

## John Nicholson

graduated in architecture from Melbourne University in 1973. He worked as an architect, graphic designer and illustrator before beginning to write and illustrate children's books in 1990.

John lives in the Victorian bush with his partner Jenny and their daughter Freda in an idiosyncratic, solar-powered house they built themselves. He now writes and illustrates full-time and writes mostly non-fiction, believing that 'information books' can be as exciting and adventurous as fiction. Children turn to them for their intrinsic interest as well as for school assignments.

**Favourite colour:** yellow

**Lucky number:** 276

**Favourite TV shows:** Montalbano, Spicks and Specks

**Interests and hobbies:** reading, writing, drawing, singing, swimming, collecting old postcards, camping in the bush, crosswords.

### ON WRITING AND ILLUSTRATING

'The books that caught my imagination as a young child were about things that had really happened, about exotic places that really existed: explorers and adventurers, ships and trains, mountains, deserts and icy wastes. Today I'm aiming my books at kids who, like me, find the world of the imagination slightly unconvincing, but can be drawn into reading books by the drama of real life.

'Describing the real world requires a close relationship between texts and pictures. Some things are best described in graphic form, others in words. Combining the two to the best advantage is a central challenge in my work.'



### WHERE DO YOU DO YOUR WRITING?

I do my writing and illustrating in an octagonal studio attached to my house. My work table is a large bay window looking out across a deep valley to bush-covered hills. Some days I spend too much time just staring out the window!

### WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON AT THE MOMENT?

I'm currently working on a series of books about transport and trade in early Australia. The first three cover the ways in which Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders traded in tools; weapons and boats before the arrival of European settlers; and then the trade and transport of the early British colonies. The last two are about steam trains and river boats and then the petrol age.

### WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

I'm fascinated by:

- simple, accessible, practical, traditional technology
- individuality and diversity
- objects and tools made by hand and the decoration and symbolism that people wrap them in
- the natural environment and our relationship with it.

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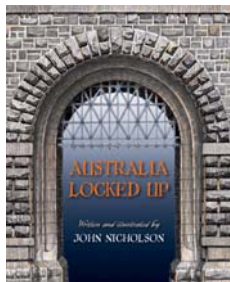
School visits by John within NSW and ACT can be organised through Lateral Learning. Visit <http://www.laterallearning.com> or email [bookings@laterallearning.com.au](mailto:bookings@laterallearning.com.au).

School visits within Victoria and all other states can be organised through Booked Out. Visit <http://www.bookedout.com.au/> or email [bookings@bookedout.com.au](mailto:bookings@bookedout.com.au)

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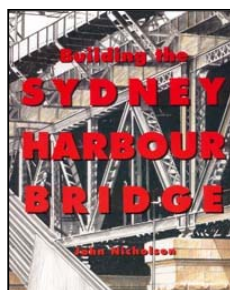
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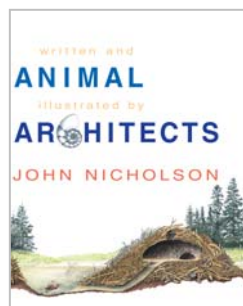


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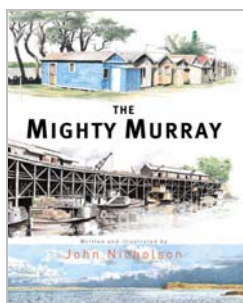


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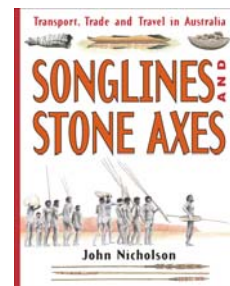


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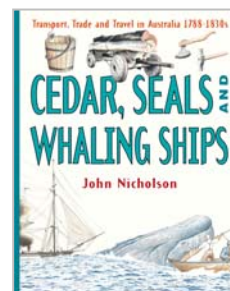
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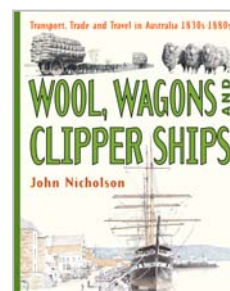
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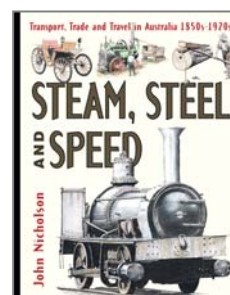


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