



CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature

2009



'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature

Council has long established an excellent reputation within local government and the general community for its support of library services and the wide range of allied programs available to local residents.

One of its more innovative projects has been the creation of a Literary Award which has now developed into a major national event. The Award was established in 2002, with the support of Westfield Bondi Junction as its major sponsor, and the Friends of Waverley Library (FOWL). Recognising excellence in research in the creation of literary works, the Award has been won by some of our finest writers, including Gideon Haigh, Helen Garner and Geoffrey Blainey.

Following Westfield's withdrawal of sponsorship in early 2008, Copyright Agency Limited (CAL), agreed to provide \$80000 over three years to ensure the continuation of the Award whilst Council looks for an alternative community partner. Now known as 'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature, the Award offers a highly competitive main prize of \$20,000. In addition, each of the 6 finalists receive the Alex Buzo Shortlist Prize, named after one of Australia's most distinguished playwrights who lived in Waverley, and contributed significantly to the Award's success, prior to his untimely death in 2006.

The new sponsorship arrangements have resulted in an increase in the winner's prize from \$15000 to \$20000. CAL is an accredited copyright management company which collects copyright licence fees and is required to allocate some of that money for continuing cultural development. CAL supports a wide range of literary awards, festivals, and author events. It is very satisfying to be able to directly reward authors whose books on library shelves have brought such pleasure and learning to tens of thousands of our readers over the years.

The Award has been enthusiastically received by the literary and publishing communities, with a record number of entries each year – 165 in 2008.

'The Nib' is the name given to the statuette which has been presented with the winner's prize each year of the award and has now been incorporated into the name of the award. 'The Nib' was designed by Council's Graphic Artist, Michael White.

There are many different literary awards available to authors, but Waverley's is unique. Besides excellence in research in the creation of literary works, the judges also take into account readability, innovation, knowledge, literary merit and value to the community. All fiction and non fiction writing are eligible. There is a lot of local community involvement with library readers encouraged to read and comment on the nominations, and to attend the two award functions towards the end of the year.

Christopher Koch was the first novelist to win the award, for his book *The Memory Room*, in 2008

The shortlisted authors for 2008, all of whom received the Alex Buzo Prize, were

Waleed Aly	People like Us
Paul Ham	Vietnam - The Australian War
Catherine Jinks	The Dark Mountain
Christopher Koch	The Memory Room
Kathy Marks	Pitcairn - Paradise Lost
Babette Smith	Australia's Birthstain

Information on the award may be found on the Library's website
www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/library/award

'The Nib' is looking for Community Partners for 2010 +

We would be delighted to talk to you!