



FAW National Literary Awards
2013 Results

The winners and placegetters were honoured at a presentation night held at the Preston Masonic Centre, Bell Street Preston, in Victoria on Friday 11 April 2014.

We thank all of the entrants, sponsors and judges for their participation and their support for the Awards. The generosity of our sponsors enables the Fellowship to run such a comprehensive suite of awards. Our judges volunteer a huge chunk of their lives to make some very tough decisions and many of them tell us how privileged they are to read the work that is submitted. In turn we are all privileged to have people who will do that, in their own time, for the love of writing. Writers of all ages, from all over Australia, provide the rich material that we celebrate with the presentation of these awards.

Congratulations to those who have received awards this year. To those who have not, I urge you to read the judges' reports carefully, have faith in your work and persevere. Work that is not short-listed for one competition may be the winner of another. When it comes to longer pieces of work, it is hard to maintain perspective and the lack of feedback from competitions on individual submissions can be discouraging. Many of us have benefited from joining or starting a writing group that we are comfortable with. 'Comfort' in this sense means finding a group that provides constructive advice in a supportive way. Discuss your writing with a critical friend, mentor or an editor. A capable critical friend or accomplished freelance editor is to a book what an architect is to a house renovation. An architect will look at the flow of the rooms, the relationship of the house to outdoor spaces and the streetscape and critically appraise furnishing details. A skilled editor will look at the cohesiveness of your chapters, the consistency of themes and character, aspects (such as subtext) that you may not be aware of and lots of picky grammar and spelling bits.

Keep writing and keep reading for inspiration, stimulation and confirmation. Writers are readers too.

Lynn Smailes

President, Fellowship of Australian Writers (FAW)
on behalf of the 2014 Committee.

Ceremony Credits

Awards MC: Pauline Csuba.
Assistant: Andrew Maj.

Photographer: Di Cousens.

Front Of House: Gail Blundell, Natalie Dean.
Drinks Attendant: Angelo Salamanca.
Catering: BBQ Bloke.
Support team: Peter Bourdon, Dot Blundell, James Triggs,
Louise Davenport, Lauren Csuba, Georgina Luck.

FAW Vic committee-
President: Lynn Smailes <lynnsmailes@gmail.com>.
Vice-President: Pauline Csuba.
Secretary: James Triggs <secretary@writers.asn.au>.
Treasurer: Gail Blundell <gailhive@gmail.com>.
Minute Secretary: Louise Davenport.
General Committee: Angelo Salamanca; Robin Kenny.
Editor of *The Australian Writer*:
Alicia Bee <australianwritermagazine@gmail.com>.
Awards Coordinator: Gail Blundell.

Awards Booklet Editor and Designer: Alicia Bee.
Proofreader: Lynn Smailes.

2014 FAW National Literary Awards

The 2014 National Literary Awards will open on Monday 1 September and close Sunday 30 November 2014. From August 2014 you will be able to download an entry form online <writers.asn.au>, or you can obtain one by sending a DL self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
FAW 6–8 Davies Street Brunswick 3058.
Entry forms are also included in the September issue of *The Australian Writer*, the regular publication of the Fellowship of Australian Writers (FAW) Vic. Inc.

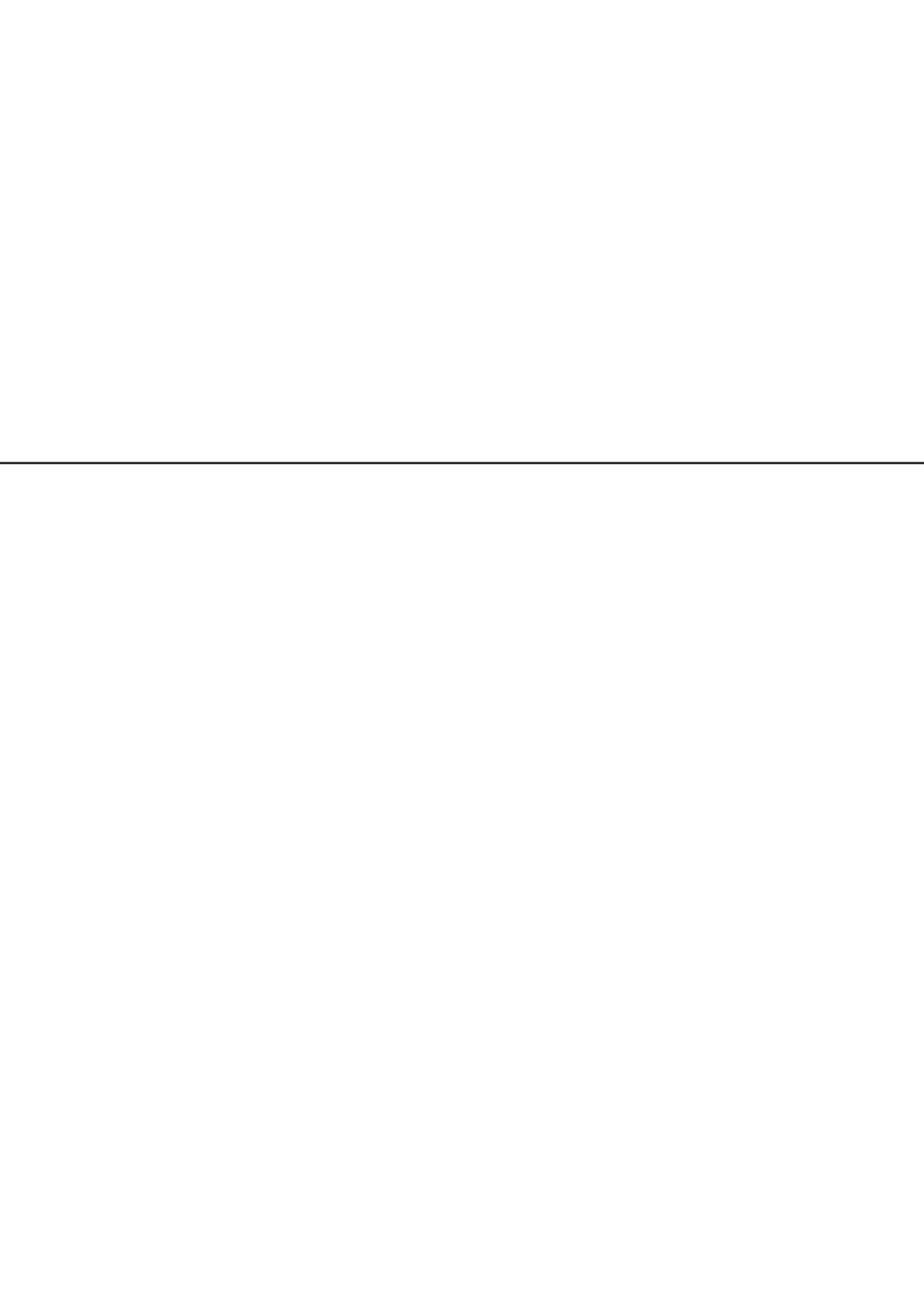
About the Fellowship

The Fellowship of Australian Writers was established in 1928 and has branches across Australia. Like all of the interstate branches, the Victorian branch operates without ongoing government funding. Daily activities are carried out by a voluntary committee who are dedicated to nurturing and supporting the aspirations of writers at all stages of their careers.

FAW members receive:

- four issues of *The Australian Writer* per year,
- the opportunity to submit work for publication in the magazine,
- the opportunity to participate in our regular writers' meetings in regional Melbourne and in country Victoria,
- ongoing information and discounted entry into the FAW National Literary Awards.

For information about FAW membership visit <writers.asn.au>.



Part 1 - Book Awards

1. FAW Excellence in Non-Fiction Award

Sponsored by FAW

Established in 1978, an award for a non-fiction book of sustained quality and distinction with an Australian theme, first published in Australia.

Winner \$1000

Bob Wurth *The Battle for Australia: A nation and its leader under siege* (Macmillan/Pan Macmillan)

Highly Commended

Malcolm Knox *Boom: The underground history of Australia from gold rush to GFC* (Viking/Penguin Books)

Commended

Iain McCalman *The Reef: A passionate history* (Viking/Penguin Books)

Judges' Report: Jean Thornton and Dr Bill Anderson.

Although fewer books were entered this year, the entries were generally of high quality and there were a number of excellent books. The winning entries were all of very high quality but the judges had little difficulty in arriving at their decision.

The Battle for Australia makes an important contribution to Australian historiography. Well researched and beautifully written, this outstanding book adds much to our understanding of Prime Minister John Curtin and Australia's role in World War Two. It is a very worthy winner.

The Boom and *The Reef* are well researched, well written books. They make important and highly readable contributions to our historical understanding.

2. FAW Christina Stead Award

Sponsored by FAW

Named for one of Australia's greatest novelists and established in 1987, an award for a work of fiction first published in Australia.

Winner \$500

Hannah Kent *Burial Rites* (Macmillan/Pan Macmillan)

Highly Commended

Samantha Tidy *Happiness Jar* (Storytorch Press)

Owen Ravenscroft *Sink or Swim* (Owen Ravenscroft)

MG Johnson *Under the Rug* (Kananook Publishing)

Commended

Terry Probert *Kundela* (Probert Consulting)

Susanna Freymark *Losing February* (Macmillan/Pan Macmillan)

Judges' Report: Gail Blundell and Philip Rainford.

An increasing number of self-published books are being entered into this award. The judges are finding that many of these would benefit from more effective editing, a vital stage in the development of published work. As for the winners, we always look for a good story first— something different that grabs our attention— and we look for how the book ends. Is it a satisfactory ending or a quick finish because the author is getting tired of the book or can't figure out a better ending? After that we consider the overall editing and presentation.

The books that won offered easy to read, challenging stories with different slants on the subjects chosen.

3. FAW Anne Elder Award

Sponsored by Cathie Elder and the FAW as trustees of the Anne Elder Trust

Established in 1977, this award is for a first book of poetry. It honours Anne Elder, ballet dancer and poet.

Winner \$1000

Vanessa Page *Confessional Box* (Walleah Press)

Commended

Susan Adams *Beside Rivers* (Island Press)

Luke Fischer *Paths of Flight* (Black Pepper Publishing)

Vanessa Kirkpatrick *To Catch the Light* (Fence Post Press)

Ainslee Meredith *Pinetorch* (Australian Poetry New Voices)

Judges' Report: Garth Madsen, Meg McNena.

As always, it was a privilege to judge the Anne Elder Award. There were so many fine poems and such a diversity of styles and approaches. Poetry, more than any other form of literature, pushes through and beyond boundaries. We expect our poets to do more than just replicate the works of the past. Because this is an award for a first published book of poetry, the selection of entries is always an indication of the health of the art-form in this country.

Once again, the strength of the entries shows that the future is a hopeful and exciting one.

Confessional Box by Vanessa Page was a clear winner. It was a powerful yet delicate work, personal yet accessible. It drew upon the familiar landscapes of the home and showed the intimacy of revealed experience in three cohesive sections: homefires, bushfires and embers. The effect was that the book held together as a single work of literature as well as a collection of individual poems. Several books made the short-list. Ainslee Meredith's *Pinetorch* was full of surprises and juxtaposed the exotic with the everyday. Vanessa Kirkpatrick's *To Catch the Light* was intimately honest with a strong sense of rhythm and imagery. Luke Fischer's *Paths of Flight* revealed the spirit of a true traveler in tune with the internal as well as the external world. Finally, *Beside Rivers* by Susan Adams was compassionate and often surprising while confronting often brutal and elemental themes.



4. FAW Barbara Ramsden Award *Sponsored by the FAW and Michael Meszaros*

Established in 1971, this Award has had an interrupted history. It honours a revered Australian editor. The winning editor and author receive bronze plaques depicting *The Origin of Art* by Andor Meszaros.

Winner

Lightning by Felicity Volk, editor Emma Rafferty (Pan Macmillan/ Picador)

Highly Commended

Norwood by Roland Johnson, editor Daan Spijer (The Publishing Company)

Judges' Report: Christina Crossley-Ratcliffe and Julia Maurus.

The Fellowship of Australian Writers established this award in 1971 in memory of 'a formidable editor', Barbara Ramsden. It is intended for books that reflect credit on both author and editor, recognising their combined effort in producing a quality product.¹

An editor's job is to take a manuscript and make it the best it can be.

Distracting lapses in punctuation, grammar and design rob the reader of enjoyment, as do inconsistencies that the indispensable style sheet is meant to forestall.

To quote from the Australian standards for editing practice:

'Editors are central to any publishing project; they endeavour to reconcile the needs of the author, the audience and the publisher. Editors are part of a team that guides a work through its various stages from creation to publication. All editors need to have a broad understanding of the publishing process and their role within it, regardless of the extent of their involvement. They should demonstrate initiative and flexibility, adapting to the needs of a project and the specific work environment. They need to communicate clearly and tactfully, and to respect the opinions of others.

The goal of editors, regardless of their role or the type of publication, is to ensure that the material is consistent and correct, and that its content, language, style and layout suit its purpose and meet the needs of its audience.'²

The judges, looking for a book that epitomised a successful partnership, agreed on one that was paradoxically so well edited that the editing was invisible. In their view that book was an enjoyable read from a passionate and hard-working writer teamed with the guidance and skill of an equally dedicated editor.

It is therefore the judges' joint decision that the 2013 Barbara Ramsden Award should go to the entry that they considered to be, overall, the most professional in its presentation. That book is *Lightning* by Felicity Volk, edited by Emma Rafferty and published by Pan Macmillan/Picador. The work was written with assistance from the Eleanor Dark Foundation and the ACT Government. While acknowledging the guidance of other 'astute and assiduous editors', Volk says her collaboration with managing editor Emma Rafferty was 'a profoundly intimate and rewarding relationship'. The book was (like many) the result of a team effort, enriched by the author's substantial research and assisted by the constructive criticism of several readers.

Lightning is Volk's first novel, a 382-page work of exceptional literary fiction that gleams with poetic nuance, motif and metaphor. It seamlessly integrates extensive background research within the richly layered lives of a family for whom the telling of their tales of recurrent hope and tragedy is a lifeline across time, place and race. The judges' commendation goes to Roland Johnson and editor Daan Spijer for their 182-page non-fiction, social history volume *Norwood: It changed the face of Melbourne*, published by The Publishing Company & Co. with Seventh House Communications.

Johnson thanks his editor, Daan Spijer, for help with structural and text editing, proofing, suggestions, mentoring— and the encouragement without which this history of the Brighton mansion and its era might have remained 'a collection of disparate writings'. Their fruitful collaboration on this self-published book is evident in its meticulous historical research, readable and well-illustrated text, and attractive cover.

The author and editor may weigh and whip the manuscript's ingredients into a passably well-baked product, but it takes exceptional skill to make it a wedding cake. A nominated editor is ultimately responsible for the finished product, and therefore any uncorrected errors by third parties, such as in proofreading or indexing, will take it out of the running for this award. Many authors now self-publish with varying degrees of reliance on freelance editing, making it increasingly difficult to define a successful collaboration. As a consequence, the judges respectfully suggest that in future submissions to the Barbara Ramsden award, nominated editors be required to detail their involvement with the manuscript.

References:

1. Reidy, S. 1998 'The "legendary" Barbara Ramsden, book editor', *Melbourne University mosaic: people and places* /Three-Four-Eight pp. 283–301, Melbourne.
2. IPEd, 2012, *Australian standards for editing practice*, 2nd edn. Available from Inst. of Professional Editors Ltd, PO Box 6585, Point Cook, Victoria, 3030 <iped-editors.org>.

Part 2 - Manuscript Awards

5. FAW Impact Digital Community Writers Award *Sponsored by Impact Digital.*

Established in 1997, this is an award for an anthology by a writer's group.

Winner \$500 Impact Digital Voucher

The Williamstown Writers *Defining Moments*

Judge's Report: Jennifer Harrison.

I'd like to congratulate The Williamstown Writers for a strong collection of stories and poems. The work was elegantly edited and produced, each story and poem voiced with conviction. Although I'm not sure if this is the case, the confidence of the work suggests sureness in the authors' relationships not only to their own work but also to each other. The poem 'Real Life' offers these lines, 'You have been / A mere drop in the ocean / Unnoticed by most' . . . and, yet, the defining moments of the lives and loves described in the collection speak against anonymity. There was a relaxed feel to the diction that was enjoyably frank and uncluttered. Best wishes to all the other entrants. There were a number of delightful works in the other submissions—startling imaginations that I would like to see more of in the future.

6. FAW Jennifer Burbidge Short Story Award *Sponsored by Mary Burbidge.*

This is an award for a story dealing with any aspect of the lives of those who suffer from some form of physical, intellectual or mental health disability and/or its impact on families. It was established in 2000 in honour of Jennifer Burbidge who died soon after her 21st birthday

Winners \$250

Eileen Herbert-Goodall *Silver Lining*

Vicky Daddo *How the One-armed Boy got the Girl*

Judge's Report: Mary Burbidge.

One of the pleasures of judging a short story competition is reading the stories for a second time.

So often the story improves as you appreciate the subtleties and clues that enrich the storyline when you are aware of the ending.

This was especially so for the winning stories.

All the entries were worth reading but poor grammar spoiled some and a number of stories did not really meet the particular guidelines for this award.

Only two stories stood out and both appealed equally, although in different ways, so I have given them both a prize. 'Silver Lining' is a gentle, rich exploration of a supportive way to approach the patchy memory failings of a person with dementia. It is evocatively written and, like memories, slips smoothly between times and places. The revelation at the end was a satisfying surprise, and rereading revealed sufficient clues to justify it.

'How the One-armed Boy got the Girl' has a writing style that suits the youth of the characters and is deft with witty dialogue. It looks at comfort levels in interactions with a person who has a disability, and explores how someone with personal experience with disability can have a less inhibited approach, helping to break down the barriers of awkwardness and reluctance.

7. FAW Mary Grant Bruce Award *Sponsored by the City of Wellington*

Established in 1981 in honour of a revered and prolific writer, this award is for a manuscript written for children between 10 to 15 years.

First Prize \$600

Janice Elva Williams *Othello is Part of Us All*

Second Prize \$300

Carmel Lillis *Stop, Roll; Drop, Ride*

Highly Commended

Jacqueline Winn *Thirteen*

Anna Quinlan *Christo's Choice*

Commended

Marian McGuinness *Tilly Goes Speeking*

Vicky Daddo *Wesley the Would-be Wizard*

City of Wellington Prize \$200

Vicky Daddo *Wesley the Would-be Wizard*

Judge's Report: Margaret Campbell.

Fewer entries this year raised a concern but on reading I was delighted to find stories that slotted themselves easily into place. It was pleasing to read a range for both younger and older readers and mystical and present day settings. The winning entries were well crafted to carry the reader through the required 'suspension of disbelief' from beginning to end. 'Othello is Part of Us All', held my interest completely. The relationships of a group of teenagers at school in a country town, takes the reader on a journey of understanding—the thoughts of our insecurities make us who we are. Authentic dialogue sets the pace and keeps the story moving with humour, action and poignancy.

'Stop, Roll; Drop, Ride' deftly uses description to place the reader in the backyard jungle where an elderly war veteran lies injured. A poignant story written with understanding of the repercussions of war.

Gippsland winner 'Wesley the Would-be Wizard' captures the attempts and failures of a student wizard who redeems himself with an amazing feat. A happy ending story for young readers.

8. *FAW John Shaw Neilson Poetry Award*
Sponsored by Collected Works

Established in 1971, this award is for a poem or suite of poems by an Australian author.

First Prize \$600

James Hughes *Unassuming* VIC

Second Prize \$150

Tim Collins *A Litter of Seven* WA

Highly Commended

Eva Collins *Autumn in Summer* VIC

Barbara Orlovska-Westwood *Mango Juice* VIC

Anna Ryan-Punch *We Stole Some Hours from the Night* VIC

Commended

Leonard Bibby *Coogee Estate* WA

Susan Kaye Fealy *On the Other Side of Love* VIC

Roger Vickery *Reddening* NSW

Judge's Report: Garth Madsen.

So many of this year's entries fell into two categories— poems that climbed onto a pulpit to preach down to us and poems that were such a brick wall of imagery that it was hard to penetrate their surface. Not surprisingly, the best poems fell between these two extremes. Messages were more powerful for being understated, metaphors were stronger for their sparseness and pertinence. This was certainly true of the winning poem. 'Unassuming' is very unassuming in its tone and imagery. It is not the sort of poem that shouts but this triptych addresses one of the major maladies of the time, the tendency to take for granted the miracles we witness every day, those tiny beauties, those small gifts, those simple acts of love. It is part of the poet's brief to notice the unnoticed but this poet lays details, images, metaphors down with such deftness that they all weave themselves around a larger spiritual theme. The second-placed poem, 'A Litter of Seven', is about grief. A father's death merges with the memory of his drowning a litter of kittens. The poet carefully sets up a sequence of echoes that resound through the hospital corridors and a plane flight. The poem ends with the drowning and there is a strongly-drawn parallel between the death of the kittens and that of the father. Other poems worthy of mention were 'Caretaker', 'Eastern Hill', 'The Glass Negative', 'I'm Normal', 'Joseph K. Emerging from a Mirror' and 'The Lake'.

9. FAW Jim Hamilton Award Sponsored by Allen & Unwin, Twelfth Planet Press and UWA Publishing.

This award was inaugurated in 1994 for an unpublished novel of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author. The categories were expanded in 2013 to encompass fantasy/science fiction and non-fiction.

Prize: Sponsors assess manuscript for publication.

Part A Fiction sponsored by Allen & Unwin

Winner: Melanie Naphine *Small Crimes* Vic

Commended: Rosalind Renshaw *A Long Way from Sunday* Vic

Gregory Hansen *Pelsaert's Nightmare* Vic

Part B Science Fiction and Fantasy sponsored by Twelfth Planet Press

Highly Commended: Peter Ramus *Everlasting Stars* VIC

Steve Harrison *Time Storm* NSW

Part C Non-Fiction sponsored by UWA Publishing

Winner: Alison Stewart *Cold Stone Soup* NSW

Part A Judges: Clare Carlin and Robert Watson.

The manuscripts were of a high standard this year (although the judges' humour was not improved on receiving manuscripts printed on both sides of the page.

Green stars all round— but they are threatening to next year read only every second page of such entries).

The judges appreciated the other risks many authors took with their manuscripts, especially in the formal matter of style and structure. It would be worth it for all submitting authors to offer their manuscript for a reader's report. Contact the Australian Society of Authors or your state writing centre for information.

If you're editing your work, a useful text for new writers (which deals particularly with structure) is *Into the Woods: How stories work and why we tell them* by John Yorke.

It was interesting to see work that made the most of the eBook format and the possibilities of digital, with the caveat that extra features should be utilised only if they 'enhance' the novel.

Think about whether a scene needs to be 'seen'. Is it part of your story that can be related or must it be depicted? Decide: which are the key scenes that must be shown?

Many entries used multiple narrators or had a different character voicing each chapter.

This is hard to do successfully and there must be sound reasons for attempting it.

When unsuccessful, the resulting work can seem facile. See Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible* (a novel she took ten years to write) for how to do it well. Or watch Luchino Visconti's *Rocco and his Brothers* (1960).

The winning manuscript is a narrative carried by many voices who narrate the quotidian, the tragic and the sinister in a style that is consistently empathic yet cool and elastic. The writer has the makings, here, of an excellent 'Australian Gothic' novel. But whose story is it? As an exercise, we'd recommend choosing a narrator and then deciding what is at stake for this character, and the main protagonists. The writer needs to fix upon and draw out the story in this manuscript. We'd be excited to see the results of a re-drafting.

The highly commended entries— *Pelsaert's Nightmare* and *Long Way from Sunday*— could not have been more different. The former is a dense and complex rumination on a particularly nasty Dutch colonial episode— that of the wreck of the *Batavia*— whose narrator is compromised in every respect. The judges were unsure of this enterprise's success, but the manuscript displayed an impressive reach of scholarship in its depiction of the era and its culture.

Long Way from Sunday delivered more than Lonely Planet anecdotes of young westerners travelling through the more risky regions of Africa: its author successfully knits in a meditation on the problematic need for freedom when in love. The author's re-drafting will no doubt deal with a degree of redundancy in some passages, but there is a remarkable, youthful tale being told here that deserves a readership.

Part B Judges: Michael Foster, Alisa Krasnostein. Report: Michael Foster.

There were an impressive number of entries for the inaugural judging of the Science Fiction/Fantasy sub-category of the FAW Jim Hamilton Award. Many showed willingness to stray from norms of the genre, and it was good to see some also showing an Australian flavour— not simply for the sake of inserting some token Australiana, but as an integral and considered part of the narrative.

While we chose not to award a winner, we felt all entries deserved thorough encouragement. Two works stood slightly ahead of the others— *Everlasting Stars* and *Timestorm*— both of which received well-deserved commendations.

We would urge future entrants to work more on stripping out extraneous text to maintain a solid forward pace, and to communicate by showing as much as possible, without so much outright telling. We look forward to the future running of this award. We have no doubt it will act to further stir the creative juices of Australia's greatly talented writers of Sci-Fi and Fantasy.

Part C Judges: Professor Terri-ann White, UWA Publishing.

This manuscript starts with a most memorable sentence: 'I was born with a caul, which the nurse brought my mother in a jar.' It continues with an excellent and lively voice that carries the memoir across 80000 words or more; a story of growing up in South Africa and carrying that heritage through a life and a century filled with incident and change for people who called themselves South African. Many memoirs have the unfortunate trick of beating out a thumping blow-by-blow of detail, achievement, exception. This one makes me believe every word I'm told, and it does so because of the crisp, precise sense that the writer knows how narrative works: how it can drive a reader through hundreds of pages with a believable, humorous, wry, knowing, and reflective voice. The author has clearly read widely and understood where the power of storytelling lies, and has then applied this knowledge to telling her story lightly. There is nothing forced, nothing boring here. For publication I expect an editor would trim the text a little but overall my reading of *Cold Stone Soup* was a wholly pleasurable experience in telling an interesting story well, giving the reader an insight into history as lived through a childhood in Africa and an adulthood in Australia, observing a beloved and troubled homeland from afar.

I commend the writer for the quality of her work and the planning and successful execution of a complex whole.

10. *FAW Angelo B Natoli Short Story Award*
Sponsored by AB Natoli Pty

Established in 1999, this award is for a short story of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian writer.

First Prize \$600

Beverley Lello *Seedlings* VIC

Second Prize \$400

Mark Smith *Periphery* VIC

Highly commended

Matthew Ryan *Worst Hope* VIC

Angelo Salamanca *Of Men and Beasts* VIC

Louise Annabelle Noble *Love at Dismal Downs* QLD

Commended

Jennifer Parry *Warrigal* QLD

Roger Vickery *Ballarat Gothic* NSW

Judge's Report: Louise Le Nay.

The winning story 'Seedlings' is a family story described with delicacy. We are invited into a relationship which has recognisable history and depth. We realise our own flaws as we witness Celia and Iris interact and respond with grace and manners, but fail each other at vital moments.

In the year in which Alice Munro was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, this is a story which seems to articulate itself in the manner of Munro's gentle, insightful style.

The second place-getter 'Periphery' is a story that suggests tragedy, made worse by the main character who is reluctant to confront the sinister subtext to her own journey— a truth which articulates itself in her peripheral vision only. The Highly Commended and Commended stories were unique, stylistically brave, moving. Very little separated the finalists.

I would like to recommend the stories of Alice Munro to everyone who hasn't yet discovered them.

Munro's work is both complicated and simple. Her style is plain. Her empathy and insights are extraordinary.

She writes: 'The complexity of things, the things within things— just seems to be endless. I mean nothing is easy... nothing is simple.'

My sincere congratulations to the winners and the commended, and thanks, as always, to the FAW for the privilege and pleasure of reading the entries.

11. FAW Di Cranston Award

Sponsored by Di Cranston

This award for a play screenplay or TV script of sustained quality by an Australian author has evolved from an award that began in 1988 as the Young Writers Award.

Winner \$250

Leonard Bibby *The Tale of Brother Tobias* WA

Highly commended

Geoffrey Greaves *My Cloud News Watch* NSW

Commended

Michael Lill *The Water's Edge* NSW

Judge's Report: Peter Krausz.

It was surprising to see a large reduction in the number of entries in this category this year. I always look forward to reading a large number of plays, scripts, radio plays, etc., but this year there were few submissions. I hope writers have not been dissuaded from writing plays or scripts as there is an ongoing need for quality writing and a variety of styles and ideas. I have always been impressed with writers who have used aspects of Australian history, or contemporary Australian life, to fashion distinctive scripts. I certainly encourage writers to increase their submissions for this category.

The winning entry this year plays with historic events, religious attitudes, cultural internments during World War 2, and societal concerns, in a cleverly constructed script which evokes cultural questions that are very much still around today. The writer has used some challenging and non-predictable dialogue to portray an Australia, as seen through religious eyes, as a country still finding its way and lost in a cultural maze. The global conflict brings to the fore contradictory attitudes that are not easily resolvable.

I also want to comment on the quality of the highly commended and commended scripts. The former is a clever piece of writing on the way news gathering and journalism have evolved over many years, mainly due to social change and technology. Whilst the latter is a well-written evocation of melancholic and historical issues related to illness, sport and hope. All of these scripts revealed a strong Australian subtext about the search for identity, meaning and harmony. I look forward to next year's expansion of entries in this category.

*12. FAW Whitelight Short Film Script Award
Part A, Sponsored by Whitelight Productions*

Established in 2004, this is an award for a short script of no more than 20 pages.

Winner

Robyn Winslow *Balls* VIC

Highly Commended

Robyn Winslow *David* VIC

Commended

Belle Savage [*Untitled Script*] VIC

Judge's Report: Angelo Salamanca.

Most of the pieces for the FAW White Light Short Film and TV Script Award were very well-written with a number of them containing a twist and elements of intrigue. The dramas that worked best explored— amongst other things— human frailties and how best to cope with personal tragedy. A strong sense of place was evoked in the majority of scripts affording scope for strong visuals. Both richly drawn characters and nuanced characterization was particularly impressive. Themes of aging, disability and a need to let go of the past in order to attain fulfilment, were handled convincingly and, largely, without mawkishness. Some very short pieces were submitted this year. These tackled a range of genres including horror and crime thriller, as well as a satirical drama about on-line entrapment. The most ambitious script of the bunch dealt with a bizarre meeting between a Nordic God and a Brunswick denizen. Essentially a duologue perhaps more suited to radio than the screen, it was redolent with philosophical discourse and Samuel Beckett-like absurdist humour. All in all, an entertaining, and in some instances poignant, batch of screenplays for 2013.

*12. FAW Whitelight Short Film Script Award
Part B, Sponsored by Whitelight Productions.*

No winner awarded due to insufficient entries.

Part 3 Young Writers' Awards

14. FAW Young Poet of the Year Award

Sponsored by Clare's Desk

Established in 1976, this award is for a poem of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author under 16 years.

Part A

Winner \$150: Marion Scott *Midnight Unicorn* TAS

Highly Commended \$50: Izabella Lloyd *My Sister* QLD

Commended \$50: Miranda Plowman *The Mark of Me* VIC

Part B

Winner \$250: Amelia Hosie *I Know a Place* NSW

Highly Commended \$50: Amelia Hosie *Armistice* NSW

Commended \$50: Ella Gale Fox-Martens *Rhythms of Suburbia* WA

Luka Zubcic *Synthesis* VIC

Judge's Report: Shirley Randles.

Most of the submissions for Part A were in free verse. In contrast to last year's entries, only a few dealt with the environment. However, when considering the age group, many poems displayed an unusual, but thoughtful, attempt at self-analysis. The effect of emotional relationships was also a common theme in this year's submissions. 'Midnight Unicorn' is a carefully rhymed atmospheric poem that creates an air of enchantment. In 'My Sister' the use of metaphors and descriptive passages conveys the affection between siblings.

At times unnecessary words or detailed explanations slowed the poetry and interrupted the rhythm of the words. Reading the poetry aloud several times will assist in eliminating this problem. All entries demonstrated a careful and sincere approach.

In Part B there was a mixture of free verse and carefully rhymed submissions. It was pleasing to note that there were few unnecessary words. Choosing the winner was difficult because all poems were well planned and of a similar high standard. The majority of poems dealt with the environment, personal relationships and the contrast between wealth and poverty. Several entries demonstrated successfully the emotional effect of using repetition to reinforce a statement. 'I Know a Place' was notable for carefully chosen words, the use of repetition and excellent imagery to create a tranquil atmosphere. The poignant poem 'Armistice' uses descriptive passages to commemorate soldier sacrifice and the loss felt by loved ones.

In both categories, those who did not gain a place deserve congratulations and encouragement to continue writing poetry.

15. FAW Michael Dugan Short Story Award
Sponsored by the Penguin Group (Australia)

Established in 1976, these awards are for short stories by young Australian writers under the age of 16 years.

Part A (8 – 12 Years)

Winner \$100: Charlotte Rue *The Emerald Soldier* VIC

Highly Commended: Brooke Grimmer *Cold Hunt* VIC
Celine Ng *The Watch* WA

Commended: Jessie Ellerton *Jamie's Magical Birthday Surprise* VIC

Keira Deed *Andy and his Fear of Ghosts* QLD

Part B (13 – 16 Years)

Winner \$150: Jason Cleary-Gorton *Leonardo's Place* NSW

Highly Commended: Brodie Hamilton *The Trail* VIC
Pascale Kahn *Whistles of the Silverchildren* NSW

Commended: Joycelin Pillay *Believe Me* NSW

Fay Taloto *On the Last Day, the First Day Began* NSW

Aaron Griffiths *What if?* NSW

Judge's Report: Shirley Hassen.

While some submissions were not up to the usual standard and did not hold my interest, most were well-written and enjoyable to read— this was certainly true of the winners of both categories. Other commended stories were notable for the use of humour ‘The Trail’ and imaginative touches ‘Whistles of the Silverchildren’.

16. FAW John Morrison Short Story Award

Sponsored by Paul Jennings

Established in 1965 under another name, this is an award for a short story by an Australian author of between 15 to 20 years.

First Prize \$200: Isabella Farrell-Hallegraeff *Vincenzo Salvatore* TAS

Second Prize \$100: Tina Gaudry *Ziggy the Bagman* QLD

Highly Commended: Isabella Farrell-Hallegraeff *Wishbone* TAS

Commended: Damien Hamilton *Transcendence* VIC

Cameron Croese *Air* NSW

Judge's Report: Jennifer Harrison.

All the submitted stories were entertaining and imaginative.

The subject matter varied from well-observed community dramas to personal epiphanies dealing with childhood obesity, poverty, migration, self worth and many other themes.

The compression of the short story form was handled adroitly and the characterisations, such as those in the excellent story 'Vincenzo Salvatore', were just terrific. The science fiction piece 'Transcendence' cleverly moved between voices and perspectives and the voice of the first person narrative in 'Ziggy the Bagman' was absolutely engaging. The cicada of 'Wishbone' worked as a metaphor that gained resonance as the story unfolded and in the story 'Air' the author's realistic use of dialogue enhanced the pathos of a young boy's struggle with obesity. Of all the stories 'Vincenzo Salvatore' was the most satisfying to read. The author has blended the elements of the short story form into an award-winning piece employing quick and vivid characterisation, crisp narrative, drama and an air of mystery.

*17. FAW Mavis Thorpe Clark Award
Part A (Individual Entry)
Sponsored by Robyn and Graeme Base*

Established in 1994, this award is for anthology of sustained quality and distinction by an Australian author.

Winner \$350: Cameron Croese *Smoke: A Collection of Stories* NSW

Highly Commended: Joanne Yvonne Oakley *Weather* VIC

Commended: Isabella Farrell-Hallegraeff *Fragments* TAS

Judge's Report: Georgina Luck.

I enjoyed reading the entries and was impressed with the standard and diversity of the writing.

The winning entry *Smoke* is an assured, compelling collection of stories with vivid, authentic characters.

The writing is well-paced and the themes and characters are brought to life with effective, believable dialogue. The stories are moving with some profound insights and worked well as a cohesive collection.

The highly commended entry *Weather* comprises fiction, poetry and non-fiction with a solid effort in all forms. I feel the fiction is the most effective, demonstrating originality and some lovely imagery. The author also sustained the weather theme with an imaginative approach.

The commended entry *Fragments* contains stories and poetry and includes some very entertaining, vivid writing which, along with the other winners, has some lovely, original imagery.

I encourage future entrants to read widely, including contemporary literary journals that publish emerging writers such as *Voiceworks* and *Meanjin*.

I congratulate all the entrants for their commitment in submitting to this category and hope they will all submit again in future.

18. FAW Mavis Thorpe Clark Award

Part B (Group Entry)

Sponsored by Robyn and Graeme Base

Established in 1965 under another name, this is an award for a short story by a group of secondary school students.

Winner \$200: St Michael's Collegiate Year 7 and 8 Class

Transformed By The Night's Whispers TAS

Highly Commended: St Michael's Collegiate English Writing Class *Anatomy of a Tree and Other Works* TAS

Commended: St Michael's Collegiate English Writing Class *Citta Subacqueo [Underwater City] and other works* TAS

Judge's Report: Pauline Csuba.

I enjoyed reading all of the entries and I was impressed by the quality of the work. The diversity demonstrated by these young writers was outstanding. The winning entry, an anthology of poetry and prose by year seven and eight students titled *Transformed by the Nights Whispers*, captured my attention.

These stories and poetry were notable for the effective use of visual imagery and the skilled use of language. It was strong, sound writing. The stories and themes chosen were effective in showcasing the skill of these emerging writers.

The highly commended entry, *Anatomy of a Tree and Other Works* and the commended entry, *Citta Subacqueo [Underwater City] and Other Works*, were characterised by original and entertaining writing.

Thank you to all who entered. All of the collections submitted contained strong, diverse and well-written pieces. The presentation matters less than the quality of the work. I look forward to more groups of students entering and showing the original qualities that were evident in this year's entries. If you missed out this year, please consider submitting next year.

19. FAW Ivy Hart Peace and Environment Rhyming Poetry Award Sponsored by Meryl Tobin

This award for rhyming poetry by primary school students was established in 2011 in honour of Ivy Hart, a writer, environmentalist and political activist.

Part A Years 3-4 primary school children

Winner \$100: Ruby Dowling *Panther, Panther* TAS

Runner-up \$25: Olivia Hosie *Kakadu* NSW

Highly Commended: Indie Sarma *Weather* TAS
Olivia Hosie *Peace* NSW

Part B Years 5-6 primary school children

Winner \$100: Niamh Brazil *The Olive Tree* NSW

Runner-up \$25: Heidi Christina Blake *Remembrance Day Poem* TAS

Highly Commended: Angus Lin *Plastic Snags* VIC

Commended: Piper Alice Hertslet *The White Eyes* QLD
Celine Ng *The Tears of Gingin Wax* WA

Judge's Report: Meryl Tobin.

I was impressed at the standard of entries in Part A and Part B. All have strong themes about nature, war and/or peace and vivid images, and the winning poems show maturity. However, poets' skills in rhythm and rhyming vary, and poets need to read their poems aloud and work on parts that jar. Some 'facts' need checking. Part A's stand-out winner 'Panther, Panther' is a lyrical poem teeming with images. With memorable lines like 'I'm jaws and claws and a painful bite', it vividly paints a picture of 'a charcoal black, stealthy killer'. Runner-up 'Kakadu' describes an Australian wilderness area, though swimming with crocs seems unbelievable. The two Highly Commended poets worked hard on rhyme and rhythm. Another stand-out winner— Part B's *The Olive Tree*, lets powerful images tell a moving story about a dove dropping a seed 'On the earth where blood did reek'. An olive tree sprouts and grows to stand 'in a place where peace was bred/Crosses white and poppies red'.

Runner-up 'Remembrance Day Poem' another outstanding piece, also illustrates the horror of war. A 'speeding shell' hits a pilot dropping a bomb on soldiers.

'He takes his final breath that night/To the curdling cries of war.'

Highly Commended poem 'Plastic Snags' shows considerable mastery of the rhyming couplet. The Commended poems are about a rare bird and a critically endangered plant.

All poets show talent but most need to check rhyme and rhythm of their poems before submitting them for publication. Keep writing.

Part 4 - Commendation Award



20. FAW Christopher Brennan Award *Sponsored by Sally Dugan*

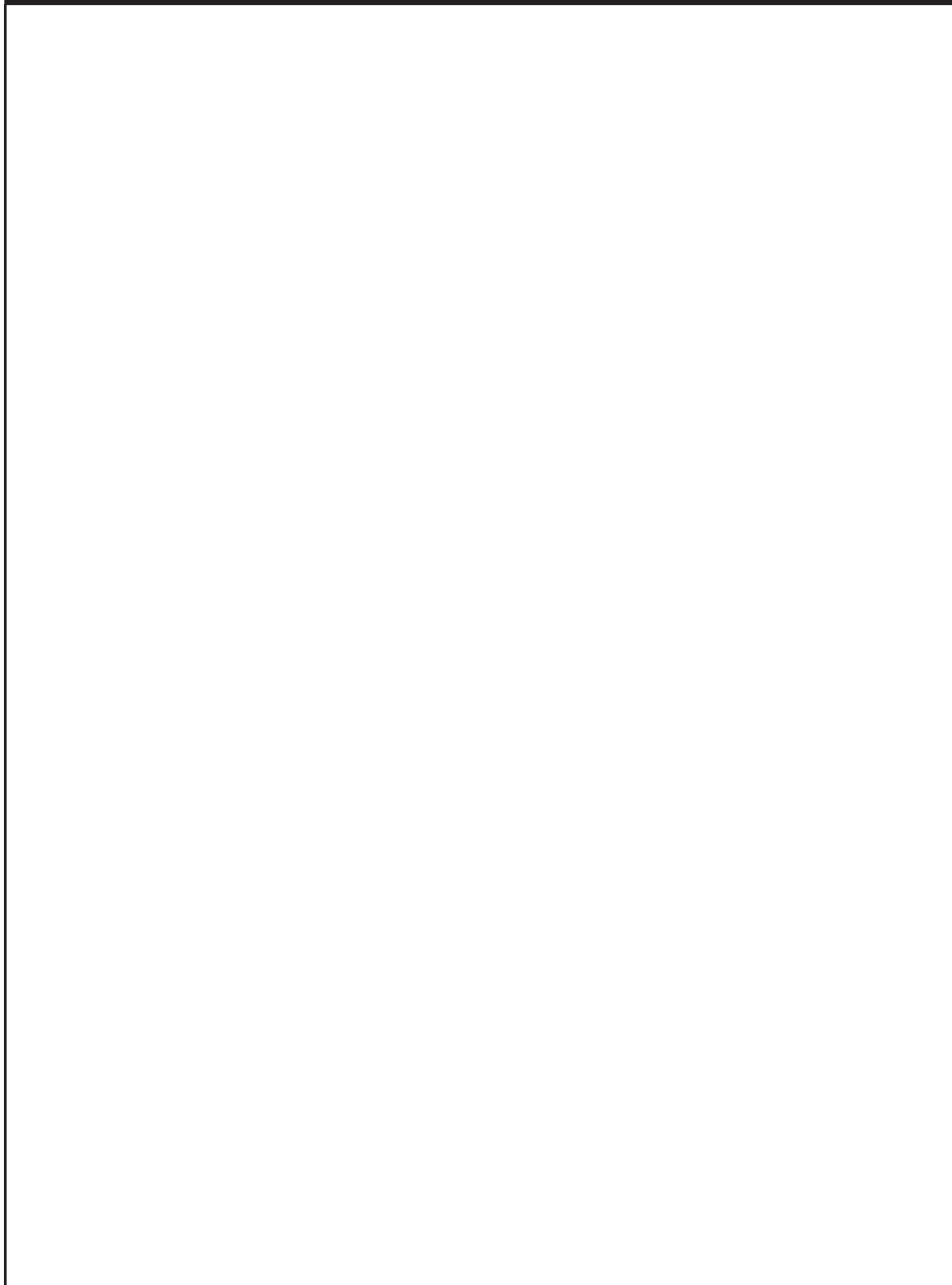
This award honours an Australian poet with a body of written work of sustained quality and distinction. The bronze plaque presented to the winning author is designed by Michael Meszaros. The image shows an artist's hand drawing back a curtain to symbolise that all artists set out to clarify for their audience something worthwhile and relevant.

Judges: Kristen Henry, Sherryl Clark.

Winner: Judith Beveridge.

Judith Beveridge won the Dame Mary Gilmore Award, the Victorian Premier's Award and the NSW Premier's Award for *The Domesticity of Giraffes* (1987). Since then she has published *Accidental Grace*, *How to Love Bats: and other poems*, *Wolf Notes* and *Storm and Honey*. *Wolf Notes* won the poetry section of the *The Age* Book of the Year and the Victorian Premier's Award.

Beveridge has published authoritative articles on the work of other poets, edited poetry anthologies and taught creative writing in a range of settings. She currently teaches at the University of Sydney, is a member of the Literature Board of the Australia Council and poetry editor of *Meanjin*.







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