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.

Please note: Links to AustLit records in the newsletter are fully available to AustLit subscribers. Links to external sites are available to all readers. (AustLit is widely available through the university and public library sectors. Ask at your local library about access or contact us for access details.)

**AustLit News**

**AustLit Wins $500,000 Funding for Phase Two Development**

AustLit is delighted to be among the projects funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) for 2008. AustLit will receive $500,000 under the ARC's Linkage, Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) grant scheme. Announcing the funding, the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon. Julie Bishop, commented on the innovation and collegial generosity of Australian researchers. 'The LIEF scheme rewards such collaboration', she said, 'by affording researchers access to equipment that otherwise would not be within their grasp and thereby assists them to achieve their goals.' (Media release, 25 September 2007)

AustLit will use the LIEF funding to further develop discovery and analysis opportunities. A particular focus will be the creation of the Australian Children's Literature Digital Resources subset. The new subset, building on AustLit's present Children's Literature subset, will bring another Australian university into the AustLit partner-fold – the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) will join the eleven universities that already collaborate in the creation of AustLit.

Development of the Digital Resources subset will be led by Professors Kerry Mallan (QUT) and Clare Bradford (Deakin University) both of whom have strong national and international reputations in the field of children's literature. Professors Mallan and Bradford are also co-editors of the journal *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature*.

Importantly, the grant will also enable the finalisation of the research and compilation work for *The Bibliography of Australian Literature*. This work will bring AustLit to a near comprehensive record of Australian literary history creating an entirely unique resource on a global scale.
Publication of the final volume of *BAL* by University of Queensland Press is planned for late 2008.

AustLit is pleased that next year's LIEF funding will be added to the ongoing and substantial commitment made by the partner universities. This combined investment enables AustLit to build on the unique achievements of recent years as we establish an important element in Australia's national research and information infrastructure.

**AustLit Seeks Subscribers' Ideas**

AustLit continues to develop new services and to enhance existing options. Currently in progress is the development of an expanded, 'one stop' keyword search that will search across an extended range of fields including notes and abstracts. A keyword search option will also be added to each of the subset search pages. AustLit is also implementing Open URLs. This protocol can enable a pathway from a work discovered on AustLit to a physical copy of that work. If, for instance, an AustLit search is conducted from a university library, that university's Open URL resolver receives annotated data from AustLit that can then inform the searcher whether a work is accessible in their library (either in hard copy or via an electronic resource).

As always, AustLit is keen to receive input from subscribers and other users. What ideas do you have for enhancing AustLit's services? What else would you like to see included in AustLit? How can AustLit better meet your particular needs? Please fill in our User Survey or contact AustLit direct via email (info-austlit@austlit.edu.au) to share your ideas.

**New AustLit Records**

During August and September 2007, the Content Development Team added:

- 7,153 new works

and

- 1,877 new agents (individuals and organisations)

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

**In the News**

**Judith Wright Property for Sale**
'Edge', the home of the late Judith Wright near Braidwood in southern New South Wales, is being offered for sale by its current owners, the Duke of Edinburgh Award organisation. Wright originally bequeathed 'Edge' to the Australian National University (ANU) for the purpose of ecological research. In 1999, the ANU told Wright and her daughter Meredith McKinney that it could no longer use the property and ownership was subsequently transferred to the Duke of Edinburgh Award for the nominal sum of $1.

News of the intended sale has angered McKinney, friends of Wright and conservationists. McKinney told the Canberra Times that her mother was 'disappointed and deeply unhappy' at the transfer to the Duke of Edinburgh Award although she reluctantly gave permission. McKinney has suggested that part of the proceeds from the proposed sale be directed to the Judith Wright Award Fund for Indigenous Students at the ANU. Mark Baker, the ACT chief executive of The Duke of Edinburgh Award said that the Award's constitution prevented it from making such a donation. (Canberra Times, 15 September 2007)

Tasmanian Greens Senator Christine Milne has filed a nomination for emergency heritage listing. The criteria for inclusion on Australia's National Heritage List stipulate that a nominated place must have 'outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history'. (National Heritage website) Wright lived at 'Edge' from 1976 until her death in 2000. Although much of her poetry was written before this phase of her life, Wright continued to correspond with literary and other friends from her bushland home and she maintained an active presence in national debates on Indigenous and environmental matters.

On 18 September, Mark Baker told the Canberra Times that a potential benefactor had approached the Duke of Edinburgh Award and a solution may be found that would satisfy all parties. One week later negotiations between the unnamed buyer (believed to be a Canberra businessman, environmentalist and philanthropist), the Award and the Australian National
University were progressing encouragingly.

Coincidentally, another property of historic literary value is for sale not far from 'Edge'. Brindabella Station, the childhood home of Miles Franklin, is on the market for $3.5 million. The Station's website offers an overview of the property's current use and attractions; the commercial real estate site, AllHomes, provides an array of photographs showing the interior and exterior of Franklin's former home.

**International Award Furthers Indigenous Heritage Collection in the Northern Territory**

The Northern Territory Library (NTL) service is the delighted recipient of the 2007 Access to Learning Award (ATLA) presented by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Global Libraries initiative. The US$1 million award recognises the on-going achievements of the NTL's *Our Story* database, part of NTL's Libraries and Knowledge Centres Program.

The Program, launched in 2004, helps members of Indigenous communities build technology and literacy skills, and preserve and share their cultural heritage. In the last three years community members have collected more than 40,000 items ranging from artworks, photographs and maps to songs, recorded interviews and filmed events. These items are stored digitally via *Our Story*'s software.

Thirteen of the NTL's remote community-based libraries are currently involved in storing Indigenous heritage through *Our Story* and the program will be implemented at other library sites in the coming year. Funds will also be used to expand early-years literacy programs for
Indigenous children, to provide further training and support to community library staff, and to share culturally appropriate elements of *Our Story* with the wider Australian community.

Additional background on ATLA and the work of the Library and Knowledge Centres is available on the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation website.

**One Man's Gift – The Father Leo Hayes Collection**

On 5 October *The University of Queensland's* (UQ) Fryer Library celebrated the 40th anniversary of the generous donation of the Hayes Collection. A short time before his death in 1967, Archdeacon Leo Hayes gave the university his extraordinary collection amassed over a lifetime – a collection of more than 100,000 items that arrived at UQ in six pantechnicons. The collection includes books – a great many of them first editions – periodicals, pamphlets, newspapers, manuscripts, letters, historical documents, maps, stamps, bookplates and other artefacts.

To a significant degree the acquisition of the Hayes Collection put UQ, and the Fryer Library in particular, 'on the map' as a top ranking research institution in Australian Studies. Building on this significant donation, Fryer Library has continued to maintain a strong collecting activity in Australian literary and historical manuscripts. The Library now holds the papers of many leading Australian writers and scholars are drawn to these collections from around the world. The Hayes Collection is continuously accessed by AustLit team members based at UQ, especially for research relating to *The Bibliography of Australian Literature* project. (The third volume in this project, encompassing authors with surnames beginning in the K to O range, was recently published by *University of Queensland Press*.)

The University marked the 40th anniversary with a celebration of the life of Father Leo Hayes and his significant collection, the launch of a new Fryer Library online display highlighting the collection, and a 'white gloves' tour of some of the collection's treasures.

**Australian Books and Writers Travel Overseas**

The Literature Board of the Australia Council has released its report on the successful applicants from the first round of assessment meetings for 2007. Board Chair *Dr Imre Salusinszky* said that applications from overseas publishers were a highlight of the meeting. The increased number of projects seeking funding (compared to 2006) emphasised 'the Board's continuing wish to expand the overseas market for Australian literature in both English-speaking and non-English speaking territories'. The successful applicants and their funded projects include:

- Fazi Editore – Tim Winton's *The Turning* (Italian)
- Houtekiet and Nagel & Kimche – Michael Gerard Bauer's *The Running Man* (Dutch and German respectively)
- Profil International and Random House Mondadori – Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*
(Croatian and Spanish respectively)

- Tranan & Trasten – a collection of short stories by Australian writers (Swedish)

and

- Jiangsu Literature and Arts Publishing House – a collection of poems by Martin Harrison (Chinese and English)

Several writers received funding for international residencies to be undertaken over the next 18 months. They include:

- Inez Baranay and Kate Holden will each spend six months in Rome at the B. R. Whiting Library
- Jane Clifton and Libby Hart will both go to Ireland for a residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre

and

- Martine Murray and Martin Harrison will each have a six-month sojourn at the Keesing Studio in Paris

Full details of grants to Australian and overseas publishers, writers, festivals and other literary organisations are available on the Australia Council website.

**New YA Fiction Award Seeks Public Votes**

Voting is now open for a new literary award being run under the auspices of the Centre for Youth Literature at the State Library of Victoria. The award, to be known as the Inkys, will honour young adult literature by Australian and overseas authors. Australian writers will be eligible for the Golden Inky and non-Australians will be awarded the Silver Inky. A longlist of 10 Australian and 10 international books has been narrowed to three books in each category. Voting is open until 5 November via SMS or online through the Inside a Dog website. Organisers ask that only people under 25 participate in the voting. The winners will be announced on 12 November.

The contenders for the Golden Inky are:

- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan
- *The Birthmark* by Beth Montgomery

and

- *Notes from the Teenage Underground* by Simmone Howell

**Historic Playbill Returns to Australia**

The earliest surviving document printed in Australia has been repatriated following its discovery
inside a 150-year old scrapbook that had been donated to the Library and Archives Canada by the Library of Parliament, Canada, in 1973. The document is a theatre playbill printed for a 30 July 1796 Sydney production of *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, an English play written by Nicholas Rowe in 1714. Canada's Minister for Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages, the Hon. Josée Verner, said: 'We were thrilled to discover this extraordinary artifact, and we are proud to return it, in the spirit of the great friendship between our countries, to the keeping of the Australian people'. (Media release, 11 September 2007)

Jan Fullerton, Director-General of the National Library of Australia, expressed her gratitude to Canada for its 'extraordinarily generous and highly significant gift to the people of Australia'. (Media release, 11 September 2007) The Library has already digitised the document. Both the printed matter and Governor Philip King's handwritten annotation on the reverse side of the playbill can be viewed via the Library's Digital Collections service.

**Asian Cultures Celebrated in Adelaide**

September 2007 saw the launch of an exciting new venture in Adelaide – the OzAsia Festival. With a programme of live performance and visual arts it celebrated 'work from Australians who identify with an Asian cultural heritage; collaborative work between Australian and Asian artists; and a cross-section of the cultures of Asia, both traditional and contemporary'. The programme of music, dance and theatre included a performance by photographer-storyteller William Yang, a performed extract and a cinematic adaptation of Anna Yen's *Chinese Take Away*, and the Australian premiere of Hung Le's 'I Still Call Australia By Phone'.

In the Artspace of the Adelaide Festival Centre an exhibition, 'Undiscovered Country' (running to the 28th October), features a display by the National Cultural Diversity Cluster. The Cluster, funded by the Australia Council for the Arts and established at the Australian Performance Laboratory at Flinders University, is working with the complexities of cross-cultural arts production and the artistic relationships between live performance and cinematic or visual outcomes.

A two-day symposium during the OzAsia Festival explored the cultural aspects of the relationship between Australia and Asia. The symposium involved politicians, administrators and policy makers, as well as performers, producers and writers. Speakers included Calcutta cultural critic, director and author Dr Rustom Bharucha, Australian writers John Romeril, Katherine Thomson, Noëlle Janaczewska and Merlinda Bobis, and from Tokyo, Michiko Aoki, who has enthusiastically introduced Australian drama to Japan.

The Moon Lantern Festival on the banks of the Torrens, under the September full moon, saw cultural activities from several Asian countries, and a parade of some 1,500 schoolchildren with hand-made lanterns. The Moon Lantern Festival was also the occasion of a reading and launch of Sally Heinrich's picture book *The Most Beautiful Lantern*. 
New Poetry Prize Announced

The Blake Poetry Prize will be offered for the first time in 2008. The newly announced prize is being supported by the South Australian-based literary journal *Wet Ink*, the New South Wales Writers' Centre, the Blake Society and Sydney's Leichhardt Municipal Council. Co-managing editor of *Wet Ink*, Dominique Wilson, believes the prize will enable the journal to 'further support poets through recognising their talents and exposing their work to a broad audience, both within Australia and overseas'. (Media release, 30 August 2007) *Wet Ink* will publish the prize-winning poem and the commended entries in each Spring issue beginning with issue 12 in 2008.

The inaugural prize, to be judged by Heather Taylor Johnson and Stephen Lawrence, calls for entries on the theme 'Bliss, Blasphemy and Belief'. Further details and conditions of entry are available on the websites of the Blake Society, *Wet Ink* and the NSW Writers' Centre. Entries close on 27 June 2008 and the winner will be announced in conjunction with the winner of the 57th Blake Prize for Religious Art in August 2008.

New Name for WA Publisher

Fremantle Arts Centre Press has changed its trading name after 31 years in business. As of 1 July 2007 the Western Australian publisher is known simply as *Fremantle Press*. General manager Clive Newman says that since the Press 'has long been located away from the Arts Centre', the new name 'more accurately reflects our total independence'. Fremantle Press will continue to foster emerging writers and will supplement its publishing program of literary works 'by carefully choosing titles designed for a more general readership'. (Media release, 29 June 2007)

Titles to be launched by Fremantle Press before the end of 2007 include:

- *Ocean Road*, Glyn Parry's new 'coming of age' novel about a young man who witnesses the failure of his parents' marriage (October)
- *Forbidden Magic: A Druid Born*, first-time novelist Christina McCarthy's tale set in Ancient Ireland among the Druids (October)
- *Down to Earth*, a photographic collection by Richard Woldendorp accompanied by an essay by Tim Winton (December)

and

- *Summer Day: Stories of Childhood*, a revised edition of Ray Coffey's anthology of stories and autobiographical pieces by Western Australian writers (December)
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Australian Plays Strut New York Stage
New York's Production Company continued its 'Australia Project' in 2007. The project features a festival of plays exploring the relationship between the United States and Australia. In 2006, thirteen Australian-inspired plays by American playwrights were produced. In 2007, under the season title 'Australia Strikes Back', it was the turn of eleven Australians to respond to American life and culture. The specially commissioned works included plays by award-winning playwrights Lally Katz, Wesley Enoch, Brendan Cowell, Tommy Murphy and Ross Mueller.

Say It Again

- The Hon. Julie Bishop, Minister for Education, Science and Training, announcing the Australian Government's plan to provide $1.5 million towards the establishment of a chair in Australian Literature at an Australian university:
  'We need to preserve our distinctly Australian voice and stories, our intellectual and cultural heritage. We must give children access to Australia's inheritance. The living past and the lessons we can take from it should be nothing less than a unique and joyous learning experience.' (Australian Literature Roundtable dinner speech, Parliament House, Canberra, 6 August 2007)

- Jeremy Fisher, executive director of the Australian Society of Authors, commenting on information presented at the Australian Literature Roundtable including the fact that 47% of the New South Wales English curriculum consists of Australian works:
  'On reflection, this was an appalling figure ... We don't have sufficient confidence in our own culture, in all its diversity, to place it first and foremost ... why Frost when we have Wright? Yeats when we have a (living) Murray? Pinter when we have Sewell? Austen when we have Stead? Woolfe when we have White? ... Why don't our schools and universities use our own imagination as a starting point?' (Sydney Morning Herald, 11-12 August 2007)

- Stephen Matchett on the fall-out resulting from Angus & Robertson's decision to charge small distributors and publishers a fee for displaying less profitable books in A&R stores:
  '[W]ith online booksellers servicing global markets, a book can reach its sales potential without ever appearing on a retailer's shelves, with all the add-on distribution, sales and accounting costs this entails. In the end it seems many of the authors Angus & Robertson does not want, will not need it.' (Weekend Australian, 8-9 September 2007)

- Michael Heyward on the need for better trained editors:
  'We don't publish enough books in Australia because we haven't trained enough editors and publishers to find the writers, nurture them and sell their work ... If we have the vision
to foster a great editorial culture we may find we have a literary boom on our hands.' (*Age*, 8 September 2007)

- Melbourne actor Neil Pigot commenting on the probability that Patricia Cornelius's dual award winning play 'Do Not Go Gentle' will not be produced in the foreseeable future by an Australian main stage company:
  'In most Western cultures audiences go to theatre to get some perspective on their world. Put simply, here we don't want it and so we don't get it ... Ideas, real ideas, are so infrequently the subject of serious discourse in our society that when an audience is presented with one they have virtually no response ... Sadly we have become as lazy in our theatre-going habits as we have in daily life ... Now it appears we are looking to remove the last obstacle to a clear conscience – the theatre'. (*Age*, 16 August 2007)

**Recent Literary Awards & Shortlists**

**Children's Book Council of Australia 2007 Book of the Year Winners**
The Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) has announced its Book of the Year winners for 2007. As often happens, the judges' choices resulted in a variety of reactions from other children's literature specialists. Stephanie Owen-Reeder, a children's book reviewer since the mid-1980s and a former editor of *Reading Time*, declared that the judges 'have done it again. They have made safe choices, choosing books by well-known, award-winning authors and illustrators as the winners of the two picture-book categories but in this case their choices ... are spot on'. (*Canberra Times*, 18 August 2007) Libby Gleeson and Freya Blackwood's *Amy and Louis* won the Early Childhood award and Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* added another prize to its already lengthy list by taking out the Picture Book award.

CBCA national president Bronwen Bennett concurred with the choice of *The Arrival* in the Picture Book category: 'It's such a strong story, it's accessible to everyone and every reading offers up something different ... I think it's a stunning book and I'm very pleased it won.' (*Age*, 18 August 2007) Bennett noted that some 'literary purists' felt the book should not have been included as it does not have any text, but she felt that attitude 'negated the value of visual literacy'.

Katharine England, author of nearly 1,000 reviews over a forty-year period and vice-president of the South Australian Branch of the CBCA was more equivocal in some of her judgments. Writing in the Adelaide *Advertiser* (18 August 2007), England revealed that she was 'staggered by the opportunities to engage young people and ignite their enthusiasm for books and reading that seem to be lost virtually every time the winners are announced'. England disagreed with the choice of Margo Lanagan's *Red Spikes* in the Older Readers category. She accepted that it is 'a work of the highest literary quality' but, noting that some of the stories in the collection 'have
already featured on prestigious adult and young adult award shortlists', wondered whether 'is it really the Children's Book of the Year'. England would have opted for Michael Bauer's *Don't Call Me Ishmael* for the older age group.

The Younger Readers award was won by Catherine Bateson's *Being Bee*. Again, England would have chosen otherwise (nominating Jackie's French's *Macbeth and Son* as her preferred choice), but Owen-Reeder agreed with the judges' verdict that Bateson struck 'just the right note' with her portrayal of the main character and with their expectation that the book would 'enjoy a wide readership' and 'touch the hearts of many'.

Other awards announced by the CBCA in August included the Crichton Award for book illustration to Vincent Agostino's picture book *When Elephants Lived in the Sea* and the Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland to David Cox.

**Premiers' Judges Favour Wright**

Judges in both the Queensland and Victorian Premiers' Awards gave their fiction prize for 2007 to Alexis Wright for *Carpentaria*. The Queensland judges described Wright's novel as 'a major achievement, a tour de force of operatic, at times surreal, storytelling'. Not since Xavier Herbert's *Capricornia*, they said, 'has there been a book like this, one that can truly claim to capture the soul of Australia's north'. In Victoria, the judges considered *Carpentaria* 'almost audacious in its scope and ambition' and commended Wright's 'bold stylistic risk'. In their view Wright's approach 'paid off with a complicated net of stories coming vibrantly alive on the page'.

In other categories, the judges of the two state-based awards differed on every count. Queensland's poetry prize was awarded to Laurie Duggan for *The Passenger* while the Victorian award went to Judy Johnson for *Jack*. In the drama field, Queensland opted for Campion Decent's verbatim theatre piece, 'Embers', an account of the 2003 Victorian bushfires. In Victoria, the judges rewarded Jane Bodie's 'A Single Act', an exploration of violence within marriage. Both states offer an award to recognise writing that advances public debate – Victoria honoured Frank Moorhouse for 'The Writer in a Time of Terror'; Queensland chose Chris Masters's *Jonestown*.

Each of the Premiers' Awards offers prizes in categories distinctive to their own states. In Victoria the Grollo Ruzzene Foundation Prize is offered for writing about Italians in Australia. This year's winner is Karen Spardon for the historical novel *Madonna of the Eucalypts*. Queensland's Steele Rudd Award is for a short story collection. The 2007 winner is David Malouf for *Every Move You Make*.

AustLit is particularly delighted by the outcome of Queensland's David Unaipon Award. It was
won by University of Wollongong-based AustLit team member Elizabeth Hodgson for her poetry manuscript 'Skin Paintings'. In 2005 the award was won by another team member, Yvette Holt. The poetry collections of both writers will be published by University of Queensland Press.

A full list of winners in the Victorian and Queensland Premiers' Awards, together with judges' comments, is available via the State Library of Victoria's website and the Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet's website.

Indigenous Stars Shine at 2007 Deadlys
The 2007 Deadlys were announced at a 'moving and awe-inspiring ceremony' at the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall on 27 September. The Deadlys, whose full title is the Deadly Sounds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music, Sport, Entertainment and Community Awards, have been celebrating Indigenous achievements across the nation since 1995. Included on this year's winners' list are:

- Anita Heiss for her humorous novel *Not Meeting Mr Right* – Outstanding Achievement in Literature
  
  and

- Richard Frankland for his direction of the television series *The Circuit* – Excellence in Film & Theatrical Score

Frankland was also nominated in the Literature category for his young adult novel *Digger J. Jones*. The other two nominations in this category were Jane Christophersen for her collection of children's stories, *Kakadu Calling*, and Alexis Wright for her already multi-award winning novel, *Carpentaria*. Details of the 2007 winners in all categories are available on the Deadlys website.

Scriptwriters and Playwrights Honoured at AWGIE Awards
Former winners and relative newcomers were honoured at the 40th annual Australian Writers' Guild AWGIE Awards on 31 August 2007. Katherine Thomson has already won AWGIEs in categories ranging from Stage to Community Theatre to Documentary. This year she collected an AWGIE in the Original Telemovie category for her police drama *Blackjack: At the Gates*. Other screenwriting awards went to Sue Smith for *Bastard Boys*, Marc Rosenberg for *December Boys* (an adaptation of Michael Noonan's 1963 novel), Tony Ayres for *The Home Song Stories* and Keith Thompson for *Clubland*. Thompson also won the overall Major AWGIE Award.

Winners in the stage writing categories included:

- Angela Betzien for *Hoods* (Theatre for Young Audiences)
- Janis Balodis for 'Electric Lenin' (Musical Theatre)
This year's awards' night also saw the announcement of three new fellowships and prizes. The inaugural Kit Denton Fellowship, rewarding 'courage and excellence in performance writing', was presented to Ian David. The $25,000 fellowship will allow David to create a 13-part television series about the legal system and the conduct of lawyers. David told the Sydney Morning Herald that his experience of the law had not led him to view lawyers as 'heroic soldiers of truth'. In his new series he wants to write about 'characters that show the law in all its grittiness ... They don't necessarily represent good values all the time and they don't have an abiding interest in truth. It's much murkier than that.' (1 September 2007)

The inaugural FOXTEL Fellowship for Excellence in Television Writing was awarded to Mac Gudgeon; Angela Betzien was the first recipient of the Richard Wherrett Prize for Excellence in Playwriting. Further details of the 2007 AWGIEs are available on the Australian Writers' Guild website.

Comic Inspiration for Vogel Winner
Stefan Laszczuk, winner of this year's Australian/Vogel Literary Award, gained inspiration from comedian Magda Szubanski. 'I just think she's the funniest woman on the planet', Laszczuk told the Australian's literary editor, Deborah Hope. (14 September 2007) Laszczuk drew on Szubanski's humour, warmth and tenderness to create a fantasy-world character for one of the brothers who feature in 'I Dream of Magda'.

Marele Day, a judge of this year's Vogel, reported that Laszczuk's 'sense of the comic, his exuberance and ability to surprise are matched by his compassionate and honest portrayal of the oddball characters'. The judges were engaged by the author's 'quirky exposition of loss, grieving and eventual growth'. (Judges' Report)

Laszczuk's novel explores the lives of George and Matthew Harrison, heart-broken survivors of a dysfunctional family upbringing. George finds solace in 'the giant painting of an alien that sits outside his room' while Matthew's escape route is via 'constant sleep – and dreams of Magda'.

Laszczuk receives $20,000 in prize money and 'I Dream of Magda' will be published by Allen & Unwin. Next year, the 50th anniversary of the award, prize money from Vogel will be increased to $25,000 and Allen & Unwin will contribute a one-off sum of $25,000.

Further information on 'I Dream of Magda', and on the other 2007 Vogel shortlisted works, is available on the Allen & Unwin website.
ASA Award Honours Glenda Adams
The Australian Society of Authors (ASA) has awarded the 2007 ASA Medal posthumously to Glenda Adams. The Medal was presented jointly by Tom Keneally, Georgia Blain and Robyn Sheahan-Bright at a ceremony in Brisbane on 15 September.

Adams died in July this year (see the Time and Tide section of AustLit's August/September newsletter). She was acclaimed for her writing and for her commitment to the teaching of creative writing. Her works include the Miles Franklin Literary Award winner Dancing on Coral.

The ASA Medal is offered biennially and was inaugurated in 2003 (the ASA's 40th anniversary year). It recognises 'the achievements of authors (including illustrators) who have made a significant contribution to the Australian community or Australian public life'. The previous Medal winners are Inga Clendinnen in 2003 and Tim Winton and Anita Heiss (under 35 category) in 2005.

Playwrights Earn Development Funding
Six playwrights have been awarded R. E. Ross Trust Playwrights' Script Development Awards for 2007. Penelope Bartlau, Aidan Fennessy, Declan Green, Catherine (Kit) Lazaroo and Glenn Perry all received funding for further development. Tom Holloway received additional investment money towards a workshop and a reading. Holloway's 'Love My Black Dog' deals with the impact of depression on a rural family. The judges commended Holloway's 'highly original performance structure' and 'sustained poetic language'.

The judges were also appreciative that the six winning entries (out of nearly 40 submissions) each alluded to 'the fragility of the contemporary world without speaking directly to it' and noted that all the works were 'the more powerful for taking this approach'.

Full details of the six awarded scripts can be found on the State Library of Victoria's website.

Crime in Australia Really Doesn't Pay
The 11th annual Ned Kelly Awards for Australian crime writing have been announced with the winners of the major categories each receiving $200 in prize money. Award convenor Peter Lawrance told the Australian's Graeme Blundell: 'Ideally, the Ned Kelly awards would become one of the big literary prizes in this country ... But much of my struggle over the years has been generating monetary support.' While despairing 'at the notion of sending pleading letters to publishers asking for support', Lawrance is certain the awards offer sales and marketing value. The winner of this year's award for Best Fiction, Gary Disher, concurs. Also speaking to Graeme
Blundell, Disher said: 'I acknowledge the importance of this award for promoting crime fiction in Australia ... It's taken notice of by international publishers as well as local readers.' *(Australian, 30 August 2007)*

Disher's winning novel is *Chain of Evidence*, the fourth book in the *Detective Inspector Hal Challis* series. Other awardees include a win in the Best First Fiction category for Adrian Hyland (*Diamond Dove*) and Lifetime Achievement honours for Sandra Harvey and Lindsay Simpson. For full details see the Ned Kelly Awards website.

**Northern Hemisphere Honours for de Kretser and Hyland**
Michelle de Kretser has won another international award for her 2003 novel *The Hamilton Case*. Having already won the Encore Award (UK) and the Commonwealth Writers Prize, South East Asia and South Pacific Region, de Kretser now adds the Frankfurt Literaturpreise to the list. The Frankfurt award is presented to a woman writer from Africa, Asia or Latin America in an endeavour to bring the literature of the southern hemisphere to European audiences. *The Hamilton Case* was published in German, French and Italian translation in 2006. De Kretser's next novel, *The Lost Dog*, will be published by Allen & Unwin in November 2007.

Also claiming honours in the northern hemisphere is *M. J. Hyland*. Like de Kretser, she has won the Encore Award and the Commonwealth Writers Prize, South East Asia and South Pacific Region. Now she is the winner of the United Kingdom's 2007 Hawthornden Prize for *Carry Me Down* (2006). The Hawthornden Prize is awarded to 'the best work of imaginative literature' and is unrestricted in terms of literary genre. Hyland is the first Australian to win the prize. She collects £10,000 in prize money.

**Southern Clime Nurtures Young Poets**
Tasmanian students performed well in the 2007 Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards. Students from Hobart schools and colleges provided the winner and runner up in the Senior Secondary category as well as the winner in the Junior Secondary category. Judges Sue Gough and Prue Mason attributed the success of the Apple Isle's students to 'something in the water'.

The Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards were established in 1984 by the Dorothea Mackellar Society and were initially run locally in the Gunnedah district of New South Wales. The competition later spread to a state and national level. The awards aim to 'capture the imagination of school students in Australia and inspire them with a passion for poetry'. Through the annual awards the Society hopes to foster its goal of broadening recognition of Dorothea Mackellar's contribution to Australian literature and igniting 'a spirit of patriotism among Australia's youth'.

The winning poems, selected from among more than 15,000 entries, can be read on the Award website.
Other Recent Award Winners
Other awards in the children's literature arena to:

(Click on the award links for more details.)

- The Wilderness Society's Environment Award for Children's Literature, Picture Book – *Uno's Garden* by Graeme Base

- Speech Pathology Australia's (SPA) Book of the Year Awards – *Clancy the Courageous Cow* by Lachie Hume, *Doubting Thomas* by Morris Gleitzman and Base's *Uno's Garden*. Plus Mem Fox is a new inductee into the SPA's Hall of Fame

and

- BolognaRagazzi Award for excellence in children's book publishing – *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan (special mention)

New Publications

Reinvented Journal Comes Online
Poet and publisher John Kinsella has launched *Salt Magazine*, an online reinvention of his earlier print journal, *Salt*. The earlier incarnation began in Perth in 1990, supported for most of its life by Kinsella and his partner Tracy Ryan. Continuing *Salt*'s tradition, the online journal 'belongs to no camp'. Kinsella sees it as 'internationalist (and regionalist!), pluralistic, eclectic, and generative'. (*Salt website*)

The first issue of *Salt Magazine* is now online. It includes poetry by, among other Australians, Judith Bishop, Michael Brennan, David Brooks, Alison Croggon and Jill Jones; fiction by Tom
Flood and Rodney Hall, and an article by Nicholas Birns on the course of Australian poetry.

AustLit will be adding Salt Magazine to its growing list of electronic journals. Most of the e-journals indexed by AustLit are archived via PANDORA, the National Library of Australia's web archive. PANDORA collects and provides long-term access 'to selected online publications and web sites that are about Australia, are by an Australian author on a subject of social, political, cultural, religious, scientific or economic significance and relevance to Australia, or are by an Australian author of recognised authority and make a contribution to international knowledge'. AustLit team members regularly make recommendations to PANDORA about publications and sites of interest to both organisations. AustLit records for works from archived sources are available as full text via links to PANDORA.

As with print journals, the scope of e-journals is diverse. Some of those indexed by AustLit are:

Journals featuring reviews and criticism:

- Australian EJournal of Theology
- Australian Humanities Review
- Borderlands
- Colloquy: Text, Theory, Critique
- Crossings: Bulletin of the International Australian Studies Association
- JASAL

and

- TEXT: The Journal of the Australian Association of Writing Programs

Journals with a dominant focus on poetry:

- Divan
- Cordite

and

- Foam:e

Currently there are more than 11,000 full text works available through AustLit. These include approximately 1,400 reviews, 900 critical articles and 6,000 poems and short stories. Regular users of AustLit will be familiar with the arrowed globe – 🌍 – indicating a work accessible electronically in full text format. Remember too that AustLit searches can be restricted to full text works by checking the 'Limit to full text' option on both the Basic and Advanced search screens. (In an Advanced search the 'Limit to full text' option displays after the initial search options have been selected.)
Submissions & Applications

'Critical Regionalism: Realizing the Local' – Call for Papers
Organiser's of the ASAL short conference, 'Critical Regionalism: Realizing the Local', are calling for papers. The conference will be held at Curtin University, Perth, from 9 to 10 February 2008 and will explore 'the power of place and region in Australian writing'.

The conference will be preceded, on the afternoon of 8 February, by Curtin University's annual Elizabeth Jolley Lecture and the launch of the online Elizabeth Jolley Research Collection. The 2008 Lecture 'will take the form of a forum in which a number of Western Australian writers will discuss the question of regionalism and writing.'

Abstracts for proposed conference papers should be submitted by 16 November 2007 to Ron Blaber via email at R.Blaber@curtin.edu.au or mailed to Communication and Cultural Studies, Curtin University, GPO Box U1987, Perth 6845

Inaugural Barbara Jefferis Award
Entries are now being accepted for the inaugural Barbara Jefferis Award. Named after Barbara Jefferis – writer, feminist and founding member of the Australian Society of Authors – the award will be presented to 'the best novel written by an Australian author that depicts women and girls in a positive way or otherwise empowers the status of women and girls in society'.

In its first year, the award is valued at $35,000. To be eligible for the 2008 award a novel must have been first published during the 2007 calendar year and its author must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident. Entries close on 30 November 2007 and will judged by journalist Deborah Hope, academic Leigh Dale and author Rosie Scott. A shortlist is expected to be announced on 8 March 2008 (International Women's Day) and the winner declared later in the same month.

Full entry conditions and the entry form are available on the Australian Society of Authors website.

Unproduced Plays Sought for 2008 Festival
Playwriting Australia, the national organisation that replaced the Australian National Playwrights Centre and Playworks, is calling for new plays to be showcased at the inaugural National Play Festival to be held in Brisbane from 10 to 23 February 2008. Playwriting Australia is seeking full-length, unproduced plays in any genre. The plays should be in final draft form and the playwrights must be able to attend the Festival.

Eligibility and application details are available on the Playwriting Australia website. Entries
Conferences & Festivals

Spaces of Print: Exploring the History of Books
The Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand (BSANZ) conference, 'Spaces of Print: Exploring the History of Books', will take place in Hobart from 7 to 9 November 2007. The conference will largely be held at the Tasmanian Museum and Gallery. AustLit's Content Manager, Carol Hetherington, will be presenting a paper titled, "'All Fame and No Bloody Money": Arthur Upfield in the Marketplace', AustLit Advisory Board member, Dr Philip Mead, will discuss 'What Happened to the Walker Books?' and AustLit team member Nathan Garvey will examine 'The Publishing History of the George Barrington Books, 1790-1840'. Other conference papers range in theme from 'Convict Books and Reading in Colonial Tasmania' to '"The Man Dear Friend Who Wears a Condom": The Manuscript Distribution of Erotica in Eighteenth-Century London'.

Conference registration should be completed by 30 October. Contact BSANZ's Treasurer, Rachel Salmond, rsalmond@pobox.com, for further information.

For more conferences, festivals 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

Centenary for 'Working Class Man'
Overland 188 (2007) notes the 100th birthday celebrations of Ralph de Boissiere on 6 October this year. Born in Trinidad, de Boissiere arrived in Australia in 1948. He was a founding member of the Realist Writers Group and an original member of Overland's editorial board. De Boissiere's commitment to working class people is strongly reflected in his novels, Crown Jewel (1952), Rum and Coca-Cola (1952) and No Saddles for Kangaroos (1964).

Mona Brand (1915-2007)
Mona Brand did not set out to change the world through her writing. 'I think I was just dealing with people and their situations and their problems', she told Sunanda Creagh on the eve of her 90th birthday in 2005. (Sydney Morning Herald, 21 October 2005) Brand's plays, however, tackled issues that were not at the forefront of public debate at the time of writing. Her first play, Here under Heaven (1948), addressed the racism encountered by Indigenous people and Chinese migrants. Strangers in the Land (1952) broached the behaviour of British colonial families in Malaya. Re-reading the latter play more than fifty years after its first performance, Brand
reflected: 'I haven't heard about Malaya in recent times but I do know they don't have British there any more owning everything. So when I read it again, I thought, well, I'm glad I did that.' (Quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 October 2005)

Brand's plays – and there are more than 30 of them – did not always receive widespread production or acclaim in Australia. Her membership of the Communist Party and her gender may have been a factor in that. But Brand and her plays were welcomed overseas, particularly in Eastern Europe. Her work was performed in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Hungary, and also reached into China and India. This anomaly was probably in Brand's mind when she sub-titled *Enough Blue Sky* – her 1995 autobiography – 'an Unknown Well-Known Playwright'.

Late in life Brand gained access to her Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) file. The 379-page file revealed that Brand and her husband, journalist and writer Len Fox, whom she met through the Realist Writers Group, had been tracked by ASIO since 1950. Among the details in the file was information on her honeymoon and evidence that ASIO had checked the validity of her marriage at the registry office where the ceremony was conducted. On 17 December 2002 Brand responded through the *Sydney Morning Herald*'s ' Heckler' column to her reading of the file. Her humour masks an undaunted commitment to radicalism: 'It makes me feel quite guilty about all the time and taxpayers' money you had to spend when I could have written and published my autobiography long before I did ... My autobiography doesn't mention everything I attended, so it's good of you to remind me how busy I was. (I wonder how I had time to write all those plays and books.) Nor does my account describe myself. But you have done it for me several times not always to my liking. "In early 30s. Short, dumpy build. Scraggy looking." That's the one I mind least, because in 1954 when that was written I was not in my early 30s. I was nearly 40. So, ASIO, you made a mistake. A laughable one. Not the first. And not the worst. At least you didn't send balaclava-clad agents to come and smash down our doors.'

**Bernard Hickey (1931-2007)**

'Italian literary academics were bewitched, bothered and bewildered in the mid-1970s by a leprechaun from Queensland who was nothing like their image of English academics. He would call his students "possum", laugh readily and sometimes conclude his talks with the words "grazie mille", meaning a thousand thanks but also an evocation of Giuseppe Garibaldi's Mille (thousand) troops who conquered Sicily.' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 August 2007)

So opens Desmond O'Grady's obituary for Bernard Hickey. Born in Queensland and educated by the Christian Brothers in Maryborough, Hickey was waylaid in Italy while returning to Australia after working and studying in Ireland and England for some years. He would make his home in Rome, Venice and Lecce for the rest of his life. Hickey's achievements in the service of Australian literature and culture are manifold. He is widely honoured as a pioneer of Australian studies in Italy and for the dialogue he fostered between Europe and Australia.
Hickey's endeavours led to the recent establishment of the Centre for Australian Studies in the Mediterranean at the University of Lecce in Italy's Puglia region. His library of 7,000 books is now housed at the Centre and the collection of Australiana located there will continue to grow. Earlier this year the South Australian Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Puglia. As part of that relationship the Hon. Kevin Foley, Deputy Premier of South Australia, was in Italy during September to hand over the first portion of a large donation of books and other educational resources to the Centre. Speaking on that occasion Foley said: 'Today's gift will support the dream of the late Australian Professor Bernard Hickey ... The South Australian Government is pleased to play a role in making Professor Hickey's dream come to fruition and without his leadership, passion and determination this initiative would not have been fulfilled.' (News release, Premier & Cabinet of South Australia, 10 September 2007)

Hickey's 'leadership, passion and determination' were recognised 20 years ago when he was made a Member in the Order of Australia. He was also an honorary life member of the European Association for Studies of Australia, a Patron of the Fellowship of Australian Writers and a Doctor of the University, Australian Catholic University. 'His passing', says Stanton Mellick, 'leaves an unfillable void in Australian cultural representation in Europe.' (Quoted in the Courier Mail, 23 August 2007)

Other recent deaths include:


- **Lola Irish** (1920-2007) – playwright and author of contemporary and historical novels including the award-winning *Streets of Dust: A Novel Based on the Life of Caroline Chisholm* (1993)

- **Philip Grundy** (1932-2007) – Greek scholar, Anglican priest, co-founder of Leros Press and translator of works such as Dimitris Tsaloumas's National Book Council Award-winning *The Observatory* (1983) and the 1987 English language edition of *Greek Voices in Australia: A Tradition of Prose, Poetry and Drama*


- **Ben Frater** (1979-2007) – student and poet whose life was described by Alan Wearne as being dominated by three things: 'his poetry, his schizophrenia and the devotion between him, his family and friends'. (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 August 2007)
Feedback

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info-austlit@austlit.edu.au

Or spend two minutes filling out our User Survey form.