

AustLit News August/September 2007



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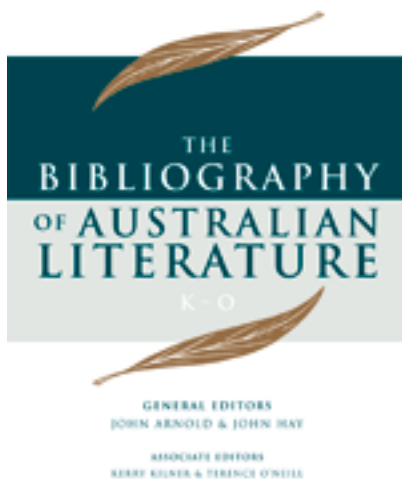


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Welcome to the latest AustLit newsletter, bringing you up to date with news on the Australian literary scene and on new developments and services at AustLit.

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AustLit News



The Bibliography of Australian Literature K-O Launch

Cover (left) of *The Bibliography of Australian Literature K-O*

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Celebrations marking the opening of the [Association for the Study of Australian Literature](#) (ASAL) conference on 1 July this year were enhanced by the launch of the third volume of *The Bibliography of Australian Literature K-O* by [Robert Dixon](#), Professor of Australian Literature at [The University of Sydney](#). The launch marks another significant AustLit milestone as 'BAL' (as the *Bibliography* is colloquially known) is the biggest retrospective research project being undertaken by the AustLit team. The project represents a substantial investment by the [Australian Research Council](#), [AustLit's university partners](#) and the [AustLit team](#).

Crowd at Customs House, Brisbane,
for the launch of
*The Bibliography of Australian
Literature K-O*



BAL aims to provide a comprehensive record of Australian book-length creative writing from the late 18th century to 2000. The research and compilation of BAL is an enormous undertaking. The team of twelve compilers working at [The University of Queensland](#), [Monash University](#) and [Flinders University](#) are working towards the completion of BAL by the end of 2008 under the General Editorship of [John Arnold](#) (Monash) and [Professor John Hay](#) (Vice Chancellor at UQ) and the Associate Editorship of [Kerry Kilner](#) (AustLit Executive Manager) and [Terry O'Neill](#), and with invaluable assistance from other AustLit team members and helpers around the world.

This team of AustLit researchers dedicatedly toil day after day searching for snippets of information about the lives and literary careers of hundreds of authors and undertake rigorous bibliographical research to canvass the publication history of every listed work, including details of reprints, new editions, translations, adaptations, etc. They harvest details from a wide array of print and electronic sources and expertly search the internet for new sources of reliable information in order to make BAL and AustLit, because BAL is derived from AustLit, as comprehensive as reasonably possible. The editors estimate that, when complete, BAL will include details of over 12,000 authors and tens of thousands of works of creative writing.

BAL is an excellent complement to AustLit by giving the snapshot view of an Australian writer's life and literary career. It can quickly and easily answer such questions as 'which novel won [Christopher Koch](#) the Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction?', 'when was [Henry Lawson](#)'s *While the Billy Boils* first published?' or 'did [Gwen Harwood](#) really use the pseudonym "[Theophanus Panbury](#)"?'. With BAL on your bookshelf, you don't have to turn on your computer and log on to AustLit to find the answers to these questions. Due to the work being undertaken for BAL, AustLit will be closer to claiming a comprehensive record of Australian literature.

Professor Robert Dixon's launch speech, [Professor Bruce Bennett](#)'s address in honour of [Professor John Hay](#) and Professor Hay's address are available via The University of Queensland's website. To listen to these speeches, click [here](#) and follow the instructions for subscribing to *UQ News Online* Podcasts. You can order a copy of any or all of the three volumes of BAL at [The University of Queensland Bookshop](#).



Professor John Hay at Customs House,
Brisbane

New AustLit Records

During June and July 2007, the Content Development Team added:

- 8,499 new works
- 2,232 new agents (individuals and organisations)

In addition to these new records, nearly 12,000 existing work and agent records have been upgraded and enhanced.

In the News

Australian Literature in Education Roundtable Inspires New Chair in Australian Literature

On the eve of the Australia Council for the Arts-organised 'Australian Literature in Education Roundtable' held in Canberra on the 7 August, the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop, announced that the Federal Government will donate \$1.5 million to endow a new permanent chair in Australian literature. Universities will be asked to apply for the right to host the appointment and the Government will select the university that can 'best demonstrate its commitment to Australian literature and is best placed to further promote scholarship in Australian literature'. ([Minister's press release](#), 7 July 2007)

The Roundtable participants released a [communiqué](#) following their discussions stating the principles that should underpin the teaching of Australian literature in Australian schools and universities. The Roundtable group also made recommendations to the Federal Government and to the governments of the states and territories.

AustLit eagerly awaits further outcomes from the Roundtable and from future government initiatives to support the teaching of and research into Australian literature and looks forward to

being of even greater value to teachers, teacher librarians, students and researchers.

The text of the minister's speech to participants of the Roundtable, delivered at Parliament House on 6 August, is available [here](#).

Henry's Holiday

[George Lambert's](#) 800 kilogram bronze sculpture of [Henry Lawson](#) usually resides in the Domain, Sydney. But Henry is taking a holiday. As part of the [National Gallery of Australia's](#) (NGA) *George W. Lambert Retrospective: Heroes & Icons exhibition*, the sculpture has been moved to Canberra for several months. The sculpture was commissioned on 18 November 1927 by the Henry Lawson Memorial Fund organising committee. According to the NGA, the committee's brief specified 'a work of art which showed Lawson as an Australian of the bush, as well as an accurate bronze likeness of him'. The brief also stipulated the type of clothing in which Lawson would be dressed – the emphasis being in the style of a bush worker 'without coat or vest' and with his 'shirt open to the neck'. Lambert's sculpture poses Lawson deep in thought, accompanied by a swagman, a dog and a fencepost.

Although Lambert completed the plaster cast of the sculpture, the bronze casting was supervised by his son, Maurice Lambert. The sculpture was unveiled on 28 July 1931 – fourteen months after Lambert's death.

Heroes & Icons is currently showing at the NGA and remains open until 16 September.

Queen's Birthday Honours

A number of writers and others with literary associations were recognised in the 2007 Queen's Birthday Honours list. They include:

- [Muriel Barwell](#) – owner of Haddon's Bookshop in Perth and member of the Western Australia Branch of the [Children's Book Council of Australia](#) (CBCA)
- [Libby Gleeson](#) – multi-award winning author of picture books, children's fiction and young adult novels. Gleeson is shortlisted in this year's CBCA awards for her tale of separated friends in *Amy and Louis*
- [Jill Roe](#) – historian, writer and mentor whose roles have included chair of the Board of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* project and Professor of History at [Macquarie University](#)
- [Murray Sayle](#) – career journalist, foreign correspondent and novelist
- [Alan Seymour](#) – playwright, script editor and television producer, best-known in Australia for his play *The One Day of the Year* but whose extensive career in the United Kingdom is less well recognised

and

- [Jennifer Strauss](#) – poet, academic and critic whose work includes the editorship of the recently-released *The Collected Verse of Mary Gilmore*

Melbourne Campaigns for City of Literature Status

The city of Melbourne is already home to 'the race that stops a nation' and it achieves world-wide exposure from events such as the Australian Tennis Open and the Formula One Grand Prix, not to mention being the home of the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground, the "G". Now it's seeking international status for its literary credentials. A sixteen-person steering committee that includes [Grant Caldwell](#), [Morris Gleitzman](#), [Kirsty Murray](#) and [Carrie Tiffany](#) is preparing a bid for Melbourne to become a [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\) City of Literature](#).

To qualify as a UNESCO City of Literature cities must meet certain criteria such as being home to diverse and quality publishing houses, having an urban environment 'in which literature, drama and/or poetry play an integral role' and housing 'libraries, bookstores and public or private cultural centres dedicated to the preservation, promotion and dissemination of domestic and foreign literature'. The Victorian Government has taken a step towards fulfilling these criteria by announcing \$9 million in funding to boost Melbourne's international literary profile. The funding will be used to develop the City of Literature bid and to 'create Australia's first Centre for Books and Ideas at the [State Library \[of Victoria\]](#)'. (Arts Victoria media release, 1 May 2007) The proposed centre will provide space for organisations such as the [Melbourne Writers Festival](#), the [Australian Centre for Youth Literature](#) and the [Australian Poetry Centre](#).

The only city yet to be appointed by UNESCO as a City of Literature is [Edinburgh](#), Scotland. The city of Shiraz in Iran submitted its bid for consideration in January 2007 and is currently being assessed; Melbourne hopes to complete its bid by October 2007. Appointed cities become part of UNESCO's [Creative Cities Network](#). The Network aims to 'help unlock the creative, social and economic potential of cultural industries held by local actors and therefore promote UNESCO's goals of cultural diversity'.

Australian Writers Take to Stage and Screen in USA

American film, television and theatre audiences will increasingly witness the work of Australia's writers in the months ahead. Here's a sample of what's in store:

- [Matthew Reilly](#), author of fast-paced adventure thrillers *Ice Station* and *Seven Ancient Wonders*, has moved to Los Angeles to work on the pilot of his television series 'Literary Superstars'. Peter Fitzsimons reports that Reilly conceived and wrote the show and then sold it to the USA's ABC network. 'Literary Superstars' features a 'female publicist for a major publishing house in New York who each week will accompany an author on the promotional/media trail'. (*Sun-Herald*, 8 July 2007) Reilly has apparently used incidents

from his own experience as inspiration for the series.

- ' [The Female of the Species](#)', written by [Joanna Murray-Smith](#) and first produced by the [Melbourne Theatre Company](#) in 2006, is set to hit the stage in Los Angeles and New York in 2008. To Murray-Smith's great delight, Annette Bening will play the role of Margot Mason, a feminist writer held captive by an intruder. (The play was inspired by a similar incident in the life of [Germaine Greer](#).) Bening last appeared on Broadway nearly twenty years ago in a role that earned her a Tony nomination. She will team with director Michael Mayer who won the 2007 Tony for best director of a musical. Bening told the *New York Times* she was attracted to 'The Female of the Species' because 'it's very smart, it's about something serious, but it's also got a lot of comedy in it'. (15 June 2007)

The production will be Murray-Smith's second foray onto Broadway – [Honour](#) had a season in New York in 1998, but was, in Murray-Smith's words, 'not wildly successful'. She admits that 'every production is its own story, a chapter of your life. You can't predict what it's going to be like'. For the time being though, knowing that she's to have a new work performed with the 'sublime' Bening in the lead role is 'as good as it gets'. (*Age*, 16 June 2007)

- An adaptation of [Wendy Orr](#)'s children's adventure [Nim's Island](#) is in production on the Gold Coast having been optioned by Fox-Walden in 2003. The *Los Angeles Times* claims the film will be the first to have a girl 'at the center of a kids' action-adventure film with a blockbuster budget'. (10 June 2007)

Orr maintains a [blogspot](#) for fans of *Nim's Island* and includes updates on the adaptation's filming. There is also a [MySpace site](#) for the film with details of cast and crew, and Walden Media maintains a [site](#) with updates on the film's production.

Fans of Nim who are waiting for the film's release in April 2008 can read the sequel to *Nim's Island* in the meantime. [Nim at Sea](#) was published in June by [Allen and Unwin](#). The new book sees Nim and her friend Fred the iguana stow away on a ship in a bid to rescue the kidnapped Selkie the sea lion.

- And [Richard Flanagan](#) may soon follow Orr's lead. According to [Susan Wyndham](#) (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9-10 June 2007) Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks studio 'has paid a massive sum for film rights' to Flanagan's [The Unknown Terrorist](#). The novel has received strong reviews following its May release in the USA. *The Washington Times* called it 'terrifying' and 'captivating', describing it as 'a masterpiece in craft structure ... Mr Flanagan's prose is as gritty as the outback, naked as a crocodile and as clear as every postcard photo of Sydney's iconic Opera House'. (6 May 2007) In the *New York Times* (8

May 2007), Michiko Kakutani wrote that *The Unknown Terrorist* is 'a brilliant meditation upon the post-9/11 world and the *Washington Post* said: 'Flanagan's tightly crafted narrative is akin to the oppressive power of Kafka's *Trial*, or Capote's *In Cold Blood* ... His prose glitters and shrieks with spare vitality'. (10 June)

And in the UK...

- Sales of [Kate Morton's](#) *The Shifting Fog* should receive a boost following its selection as a featured book on the United Kingdom's popular *Richard and Judy Show*. Published in the UK under the title *The House at Riverton*, Morton's novel is one of eight 'Summer Read' selections and was discussed on the television program on 18 July 2007. The selection continues the presence of Australian historical novels on the show – [Geraldine Brook's](#) *March* was chosen in 2006.
- The [Young Vic](#) theatre company has recently produced a London season of Tanya Ronder's stage adaptation of [D. B. C. Pierre's](#) Booker prize-winning novel *Vernon God Little*. Given the subject matter, some reviewers expressed discomfort at watching *Vernon God Little* only a few weeks after the mass murder at the Blacksburg campus of Virginia Tech. (Both the book and the play deal with the aftermath of a fictitious massacre at a Texan high school.) However, as Michael Billington pointed out in the *Guardian*, 'Ronder's faithful version makes clear that Pierre's target is the psychotic culture surrounding such tragedies'. (9 May 2007)

There was some debate about whether the season should have been cancelled. *The Daily Telegraph's* Charles Spencer felt that, on balance, the Young Vic made the correct decision in proceeding with the production. 'Art has a duty to reflect life and death – and *Vernon God Little* certainly does that. Beyond its wild satire and frequent obscenity, there is compassion and a celebration of life lurking somewhere in Pierre's dark and twisted narrative'. (9 May 2007)

A Name in Search of an Identity

'[Torsten Krol](#) lives in Queensland. This is his first novel.' So says the [Pan Macmillan](#) author statement attached to the 2006 novel *The Dolphin People*. But Australia's book reviewers are scratching their heads over the mysterious author's true identity. Krol's Auckland literary agent, Michael Gifkins, confirms that the name is a pseudonym and told the *Australian's* Deborah Hope that his client is a serious author who 'just wants to write'. (14 July 2007) Krol has recently published a new novel, *Callisto*, and [Nigel Krauth](#) is on the detective trail: 'This doesn't feel like the second work of a starting writer. There's remarkable sureness in the plot structure and handling of suspense. Visual description throughout is superb ... the language is so rich and precise ... Surely this intelligence and maturity isn't the writing of a newcomer; more likely the work of, say, a [David Malouf](#) moonlighting'. (*Australian*, 7 July 2007)

[Peter Pierce](#) reflects on Krol's satirical poke at American politics and culture and concludes: 'my bet is that [DBC Pierre](#) is back'. (*Canberra Times*, 21 July 2007) Certainly there are similarities between *Callisto* and *Vernon God Little* – the unsettling black humour, the small-town US setting, the outcast anti-hero. Pan Macmillan's [Reading Group Notes](#) also invite comparison between *Callisto*'s Odell Deefus and J. D. Salinger's Holden Caulfield in *Catcher in the Rye* – a comparison previously made between Little and Caulfield.

Regardless of Krol's true identity he is, according to Patrick Allington, 'a satirist of considerable vision, imagination and control'. (*Advertiser*, 23 June 2007)

Retirements Afoot

Two esteemed members of Australia's literary community have recently announced their 'official' retirement:

- [Professor Peter Fitzpatrick](#) is retiring from his position at Monash University's [Centre for Drama and Theatre Studies](#). A specialist in the field of Australian theatre, particularly musical theatre, Professor Fitzpatrick founded the Centre and has been its head for more than ten years. Professor Fitzpatrick's contribution to critical and creative studies within the university sector is matched by his artistic output in the world of theatre and film. His credits as a director include productions of plays by [Louis Nowra](#), [Alex Buzo](#) and [Michael Gow](#) as well as the 1988 bicentennial production of *History of Australia: The Musical*. Professor Fitzpatrick won an AFI award in 1995 for his film adaptation *Hotel Sorrento*. He has also written novels.

Professor Fitzpatrick will continue his association with Monash University as an Honorary Professor. He is currently researching a dual biography of theatre entrepreneur [Frank Thring](#) (1882-1936) and Thring's son, the actor Frank Thring (1926-1994).

- [Ron Pretty](#), poet, academic and founding publisher of [Five Islands Press](#) is also retiring. Pretty was Head of Writing in the [Faculty of Creative Arts](#) at the University of Wollongong from 1983 to 1998. He edited the Wollongong-based journal *Scarp* and established the Poetry Australian Foundation (now the [Australian Poetry Centre](#)). Under the Foundation's auspices, Pretty and [John Millett](#) also established the poetry journal *Blue Dog*, first published in 2002.

In addition to having four volumes of his own poetry published, Pretty has been a dedicated and tireless promoter of the work of other Australian poets. With Five Islands Press he has published 230 volumes of poetry. (He was awarded membership in the Order of Australia in 2002 for 'service to literature, particularly through the establishment of

organisations to foster the promotion of Australian poetry'.) The work of Five Islands Press will continue under the management of four co-editors – [Kevin Brophy](#), [Robyn Rowland](#), [Lyn Hatherly](#) and [Dan Disney](#). Farewelling Pretty at a function at the Australian Poetry Centre in Melbourne, Rowland said: 'We are motivated by the hope that the iconic Five Islands Press will continue its contribution to Australian poetry for many decades to come.' ('APC Buzz', *Zest* magazine, July 2007)

Inaugural Indigenous Literacy Day

All Australians are invited to participate in the inaugural Indigenous Literacy Day (ILD) on 5 September 2007. The one-day event, part of the [Indigenous Literacy Project](#), will raise awareness of the literacy crisis among remote Indigenous Australians and will raise funds to support the [Literacy Strategy](#) of [The Fred Hollows Foundation](#).



Indigenous Literacy Day grew out of the 2006 Australian Readers' Challenge – a collective effort across 350 schools, 64 public libraries and 48 bookshops that raised \$80,000 for The Fred Hollows Foundation's Indigenous literacy programs. [Tara June Winch](#), speaking after the Challenge, said: 'If you're going to be a writer you have to come from some place ... If you're going to be a writer you have to be a reader first ... What these literacy programs create are readers first. In the hope, I hope, of writers next. And these writers will come from some place. Stories from an Aboriginal place, a place that needs more and more voice and more and more ears.' (2006 Australian Readers' Challenge report)

Indigenous Literacy Day (ILD) is supported by booksellers, publishers, authors and professional associations across Australia. David Gaunt, Chair of the ILD and co-owner of Sydney's [Gleebooks](#), says: 'We are overwhelmed by the generous support of the many members of the Book Industry who are donating 5% or more of their sales on September 5'.

The Project's website has suggestions for authors, schools and businesses to participate in the day. It also has details of current projects and instructions for sending donations direct to the Project.

Say It Again

[Bruce Pascoe](#) in *Convincing Ground*, following his discussion of the portrayal of Indigenous peoples in literature written by white Australians: 'We should be raised in households where it is expected that we read Indigenous literature so that the knowledge becomes as habitual to Australians as entering our kids in Little Athletics and Learn to Swim courses, part of the preparation for life which every Australian must experience.' (*Convincing Ground*, p.214)

[Gail Jones](#) speaking at the Menzies Centre, Australia House, London, two days prior to the only event outside Australia to commemorate [Sorry Day 2007](#): 'What I hope I'm foregrounding [in the novel [Sorry](#)] is how problematic are speech acts to do with guilt and reparation. Maybe history can't be repaired. Maybe the time for change was ten years ago. But I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that literature can play a part in moral discourse.' ('Faith in a Sorry Life', *Australian*, 16 June 2007)

[Anita Heiss](#) on saying 'sorry':

What do you want me to do with your apology?

With your lifetime of entrenched racism
wrapped up nicely into one word
"sorry"

...

How do *I* respond
As *you*
walk away
shoulders free
from the weight
of guilt,
mind clear

(from 'Apologies', *I'm Not Racist, But...*, 2007, pp.1-5)

[Lee Lewis](#) on the currently 'white-dominated' [Sydney Theatre Company's](#) Actors Company: 'Imagine the impact such an ensemble might have had on the ideal image of our national identity had it comprised, say, four indigenous actors, two Chinese-Australians, one Lebanese-Australian or, indeed, any other permutation that was not white-dominated.' ('All White on the Night: Director's Cut', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 June 2007)

(Indigenous Australian [Deborah Mailman](#) was an original member of the Actors Company, but left after becoming pregnant.)

The Story Continues...

Meanjin Update

Plans emerged in late May 2007 of a proposal for [Melbourne University Publishing](#) (MUP) to take control of the administration and distribution of the literary journal [Meanjin](#). (See '[MUP Plans to Spread Umbrella over Meanjin](#)' in the June/July AustLit Newsletter for more background.) Further developments have occurred in the last few weeks.

The University of Melbourne Voice (9-23 July 2007) reports that the University's Subsidiaries Committee has agreed that, 'until further consideration, the magazine will be managed through the current corporate vehicle with [Professor Kate Darian-Smith](#) as Chair of the Board of Management'. The Committee recommended that 'all other Board positions be spilled and that a new Board have stronger external representation'. In future, the *Meanjin* editor will not be a member of the Board. The new Board is to rewrite *Meanjin's* business plan and, in June 2008, will need to demonstrate 'satisfactory performance' against the plan.

The Subsidiaries Committee also asked the University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Glyn Davis, to convene a meeting to discuss issues surrounding *Meanjin*. That meeting was held on 24 July. Writing in the *Australian's* 'Higher Education Supplement' on 25 July, Bernard Lane reports on the outcome of the meeting: 'A three person panel, yet to be named, would report in September on *Meanjin's* "intellectual agenda, organisational structure, board membership and publishing issues"'. Professor Davis restated the University's 'comprehensive commitment' to *Meanjin* and its intention to build on the work done by editor [Ian Britain](#).

Britain has indicated that he will oversee production of the September issue of *Meanjin*. His future after that date is less certain. Although the Subsidiaries Committee said a new *Meanjin* Board 'should consider' Britain for the job of editor, he has previously stated that he 'would not feel in a position to reapply for the job' if the original MUP plan was approved. Britain declared: 'my perception of the way we've been functioning would be completely eroded and I could not work in those conditions'. (*Age*, 2 June 2007)

Australians at Work in Japan

Following the news that [Michael Farrell](#) and [Sarah Holland-Batt](#) were to spend time in Japan ('[Writers Head to Asia for Residencies](#)', April/May 2007 AustLit Newsletter) and that Professor David Carter would be the 2007-2008 Visiting Professor in Australian Studies at the University of Tokyo ('[David Carter to Tokyo](#)', June/July 2007 AustLit Newsletter), [David Gilbey](#) writes that they will be joining a growing group of Australians working and studying in the 'Land of the Rising Sun'. Gilbey, Senior Lecturer in Literature and Creative Writing at [Charles Sturt University](#), is currently making his third visit to Miyagi Gakuin Women's University, Sendai. While at Miyagi Gakuin he will be teaching courses on Children's Literature and Australian Culture and keeping up his 'usual Australian connections by writing, reviewing, supervising and marking'. (Among other things, Gilbey is the chief editor of the annual *fourW* anthology and co-ordinator for the [New South Wales Board of Studies](#) Higher School Certificate Distinction Course in Comparative Literature.)

Other Australians in Japan include poet [Ted Neilsen](#), whose [weblog](#) provides an account of daily life in the Japanese capital, and [The University of Sydney's](#) [Michael Brennan](#). Brennan has worked as a lecturer in the Department of Asian Studies and Foreign Languages at the Nagoya

Shoka Daigaku University.

Recent Literary Awards & Shortlists

Miles Franklin to Alexis Wright's *Carpentaria*

[Alexis Wright](#) is the winner of the 2007 Miles Franklin Literary Award for her novel *Carpentaria*. Accepting the award, Wright said: 'I understand that the Miles Franklin award is now in its 50th year. It has a rich history of honouring the work of many great Australian writers whose work I respect and admire. As an Indigenous Australian writer trying to make my contribution to the literature of this country, I am honoured to be in their company.' ([Trust website](#))

The judging panel for this year's Miles Franklin acknowledged the 'many levels and registers' present in Wright's *Carpentaria* – the 'gripping account' of the battle for land rights in the Gulf Country, the 'stunning evocation ... of a sublime and often overwhelming tropical world that is still inhabited by traditional spirits' and the 'apocalyptic' climax drawing together 'myth, allegory and social satire'. The panel concluded that *Carpentaria* was a 'big novel in every sense. Richly imagined and stylistically ambitious, it takes all kinds of risks and pulls them off with the confidence and assurance of a novelist who has now discovered her true power.' ([Judges' Formal Comments](#))

Wright took five years to write *Carpentaria* as she sought the right narrative voice. She told Deborah Bogle: 'I felt it had to be written in the way we tell stories'. The solution came when she overheard two Aboriginal elders talking in Alice Springs. 'It reminded me of how my grandmother used to tell stories ... That is the voice of Aboriginal elders talking about people and country. The risk I was taking was that that's the voice Australians never wanted to listen to.' (*Advertiser*, 22 June 2007)

Wright had a difficult job finding a publisher to listen to that voice when her manuscript was completed. It was rejected by some of the larger publishing houses before finding a home with the independent publisher [Giramondo](#). Fittingly, one of Giramondo's aims is 'to encourage innovative and adventurous work that might not otherwise find publication because of its subtle commercial appeal'.

'Is This a Dagger...'

[Peter Temple](#) could be forgiven for asking Macbeth's doubting question: 'Is this a dagger which I see before me?'. Fortunately Temple's fate was considerably better than that of Shakespeare's Scottish general. Temple is the first Australian to win the Lawrie Dagger Award, popularly known as the Golden Dagger. The award is presented by the British [Crime Writers Association](#) (CWA) and is given to 'the best crime novel of the year'. Temple won for his 2005 novel *The Broken Shore*. First published in Melbourne by [Text Publishing](#), the novel has now been

published in the United Kingdom by [Quercus](#). English editions are available in the USA and Canada, and German and Dutch translations have also been published.

The Dagger judges acknowledged Temple's 'excellent characterisation mingled with a subtle exploration of contemporary Australian landscape and mores' and described *The Broken Shore* as 'a first class read with a sympathetic engrossing police protagonist'. The CWA's Leslie Horton told the *Sydney Morning Herald*: 'Everyone loved it; every single judge loved it and every single judge put it in first place'. (7-8 July 2007)

Temple expressed his absolute delight in winning the award: 'You only have to look at the people who have won in the past, it's a roll-call of great crime writers'. (Previous winners include Henning Mankell, James Lee Burke, Ian Rankin and Val McDermid.) Temple was optimistic about the flow-on effect his win would have for Australian crime writers entering the British market. 'The English-speaking world is fantastically productive in crime-writing, so crashing into it is actually quite difficult and I think the British market is particularly difficult ... So every time an Australian does something, people will say, "Who else is there", and people have been asking me that'. (AAP, 6 July 2007)

Australia had another representative at this year's CWA awards – [Michael Robotham](#) was nominated for the Ian Fleming Steel Dagger for best thriller. The judges described Robotham's *The Night Ferry* as '[v]ery involving and accomplished, especially in the portrayal of the female Sikh lead character. Robotham handles his subject with great deftness and perception in this modern take on people smuggling'.

Full details of the 2007 CWA awards are available on the Association's [website](#).

Tan Garner's More Praise for *The Arrival*

[Shaun Tan](#) has won both the Children's Books Award and the Premier's Prize in the recently announced 2006 Western Australian Premier's Book Awards. The judges described Tan's *The Arrival* as an 'intriguing and elegant artwork' capturing 'both intimate personal moments ... and the vast scale of human movement across time, space and cultures'.

The awards were presented on 8 June by the Minister for Culture and the Arts, the [Honourable Sheila McHale](#). Other winners include:

- Fiction – *The Travel Writer* by [Simone Lazaroo](#)
- Poetry – *All the Time in the World* by [Dennis Haskell](#)
- Non-Fiction – *Rob Riley: An Aboriginal Leader's Quest for Justice* by [Quentin Beresford](#) and *Arthur Tange: Last of the Mandarins* by [Peter Edwards](#) (joint winners)
- Young Adult's Books – *Destroying Avalon* by [Kate McCaffrey](#)

and

- Scripts – '[Sardines](#)' by [Hellie Turner](#)

The full judges' report for all categories can be accessed on the [State Library of Western Australia's](#) website.

Ditmar Award Winners

The winners of the 2007 Ditmar Awards were announced during the 46th National Science Fiction Convention held in Melbourne from 8 to 11 June. The awards are voted on by members of the Convention and recognise excellence by Australians in the Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror genres. This year's winners include:

- Novel – *The Pilo Family Circus* by [Will Elliot](#)
- Novella/Novelette – '[The Devil in Mr Pussy \(Or How I Found God Inside My Wife\)](#)' by [Paul Haines](#)
- Short story – '[The Fear of White](#)' by [Rjurik Davidson](#)
- Peter McNamara Convenors' Award – [Shaun Tan](#)

and

- Professional Achievement – [Bill Congreve](#) for [MirrorDance Books](#) and *The Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy Volume One* and *Volume Two*. Volume Two was also awarded the prize for best Collected Work.

Book Industry Awards Announced

The [Australian Publishers Association](#) announced the Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIA) for 2007 on 24 July. Winners were chosen by 'an academy of booksellers and publishers' and the awards were presented by the Minister for Arts and Sport, [Senator George Brandis](#). The Non-Fiction prize and the overall Australian Book of the Year was won by [Les Carlyon](#) for *The Great War*, an account of the Australians at the Western Front during World War 1. Book awards in other categories include:

- Newcomer of the Year – *Unpolished Gem* by [Alice Pung](#)
- Literary Fiction Book of the Year – *Carpentaria* by [Alexis Wright](#)
- General Fiction Book of the Year – *The Shifting Fog* by [Kate Morton](#)
- Book of the Year for Younger Children – *Josephine Wants to Dance* by [Jackie French](#)
- Book of the Year for Older Children – *The Arrival* by [Shaun Tan](#)

and

- Biography of the Year – *Jonestown* by [Chris Masters](#)

Publisher awards were made to [Allen and Unwin](#) (Publisher of the Year) and [Black Inc.](#) (Small Publisher of the Year).

The [Australian Booksellers Association](#) has also announced the winner of its annual award. Booksellers voted for the book they most enjoyed reading and selling during 2006. Their choice was [Susan Duncan's](#) *Salvation Creek*.

Philip Hodgins Medal to Clendinnen

Historian, academic and essayist [Inga Clendinnen](#) is the winner of the 2007 Philip Hodgins Memorial Medal. The Medal honours [Philip Hodgins](#) and is usually presented to a poet, but this year's judge, [Alan Gould](#), chose to present the Medal to 'someone in sympathy with his [Hodgins's] poetry'. At the [Mildura Writers' Festival](#), Gould confessed to being a newcomer to Clendinnen's writing, but once he had read *Tiger's Eye* he quickly moved on to her other work. He was 'astounded by her poetic finesse and resonance; the steadiness of her nerve, her meditations on the power of history and the "athletic movement of her intrepid mind"'. (*Age*, 28 July 2007)

Clendinnen compared her writing experience to that of snorkeling: 'There you are with your head in the water watching this strange world; these exotic creatures darting in and out of the coral and the weeds; at first you can't make any sense of it but if you stay there something will happen, some sense will come of it'. (*Age*, 28 July 2007)

Clendinnen's most recent publication is [Agamemnon's Kiss: Selected Essays](#).

And Watch Out For...

- [The Children's Book Council of Australia](#) will announce the winners of the Children's Book of the Year Awards during Children's Book Week, 18-24 August. The shortlist for the 2007 is available on the [CBCA website](#).
- The Ned Kelly Awards will be presented at the [Melbourne Writers Festival](#) on 29 August 2007. Nominees for Best Novel include [Barry Maitland's](#) *Spider Trap*, [Peter Corris's](#) *Undertow* and [Garry Disher's](#) *Chain of Evidence*. A full list of nominees can be found on the [Crime Down Under](#) blogspot.

and

- [The Australian Writers' Guild](#) will present the 2007 AWGIE Awards on 31 August at Doltone House, Sydney. The recipients of the inaugural Richard Wherrett Prize and the inaugural Kit Denton Fellowship will also be announced on that night. A list of all

AWGIE nominees appears on the [Guild website](#).

This Month's Spotlight:

Black Words: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Writers and Story Tellers (www.austlit.edu.au/BlackWords)

Indigenous Australians have a growing presence in Australian literature, both in numbers and visibility. AustLit is a part of that presence through its *Black Words* subset launched in June this year. (See '[Black Words Makes Its Mark](#)', June/July newsletter) In this month's 'Spotlight', three Indigenous Australians share what *Black Words* means to them. Each is a writer and a member of the [AustLit team](#).



[Dr Anita Heiss](#), National Coordinator of *Black Words*, writer, filmmaker, public speaker and member of the Board of Directors for the [Gadigal Information Service](#)

Photo by Marianne Tome

As someone involved in the Australian arts scene for many years – as an author, as a publicist with the Australia Council, as a board member of community arts organisations, and as a literary project manager – I have always been aware of Aboriginal literature being the little sister to other art forms – I mean we have been singing, dancing, painting and performing since the beginning of time. But books and writing, well that's something new in our incredibly long history. The idea of Aboriginal-authored books is still new to many of our people who are struggling with basic literacy skills. BUT, we are a growing community of writers and storytellers and we produce cultural product every day that contributes to the overall Australian literary scene. And finally *Black Words* showcases that contribution and evolution, not only to Australian but world audiences, sustained by an increasing interest in Indigenous voice, stories and experiences.

I am proud to be part of a team that is about acknowledging and showcasing our stories, our talents, our diversity and our politics. For it is in our poetry, our novels, our plays and our life-stories that we have a platform to say who we are, what we aspire to, and how we are impacted upon by government policies that either render us invisible or insignificant, and nearly always powerless.

Black Words is so much more than a website or database, it is a revolution in Indigenous voice.



[Yaritji Green](#), AustLit team member at [Flinders University](#), past co-ordinator of the South Australian Indigenous Writers and Storytellers group and co-ordinator of the Inaugural National Indigenous Writers' Festival 2005

Photo courtesy of the author

Each day as I work on *Black Words*, there is a small part of me that wishes this database was started five years ago when I was beginning my Bachelor of Creative Arts at Flinders University. With every author or published work I index, I think about how it could have helped that essay or that report. Since starting early this year, I am amazed by the number of Indigenous writers and books in the public arena.

Students and academics who get the opportunity to access *Black Words* now and in the future are fortunate to use this tool as a part of their studies. So much wonderful work has been done by the *Black Words* team directed by Anita Heiss and [Kerry Kilner](#), and mentored by [Anne Chittleborough](#) and Joan Keating. What we are doing in AustLit and *Black Words* is forging a path that other countries will want to follow.

The writer in me loves to research the works of other Indigenous writers; to know their stories about where they come from and who their family is. I like to share this information with family, friends, and peers. Nowadays, I can just give a temporary guest pass to *Black Words*, and already people are telling me of the Indigenous authors they've had a look at or children's books they are going to buy for their own children. I know that people are talking about *Black Words* in their workplace, with their friends, people who may in turn mention it to someone else in their network.

Black Words is helping Indigenous authors and oral storytellers to make their stamp on the internet. It's an opportunity for them to promote their works, their community on a global platform. *Black Words* is a living entity that is going to continue to grow.



[Yvette Holt](#), AustLit team member at The University of Queensland, winner of the 2003 UTS Human Rights Awards, Reconciliation Award and winner of the 2005 David Unaipon Award for her soon-to-be published poetry collection [Anonymous Premonition](#)

Photo by Lyle Radford

Since commencing work as a researcher on the *Black Words* subset project in October 2006, I have enjoyed exploring and sharing in the cultural diversity of literature amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers from a black perspective. For me personally this has been the most rewarding aspect of researching in the area of *Black Words*. Even though Indigenous Australians represent less than 2% of the nation's total population, our contribution as writers and storytellers has permanent and significant coverage in all genres of literature from children's books to 'chick lit' and all stops in between. For both our writers and readers alike, this symbolises an immense sense of cultural pride, dignity and longevity, our history is truly secure amongst Indigenous writers and storytellers. No longer can Australian history be interpreted from a one-sided perspective, as was the absurd case in my own classroom experiences of social history; our stories and our own unique history as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders has fully emerged and will continue to enlighten and more importantly educate those who wish to be informed.

I would highly recommend *Black Words* as a valuable and resourceful tool for any persons, particularly primary/secondary students, who may wish to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander literature. *Black Words* provides an informative guide on where Indigenous Australian literature has been and where we are heading ... into an exciting and unprecedented future. How refreshing indeed, to simply log onto a web site which is totally dedicated to Indigenous Australian literature, researched by Indigenous people.

Please explore the [Black Words](#) site. If you would like to make any comments or provide suggestions and enhancements to the content, or if you require temporary access, fill in the [Black Words feedback form](#) or email us direct at: info-austlit@austlit.edu.au

New Publications

This month's new publications highlight some recent writing by Indigenous Australians:

- *Yirra and Her Deadly Dog, Demon* by [Anita Heiss](#) and the children of La Perouse Public School

In 2004 Dr Anita Heiss was awarded an Indigenous Arts Fellowship through the Indigenous Arts Reference Group of the New South Wales Ministry for the Arts and the City of Sydney enabling her to work on a project close to her heart and her home. Having grown up in the suburb of Matraville, and wanting to contribute something to her local community, Heiss approached La Perouse Public School with a proposal to collaborate on a story about a contemporary Indigenous girl named Yirra. Over a period of fifteen months the school's predominantly Indigenous student body created Yirra's identity and history and gave her a mischievous pet dog. Heiss brought their ideas together in *Yirra and Her Deadly Dog, Demon*. The book was launched by the New South Wales Governor, Professor Marie Bashir. Professor Bashir told the school audience: 'I think this book should go into every library in Australia. It records something in our own history, our language, the way we speak to each other.'

Speaking during the Sydney Writers' Festival, Heiss told Bonny Symons-Brown for the *Festival News*: 'We had lots of fun; it was one of the most rewarding projects I've ever worked on'. So much so that a follow-up story, 'Yirra Goes on a Surfing Safari', is now in production. (*Festival News*, June 2007)

Royalties from *Yirra and Deadly Dog, Demon* will be divided equally between Heiss and the school, and revenue generated will go towards writing and reading projects for La Perouse Public School. Details of other books by Anita Heiss can be found on the [Bookshelf](#) section of her [website](#).

- *Convincing Ground: Learning to Fall in Love with Your Country* by [Bruce Pascoe](#)
Bruce Pascoe declares that *Convincing Ground* 'is not a history, it's an incitement'. It is written 'for the Australians, old and new, black and white. Some might find the style offensive and abrupt but it has been written so that Aboriginal Australians can recognise themselves in the history of their own country.'

Pascoe concentrates his writing on the history and stories of the Wathaurong people of south west Victoria, but also broadens his argument to a national scale. He concludes with the hope that all Australians 'will fall in love with our country'. He doesn't shirk the difficulties inherent in that proposal, but suggests that 'nations are not forged without the metal getting hot'.

Reviewer Sean Gorman contends that 'Pascoe's love for his country is equal to that of John Howard's. It is just that he is standing in a different spot of the historical campfire'. (*Age*, 16 June 2007)

- *Contemporary Indigenous Plays*

This collection brings together five plays that were first performed during the last ten years:

- Vivienne Cleven's *Bitin' Back*
 - Enoch Wesley's *Black Medea*
 - David Milroy and Geoffrey Narkle's *King Hit*
 - David Milroy and Ningali Josie Lawford's *Windmill Baby*
- and
- Jane Harrison's *Rainbow's End*

In her introduction to the collection, [Larissa Behrendt](#) says that the plays not only showcase 'some of the most important moments in Indigenous theatre in the last decade', they 'encompass a cross-section of the themes that make Indigenous theatre distinctive: the experiences of forced separation, racism in the provision of everyday services, the struggle with identity, the need to reconnect to family and country, the struggle with abject poverty, the desire for self-determination and the strong ties of family, kinship and community'. In combination, the plays 'assist in explaining Aboriginal experiences in terms that a non-Aboriginal audience can understand'.

- *Digger J. Jones* by [Richard Frankland](#)

Richard Frankland is best known as a singer/songwriter and a filmmaker. He has now added writer of children's fiction to his résumé. The release of *Digger J. Jones*, which is written in the form of a diary, coincides with the 40th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum and reveals a 1960s Australia through the eyes of a ten year-old boy. Digger records his encounters the Vietnam War and freedom marches, he confronts death and he falls in love with a nun.

Launching the book in March 2007, the Victorian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Gavin Jennings, said the 40th anniversary of the Referendum provided a chance for policy makers and the broader community to take stock of progress in the last four decades. 'This book is an opportunity for children to understand and question Australia's cultural history but it's also a platform for discussion of Indigenous affairs'. (Media release, 8 March 2007)

(And if you want to know Digger's thoughts on 'fishlicking', 'poonching' and 'piffing yonnies', you'll just have to get your hands on a copy of the book.)

and

- *Me, Antman and Fleabag* by [Gayle Kennedy](#)

The narrator of *Me, Antman and Fleabag* packs her partner and their dog into the car, loads Slim Dusty into the CD player, and hits the road for a trip that makes room for 'all the good things in life, like family, laughin', travellin' and, best of all, love'.

Kennedy was shortlisted in the 2005 David Unaipon Award for 'Koori Girl Goes Shoppin'; with *Me, Antman and Fleabag*, she won the award in 2006. To get a taste for the book's characters read Kennedy's 2005 award-winning entry in the New South Wales Writers' Centre Inner City Life competition, 'Life's Good When Ya' Know How' – story available online [here](#).

And in 2008 watch out for [Yvette Holt](#)'s first collection of poetry, *Anonymous Premonition*. This collection won the 2005 David Unaipon Award and, like Kennedy's prize winner, will be published [University of Queensland Press](#).

More new work by Indigenous writers can be found by searching [Black Words](#) and on the following selection of publishers' websites:

- [Magabala Books](#)
 - [IAD Press and its Jukurrpa Books imprint](#)
 - [Aboriginal Studies Press](#)
 - [Keeaira Press](#)
- and
- [University of Queensland Press](#) (search via the 'Black Australian Writing' category)

Submissions & Applications

Stories from Asian Migrants Wanted

[Alice Pung](#), author of *Unpolished Gem*, is preparing an anthology of 'personal-experience narratives' about Asian migrants who have grown up in Australia. Send submissions of 800 to 3,000 words to:

The Editor
Growing Up Asian in Australia
Black Inc.
Level 5
289 Flinders Lane
Melbourne Vic 3000

Further enquiries to denise@blackincbooks.com

Calling Regional Writers

[ABC Radio](#) is again running its short story project for Australian residents who live outside the metropolitan areas of major capital cities. Stories must be original, previously unpublished and up to 800 words. They can be fiction or non-fiction and in any genre. Ten winning stories will be produced for radio and broadcast on Radio National and ABC Local Radio stations around Australia. The winning writers will each receive \$700.

Further information, including instructions on how to enter, is available on the [ABC Radio website](#). Entries close at 5pm AEST on Friday, 17 August 2007.

Extension Granted

[Nathanael O'Reilly](#) advises that the deadline for submissions for an upcoming issue of *Antipodes: A North American Journal of Australian Literature* has been extended. The special issue, with the working title 'Protect Australia Fair: International Perspectives on Australian Culture', will be published in 2009. AustLit's [February/March 2007](#) newsletter carries details of submission requirements. (To view, click [here](#).)

Please forward enquiries, expressions of interest or completed essays to Nathanael O'Reilly at: Nathanael_o@earthlink.net or Jean-François Vernay at vernayj@yahoo.com. (Note the change of contact details from those previously advised.) The deadline for final submissions is 1 February 2008.

Residencies in the West

Each year the Katharine Susannah Prichard (KSP) Foundation hosts writers in its residency program, funded by [ArtsWA](#). The program allows writers 'time and space to work on their own writing projects' and the opportunity to participate in the events at the [KSP Writers' Centre](#). Applications for established writers have already closed for 2008, but emerging writers have until 31 August 2007 to apply for residencies in 2008.

Details of the residency program and application forms are available on the [KSP Writers' Centre website](#). Note that it is a condition of application that you be a member of one of the WA Writers Centre organisations.

Conferences & Festivals

A raft of literary festivals is on the horizon in the next few months. They include:

- [The Age Melbourne Writers Festival](#) – 24 August - 2 September

- [Brisbane Writers Festival](#) – 12-16 September
 - [Canberra Readers and Writers Festival](#) – 17-23 September
- and
- [Watermark Literary Muster](#) (New South Wales) – 2-6 October

There is also a number of festivals focused specifically on poetry, including:

- [Overload Poetry Festival](#) (Melbourne) – 3-18 August
- [Shoalhaven Poetry Festival](#) – 31 August - 2 September
- [Queensland Poetry Festival](#) – 7-9 September
- [Tasmanian Poetry Festival](#) – 6-8 October

and

- [WA Poetry Festival](#) – 13-21 October

For more events, submission requests and other literary opportunities see the [AustLit Events Directory](#). If you have new events of interest to the Australian literature, teaching and research communities and the general public please complete the form provided on the [Events Submission page](#) on our website.

Time and Tide

Ninette Dutton (1923-2007)

At the close of her 1995 memoir, *Firing*, [Ninette Dutton](#) wrote: 'I have a feeling that I am still preparing for something new to happen. I wonder what's next?' What came next included re-settling in Canberra for five years and then a further move, closer to family in the Blue Mountains, for another five. Dutton's son, Francis Dutton, says that Dutton 'considered herself foremost a wife and mother'. She was married for forty years to the poet [Geoffrey Dutton](#) and travelled extensively with him before a long sojourn at her husband's family property in South Australia. During that period, Dutton offered hospitality to luminaries from across the arts world including [Patrick White](#), [Shirley Hazzard](#), 'Beat' poet Allen Ginsberg and composer Benjamin Britten. 'This was a time', 'says Francis Dutton, 'when connections were made, exciting new talent discovered and the arts support network was being established'. (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 July 2007)

Dutton's talents were manifold. A self proclaimed 'passionate gardener', she wrote several books on gardening and wildflowers, and was a broadcaster for ABC radio and a newspaper columnist on the same themes. She was a gifted and innovative enameller; her work is held in public and private collections in Australia and overseas.

In her memoir *Home* (2000), Ninette Dutton concludes: 'My tale is now told and my quest is over. There is great exhilaration in undertaking and completing a quest.'

Robert English (1936-2007)

'Genuine intellectual', 'bohemian', 'formidable raconteur' and 'literary anti-Christ of Sydney' – these are just some of the epitaphs applied to lawyer and property developer turned writer [Robert English](#). The last is English's own claim.

English's first book was the 1979 novel *Toxic Kisses*, described by [Stuart Coupe](#) as 'an Antipodean version of Hunter S. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*'. It is also the book nominated by [D. B. C. Pierre](#) as providing the inspiration for his own literary career. English wrote three further novels and published a collection of anecdotes with the politically incorrect title *Never Hit a Woman: What Are Your Feet For?*

Coupe says that, 'not surprisingly', English was never invited to speak at a writers' festival. 'His opinionated disdain, combined with his alcoholic intake, made people fear what might happen if English were given a microphone and an audience'. English's insights into the human character were, however, relished by his circle of friends. In the view of barrister and film producer Charles Waterstreet, English 'left a big footprint on life and big thumbprint as well'. (*Sydney Morning Herald*, (2 July 2007)

Glenda Adams (1939-2007)

[Glenda Adams](#) won the Miles Franklin Literary Award for *Dancing on Coral* in 1987 – the last year in which the award was given in the year of publication rather than the year of the announcement. Mirroring Adams's own journey, *Dancing on Coral* features of the story of Lark Watters who travels from the confinements of 1960s Sydney to a more expansive life of New York. Adams had taken the trans-Pacific journey of her heroine in 1964 when she travelled to the USA to study journalism at Columbia University. At the time of her death, she was adjunct professor at Columbia in the university's creative writing program.

Adams held a similar position at the University of Technology Sydney where she taught full-time from 1990 until her retirement in 2003. She continued her association for the following four years while focusing more fully on her own writing. In a paper written for the 2007 Sydney Writers' Festival, and delivered on Adams's behalf by [Debra Adelaide](#), Adams expressed her strong belief that teachers of creative writing should allow their students to 'embark on their own journey of uncertainty'. (*Festival News*) She expressed concern that an increasing emphasis on formality and structure and the use of obscure jargon mitigate creativity.

Adams's obituarist [John Dale](#) (a colleague at UTS along with Debra Adelaide) describes Adams as 'a writer's writer who understood the creative process. Never one to seek the limelight, she made a significant contribution to Australian literature and the discipline of creative

writing.' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 July 2007) Dale's view was backed by a writer to the letters page of the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 20 July: 'She will not be remembered for making billions, breaking sporting records or winning votes but for living well, laughing often, loving much and for sharing her gifts so freely'.

Dancing on Coral is still in print; it is one of the titles in [Angus and Robertson's *A and R Classics*](#) series.

Lynne Wilding (1941-2007)

[Lynne Wilding](#) was a founding member and inaugural president of the [Romance Writers of Australia](#). Wilding's writing success, after what she described a long apprenticeship, began in 1997 with the publication of *This Time Forever*. Over the following decade she published one novel a year including her most popular book, *Heart of the Outback* (1998).

Linda Funnell writes that Wilding had 'a knack for creating characters that readers immediately related to, and stories that got under the skin'. (*Bookseller + Publisher*, July 2007) [HarperCollins](#), publisher of the majority of Wilding's novels, released *Amy's Touch* in May 2007. Like many of her novels, *Amy's Touch* is set against an Australian farming backdrop and features a tussle for a woman's heart. Nine of Wilding's novels are in print from HarperCollins.

John Winch (1944-2007)

[John Winch](#) held dozens of one-man exhibitions during the course of his career as an artist. He worked on canvas and paper, he created etchings and engravings, and he fashioned sculptures and ceramics. Over the last two decades, Winch added another string to his already crowded bow – children's book illustration. In 1988 Winch was invited to illustrate [Libby Gleeson's *One Sunday*](#). He took such delight in the project that he went on to write and illustrate his own picture books and he continued to collaborate with other Australian authors.

Winch's two final picture books honour his favourite artists – Albrecht Dürer and Leonardo da Vinci. *Run, Hare, Run* (2005) is inspired by Dürer's 1502 watercolour *A Young Hare* while *Fly, Kite, Fly* (2007) grew from da Vinci's habit of freeing caged birds. [Winch's website](#) provides a glimpse into some of his artwork, including the cover images for his children's books. (Further images of his paintings can be found on Gosford's [Gallery 460 website](#); the gallery recently held an exhibition of Winch's work.)

With his wife, artist Madeleine Winch, John Winch established the Stuart Town Studios where artists, writers, musicians or 'anyone with an interest in the arts' could apply for a residency. Details are available on the [Studios website](#).

Noel Rowe (1951-2007)

[Dr Noel Rowe](#) trained as a Roman Catholic priest in the 1970s and later combined the vocations of poet and teacher. He was Senior Lecturer at The University of Sydney in the [Department of English](#) and had developed a specialist's knowledge of [James McAuley](#), [Francis Webb](#) and [Vincent Buckley](#). More recently he had engaged in work on [Hal Porter](#) and [Christos Tsiolkas](#). [Dr Elizabeth McMahon](#), Senior Lecturer in the School of English, University of New South Wales, describes Dr Rowe in this way: 'A subtle and incisive thinker with a dry, generous wit, Noel provided his many students and readers with new and complex ways of engaging with Australian literature, which he loved'.

Dr Rowe's gifts as a poet were publicly recognised in 2005 when his collection *Next to Nothing* won the William Baylebridge Memorial Prize and was second in the Mary Gilmore Award for a First Book of Poetry, an award offered by the [Association for the Study of Australian Literature](#). In 2006 Vagabond Press published Dr Rowe's sequence *Touching the Hem* as part of its limited edition *Rare Object* series.

Conveying a perception of his own writing experience on one occasion, Dr Rowe wrote: 'When I am writing I am as close as I get to being fully alive, but I am only writing well if I am not thinking about myself. When I am writing I am as close as I get to glorifying God, but only to the degree that I forget God ... I knew that if I got caught in the rhythm it would happen: the darkness would draw back, the angel would come in, and so quietly I would hear my blood beating on the shore of absolute beauty.' (['Poetry, Theology and Emptiness'](#), *Australian EJournal of Theology* 5 (2005))

Other recent deaths include:

- [Dennis Wren](#) (1926-2007) – publisher with [Heinemann Australia](#), founder of Wren Publishing and host of famed literary lunches in Melbourne.
- [Barbara Buick](#) (1924-2007) – publisher with Cheshire, political activist for women's rights and a driving force behind the creation of the [Children's Book Council of Australia](#). Her correspondence with Australian children's writers from her time at Cheshire is held in the [Research Collection of Children's Literature](#) at the [State Library of Western Australia](#).
- [John Croyston](#) (1933-2007) – poet, and writer and producer with the ABC on such programs as *The Poet's Tongue* and the *Quarterly of Australian Verse*.
- [Richard Franklin](#) (1948-2007) – film director, including directing and co-writing *Brilliant Lies*, a screen adaptation of the [David Williamson](#) play of the same name.

and

- [Margaret Olds](#) (1951?-2007) – publisher, editor and one of the developers of the Editing and Publishing course at Macquarie University.

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