

Emeritus Professor Richard E Collins

29 March 2006

Dear Marti

Many thanks for sending me a copy of the recent review of your physics books for young people, and congratulations on the glowing praise that they have attracted! It is very encouraging to see that your books are starting to receive the recognition that they so richly deserve.

It must have been about ten years ago when you first walked into my office at the University of Sydney and talked about your plans to write some physics books for primary school children. I well recall how enthusiastic I was about your idea. I was also impressed by your determination that the books had to be more than just stimulating to children and useful to their teachers – you were insistent that the science in them had to be correct. It took very little persuading for me to agree to help you with this aspect of your project, and it has been a pleasure to work with you over the intervening years. As a passionate teacher myself, it is always a delight to interact with people who love to learn, and you are one of these. You have never been reluctant to admit that you didn't understand a particular piece of physics, and you always kept at me until you did. In addition, you never failed to incorporate suggestions that I made to improve the scientific integrity of the content of the books, even when, as often happened, this required multiple revisions and sometimes major rewriting. The result speaks for itself, as has been so well confirmed by the review. You can be justly proud of what you and Andrew have achieved together. I too have obtained considerable satisfaction from the small part that I have been privileged to play in the creation of these little masterpieces.

I very much hope that your books find an important place in the stimulation of young people to have an interest in science. Getting at them while they are young – in science, music, language or, indeed, any intellectual pursuit – has been shown to be a most effective way of achieving outstanding outcomes. Your books could be pivotal in enabling this to occur in science.

I send you my best wishes for the success of your books in the future, and kindest personal regards.

Richard Collins