

# Author is humbled by her reception in Italy

GILL Pittar was treated like literary royalty during her recent trip to Italy after being nominated for an Italian literary award for her book *Milly, Molly and Alf*.

Named runner-up in the prestigious Grinzane Junior Cavour literary award, Mrs Pittar juggled book signings, interviews on television and radio, and being feted at functions in Turin and Rome as part of the fanfare and praise received for the *Milly, Molly* concept.

"It was very humbling. Many people expressed their appreciation of my work and having hundreds of Italian schoolchildren cheering for *Milly, Molly* was very emotional.

"There was genuine gratitude for a product that teachers and librarians find useful.

"It makes what you do worthwhile."

Illustrated by Cris Morrell, *Milly, Molly e Milos*, as it is published in Italy, tells the story of an orphaned refugee who triumphs over adversity.

A handmade replica of the Italian version of *Milly, Molly and Alf*, illustrated and compiled by Italian schoolchildren, holds a special place in Gisborne's *Milly, Molly House* this week after it was presented to author Mrs Pittar.

The Grinzane Junior Cavour literary award, won by Italian writer Emanuela Nava, is dedicated to children's fiction promoting multiculturalism.

Mrs Pittar said the character Alf touches people's hearts.

The multicultural nature of the series, sold to 109 countries and published in 30 languages, fitted well in Italy.

"Some schools in Rome have up to 38 children of different ethnicities in one classroom. A lot don't speak Italian. *Milly, Molly* is a wonderful teaching tool for them since they have few books promoting the acceptance of diversity," said Mrs Pittar.

"I applaud the Italian effort to embrace their multicultural society. I, too, believe world peace can be attained through the education of our children and am delighted *Milly and Molly* can help pave the way." Publishers EDT srl. were quick to tout the success of the book, promoting *Milly, Molly e Milos* with an interactive CD featuring the story in 12 languages.

EDT bought the Italian language rights to the series in 2004 and now publish 28 titles.

"EDT is delighted with the recognition and view the book's success as a reflection of the quality of the series," said Mrs Pittar.

*Milly, Molly* will also screen on television around the world next year. A television series produced by an international consortium including *Milly Molly Group Holdings* was launched at Cannes in 2006. TVNZ and major international networks bought the 13 half-hour episodes currently in production. A second series of 13 episodes will follow.