These books are a pleasure to read. Wood draws us into a lively and authentic world that's keenly observed with humour and affection. Her writing style is relaxed and confident. The characters (people, horses, dogs, even pig!) are vivid, the relationships dynamic, and the setting conveys a powerful sense of Australian place. There's much satisfying detail of work with horses, and no shortage of action and adventure, but Wood also makes us laugh, touches with moments of deep feeling, and probes the main characters' inner lives. She explores big ideas about connection (to place, family, ancestors, nature), about rights and obligations, and the corrosive power of hatred. All in all, there is an unusual mix here, with a complexity and richness that distinguishes the series from conventional 'horse stories'. Appraisal by Rosalind Price

REVIEWS FOR DIAMOND SPIRIT: BOOK 1

Most of the best juvenile horse literature was penned by British authors. To find an Australian writer capable of bringing back all the charm and drama of those old novels while setting them in the 21st century is a welcomed revelation to this reviewer. Diamond Spirit is a wonderfully readable and enjoyable return to the world of horses and young people who are besotted with them. You can't help but look forward to the rest of the trilogy. Review by Kerry Hennigan; Travel Beat
'I read it and I thoroughly enjoyed it!' Sue Jones, Australian Campdrafting Magazine

'This is a cracker of a new series ... It's very Australian, fast paced, exciting and leaves you desperately waiting for the next book. There are plenty of adults reading this one and I've had nothing but great feedback from everyone.' Jody, www.equitainment.com.au

‘Kids who love horses will adore this introduction to a trilogy of books about a young girl Jess, her best friend Shara and their horses. Author Karen Wood grew up with horses and has integrated a lovely spiritual element into her books, with indigenous themes giving them greater depth of meaning.’ Reading Room Reviews / Sunday Mail Brisbane, 23/01/2011

‘... definitely one for horse lovers in upper primary/junior secondary school.’ Hilary Adams, Bookseller and Publisher Magazine, Summer edition 2011.
‘There is a lot of good information and content about camp drafting, and rearing and riding horses.... The human stories are well thought out and worked out as well although a bit predictable in places.’ 103.1fm radio, Grafton.

'Amazing storyline, only problem... i have to wait for the next one to come out in February 2011!!!! If you love animals (especially horses) this is a definite book to read!! By Lizzie Maidment; Fan the Pages

This Australian author has hit upon a winning formula with the first book of her trilogy; young girls and horses, action and drama... I grew up with horses, my children spent 12 years competing at Pony Club (where my son met his first girlfriend), and I have a niece working on a station in Queensland who, in her spare time, competes at campdrafts, so I was reading about things I am familiar with, and found the book very enjoyable. Watch out for it in January, you won’t be disappointed. By Colleen; Timeless Books
YA readers who liked the series Saddle Club would find this book particularly interesting as it reminded me of the same sort of theme and characters. There was the same sort of drama that seemed to always happen to the girls of the pony club. This book was a nice break from the flood of paranormal romance that is dominating the YA market at the moment. By Scott Wilson; The Fringe Magazine

'Karen Wood explores the world of horses and those who work closely with them. She explores themes like hatred, forgiveness, honesty and trust. There is also an exploration of connection with land and the idea that not all things can be explained scientifically. Readers who love horses will immerse themselves in familiar language, in a familiar world. Other readers will enjoy the themes of friendship and adventure. Recommended for upper primary to lower-secondary readers.' Claire Saxby, Children’s author, www.clairesaxby.com

REVIEWS BY TEACHERS
The plot moves along at a cracking pace with no boring bits. The dialogue is interesting and realistic; and I did enjoy the interplays between the characters wondering if they could ever resolve their differences. As stated before, I am no horse lover but having tasted a chapter of the sequel, I look forward to reading the next two books.

Nova Gibson, Massey Primary School, New Zealand

WHAT YOUNG READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE DIAMOND SPIRIT SERIES

‘Diamond spirit was such an exciting novel, I couldn't stop reading. It opened my eyes to new events and I would recommend this book to anyone who likes animals. I could relate to all the characters perfectly well and this book was easy to understand. The age rating for this book would be from twelve year-old onwards but I would say roughly anyone would enjoy this book. Sarah (Yr 9)
'[Diamond Spirit] was the BEST book i have ever read! I am very into my horse and your story was very realistic. The emotion, the drama, the friendship, the horses, it is seriously the best book EVER!!!' Emma.

'I think the book was beautiful because it made me think about life and friends. It was a story so sad then sweet. I would recommend it to friends and rate it 10 our of 10.' Catie, 11

'PLEASE WRITE MOREEEEEEE you are an amazing writer and you make me feel like i am Jess, i love the country! and your books they are amazing, please write moreeeeeee!!!! if you dont write more i might just die -.---!! haha but seriously please write more!!' Sophie and Rex.
'I'm 13 years old and have read two of your books, Moonstone Promise and Diamond Spirit. I absolutely LOVE both of them and can't wait to get my hands on Opal Dreaming. I was just wondering if you were ever thinking of making a movie out of it? I think it was such a fabulous book and would make a great movie... These would have to be the best book I've ever read. Please continue writing more book in this series, they are the BEST! I love Jess and Gracie and Luke! It would be so cool to have a movie of this!' Olivia.

'The entire book was awesome!!!!. From the first page it was captivating. I just couldn't put it down. You should totally read it. I would rate it 10 out of 10.' Tara, 11.

'I LOVED this book... (spoilers excluded) ... It left you feeling content and fulfilled long after you read the last line. I would rate it 10 out of 10! A cool story and a great book.' Georgia, 13.
'I bought Diamond Spirit and loved it to bits. It's one of the best books I've ever read... I am really looking forward to reading the next two books and the fourth if you publish it.' Makaela B.

'The first book in the diamond spirit series is my favorite book. I am really looking forward to the next one in the series, what's the date they are getting released? I can't wait! I read your first book two days. I'd just like to say that you are the most unique author. I love the way you describe every thing!! Your number one fan Courtney.'

'My name is Cindy, I just finished reading Diamond Spirit. I just wanted to say that I really enjoyed reading this book. Usually I don't read many books but by reading this book it has changed my thoughts. I am looking forward to reading the rest of the series.'
'My name is Jamie although im 21 i have read your first book and thought it was fantastic!! Thank you for the great read! keep them comming.'

'I absolutely LOVE Moonstone Promise! Its an awesome book and I love it! You have yet again written another favourite book!' Courtney.

'I give Moonstone Promise a rating of ten out of ten! Its a great story, and the characters are so realistic.. I really look forward to reading the rest of the series, hopefully there are many more to come!' Ruby.

'I have the whole series in the place of honour in my room near my riding ribbons!' Jess
'My name is Morgan and i've just finished reading diamond spirit, i must say im HOOKED!'

'I absolutely love your books and since I love horses as well I read your books in just a matter of days.' Audrey.

'I love how theres a bit of romance and horses, it is the perfect combo.' Katie, 15.
'I love Diamond Spirit, it's a excellent book. Reading your books make me feel like I have a horse. Thanks for making excellent books.' Jess.

'I felt really connected to the characters and horses in the story, as though I was right there with them. You are an amazing writer!' Katrina, NZ.

'I love your books! I'm reading Diamond Spirit after my friend suggested it to me, (and i give it ten thousand out of ten :D )

I hope you make more of the series. Just want to know if you were thinking about making a movie for Diamond Spirit?? (or all three ^.^! ) it would be soooo cool.' Tori.
'i just wanted to say . . . . .OH MY GOODNESS I LOVE YOUR BOOKS. I want to die with your books they're just that amazing. If it was possible i think that your books should be made into movies. They would be the best movies ever and i would buy them and watch a million times .' Kimberly, 13.

'I read all three diamond spirit books in 1 week! They would have to be the best books i have ever read, i love all the drama and romance (: they are really good! I laughed and even cried, i felt like i was there!' Renee.
'I absolutely LOVE your books. I read [Diamond Spirit] in about 1 day then proceeded to go and buy the next 2 books. They are amazing and you really feel as if you are in the story with the characters - its so life like and real!' Amy.

>All of the books i just could not put them down, one or two night i stayed up to 12 oclock reading them. but i loved the book so much i just could not stop :) As i was reading them i cried, laughed, blushed, etc!!' Kate.

'It is really good to have a book series that i can read and read again!' Michaela.
'i was soooooo engrossed into the books i just want it to continue.... The last book opal dreaming made me laugh and cry and wish me and my other half had that funny but so cute bond between Jess and Luke. I really wish there would be more book as mum hasnt seen me read a book so fast and determined.' Sarah.

'I just couldn't put them down. They have to be my favourite series and I loved it! Reading the books made me want my own horse even more. I can't wait for a fourth book if there is one.... and a movie would be absoultely epic!' Kenzie, New Zealand.
'I hope you are going to write more horse books or continue the series because there great, no amazing.' Jess.

' I absolutely adored the Diamond Spirit series I’ve read the 1st 3 books.' Alex.

'i LOVE ur books there the best.' Rosemary
(my personal favorite) 'do you like asparagus? because everyone eats it in dimond spirit I eat it now to!' Michaela.

'I read your Diamond Spirit books and fell in love with them!!!!! i loved them sooooomuch that i read the first one twice, the second one three times and the lats one four times!!!!!!! You have really changed my life with those books whenever i felt sad or something i just got completely lost in your books i really felt like i was there with Jess out campdrafting and allll! i no its a big ask but you would change my life if you wrote a 4th Diamond spirit!' Meg.

'With your diamond sprit books i hope you'll get them into a movie that would be fantabulous
'I love your books i ride horses myself... the books opened up my eyes to a new me one that has a clear view on the true spirit of Australia, it has inspired me in all different ways, jess reminded me of myself in a way. I finished the last book and i just loved the whole series and was hoping they could keep going on!' Julia, Inspired young girl :)

'I started reading the Diamond Spirit series, and i absolutely love them. I finished all three books in about 2 days, which is unusual for me because i never really read, but i just couldn't put these books down.' Kristyn.
'I love the Diamond Spirit series. I got the first book for my birthday and once I started reading it I didn't want to put it down. I'm halfway through reading the second book now and can't wait to finish it and start the next book. I also thought that it was great to finally find a book about horses that is set in Australia.' Jessica.

'\textit{i am re-re-re-re-re reading your books for the hundredth time their just so good you never get sick of them=}\textquoteleft Josephine.

'I am completely in love with your books. They are by-far the best books I have read in a very long time. Maybe you could make the books into a TV series, like the Heartland series. I really love your books, thank you very much for writing them.' Imi.
'My name is Demi and I love your books Diamond Spirit. I am 12 turning 13 and totally horse crazy. I was wondering if you were going to write more books for the Diamond Spirit series. I would love to keep reading about all the stuff that Jess gets up to with her friends and horses.'

'I got opal dreaming for my eighth birthday in March. I enjoyed the book so much that I have now read diamond spirit and moonstone promise. I can't decide which one I like best. I am hoping you are going to write some more.' Georgina.

'i love reading books and i use to read the saddle club series but then i got sick of reading them and then i found out my school got some new books in the library and they were moonstone promise and opal dreaming as soon as i started reading moonstone promise i fell in love with it and now i cant stop i just wanted to say there great books and i love reading them.' Jessica.
'I really love the diamond spirit series! I am in New Zealand and I brought all three of the books, and I just was so inspired by them.' Chelsey.

'I usually struggle with getting interested in horse books, particularly series, but I was hooked on Diamond Spirit by the first page, and read all the way into the night, and finished it the next day... I kept telling mum how, even though horse books I had read in the past were awesome, that these books had mature themes, and a bit of a different story line to the others... I read [Moonstone Promise] in a few days and I felt really funny after turning the last page. I felt kind of magical. You left me extremely interested in Aboriginal culture. I also liked how you had slightly magical things like reincarnation and spirits... When I got to Opal Dreaming, however, my sister was still reading it. But I was so determined to read that book that I snuck out of the class I was in, marched all the way over to where my sister's classroom was, and took the book out of her bag. She still hasn't noticed.' Sophie.
'About 4 days ago mum came home with a book then i was like GREAT! Another crappy horse book...But no, i read the first book in one day and straight away wanted more.. So we bought 2 and 3, now ive finished ALL of them in 4 days! And then i googled you, and found your website wondering if more would come out! Then i saw early next year :( I was devostated to see how long i had to wait for 4 and 5, but i can wait!' Anna.

'I have just finished reading your 3 books and I LOVED all of them and am reading them over and over I enjoyed them sooo much.' Jessica, 9 yo, grade 5.

'If it was possible i think that your books should be made into movies. They would be the best movies ever and i would buy them and watch a million times I really love your books because they are so inspirational! they inspire people everywhere to do better with their horses to achieve a strong bond.' Kimberly.
'I was just wondering if you were going to make a movie of you 3 books? I really hope you do because there great books and they’d make awesome movies.' Alex.

'I have just finished reading your 3 books which Mum got for me from Big W in Mackay, Queensland. I LOVED all of them and am reading them over and over I enjoyed them soooo much.' Jessica 9. (must be a pretty good reader!!!!)
I love books, but Diamond Spirit is officially my favourite collection of books. Georgia.

your books are so great the first time i read them i got hocked and i have read them many time now. Nikayla.

I was reading Opal Dreaming and read it all in 1 night I was very tired the next day and had to go to school :( 1:30 in the morning I stayed up! I just couldn't put it down! Shelby, 11.

My name is Hannah and i am a HUGE fan of your books. I am completely in love with the characters in your book, especially Luke and i love horses!
'Diamond Spirit is the bestest book in the entire world. I love it so much.' Morgan.

WHAT PARENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT DIAMOND SPIRIT

'It really makes me happy to come across a book let alone a series, that is published by a true Australian. I was captivated from the opening chapter. When you hit on something this good, you want your author to continue and continue to bring out more books. My daughter is 9 and I'm itching to let her read this book, as there are many aspects in this book that interest me with the very well placed messages you have placed within.' Julianne.
'After a brief search I discovered [the books] back in my 13-year-old daughter's bedroom by her bed where they were in the processing of being re-read. Surely a sign of great success, that one read is not enough. My congratulations to the author. It was a breath of fresh air to see my daughter reading something that didn't involve someone's life blood being sucked from their necks!!!'

'The kids were fighting over who was reading them first, they love them too. Your books are awesome!!!' Tracey.
' I would just like to say thankyou for writing your book. My 14 year old daughter has never finished reading a book. I can gladly say that she will finish this one, she cannot wait to get to the next page, and for Joanna that is huge.' Jodie.

Me and My mum love the books .. we have our own horses . so i always love reading books about horse's or something like it ....... Jacqui and her mum.