

Gee-gee wiz: a novel triumph

Totally horse mad is an accurate way to describe Bexley author Kathy Helidoniotis' childhood. When she was 10, she was given a horse called Clarrie and her love of equines started.

Many years later, she has drawn on her childhood memories and penned *Totally Horse Mad*, a book aimed at 8 to 12-year olds.

A teacher by trade, Mrs Helidoniotis has published eight other books, but this is her first novel.

"My daughter Mariana, who is five, is now pestering me for a horse," she said.

"She is horse mad and is so excited about the book, and my three-year-old son, John, is so proud. He tells everybody,



HOT TO TROT . . . Kathy Helidoniotis has just released her first novel.

'mum's got a book'. " Mrs Helidoniotis decided $3\frac{1}{2}$ years ago decided to write children's books.

"I knew I wanted to be a children's author but didn't know how to go about it," she said.

She enrolled in creative writing courses and after entering her manuscript in a competition, won a mentorship with children's author Stephen

Measday.

"I finished the first draft of the book in October 2001 and had a publishing contract a year later," she said.

"I never thought this would actually happen. I've been to other people's book launches but I can't believe this is for mine!"

Totally Horse Mad is \$14.95 and is available from all good bookshops.