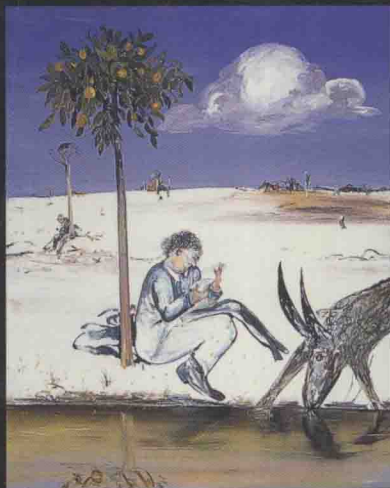


THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



# AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

*Edited by Elizabeth Webby*

THE CAMBRIDGE  
COMPANION TO  
AUSTRALIAN  
LITERATURE

EDITED BY  
ELIZABETH WEBBY



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This book introduces in a lively and succinct way the major writers, literary movements, styles and genres that, at the beginning of a new century, are seen as constituting the field of 'Australian literature'. The book consciously takes a perspective that sees literary works not as aesthetic objects created in isolation by unique individuals, but as cultural products influenced and constrained by the social, political and economic circumstances of their times, as well as by geographical and environmental factors. It covers Indigenous texts, colonial writing and reading, poetry, fiction and theatre throughout two centuries, biography and autobiography, and literary criticism in Australia. Other features of the companion are a chronology listing significant historical and literary events, and suggestions for further reading. It will be an indispensable reference for both national and international readers.

Elizabeth Webby is Professor of Australian Literature and Director of the Australian Studies program at the University of Sydney. She is the author, editor and co-editor of many books including *The Penguin New Literary History of Australia* (1988), *Modern Australian Plays* (1990), *The Penguin Book of Australian Ballads* (1993), *Australian Feminism: A Companion* (1998) and *The Letters of Walter and Mary Richardson* (2000). For twelve years she was the editor of the influential literary magazine, *Southerly*.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

MICHAEL ACKLAND is a Reader in English at Monash University. His publications include four editions of nineteenth-century prose and verse and four monographs: *That Shining Band: A Study of Australian Colonial Verse Tradition* (1994), *Henry Kendall: The Man and the Myths* (1995), *Henry Handel Richardson* (1996) and *Damaged Men: The Lives of James McAuley and Harold Stewart* (2000). He is currently researching the place of the grotesque in Australian culture.

MAY-BRIT AKERHOLT is the Artistic Director of the Australian National Playwrights' Centre. She was resident dramaturg at the Sydney Theatre Company for six years and before that, lecturer in drama at NIDA, and tutor in English at Macquarie University. She has translated eighteen plays for the Australian stage, and has published numerous articles about translation, theatre and writing for performance, as well as a study of Patrick White's plays (1988).

DELYS BIRD teaches in the English Department at the University of Western Australia in Australian literary and cultural studies and women's studies and is one of the editors of *Westerly*. She has published on Australian women's writing from the colonial period to the contemporary, and has edited a collection of Elizabeth Jolley's radio plays, *Off the Air* (1995); a book on women and detective fiction, *Killing Women* (1993); and co-edited collections of essays on Elizabeth Jolley's fiction (1991) and Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1992).

DAVID CARTER teaches literature and cultural studies in the School of Humanities, Griffith University, Brisbane, and is President of the International Australian Studies Association. His publications include *A Career in Writing: Judah Waten and the Cultural Politics of a Literary Career* (1997) and a number of edited books, *The Republicanism Debate* (1993), *Outside the Book: Contemporary Essays on Literary Periodicals* (1999) and *Judah Waten: Fiction, Memoirs, Criticism* (1998). He is currently writing a history of twentieth-century magazine publication in Australia.

#### CONTRIBUTORS

RICHARD FOTHERINGHAM is Head of the English Department and Reader in Drama at the University of Queensland. His major publications include a study of sport in Australian drama and film (1992), and a biography of the short story writer and playwright Steele Rudd (1995), as well as numerous articles on Australian theatre, film and the performing arts as an industry. He is currently editing two collections of early Australian plays for publication in the Academy Editions of Australian Literature series.

KERRY GOLDSWORTHY taught Australian literature, women's studies, Victorian literature and creative writing in the Department of English and Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne for seventeen years; she resigned in 1997 to become an independent scholar and writer. She has edited four anthologies of Australian writing and has written a collection of short stories (*North of the Moonlight Sonata*, 1989) and a monograph on the work of Helen Garner (1996). She was editor of *Australian Book Review* from 1986–87.

DAVID MCCOOEY lectures in literary studies at Deakin University (Geelong). He is the author of *Artful Histories: Modern Australian Autobiography* (1996), which won a NSW Premier's Literary Award. He has published widely on Australian poetry in journals such as *Australian Literary Studies* and *Southerly*, and his reviews and poems have appeared in many national and international publications.

PENNY VAN TOORN is a lecturer in Australian literature and Australian studies at the University of Sydney. She is the author of *Rudy Wiebe and the Historicity of the Word* (1995), and co-editor of *Speaking Positions: Aboriginality, Gender and Ethnicity in Australian Cultural Studies* (1995). She has published extensively on postcolonial literatures and theory, focusing particularly on writings by and about indigenous peoples of Australia and Canada.

ELIZABETH WEBBY is Professor of Australian Literature and Director of the Australian Studies Program at the University of Sydney. She has published many books and articles on Australian literature and literary culture. From 1988–99 she was editor of *Southerly*, Australia's oldest literary magazine.

GILLIAN WHITLOCK is Head of the School of Humanities at Griffith University. Her publications on autobiography include *The Intimate Empire. Reading Women's Autobiography* (2000) and an edition of contemporary Australian autobiography, *Autographs* (1996).

## CHRONOLOGY

This chronology provides a basic framework of dates in Australian history, together with major literary and cultural events, and selected publications of particular historical or literary significance.

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 40,000 BC | Aboriginal peoples living on Australian continent from at least this time.   |
| 20,000 BC | Rock art in Western Arnhem Land depicts now-extinct animals.   |
| 14,000 BC | Tasmania separated from mainland at end of glacial period.   |
| 12,000 BC | Archaeological evidence of use of boomerangs for hunting.  |
| 1616      | Dirk Hartog makes first recorded European landing on Australian continent, in Western Australia.   |
| 1642      | Abel Tasman lands at Blackman's Bay, Van Diemen's Land.  |
| 1703      | William Dampier, <i>A Voyage to New Holland in the Year 1699</i> .   |
| 1770      | James Cook lands in Botany Bay, later names and takes possession of New South Wales for Britain.   |
| 1788      | First Fleet arrives and establishes penal settlement at Sydney and later at Norfolk Island.  |
| 1789      | Convict production in Sydney of George Farquhar's <i>The Recruiting Officer</i> .<br><i>The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay</i> .<br>Watkin Tench, <i>A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay</i> . |
| 1802      | George Howe prints first Australian book, the NSW <i>General Standing Orders</i> .   |
| 1803      | Settlement established in Van Diemen's Land, near Hobart.<br>First issue of <i>Sydney Gazette</i> (1803–42).   |
| 1813      | First European crossing of Blue Mountains, west of Sydney.   |
| 1816      | First issue of <i>Hobart Town Gazette</i> .  |
| 1819      | Barron Field, <i>First Fruits of Australian Poetry</i> .   |

# CHRONOLOGY

- 1821 First locally produced periodical, the *Australian Magazine* (1821–22).
- 1824 Penal settlement established at Moreton Bay.
- 1826 Establishment of Australian Subscription Library in Sydney.  
Charles Tompson, *Wild Notes from the Lyre of a Native Minstrel*.
- 1827 Establishment of Hobart Town Mechanics' Institute.
- 1829 Establishment of Swan River Colony in Western Australia.  
Henry Savery, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land*.
- 1830–31 Henry Savery, *Quintus Servinton*.
- 1831 First issue of *Sydney Herald* (still publishing, as *Sydney Morning Herald*).
- 1833 First settlers arrive in Port Phillip district, later Victoria.  
Charles Sturt, *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia*.
- 1836 South Australia established as a colony of free settlers.  
George Bennett, *Wanderings in New South Wales*.
- 1838 Anna Maria Bunn, *The Guardian*.  
T.L. Mitchell, *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia*.
- 1840 Transportation of convicts to NSW ceases.  
First issue of *Port Phillip Herald* (still publishing as *Herald-Sun News*).
- 1841 Charlotte Barton, *A Mother's Offering to Her Children*.
- 1843 Charles Rowcroft, *Tales of the Colonies*.
- 1844 Louisa Ann Meredith, *Notes and Sketches of New South Wales*.  
Edward Geoghegan, *The Currency Lass*.
- 1845 Charles Harpur, *Thoughts: a Series of Sonnets*.  
Thomas McCombie, *Arabin, or the Adventures of a Colonist in New South Wales*.  
Mary Vidal, *Tales for the Bush*.
- 1846 *Moreton Bay Courier* established (still publishing as *Courier-Mail*, Brisbane).
- 1847 Alexander Harris, *Settlers and Convicts*.
- 1849 Alexander Harris, *The Emigrant Family*.
- 1850 First convicts sent to Western Australia.  
University of Sydney established.
- 1851 Colony of Victoria gains independence from NSW.  
Gold discovered in NSW and Victoria.
- 1852 First mail steamer arrives in Sydney from England.  
G.C. Mundy, *Our Antipodes*.

# CHRONOLOGY

- 1853 Last convicts arrive in Van Diemen's Land.  
Charles Harpur, *The Bushrangers and other poems*.
- 1854 Eureka Stockade, unsuccessful rebellion of miners at Ballarat, Victoria.  
*The Age* established (Melbourne, still publishing).  
Catherine Helen Spence, *Clara Morison*.
- 1855 *Melbourne Punch* established (1855–1929).  
Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*.  
William Howitt, *Land, Labour and Gold*.
- 1856 Van Diemen's Land renamed Tasmania.
- 1858 *South Australian Advertiser* established (still publishing).
- 1859 Queensland becomes a separate colony.  
Henry Kingsley, *The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn*.  
Caroline Leakey, *The Broad Arrow*.
- 1863 Northern Territory separated from NSW.
- 1865 First issue of *Australian Journal* (1865–1962).
- 1866 G.B. Barton, *Literature in New South Wales*.
- 1867 Gold rushes begin in Queensland.
- 1868 Cessation of convict transportation to Western Australia.
- 1869 Henry Kendall, *Leaves from Australian Forests*.
- 1870 Adam Lindsay Gordon, *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*.
- 1873 Garnet Walch, *Australia Felix*.
- 1874 Marcus Clarke, *His Natural Life*.
- 1876 First issue of the *Melbourne Review* (1876–85).
- 1880 Bushranger Ned Kelly captured and hanged in Melbourne.  
*Bulletin* established (Sydney, still publishing).  
Henry Kendall, *Songs from the Mountains*.  
Rosa Praed, *An Australian Heroine*.
- 1881 Rosa Praed, *Policy and Passion*.
- 1883 First regular train service between Sydney and Melbourne.  
George Darrell, *The Sunny South*.
- 1886 Francis Adams, *Australian Essays*.  
Fergus Hume, *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*.
- 1887 Ada Cambridge, *Unspoken Thoughts*.
- 1888 First issue of *The Dawn: A Journal for Australian Women* (1888–1905).  
Rolf Boldrewood, *Robbery Under Arms*.
- 1889 Jessie Couvreur ("Tasma"), *Uncle Piper of Piper's Hill*.  
Ernest Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*.
- 1890 Ada Cambridge, *A Marked Man*.  
Catherine Martin, *An Australian Girl*.

# CHRONOLOGY

- 1891 Major shearers' strikes in Queensland, in January and June.  
Ada Cambridge, *The Three Miss Kings*.
- 1892 Gold discovered in Western Australia.  
William Lane, *The Workingman's Paradise*.  
Price Warung, *Tales of the Convict System*.
- 1893 Major depression and drought.  
Francis Adams, *The Australians*.
- 1894 Women's suffrage attained in South Australia.  
Henry Lawson, *Short Stories in Prose and Verse*.  
Ethel Turner, *Seven Little Australians*.
- 1895 Angus & Robertson publishes A.B. Paterson's *The Man from Snowy River* (10,000 copies sold in first year).
- 1896 First film made in Australia.  
Henry Lawson, *While the Billy Boils*.
- 1898 David Carnegie, *Spinifex and Sand*.  
H.G. Turner and Alexander Sutherland, *The Development of Australian Literature*.
- 1899 Steele Rudd, *On Our Selection*.
- 1901 Australia becomes a federation and first Commonwealth Parliament opened.  
Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career*.  
Henry Lawson, *Joe Wilson and His Mates*.
- 1902 Barbara Baynton, *Bush Studies*.
- 1903 Joseph Furphy, *Such is Life*.
- 1905 A.B. Paterson, ed., *Old Bush Songs*.
- 1906 British New Guinea becomes a territory of the Commonwealth.
- 1908 Commonwealth Literary Fund established.  
E.J. Banfield, *Confessions of a Beachcomber*.  
Jeannie Gunn, *We of the Never Never*.  
Henry Handel Richardson, *Maurice Guest*.
- 1910 Charles Bean, *On the Wool Track*.  
Mary Grant Bruce, *A Little Bush Maid*.  
Mary Gilmore, *Marri'd*.  
Henry Handel Richardson, *The Getting of Wisdom*.
- 1911 Louis Stone, *Jonah*.
- 1912 Louis Esson, *The Time is Not Yet Ripe*.  
Bernard O'Dowd, *The Bush*.
- 1913 Christopher Brennan, *Poems*.
- 1915 Allied landing at Gallipoli in Turkey on 25 April, later commemorated as Anzac Day.

# CHRONOLOGY

- 1918 C.J. Dennis, *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke*.  
 May Gibbs, *Snugglypot and Cuddlepipie*.  
 Mary Gilmore, *The Passionate Heart*.  
 Norman Lindsay, *The Magic Pudding*.
- 1919 John Shaw Neilson, *Heart of Spring*.
- 1920 Establishment of QANTAS (Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services).
- 1923 Opening of first public radio station in Sydney.  
 D.H. Lawrence, *Kangaroo*.
- 1925 Mary Gilmore, *The Tilted Cart*.
- 1926 K.S. Prichard, *Working Bullocks*.
- 1928 Martin Boyd, *The Montforts*.  
 Miles Franklin, *Up the Country*.
- 1929 M. Barnard Eldershaw, *A House is Built*.  
 K.S. Prichard, *Coonardoo*.  
 David Unaipon, *Native Legends*.
- 1930 Norman Lindsay, *Redheap*.  
 Vance Palmer, *The Passage*.  
 Henry Handel Richardson, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*.
- 1931 Ion Idriess, *Lasseter's Last Ride*.
- 1932 ABC established as national broadcaster.  
 Official opening of Sydney Harbour Bridge.  
 Kenneth Slessor, *Cuckooz Country*.
- 1934 Eleanor Dark, *Prelude to Christopher*.  
 Brian Penton, *Landtakers*.  
 Christina Stead, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*.
- 1936 Dymphna Cusack, *Jungfrau*.  
 Jean Devanny, *Sugar Heaven*.  
 Kenneth Mackenzie, *The Young Desire It*.
- 1937 K.S. Prichard, *Intimate Strangers*.
- 1938 Sesquicentenary celebrations: Aborigines' Progressive Association declares 26 January a "day of mourning".  
 Xavier Herbert's *Capricornia* wins Sesquicentenary Prize for Fiction.
- 1939 Expansion of Commonwealth Literary Fund.  
 First issue of *Southerly*.  
 Kenneth Slessor, *Five Bells*.  
 Patrick White, *Happy Valley*.
- 1940 First issue of *Meanjin*.  
 Christina Stead, *The Man Who Loved Children*.
- 1941 Eleanor Dark, *The Timeless Land*.

- Kylie Tennant, *The Battlers*.
- 1942 Japan bombs Darwin; Japanese submarines in Sydney Harbour.  
Gavin Casey, *It's Harder for Girls*.  
Eve Langley, *The Pea Pickers*.  
Douglas Stewart, *Ned Kelly*.
- 1943 Kylie Tennant, *Ride on Stranger*.
- 1944 Ern Malley hoax.  
Kenneth Slessor, *One Hundred Poems*.  
Christina Stead, *For Love Alone*.
- 1945 Australian Book Council formed in Sydney.
- 1946 Children's Book of the Year Award begins.  
Martin Boyd, *Lucinda Brayford*.  
Judith Wright, *The Moving Image*.
- 1947 European migration program begins.  
M. Barnard Eldershaw, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*.
- 1948 Francis Webb, *A Drum for Ben Boyd*.  
Patrick White, *The Aunt's Story*.
- 1949 Judith Wright, *Woman to Man*.
- 1950 Menzies' government introduces Communist Party Dis-  
solution Bill.  
Frank Hardy, *Power Without Glory*.  
Nevil Shute, *A Town Like Alice*.
- 1951 Dymphna Cusack and Florence James, *Come in Spinner*.  
Martin Boyd, *The Cardboard Crown*.
- 1952 Judah Waten, *Alien Son*.
- 1954 Establishment of Elizabethan Theatre Trust.  
*Overland*, incorporating *Realist Writer*, begins publication.  
Mary Gilmore, *Fourteen Men*.  
Vance Palmer, *The Legend of the Nineties*.
- 1955 First full-year university course in Australian Literature (at  
Canberra University College).  
A.D. Hope, *The Wandering Islands*.  
Ray Lawler, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*.  
Patrick White, *The Tree of Man*.
- 1956 Olympic Games held in Melbourne.  
Regular television transmission commences in Australia.  
First issues of *Quadrant* and *Westerly*.  
Ethel Anderson, *At Parramatta*.
- 1957 Patrick White's *Voss* wins first Miles Franklin Award.
- 1958 National Institute of Dramatic Art established.

- Elizabeth Harrower, *The Long Prospect*.  
 Randolph Stow, *To the Islands*.
- 1959 R.D. FitzGerald, *The Wind at Your Door*.  
 Dorothy Hewett, *Bobbie Up*.
- 1960 First Adelaide Festival of the Arts held.  
 Alan Seymour, *The One Day of the Year*.
- 1961 H.M. Green, *A History of Australian Literature*.  
 Patrick White, *Riders in the Chariot*.
- 1962 First chair of Australian Literature established at University  
 of Sydney.  
 Thea Astley, *The Well Dressed Explorer*.  
 Hal Porter, *A Bachelor's Children*.
- 1963 Establishment of Australian Society of Authors.  
 First issue of *Australian Literary Studies*.  
 Hal Porter, *The Watcher on the Cast-Iron Balcony*.  
 Randolph Stow, *Tourmaline*.
- 1964 Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country*.  
 George Johnston, *My Brother Jack*.  
 Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker), *We Are Going*.
- 1965 Australian troops sent to Vietnam.  
 Mudrooroo (Colin Johnson), *Wild Cat Falling*.  
 Patrick White, *Four Plays*.  
 Judith Wright, *Preoccupations in Australian Poetry*.
- 1966 Introduction of decimal currency.  
 Elizabeth Harrower, *The Watch Tower*.  
 A.D. Hope, *Collected Poems 1930-65*.
- 1967 Referendum allows Aboriginal Australians to be recognised as  
 Australian citizens.
- 1968 Establishment of Australia Council for the Arts.  
 Alex Buzo, *Norm and Ahmed*.  
 Joan Lindsay, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*.
- 1969 Women granted equal pay for work of equal value.  
 Bruce Beaver, *Letters to Live Poets*.  
 James McAuley, *Surprises of the Sun*.  
 Les Murray, *The Weatherboard Cathedral*.  
 Francis Webb, *Collected Poems*.
- 1970 Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch*.  
 Patrick White, *The Vivisector*.
- 1971 Bruce Dawe, *Condolences of the Season*.  
 David Ireland, *The Unknown Industrial Prisoner*.  
 James McAuley, *Collected Poems*.

# CHRONOLOGY

- David Williamson, *The Removalists*.
- 1972 Australian Labor Party wins government and withdraws troops from Vietnam.  
Aborigines set up "tent embassy" at Parliament House, Canberra.  
Thea Astley, *The Acolyte*.  
Dorothy Hewett, *The Chapel Perilous*.  
Jack Hibberd, *A Stretch of the Imagination*.  
Thomas Keneally, *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*.  
Frank Moorhouse, *The Americans, Baby*.
- 1973 Sydney Opera House opened.  
Patrick White wins the Nobel Prize for Literature.  
Rosemary Dobson, *Selected Poems*.  
Patrick White, *The Eye of the Storm*.
- 1974 End of the "White Australia" policy, which restricted immigration of non-Europeans.  
Thea Astley, *A Kindness Cup*.  
Peter Carey, *The Fat Man in History*.  
Les Murray, *Lunch and Counter Lunch*.
- 1975 Dismissal of Whitlam government by Governor-General.  
Gwen Harwood, *Selected Poems*.  
Xavier Herbert, *Poor Fellow My Country*.  
David Malouf, *Johnno*.
- 1976 Vincent Buckley, *Golden Builders*.  
Robert Drewe, *The Savage Crows*.  
Les Murray, *Selected Poems*.  
Patrick White, *A Fringe of Leaves*.
- 1977 Foundation of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature.  
Robert Adamson, *Selected Poems*.  
Helen Garner, *Monkey Grip*.  
Kevin Gilbert, *Living Black*.
- 1978 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras established.  
Jessica Anderson, *Tirra Lirra by the River*.  
Bruce Dawe, *Sometimes Gladness*.  
Christopher Koch, *The Year of Living Dangerously*.  
David Malouf, *An Imaginary Life*.
- 1979 Bruce Beaver, *Selected Poems*.  
Randolph Stow, *Visitants*.  
Patrick White, *The Twyborn Affair*.
- 1980 Murray Bail, *Homesickness*.

- Robyn Davidson, *Tracks*.  
 Barbara Hanrahan, *The Frangipani Gardens*.  
 Shirley Hazzard, *The Transit of Venus*.  
 Les Murray, *The Boys Who Stole the Funeral*.
- 1981 Vincent Buckley, *Selected Poems*.  
 Albert Facey, *A Fortunate Life*.  
 David Foster, *Moonlite*.  
 Patrick White, *Flaws in the Glass*.
- 1982 Thomas Keneally, *Schindler's Ark*.  
 Olga Masters, *The Home Girls*.  
 Les Murray, *The Vernacular Republic*.  
 John Tranter, *Selected Poems*.
- 1983 Election of Bob Hawke's Labor government.  
 Beverley Farmer, *Milk*.  
 Elizabeth Jolley, *Miss Peabody's Inheritance*.  
 Mudrooroo, *Doctor Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*.  
 Les Murray, *The People's Otherworld*.
- 1984 Rosa Cappiello, *Oh Lucky Country*.  
 Rosemary Dobson, *The Three Fates and other poems*.  
 Helen Garner, *The Children's Bach*.
- 1985 Peter Carey, *Illywhacker*.  
 Jack Davis, *No Sugar*.  
 Kate Grenville, *Lilian's Story*.  
 Janette Turner Hospital, *Borderline*.  
 Louis Nowra, *The Golden Age*.
- 1986 Michael Gow, *Away*.  
 Elizabeth Jolley, *The Well*.  
 Christina Stead, *I'm Dying Laughing*.
- 1987 Thea Astley, *It's Raining in Mango*.  
 Laurie Duggan, *The Ash Range*.  
 Sally Morgan, *My Place*.  
 Gerald Murnane, *Landscape with Landscape*.
- 1988 Bicentenary celebration accompanied by strong Aboriginal protests.  
 Peter Carey, *Oscar and Lucinda*.  
 John Forbes, *The Stunned Mullet*.  
 Ruby Langford Ginibi, *Don't Take Your Love to Town*.  
 Tim Winton, *In the Winter Dark*.
- 1989 Robert Adamson, *The Clean Dark*.  
 Mary Fallon, *Working Hot*.