

McClymont kids and staff immortalized in book

By J.P. SQUIRE

The Daily Courier

Sandra Sellick is an airline ticket agent, not an elementary school principal in a new children's book.

Vice-principal Donna Stathers is in her housecoat, curlers in her hair, dancing with a raccoon.

Secretary Shelley Brander plays a supporting role, working on her computer in the Anne McClymont Elementary School office.

Their likeness appears in Lyn Hancock's *There's a Raccoon in My Parka*, thanks to Kelowna illustrator Loraine Kemp.

"I worked with Sandra on a young authors conference last year, and when I asked her if Anne McClymont could be a base for models for my illustrations, she jumped at the chance," said Kemp.

Sellick, illustrating the part of a ticket agent in Chapter 1, has a shocked expression on her face when she discovers a raccoon on her ticket counter.

After Loraine unveiled her first illustration, students and staff were all excited about posing for photographs, which Kemp then turned into more artwork, one piece for each chapter.

"There's a lot of fun and whimsy in



KIP FRASZ/The Daily Courier

the illustrations," said Sellick with a laugh. "It's a delightful story; it's bound to be successful internationally. I think we've got a bestseller. And it's exciting to be part of the book launch."

In advance of the book's release, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday at Mosaic Books, Kemp and Hancock talked to half of the school during an assembly Monday morning and conducted workshops for groups of 20 students during the afternoon.

Parents, students and Kemp's family were invited to a short presentation and opportunity to meet the author and illustrator Monday night. The

school is selling the \$13 books as a fundraiser.

"Anne McClymont is full of wonderful, enthusiastic people," said Kemp.

"I initially thought there's no way I can convince anyone to dance in the snow wearing a housecoat and curlers. Not a chance. But Donna Stathers raised her hand, and she danced wonderfully."

Everyone at the school was amazed at Kemp's talent, said Brander.

"There wasn't anybody in the book from the school that I didn't recognize. I thought the illustration of Sandra was the best. I was flattered, and it's

Students at Anne McClymont Elementary School get some drawing tips from book illustrator Loraine Kemp on Monday.

kind of exciting. It's a nice keepsake.

"It's not every day you get to be in a book."

Student Tannis Williamson, 11, added: "It's pretty cool. I thought my illustration was really good. During the workshop, we learned how to take notes during an interview and write newspaper stories."

Her mother, Gail, was thrilled and perhaps a little jealous.

"You've got to go to an elementary school to get in a book. I thought it was great. I think Tannis enjoyed the whole thing. It's such a unique experience for them to see the whole process of producing a book."

Hancock, who has written 18 other books, admitted she was initially puzzled why Kemp wanted the look of modern children instead of the children photographed by her with the raccoon in the 1970s, but appreciated her efforts when she viewed the results.

"It's highly unusual for an author and illustrator to work so closely, but she was like a girlfriend you've known for years. I found she was like me - so enthusiastic, so passionate about what she's doing. She's a stickler for details; she's a perfectionist. We're on the same wavelength."