



Words Out West

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Newsletter of the Central West Writers' Centre

July 2007

Central West Writers' Centre update

The Central West Writers' Centre is dedicated to fostering the creative development of writers in our region and promoting all aspects of reading and writing through an exciting partnership with Central West Libraries.

Coordinators from Writing Centres around the State attended the recent **LitLink Conference** held in Sydney and discussed opportunities to work together to promote reading and writing as well as community partnerships and issues such as funding. LitLink's nine writers' centres serve more than 5,500 members.

The Central West Writers Centre is located upstairs at the Orange City Library, Byng Street, Orange. Please phone 6393 8125 to make an appointment. Check out our **website blog** for the latest news at www.wordsoutwest.com.au.

Greetings

The temperatures are cool outside with the region experiencing the coldest winter weather in years but things are heating up on the writing front.

We have had a busy time with a number of book launches and author talks in the region and more coming up with Michael Caulfield's launch for *The Vietnam Years*.

There will also be Children's Book Week celebrations, Simultaneous Storytime, Jane Austen Book Club, the Pageturners book discussion group continues, a Radio Plays project to go to air and lots more.

Congratulations and a round of applause please for **winner of our Banjo Paterson Writing Awards** (see inside for details).

Jasmine Vidler
Reading and Writing
Coordinator incorporating
Central West Writers' Centre

News and Regional Events

Banjo Paterson Writing Awards Winners Announced

Writing competition entries usually reflect the social issues of the times and this year's Banjo Paterson Writing Award entries certainly mirrored community concerns. Central West Libraries Manager Jan Richards said the environment, Iraq, war veterans and the drought emerged as constant themes in the poetry and prose sections. Entries were received in the Open Poetry Section with topics ranging from the alphabet to farming, war memories and fossil fuels," Ms Richards said. "The Adult Bush Poetry entries featured pioneering women to rivers, drovers, Kelpies, outdoor dunnies and the drought; and surprisingly Iraq. War veterans, futility of war, relationships and mental illness were just some of the themes explored in the Adult Prose section," she said.

The annual Banjo Paterson Awards honour Banjo Paterson, a great Australian writer and favourite son of Orange, with a competition fostering prose or poetry writing with Australian content. The writing styles do not have to be in the same "bush" style as Banjo. Ms Richards congratulated all the entrants and said she was pleased to announce the following winners:

- Prose Joanne Riccioni, of Collaroy, "*Mrs Taylor Gets a Tattoo*" (Prize \$1,000)
 Frank Leggett, of Middle Cove, "*Stanwell Park*" (\$400)
 Helen Iles, Oldbury WA, "*Cattle Dog*" (\$200)
- Open Poetry David Campbell, Beaumaris, "*Lifeblood*" (Prize \$1,000)
 Judy Johnson, Cardiff, "*Photography (Swimming at Dingo Creek, 1967)*"
 (\$400)
 Anne Bell, Gunnedah, "*Corrugated Iron*" (\$300)
- Bush Poetry Catherine Bennetts, King Creek, "*Old Murphy's Pub*" (Prize \$500)
 Ellis J Campbell, Dubbo, "*One Day at a Time*" (\$200)
 Ron Stevens, Dubbo, "*In and Out of Line*" (\$100)

Winning entries will be published on the Central West Libraries website www.cwl.nsw.nsw.gov.au.

Australian Writers and Poets

Family and friends of Orange historian, author and Orange City Councillor John Miller helped launch his latest book *Australia's Writers and Poets* last month with assistance from Angus and Robertson Bookshop. The book is part of Exisle Publishing's Little Red Books series aimed at educating people about the people, history and events that have made Australia. John Miller says the book, like the rest of the hardback series, is a quick and easy reference. Publisher of the series Gareth St John Thomas was impressed with Orange City Library and the welcome received for the book in Orange. He spoke highly of John Miller's ability to write clearly and concisely to meet their brief (maybe all that newspaper experience has paid off). Each chapter includes a breakout on one of the significant writers of each era, including Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker), Charles Harpur, Banjo Paterson, Henry Handel Richardson, Patrick White and Les Murray. The book sells for \$16.95. For more details about the book series go to the website www.littleredbooks.com.au Look out for upcoming editions including *The Ashes* and *Australian Disasters* both written by John Miller.

***Wild Ride: Rise and Fall of Cobb & Co* Book Launch**

More than 40 people attended the book launch of Sam Everingham's first book *Wild Ride: Rise and Fall of Cobb & Co* with most people interested in our coaching history. Sam presented an informative lecture about the history of Cobb & Co and talked about the comprehensive research spanning 8 years undertaken for his book. He talked with great affection about Frank Whitney and his wife Isabelle, who lived for a time in Orange and later Coombing Park at Carcoar, as well as the Rutherford family. He also spoke of the many adventures passengers had when travelling on the coaches. If the coach was bogged the mail would often be sent ahead because the mail contracts were more important than the passengers. Cobb & Co were also founding new routes beyond railways and roads so they often had to forge rivers and creeks and passengers would have to swim or be ferried across in a washtub attached by rope and sometimes the coaches were floated across on a barge. Sam also talked about the family secrets behind the Cobb & Co story. But also highlighted their business acumen and clever way they opened up pastoral settlement by linking in with existing railway routes. The launch was supported by Angus & Robertson and Penguin Australia.

Congratulations to local author Rhonda Scott

They say that many first novels are at least partly autobiographical and local author Rhonda Scott's book is no exception. Rhonda Scott visited Blayney Library to talk about the fact and fiction behind her book *The Wasted Years*. It is an epic story tracing the life of Jane Breckener from her Sydney childhood in the 1950s to her retirement from teaching at the beginning of this century. It deals with some of the major social changes of this period and explores themes of marriage, separation and love. The audience enjoyed Rhonda's talk about fact and fiction and experience of self-publishing. Rhonda talked about some of the incidents in the book which happened in real life. She also explained how she used to rise at 4am each day to write before going to school to teach. But she found herself preferring to work on her book and eventually resigned from teaching. The book was also her major work for her Masters of Arts Course in Creative Writing

"I found crafting this novel a fascinating process. The plot is totally fictitious, as are most of the characters and some aspects of the setting. But throughout the novel are elements from my life. It is as if I chose the ones I wanted to use, chopped them up, threw them in the blender, poured in a lot of imagination and mixed them all up," Rhonda said.

Orange welcomed the extraordinary Donna Carson

Anti-violence campaigner, advocate for victim's rights, educator and guardian angel for countless burns survivors and victims of domestic violence - Donna Carson is an inspiration. She talked about her passionate work in the community after a devastating and life-changing event which occurred on Good Friday 13 years ago. Donna has documented her experiences in a book titled *Judas Kisses* told with great empathy by her long time friend Debbie Ritchie. With assistance from Book City, Donna was able to visit Orange and launch her book before a crowd of community-minded people. Her horrifying ordeal has given her the determination to help others. Donna spoke candidly and amazingly with good humour about her experience.

There were questions about her views on the legal system, policing and domestic violence. Her view is that women's refuges should be made public as people don't know where they are and it would've helped her before her ordeal. She also said domestic violence was a community problem as it affected women, children and men. Her talk was timely as she believed a common sense approach was required for police to be able to act immediately if the family was at risk in order to prevent further incidents. Now this approach is being talked about by the Government.

Despite the seriousness of Donna's talk, her speech was peppered with amusing anecdotes such as after undergoing skin grafts for her face, where they took skin from her back and "bum" for her cheeks, she was getting ready to accept her Australia Day Award in front of a large audience: "John Howard gave me big hug and a kiss and I thought to myself - if only you knew where that part of my skin had come from!"

***Half a World Away* author Elisabeth Edwards talk at Cowra Library**

When the Half a World Away Migrant project began Migrant Story Workshops were held to help people put pen to paper to record their own stories. Then a significant exhibition – "Half a World Away Post War Migration to the Orange District 1948 – 1965" brought the **story of postwar European Migrants** who settled in the Orange district to life. Now Elisabeth Edwards uncovers migration stories of triumph and bravery in a book of the same name.

Lis interviewed many people, searched archives and newspaper reports to bring their memoirs to life. She spoke about her research and fascinating interviews with migrants – some who were reluctant to tell their stories and others who were bursting at the seams to share their experience. Many of the stories were quite emotional as they left behind their families to begin a new life in a country where they did not know the language or customs, were criticised for speaking in their own language and often given names like "Bill" and "Fred" because their own names were too difficult to pronounce. A lively discussion followed Lis' mention of the terrible food often served at the migrant camps including an incident where a baby was given liver and onions. The men often had to leave their families and live in tents (imagine winter time) - and could not bring their families to join them until they had a home. It was a tough second start in life. The author visit was a great insight into producing the book and inspiring for the Cowra History Group with their migrant stories project.

Pageturners Book Discussion Group talk about Kevin

The next Pageturners gathering will be held on **Wednesday, 8 August at 6.45pm** for a 7pm start at Orange City Library, Byng Street. New Pageturners are most welcome. The book for discussion is *We Need to Talk About Kevin* by Lionel Shriver (the female author with a man's name). This book is sure to generate some interesting discussion as the book explores topical themes.

Writing Your Life Workshop at Grenfell

Organiser Jenny Smith reported full attendance at the recent "Writing Your Life Workshop" with **Patti Miller** held at Grenfell as part of the **Henry Lawson Festival** and supported by the Central West Writers' Centre. The Grenfell Record newspaper published a report by participant Carly Brown about her experience in attending the workshop.

The workshop “encouraged everyone to believe they had a story to tell for reasons ranging from lineage through to healing, history and creativity. This workshop undoubtedly helped us to broaden our literary horizons and awaken new perspectives on the significance of sharing our life stories.” Carly also thought Patti was excellent in her ability to draw those hidden stories out of each of the participants. Everyone enjoyed the workshop describing it as stimulating, helpful and one person said “**fancy this happening in little old Grenfell**”. To find out more about Patti Miller visit her website www.lifestories.com.au

Upcoming Events

McKillop Book *Into the Golden West*

Author Robert McKillop visits Orange to talk about his book *Into the Golden West: the McKillops of Buddah 1782-1974* at the Orange City Library on **Thursday 5 July at 7pm**. This illustrated book tells the story of Scottish Highlanders who came to NSW in the 1830s. The focus is on the third son, Duncan, who arrived in the Bathurst district, soon after he married Ann McKay. The couple established the Bush Inn at Summerhill in 1842. The achievements of the McKillop family, including Mother Mary McKillop, are told using records handed down by the family and cover social, economic and environmental issues facing rural Australia. Rural journalist Neil Inall will introduce Robert for this unique farming and family history presentation. Everyone is welcome to attend, please RSVP by calling Orange City Library on 6393 8132.

Bathurst Writing Group Meeting and Self Publishing Talk

The next meeting of the Bathurst Writers’ Group will be on **7 July, 2pm at the Bathurst Library**. Please note the August meeting will be an upcoming **talk on self publishing on Saturday, 28 July, 2pm, Bathurst Library**. Judy Walker has put out her book *Warts and All* aimed at children with a learning disability. Martha Gelin is publishing her second edition sex education book for parents/professionals, titled *The Sex Explanation Handbook*. A new member, Steaphen Pirie, has three or so books already out including *Maya Sends Her Love*. He writes about the interface between quantum physics, consciousness and spirituality. The three authors have used different methods for getting their books out; have spent differing amounts of money; and are handling promotion and distribution of their books in different ways. You’ll get to hear from three authors about real life experiences, and it should be interesting to anyone who’s thinking about following this same route. Everyone is welcome to attend. Call Martha on 6331 8382 if you require more details.

Radio Plays Project – The Other Side of the Line

The award winning radio plays project, *The Other Side* has returned. **Orange Community Broadcasters FM107.5** and the Central West Writers’ Centre are collaborating to produce local radio plays of broadcast quality which will be put to air from November. The station was awarded Best Innovative New Program by the Community Broadcasters Association of Australia (CBAA) for the Other Side Project, at the CBAA’s national conference in 2005. Project Coordinator Fiona Hawke said this year sees some tighter criteria introduced with a limit of seven minutes and three performers for each play and a new theme of *The Other Side of the Line*. Interested writers should contact Project Coordinator Fiona Hawke on 6361 0129 or the Central West Writers’ Centre on 6393 8125.

National Poetry Slam Heat in Orange

Orange is calling all poets, hip-hop artists and other outspoken wordsmiths to polish their rhymes and lyrics for Australia's first ever national poetry slam, with cash and prizes on offer. **On Friday 7 September at 6.30pm Orange City Library** will host one of 8 slam heats planned across the State, with two finalists from each heat battling it out spoken-word style in the NSW Final in Sydney.

All contestants are given a mic, a live audience and just two minutes to impress the judges (selected at random at each heat) with their spoken word, poetry, hip hop, monologues and stories. Contestants can speak, sing, scream, rap, howl or even whisper their words. Talented spoken-word artist Miles Merrill will host each heat and entertain the crowd with his own original word artistry. "Poetry slams have existed in the US for 20 years, and these competitions are now gaining momentum in Australia," says Miles Merrill. The national competition follows on from the State Library's highly successful NSW Poetry Slam 06 where over 200 poetry enthusiasts and students participated in workshops, regional and city poetry heats and the grand final. The Australian Poetry Slam 07 is an initiative of the State Library of NSW, and is supported by state, territory and public libraries and festivals across the country.

Write in the Heart Review

Here is a first hand account by participant Barb Peters, of Bathurst, who attended the Write in the Heart Festival held during the June Long Weekend at Condobolin. The event was supported by the Lachlan Arts Council and Festivals Funding Australia:

"I went along to the 'Write in the Heart' Festival an inexperienced wannabe writer. I came home with more knowledge than I ever would have expected to get in one weekend. It started on the Friday night with a casual dinner at the Condo pub where I met some of the authors and organisers of the event. They told us a bit about themselves, it was nice to see that they were everyday people that we could sit around and have a beer with. On the Saturday morning it started with an official introduction of the authors, they told us of their work and their journey to get where they are today.

Fran Dobbie, indigenous author of two books – *Whisper* and *Paperbags and Dreams* was the most inspirational to me personally. We were asked to trace around our hand and write down our life changing events by using our hand outline as a template. We relived our past, good times and bad, and then shared one life changing moment with the group. This was a life changing event in itself. All shared their most devastating moment in their life and it pulled me back to earth. I now realise that whatever I'm going through that there is always someone out there going through something similar or worse. We shared many tears in those three hours; however, we couldn't believe that our time was up with Fran that morning. It was a very emotional morning for all that day.

After lunch there was a panel discussion. I found this very useful as participants could ask questions and all of the guest authors would give their advice.

This gave us an overall view and many options to work with. Guests included Hazel Edwards, Fran Dobbie, travel writer John Borthwick, Style Magazine editor Jacqui L'Estrange and President of the Australian Storytelling Guild Vivienne Ward.

That afternoon I attended Hazel Edwards workshop, titled 'How to get your project off the ground'. This was fantastic. The group sat around a huge table, we told Hazel our current project and she guided us towards our goals. Everyone helped each other on issues they had with their own project. This workshop really inspired me as I received the encouragement I needed to follow my dreams of publishing my work. Hazel is the author of *There's a Hippotamus on our Roof Eating Cake*.

Overall the whole weekend was inspirational, informative and very helpful for all those wanting to write, whether for publication, passing a story down the family line or self healing. I would recommend this to all writers and I will be going back again next year. By then I hope to have had my book published. And maybe, just maybe, one day I might get to be an author invited to the festival."

Competitions and Opportunities

Growing up Asian in Australia - Call for submissions

Asian-Australians are known to each other and the outside world by many labels and nicknames. Yet are these labels based on some degree of truth, or only fiction? What is it like to grow up Asian in Australia? Black Inc is looking for personal experience narratives of growing up Asian-Australian that are unique, honest and reflective, for an anthology. The pieces can be in any manner, tone or style, but we are not looking for abstract or sociological treatments. They can deal with any aspect of growing up Asian-Australian so long as they are original and provide insight into the fascinating lives of Asian-Australians that defy, question or shed light on the usual stereotypes.

Submissions should be between 800 and 3000 words in length and must be received by **1st December 2007**. Late entries will not be accepted. This collection will be edited by Alice Pung, author of *Unpolished Gem*, and published by Black Inc. in 2008. Please address submissions to The Editor, Black Inc., Level 5, 289 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000. Hard copy only, but receipt will be acknowledged by email so please include an email address. Final selection of pieces will be made in early 2008. Enquiries should be addressed to <deniseo@blackincbooks.com>.

Transcribe 2007 Young Writers Competition

The Transcultural Mental Health Centre in conjunction with the Schizophrenia Fellowship and Mental Illness Education Australia (NSW) are hosting the TranSCRIBE Young Writers Competition. The competition is for young people 12 – 19 years across NSW from all high schools. TranSCRIBE aims to provide opportunities for teachers and students to discuss issues relating to mental health and cultural diversity in the classroom. The overall theme is "From where I stand...". The **closing date is 19 July** and entries can be downloaded from the website: www.dhi.gov.au/tmhc/transcribe or phone (02) 9840 3800. Stories can be non-fiction, poetry, journal, letters, autobiographical or any form of writing. Entries are judged on understanding of the issues, ability to inspire, quality of writing, use of words, reader friendly, creativity and originality. Max 2000 words typed or handwritten.

The Iremonger Award for Writing on Public Issues

Do you know anyone who has a great idea for a non-fiction book? One that will contribute to public debate on a contemporary Australian political, social or cultural issue? Then let them know about the Iremonger Award, sponsored by Allen & Unwin. The winning entry will receive a cash prize of \$10,000, guaranteed publication, royalties on book sales and editorial support to develop the proposal into a finished manuscript. **Entries close 31 August 2007.**

For more information, including an entry form, conditions and list of previous winners visit: www.allenandunwin.com/awards/iremonger_award.asp.

Publication Opportunities

New Children's Magazine

Aimed at 3 to 6 year olds, *Little Ears* magazine is a tool for preschools as well as a reading resource for parents. It brings approximately a dozen stories, written by Australian writers to families and preschools every two months. A free preview of Little Ears is posted on the website. Go to www.littleears.com.au and read the sneak preview of the printed magazine that will be available in September this year.

Blast

Submissions of poems, critical writing (short stories included) are sought for **Blast** #6, deadline 31 August 2007. Subscriptions to **Blast** cost \$20 per year for two issues, postage included; cheques payable to Blast Magazine; receipts issued. Submissions and subscriptions to Ann Nugent, Blast, PO Box 134, Campbell, ACT, 2612. Email: anugent@annsverandah.com

Broadkill Review Journal seeks submissions

This new US journal Broadkill Review **welcomes submissions from overseas writers.** The Broadkill Review has already reached a distribution over 5000 copies per issue, and has featured articles, poetry, fiction, and interviews from leading writers in the United States. In an interesting hybrid of print and electronic publication, The Broadkill Review will publish six PDF issues per year.

The magazine hopes to be a positive influence on behalf of poetry, creative writing, especially short fiction, and articles which will address matters of interest to all writers whether established or just starting out.

In order to submit your poetry or short fiction (no non-fiction as yet) send it as an e-mail attachment in MS Word or within the body of the e-mail. No elaborate fonts or illustrations. The Australian Editor is Maryanne Khan. Submissions of unpublished poems, articles or short stories as above can be sent to The Editor: mkhandesign@optusnet.com.au. No previously published work, please.

Allow up to three months for response, as the editors hope to fill each issue with the highest quality material.

Eclecticism

A new Australian e-zine, Eclecticism (www.eclecticzine.com) has been launched. As the name suggests, it aims to draw a diverse range of creative minds, styles and genres.

The first issue will be released late July 2007. Each issue will have themed and open sections, and currently seeking contributions from writers of prose and poetry, illustrators/artists, and beat-musicians. Eclecticism is free – a non-profit e-zine that hopes to showcase current writers, expose emerging writers and artists and provide an avenue for those with one or two stories within them. It will be available to download (PDF format) from the website. Readers are encouraged to subscribe to the e-zine to build its fan base and be the first to receive notification of each issue's release.

Children's Book Week

Children's Book Week is coming up 18 – 24 August and Orange City Library will be hosting a visit by author Moya Simons.

Moya's books include the very popular *Dead* series - *Dead Meat!* *Dead Worries!* *Dead Average!* *Dead Funny!* and *Dead Scary!* and the *Totally* series – *Totally Cool!*, *Totally Weird!*, *Totally Awesome!*, *Totally Freaky!* and *Totally Creepy!* She is one of the country's most popular writers, loves to write, loves talking about it and if she doesn't write everyday she breaks out in hives!

Moya enjoys entertaining children and writing stories that make them laugh. She has written more than 20 books and they are read widely in schools and libraries. We look forward to welcoming Moya to the Central West.

Your inspiration

"You may never have read a poem in your life, and yet you can pick up a volume, open it to any page and suddenly see your own original face there; suddenly find yourself blown into world full of awe, dread, wonder, marvel, deep sorrow, and joy."

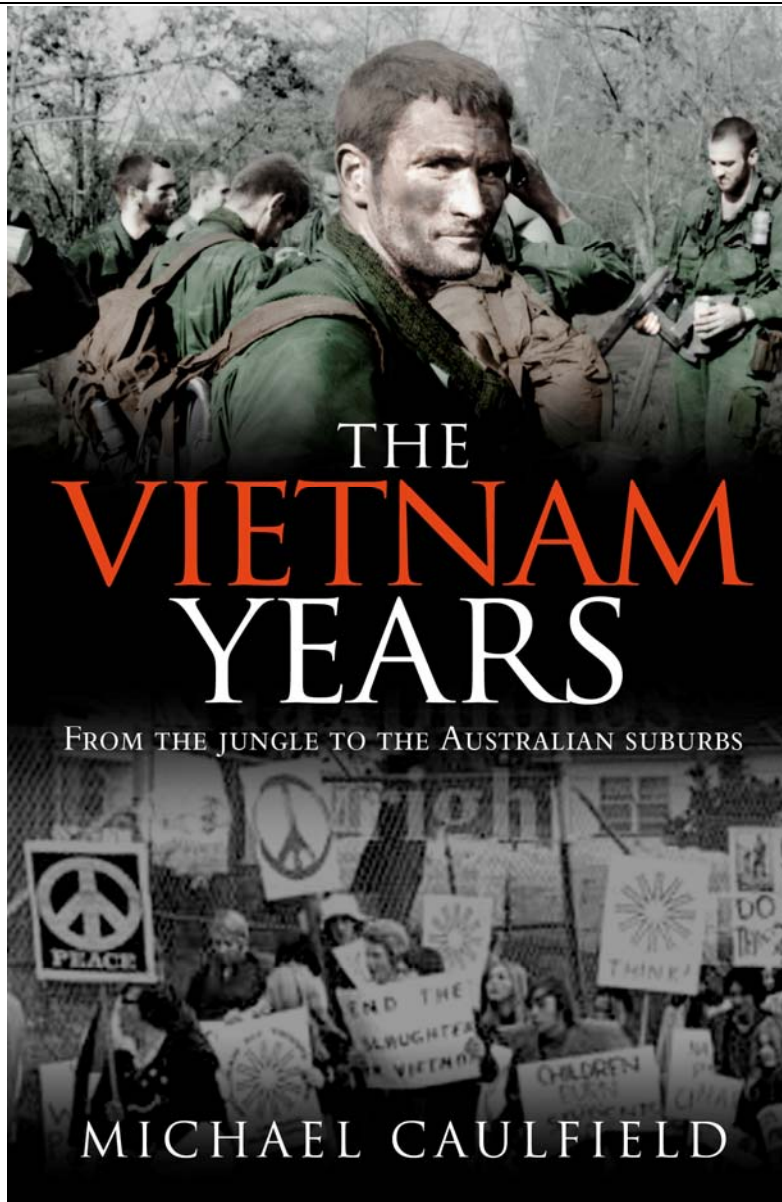
From *Ten Poems to Change Your Life* by Roger Housden.

Your words

Let us know your thoughts about writing, reading, ideas, this newsletter, by emailing writing@orange.nsw.gov.au or call 6393 8125 during business hours.

End Note

Do you know what an interrobang is? It is a punctuation mark (an obscure one) in the form of a question mark superimposed on an exclamation point. It can be used when you ask a question in an excited manner or express excitement or disbelief in the form of a question eg. She said what!/? Check out more about it at: <http://www.interrobang-mks.com/> and see if you can use it in everyday life.



Local author **Michael Caulfield** has written a new book titled *The Vietnam Years From the Jungle to the Australian Suburbs*. It is a narrative driven account of the war and the changes it wrought here – ranging from a poignant story of the Battle of Long Tan to the effects of a war where a man could come off a patrol in the morning - and be back in Sydney that evening, discharged from the army, and drunk in the Bourbon and Beefsteak. An evening with Michael Caulfield will be held at Highland Heritage Estate, Mitchell Highway, Orange on **Saturday 4 August at 7pm**. Tickets are \$70 pp and available from Boomers Bookshop and ABC Centre (Ph: 6361 8399) in association with Wicked Fairy Events and The Central West Writers' Centre.

