuss



“
**Volunteers do not
necessarily have the time;
they just have the heart.**

Elizabeth Andrew



"Okay, we need volunteers to
play 'Beat the Croc.'"

Happy 80th Birthday CBCA

The Children's Book Council of Australia is a not for profit, volunteer-run national organisation which aims to engage the community with literature for young Australians. This year marks the CBCA's 80th birthday.

Each year the CBCA promotes their annual book awards. The awards bring to the attention of children, parents, teachers, and everyone interested in children's literature books of high merit.

Children's Book Week is a highlight on their annual calendar and one that many children enjoy as they can dress up as their favourite book. It is a fabulous way to develop literary connections for children, parents, authors, illustrators, and teachers in a fun and engaging way.

This years' theme is *Book an Adventure*.



(above) Bunbury Public School, taken approx. 1955. Image credited to Bunbury Museum & Heritage Centre, Bunbury.

The first Bunbury public school officially opened on 9th May 1895 with 182 children on the roll including infants. Prior to then, there were a few private schools where girls and boys were taught separately. The first Bunbury public school was in the building known as the "Paisley centre" taking its name from the employed Headmaster TW Paisley.

There is a long history of the beginning of school education in Bunbury and if you would like to explore further visit the Bunbury Museum & Heritage Centre.

Images credited to: Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre, Bunbury, May 2025.

It is fascinating to look back at early education. Do you know the first school in your town or region? If you do and would like to share, please email Suzanne at suzgratwick@gmail.com to include in future newsletters.

Early festive wishes to all in our Hands
Up 4 Kids community. Stay safe and well.