

A stylishly packaged book for parents to record their child's life and . . .

All those magic moments

Josh Robertson

IT WAS a book idea a major publisher could have easily produced and popularised — but didn't think to.

A *Book About Me* — a stylishly packaged book for parents to record their child's life from the womb to prep-school — has sold 4000 copies in a year and earned a second print run, a rare feat for a self-published book.

Its creators, Annabel Cornfoot and Fiona Collie, have already covered printing and design costs of about \$40,000 and aim to sell another 4000 by the end of the year.

And they expect the latest release from their Milestone Press imprint, *My School Days*,

to sell even better. Ms Cornfoot says while "baby books aren't for everyone", *My School Days* will enjoy broad appeal as "a nice way to collect and record your children's memories".

"If your child is in Grade 2, you can still buy one; whereas, if you've got a two-year-old, you're not going to buy a baby book and backdate it," she says.

Ms Cornfoot says while the costs are the same, the new book has been priced \$10 less at \$34.95 in anticipation of a larger market.

The book will retail mainly in maternity, children's wear and gift shops, building on links Ms Cornfoot established in shopping around its predecessor.



"It's very hard for a little publisher to get into the big bookstores . . . we're just too small and they're not really interested in us," she says.

"They also work on sale and return, which is very hard if you're going to self-publish.

"You might reprint and then get 3000 books back.

"So *A Book About Me* was sold by me just doing the groundwork, finding stores — maternity shops basically, and gift shops."

Ms Cornfoot says this is "very

time consuming" but not difficult since "everyone believes in the product because it is unique".

"Now we're just talking them into taking the new book because it's in the same sort of style, same fresh design,

REMEMBER that day when . . . Annabel Cornfoot with daughter Emily, 3, and Georgia, 14 months, with two books she has self-published.

Picture: John Wilson

unique," she says. "And the feedback is they are taking them because they know that the last book has done incredibly well."

The inspiration for the first book came when Ms Cornfoot and Ms Collie, expecting their second and third children respectively, went on a search for a "stylish baby scrapbook" but found none.

The process was helped by Ms Cornfoot's background in the printing industry, having worked in London for Dorling Kindersley and in Hong Kong as a sales rep for Chinese printers and paper merchants (whom she continues to represent).

"Because of my printing background, we thought it was something that we could do ourselves and sell ourselves, which is what we've done," she says.

www.milestonepress.com.au

BusinessOwner
Every Monday >>