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Harbour Bridge, Auckland 1958-59 – Philippa Werry

Publisher: Scholastic NZ

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Part of the *My New Zealand Story* series.

Simon's teacher challenges his class to start a diary, with a prize at the end of the year for the person with the most entries. Reluctant at first, Simon soon finds he is enjoying recording his thoughts, actions, and the conversations of family and friends.

Simon emerges as a likeable young boy in a typical NZ family – Dad working hard and enjoying an end of week beer with his mates, Mum a busy housewife, teenage sister (oh, dear!) and concerned younger sister.

Life is changing. Not only the bridge being built, but the space race, the bodgie and widge era with the advent of milk bars and jive clubs, the singers who become overnight celebrities, the first supermarket in Auckland and so on. Philippa Werry brings this era to life with her portrayal of typical family activities such as trips to Farmers and their Christmas parade, guest speakers to class, the concerns of parents and grandparents.

Through this school year Simon learns not only about the bridge building effort but also gains a better understanding of his sisters and their interests, his parents and grandparents. He even decides to continue writing his diary.

Another worthwhile addition to this series, this book will surely find a home in school libraries and class book sets throughout New Zealand as well as being of particular interest to those who live in the 'super city'.

Reviewed by Chris Wright

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