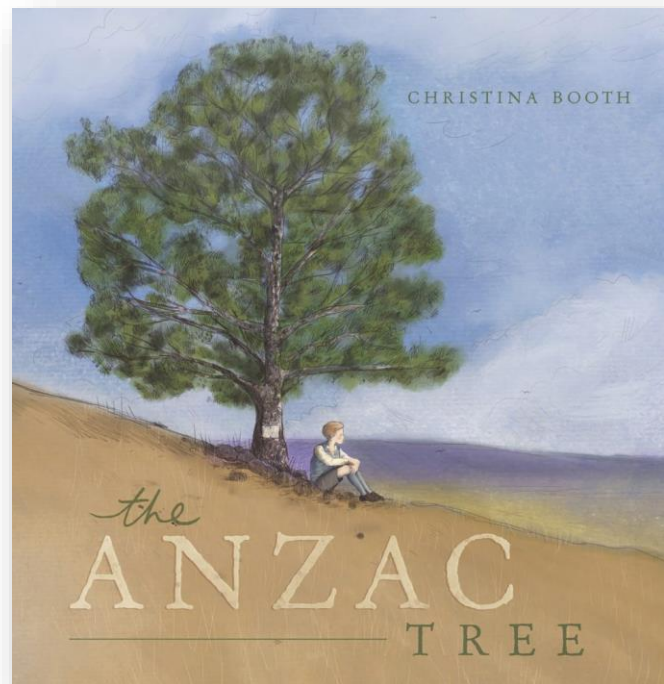


The ANZAC Tree

Author/Illustrator
Christina Booth



I live on a big farm a long way from anywhere.

We have sheep, wheat and cows, chickens, my dog Shep and a cat called Toffee.

I like to climb the big hill and look out at forever.

Percy and Roy like to climb up here too. Before they left they planted two trees.

'To remember us by,' said Percy.

Before Roy and Percy Pinner leave Tasmania, bound for the Great War, they both plant trees. Only one brother returns, and only his tree survives. That tree becomes a place of solace and of commemoration for the family each Anzac Day. Successive generations of the family grow up and go to different wars – the Second World War, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan. Their stories are narrated by the children left behind, in a stunning book that covers a century of war, and remembrance.

TEACHER NOTES

Writing Style

Using the innocence of a child's voice, Booth narrates war through the simplest of views. She navigates the politics of war by using the naïveté of an unassuming child left at home by a loved one.

With the use of short paragraphs and prose, Booth employs an almost diary format, but almost never spends more than two spreads per child. Booth has 'photographs' inlaid into the spread and the captions of those tell almost as much as the text itself.

Illustrating Style

Booth creates her art digitally with a tablet, employing a watercolour style with short sharp strokes. Her colour palette evokes a sombre mood with its use of browns, dull blues, and greys.

Her art was based on real places and people, and Christina worked off images she had found online and taken herself.

Author Motivation

Christina Booth was initially inspired to write the story of Pinner's Pine when she went to an art gallery. A guide pointed out an artwork of a tree and explained the story of how before two brothers went to war they each planted a tree. One of the brothers and his tree both died. From there Christina was inspired. She reached out to the artist and using information the artist provided, researched and found Pinner's Pine and the family farm in Tasmania. The story was an interesting one and Christina felt it important for local stories to be told. Seeing the family gather, meeting Roy Pinner's son and seeing the family connection inspired Christina to write about how war effects those left behind, especially through the eyes of children.

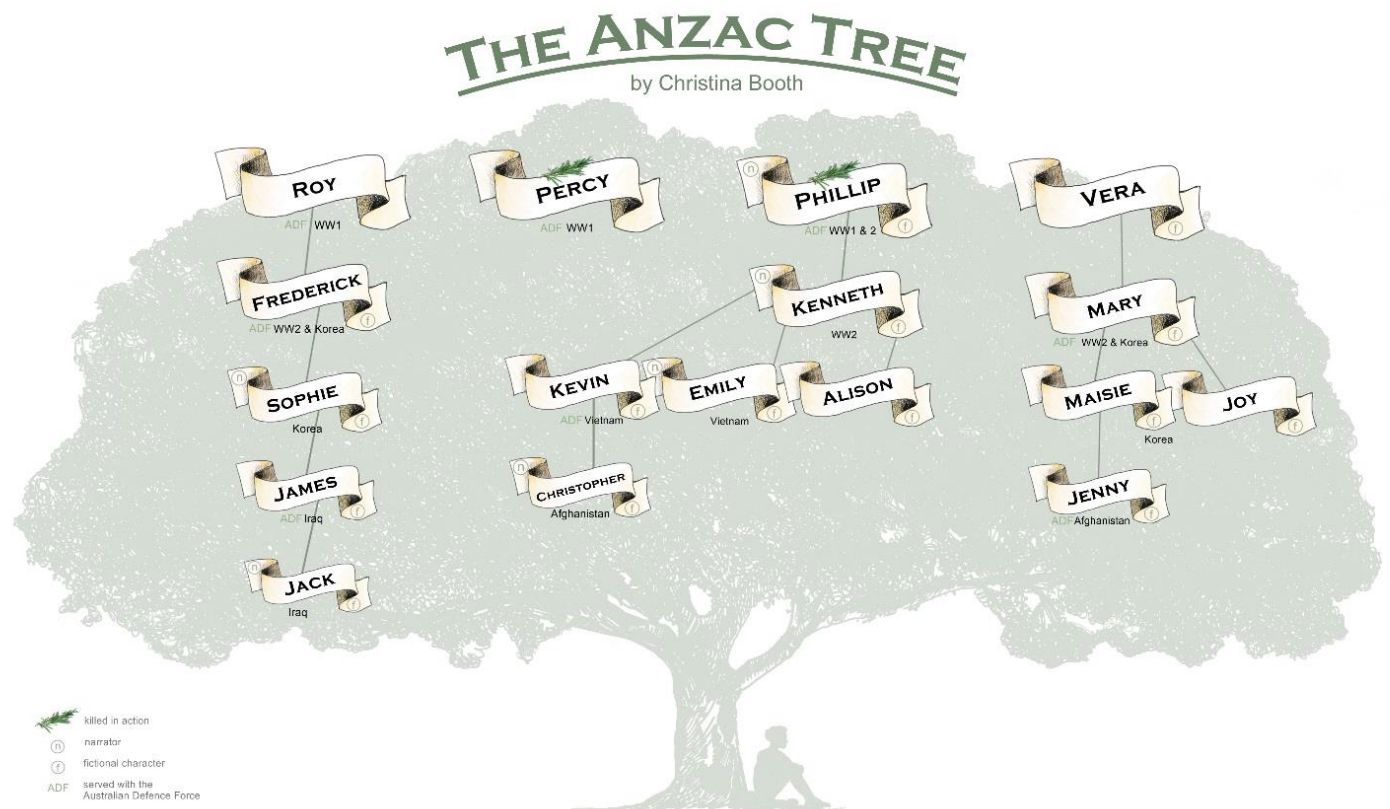
Author/Illustrator Background

Christina Booth started her career as an illustrator to great writers such as Colin Thiele, Max Fatchen and Christobel Mattingley and Jackie French. Her first picture book, *Purinina, A Devil's Tale* was published in 2007, soon followed by more, a number of which have won awards. *Kip*, the story of a noisy rooster living in the city, won an Honour Book Award in the 2010 CBCA (Children's Book Council of Australia) Book of the Year Awards. Her recent book, *Welcome*

Home, won the 2014 Environment Award for Children's Literature. Her other books include *Potato Music*, *Too Many Sheep* and *This is Banjo Paterson*. She lives in Launceston, Tasmania.

Study Notes/Activities

- This book is inspired by a true story. Do you have any family members in the military? Have any of them been to war?
- Create an illustrated timeline of the different wars shown throughout the book.
- Using the family tree below, match the narrator in the book with the person on the tree. Make sure to look at the illustrations too, as there are some hidden clues in there.



- After studying the Pinner family tree, draw your own family tree. Ask your parents and grandparents for help, and go as far back as you can. If you have any family members who were in the military, mark them.

- Split the class into six groups and have each group study one of the wars mentioned in the book: World War One, World War Two, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War and the Afghanistan War. Have them research when it was, which countries were involved and why it ended.
- There is no text on pp 13-14. Why do you think that is? Is it effective in getting the message across? Look at p 7. Visually, what does it have in common with the pp 13-14 spread? Why are those pages similar?
- When is ANZAC day? Why is ANZAC day on that particular day? What is the significance of the dawn service? Why do servicemen and women participate in the ANZAC parade?
- Jenny is the first female member of the family to join the armed forces. Research the history of women's involvement in the Defence Force, including the AWAC, WRAAC and the Army Nursing Service.
- Kevin has nightmares and can hear helicopters when they aren't there. In class, discuss PTSD in soldiers, and the stigma that surrounds it (e.g. the early diagnosis of 'shell shock' often went hand-in-hand with claims of cowardice).
- Have the students guess what medium the artist used to illustrate the book (A: digital).
- Look at the colour palette Christina Booth has used (it's full of browns, faded blues, and greys). What emotion is she trying to convey with the colours?
- Look at the clothes the characters are wearing throughout the book. Does this accurately depict the change in fashion throughout the years? Research fashion from those times. Why have the clothes people wear changed?
- On p 9 and p 16 there are illustrated medals. Research what these medals are and what the recipient must have done to receive them.
- Using just the captions in the photographs, list all the things we learn about the characters and their families.
- If you had to take four photographs to summarise your life right now, what would they be of? What captions would you give them?
- Why do you think that Christina Booth decided to use photographs in addition to the full page spreads?
- How has technology changed the way we view war? From the priest delivering news of Percy's death, to telegrams in WWII, televised war footage in the Vietnam War, and Skyping in the Afghanistan war.

- By the time the tree is 100 years old it is very tall. Trees take a long time to grow. Research how long trees take to grow, how you can tell that a tree is old and what the age markers are. Go into the playground and try and guess the age of the trees there.
- On the 100th anniversary of ANZAC day, The Examiner in Tasmania released this article: <http://bit.ly/2kPuojC> discussing the history behind Pinner's Pine, and spoke to Roy Pinner's real descendants. Watch the video and discuss the article. Brainstorm how war would have been different to what the young soldiers expected.



Figure 1 The house on Patterdale farm, as seen in p 6

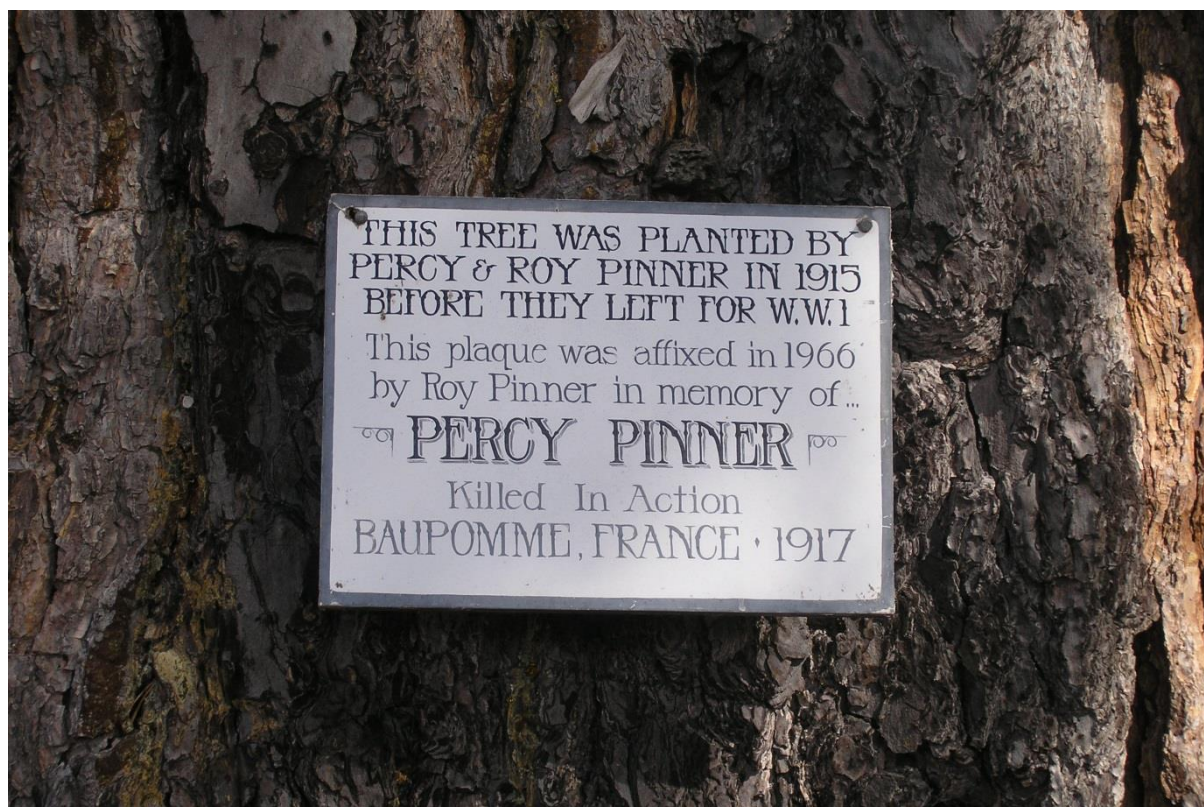


Figure 2 The plaque on Pinner's Pine, legible on p 13, 16, 20, 22, 25 and 26 of The Anzac Tree



Figure 3 Percy Pinner courtesy of the National War Memorial Archives



Figure 4 Percy Pinner courtesy of the National War Memorial Archives



Figure 5 Roy Pinner courtesy of the National War Memorial Archives



Figure 6 Pinner's Pine today