



### *A LITTLE ABOUT ME*

As a child I loved to draw-but I also loved books, especially picture books. I still remember certain illustrations, covers and bindings from books that were read to me as a young girl.

I've lived in many places: I grew up in Wantagh on Long Island, N.Y., graduated from Northfield Mount Hermon School in Massachusetts and attended St. Lawrence University in upstate New York.

At the University of Wisconsin in Madison, I majored in fine art and learned how to design, print and bind handmade books. I also took courses in Children's Literature. The combination of form and content in the picture book format fascinated me and after graduation I headed for NYC where I worked for 17 years in children's book publishing as a designer and art director. But I didn't begin to write until I had children of my own.

My books have been published in many countries and in many different languages. You can find my books in the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Africa and Germany. Some of my books have been translated into German, French, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Tswana, Sesotho, and Zulu!

I now live with my family in Arizona.

*THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ME*



When I grew up I wanted to be Annie Oakley or Tinkerbell

I wrote and illustrated my first book, *Patsy the Turtle*, when I was in kindergarten

My favorite part of writing a book is thinking and planning it; writing is *hard*.

Once, I was in an Ivory soap commercial on TV.

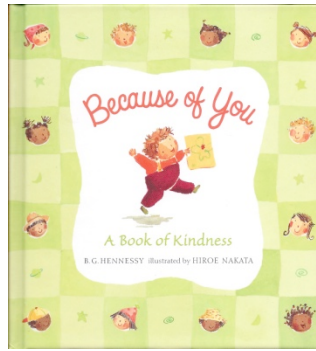
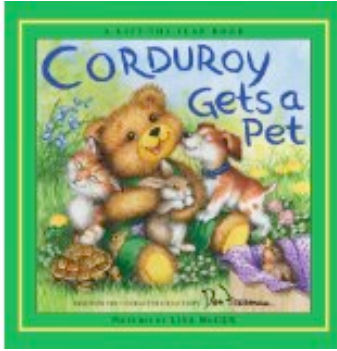
I have never liked Brussel sprouts, but I do like graham crackers and milk.

I am shorter than my three sons

When I write I work in front of a big window that looks out onto Mummy Mountain



Mummy Mountain, Arizona



Two books of mine were published this year. *CORDUROY GETS A PET* illustrated by Lisa McCue is a lift-the-flap book based on Don Freeman's beloved character, Corduroy. Working on the Corduroy books is always a treat. Earlier in my career I was the art director at the Viking Press and worked with Don Freeman on *A Pocket for Corduroy*. For me, the Corduroy stories share a sense of discovery, humor, adventure, and friendship.

A new gift edition of *BECAUSE OF YOU* illustrated by Hiroe Nakata was published by Candlewick Press this spring. This book begins with the line, "Each time a child is born, the world changes." It is a book about sharing, caring, listening and kindness. It has become a popular baby gift, teacher gift, graduation present and mother's day gift!

## ***MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

### ***WHAT DO THE INITIALS "B. G." STAND FOR?***

There have been some pretty creative guesses about that.

*Big Guy? Brigadier General? Before Google? Book Girl*

Actually the "B" is for Barbara and the "G" is for Gulbrandsen, my last name before I was married. But, I think "Book Girl" really

**B.G.**

### ***WHICH IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK?***

Usually the one I am working on. This question reminds me of a pet show where children brought in a favorite stuffed animal. Each one came home with a prize. My son's rabbit won "Best Tooth in Show." There is something special to me about each of my books. *THE DINOSAUR WHO LIVED IN MY BACKYARD*: Best First Book, *JAKE BAKED THE CAKE*: My Favorite Read Aloud, *THE ONCE UPON A TIME MAP BOOK*: Favorite Idea- well, you get the idea.

**HOW DID YOU BECOME A WRITER?**



I didn't plan to be a writer, but books have always been a part of my life. When I was growing up, bedtime was not bedtime without a story. I still have copies of some of my favorites.

Some of my childhood favorite books; *The Little Red Caboose* by Marian Potter and illustrated by Tibor Gergely, *The Tall Book of Mother Goose* illustrated by Fedor Rojankovsky, *Cinderella* illustrated by Ruth Ives, *A Little House of Your Own* by Beatrice Shenk de Reigniers illustrated by Irene Haas, and *The Illustrated Treasury of Children's Literature* edited by Margaret Martignoni.



I wrote my first book, PATSY THE TURTLE, when I was five. I did the pictures too! You can check out my drawings and read the story on my website: [www.bghennessy.com](http://www.bghennessy.com) Click on the "STUFF TO DO" button at the top of the page, then click on the PATSY THE TURTLE link.

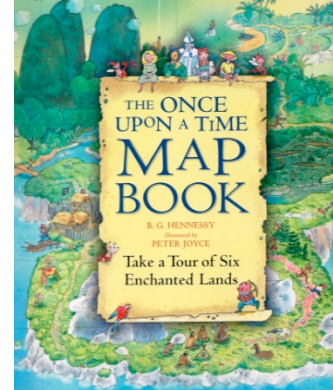
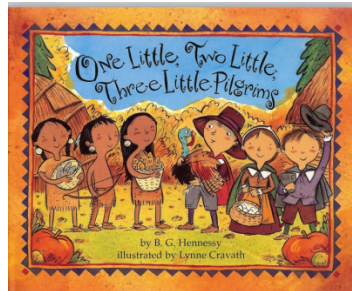
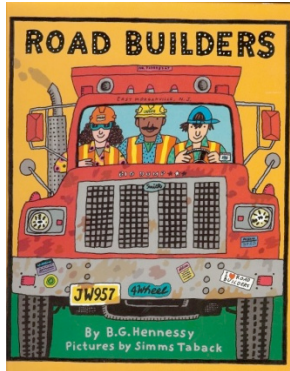


One of my drawings of Patsy on the left and me on the first day of kindergarten on the right.



In college I majored in Fine Arts major and studied bookmaking. After graduation I worked in New York City in Children's Book Publishing as an Art Director. I started writing books when I had children of my own.

### ***WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS?***



Illustrations by Simms Taback, Lynne Cravath Avril and Peter Joyce

Everywhere! Children give me lots of material. Sometimes I'm intrigued with a subject or a point of view. ROAD BUILDERS and ONE LITTLE, TWO LITTLE, THREE LITTLE PILGRIMS are examples of subject books. Sometimes I begin with a concept. When I was little I thought all the nursery rhyme characters lived in the same town because they were always in the same book. That "town" became the setting for THE MISSING TARTS. I've never been very good at reading maps, but I've always liked maps with little pictures on them. I thought that putting together a book of maps of really interesting places would be fun. That is the idea behind THE ONCE UPON A TIME MAP BOOK.

### ***WHAT I AM WORKING ON RIGHT NOW***

THE SCARY PLACES MAP BOOK!





For the past several months I have been finishing up THE SCARY PLACES MAP BOOK. It is a companion to THE ONCE UPON A TIME MAP BOOK. My office is full of pictures and books about ghosts, vampires, witches, goblins, sea monsters- you name it! There are six scary places and a special guide takes you on a tour of each terrifying place. You can travel to the Western Terror-Tories with Gruesome Gus or sail the Seven Seas on the Ghostly Galleon with Captain Davy Jones. Or maybe a tour of Transylvania with Igor via Bloodmobile is more your style? You will visit places you have only read about. It has been lots of fun to work on. THE SCARY PLACES MAP BOOK will be published by Candlewick Press in 2012.

### ABOUT MY WRITING

I've always loved a good question. Especially one that has more than one answer. I often start working on a book by looking for a question I think children would find interesting.

Does the world change when a baby is born? Do teachers get nervous the night before the first day of school? Do ornaments know when Christmas is coming? What would make someone "happy ever after?" Where do clouds sleep? Who are Eeney, Meeney, Miney, Mo? What happened to the Queen of Hearts' tarts? How would a contemporary child describe a dinosaur? What does Neverland look like? Sometimes the questions are more practical; What are the Olympics? Why do you need so many trucks to build a road? What happens at a wedding?

The fun of writing a book is in coming up with interesting questions. The hard part is coming up with great answers.

### INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE?

You can find out more about me and my books on my website: [www.bghennessy.com](http://www.bghennessy.com). There are teacher guides and some fun projects that are related to my books.

To keep up with I'm working on Join the [B.G. HENNESSY BOOKS](#) Fan Page on Facebook.

You can watch a video interview about how I got to write the Corduroy books on the home page of my website, or on [You Tube](#).