



## CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature 2002 - 2011

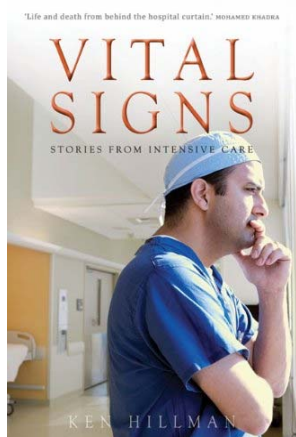


### Winners and Shortlisted Authors

Known as 'The Nib' CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature 2008 – 2011  
Known as Westfield/Waverley Library Award for Literature 2002 – 2007

'The Nib' Literary Award is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year and is unique amongst the many literary awards open to Australian writers. An eclectic list of deserving authors have been shortlisted or won the award, representing a very broad cross section of Australian writing. This list includes the judges' comments, and other information, which provide an insight into the books, chosen as 'the best six' in their respective years. Hopefully, you will be encouraged to look further and perhaps discover a 'gem or two' that you may have missed. All the books are, of course, available from Waverley Library. Happy reading!!

## 2010 Shortlist



***Vital Signs: Stories from Intensive Care***  
by Ken Hillman

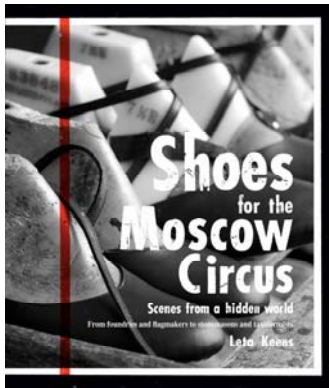
### Judges' comments:

A man with interesting blue feet, which have to be cut off; a woman with blood poisoning as a result of going for a ten kilometre run after shaving off her pubic hair; families at the bedsides of dying patients: these are among the scenes sketched for us in this remarkable memoir by the first Australian doctor to qualify as an intensive care specialist. While recounting his own experiences, he also discusses the ethical dilemmas faced by medical staff with the power of life or death in their hands, and supplies a well-researched history of the development of life-saving technology. Above all, though, this book is the story of man who has had to live with tragedy for much of his life – and who has been able, occasionally, to avert it.

**Publisher:** UNSW Press

**Shelf location:** ANF 616.028 HIL

**Website:** <https://www.unswpress.com.au/isbn/9781742230955.htm>



***Shoes for the Moscow Circus***  
by Leta Keens

**Judges' comments:**

Taxidermists, boat-builders, book-binders, bat-makers, a blacksmith, a foundry, a tannery, a cricket ball maker, and a doll hospital, among many other unusual yet necessary occupations, are examined in patient, meticulous detail by the author of this fascinating book, which might best be described as an industrial miscellany. Interviews with craft-obsessed, sometimes cantankerous workers are combined with vivid descriptions of the settings where these varied and specialist trades are carried out. This is a delightful yet most unexpected book, wide-ranging in its research and lucid in its written expression.

**Publisher:** Murdoch Books

**Shelf location:** ANF 338.6420994 KEE

**Website:** <http://www.murdochbooks.com.au/shoes-for-the-moscow-circus-9781741964677.htm>



***Breaking News: the golden age of Graham Perkin***  
by Ben Hills

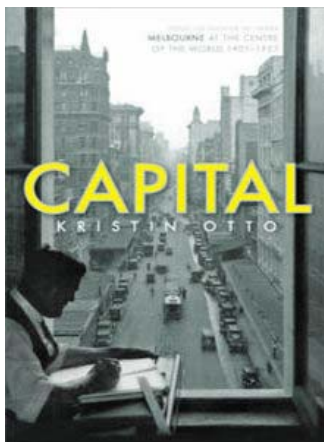
**Judges' comments:**

Just weeks before the dismissal of the Labor Government in 1975, Graham Perkin, the editor of Melbourne's Age newspaper, died of a heart attack at the age of 45. His last editorial, famously headed "Go Now, Go Decently", implored Gough Whitlam, the leader he had previously supported, to defuse the impending crisis by resigning. His plea went unnoticed, and the news of his death was overshadowed by the drama that followed. This book recounts the life of one of Australia's most influential and gifted journalists, but it is much more than just a biography. It is a detailed insider's account of the workings of a great newspaper, and an insight into the development of the mass media – not only newspapers, but magazines, radio and television – as we know them today. It is also a history of this country, as seen through a newspaperman's eyes, in the period between the Second World War and the end of the Vietnam War, written with the readability and clarity of a thriller.

**Publisher:** Scribe Publications

**Shelf location:** ANF 070.92 PER

**Website:** <http://www.benhills.com/>



**Capital**  
by Kristin Otto

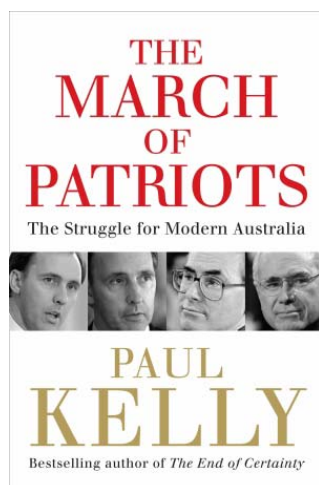
**Judges' comments:**

For its first twenty-seven years as a federation, the capital city of Australia was Melbourne. This eventful period took in the First World War, and many dramatic advances in technology and industry, as cars, aeroplanes, the wireless and the cinema were introduced. This handsomely illustrated book provides a series of snapshots of life in Melbourne in those years, as seen through the eyes both of ordinary people and of eminent figures such as Sir John Monash, Dame Nellie Melba, C.J. Dennis, Houdini, and Macpherson Robertson, inventor of the Cherry Ripe. Mac Robertson was responsible for Melbourne's first death by car accident, when he ran over a man in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy, while travelling at "seven or eight miles an hour". When the war ended, Melba had herself driven to the village of Lilydale, where she rang the fire bell; Dennis's illustrator, David Low, said of her that "she was a bullying woman who ate a great deal and swore a lot." There are similar illuminating anecdotes on every page of this evocative study.

**Publisher:** Text Publishing

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.51 OTT

**Website:** <http://textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/author/kristin-otto/>



**The March of the Patriots**  
by Paul Kelly

**Judges' comments:**

The story of Australian politics in the last two decades, it can be argued, is the story of two leaders whose differences were less than their similarities. Both Paul Keating and John Howard grew up in Sydney's south west suburbs, and both came from similar family backgrounds. Yet as politicians they presented themselves as utter opposites, even while supporting policies that were nearly the same. This epic work from the 1990 Graham Perkin Journalist of the Year is the first half of a two-part study of the events and political struggles that led to the making of modern Australia. There is no writer better qualified to portray this period, and the extensive research in this first volume is complemented by a series of interviews with the narrative's central characters.

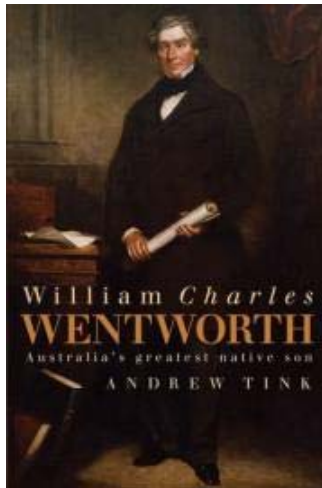
**Publisher:** University of Melbourne Press

**Shelf location:** ANF 320.994 KEL

**Website:**

<http://www.mup.com.au/uploads/files/mediarelease/EMRMarchofPatriots.pdf>

## The Winner 2010



**William Charles  
Wentworth**  
by Andrew Tink

### **Judges' comments:**

The figure of W.C. Wentworth looms over Australian history and politics to this day, particularly here, where a neighbouring electorate bears his surname. Thus it seems appropriate that his biography should be undertaken by an author with first-hand experience of the political life. All the same, research and writing skills are as necessary to the creation of a biography as is the empathy that results from a shared occupation. Both are present, here, in a book that recounts the life of the illegitimate son of a surgeon suspected of highway robbery, who became a celebrated explorer, poet, journalist, politician, newspaper proprietor, owner of the South Island of New Zealand, and founder of a dynasty. It is a life that cannot fail to hold the reader's attention, and a story deserving of the justice this elegantly written work has done it.

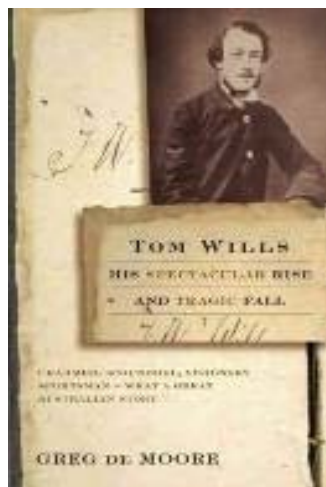
**Publisher:** Allen and Unwin

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.401 WEN

**Website:**

<http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=311&author=641>

## 2009 Shortlist



**Tom Wills**  
by Greg de Moore

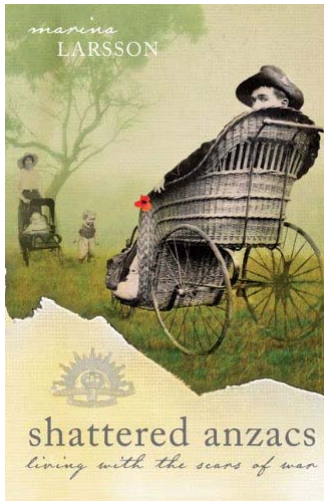
### **Judges' comments:**

While the name of Tom Wills is familiar to those who have studied the history of Australian sport, too little has been known about the man who was both one of the first celebrated cricketers of colonial times and a founding figure in Australian Rules football. As a psychiatrist, Greg de Moore's interest in his subject was awoken when he learned that this successful sportsman had ended his life at the age of forty-four by stabbing himself in the heart. In trying to find an explanation for what seems a senseless early death, de Moore's research took him from the Royal Melbourne Hospital to the Rugby School in England, and to a cattle station in Central Queensland, where invaluable documents had been stored for more than a century. The story he has uncovered provides a new perspective on relations between the aboriginal people and the settlers of the nineteenth century, as well as on the foundations of modern sport.

**Publisher:** Allen & Unwin

**Shelf Location:** ANF 994.03 WIL

	<p><b>Website:</b>  <a href="http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=94&amp;book=9781741754995">http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=94&amp;book=9781741754995</a></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Winner 2009</b></p>  <p><b><i>The Land I Came Through Last</i></b> by Robert Gray</p>	<p><b>Judges' comments:</b>  The distinguished poet Robert Gray set out to write a book about his family entirely from memory, but found, as we all do, that it is "impossible to be accurate about another's past or even one's own". Thus he was driven to research the family background that led to his own experiences, and it has taken him more years than anyone expected to complete one of the most beautifully written works of autobiography ever to appear in this country. At the centre of the book is the author's father, a feckless, gifted, irritable, occasionally charming drunkard, but there are many other memorable characters who take a less central role in the story, among them writers such as Bruce Chatwin and Patrick White. Gray's portrait of the latter brings an entirely new perspective to our understanding of the Nobel Prize winner's personality.</p> <p><b>Publisher:</b> Giramondo  <b>Shelf location:</b> ANF 819.4 GRA  <b>Website:</b>  <a href="http://australia.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw/cms/cms/cms_module/index.php?obj_id=459">http://australia.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw/cms/cms/cms_module/index.php?obj_id=459</a></p>
 <p><b><i>The Accidental Guerrilla</i></b> by David Kilcullen</p>	<p><b>Judges' comments:</b>  Terrorism, for many, is the most urgent problem facing modern society. The world's foremost expert on methods of dealing with it happens to be a former Australian army officer. In developing his ideas about the best ways for governments and the military alike to respond to insurgents and guerrillas, David Kilcullen's research has involved much more than mere academic study, though his reading has breadth and depth; the most original contributions he makes derive largely from first-hand experience of the battlefield. To reduce the threat of terrorism, he argues, it is essential first to identify the sources and the motivation of each local insurgency. His arguments are framed in an elegant yet straightforward prose style, a style that is present also in the fascinating excerpts from his field notes, quoted throughout this persuasive, highly significant book.</p> <p><b>Publisher:</b> Scribe  <b>Shelf location:</b> ANF 355.0218 KIL  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.scribepublications.com.au/author/davidkilcullen">http://www.scribepublications.com.au/author/davidkilcullen</a></p>



***Shattered Anzacs***  
by Marina Larsson

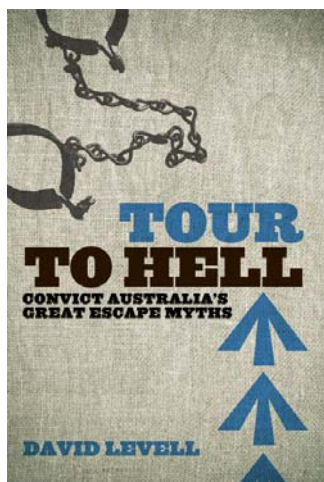
**Judges' comments:**

More soldiers returned from the First World War alive but in some way disabled than those who died. Some were missing limbs or otherwise physically maimed, some suffered the life-long after-effects of gas or infection, and some were mentally scarred by their experiences. The suffering of these victims is obvious; but Marina Larsson decided to investigate the effect of that suffering on the families and friends of the returned servicemen. By interviewing the surviving children of Anzacs who came back as changed men, and by researching letters and memoirs held in archives and libraries around Australia, she has created a memorial to war that goes well beyond the usual accounts of battles and troop movements. She has also brought readers closer to a fully rounded sense of what it was like to live in a community both during and after the war, helped by an abundance of quotation from those who were there.

**Publisher:** UNSW

**Shelf location:** ANF 362.860994 LAR

**Website:** <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/history/staff/larsson.htm>



***Tour to Hell***  
by David Levell

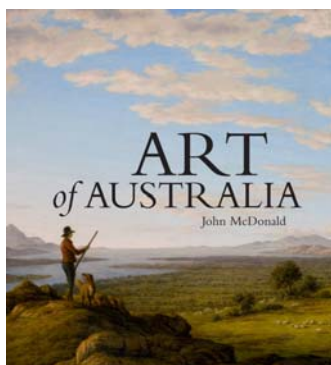
**Judges' comments:**

In the earliest days of the penal colony in New South Wales, rumours and legends circulated among the inmates that it was possible to escape on foot from the punishment they felt was a living hell. Some of the convicts were Irishmen who believed that they could reach China by walking north from Port Jackson. Others were convinced that there was a colony of sympathetic white men somewhere beyond the Blue Mountains, and others still that they could walk to Timor. As a result of these delusions, many escapees came to a gruesome end, and yet in the process they made an unacknowledged contribution to the early exploration of New South Wales. David Levell has uncovered many little-known facts about the early days of settlement, and transformed them into a compelling narrative, in this account of the misguided beliefs of the unhappy convicts.

**Publisher:** University of Queensland

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.02 LEV

**Website:** <http://davidlevell.wordpress.com/>



**Art of Australia**  
by John McDonald

**Judges' comments:**

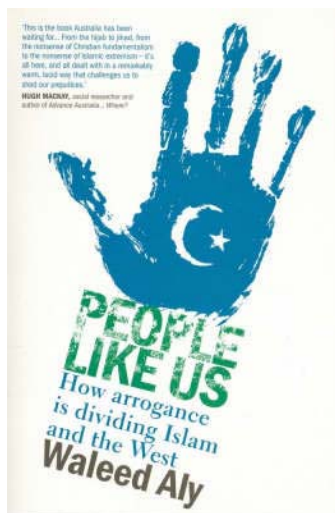
Though he is best known as the art critic for the Sydney Morning Herald, John McDonald has always been far more than a mere journalistic chronicler of the local art scene. He has also been a profound and original student of Australian art history, and a notably independent thinker. Many years of research have gone into the ambitious project in which this book is only the first volume, yet research is not all this magnificent publication has to offer. The illustrations are numerous and handsomely reproduced, and McDonald is both a perceptive explainer of art, and a stylish writer with a shrewd sense of anecdote; while narrating the history of Australia's cultural heritage in a sequence from the adversity of convict days to the "blessed hope" of the end of the nineteenth century, he entertains the reader with revealing stories about the larger than life characters who helped to create that heritage.

**Publisher:** Pan Macmillan

**Shelf location:** R 709.94 MAC

**Website:** <http://www.australianstudiobook.com/book/john-mcdonald>

## 2008 Shortlist



**People Like Us**  
by Waleed Aly

**Judges' comments:**

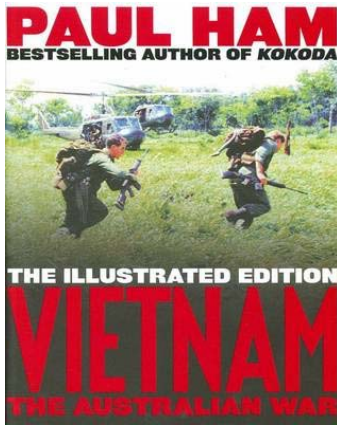
The position of the Islamic religion in modern-day society poses a question of the utmost urgency. While much has been written about it, most has come from extremists of one persuasion or another. In balanced, elegant prose, Waleed Aly shows how tensions are brought about by the mutual inability of Muslims, Christians and secular Westerners to understand one another's motives. Habits of dishonesty and self-deception are to blame, he suggests, for this mutual misunderstanding, which can only be solved, in his words, by "people like us".

**Publisher:** Picador/Pan Macmillan

**Shelf Location:** ANF 297.27 ALY

**Website:**

[http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display\\_author.asp?Author=Aly,%20Waleed](http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_author.asp?Author=Aly,%20Waleed)



***Vietnam: The Australian War***  
by Paul Ham

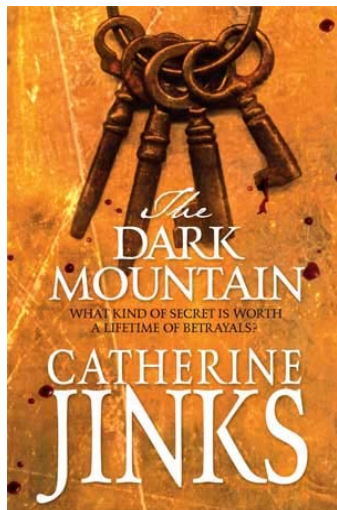
**Judges' comments:**

No war before or since has had such an impact on Australian culture as the Vietnam war. As Paul Ham puts it, "in the late 1960s the war touched everyone." Thus there is far more to this exhaustively researched account of Australia's military contribution to the war than recreations of battles and discussions of tactics, even though these are expertly done. This book is also a comprehensive portrait of the nation which had sent its soldiers abroad to fight for a cause not everyone could support, a nation increasingly divided against itself, where an unwillingness to face the truth added to the divisions.

**Publisher:** Harper Collins

**Shelf location:** ANF 959.7043394 HAM

**Website:** <http://www.harpercollins.com.au/books/Vietnam-Australian-War-Paul-Ham/?isbn=9780732282370>



***The Dark Mountain***  
by Catherine Jinks

**Judges' comments:**

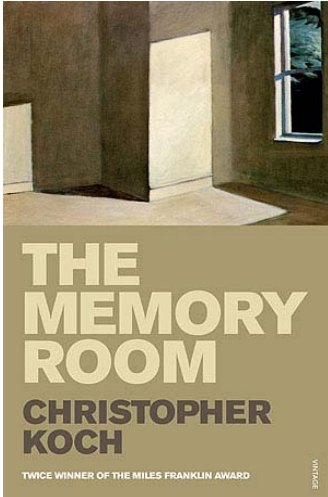
Louisa Atkinson was the first Australian-born woman novelist, and in her short life she was also a successful journalist and a respected naturalist. Yet her childhood was shadowed by the death of her father and her mother's unhappy remarriage. Using the historical framework of Atkinson's biography, and meticulous research into every aspect of 19th century life in Australia, Catherine Jinks writes in the persona of Atkinson's older sister Charlotte to create a novel of perfect construction and powerful themes, including murder, madness, and the lasting impact concealment of the truth can have on every member of a family.

**Publisher:** Allen & Unwin

**Shelf location:** AF JINK

**Website:** <http://www.catherinejinks.com/default.asp?PageID=164>

# The Winner 2008



***The Memory Room***  
by Christopher Koch

## **Judges' comments:**

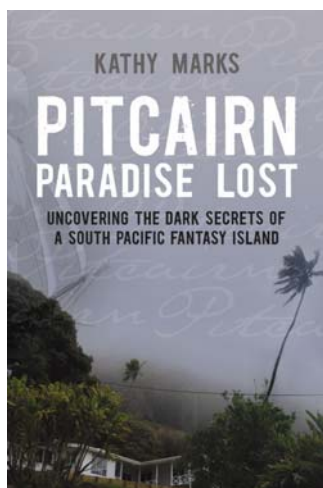
To become a spy, one must develop a taste for secrecy as well as learning the skills of concealment. Yet for Christopher Koch fascination lies in the nature of the psychological need which might propel a person into a life of espionage. In exploring the impulses which lead his characters, Vincent Austin and Erica Lange, from an innocent world of make-believe to real-life deceptions in the context of the last years of the Cold War, and then to tragedy, he has researched in convincing detail the actual operations of professional secret agents. His novel also depicts China with the same evocative richness found in his descriptions of Tasmania, Sydney, Canberra and the Monaro.

**Publisher:** Vintage/Random House

**Shelf location:** AF KOCH

**Website:**

<http://www.randomhouse.com.au/Author/Koch,%20Christopher>



***Pitcairn: Paradise Lost***  
by Kathy Marks

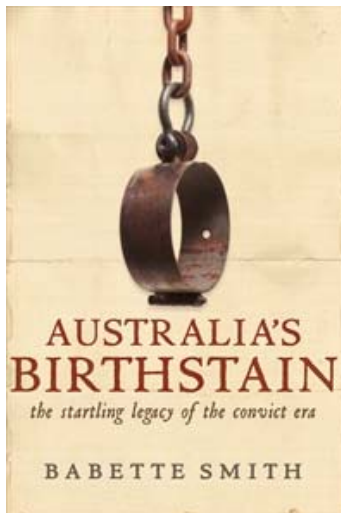
## **Judges' comments:**

In 1999, a police investigation of a rape on the remote Pitcairn Island set a chain of events in motion which ended with thirteen men, out of a population of forty-seven, facing more than ninety charges of rape and child abuse. Kathy Marks was one of only six journalists who were allowed onto the island to report on the trials. Her book is more than just a gripping account of a highly unusual series of court cases; it is also a well-researched history of the cliff-bound speck of land originally settled by the Bounty mutineers, and an atmospheric description of a uniquely isolated community, one which perhaps through necessity had long avoided facing the truth.

**Publisher:** Fourth Estate/Harper Collins

**Shelf location:** ANF 364.153 MAR

**Website:** <http://authors.simonandschuster.com/Kathy-Marks/48164480/biography>



***Australia's Birthstain***  
by Babette Smith

**Judges' comments:**

Though things have changed in recent years, for most of the time since Australia was founded it has been a source of embarrassment for many that the nation began as a convict settlement. For families with social pretensions, a convict ancestor was once a source of shame, though now it might be a status symbol. Among many interesting ideas in this densely researched account of Australia's long period as a convict colony, Babette Smith makes the point that one of the deepest motives in the campaign to abolish the transportation of convicts to Australia was homophobia: in the 19th century, it was felt that the convict colonies were "incubators of homosexuality". For that reason the truth about our past was covered up and mythologised for many years; in this book the myths and the facts are decisively disentangled.

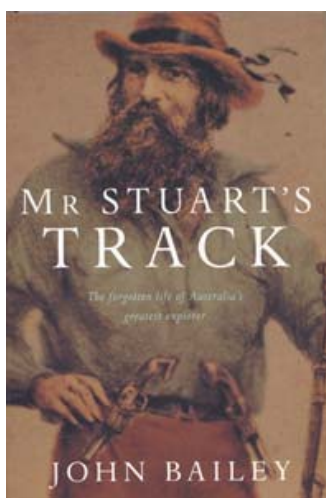
**Publisher:** Allen & Unwin

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.02 SMI

**Website:** <http://www.babettesmith.com/>

## 2007 Shortlist

The  
Winner  
2007



***Mr Stuart's Track***  
by John Bailey

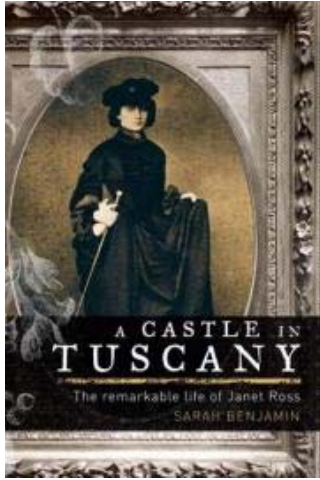
**Judges' comments:**

John McDouall Stuart was the first European to cross the continent of Australia from South to North, succeeding where Burke and Wills had tragically failed at almost the same time. As John Bailey shows in this fast-paced biography, he was an unlikely figure to become an acclaimed explorer, physically frail and over-fond of "the blood of bold John Barleycorn", while his financial backers were somewhat shady Adelaide businessmen. For all its meticulous research, this book is as colourful and enthralling to read as a novel.

**Publisher:** Macmillan

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.03 STU

**Website:** <http://jbailey.info/>



***A Castle in Tuscany***  
Sarah Benjamin

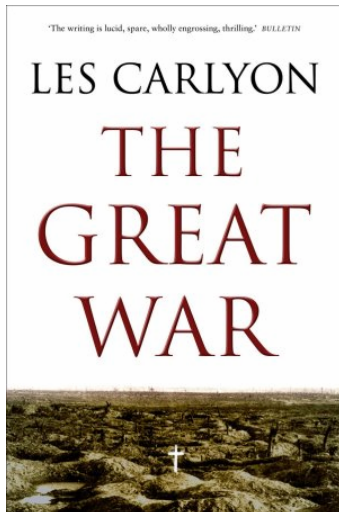
**Judges' comments:**

The author of one of the earliest food books to achieve widespread, and lasting, popularity, Janet Ross was an Englishwoman who moved to Florence in her mid-twenties, just as the unification of Italy was taking place. She was as gifted at writing as at cooking, and made the acquaintance of such well-known contemporaries as George Meredith, Mark Twain and Bernard Berenson. Sarah Benjamin's superbly produced book about this remarkable woman is more than just a biography; it also, helpfully, includes recipes.

**Publisher:** Pier 9/Murdoch

**Shelf location:** ANF 641.5092 ROS

**Website:** <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/a-castle-in-tuscany-the-remarkable-life-of-janet-ross/story-e6frg8no-1111112338837>



***The Great War***  
by Les Carlyon

**Judges' comments:**

Australians contributed more to the Allied effort in the First World War than their legendary heroics at Gallipoli; in the last three years of the war in Western France there were far more Australian casualties than in the campaign which has become part of our official national story. Battle scenes are notoriously chaotic and confusing, but Les Carlyon, making extensive use of surviving letters, documents and photographs, has constructed an exceptionally readable account of Australia's part in the crucial engagements which were to lead to victory. Included among many illustrations is a photograph of Corporal Adolf Hitler, wearing a splendid handlebar moustache, but looking, as Carlyon says, like a man who collects the tickets at a railway station.

**Publisher:** Macmillan

**Shelf location:** ANF 940.4144 CAR

**Website:**

[http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display\\_author.asp?Author=Carlyon,%20Les](http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_author.asp?Author=Carlyon,%20Les)



***The Forgotten Children***  
by David Hill

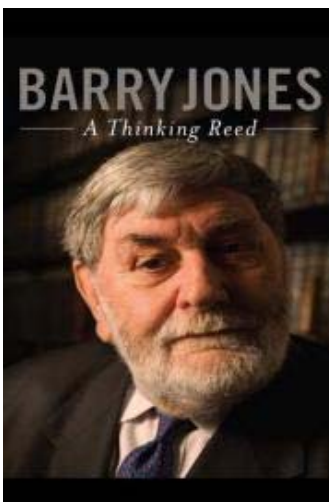
**Judges' comments:**

From the 1930s until as recently as 1974, thousands of orphaned or impoverished children were sent from Britain to board and be brought up at the Fairbridge Farm School near Molong in NSW. The Fairbridge Society, founded with the best of intentions earlier in the century by Kingsley Fairbridge, ran similar schools in several colonies of the former British Empire. In practice, good intentions led to cruel and dispiriting outcomes, which are described in disturbing detail by David Hill, who was one of the unfortunate children sent to the school, along with his two brothers. Robust and capable, the Hill brothers survived the experience and went on to have successful careers, but many did not, as is shown in the words of some of them in this powerful and moving book.

**Publisher:** Random House

**Shelf location:** ANF 304.894 HIL

**Website:** <http://www.randomhouse.com.au/Author/Hill,%20David>



***A Thinking Reed***  
by Barry Jones

**Judges' comments:**

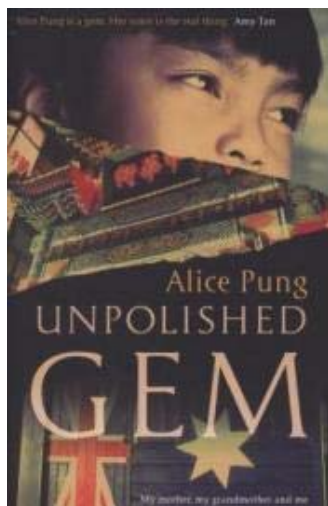
The most intelligent elected politician of our times writes about his extraordinary career in this well-written memoir. Every sentence brims with research, learning and wisdom. The narrative begins before the author has even been born, and takes the reader through his childhood, his early career as a teacher and his period as a television celebrity on the quiz show "Pick-a-Box", before he entered Parliament and became a minister in the Hawke government. Enjoyably, much of the book is taken up with correcting errors committed by others who have written about Jones.

**Publisher:** Allen & Unwin

**Shelf location:** ANF 324.29407 JON

**Website:**

<http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=311&author=281>



***Unpolished Gem***  
by Alice Pung

**Judges' comments:**

Growing up in the Western suburbs of Melbourne with a Chinese/Cambodian family, Alice Pung experienced the best and worst of two radically dissimilar cultures. To her parents, Australia is a country "where no one walks like they have to hide", a place where "there are many wahs of wonder". They buy tins of pet food, cut it up and make "a nice stir-fry stew. 'It smells so good,' breathes my auntie as she spoons the meal onto a large plate." This beautifully written memoir shows the reader both cultures through the surprised eyes of each other.

**Publisher:** Black Inc.

**Shelf location:** ANF 305.895094 PUN

**Website:** <http://alicepung.com/blog/>

## 2006 Shortlist

The  
Winner  
2006

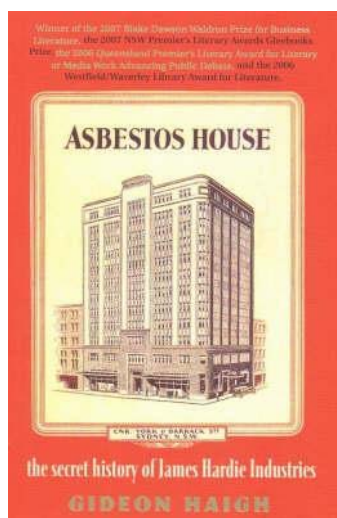
**Judges' comments:**

The story of a small leather trading business which grew to become a giant of the building industry, and a clear explanation of the uses and dangers of asbestos, the mineral on which the James Hardie Industries fortune was founded, all told in a style as compelling as that of a novelist.

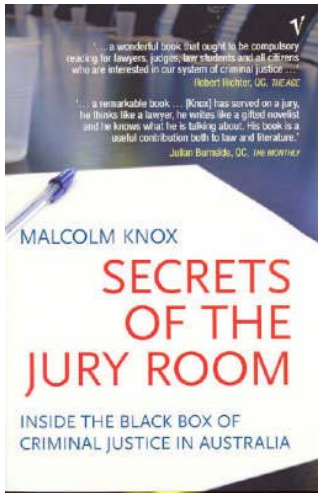
**Publisher:** Scribe

**Shelf location:** ANF 338.760994 HAI

**Website:** <http://www.scribepublications.com.au/author/gideonhaigh>



***Asbestos House***  
by Gideon Haigh



***Secrets of the Jury Room***  
by Malcolm Knox

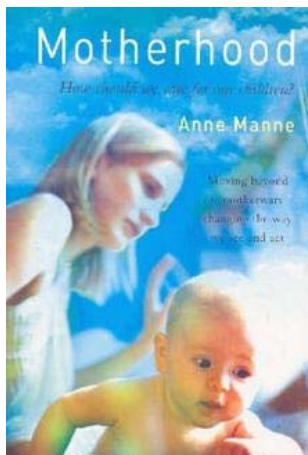
**Judges' comments:**

When the sometime Sydney Morning Herald Literary editor was summoned for jury duty, he took the opportunity to compile an absorbing account of his experiences as a juror, an account which developed into an exploration of the central element in Australia's justice system

**Publisher:** Random House

**Shelf location:** ANF 347.075 KNO

**Website:** <http://www.randomhouse.com.au/Author/Knox,%20Malcolm>



***Motherhood***  
by Anne Manne

**Judges' comments:**

A passionate argument, supported both by detailed research and by the author's own first-hand observations, for a re-examination of present attitudes to the way children are cared for when their mothers have to work, this eloquent polemic is intended to stimulate debate on a topic which concerns everyone's future.

**Publisher:** Allen & Unwin

**Shelf location:** ANF 306.8743 MAN

**Website:** <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/5186643-motherhood>



***Margaret Olley***  
by Meg Stewart

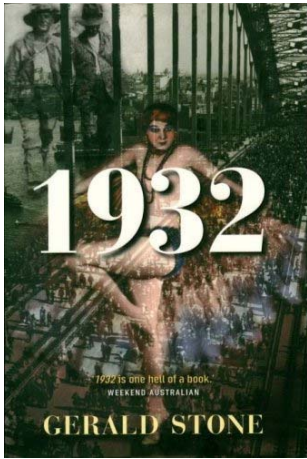
**Judges' comments:**

The biography of one of this country's most admired living artists, told partly in her own words, and handsomely illustrated, which can also be read as a social and cultural history of the nine decades spanned by the remarkable life of its subject.

**Publisher:** Random House

**Shelf location:** ANF 759.994 OLL

**Website:** <http://www.randomhouse.com.au/Author/Stewart,%20Meg>



**1932**  
by Gerald Stone

**Judges' comments:**

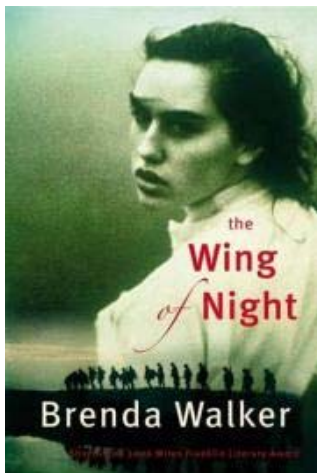
A racy encapsulation of a single, pivotal year in Australia's history when, amid all the suffering of the Depression, the Sydney Harbour Bridge was opened in a scene of half-comic drama, the racehorse Phar Lap died in America, the Premier of New South Wales was dismissed from office by the State Governor, and the English cricket team unveiled the tactic later to be known as "Bodyline"

**Publisher:** Pan Macmillan

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.042 STO

**Website:**

[http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display\\_title.asp?ISBN=9781405038157&Author=Stone,%20Gerald](http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_title.asp?ISBN=9781405038157&Author=Stone,%20Gerald)



***The Wing of Night***  
by Brenda Walker

**Judges' comments:**

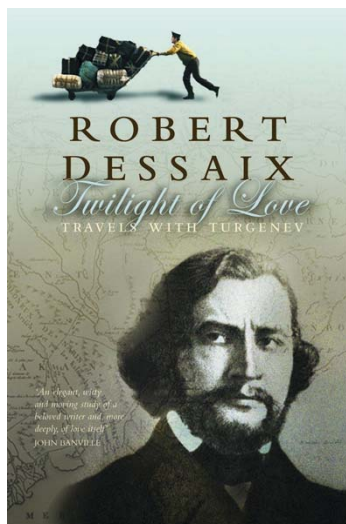
An evocative novel which interweaves the farmlands of Western Australia with the First World War battlefields at Gallipoli, entering imaginatively into the minds of long-distant soldiers, and the women they left behind.

**Publisher:** Penguin/Viking

**Shelf location:** AF WALK

**Website:** <http://www.penguin.com.au/contributors/brenda-walker>

# 2005 Shortlist



***Twilight of Love***  
by Robert Dessaix

**Judges' comments:**

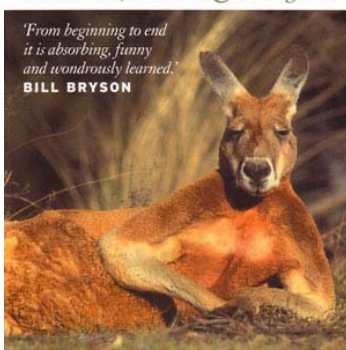
The life and work of the Russian novelist Ivan Turgenev acts as a framework for this elegant rumination on love, life and literature, in a book which crosses the boundaries between several different categories of writing, including biography, criticism, travel narrative and personal memoir.

**Publisher:** Picador/ Pan Macmillan

**Shelf location:** ANF 891.733 TUR

**Website:**

[http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display\\_author.asp?Author=Dessaix,%20Robert](http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_author.asp?Author=Dessaix,%20Robert)



***Country***  
by Tim Flannery

**Judges' comments:**

Australia's most respected popular science writer uses the kangaroo, its biology, its habitat, its history, and even its traces in the fossil record, as a thread to hold together what is also a charmingly self-deprecating account of the author's own scientific education.

**Publisher:** Text

**Shelf location:** ANF 919.4 FLA

**Website:** <http://textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/book/country/>

# The Winner 2005

HELEN  
GARNER  
JOE CINQUE'S  
CONSOLATION  
A TRUE STORY OF DEATH, GRIEF AND THE RAGE



**Joe Cinque's  
Consolation**  
by Helen Garner

**Judges' comments:**

in the late 1990's two Canberra law students were charged with the murder of a young man. Helen Garner attended their separate trials, and interviewed the family and friends both of the victim and of the two defendants. This account of her researches into the murder has the page-turning urgency of a crime novel, though the crime itself remains a mystery.

**Publisher:** Picador/ Pan Macmillan

**Shelf location:** ANF 364.152309947 GAR

**Website:**

[http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display\\_author.asp?Author=Garner,%20Helen](http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_author.asp?Author=Garner,%20Helen)

**Judges' comments:**

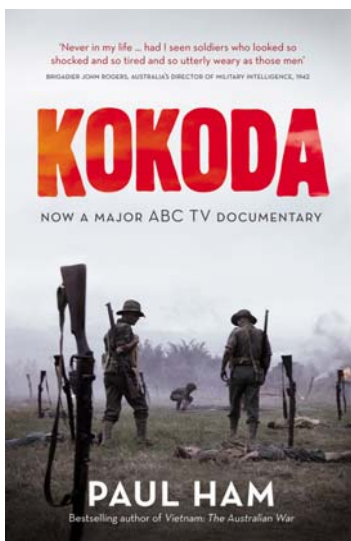
The Kokoda Track in New Guinea was the seeing for one of the most celebrated battles to involve Australian soldiers, and has thus acquired an almost mythical stature. This well researched book recounts the battle not only from the Australian point of view but also from that of the Japanese combatants.

**Publisher:** HarperCollins

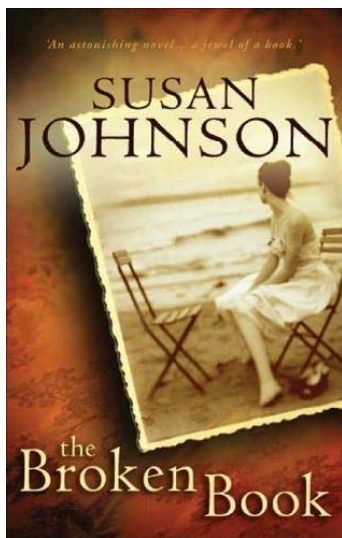
**Shelf location:** ANF 940.542651 HAM

**Website:**

[http://www.harpercollins.com.au/authors/50019035/Paul\\_Ham/index.aspx](http://www.harpercollins.com.au/authors/50019035/Paul_Ham/index.aspx)



**Kokoda**  
by Paul Ham



***The Broken Book***  
by Susan Johnson

**Judges' comments:**

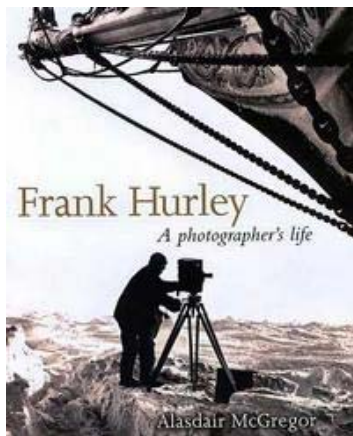
Purporting to consist of the papers, including both private journals and an unfinished novel, by the long-deceased Australian writer Katherine Elgin, this cleverly constructed work of fiction vividly evokes the world before, during, and after the Second World War while also exploring the dilemmas faced by women who wish both to raise a family and to live the life of an artist.

**Publisher:** Allen & Unwin

**Shelf location:** AF JOHN

**Website:**

<http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=94&book=9781741143515>



***Frank Hurley***  
by Alasdair McGregor

**Judges' comments:**

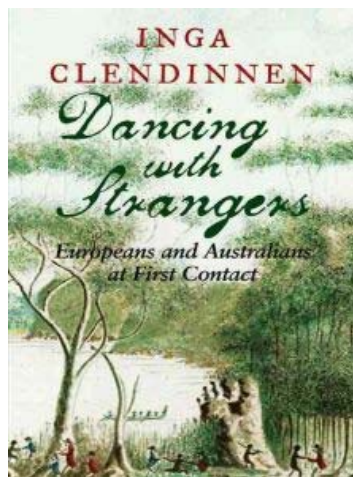
Few Australian lives have been on such an epic scale as that of Frank Hurley. From the early expeditions to Antarctica, where his photographs went beyond mere documentary to become works of art, to the battlefields of France in the First World War, the early days of cinema in Australia, and then another war, Hurley was present as witness and participant. This thoroughly researched and handsomely illustrated biography does justice to a remarkable life.

**Publisher:** Penguin/Viking

**Shelf location:** ANF 770.92 HUR

**Website:** <http://www.penguin.com.au/products/9780670073511/frank-hurley-photographers-life>

# 2004 Shortlist



***Dancing with Strangers***  
by Inga Clendinnen

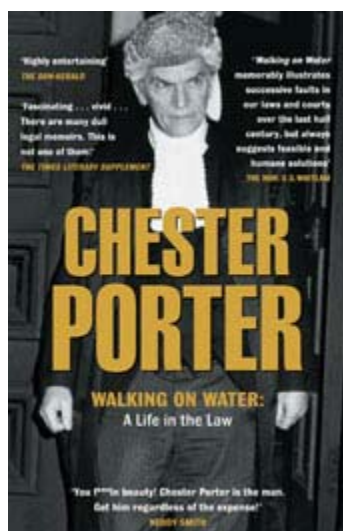
## **Judges' comments:**

This book describes the arrival of the First Fleet in New South Wales in 1788 when the British met the original Australians. How they felt about each other, what they thought of each other's strange habits. How they tried to change each other and to communicate with each other, is what *Dancing with Strangers* is all about. To begin with, British and Aboriginals danced together on the shore. Then we discover why the dancing stopped. Many sources have been used in the research for this book – historical books, letters and journals, contemporary accounts and sketch books. Inga Clendinnen has blended personal responses with solid historical background. This book is a fascinating account of an historic meeting which would shape the future of Australia. It is extremely readable and is an essential reference book for any student of Australian history.

**Publisher:** Text

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.411004991 CLE

**Website:** <http://textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/book/dancing-with-strangers/>



***Walking on Water: A Life in the Law***  
by Chester Porter

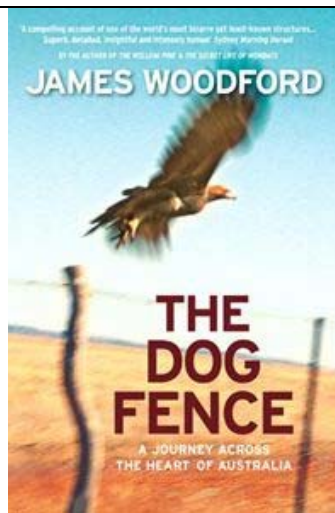
## **Judges' comments:**

Chester Porter tells the story of his own distinguished legal career and some of the famous cases he has worked on, such as the Chamberlain case, the Blackburn Royal Commission, his defence of Roger Rogerson and others. As he tells his personal story, he also gives an overview of how society and the law system have changed during the last 50 years and questions various aspects of our legal system. This book is an autobiography and, as such, needs no bibliography. Chester Porter, however, draws on his own detailed case notes, court records, media reports of trials, and his own extensive knowledge of the law to make his well-researched book authoritative, fascinating and delightfully personal. This book is essential reading for any student considering a career in the law, but is also entertaining and instructive for the general reader.

**Publisher:** Random House

**Shelf location:** ANF 340.092 POR

**Website:** <http://www.randomhouse.com.au/Author/Porter,%20Chester>



***The Dog Fence***  
by James Woodford

**Judges' comments:**

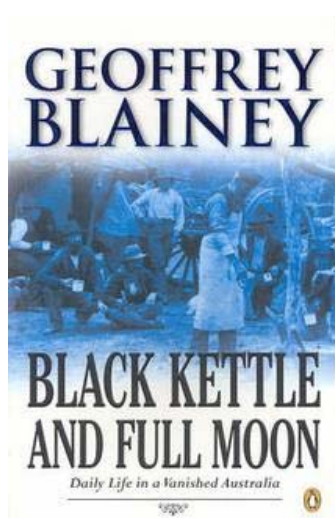
Most Australians have heard of the dog fence, the 5 400 km fence which stretches across Australia's desert heart, but few Australians have seen it, know how it is maintained or what it is actually like. James Woodford's book fills that gap. His story of travelling along the entire length of the fence and of meeting people whose lives are affected by it or who work on it will ensure that this amazing structure is now better understood. James Woodford's research was both practical and bibliographical. The getting of permission, the actual journey, the interviews and travel took him many months. He also consulted and refers to history books, letters and journals, maps and newspapers. The Dingo Fence is a highly entertaining book, but is also educational. It has variety, humour, an intriguing collection of eccentric personalities and the fascinating story of a unique structure.

**Publisher:** Text

**Shelf location:** ANF 362.69772 WOO

**Website:** <http://textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/author/james-woodford/>

The  
Winner  
2004



***Black Kettle and Full Moon***  
by Geoffrey Blainey

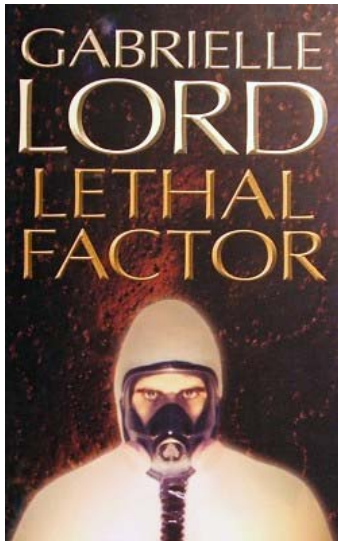
**Judges' comments:**

This book is a history of how Australians lived from the time of the first Gold Rush until World War 1. It tells of the domestic appliances, the drinking and eating habits, bush life and town life, shopping and smoking, cycling and cooking and a vast range of other topics. It brings to life for the modern reader a way of life that has disappeared. The book draws on a great range of sources and Geoffrey Blainey's research has been extensive and thorough. He has consulted biographies and journals, letters and history books, poems, newspapers, gazettes, museums, galleries and catalogues. He includes prices, statistics, dates and other specific and detailed information. This book is a delight to read, is educational, is varied and maintains reader interest from the first page to the last. It will be a superb reference book for libraries, as well as excellent entertainment for the general reader.

**Publisher:** Penguin

**Shelf location:** ANF 994 BLA

**Website:** <https://www.penguin.com.au/lookinside/author-profile.cfm?AuthId=0000000163>



***Lethal Factor***  
by Gabrielle Lord

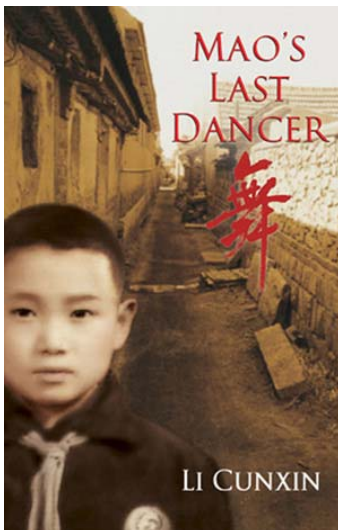
**Judges' comments:**

This thriller tells the tales of a horrifying anthrax murder and shows how forensic examiner Jack McCain solves the crime. In the process anthrax becomes a threat to Jack's own life as he races to find the killer in time. As a novel, this book needs no bibliography, but it is clear from beginning to end of the story that a great deal of research has been done. Gabrielle Lord shows clearly how anthrax is made, how it kills and the detail of forensic laboratory work, while at the same time seamlessly weaving this information into her exciting story. She makes her readers understand the technical information necessary to her plot, without distracting the reader from the excitement of that plot. A likeable hero, an action-packed story and plenty of psychological tension make *Lethal Factor* an excellent read.

**Publisher:** Hodder Headline

**Shelf location:** AF LORD

**Website:** <http://www.gabriellelord.com/index.html>



***Mao's Last Dancer***  
by Li Cuxin

**Judges' comments:**

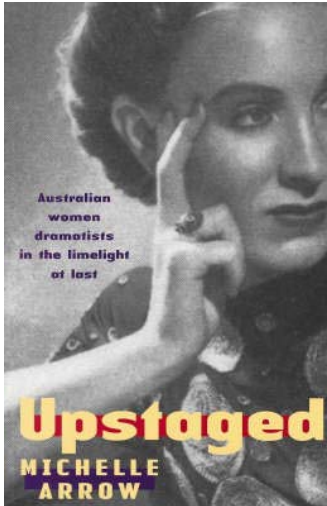
This autobiography tells the story of a Chinese peasant boy who was selected to be a student in Madame Mao's academy of dance. He would end up dancing with some great ballet companies of the world, defecting to the west, then marrying an Australian and settling in Melbourne. It is an inspirational life story, told with modesty, honesty and great love for family and friends. Research for an autobiography is very different from the research needed for a history book. Li Cunxin had to find out about the lives of his parents before his own birth and during his early childhood, and he had the difficult task of selecting events from his own life to give a clear picture of his rise from poverty to stardom, and then narrating those events without undue bias or sentimentality. He has done this superbly. *Mao's Last Dancer* is compulsively readable and is a book for a wide readership, from teenagers to adults, from ballet fans to students of Communism.

**Publisher:** Penguin

**Shelf location:** ANF 920 LI

**Website:** <http://www.licunxin.com/>

# 2003 Shortlist



***Upstaged***  
by Michelle Arrow

**Judges' comments:**

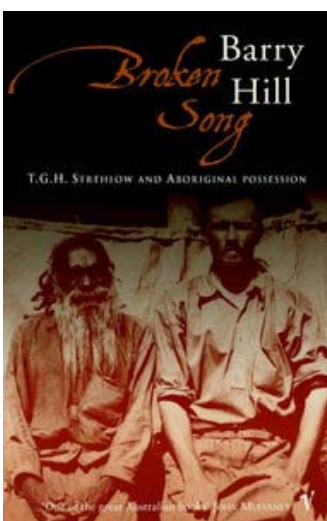
A scholarly yet highly readable account of Australia's pioneer female dramatists, the difficulties they faced and the work they produced, which also provides valuable insights into the theatre.

**Publisher:** Currency

**Shelf location:** ANF 819.209 ARR

**Website:** <http://www.modhist.mq.edu.au/staff/michellearrow.html>

The  
Winner  
2003



***Broken Song***  
by Barry Hill

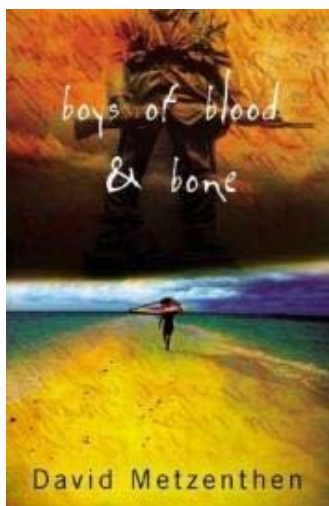
**Judges' comments:**

An epic account of an epic life, that of the anthropologist, linguist and translator T.G.H Strehlow, whose explorations and detailed study of aboriginal life are still among the most important.

**Publisher:** Knopf

**Shelf location:** ANF 573.0924 HIL

**Website:** <http://houseoflegends.com.au/Author/Hill,%20Barry>



***Boys of Blood and Bone***  
by David Metzenthen

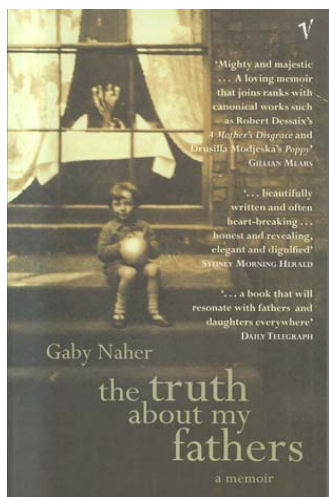
**Judges' comments:**

Written for a young audience this powerful novel alternates between a country town in present-day Victoria and the battlefields of the First World War, entwining these in a way which illuminates both.

**Publisher:** Penguin

**Shelf location:** AF METZ

**Website:** <http://www.penguin.com.au/contributors/david-metzenthen>



***The Truth About My Fathers***  
by Gaby Naher

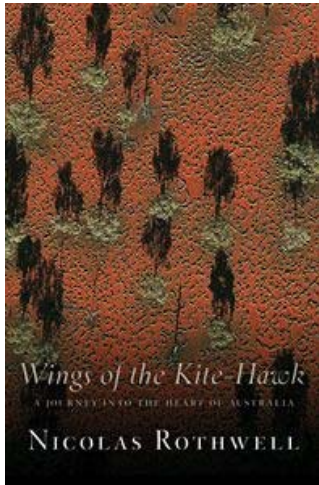
**Judges' comments:**

A well-researched memoir, describing both the family background of the author's beloved adoptive father, and her search for her long absent biological parent.

**Publisher:** Random House

**Shelf location:** ANF 920 NAH

**Website:** <http://www.randomhouse.com.au/Author/Naher,%20Gaby>



***Wings of the Kite-Hawk***  
by Nicolas Rothwell

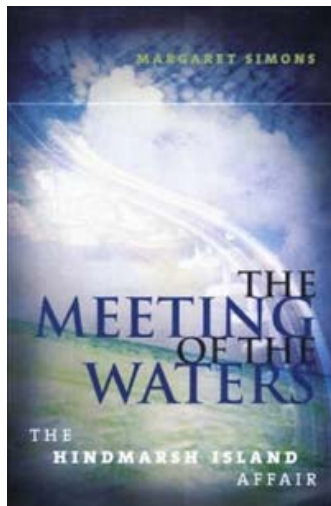
**Judges' comments:**

A work in which travel writing, history, archaeology and art criticism are all combined in the Europe-educated author's intensely emotional response to the landscapes and artefacts of Northern and Central Australia.

**Publisher:** Picador

**Shelf location:** ANF 994 ROT

**Website:** <http://www.blackincbooks.com/authors/nicolas-rothwell>



***Meeting of the Waters***  
by Margaret Simons

**Judges' comments:**

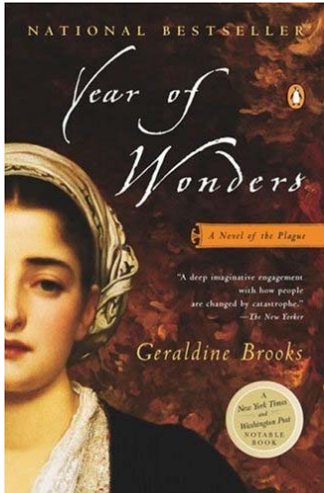
The political controversy over the Hindmarsh Island Bridge is detailed meticulously in this evocatively written book, which may be the first to give a completely balanced account of its subject.

**Publisher:** Hodder

**Shelf location:** ANF 994.2004991 SIN

**Website:** <http://margaretsimons.com.au/>

# 2002 Shortlist



**Year of Wonders**  
by Geraldine Brooks

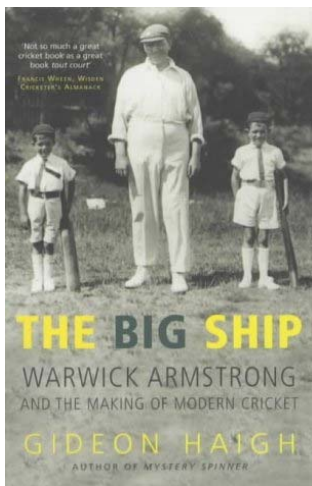
**Judges' comments:**

The 1666 plague forms the background for this novel, which convincingly takes the reader to an English village and sets the scene for a gripping, highly readable and horrifically real story.

**Publisher:** Fourth Estate

**Shelf location:** AF BROO

**Website:** <http://www.geraldinebrooks.com/>



**The Big Ship**  
by Gideon Haigh

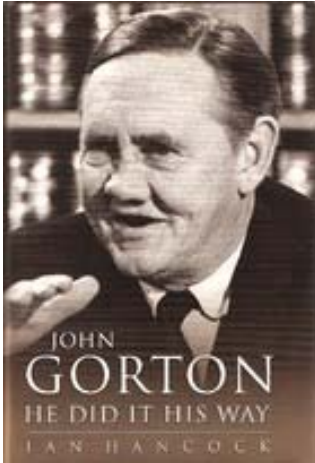
**Judges' comments:**

This biography of former captain Warwick Armstrong is a landmark in the history of Australian cricket, detailing the life and finances of sporting figures in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Publisher:** Text

**Shelf location:** ANF 796.3580994 ARM

**Website:** <http://textpublishing.com.au/books-and-authors/book/the-big-ship/>



***John Gorton: He Did It His Way***  
by Ian Hancock

**Judges' comments:**

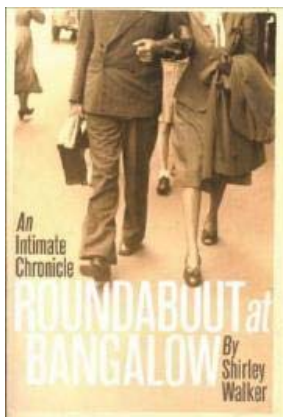
The life of Gorton, who was Prime Minister from 1968 to 1971, is brought alive in a well structured political history that has assimilated its research and delineates the world of postwar Canberra.

**Publisher:** Hodder Headline

**Shelf location:** ANF 320.994 GOR

**Website:**

<http://www.federationpress.com.au/bookstore/author.asp?id=1035>



***Roundabout at Bungalow***  
by Shirley Walker

**Judges' comments:**

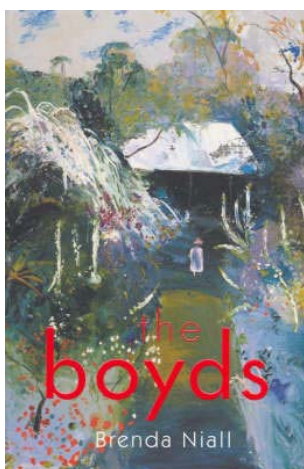
A stunning piece of social history, this intimate chronicle takes the author through the Depression, the Second World War and life as a teacher and mother in country towns from Grafton to Ayr.

**Publisher:** UQ Press

**Shelf location:** ANF 920 WAL

**Website:**

<http://www.australianliterarycompendium.com/shirleyWalker.html>



***The Boyds***  
by Brenda Niall

**Judges' comments:**

Among the great achievers in Australian art, the Boyd family are depicted as character in a narrative, in an authoritative and enjoyable biographical work.

**Publisher:** MU Press

**Shelf location:** ANF 920.094 BOY

**Website:**

[http://www.austlit.edu.au/run?ex=ShowAgent&agentId=A\\$Oy](http://www.austlit.edu.au/run?ex=ShowAgent&agentId=A$Oy)

The  
Winner  
2002

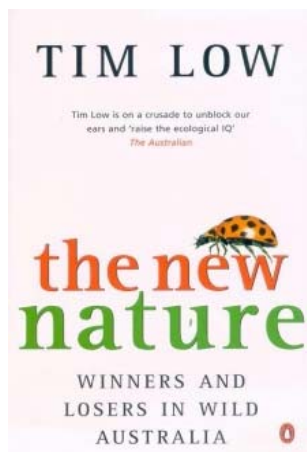
**Judges' comments:**

Both erudite and accessible, this account of today's environment introduces a new perspective in assessing the interaction of humanity and nature. The landscape will never be the same for the reader.

**Publisher:** Viking

**Shelf location:** ANF 574.994 LOW

**Website:** <http://www.penguin.com.au/contributors/tim-low>



**The New Nature**  
by Tim Low

Further information about the Award, including details for 2011, the Award's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, may be found on Waverley Library's website.

[www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/library/award](http://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/library/award)

