



'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature

Report for 2009



*Of all the books to be entered for this award, including all those we have chosen as winners in past years, there is only one that we can be sure will still be read in fifty year's time, or in a hundred, and because it has that quality I am pleased to announce that this year's winner is to be *The Land I Came Through Last*.*

Jamie Grant, Award Judge, 2009

*It (*The Land I Came Through Last*) will join the canon of Australian literature beside say, Ken Slessor's *Five Bells* or Patrick White's *Voss*.*

Peter Coleman, *The Australian Spectator*, 5 December, 2009



CAL Goes International!

The winner of the 2009 'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature, *The Land I Came Through Last*, was released as part of the international Bookcrossing program.

The release notes indicated that *this book won the CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature 2009. A great read.*

A reading was registered on 28 January in the following terms:

The book was given to me highly recommended by a friend.

I enjoyed the book immensely, particularly the writer's unique style - almost poetic. I also appreciated the author's honesty in telling his incredibly private/intimate story.

I plan to release the book by way of a gift or at the local cafe bookstore where I know it would be picked up and enjoyed.

Anonymous Finder
Manhattan, New York, USA

The book rating was 8 (of 10) stars!

We look forward to following CAL's journey around the world!!

'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature

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Background

The Literary Award was established as the Westfield/Waverley Library Award for Literature in 2002. It is the major national literary award recognising excellence in research in the creation of literary works by Australian authors. Besides research, other criteria taken into account are readability, innovation, knowledge, literary merit and value to the community. The award's criteria, which may be applied to all genres of writing, make it unique amongst the many awards open to Australian writers.

Following Westfield's decision in March 2008 to withdraw financial support to enable all of its community monies to be directed towards the establishment of a national charity to support disabled children and their families, application was made to Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) for triennial funding whilst Waverley Council sought an alternative community partner. A grant of \$80,000 was provided from CAL's Cultural Fund, to be applied across three years as \$30,000 (2008/9), \$30,000 (2009/10) and \$20,000 (2010/11).

The grant negotiations were completed in June 2008, the main condition being that CAL has naming rights, with agreement that the award be known as 'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature.

With CAL as the major sponsor, the award continued to be organised by Waverley Council through its Library Service, with the support of the Friends of Waverley Library (FOWL).

The Grant

The support of CAL provided additional funding which allowed an increase in the value of the prizes, the first time since the creation of the award. The winner's prize was increased from \$15,000 to \$20,000 and the Alex Buzo Prize for each of the six shortlisted authors was increased from \$600 to \$1,000.

2009 represents the second year of the triennial funding.

All of CAL's funding for the year may be considered to have covered, or contributed towards the prizes, judges' fees and other associated author payments. In short, all of the \$30,000 grant has been paid to Australian authors and can be said to be a very practical and outstanding example of *CAL supporting Australia's Cultural Development*.

In addition, as part of Waverley Council's celebrations of 150 years of local government, the two award functions were incorporated into an inaugural Waverley Words Literary Festival. **CAL's sponsorship of the literary award was, as a consequence, recognised in the Literary Festival program, providing a significant bonus in relation to its public exposure for support of the award.**

The conditions of the grant have not only been generally satisfied, but far exceed expectations.

The Award

In a year of many highlights, the following are noted:

Sydney Writers Festival A panel discussion on *Research and Writing* was jointly presented by CAL and the Library. Three of the award's previously shortlisted authors, Paul Ham, Catherine Jinks and Babette Smith joined facilitator Ashley Hay in a lively and highly entertaining discussion about their different approaches to research. Some 200 people attended this session at which the award was 'officially' launched. As one blog subscriber noted: *It was an interesting session...the three speakers were great - informative and entertaining.*

Nominations A near record 160 entries were received at the close of nominations on 10 July. Although the bulk of works came from NSW and Victoria, entries also emanated from Queensland, ACT, Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, Northern Territory and Australian authors resident overseas. There was a representative breakdown of 106 non fiction, 40 fiction and 14 young adult/children's items, including the first electronic copy of a published work, an anthology of poems. The overall standard can be said to be the highest to date. As the judges said: *... far too many of the books that have been entered are undeniably good ... it was hard for us to arrive at a shortlist.*



Lex Marinos

Shortlist Announcement

The announcement of the shortlisted authors and presentation of the Alex Buzo Prizes took place on 4 November at The Eastern Hotel's Ruby Lounge, Bondi Junction.

The occasion was hosted by Lex Marinos and attended by some 90 people, with CAL Chair, Brian Johns representing Copyright Agency Limited.

Jamie Grant, spokesperson for the judges indicated that, in an exceptional year, there were many books deserving of inclusion on the shortlist. He mentioned that

These books alone, in all their variety and depth of research, have been enough to make the task of judging the award this year both arduous and pleasurable. There were, however, six books that stood even higher in our view.



L –R: Robert Gray, Merelyn Buzo, John McDonald, Emma Buzo, Greg de Moore, David Levell, Brian Johns

The shortlisted authors, all of whom received a certificate to accompany their CAL sponsored \$1000 prize, were:-

- Greg de Moore **Tom Wills** [Allen & Unwin]
- Robert Gray **The Land I Came Through Last** [Giramondo Publishing]
- David Kilcullen **The Accidental Guerrilla** [Scribe Publications]
- Marina Larsson **Shattered Anzacs** [UNSW Press]
- David Levell **Tour to Hell** [University of Queensland Press]
- John McDonald **Art of Australia** [Pan Macmillan]

Finalist Poster 2009

All of the authors were present or represented on the evening. Brian Johns noted that

this award offers us a unique chance to bring acknowledgment and financial reward to a number of deserving writers, not just the outright winner.

He also spoke very favourably about the award's connection with the community which he encouraged.



Christopher Koch

Last year's winner, Christopher Koch, was our guest speaker who spoke fondly of books, especially those which influenced him as a youngster. Following many favourable comments and feedback, the full text of his speech has been added to the library website, along with the judges' comments and a selection of photographs taken on the night.

This was a highly successful and enjoyable evening which has become a high profile, quality event within the award process.

The feedback from shortlisted author Greg de Moore reflects the general feeling about the occasion:-

Thank you and the Waverley Library and its sponsors for everything. Last night was a wonderful experience for me and, I hope, for all those in attendance.

Announcement of Winner The award presentation was hosted by Richard Glover at Nick's Bondi Beach Restaurant on 25 November. More than 70 people attended, with 4 of the shortlisted authors or their representatives present. Richard was introduced by Waverley Council's General Manager, Tony Reed. Waverley's Mayor, Sally Betts, spoke on behalf of Council, noting that

we are so proud that this award has grown and is considered to be one of importance and prestigious in the literary arts world ... we are very grateful to Copyright Agency Limited and its Cultural Fund for the funding of some \$80,000 over three years ... the involvement of CAL , which is an agency representing authors and publishers, brings even more credibility to the award ... when we started in 2002 the award attracted 50 submissions, this year 160 books were submitted for our consideration.

CAL has been incredibly supportive of our award ... while we look for a long-term partner. It is gratifying to know all grant funds are passed on to Australian authors, either as prizes or fees for involvement in the Award.

Eloise Nolan, Rightsholder Relations Manager represented CAL, speaking very positively about CAL's support of the award and how it fitted well into CAL's role to provide, via its Cultural Fund, assistance to Australian writers, publishers and the cultural community.

In presenting the judges' report, Jamie Grant drew attention to all of the award criteria which were taken into account in assessing the winning work:

More important than the depth of the research in this book, and outweighing its value to the community and its readability, is the sheer quality of the writing. Of all the books to be entered for this award, including all those we have chosen as winners in past years, there is only one that we can be sure will still be read in fifty years' time, or in a hundred, and because it has that quality I am pleased to announce that this year's winner is to be THE LAND I CAME THROUGH LAST.

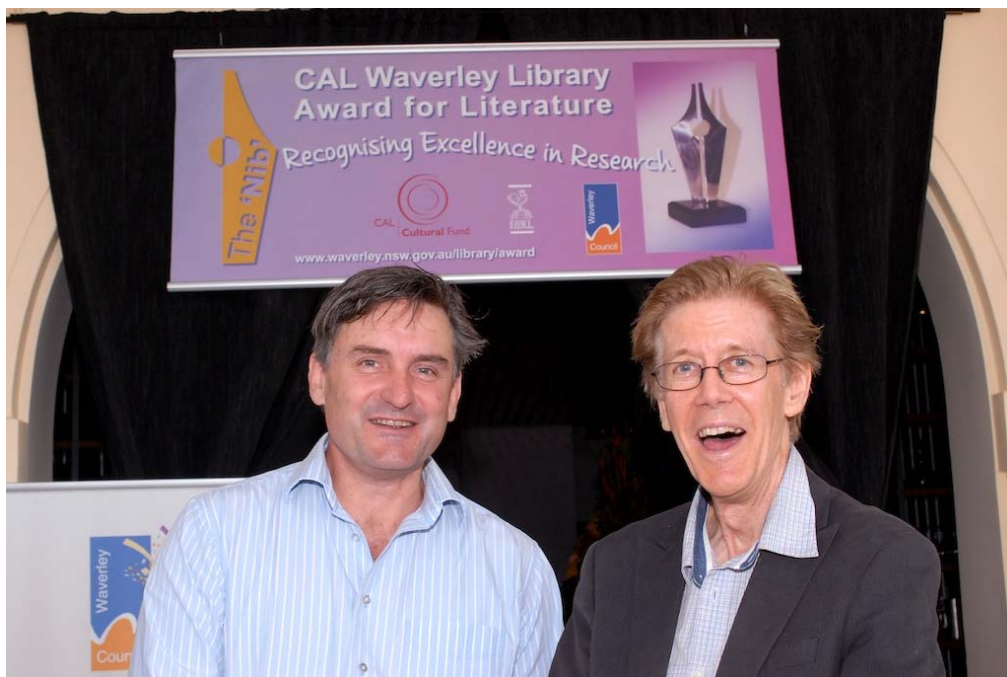
Robert Gray thanked CAL and Waverley Council for making the award possible and mentioned the value of the award to writers such as himself. He described his work as *poetic without being pretentious* and was particularly pleased that the judges had rewarded it especially for the quality of writing.

The morning concluded with an interview of Robert by Suzanne Leal. Notwithstanding the earlier presentation of CAL's \$20,000 prize, this thoughtful and free flowing interview was the highlight of a very enjoyable occasion. The interview, as part of the full proceedings, was recorded and is preserved in the library's archives, together with those from previous years. **These interviews by Suzanne, and past ones by Susannah Fullerton and Andrea Stretton are forming an important contribution to the preservation of Australian literary history.**

All shortlisted books were available for sale at both award presentations.

An Information Kit was prepared and made available to key people, such as the SMH's Literary Editor, Susan Wyndham.

Bookmarks illustrating the shortlisted books and the winning book were also prepared for distribution at the award functions, and via local bookshops and libraries.



Richard Glover & Robert Gray

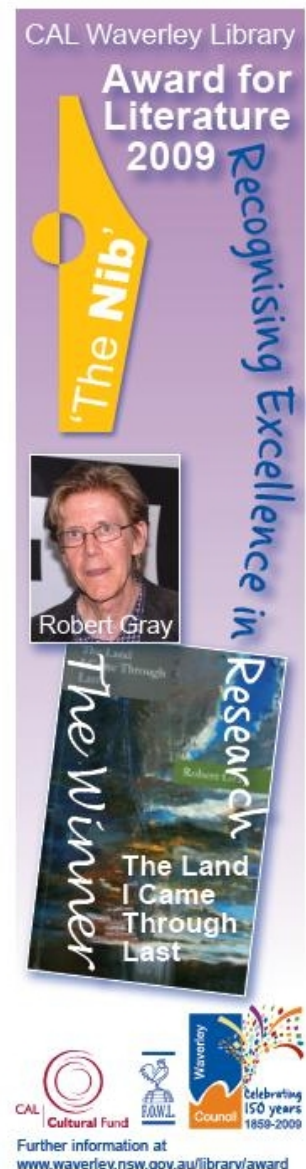
Publicity/Promotion

The award was promoted widely and well supported by the media. Indeed, media coverage has been excellent. Promotion included a variety of means - posters, bookmarks, stickers and media releases, with extensive use made of online resources.

A list of both award documentation and publicity material is attached to this report. Ranging across a full year, this substantial body of information/documentation represents outstanding value to both CAL and the award.

Some examples of media and other coverage of the award include:-

- *SMH, Sun Herald* and *Weekend Australian Review* (5 occasions)
- Local Press e.g. *Wentworth Courier, Eastern Suburbs Spectator, Bondi View* (numerous occasions)
- Waverley Council publications e.g. *Waverley in Focus, Information Bulletin*, Commemorative Calendar
- Literary groups/associations e.g. Sydney PEN, Sydney Writers' Festival, Fellowship of Australian Writers, Society of Editors, New England Writers' Centre, Writing & Society Research Group, *AusLit*, Society of Australian Writers (WA)
- Online publications e.g. *Good Reading Magazine*, SMH Blogs: Entertainment, *Bookseller + Publisher*, Twitter, *Literaryawards.com*, Arts Hub
- Libraries e.g. *Public Library News*, Australian Library & Information Association *PubNews*, NSW Public Libraries Network, Waverley Library,
- Posters e.g. SWF, Shortlist and Winner (libraries, bookshops, community notice boards, websites)
- Bookmarks & book stickers (distributed via award functions, bookshops, libraries & community)
- Booksellers e.g. Temple Books, Emporium Books, Shearer's Bookshop, Borders, Dymocks, Angus & Robertson, Gertrude & Alice, Zabriskie Books
- Community events e.g. Waverley Words Literary Festival, Friends of Waverley Library, Bookcrossing



Bookmark

Waverley Words Literary Festival (A CAL Bonus!)

In conjunction with Waverley Council's celebration of 150 years of local government, the inaugural Waverley Words Literary Festival was held throughout October and November 2009. More than 50 published authors and poets participated in 37 events such as book talks, poetry and performance, theatre, hip-hop, language discussion, workshops etc.

The Festival was organised around the two literary award functions and, as a consequence, CAL was acknowledged as a community partner.

Some 3000 people participated in events at various venues around Waverley: bars, restaurants, theatre, library, bookshops and Oxford Mall.

The Festival was a significant local event and has been submitted to the Local Government and Shires Association for consideration in its Cultural Awards for 2010.

The Festival provided an excellent opportunity to give wider recognition to CAL's support of the award, Australian writers and cultural development generally. This additional exposure represents great value for CAL - at no extra cost!

It is proposed to continue the Festival in 2010.



Organised by Waverley Council with support and cooperation from...

<p>Actors' Forum PHONE 9300 9007</p> <p>The Alex Buzo Company PO Box 833 Kingsford NSW 2032 PHONE 0411 399 923</p> <p>Bondi Junction Town Centre Management PHONE 8305 8419</p> <p>Bondi Pavilion Community Cultural Centre Queen Elizabeth Drive Bondi Beach PHONE 8362 3400</p> <p>Bondi Writers' Group PO Box 701 Bondi Junction NSW 1355</p> <p>Copyright Agency Limited Level 15 233 Castlereagh Street, Sydney</p> <p>Dept of Community Services BETTER FUTURES</p> <p>Dymocks Westfield Bondi Junction PHONE 9387 7622</p>	<p>Eastern Suburbs Poetry Group 3/3 Carlisle Street, Tamarama PHONE 9130 8719</p> <p>Friends of Waverley Library (FOWL) c/- Waverley Library PHONE 0431 968 384</p> <p>Gertrude & Alice bookstore & cafe 46 Hall Street, Bondi Beach PHONE 9130 5155</p> <p>Ravesi's Campbell Parade, Bondi Beach</p> <p>RUN Property 191 New South Head Road Edgecliff PHONE 9301 5778</p> <p>Waverley Library 32 – 48 Denison Street Bondi Junction PHONE 9386 7709</p> <p>Zabriskie Books 3 Hall Street, Bondi Beach PHONE 9365 1482</p>
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Waverley Council Customer Service Centre
55 **Spring Street, Bondi Junction**
PHONE 9369 8000
WEB www.waverley.nsw.gov.au

Management Committee

The award process was managed by the library, with the support of an expert community group representing a broad cross-section of literary/cultural endeavour. The committee for 2009 comprised Chris Haywood, Dr.Lorna Graham, Ron Lander, Ursula Dubosarsky, Peter Coleman, Merelyn Buzo, Jamie Grant and Denis Moore. The library representatives were Linda Bathur (Chairperson) and Roniet Meyerthal, with administrative and graphic support from Felicite Briggs and Michael White.

The panel of three judges, comprising Jamie Grant, Kathleen Stewart and Ursula Dubosarsky, has wide and extensive experience across all aspects of the writing and publishing industries.



Robert Gray with 'the Nib', presented to him by Eloise Nolan

Sponsorship

It is noted that 2009 was the second year of our triennial funding from CAL. During the year time has been devoted to seeking long term financial viability for the award, and will continue throughout 2010.

Notwithstanding Waverley Council's strong support of the award, this has always been on the basis of the involvement of a community partner(s) to share the costs.

The reduced funding available from CAL for 2010 (\$20,000 down from \$30,000) has already had an impact on the library's general budget and may necessitate some award 'streamlining' to enable this year's award processes to be fully implemented. The award prizes would, however, remain intact.

Whilst the creation of the Waverley Words Literary Festival took a great deal of time which would otherwise have been applied to seeking alternative funding, it is believed that the Festival provides considerably wider community support and involvement for the award which now has much greater value and opportunities for prospective partners.

Value/Outcome

There is no doubting that the award has achieved considerable recognition, acceptance, and success within a relatively short period. The award has developed into a major national literary project which rewards authors in a unique way, by acknowledging quality research undertaken in the creation of literary works. **The award's criteria sets it apart from all other awards and may be applied to all genres of writing.**

Robert Gray's achievement, added to those of the inaugural winner, environmentalist Tim Low, and other winners Barry Hill, Geoffrey Blainey, Helen Garner, Gideon Haigh, John Bailey and Christopher Koch completes a very distinguished group of writers whose research is of the highest order across a broad spectrum of writing.

Unlike other awards, the incorporation of the Alex Buzo Shortlist Prize into the award process ensures that more than one author is recognised and financially rewarded.

Literary Awards draw attention to winning works and, generally, stimulate additional sales. **It can be said, however, that this award significantly enhances the reading of not only the winning and shortlisted books, but all other nominated works, via the library reading program based on the nominated entries.** Given that Waverley Library is a major public library within NSW, and that the award is promoted extensively within the public library network, **there is no doubt that considerable additional sales and readings take place over and above what might normally be expected.** This is facilitated by the involvement of local bookshops in the promotion of the award.

The incorporation of at least two of the shortlisted books, including the winner, into the bookcrossing program has been a novel(!) way to distribute books via community public spaces. The Award, and CAL's support as the major sponsor, have been acknowledged within the books whose journeys have just began.

In addition, **all shortlisted authors were provided the opportunity for sales at both the shortlist and award presentation functions.** A number of previously shortlisted authors were also invited to participate in a discussion on Research and Writing at the 2009 Sydney Writers Festival, providing further opportunity for promotion of their books.

By any measure, this year's award may be considered an outstanding success, and has certainly brought direct and indirect benefit to a number of authors, not only the award winners.

It is believed that public regard for the award has been heightened by the support of CAL, for which Waverley Council is very appreciative. That CAL is an organisation representative of authors and publishers lends greater authority to the award. It is also believed that CAL's association with the award is mutually beneficial. It provides CAL with a quality national project whose guidelines relating to research, knowledge and value to the community (not to forget literary merit and readability!) are aligned to its mission and are a perfect match with its objective of supporting Australia's Cultural Development. Although CAL's funding is short term, **it is believed that the collaboration between CAL and Waverley Council and its library service represents a significant partnership in the development and the dissemination of Australian content.**

The award not only brings credit to CAL, but helps to increase its profile significantly with the library community, with which it is understood it is keen to establish a greater affinity.

The benefits to both CAL and the Award will increase annually, building on the success of the previous year. 2009 has certainly consolidated our considerable efforts of the previous year and is generally agreed to be our 'best ever'.

Thanks

Waverley Council is very grateful for the support of CAL, via funding from its Cultural Fund, which is taken as a strong indication of confidence in the award and its relevance to rewarding Australian writers.

We are also very appreciative not only of the financial support of CAL, but of the involvement and cooperation of staff more generally, especially Zoe Rodriguez.

We were delighted that CAL Chair, Brian Johns, was available to represent CAL at the shortlist function and that Eloise Nolan spoke so eloquently at the winner's presentation. It was also very pleasing that a number of CAL staff attended.

We very much look forward to continuing to strengthen the ties between the two organisations.

Attachments

Appendix 1 - List of Award Documentation

Appendix 2 - List of Media & Related References (Selection only)

'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature 2009 - Appendix 1

List of Award Documentation

Bookcrossing.com registrations (2 Books)

Waverley Council Media Release - Announcement of Winner

The Winner - Publicity Poster

The Winner - Judges' Report

Bookmarks - Winner and Shortlist

'The Nib' Winners - Publicity Poster

Invitations - Shortlist and Award Presentation

Sydney Writers' Festival - Publicity Poster

'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature - Information Sheet

Waverley Council Media Release - Announcement of Shortlist

Shortlist of Finalists - Judges' Comments

Shortlisted Authors - Publicity Poster

'The Nib' - Information Sheet for Community Partners

'The Nib' - Nomination Stickers

'The Nib' - List of Nominations

Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature - Publicity Poster (2)

Waverley Council Media Release - Award Announcement

Literary Award Guidelines

Waverley Council Commemorative Calendar - Award Functions (2)

'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature 2009 - Appendix 2

Media and Related References (Selection Only) - Summary

2010 February

Sun Herald - Article on Robert Gray

FOWL Deeds - Mention of Shortlisted and Winning Authors

2009 December

Bondi View - Article on Winner

Temple Books (online) - Mention of Winner

SMH Blogs: Entertainment (online) - Mention of Winner

Weekend Australian Review - Mention of Winner

Waverley in Focus - Mention of Winner

Cokahama Books (online) - Mention of Winner

Spectator Australia - Article on Winner

Blue Pencil - Announcement of Shortlist

Public Library News - Mention of Award

SPUNC (online) - Mention of Winner

UWS, Writing & Society Research Group - Mention of Winner

Emporium Books (online) - Article on Winner

Waverley Library (online) - Winners, Functions, Guidelines etc

Streetcorner (online) - Article on Winner

Good Reading Magazine (online) - Mention of Winner

November

Eastern Suburbs Spectator - Article on Winner

The Spectator - Article on Winner

Wentworth Courier - Article on Winner

Sydney Morning Herald - Mention of Winner

Wentworth Courier - Mention of Award Presentation

Awardtragic.blogspot - Article on Winner and Shortlist

Weekend Australian Review - Mention of Shortlist

Sydney Morning Herald - Mention of Shortlist

Bondi View - Article on Shortlist

Wentworth Courier - Mention of Shortlist

Shearer's Bookshop (online) - Mention of Shortlist

Seekbooks (online) - Mention of Shortlist

Bookseller+Publisher (online) - Mention of Shortlist

Bookseller+Publisher (online) - Reference to Announcement of Winner

Information Bulletin (Waverley Council) - Mention of Shortlist Announcement

Literaryawards.com - Article on Shortlist and Previous Awards

Boomerang Books (online) - Mention of Shortlist

Spectator Australia - Article on Shortlist Function

Scribe Publications (online) - Mention of Shortlisted Book

The Alex Buzo Company (online) - Announcement of Shortlist & Photos

Wentworth Courier - Announcement of Shortlist

Wentworth Courier - Mention of 'The Nib' Award

Eastern Suburbs Spectator - Article on Shortlist

Eastern Suburbs Spectator - Mention of Shortlist

October

Waverley Words Literary Festival Program - Award Functions & CAL

July

Sydney PEN Centre News - Announcement of Award

Blue Pencil - Announcement of Award

June

In Print - Announcement of Award

Wentworth Courier - Announcement of Award (2)

Arts Hub (online) - Mention of Award

Australian Library & Information Association PubNews (online) - Announcement of Award

Boomerang Books (online) - Mention of Award & Sydney Writers Festival

Brascoe Publishing (online) - Announcement of Award

OTA (online) - Announcement of Award

Walleah Press (online) - Announcement of Award

Waverley in Focus - Announcement of Award

Bondi View - Announcement of Award

Streetcorner (online) - Announcement of Award

Bondi Writers' News - Announcement of Award

May

New England Writers Centre, *Newsletter* - Announcement of Award

Wentworth Courier - Announcement of Award

Sydney Writers' Festival (online program) - Mention of Award (2)

Sydney Writers' Festival Official Guide - Mention of Award

Fellowship of Australian Writers (online) - Announcement of Award

Bookseller+Publisher (online) - Announcement of Award

Writing WA (online) - Announcement of Award

Fellowship of Australian Writers WA - Announcement of Award

April

AustLit (online) - Announcement of Award

Bookseller+Publisher (online) - Announcement of Award

Twitter, Hugh Jackman (online) - Mention of Award

Waverley Council Sesquicentenary Celebrations Exhibition - Mention of Award

February

FOWL Deeds Newsletter - Announcement of Award & Award Article