

NEWS

Historic win for Katrina

BY ALEX GRETGRIX

AFTER being shortlisted last month, Sedgwick's Katrina Nannestad has been announced as the winner of the 2021 ARA Historical Novel Prize in the Children and Young Adult category.

The author, who has spent most of her life teaching and writing novels for children, found herself writing her first historical novel, *We are Wolves*, after sending an interesting tidbit to her publisher.

And now, she can say this "happy accident" has turned into an award for her passion.

"I am honoured and incredibly excited to have won the ARA Group Historical Novel Prize in the CYA category," Ms Nannestad said.

"Stories with lovable characters have the power to bring history alive in a way that is meaningful and accessible to young readers.

"We want our children to explore the events and the big issues that have shaped our world, but we want them to be safe while doing it.

"We also want them to love literature, historical fiction is

“

The prize is a great encouragement to me as I continue to write historical fiction - a process that is both challenging and rewarding.

We are Wolves author Katrina Nannestad

a perfect medium for achieving all this.

"I am so very grateful to the ARA Group that sponsors this prize and to the judges who have deemed my book worthy of winning. This is a generous award that makes a real difference in a writer's life."

We are Wolves follows Liesl, Otto and baby Mia Wolf as they flee their home in East Prussia and learn to live wild, competing with thousands of other displaced war

orphans who roam the forests and fringe farmlands of their conquered homeland.

In its second year of operation, the ARA Historical Novel Prize is worth a total of \$100,000 in prize monies.

In the Children and Young Adult (CYA) category, the winner will receive \$30,000, while the two shortlisted authors will receive \$5,000 each.

Chair of the judging panel Paul Macdonald praised Ms Nannestad on her work.

"This outstanding novel demonstrates great writing, extensive research and great appeal for young-and not so young-readers," he said.

"We are Wolves is simple, poetic and deeply moving.

"It's a brilliant novel raising issues about identity, family, trust and survival.

"Ultimately it is a tale of hope."

The 2021 judging panel for the CYA category included Paul McDonald, Thuy On and Catherine Mayo.

For more information about the awards and its past and current winners, visit hnsa.org.au/ara-historical-novel-prize



Sedgwick author Katrina Nannestad has won the ARA Historical Novel Prize for her book 'We are Wolves'. Picture: SUPPLIED