



**The Letterpress Project**

**Author and Illustrator E-Interviews**

# **An Interview With Yvonne Fleming**

**Q1. What are your earliest memories of books and reading? For example, did you have a favourite or inspirational book?**

My earliest memories are loving Rodger Hargreaves series of Mr Men books. I loved the colourfully illustrated characters and fun stories. As I got older my favourite book was Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl. I loved this book because no matter how often I read it I enjoyed it as much as the first time.

**Q2. What inspired you to become an author / illustrator?**

As a child I really enjoyed reading books and escaping into the magical world of make believe. When I became a mum, I liked making up stories and songs for my children. One night putting my two sons to bed I asked them to pick a book to read and they asked me to tell them one of my stories. I told them a story about my little Weatherbies characters and a few nights later they asked to hear it again. This is when I started writing my stories down to help me remember them. Then one night my husband heard me telling the boys a story and he said it was good and encouraged me to develop them. I wrote a collection of songs for each character and created a song book to take into the schools for market research. I got a lot of positive feedback from the teachers, parents and children, and that's what inspired me to become an author.

**Q3. For you, what makes a successful book or illustration?**

For me its seeing a child enjoy the story and connect with the characters. If a child interacts with you and talks about the characters and how they feel about them then you know you have captured their imagination with your story.

**Q4. Do you have a specific audience in mind when you write your books / plan your illustrations?**

My books are aimed at children aged 2 – 5 years old. The colourful character designs and simple story lines are perfect for this age group.

**Q5. What future do you think the physical book has? For example, do you think the electronic book will replace the physical book?**

With the strong demand for digital products and the need to move with the times its good to have access to stories on eBooks, but I would like to think there will always be a future for physical books. It's exciting to turn the pages and get lost in the stories and there's nothing like the smell and feel of a new book in your hand.

**Q6. Are you a book collector? Is there a special book you'd love to own?**

I like to read a book and then pass it on for friends and family to enjoy. But I have collected a lot of children's books over the years from the Roald Dahl collection and Francesca Simon series of Horrid Henry Books, to Animal Farm by George Orwell and The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne. I'd love to own the first editions of both parts of Little Woman by Louisa May Alcott.