

Happy Birthday Socks Creator!

Beverly Cleary, author of Socks the Cat, turns 90 this week

Remember Socks? The white-footed tabby kitten with black rings around his tail, who lived with Mr. and Mrs. Bricker? He was the darling of his household, until the Brickers brought home a new baby. His adventures in the Bricker home have delighted thousands of children since 1973, when author Beverly Cleary brought him to life.

Cleary celebrates her 90th birthday on April 12. Born Beverly Bunn in McMinnville, Ore., in 1916, she lived in a book-loving family that passed on this passion to her. Her school librarian encouraged her love of books and suggested that Cleary write childrens books when she grew up. She worked as a librarian for several years after graduating from college, and after hearing children ask for stories about kids like them, she responded with her first book about a boy named Henry and his dog, Ribsy.

Long-time Cleary fans know that Socks is just one of Clearys popular characters from her long line of childrens books. Readers are sure to recognize the names Otis, Henry, Ralph and, most of all, Ramona. Such engaging characters have captured childrens attention for years and will continue to do so for many more. Posted: April 11, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST