

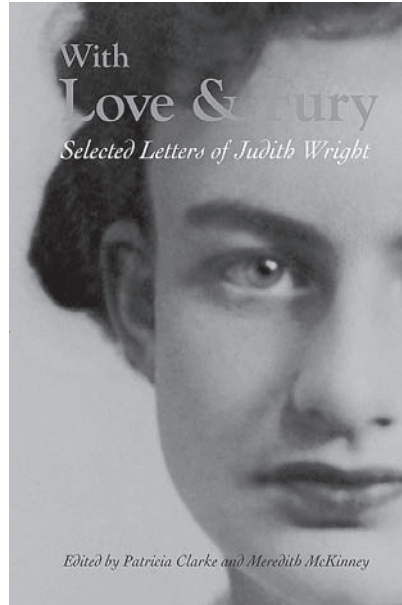
## With Love & Fury: Selected Letters of Judith Wright

For Judith Wright, letter-writing was essentially a practical activity, a matter for the daylight hours. Early mornings, or late at night after the family had gone to bed, were the times for poetry and private intensities, but sometimes for hours during the day the typewriter would be thundering away in the study while the correspondence got dealt with. In these letters, she seldom practised 'the art of writing'—they are certainly a writer's letters, with a keen sense of language and rhythm, but they are almost never 'writerly' in a self-conscious way. Rather, their tone captures the mixture of wry humour, warm engagement and, increasingly as the years passed, passionate indignation that was her daytime self in conversation with the world. The confessional was never her style, but there is a delightful intellectual warmth in these letters that engages the reader quite as strongly as would a more intimate exposure of private feelings and self-searchings.

The voice we hear in her first adult letters, written offering a sample of her poems to *Meanjin* in the mid-1940s, is already becoming a confident one, and that confidence grows at an astonishing pace once Judith moved to Queensland in 1945. The letters of the following decades give a vivid and multidimensional portrait—Judith the writer, intent on her craft and surprised by fame, as well as the private person, the mother, wife and friend, and, increasingly as the decades passed, the passionate environmental and Indigenous rights activist.

Much debate has surrounded Judith Wright's shift from poet to environmental and, later, Indigenous rights activist. Those who admire her for her poetry often lament the waste of her talents that they perceive as resulting from the decision to devote herself to activist causes. Those who honour her for the pioneering and deeply influential role she played in the battles for environmental protection and Indigenous rights are apt to quote her own later opinion, that activism is of more use to the world than poetry. Matters were never quite so simple for Judith herself, of course. Importantly, these letters trace a more complex version of the story.

The letters make clear that, as Judith moved into middle age, poetry was tending to become elusive for her. The increasing periods of poetic silence certainly concerned and saddened her, much as she chose to make relatively light of the problem in letters. The decision to direct her energies into new and different channels would hardly have been a conscious response to this

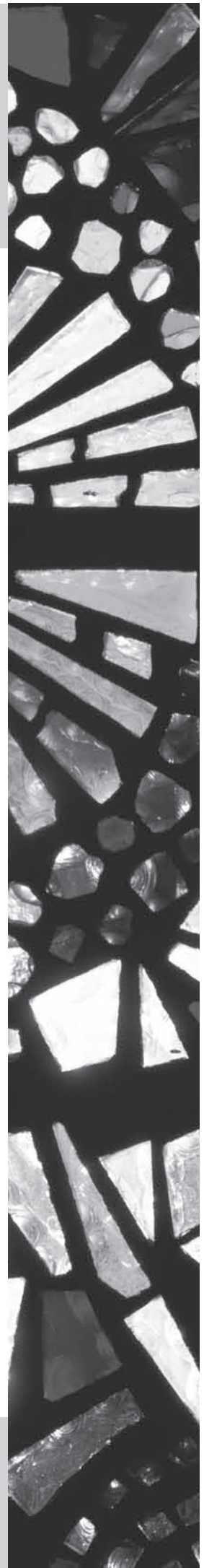


situation, but the connection is not difficult to make in retrospect, and she herself made it on a number of later occasions when she spoke of having mutually parted ways with poetry.

But the break with poetry, the refocusing of energy, was never as clear-cut or complete as such an overview suggests. In fact, the busy years of active engagement with conservation and the Aboriginal treaty movement produced five more volumes of poetry, much of it ranking with her earlier work, culminating in the late volume *Phantom Dwelling* (1985), whose subtle and masterful poems of old age explore a radically new poetic terrain. Elusive as the muse became with increasing age, it never forsook her, nor she it, as these letters make abundantly clear.

For all the rich variety of selves that evolved through her long life, the reader is nevertheless aware of strong continuities that bind the correspondence into a single whole. Judith's first surviving letter, written as a girl of 10, is already vibrant with both the pleasure in language and the intense responsiveness to the natural world that formed the core of her being and dictated the directions of her life. Above all, as we read we are constantly aware of Judith's deep engagement with life, and of her love of the world (and of friends) and the fine fury that led her to battle so courageously on the world's behalf—those two sides of the single passion that shaped both her poetry and her life.

**Meredith McKinney**



# BOOKSHOP BESTSELLERS

## Fiction

1. *Murder in the Dark* by Kerry Greenwood
2. *The Secret River* by Kate Grenville
3. *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai
4. *March* by Geraldine Brooks
5. *The Apricot Colonel* by Marion Halligan

## Non-Fiction

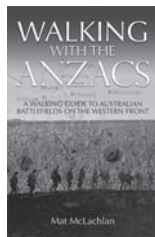
1. *The Diaries of Donald Friend Volume 4* edited by Paul Hetherington
2. *The Genius of Donald Friend* by Lou Klepac
3. *The Diaries of Donald Friend Volume 1* edited by Anne Gray
4. *The Diaries of Donald Friend Volume 3* edited by Paul Hetherington
5. *The Diaries of Donald Friend Volume 2* edited by Paul Hetherington

## Children's Books

1. *Hello Dudley* by Sam Lloyd
2. *Bugs and Beasts 1 2 3* by Irma Gold
3. *The Monster Who Ate Canberra* by Michael Salmon
4. *Australian Backyard Astronomy* by Ragbir Bhathal and Jenny Bhathal
5. *Bugs and Beasts A B C* by Irma Gold

## A Time to Remember

April 25 was once the day that our nation stopped to remember those who fought in World War I. Now it also includes recognition of those who continue to represent their country in other theatres of war. Each year a number of books are published which commemorate Australians at War.



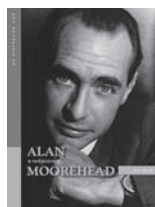
Matt Lachlan's *Walking With the Anzacs* is the new essential companion for Australian's visiting the Western Front. The book contains 14 walking tours of Australia's most important battlefields and includes descriptions of those campaigns. The tours focus on the human element of the battle and are written for the visitor with limited military knowledge.

***Walking With the Anzacs* by Matt Lachlan, Headline, RRP \$40.00**



In 1916 Sydney Loch, a young soldier, kept a journal of his experience on the battlefields of Gallipoli. On his return, his first novel *The Straits Impregnable* enjoyed huge literary acclaim before being withdrawn from sale by censors due to it being labelled as 'true'. In *To Hell and Back* historians Susanna and Jake de Vries have edited Loch's book and included a biography of his remarkable life.

***To Hell and Back* by Susanna De Vries, Harper Collins, RRP \$32.99 due April**



Alan Moorehead's classic historical narrative *Gallipoli* has been reissued by Aurum after many years out of print. Moorehead's personal papers which are held in the National Library's Manuscript Collection have been used by Ann Moyal to produce *Alan Moorehead: A Rediscovery*, published as part of the Library's Australian Life Series.

***Gallipoli* by Alan Moorehead, Aurum, RRP \$22.95**  
***Alan Moorehead: A Rediscovery* by Ann Moyal, National Library of Australia, RRP \$24.95**

## What I'm Reading



**Paul Livingston**  
**Senior Reference Librarian**  
**National Library of Australia**

'I wish I had your job, just sitting around reading books all day.' You'd be surprised how often I hear that. If only it were true. I do get to dip into many books and journals in the course of the day, but it is all part of my job answering reference enquiries.

Reading for pleasure is another thing. My passion is photography and most of my reading of late has been journals on technique and photo manipulation. Also, I've been reading works about photographer, Henri Cartier-Bresson.

I've just re-read Tony Buzan's *Use Your Head* and Tony & Barry Buzan's *The Mind Map Book* in preparation for some study I'll be doing. Recent purchases for my current reading include *Susan Sontag on Photography, Classic Essays on Photography, Modern Criticism and Theory, The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, and *Critical Theory Since Plato*.

One does need to escape from reality now and again and I admit I usually work through all of a single author's work. Dan Brown provided some escape with his *Angels and Demons* and *Digital Fortress*, as good if not better than the *The Da Vinci Code*. Bryce Courtney has also provided me with hours of escapism from the stress of the day—*Brother Fish* and *Sylvia* are waiting in the wings to be read. *April Fool's Day* was too real, sensitive and personal, and was one of the few books I could not finish.

My all-time favourite escape writer is the British steeplechase jockey, and newspaper journalist, Dick Francis. For the past 15 years I have found his latest offering under the Christmas tree. Never a disappointment, his works unfortunately are short, and the time between books is too long.

Sitting by my bedside awaiting consumption are Geoffrey Blainey's *A Very Short History Of the World* and Paul Davies' *God and the New Physics*.

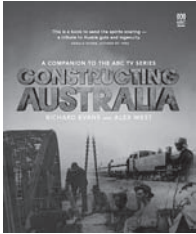
'Grandpa read this one', three-year-old Isabel says as she and her brother Ronin curl up on my lap. I always have time to read to the children. She hands me one of Jeannie Baker's collage books. We never tire of reading these and admiring the exquisite illustrations and text.

## BECOME A FRIEND



Become a Friend of the National Library of Australia and enjoy exclusive behind-the-scenes visits, discover collections that reveal our unique heritage, and experience one of the world's great libraries. Friends receive a 15% discount on all purchases at the National Library Bookshop. For information visit [www.nla.gov.au/friends](http://www.nla.gov.au/friends) or phone (02) 6262 1551.

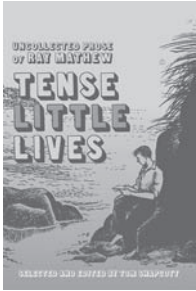
## What's New on the Shelves



### Constructing Australia

Due to be released to coincide with the ABC's mini-series, *Constructing a Nation* tells how three of Australia's greatest icons were built. These are the dramatic stories of political turmoil, private tragedy, and conflict that lie at the heart of the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Perth-Kalgoorlie Pipeline, and the Overland Telegraph. Richard Evans and Alex West have collaborated to produce this revealing portrait of Australian history.

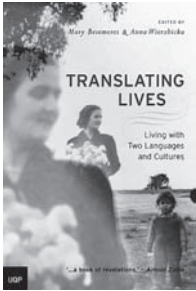
**Constructing Australia** by Richard Evans and Alex West, The Miegunyah Press, RRP \$34.95



### Tense Little Lives: Uncollected Prose of Ray Mathew

In the 1950s Ray Mathew was a young Australian writer with outstanding gifts. He left Australia in 1960, never to return. Yet he continued to write until his death in New York in 2003. The National Library of Australia's collections contain unpublished manuscripts from which Tom Shapcott has selected and introduced nine short stories and three chapters from the unpublished novel, 'The Making of Andrew'. These works demonstrate that Mathew's continued to exercise his strength as a gifted writer.

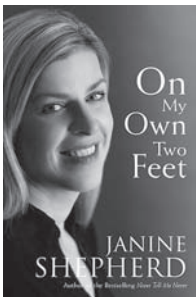
**Tense Little Lives: Uncollected Prose of Ray Mathew** selected and edited by Tom Shapcott, National Library of Australia, RRP \$29.95, due April 2007



### Translating Lives

*Translating Lives* gives an extraordinary insight into what it means to be living in two cultures in multicultural Australia. Within these pages are the personal and compelling stories of 12 Australians for whom English is their second language. Coming from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, the contributors include award-winning writers Eva Sallis and Kim Scott. For those seeking a deeper understanding of the complexities of Australia's multiculturalism, or anyone interested in the emotional journeys of people immigrating to new lands, *Translating Lives* offers some moving stories.

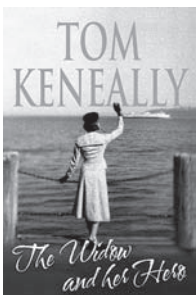
**Translating Lives: Living with Two Languages and Cultures** edited by Mary Besemer and Anna Wierzbicka, University of Queensland Press, RRP \$32.95, due April 2007.



### On My Own Two Feet

Many people will remember Janine Shepherd's amazing story of recovery from her best selling memoirs *Never Tell Me Never* and *Dare to Fly*. Shepherd's latest book sees her and her family relocate to the Southern Highlands where she discovers her passion for horseriding. At the point when she looks like being selected for the Paralympic Equestrian Team to compete in Athens, her husband becomes seriously ill and her long-held dream of country life begins to crumble. Janine Shepherd's new memoir *On My Own Two Feet* is a surprising and touching story, written with her characteristic warmth, integrity and humour.

**On My Own Two Feet** by Janine Shepherd, Random House Australia, RRP \$34.95



### The Widow and her Hero

Tom Keneally fans will be delighted to hear that his latest book is due for release in March. *The Widow and Her Hero* is the story of Grace, a young woman in love and living in a country at war during WWII. Her hero is the genial and handsome Captain Leo Waterhouse. Like so many Australians at this time these young lovers are well aware of the inevitable costs of war. Leo fails to return from his commando mission and 60 years on Grace is still haunted by the tragedy of her loss. The real story of Leo's ill-fated mission is yet to be explained. A captivating and intriguing story from this popular Australian author.

**The Widow and Her Hero** by Tom Keneally, Doubleday Australia, RRP \$49.95.

## LATEST NEWS

### 8th Annual Manning Clark Lecture:

**Barry Jones AO**

**Presented by Manning Clark House**

Barry Jones has been a teacher, TV and radio performer, university lecturer, lawyer and politician—a life reflected in his recent memoir, *A Thinking Reed*.

**Thursday 1 March, 6 pm, Theatre**

**Cost: \$20; Manning Clark House**

**members \$10**

**Bookings and payments through**

**Manning Clark House: (02) 6295 1808**

### Judith Wright: A Conversation

Meredith McKinney, Patricia Clarke and Veronica Brady discuss the life, letters and poetry of Judith Wright with Paul Hetherington, Director, Publications and Events.

**Book signing to follow the event.**

**Sunday 4 March, 2 pm Theatre, free**

**Bookings: (02) 6262 1271**

### Friends Book Club

Join the Friends Book Club for a monthly literary discussion. This is a free event but attendees must be financial members of the Friends of the NLA. The book for discussion is David Malouf's *Every Move You Make*.

**Tuesday 27 March, 7 – 8.30 pm**

**Friends Lounge, Friends only**

**Bookings essential: (02) 6262 1551**

### The Journalist, The Dealer, The Scholar and Patrick White

David Marr, 'The Journalist', Nicholas Pounder, 'The Dealer' and Professor Elizabeth Webby, 'The Scholar', share personal recollections and responses to the discovery of Patrick White's literary archive. Chaired by Marie-Louise Ayres, Curator of Manuscripts. Selected items from the Patrick White Collection will be on display during the day.

**Friday 30 March, Collection viewing**

**10 am – 4 pm Lower Ground Floor 1, free**

**Seminar 3.30 – 5.00 pm**

**Theatre, free**

**Bookings essential: (02) 6262 1271**

## SPECIAL OFFER

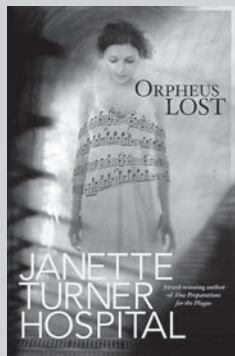


Come into the bookshop during April and purchase one of the selected titles in the **Australian Women's Weekly Cookbook\*** range and you will receive a fashionable **AWW Book Bag FREE**.

\*selected titles only and only while stocks last.

## GIFTS IDEAS FOR MUM

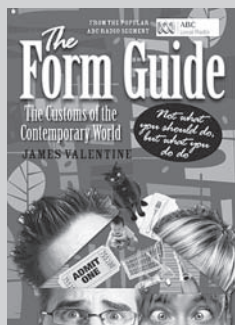
If you are looking for the perfect gift for Mother's Day on Sunday 13 May, the National Library Bookshop has a large range of uniquely Australian books and gifts. Due for release in May is a new book by award-winning author Janet Turner Hospital. *Orpheus Lost* is a compelling re-imagining of the ancient myth where Orpheus travels to the underworld to rescue his lover Eurydice from death. Mathematical genius, Leela escapes her hometown to study in Boston where she meets an Australian musician, Mishka. The two become lovers, but when Leela is taken in and interrogated over an underground explosion she is led to understand that Mishka may not be all that he seems. As Leela struggles to



digest this, Mishka disappears... a gripping new work from the highly acclaimed author of *Due Preparations for the Plague*. ***Orpheus Lost* by Janet Turner Hospital, Fourth Estate, RRP \$32.99**

### Quirky hints on how to behave in the Contemporary World

For a decade, James Valentine has conducted a forum 'The Form Guide' on his weekly ABC radio program. People call in seeking advice on sticky social problems, they present their dilemma and then other listeners call in with solutions. *The Form Guide* is not a rule book, it's a guide book. It's a very funny book about what we



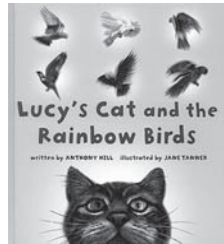
do, which is not always what we should do, in some of those more interesting social situations.

***The Form Guide* by James Valentine, ABC Books, RRP \$22.95**



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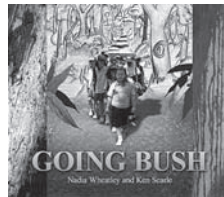
## FOR THE BOOKWORMS



### Lucy's Cat and the Rainbow Birds

In Lucy's garden is a very tall tree filled with beautiful rainbow birds. When Lucy goes into the garden to feed the birds she finds her tabby cat Artemis there ready to pounce. Lucy works out a plan to stop Artemis chasing the birds so that they can live together in peace, but the skilful and cunning Artemis has different ideas. *Lucy's Cat and the Rainbow Birds* is filled with gorgeous colour illustrations by Jane Tanner and accompanied by an entertaining read-aloud text by Anthony Hill, which combine to create a delightful children's picture book for ages 3-6.

***Lucy's Cat and the Rainbow Birds* written by Anthony Hill and illustrated by Jane Tanner, Viking, RRP \$26.95**

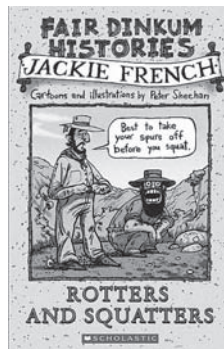


### Going Bush

In 2005 author Nadia Wheatley and artist Ken Searle developed a Harmony Project with students from Infants and Primary schools in south-west Sydney. The children were encouraged to explore their local environment and work collaboratively on art and writing. Here, they discovered and experienced the harmony

of the natural environment while learning about the relationship between the traditional owners and the land. *Going Bush* showcases some of the students' illustrations and writing, linked together with art and design by Ken Searle and a narrative by Nadia Wheatley.

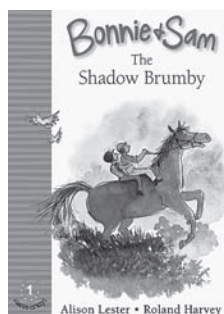
***Going Bush* by Nadia Wheatley and Ken Searle, Allen & Unwin, RRP \$29.95**



### Rotters and Squatters

*Rotters and Squatters* charts the years 1820-1850 which sees the transition from penal settlement to sustainable 'free' colonies in early Australia. Beginning with the arrival of Governor Brisbane and the implementation of the Bigge Report and ending in the year before the start of the Gold Rush, volume three in the Fair Dinkum Histories series brings new life to this period in Australian history. Award-winning Australian author Jackie French and illustrator Peter Sheehan team together once more to educate and entertain children 8 years and over with loads of fascinating Aussie facts.

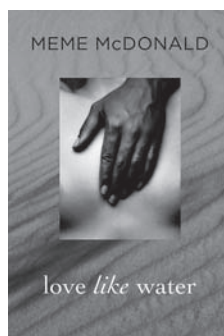
***Fair Dinkum Histories: Rotters and Squatters* by Jackie French and Peter Sheehan, Scholastic Press, RRP \$14.99**



### Bonnie and Sam 1: The Shadow Brumby

The first in a new series of chapter books for younger readers, *The Shadow Brumby*, is a story of friendship, horses and adventure in an Australian country town. Bonnie and Sam are best friends who love horses. The girls listen to and intuitively understand the horses and always know when they need a hug or something to eat. Providing great entertainment for 6-9 year olds, much loved author and illustrator Alison Lester and Roland Harvey team together to produce the first instalment in what promises to be an exciting new series.

***Bonnie and Sam 1: The Shadow Brumby* by Alison Lester and Roland Harvey, Allen & Unwin, RRP \$12.95**



### Love Like Water

Three young lives intersect in this new book by highly regarded Australian author Meme McDonald. Cathy arrives in Alice Springs from the cattle country, looking for a new life. Jay is working for the local radio station, far from his own saltwater people and is wary of this no-water country. Margie is a wild city girl, up for a good time and confronted by a world she's never known. Set in the heart of Australia *Love Like Water* is a bold and confronting book about friendship, love, sex and identity. In the arid desert landscape of Alice Springs black and white, bush and city collide and nobody remains unchanged.

***Love Like Water* by Meme McDonald, Allen & Unwin, RRP \$19.95**