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Renowned author to share the magic of reading in Logan

THE much-loved Australian classic children's book *Possum Magic* almost never made it to bookshelves.

Written by South Australian author Mem Fox the book was initially rejected nine times over five years before a publishing deal was secured.

The book, Ms Fox's first publication, became (and continues to be, to this day) the best-selling children's book in Australia with nearly five million copies sold worldwide.

The classic book is a staple in most family's reading lists and has been shared between countless generations of Australians.

Now an author of more than 40 books for young children including *Time for Bed, Where Is The Green Sheep?* and *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes* translated into 19 languages and the book for parents *Reading Magic*, Ms Fox will be in Logan City in May for the annual celebration of *Under 8s Week*.

Logan City Council Libraries and Logan Together have joined forces to present for free *An Evening with Mem Fox* from 6.30pm to 8.30pm on May 24 at the Logan Entertainment Centre.

Mayor-Elect Luke Smith said parents, carers and early childhood educator passionate about giving Logan children the best start in life were invited to attend this special session.

"Literacy is Mem's passion and she will impart her wisdom and thoughts, regale us with tales both true and bold and challenge us to make a difference in the lives of children," he said.

"*Story time with Mem* will also be held in two sessions for children from 10.30am and 1.30pm on 25 May at the Logan Entertainment Centre and we encourage people to register as tickets are already proving very popular.

Logan Together Director, Matthew Cox, said that the two *Story time with Mem* sessions will highlight the power of books and storytelling as a way for parents to connect with their little ones and fire up young minds.

"Mem will share her secrets for making books fun and bringing the imaginary to life" he said.

"Reading together is such an important and effective way to develop language and literacy skills in young children."

Tickets for both events with Mem are free but limited and can be booked at Logan Entertainment Centre by calling (07) 3412 5626 weekdays from 9.30am to 4.30pm or online at <http://www.loganentertainmentcentre.com.au/whats-on>

Mayor-Elect Smith said since its release in 1983 the popularity of *Possum Magic* has never waned as parents who were read the book when they themselves were children now share it with their families.

Today Ms Fox is a retired Associate Professor of Literacy Studies (Flinders University, South Australia) and one Australia's most highly regarded picture-book authors.

Celebrate Under 8s Week runs from May 21 to 28 and the Logan events are part of *the First 5*

Forever family literacy initiative funded by the Queensland Government.

More information about other free early literacy sessions for children aged up to five years is available by picking up a copy of *What's On* guide at any Logan City Council Library or online at www.loganlibraries.org/whats-on