



This month, we've been talking to . . .

David Hill

David Hill is one of New Zealand's most well-known children's fiction authors. He is a versatile journalist, reviewer, playwright and fiction writer. His first young adult novel, *See Ya Simon*, won the 1994 Times Educational Supplement Award for Special Needs and the 2002 Children's Literature Foundation Gaelyn Gordon Award for a Much-Loved Book. In 2003 David won the LIANZA Esther Glen Medal for *Right Where it Hurts* and in 2005 David became the 15th recipient of the Storylines Margaret Mahy Award.

We asked David some questions about himself and his writing, and here's what he said ...

Where were you born?

I was born in Napier and grew up in Hawke's Bay.

Where do you live now?

I have lived and worked in Wellington, Auckland, and the UK, and I currently live in New Plymouth.

Where did you go to school?

I went to Napier Central School, Napier Intermediate and Napier Boys' High.

What were you like in school?

I was lazy and shy and awkward, and I started writing partly because words were about the only thing I was good at. I was the kid in class whom people didn't notice much, which turned out to be brilliant for a writer – I could watch them instead.

What is the naughtiest thing you did?

I was a harmless, timid, small kid: about the only naughty thing I did was to tell the local shop-owner that my Mum said I could have an ice-cream, and she'd pay for it later. (She knew nothing about it!)

What was your favourite book growing up?

I read a lot – I still remember a book called *The Boy From London*, about a kid who has a wicked stepfather, runs away, joins a bunch of gypsies, has all sorts of adventures. Corny but fascinating.

Who is your favourite children's author?

Heaps of them – Maurice Gee writes brilliantly for both adults and kids.

How did you get started? How old were you?

I got started because I wanted to write about our son when he was born – I felt sure there'd never been such a beautiful small human in the world.

Do you have a special place where you write?

I write in a little messy room between the kitchen and the back porch, where I can talk to people as they pass by. I don't like being all alone when I write.

What is the best thing about being an author?

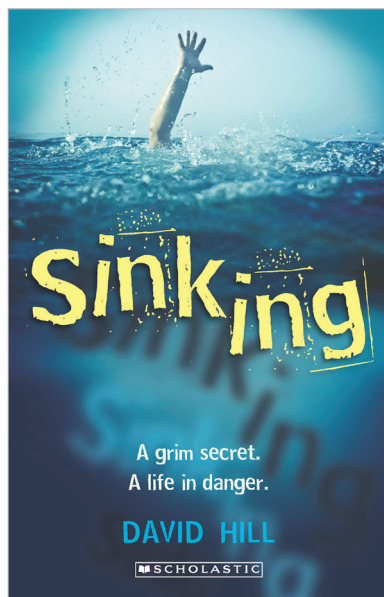
The best thing about being a writer? Making something that never existed before. Every time YOU write something, you're doing that, and it's a special feeling.

I've written about 30 books, which have been published in about 8 languages in about 12 countries. I've won awards in NZ, the UK, France, Germany and the US. But the biggest thrill of all is finishing writing a book, and knowing – Wow! I did it!

What do you do when you are not writing?

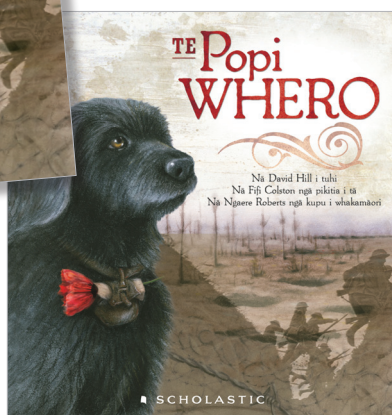
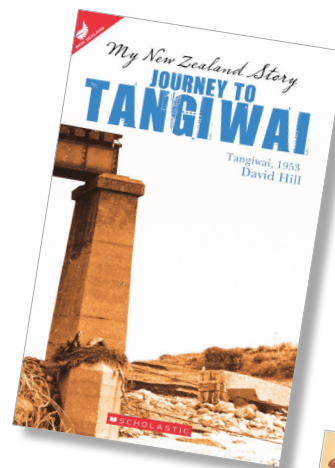
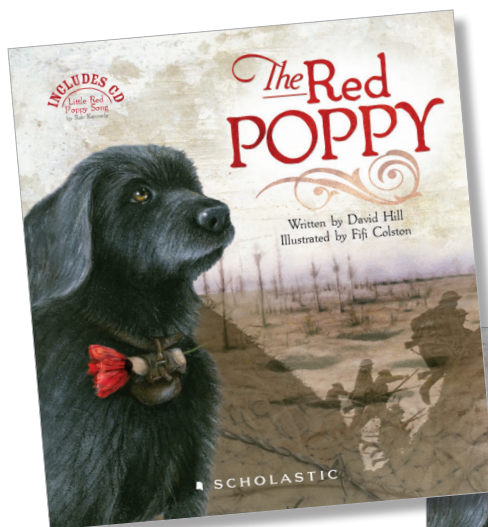
When I'm not writing, I like astronomy and archery (I belong to clubs, and yes, I've written about both of those.)

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Sinking

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