



# **MEET THE CREATORS!!!**



# ISOBEL JOY TE AHO-WHITE

(Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Wairoa, Kāi Tahu)

Illustrator



“I am an artist, author and musician who has illustrated over 30 books for children. My favourite subject matter is pūrākau Māori and I often incorporate kōwhaiwhai and native plantlife into my work.”

Books illustrated by Isobel:



## Five Fun Facts...

1. She likes to work curled up under a blanket; it helps her focus.
2. Her random talent is warbling.
3. Art class was her favourite part of school.
4. ‘Kiki’s Delivery Service’ is her favourite movie.
5. Her favourite childhood books were: ‘Funnybones’, ‘Goosebumps’ and ‘The Famous Five’.

Isobel is most interested in fables, fairytales, folk tales, pūrākau, and ancient forms of wisdom passed through generations by way of storytelling. Her work reflects this and incorporates symbolism that creates an additional layer of meaning.

Find out more at: [izzyjoyart.com](http://izzyjoyart.com)



# JAMES RUSSELL

Author & Publisher



“Reading rules! Reading an amazing book fills my cup like nothing else can. When I write, I imagine myself as a camera because readers form a picture in their head.”

## Five Fun Facts...

1. When working as a chef, he came across a potato the size of a rugby ball. He roasted it for a couple of hours and served it to a customer!
2. His favourite word is ‘Squeegee’.
3. The first concert he went to was Bobby Brown. He says it was terrible!
4. If he wasn’t a writer he would be a farmer.
5. His favourite holiday spot in Aotearoa is any beach in Northland.



James is a bestselling children's writer and has won multiple awards including the Storylines Gaelyn Gordon Award, Storylines Notable Book awards. He has also been a finalist in the New Zealand Book Awards for Children & Young Adults, Booklovers Awards, and the NZ Booksellers Awards.

Find out more at: [dragonbrothersbooks.com](http://dragonbrothersbooks.com)



# NED BARRAUD

*Author & Illustrator*



“The best thing about being a writer and illustrator is being able to do what you love.

It's hard sometimes to stay inspired and keep motivated. But getting your new book in the post rocks!”



## Five Fun Facts...

1. He loves being out in nature: tramping, swimming, paddleboarding, mountainbiking...
2. The first concert he went to was Pearl Jam.
3. At school, he once got hit in the face by a baseball because he wasn't watching the game.
4. His favourite word is 'espresso'.
5. He has always been arty, and got in trouble at school for daydreaming and sketching in his maths book.

**Ned is a children's author and illustrator known for nature-focused books that blend science, art, and storytelling to inspire young readers.**

**Find out more at: [nedbarraud.com](http://nedbarraud.com)**

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# DAVID RILEY

*Author & Publisher*

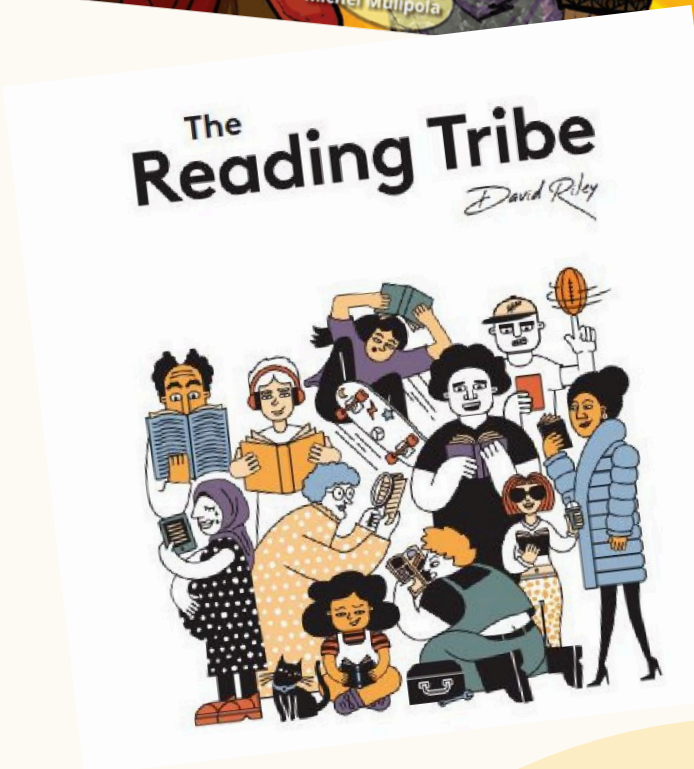


**"I love sharing stories that inspire people. The word 'inspire' means 'breathe into.' My hope for every book I make is that the story will breathe life into whoever reads it especially if they have lost some hope."**



## Five Fun Facts...

1. His favourite Kiwi author is Joy Cowley.
2. His most played artist on Spotify is Fat Freddy's Drop.
3. If he wasn't a writer, he would be a Theatre Director.
4. His favourite food is seafood.
5. At school, he would have been found playing sports on the field at lunchtime.



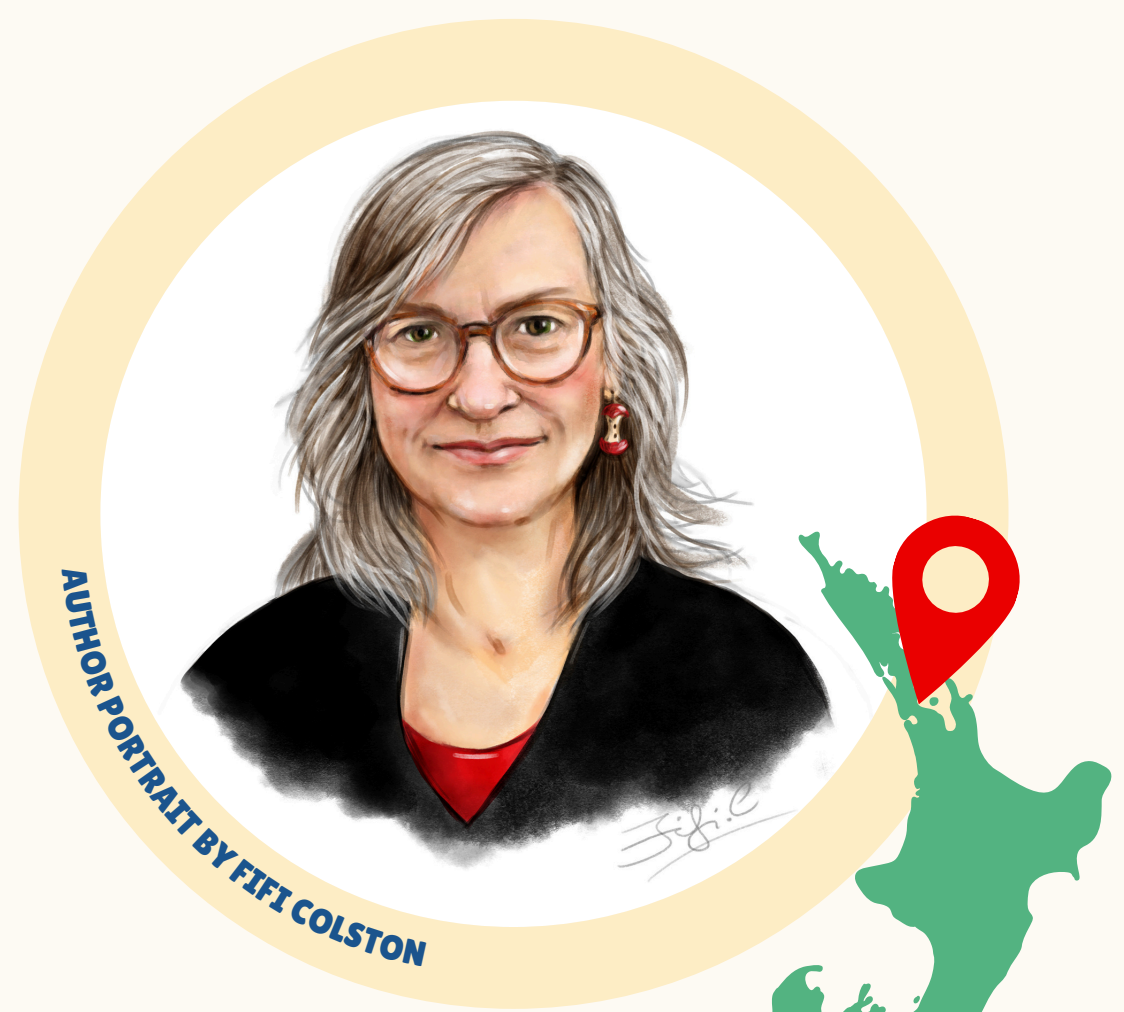
**David is a South Auckland based teacher and children's author. As well as writing and publishing inspiring stories, he is passionate about encouraging young people to share their own stories.**

**Find out more at: [readingwarrior.com](http://readingwarrior.com)**



# MELINDA SZYMANIK

Author

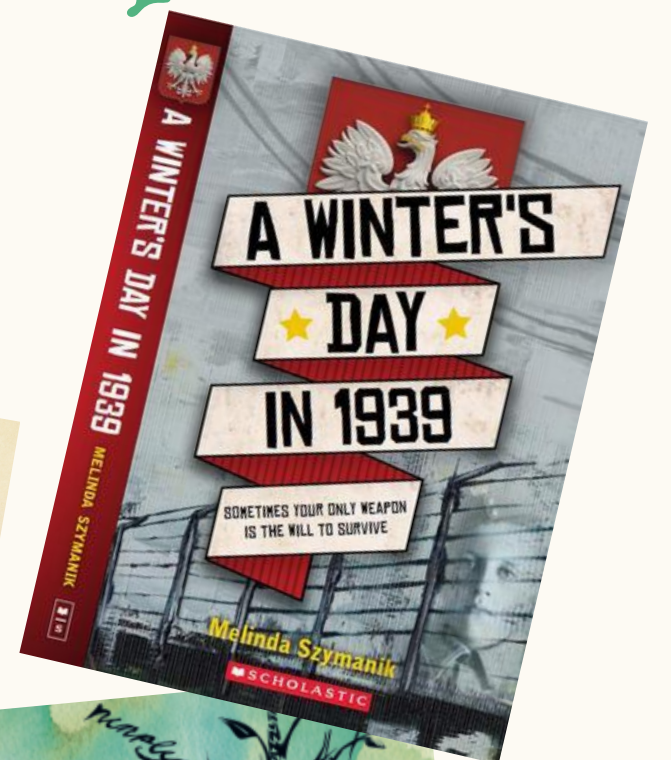
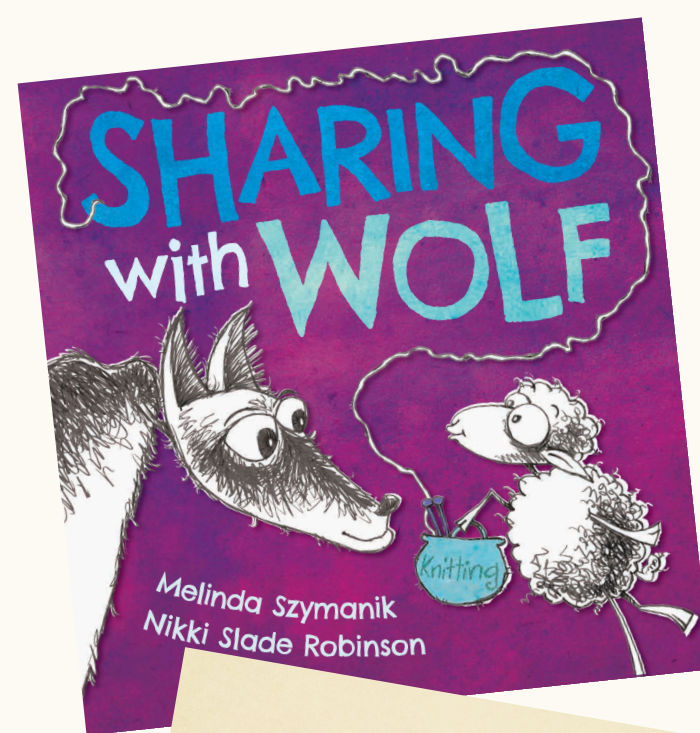


"I want readers to fall in love with words and stories like I did, so I'm always trying to make words do gymnastics in my books, so people can see how cool they are and what they are capable of."

## Five Fun Facts...

1. As a grown up, she learned Irish Dancing.
2. She uses em dashes, commas, parentheses and colons a lot to make really long sentences.
3. Her favourite snacks while writing are coffee, chocolate, roasted nuts, and fruit.
4. Least favourite school subject: P.E
5. She loves travelling the world - especially to London and NYC.

Find out more at:  
[melindaszzymanik.blogspot.com](http://melindaszzymanik.blogspot.com)



As soon as she learned to read Melinda became obsessed with words and stories. Ever since, she has collected words, turning them into stories, books and poems.

She is a very good speller and believes there is no such thing as reading too many books.



# SALLY SUTTON

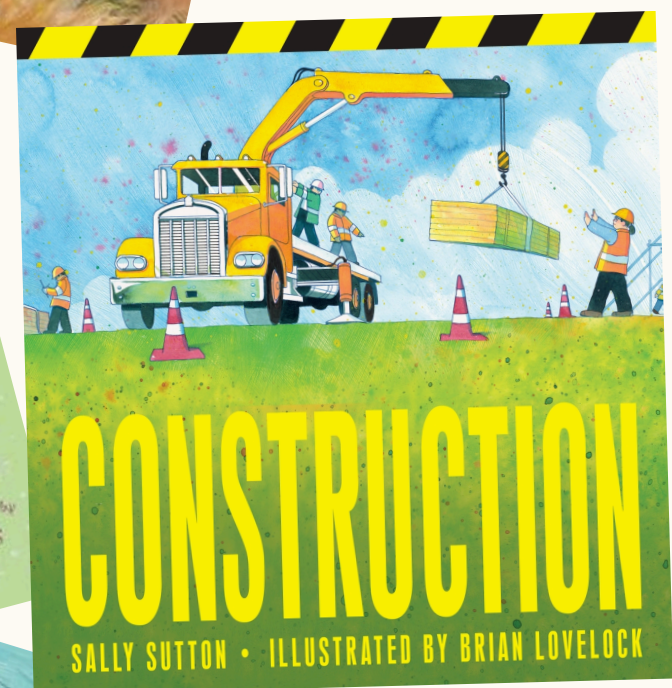
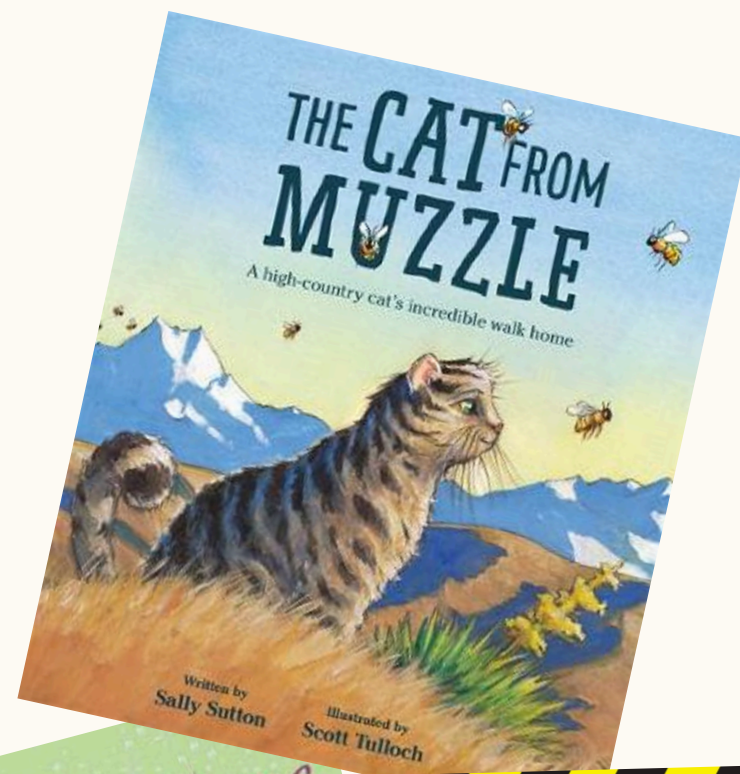
Author



**“If I wasn’t a writer,  
I would be bored,  
lackadaisical, querulous,  
dejected and woebegone,  
and I would not own a  
thesaurus.”**

## Five Fun Facts...

1. Her favourite teachers were the ones who read stories to the class.
2. Her favourite word is ‘discombobulation’.
3. When writing she tends to use too many exclamation marks!!!!!!
4. She loves learning languages.
5. Sometimes she is up and writing at 4.00 a.m.



**Sally writes picture books,  
junior fiction and school  
productions for Hī Hā.**

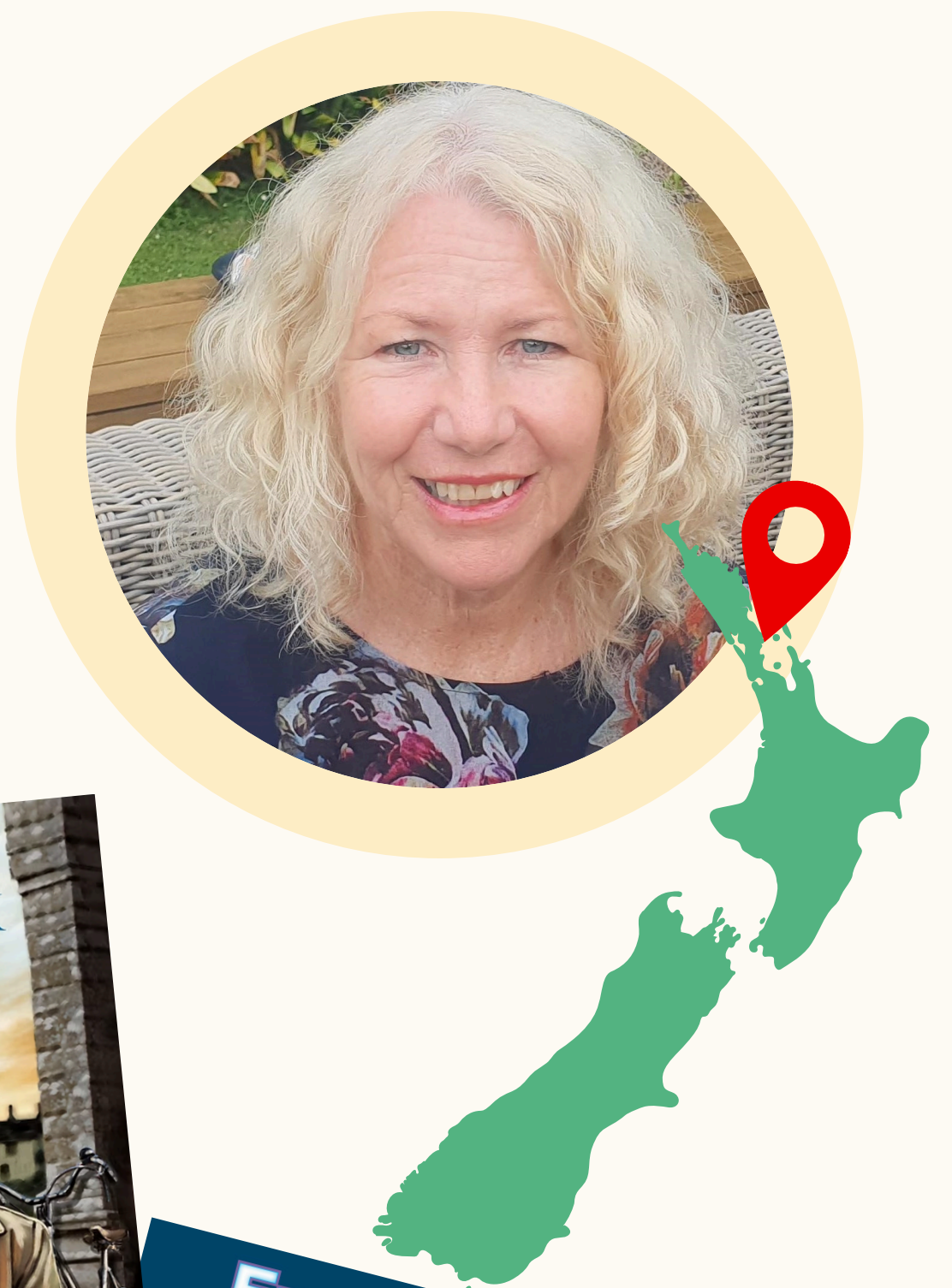
**She loves to rhyme...  
All the time...  
With everyone...  
It's just so fun!**

**Find out more at: [sallysutton.co.nz](http://sallysutton.co.nz)**



# MARIA GILL

Author



“The best thing about being a writer is taking a creative idea and turning it into a book. I love writing true stories that will inspire children to care for our environment or be the best they can be.”



## Five Fun Facts...

1. In her teens, she competed in ice figure skating.
2. If she wasn't a writer, she would be a journalist or photographer.
3. Her family travelled around Australia in a caravan.
4. She rides her bike every day and recently retraced spy Nancy Wake's daring wartime journey in France.
5. At school, she was most likely to be found in the library at lunchtime.

Maria writes exciting stories about real people, animals, history, and science. She loves visiting schools to talk about writing and research. Her books help kids discover amazing facts, brave heroes, and cool adventures from New Zealand and around the world.

Find out more at: [mariagill.co.nz](http://mariagill.co.nz)

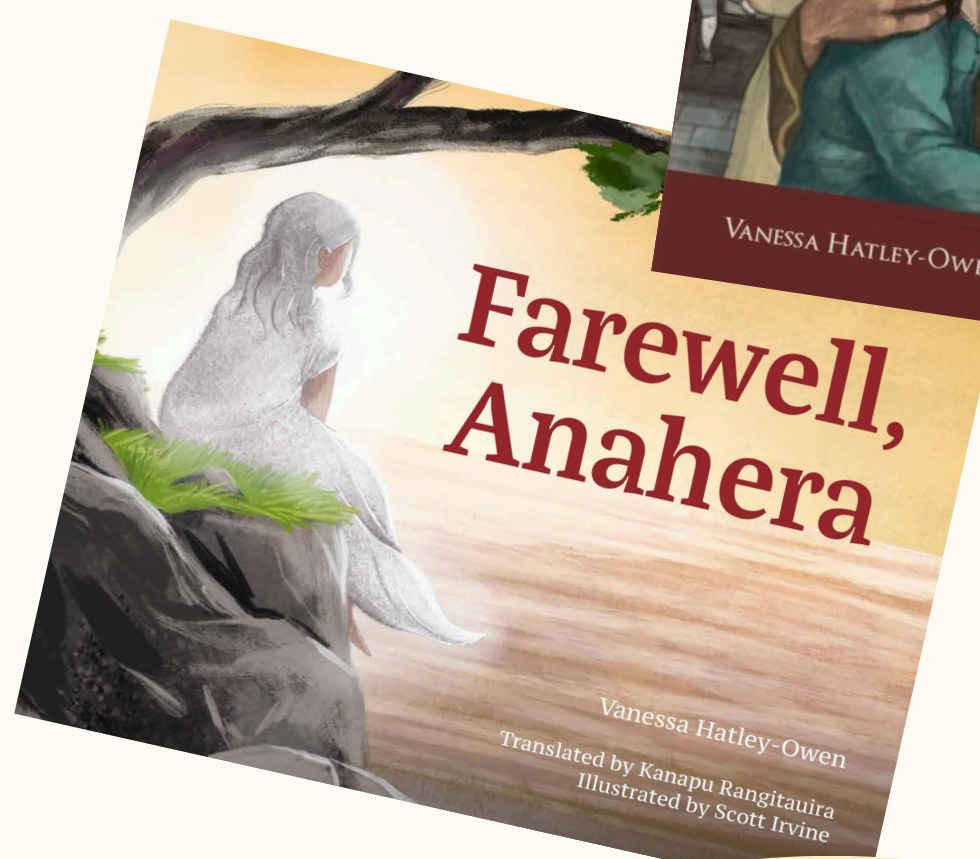
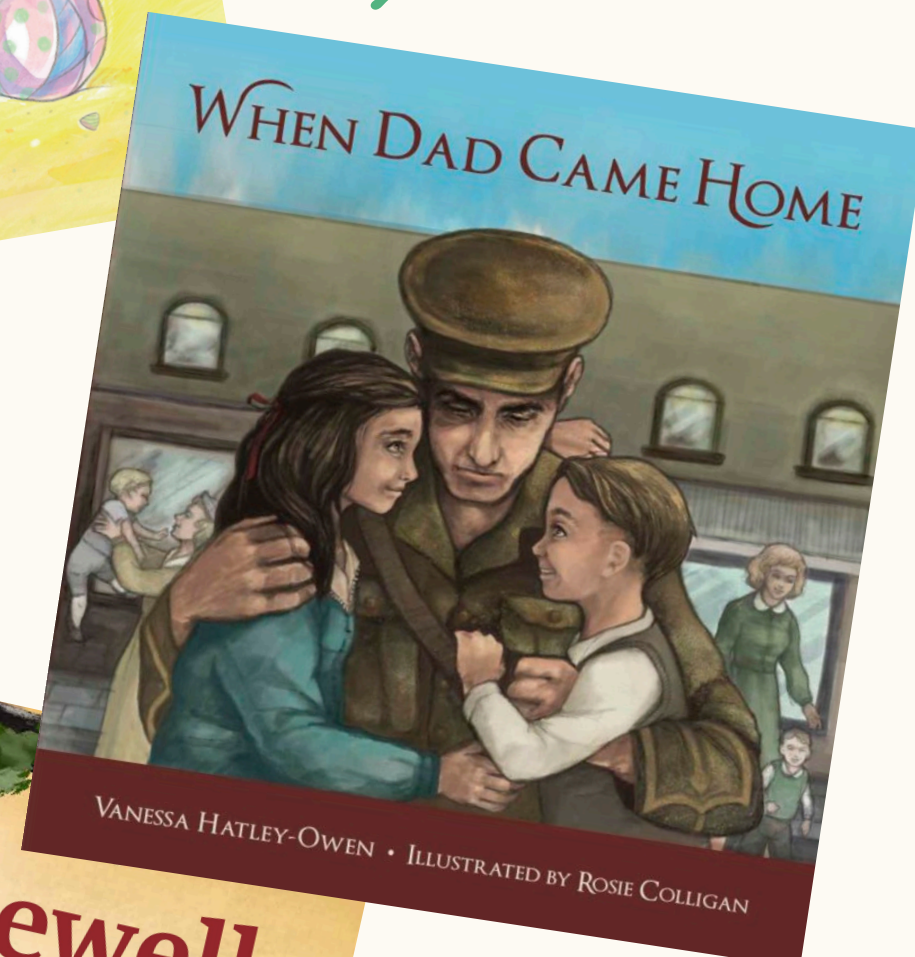
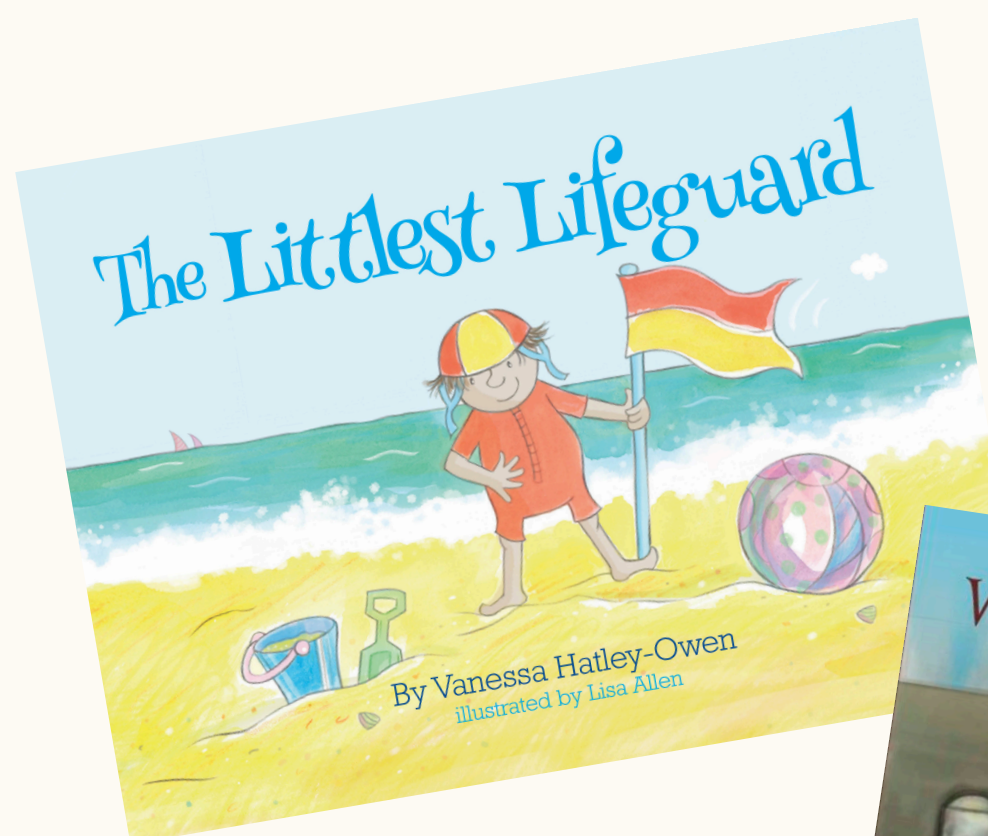


# VANESSA HATLEY-OWEN

*Author*



Vanessa was a day-dreaming child whose nose was permanently stuck in a book. Now, she works as a primary school librarian and enjoys writing books as much as she enjoys reading them.



## Five Fun Facts...

1. Her favourite word is 'oubliette'.
2. She won her school's Year 11 speech competition.
3. Her favourite movie is 'The Princess Bride'.
4. She only passed Year 12 maths by begging her teacher for one extra point.
5. Her favourite native NZ bird is the pūkeko.

***"All books have magic in them... it's the magic of imagination. It's woven into the story by the author and is multiplied by the reader."***

**Find out more at: [vanessahatleyowen.com](http://vanessahatleyowen.com)**

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