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Australian girls had reason to party

The newly refurbished South Perth Civic Centre hall was abuzz on Friday 8 April as 99 children and 75 adults attended the launch of the highly anticipated book, *The Rainbow Necklace*. Since the Australian Girl™ dolls were created in 2008 by Perth based grandmother, Helen Schofield, fans across Australia wanting to see the five characters in action have had to be content with the website cartoon strips and their own short stories. But now the wait is over and the first book based on Matilda, Emily, Amy, Belle and Jasmine was launched to great excitement by all.

Author Jacqueline Larsen says, “It is exciting to see it finally in print and I am looking forward to sharing the story with real Australian girls all over the country.”

Australian Girl™ is a range of uniquely Australian dolls that provides young Australian girls quality dolls that they can relate to and helps to counter the increasingly negative impact of popular culture on children by reflecting back a positive body image and values. The characters belong to contemporary Australian society and like to do everything that real Australian girls like to do.

Jacqueline continues, “Girls of today are growing up in a media saturated society and whether we like it or not, everything that they see and hear around them helps inform their sense of selves. I believe it is important for young Australian girls to see Australian girls reflecting back at them. This book gives young Australians a chance to read an exciting adventure set in their own country and featuring girls just like them.”

The Rainbow Necklace is an exciting, fast paced adventure that sees the girls travel back in time and discover things they never knew about Australian history and significant women from our past as they work together to solve mysteries and overcome problems with a rather unexpected outcome.

Australian Girl™ creator Helen Schofield says, “It was humbling but also incredibly exciting to see so many girls and their dolls in one place at one time. It was clear to see how passionate the girls are about their dolls and what a difference the dolls can make.”

Every girl who attended the event received a free copy of the book along with a goody bag. There were opportunities for signings with the author, many craft activities, party food and drink as well as the opportunity to shop for more dolls and accessories.

The book was also launched through a creative writing workshop with the author Jacqueline Larsen, at Wembley Primary School, on Friday 8 April.

Photo of the biggest assembly ever of Australian girls and their dolls is on the next page.

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