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## Walleah Press Newsletter - March 2019

### Discounted titles March 2019

#### Offer 1

Two Andrew Burke titles — 'Undercover of Lightness' (2012) and 'One Hour Seeds Another' (2012) — \$22.50.. Covers cost of both collections, inclusive of postage.

#### Offer 2

The 2012 poetry collection 'RADAR' (Nathan Curnow, Kevin Brophy). \$12.50, inclusive of postage.

#### Offer 3

Tim Thorne's poetry collection 'Head and Shin' (2004, 130 pp) \$7.50, inclusive of postage.

### Forthcoming titles

Nicola Bowery. Poetry, *child in the wings*. Publication - March/April 2019.

Jan Colville. Poetry, *Journey*. Publication - April/May 2019.

Ron Moss. Haiku. Publication - April/May 2019.

Lyn Reeves. Haiku and senryu. Publication - June/July 2019.

### Michael Sharkey: 'Many Such As She: Victorian Australian Women Poets of World War One'

Some welcome feedback for Michael Sharkey's anthology, 'Many Such as She'....

*I've just been having another and deeper look into those women 'war' poets you've so assiduously collected and wonderfully written up, and up till now I've found their treatment of war, loss, patriotism, etc -- by which I mean their favourite 'positions' to couple up in thought with their absent men -- quite troubling and, here and there, alarming. That is, until I suddenly began to 'hear' it all quite differently -- not as a contemporary reader, but as a witness to their times. In fact, 'times' is the snugly fitting key, and you have to almost become a time-traveller to get back there. It's not so much a different world I find that they are living and thinking in -- which would have to be a nonsense, unless they were all mad -- rather, they are using a language where the words have different weights and values from our own. You have to make an effort to free, or disencumber, their words from the interrogations that the language we at first think they are using has subsequently been loaded with. Some of it, even making this allowance, remains, however interesting as examples, affected, crude and even silly. But a lot more becomes, in dramatic contrast, affecting and some seems to catch at stunned moments of a genuine distress with flair and to be heart-breaking. Fine job digger -- or perhaps deliver's the truer word.*

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Michael's response was to find the remarks pretty spot-on, regarding the way we read the language of writers of another era. 'It's something that fascinated me all my reading & teaching life—the way in which we get to enter another world' — 'time travelling', as he put it.—'so we can relive the thoughts & emotions of characters we encounter there. We do that without resort to theory or any worry about 'how' we should read such work from a bygone time. People who pick up a copy of some novel from the past — say, *Pride and Prejudice*, or *Gulliver's Travels* — don't go into a fret about how to go about it; they just open the book and engage with the language without any great concern that some words may be a bit strange or that the punctuation's not exactly 2019 style... they go at it in the same way that someone reads a newspaper online or in print, or like people on a bus or plane or train read a contemporary detective story, romance or biography. We're not all conscious scholars of linguistics or historical anthropology.... So the comments on the way we can read such people as those early twentieth century women poets' work are helpful. Their language does have certain different values or weights embedded in it — words they look for granted as having connotations as well as denotations according to the time they inhabited. We might put a different weight on some words, but we still seem to effortlessly know what they were getting at, and we unconsciously enter into their world view, even if we have different attitudes to the meaning of a word like 'duty' or 'peace' or 'love' or 'family' nowadays. We can understand the writers' anxiety, fear and other passions. It's why we can relate to the love-poems of Lesbia Harford, or the cool outrage of Fullerton's poem 'The Targets', which another friend wrote to say that a reading aloud, by a woman who teaches theatre, had a profound effect on an audience recently.'

### Hobart visit, Geoff Goodfellow - February 2019

It's always good to catch up with poet Geoff Goodfellow. He's been touring Tasmania this week, visiting local schools and the prison, talking poetry.

'You're becoming a local, Geoff....'

'Well I find that when I go into the schools, the year nine's—they won't know me—but the year ten's, they'll remember me from last year, come and say hello, ask how I'm going.'

'Do they give any trouble?'

He laughs. 'Nah.... I don't let 'em.'

He says it's easy building a rapport with the students. He's direct and blunt, speaks in a manner they're not used to from someone with an authoritative role within a school environment. And once he has their attention, his message is always the same. 'Concentrate on your studies, don't waste your time here—or mine—cos it's the only way you'll get ahead.'

His words resonate and I ask if he's read any Margaret Drabble.

'Can't say I have.'

I mention her 2000 novel *The Peppered Moth*, wherein Drabble's school-teacher character Miss Heald explores her students of the necessity of 'deferring pleasure'.

'Work hard now, she said to her young people, and reap the rewards later. Do not grab the instant....'

Geoff nods, says he has pretty much the same message for the students he deals with. 'I tell them their school work's important. That they have to set themselves a time frame, picture where they'd like to be in ten years time. In my day it was enough to finish matriculation but nowadays even a BA won't guarantee you an interesting career.

You might need a Masters, even more. You might be in your mid-twenties – or later – before you find yourself with a job you enjoy.'

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So what does a poet read for pleasure?

'Poetry of course, but novels too,' Geoff replies. 'I came across a copy of an old Carson McCullers novel recently—(perhaps *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*)—'read the first page and decided, that's for me so I bought it.'

He says he wouldn't do it the disservice of glancing only casually at it, but would take the book home, sit down and give it his undivided attention ... From his reading of the first page, the book deserved it.

Geoff's website biography describes his writing as often providing '... a public voice for those living close to the margins and who are generally under-represented in contemporary literature,' which perhaps explains his interest in the award of the 2018 Man Booker Prize last year, won by Anna Burns with her novel *Milkman*. (In an article entitled 'The story of Anna Burns shows how working-class talent is going to waste', *Guardian* journalist Suzanne Moore argues that the creative industries now belong to the wealthy and their offspring. 'Who else can afford to be a poet, or make music the way they want to, or make art that a big collector doesn't want?')

'I was listening to the morning news late last year and heard *Milkman* had won the Booker overnight,' Geoff recalls. Later in the day he was on the phone to his daughter Grace who mentioned in passing she'd gone and for the first time bought a book online.

'Oh, what book is that?' Geoff enquired.

'*Milkman*, by Anna Burns', Grace replied.

'Oh, that's just won the Booker Prize,' he said.

'No it hasn't, though it's on the shortlist.'

'No no no, it's won overnight,' Geoff insisted. 'Listen,' he added, 'once you've finished the book, how about letting me borrow it?'

'Sure.'

A week passed. Geoff asked how *Milkman* was going.

'Oh I haven't started it yet, I'm reading something else at the moment.'

Another week passed. 'How's *Milkman*?'

'Just begun.'

Another week. '*Milkman*?'

'Oh, I haven't read very far yet....'

Yet another week. 'How's *Milkman* going?'

'Still reading....'

When eventually he got his hands on the book, Geoff found it hard to settle into. 'I read to page 11 and thought, this is tough. I gave it another go and reached page 27 before I put it down again, thinking, I don't want to waste my time reading this. But I told myself not to give up so easily and continued with it—though it wasn't till I reached around 150 pages that I began to pick up the rhythm and intonations of her voice.... That's when I started to think, this is good.'

'I'm glad I persevered!'

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Geoff mentions meeting Ken Kesey - author of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* - at an Adelaide Writers Festival in the early eighties, and how that developed into friendship and an offer to stay with Kesey in the US. 'I was on the bill in Adelaide, so was Ken. I sensed his interest when he heard me read and he later came up and asked for a copy of my book. 'I'll give you one of my own tomorrow,' Kesey added.

Geoff had heard of Kesey, said yeah - that'd be good. They met up the following day and got talking. 'When I hear others reading, they could be from anywhere. When I hear you read, I recognise I'm listening to an Australian', Kesey confided. He said to look him up if ever got to the States.

Geoff says it wasn't time for him to be heading overseas—to begin with, he didn't have the money—but eighteen months later circumstances had changed and he rang Kesey to see if the offer still stood. Before long, he found himself in Kesey's expansive Eugene, Oregon home.

Among their many conversations about poetry and music – a Kesey quote is 'The Greatful Dead are our religion. This is a religion that doesn't pay homage to the God that all the other religions pay homage to.' - the possibility of a Goodfellow poetry reading in Eugene was floated.

'Not being a local, you might find it difficult getting an audience,' Kesey mused.

'I'll get by,' Geoff insisted.

'How?'

'Well, I'll visit radio stations, put posters up around the place. I've done all this before.'

'It might work if we did a reading together,' Kesey mused, 'but the things is.... I'd only do it on one condition, that it's free for people to come and listen. This is my town. I don't want to be ripping people off. But we could take our books and sell them.'

'And we did,' Geoff concluded. 'It was great!'

### New Norfolk reading, 'Renovating Madness': Ten Days on the Island

Liz McQuillkin and Karen Knight will read from their December 2018 poetry collection [Renovating Madness](#) in New Norfolk on March 23rd as part of Ten Days on the Island.

### Shortlist: 2019 NSW Premier's Literary Awards announced 28th Feb 2019

Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-fiction.

Alexis Wright (*Tracker*), Richard Fidler and Kari Gislason (*Saga Land*), Sarah Krasnostein (*The Trauma Cleaner*) and Maria Tumarkin (*Axiomatic*), Billy Griffiths (*Deep Time Dreaming: Uncovering Ancient Australia*) and Vicki Laveau-Harvie (*The Erratics*).

Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry

Judith Bishop (*Interval*), Michael Farrell (*I Love Poetry*), Penelope Layland (*Things I've Thought To Tell You Since I Saw You Last*), Philip Neilsen (*Wildlife of Berlin*), Mark Reid (*Blindside*) and Chris Wallace-Crabbe (*Rondo*).

Christina Stead Prize for Fiction

Michelle de Kretser (*Life To Come*), Tim Winton (*The Shepherd's Hut*), Stephanie Bishop (*Man Out of Time*) and Gerald Murnane (*Border Districts*).

Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children's Writing

Julie Hunt (*Shine Mountain*), Lorraine Marwood (*Leave Jessica*), Caroline Magerl (*Maya and Cat*), Claire Saxby and Tannya Harricks (*Dingo*), Jessica Townsend (*Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow*) and Dianne Wolfer (*The Dog with Seven Names*).

Nick Enright Prize for Playwriting

Kendall Feaver (*The Almighty Sometimes*), Petra Kalive (*Oil Babies*), Michele Lee (*Going Down*), Lachlan Philipott (*Lost Boys*), Howard Lawrence Sumner (*The Long forgotten Dream*), Ursula Yovich and Alana Valentine (*Barbara and the Camp Dogs*).

Betty Roland Prize for Scriptwriting

Alice Addison (*Picnic at Hanging Rock - Episode 4*), Benjamin Gilmour (*Jirga*), Noëlle Janaczewska (*Seoul City Sue*), Timothy Lee (*Mystery Road, Episode 5 'The Waterhole'*), Michael O'Brien (*Mystery Road, Episode 1 'Gone'*) and Greg Waters (*Riot*).

Multicultural NSW Award

Michael Mohammed Ahmad (*The Lebs*), Eileen Chong (*Rainforest*), Magdalena McGuire (*Home is Nearby*), Sisonke Msimang (*Always Another Country: A Memoir of Exile and Home*), Melissa Lucashenko (*Too Much Lip*) and Sofija Stefanovic (*Miss Ex-Yugoslavia*).

UTS Glenda Adams Award for New Writing

Robbie Arnott (*Flames*), Trent Dalton (*Boy Swallows Universe*), Chris Hammer (*Scrublands*), Robert Lukins (*The Everlasting Sunday*), Jamie Marina Lau (*Pink Mountain on Locust Island*) and Tracy Sorensen (*The Lucky Galah*).

NSW Premier's Translation Prize

Harry Aveling, Stephen Corcoran, Alison Entrekina, Penny Hueston, Stephanie Smeed and Omid Tofighian.

Indigenous Writers' Prize

Kim Scott (*Taboo*), Larissa Behrendt (*Finding Eliza: Power and Colonial Storytelling*), Tony Birch (*Common People*), Anita Heiss (*Barbed Wire and Cherry Blossoms*) and Leah Purcell

The winners will be announced at the State Library of NSW as part of the Sydney Writers' Festival on Monday 29 April 2019.

### Shortlist: 2019 Peter Porter Poetry Prize

The shortlisted poems are:

'Dancing with Stephen Hawking' by John Foulcher (ACT)

'The Mirror Hurlers' by Ross Gillett (Vic)

'Searching the Dead' Andy Kissane (NSW)

'83 Temple Street, Mong Kok' by Belle Ling (Qld/Hong Kong)

'Bavens' by Mark Tredinnick (NSW)

Winners will be announced Monday, 18 March 2019, 6 for 6.15 pm to 7.30 pm - details at <https://www.australianbookreview.com.au/prizes-programs/peter-porter-poetry-prizes/current-prize>

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