



Media Release

NATIONAL EVENT: 5 SEPTEMBER 2012

SONGS OF CROCODILES LAUNCHED ON INDIGENOUS LITERACY DAY, WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

A story written by a young Aboriginal boy in a remote community in the Kimberleys has inspired a composition that will be sung at the Sydney Opera House on Indigenous Literacy Day, Wednesday 5 September 2012.

Indigenous Literacy Day (ILD) will be launched around Australia in a series of activities that include ILF Patron **Thérèse Rein**, Miles Franklin Award-winning author **Kim Scott**, **His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia, Malcolm McCusker**, and a number of ILF ambassadors including **Kate Grenville, Andy Griffiths, Anita Heiss, Sally Morgan and May O'Brien**.

ILF Founder **Suzy Wilson** said that this year more than 20,000 school children will engage in **Great Book Swaps** around the country, and a host of authors including AFL player **Micky O'Loughlin** will speak to help raise the Foundation's goal of \$200,000 on the day. Funds raised will go to core programs to address low literacy levels of Indigenous children living in remote communities around Australia.

Now in its sixth year, ILD is organised by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. This national charity, initiated by the Australian Book Industry, works with the generous support of schools, libraries, individuals, businesses and other organisations across Australia who hold events and donate on the day.

In 2011, the Indigenous Literacy Foundation delivered over 20,000 books in more than 200 remote communities from the Kimberleys in Western Australian to Broken Hill in NSW. During the past three years the Foundation, which does not receive any government support, has gifted over 80,000 new and culturally specific books to Indigenous babies and children up to the age of 15 years old. It has also worked with key organisations that work hand-in-hand with remote communities such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Departments of Health and Indigenous Knowledge Centres.

Only one in five children living in a remote Indigenous community can read or write to the accepted minimum level. Less than 36% of people living in a remote community have access to a library.

"The statistics are shocking and we need to level the playing field so that all Australian children have equal opportunities," Karen Williams, Executive Director of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation said.

How can you be involved? On Wednesday 5 September everyone is invited to participate in Indigenous Literacy Day and make a donation, organise a Great Book Swap or hold a fundraiser. More details are on: www.indigenouliteracyfoundation.org.au

For interviews and further information please contact:

• **Karen Williams, Executive Director: 02 9319 2883 / 0404075924 or email karen@indigenouliteracyfoundation.org.au**

- **SYDNEY EVENT:** SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE, Thérèse Rein, Micky O'Loughlin, Great Book Swap & launch of *Naked Boy & Crocodile Composition, Performance by Darlington Dance Group*, 10-11.30am. Contact Karen Williams (02) 9698 2884.
- **MELBOURNE EVENT:** Wesley College (Glen Waverly Campus) /Cato Hall Great Book Swap with Ambassadors Kaz Cooke, Felix Riebl. Contact Kristin Gill Kristin.Gill@au.penguinigroup.com
- **PERTH EVENT:** Museum of WA, Governor of WA, 11-12.30pm, contact Claire Miller on Ph: (08) 9430 6331
- **BRISBANE EVENT:** Great Book Swap Breakfast with Andy Griffiths, at St Peter Claver College, Riverview. (7-8am) Contact: ILF Founder Suzy Wilson suzy@riverbendbooks.com.au
- **CANBERRA EVENT: 15 SEPTEMBER**, Boori Monty Pryor, Great Book Swap, National Library of Australia.