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## **Grandad's Wheelies by Jack Lasenby** **illustrated by Bob Kerr**

**Publisher: Penguin Random House**

**RRP \$16.99**

Jack Lasenby is a well-known New Zealand storyteller with several books featuring larger-than-life characters. Often the comical protagonists stretch the truth by recounting incredible feats of the imagination which leave the reader smiling.

Young Jack enjoys staying with his grandparents and hearing their stories of unbelievable feats of endurance. Although, Jack's mother tells him, *"In a way....All Granny and Grandad's stories are true."*

In most cases, there seems to be only a smidgen of truth, or to quote Grandad, *"a skerrick"*. For instance, Grandad tells young Jack that he built the first road from Auckland to Wellington using his wheelbarrow and false teeth. Granny counters that by saying she built the first railway from Auckland to Wellington by carrying the lengths of steel on her shoulders while riding her bike.

Artist Bob Kerr embellishes the outlandish stories with nostalgic black-and-white drawings. Grandad wears shirts with rolled-up sleeves and braces holding up his trousers while Granny wears dresses and, at times, an apron. Supporting characters often have bemused expressions that convey their bewilderment as to what-on-earth they're involved in.

The dialogue is full of olden-days Kiwi expressions, yet mostly understandable by today's young readers. A helpful glossary at the end of the book explains some of the more obscure old-fashioned terms. Fun stories for all ages.

### **Author's profile:**

[www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/profiles/lasenby,%20jack](http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/profiles/lasenby,%20jack)

**Illustrator's blog:** [undercoatblog.blogspot.co.nz](http://undercoatblog.blogspot.co.nz)

**Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett**

