CRNLE Something Rich and Strange Conference

12–14 December, 2005

Seafront Hotel, Penneshaw, Kangaroo Island

PROGRAMME

EMERGENCY CONTACTS: Nena Bierbaum 0410 310 497,
AUDIO VISUAL COORD: Peter Manthorpe

VENUE: Kangaroo Island Seafront, 49 North Terrace. All papers will be delivered in the Seafront Conference Room. The Monday night festivities will be held in the Community Hall (next to the Post Office in the Council Building). Morning and afternoon teas will be available near the entrance to the Conference Room; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday lunches will be served in the Seafront Dining Room, which is also the venue for the Tuesday night dinner.

SUNDAY, 11th December

11.15 a.m.  KANGAROO ISLAND TOUR – Those who have booked, please meet at reception in the Seafront Hotel, Penneshaw.

7.30 for 8.00 p.m.  BARBECUE BY THE BAR – Please buy your own drinks.
MONDAY, 12th December

9.00 – 9.50 Registration (outside Conference Room)

10.00 – 10.15 Welcome: Rick Hosking, Director of CRNLE

10.15 – 11.15 (Chair: Rick Hosking)

Richard White - Beach holidays
Helen Tiffin - Sharks and the Australian imaginary

11.15 – 11.30 MORNING TEA

11.30 – 12.30 (Chair: Sue Hosking)

Steven Muecke - Indian Ocean Poetry
Ron Blaber - Colonial Coastlines and “unsettled” settlements

12.30 – 1.30 LUNCH

1.30 – 3.00 (Chair: Syd Harrex)

Brian Matthews – Packin’ Heat at Bojangles: Low Life and High Life on the St Kilda Littoral
John McLaren - Kingdoms of Neptune: seas, bays, estuaries and the dangers of reading skua poetry (it may embed in your skull)
Russell McDougall & Julian Croft - The Coal Littoral: Lakeland Transhumance

3.00 – 3.15 AFTERNOON TEA

3.15 – 4.45 (Chair: Peter Manthorpe)

Caroline Ford - ‘Untamed and untamable’: Romanticism and the appeal of Sydney’s beaches in the nineteenth century
Moya Costello - At Home in Text on the Coast
Heather Taylor Johnson - Other People’s Oceans: Cultural and Geographical Displacements and the Sea as Death

4.45 – 5.00 Chad Habel – discussion about Flinders D-space

EVENING MEAL – please make your own arrangements

8.00 p.m. FESTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY HALL – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
To the accompaniment of wine-tasting, the relaxed evening programme includes readings by Kangaroo Island writers and conference delegates, including Gay Lynch, Michele McCrea, Anna Solding and Heather Taylor Johnson; local and conference musicians, and a book launch.

SPONSORED BY WIRRA WIRRA WINES AND FLINDERS UNIVERSITY
TUESDAY, 13th December

9.20 – 10.30  (Chair: Sue Sheridan)

Lucy Frost - A “Quixotic Escapade”
Anna Johnston & Ralph Crane – Exploring Cultural Contact: Flora Annie Steel and the Punjab

10.30 – 10.45  MORNING TEA

10.45 – 12.15  (Chair: Graham Tulloch)

Margaret Allen – Rich and strange: the career of Mr Ottim Singh in White Australia
Peter Manthorpe – 'The Saline Solution'
Bridget Jolly - Spinning tops and experimental plots

12.15 – 1.15  LUNCH

1.15 – 2.45  (Chair: Ron Blaber)

Christine Nicholls - Something rich and strange: Robin Best’s Open Cut and Marine Forms
Rebecca Pannell - Time for a Sea Change
Chad Habel – Christopher Koch: Crossing Over

2.45 – 3.00  AFTERNOON TEA

3.00 – 4.30  (Chair: Margaret Allen)

Tracy Spencer – 'Getting off the verandah': decolonising Australia.
Ben Kooyman – Dark fantasy, darker reality: allegories of renaissance England and the (lost) New World in three comic books
Paul Sutton - An Apology for the Canon


7.00 for 7.30  CONFERENCE DINNER at the Seafront Hotel
WEDNESDAY, 14th December

9.00 – 10.30  (Chair: Helen Tiffin)

Sue Sheridan - Some Versions of Coastal: Thea Astley, Captain Simpson and the North Queensland Coast
Sue Hosking – ‘We're all going on a summer holiday’: the ins and outs of shack culture.
Jonathon Bollen - White men, wet dreams: fishing, fatherhood and finitude in recent Australian theatre

10.30 – 10.45  MORNING TEA

10.45 – 12.15  (Chair: Steven Muecke)

Maria Nugent - From landing place to meeting place: Telling stories of the encounter between Captain Cook and local indigenous people at Botany Bay in 1770
Rick Hosking - 'Keep to the beach': thrilling history in two South Australian historical novels from the colonial period
Kay Merry - Shipwrecks, Castaways and Aborigines on the Coorong

12.15 – 1.15  LUNCH

1.15 – 2.45  (Chair: Tracy Spencer)

Annie Werner - “Savage Printers”: Beachcombing, Tattoos and Liminality in James O’Connell’s Residence
Michael Savvas - Errol Flynn’s Lifelong Relationship
Graham Tulloch – Scott and Stevenson on the Beach

2.45 – 3.00  AFTERNOON TEA

3.00 – 3.45  (Chair: Brian Matthews)

Kirpal Singh – Water as seen through different eyes: Reflections on Multi-Cultural Responses to the SEA

3.45 – 4:30  Kirpal Singh – Summary and response
Abstracts

Margaret Allen

‘Rich and strange: the career of Mr Ottim Singh in White Australia’
Mr Ottim Singh, proprietor of ‘The People’s Store’, Kingscote KI from 1902-1927 made a number of sea-voyages between India, Australia and the Netherlands East Indies between c 1881 and 1927. During the course of these he crossed many beaches and boundaries. He lived in Australia from 1890 until his death in 1927. In this society he was marginal, indeed liminal. This paper explores the strategies and discourses which he, and other British Indian, could adopt in order to survive within White Australia.

Ron Blaber

Colonial Coastlines and ‘unsettled’ settlements
Coastlines are material and abstract. They cannot be made subject to the gaze. They are then unknowable and unsettling. The beach is material and specific; it can be made subject to the gaze, made knowable, perhaps even down to the grain of sand. It becomes familiar, even comfortable. Perhaps. However, once set in conjunction with the coastline, the ownership of the beach becomes unsettled.

In terms of colonial settlement the beach is unsettled in its function. It is a site of communication, be it promise or threat – just what does that sail on the horizon mean. In the everyday it is a site of arrival and departure, a gateway for the passage of people. But in the extreme, arrival is abandonment and departure rescue.

If we look at the US, Canada and Australia, why are these still predominantly seaboard cultures? Why are the words ‘hug’ or ‘cling’ used to describe a population’s relationship to the coast? Why this nexus between safety and fear?

This paper addresses these questions through a consideration of 4 cases of colonial coastlines/beaches – Crusoe’s island, Cook’s encounter in Hawaii, Marlow’s coastline in Heart of Darkness and the more mundane Mirvac fini development at Port Bouvard south of Perth.

Jonathan Bollen

White men, wet dreams: fishing, fatherhood and finitude in recent Australian theatre
At the end of Stephen Sewell’s play The Father We Loved On A Beach By The Sea (1978), we see Joe, a father of two sons, in the scene for which the play is named: dressed in bathing trunks and carrying a plastic bucket, he looks blankly out to sea; there is the sound of the surf and of children playing – but Joe, ‘the father we loved’, is impassive and unresponsive.

Scenes of masculine dissipation, of white men dissolute or dissolving between the sea and sky, have become a feature in recent Australian theatre. In John Misto’s monodrama Sky (1992), for instance, a father mourns the loss of his son who disappeared whilst flying solo over the sea. One explanation for the disappearance is that the pilot suffered from ‘the twilight syndrome’ where sea and sky look so alike that a pilot becomes disorientated and loses control of the plane. More recently, in Margery and Michael Forde’s James and Johnno (2004), two middle-aged brothers set out in a boat to scatter their father’s ashes on Moreton Bay, where the three of them once used to fish. In Daniel Keene’s To Whom It May Concern (1998), a 60-year-old father, at a loss what to do with his mentally disabled 40-year-old son, takes him to the beach and urges him into the water: ‘please Leo go in the water let the water take you please Leo’.
The relation between men and environment in these plays is no longer antagonistic, as it was, for instance, in the bush realism of earlier Australian plays. Rather, elemental exposure to the sea and the sky in these plays can have a restorative effect on men who are somehow incapacitated, at a loss or incomplete. In Neil Cole’s *Alive at Williamstown Pier* (1999), for instance, a manic-depressive politician and father of two boys returns repeatedly to the pier, to a place between the sea and the sky, where he feels a kind of distanced at-one-ness with the world. While in Nick Enright and Justin Monjo’s adaptation of Tim Winton’s *Cloudstreet* (1998), dreams about water, sky and stars and images of boats, beds and bathtubs create a richly fluid and immersive world for brothers Quick and Fish Lamb. Yet, in looking to the sea and the sky to project a future horizon for white masculinity, these plays inevitably turn their back on a land now indelibly scored by the history of inter-race relations.

This paper is drawn from ‘Marking masculinity in Australian theatre, 1955-1970 and 1985-2000’, an ARC Discovery project undertaken in collaboration with Adrian Kiernander and Bruce Parr.

**Moya Costello**

**At Home in Text on the Coast**

This paper links architect Philip Drew’s theory of Australian spatial culture, the Sydney section of Murray Bail’s novel *Holden’s Performance*, and a personal narrative about the importance of the coast and the concept of home to me. In his nonfiction trilogy *Leaves of Iron*, *Veranda* and *The Coast Dwellers* (plus the supplement, *Touch This Earth Lightly: Glenn Murcutt in His Own Words*), Drew considers that Australians ‘are a nation of coast dwellers and our culture is increasingly littoral’. He focuses on the topography of the coast, the architect Glenn Murcutt and the architecture of the veranda. I discuss these three things in turn. In his work, Drew draws on Australian visual and literary culture to support his thesis. Though Drew doesn’t mention Murray Bail in his particular referencing of Australia’s literary culture, the central section of Bail’s novel *Holden’s Performance* invokes the typical coastal life of Sydney through one of its seaside suburbs, Manly. Bail parallels major passages in Holden’s life with references to synchronous national and international events. In this realm where fact and fiction intersect, my migratory path mimicked in reverse that of Holden’s: I grew up in Sydney and moved to Adelaide. I consider the coastal life of these two cities. I also draw on a number of writers/theorists and books such as Paul Carter on the nature of settlement. I also consider the boat as a container of desire in Kim Mahood’s *Craft for a Dry Lake*, and in particular images from visual artist Julie Adams’ thesis ‘Relics and Remnants of Desire’, and link these to similar symbols/images created in my own life.

**Caroline Ford**

**‘Untamed and untamable’: Romanticism and the appeal of Sydney’s beaches in the nineteenth century**

This paper considers those nineteenth century beachgoers for whom the natural scenery was the primary attraction for spending time on the coast near Sydney. It examines not only what they did on and around the beach, but also the ways in which they represented their experience there, and draws on the wealth of literature, from newspaper and journal articles to guidebooks to travel journals, which rely heavily on romantic language to describe the surf, wind, cliffs, rocks and ocean views. But this paper also questions the sincerity of such accounts, arguing that rather than being ‘true romantics’ as they might have us think, these beachgoers were merely products of a society which valued the romantic appeal of nature.
Lucy Frost

A ‘Quixotic Escapade’
This paper narrates the tale of how a Spanish-speaking sailor with the unlikely name of Fortestado Santo arrived in Van Diemen’s Land in 1812 as a British transportee, and attempted to leave three years later on board a ship he and other escapees had built at Recherche Bay. Fragments of the story about this motley crew appear in British records from the Old Bailey and from Court Martials, as well as from colonial records and newspapers. There is also one extended, if highly suspect, account: John Pascoe Fawkner’s unpublished autobiography. In his manuscript, Fawkner tells of how he ‘fancifully agreed’ when young to help ‘foreigners’ escape ‘from the slavery of convictism’ by lending them his whaling boat for the first part of their journey, and spending the winter with them at Recherche Bay, building the ship they called the Liberty.

Chad Habel

Christopher Koch: Crossing Over
The notion of crossing over is central to Christopher Koch’s writing. This paper will explore Koch’s elaboration of liminal spaces in novels such as Highways To A War and Out Of Ireland as well as his non-fiction works Crossing The Gap and The Many Coloured Land: A Return To Ireland. In these works characters and speakers embark on adventures to Other places which are notably different to traditional adventure narratives of the nineteenth century. These ‘critical’ adventures enable reconfigurations of national and gender identities based on experiences of revolution, war, and personal tribulations. In so doing they disrupt the binary logic which pervades adventure traditions in English literature.

Rick Hosking

‘We’re all going on a summer holiday’: the ins and outs of shack culture
Within two or three decades of settlement, historical fictions began to appear in most of the Australian colonies, many of them ‘thrilling histories’, negotiating community memories of ‘paving the way’, that is, of foundation and pioneering. In South Australia a significant minority of such texts represent violent encounters between settlers and Indigenous people, encounters that take place on beaches. William Anderson Cawthorne’s novella The Kangaroo Islanders (1865) concludes with a representation of the 1836 murder of the protagonist Captain Meredith by two Kaurna (?) men on the beach at Yankalilla; he had gone ashore to find some shade and read his bible. Simpson Newland’s novel Paving the Way: a Romance of the Australian Bush (1893) begins with a representation of the wreck of the brigantine Maria in 1840 and the massacre by the Ngarrindjeri of all save one of the survivors on the Coorong beach; the protagonist Roland Grantley manages to escape death by running along the beach to the Murray Mouth. Both events have an historical basis; while community memories of these events helped maintain Manichean stereotypes of Indigenous people well into the nineteenth century and beyond, some justification for Indigenous resistance and retaliation is provided in both fictions. Both also propose a degree of ambivalence about the extent to which settling down has been possible over the intervening years. This paper will consider the beach as a contact zone, a place of encounter, contest and physical display, an anxious site of confrontation, confusion and misunderstanding.
Sue Hosking

Paradise, absolutely Paradise. That’s what we think anyway

The weekender, whether shack or second leisure home, has long been part of the Australian dream. The desire to escape from the pressures of daily occupations, paid work and the conventions of orderly urban and suburban life has manifest itself in different forms along the coastlines of Australia: shack communities; recreational towns; pseudo-resorts. Traditionally the week-ender by the beach is conceived as a place of freedom.

This paper looks at two stories set in holiday homes by the sea: Patrick Whites Dead Roses and Elizabeth Harrowers The Beautiful Climate. The stories play with and contest the usual conceptions of the spaces of the holiday home by the beach.

Anna Johnston and Ralph Crane

Exploring Cultural Contact: Flora Annie Steel and the Punjab

Under the aegis of empire, individuals from diverse positions within diverse cultures were brought together in conditions which, as Mary Louise Pratt argues, were interactive, improvisational, and characterised by radically asymmetrical relations of power. This paper examines the writer and Anglo-Indian memsahib Flora Annie Steel, and particularly her Tales from the Punjab, as a case study of the contact zone between imperialism, anthropology, and folklore. Steel’s collection of juvenile stories provides an opportunity to explore the folklore movement in relation to anthropology, and to elucidate the importance of empire writing for younger audiences. It also enables us to think about the role of imperial women and their writing in relation to broader debates about imperial history, biography, and anthropology, and about how we might look again at such figures in order to explore the multiplicity of cultural contact under colonial conditions.

Bridget Jolly

Spinning tops and experimental plots

An agricultural produce railway was once anticipated to traverse Kangaroo Island’s broad back. The marine craft on which the Island depended for physical contact with the ‘outer’ world might thereby have been linked to a facility discussed by a Royal Commission, 1909–1911, and by Islanders and others for some years before and after.

Western Kangaroo Island’s progress in those years of deliberation included the initial publication of the Kangaroo Island Courier, the first run of the SS Karatta, the opening of the quite exceptional Ozone Hotel, and start of work on the Cape du Couedic lighthouse site (all in 1907); the landing of the first traction engine on the Island, and the state government’s wooing of Scottish fishermen and their families for closer settlement at American River (both in 1908); the opening of Kingscote’s new jetty (1910); and the first agricultural show (at Kingscote, 1911).

The railway might have been another ‘French connection’ for the Island: although no Très Grande Vitesse (even by standards of the time), the animal-powered monorail of a French engineer, Caillet, vied momentarily for acceptance with the gyroscopically-stabilised monorail of the Irish inventor, Brennan.

The deliberations of Royal Commissions on several mainland state railways kept alive Islanders’ hope for rail transport to a Nepean Bay or American River port. But on this depended expeditious government productivity-testing of the ironstone country. Experimental agricultural plots begun (1908) to test the ‘new’ country the rail would serve, and an experimental farm of 1915 became unwitting precursors of the Island’s post-World War II soldier settlement.

Brennan’s monorail was early dismissed by Australian governments: its utopian-seeming ‘sci-fi’ excesses dampened any ardour. Yet had this visionary design or Caillet’s ‘portable’ monorail been
adopted on the Island, it might still perhaps take visitors to the Flinders Chase reserve—one benefit that the Snug Cove settler John Hirst believed would accrue from a railway. The deeply divided views at this time on the expansion of the Chase were one of several interdependent concerns awakened by the possibility of a railway.

**Ben Kooyman**

**Dark fantasy, darker reality: allegories of renaissance England and the (lost) New World in three comic books**

*V For Vendetta* (1981–1988) and *Hellblazer* (1987–2005) present pessimistic portraits of Britain: *Vendetta* presents an Orwellian future Britain gutted by fascism, while *Hellblazer* presents a nightmarish vision of a decaying Albion. I believe that the institutional evil of the fictional British societies presented in these comic books closely resembles the historical reality of Elizabethan-Jacobean England. Two significant historical figures in particular stand out as archetypes for the protagonists of these comics. John Constantine, the dark magician/sorcerer of *Hellblazer*, resembles Christopher Marlowe, while the dangerous and charismatic anarchist V resembles (indeed, imitates) Guy Fawkes.

*Hellblazer* and *Vendetta* are liminal fictions (indeed the medium itself is liminal, a space between art, literature, and film that plays with and borrows from the iconography of all three), and the fact that these alternate Englands resemble, and contain traces of, the violent and sinister historical reality of Elizabethan-Jacobean England, a state that destroyed ideological threats like Marlowe and Fawkes, testifies to a hopeless cyclical nature.

But there’s a striking difference between historical reality and comic book fantasy, which will be examined using, as a framing device, *Marvel 1602* (2003). In this comic book, the New World, thousands of miles away across the ocean, represents hope, redemption, and spiritual rebirth. The New World, the sea, and the beach, in both history and fiction, were symbols of hope and discovery for Renaissance England, iconic of previously unrealised freedom, distant but palpable. But while in that England such hope lied beyond the threshold of the ocean, in the fictional modern/future Englands of *Vendetta* and *Hellblazer* there is no New World: the world of today/tomorrow is closed, sealed, finite, and the idea of a rich alternate world beyond the sea is dead, or hauntingly evanescent...

**Gay Lynch (reading)**

**Peter Manthorpe- ‘The Saline Solution’**

**Michele McCrea**

For decades it was just a holiday house in a lonely place that wasn’t even a town - merely a straggle of houses and a few shops along the cliff road. In summer the empty houses filled up with families, and children and dogs ran joyfully in the shallow water. In winter you hardly saw a soul, or heard a thing - except the wind, the birds and the coughing bark of a fox as it made its way home across the paddocks before dawn.

Then real estate prices went crazy and everyone wanted a piece of the coast. Expensive dwellings sprang up along the esplanade, and further inland, massive housing developments swelled the population, until our little town was swallowed up by the suburbs.

Hoons raced up and down our once-quiet road in noisy cars. The empty block next door where I first learned to drive was occupied by a family of four in a too-big house with a swimming pool in
the backyard and a stone dolphin out the front. The father was a loud obnoxious man with a passion for power tools.

Our house seemed an incongruous relic but we clung to it fiercely, lamenting the changes, like sailors clinging to a wreck, cursing the storm and the sea that’s drowning them.

I look out now at the tossing sea and the waving trees. I never want to leave this house, I want to live here forever and sew and make my sculptures. I don’t have to go anywhere; I can just look at the sea.

I look at the sea from the deck of a ship that stands firm on the earth. Our house is like a ship. It was built by an engineer who loved boats: it has wooden stairs and banisters with brass fittings, and a balcony the width of a boat deck. The ground floor was once a boatshed and the upstairs, captain’s quarters.

I make a mug of tea and scan my surroundings, first the room I am in and then, in ever-widening circles, the rooms that surround it, and the rooms of the past that lie behind them in thick layers, going all the way back to when I was nine years old.

John McLaren

Kingdoms of Neptune: seas, bays, estuaries and the dangers of reading skua poetry (it may embed in your skull)

Although Australia has always played a major role in Pacific affairs, the people and places of the Pacific have played little part in shaping its imagination. Australians, in contrast to New Zealanders, have looked to Neptune’s inland realm, searching for a sea that did not exist, exploring, draining and polluting rivercourses, or paddling by the shores of the threatening ocean. When Louis Becke sailed forth, he found only islands in an ocean, not an ocean of islands, and brought back tales of cannibals, pirates and blackbirders. Kenneth Slessor watches the sea-captains from the shore. Allen Curnow wrote of Tasman as navigator, Slessor wrote of Cook as technician, preparing the way for poets to write in Australia. Vance Palmer set a novel among fishermen in The Passage, but the estuary where his characters work is only a background to the lives they lead on shore. Thea Astley ventured into the Pacific in her Beachmasters, but in the book she kept to her island, and when she returned to Australia she had a deluge sweep her bolder characters out into the oceans, where they were heard of no more. Tim Winton took on Melville’s whale and whalers, but again his action was confined to the shore, as it is in Dirt Music, another novel of a fisherman. Against this background, this paper will explore the way Robert Adamson chooses to inhabit the littoral as liminal between sea and land and between the history of Australia and the pressures of the globe.

Brian Matthews

‘Packin’ Heat at Bojangles: Low Life and High Life on the St Kilda Littoral’

Melbourne’s beachside suburb, St Kilda, offers one of the more interesting littoral spaces. The colonial holiday retreat of the wealthy (The beautiful shores of our bay have become a resort of numerous parties from town Charles Harpur, 1841), St Kilda retains its leafy, architecturally splendid character on its eastern side away from the coast but the littoral became a mix of English seaside resort, Australian laid back democratic and the vaguely, sometimes nakedly, criminal as the life of St Kilda’s western back streets and the infamous Fitzroy Street overflowed onto the deceptively sunny, peaceful sands. Then there was and now resurrected St Kilda’s endlessly controversial Baths (many of the sights have been . . . obscene and disgusting Constable 9536, February 1946), the stingray plague, the Memorial picture theatre with its endless diet of horrors and as-near-to-pornographic pics as the proprietors dared, and the nightclubs and brothels fought over by the strong-arm men of each era, all within a stones throw of the glittering bay and the lapping waves and the bathing children and their mothers. A great mix which, in this paper, I document, describe and speculate on.
Hamish Maxwell-Stewart
There’s One More River to Cross and that’s the River Gordon: Escape from Macquarie Harbour Penal Station
Every escape is a performance. This paper will look at convict attempts to escape from Macquarie Harbour penal station in the mid-1820s. It will examine physical attempt to cross from an ordered landscape of power within the confines of the penal station to the untrammeled commons which beyond its boundaries. It will also look at official attempts to track, recapture and punish absconders. By tracing the interplay between acts of incarceration and excarceration the paper will seek to explore some of the dynamics which lay at the heart of convict life.

Russell McDougall & Julian Croft (jointly authored, but delivered by RMcD)
The Coal Littoral: Lakeland Transhumance
This paper will examine the social narratives of coal mining from the 1930s to the 1960s relating work underground in the Hunter Valley to the holiday littoral of Lake Macquarie and the Tuggerah Lakes. Drawing upon oral history sources as well as more formal historical and literary narratives, we look at the integration of the industrial culture of mining with the fishing holiday as a form of pastoralism.

Kay Merry
Shipwrecks, Castaways and Aborigines on the Coorong
This paper will compare three Coorong shipwrecks in the first decade after settlement in South Australia, and analyse the experiences, reactions and responses of the white castaways and the local indigenous people.

Stephen Muecke
Indian Ocean Poetry
I will present some texts, talk pieces, which engage with the Indian Ocean region. Each presents an argument and tells a story, so to that extent they fit into a fictocritical mode. Post-orientalism is about relocating Baudelaire in the indian Ocean, where he is literally immersed in 1843. The piece proposes that Saids orientalism, with its politics of representation, fails to account for the infectious power of poetry. ‘Jeromes Happy Hour’ is the story of the demise of reef-fishing in Mauritius in the 1970s, as Britain tries to modernise the fishing industry there. Jerome resists by drinking sweet rum coco. Finally, Paul and Virginia borrows the epic narrative style of Broome storyteller Paddy Roe to re-tell this French rouseauian romance in a contemporary creole style.
Christine Nicholls
Something rich and strange: Robin Best’s Open Cut and Marine Forms

In his recent book What’s Wrong With Contemporary Art?, Peter Timms argues that:

...[t]hroughout the 1960s and well into the 1970s, a great deal of discussion about ceramics centred around the need to establish an identifiable Australian tradition. [Bernard] Leach seemed to offer a way to achieve this, not only by means of the abstract idea that the crafts were capable of reflecting the moral status of a culture, but through his advocacy of a ‘great exchange’ between East and West, leading to a new cultural synthesis.

An Australian pottery tradition could therefore be constructed by adapting Australian ideas about responsiveness to locality and the particular nature of various materials and applying them to the local landscape. This marrying of Oriental philosophies to local Australian conditions was perfectly in keeping with Leach’s desire for cultural reconciliation.

And so it came about that something recognisably Australian developed from an eccentrically English response to Korean and Chinese styles and Japanese aesthetics. (Timms, 2004:136).

Timms goes on to write that in Australia by the 1990s, when Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating was urging Australians to think of ourselves as part of Asia, this cultural re-orientation resulted in a genuine exchange of ideas and values between Australian and Asian, particularly Japanese, ceramicists. Potters visited each other’s countries for extended periods, learning from one another. Timms also asserts that such cultural exchange was founded upon mutual respect, thus avoiding the excesses of ‘jingoistic nationalism’ or the expression of crudely parochial nationalist ideals - a charge that he has levelled at Bernard Leach. (Ibid, pp 135-136).

Robin Best is a South Australian ceramicist who has spent considerable time on cultural exchanges in various parts of Asia as well as in the Pitjantjatjara Lands of northern South Australia. In this powerpoint presentation I will examine two bodies of Best’s work, ‘Marine Forms’ and ‘Open Cut’. These works have been inspired by Australian underwater marine life, and by the coastal area in and around the Fleurieu Peninsula. I will discuss Best’s work in terms of the conference themes and also with reference to the oeuvre of certain other contemporary Australian ceramicists.

In my paper I will argue that the approaches and cultural practices of some contemporary Australian ceramicists (including Robin Best) provide a template for other Australian artists and artistic forms (including literature, the performing arts and music). By ‘thinking locally, acting globally’, and by their open acknowledgement and respect for other cultural traditions and approaches and in their eschewal of appropriation, a number of contemporary Australian ceramicists and other visual artists are making works of a beauty that is indeed rich and strange. But they are simultaneously and perhaps unexpectedly creating a kind of surplus value: the productive cultural synthesis upon which their artistic accomplishment is founded is also making an important contribution towards bridging the existential gap between Australia and Asia. Finally, I will speculate upon possible reasons for this.


Maria Nugent
From landing place to meeting place: Telling stories of the encounter between Captain Cook and local indigenous people at Botany Bay in 1770

In 2000 the public reserve on the southern shore of Botany Bay, which since 1899 had been known as Captain Cook’s Landing Place, was renamed the Meeting Place Precinct. The name change from landing place to meeting place reflects the broader project of reconciliation, which has at its heart concepts such as shared history and shared heritage. It is in this context that efforts have been made by the authorities responsible for managing the historic reserve at Botany Bay (now part of the Botany Bay National Park) to reinterpret its national heritage significance in terms of it being a
foundational site for the meeting of cultures as opposed to the origin point for British colonisation of the territory, which is how it had been inscribed and interpreted for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This paper examines this recent development within the context of a much longer history about Botany Bay’s use as a site for Australian story-telling about British possession and Aboriginal dispossession.

The paper reflects on some of challenges of writing a new history of the site, which will inform the future public presentation of the area’s historical significance. In so doing, I revisit the actual encounter that occurred between Cook’s men and local people in 1770, using insights gained from ethnographic studies belonging to other times and places. I argue that the re-inscription of Botany Bay as a foundational site for cross-cultural meetings masks the notable absence of any proper meeting occurring between voyager and locals during the week or so Captain Cook and his crew were in the bay. Yet, it is in the very absence of a proper meeting between the locals and voyagers that one can see most clearly expressions of indigenous sovereignty on the one hand and the imperatives of the voyagers on the other. Therefore I suggest that greater attention to what Nicholas Thomas has described as ‘the failure of communication’ that took place at Botany Bay in 1770 provides a much stronger foundation for the contemporary use of the site for telling historical stories that might foster reconciliation because this acknowledges the frustrated efforts of the locals to deal on their own terms with the strangers. For this reason, thinking about Botany Bay in 1770 as a place of ‘no meeting’ rather than of ‘meeting’ might ultimately be more productive for now achieving a type of rapprochement between black and white and between past and present.

Rebecca Pannell

Time for a Sea Change
One of the most successful television series ever produced in this country is ABC TV’s Sea Change. Why? What qualities, themes and narratives made this a serial that viewers clung to every Sunday night for years?

This paper will discuss the ways in which the themes and the character narratives were closely tied to landscape, seascape, place and placing in the series. In particular it will focus on the character of water and intertextual references that resonate in Australian film and television. How was the ‘beach’ as Australian icon disrupted/ reinforced in this particularly Australian text? What ‘encounters’ happened on and off screen?

Time permitting; you may even get a glance of Summer Bay (Home and Away) and other ‘Aussie soaps’ set along the coastline.

Michael Savvas

Errol Flynn’s Lifelong Relationship
Errol Flynn is remembered for a number of things, but generally not for his writing. Yet throughout his adult life he wrote works that were entertaining, imaginative and interesting. Esteemed academic Stephen Knight wrote of Flynn’s novel Showdown that ‘the fluent technique might cause some surprise.’

Flynn also had a lifelong relationship with the sea, and frequently wrote about his feelings towards it. I will be discussing this relationship as seen through Flynn’s writings. I will be referring to Flynn’s articles for The Bulletin as a correspondent, along with his books Beam Ends, Showdown and My Wicked, Wicked Ways.
Sue Sheridan

Some Versions of Coastal: Thea Astley, Captain Simpson and the North Queensland Coast

Why isn’t there a literary form called ‘the coastal’, equivalent to the pastoral? If the pastoral enables images of simplicity and innocence to be explored, and counterposed to other modes of representation (William Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral), what might ‘coastal’ writing do? I have chosen two of the many possible versions of ‘coastal’ in Australian writing, both of them having as their geo-political point of reference the far north Queensland coast. This coast appears, from the perspective of the inland rain shadow country, as a mirage of bliss, in Thea Astley’s Drylands; and, from a mariner’s perspective, it appears as a dangerous edge, in Captain Beckford Simpson’s journal of his journey with Jacky Jacky to search for the remains of the explorer Edmund Kennedy.

Kirpal Singh

WATER AS SEEN THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES: Reflections on Multi-Cultural Responses to the SEA

For centuries poets and writers (and other kindred spirits such as artists) have been responding to water and to the waters of the SEA. In an age when cross-cultural engagements are very real and therefore under great strains of sensitivity as well as possible misunderstanding it becomes imperative that all efforts be made to try and see how people from differing cultural backgrounds look at things. I thought I might offer, as a contribution to this overall agenda, the ways in which three different cultural *types* look at water: the christian, the hindu, and the muslim. I will be using various literary (and one or two non-literary) passages for this purpose and hope that my listeners will help enlarge this theme through their own ‘take’ on my position. As they say the SEA beckons but only the chosen survive its vastness.

Anna Solding

Tragic Beach

What is it about the sea that attracts tragedy in writing? Why are we so fascinated with reading about the dangerous forces of water?

Tim Winton’s writings of the beach and the sea are often celebratory, elated love songs to a place where the writer feels at home. Yet some of the most tragic events also take place in that same beach environment. Accidents where characters almost drown are a recurring theme in Winton’s texts. His characters seldom venture far from the coast. Swimming, fishing and contemplating life in silence, looking out over the water, comes naturally to them. Even though they are aware of the dangers of the sea, they are constantly drawn to it.

In my paper I intend to explore the tragic aspects in Winton’s writings of the beach and its culture and in turn compare them with those in my own manuscript. One of my stories, set in Sweden, shows a Muslim immigrant’s first encounter with the beach in the city where she has lived for over twenty years. For Swedes in general the beach is a place of fun and relaxation, much the same way that it is for Australians, but for Nassrin it signifies so much more. I intend to explore the significance of the sea in my own writing while contrasting and comparing it to the way Winton uses it in some of his most potent works.
Tracy Spencer

‘Getting off the verandah’: decolonising Australia

The verandah has been employed as a Christian cultural icon of reconciliation, where ‘East meets West, North meets South’. Postcolonial reading of the verandah in Australian history reveals it is a domestic space inscribed by colonial ideologies of separation of indigenous and non-indigenous people. However, the desire expressed in Pickard’s contextual theology is for national redemption through the ‘meeting’ together of separated peoples, and so situates this theology within the wider discourses of reconciliation, both within Australian culture and Christian theology. This paper examines potentially redemptive ‘meetings’ of Indigenous and settler Australians, drawing particularly on the engagements of Jim Page and Rebecca Forbes in the Adnyamathanha community of the northern Flinders in the 1930s-50s. Through Adnyamathanha accounts of their ‘meeting’, characteristics emerge that suggest new formulations of settler identity that resist colonial / ‘indigenous’ oppositions, and might best be understood within contemporary discourses of decolonisation which renegotiate roles of host, stranger and guest on and off the Australian verandah.

Paul Sutton

An Apology for the Canon

In the sea of texts that surround us today, a sea that is expanding daily with no signs of shrinking, one cannot possibly read everything anymore. Yet, everyday, we make decisions about what is worth reading and what is not worth reading. The canon, traditionally, has been the established beach that has formed the stable contact point for a reader to dip into the sea of texts that surrounds them. As beaches are capable of erosion, so does the canon erode over time as texts are lost - Library of Alexandria anyone? – but the beach is also added to. People continue to write and while Joyce, Woolf, Dickinson and Whitman were once tenuous grains added to the beach, they are now firmly ingrained in the Canon. However, the Canon has come under attack and the words of Ariel do not supply any hope. ‘Nothing of him that doth fade/But doth suffer a sea-change/Into something rich and strange.’ For any text from history, if it is ‘full fathom five’ it is unlikely to ever see the light of day again and they will fade from memory and life. This paper is an apology, in the sense of apology as defence, of the Canon. An apology marshalled around the need to stop the sea eroding the foundations of the beach that modern texts are washed up on. As the sea of texts grows greater, we, as critics or writers, need those dead white men more than ever.

Heather Taylor Johnson

Other People’s Oceans: Cultural and Geographical Displacements and the Sea as Death

Poets tend to draw from past memories and present emotions to create that authentic moment. Those of a cross-geographical nature may utilise scenery that varies from one country to the next. Though the setting can be ambiguous and unimportant to the reader, it may be entirely obvious and symbolic to the writer. Looking back on my poems, particularly those that have been published and therefore include me in the discussion as ‘poet’, I find that my sea-side settings inspired by my American surroundings (my ‘home’) reflect themes of rebirth while those that are inspired by my Australian-adopted home reflect themes of death. This, to me, is fascinating since I prefer Australia to America and have no desire to return ‘home’. Though the actual crossing of the Pacific Ocean indicates an instance of rebirth, the opposite is reflected in my poems. I wish to present a paper that explores the concept of the sea as death in the writing of a culturally and geographically displaced poet.
Helen Tiffin
Sharks and the Australian imaginary
Representation of animals and environments is increasingly understood to have played and to continue to play a major role in conservation. Public support, neglect, or outright vilification, is often based on the ways in which animals and habitats are described, and is hence crucial to species survival.
This paper will consider the ways in which sharks are routinely depicted in the media, fiction, illustrations, scientific studies and cartoons. In so doing it will attempt to account for the incommensurability between actual harm done to humans by sharks and the extreme fear(s) they generate.
Although the paper focuses on Australian representations, Western attitudes to sharks and contact history between sharks, and other groups of humans will be mentioned.

Graham Tulloch
Scott and Stevenson on the Beach

Annie Werner
‘Savage Printers’: Beachcombing, Tattoos and Liminality in James O’Connell’s Residence
In 1836, A Residence of Eleven Years in New Holland and the Caroline Islands was published in Boston. The subject and narrator of the text, James F. O’Connell, was alternately known as a sailor, a traveler, a rogue, even a pirate, and later in his life, when he returned to Europe, he appeared in circuses as a man ‘tattooed by savages’. In this paper, I will explore the way that, in becoming an indigenously tattooed white man, O’Connell straddled the boundary between civilization and savagery. His experiences as a beachcomber in Ponape were literally inscribed upon him and, just as he had transgressed cultural boundaries in crossing the beach, so too was his own boundary – his skin – transgressed by what Vanessa Smith has identified as an ‘alien aesthetic’.
Though modern scholars have shown O’Connell’s narrative to be at least partially fictionalized, it is still a valuable document, though not as the ‘first published, circumstantial history of a community of Oceanic Indians’ as the editor claimed. Rather, O’Connell’s narrative stands as an active engagement with a colonialist discourse that surrounded the notions of liminality and transgression that the beachcombers embodied. O’Connell’s Residence is a clear example of a text that engages not only with the conventions of a new and emerging genre of popular literature, but also with the greater dialogues involving colonialist definitions of civilization and savagery.
In this paper, I will offer a textual analysis of O’Connell’s narrative that explores his position as a liminal figure. More explicitly though, I will consider the added implications of his status as an indigenously tattooed white man. Just as O’Connell transgressed boundaries between identities, the indigenous ink that was injected into his skin both transformed and translated his own corporeal racialisation.

Richard White
Beach holidays
The prominence of the beach in Australian culture has become something of a cliché, but the particular role of the beach holiday, as distinct from the more elaborate culture of the city beach, has received less attention. This paper sketches the rise and fall of the family beach holiday in Australia. It emerged in the late nineteenth century, justified largely as a healthy escape from the
city, and represented a different negotiation of nature and culture and the body from that found at Bondi, St Kilda or Glenelg. By the 1930s a holiday at the beach was still a fairly exclusive status symbol, though it was being prescribed for deprived rural children with the same enthusiasm that a bush holiday had been prescribed for their city slum counterparts. After World War II, with mass car and home ownership, the focus on family life and increasing availability of annual leave, the beach holiday had its heyday, in camping grounds, holiday cabins, flats and weekenders strung around the Australian coast – and Harold Holt celebrating his capacity to run the nation lying on a banana chair in Portsea. But from the 1970s it began to lose its significance as a shared experience. The annual holiday was transformed by the two-income family and a new work culture. The Australian beach holiday became daggy; beach holidays went off-shore and became identified with pampering, status and activity rather than the joy of doing nothing. And this is the genius of John Howard’s annual holiday at Hawk’s Nest, a perfect example of the smoke and mirrors of the Howard ascendency.
**Bionotes**

**Margaret Allen** teaches gender studies with an historical flavour at the University of Adelaide. She has done a great deal of research into 19th century South Australian women writers, in particular on C.E.M. Martin, about whom she has published a number of articles and chapters. She is engaged on an ARC funded project exploring links between Australia and India in the period c1880-1930. She has become particularly interested in the experiences of Indians living in Australia during these years and on how they negotiated the White Australia Policy.

**Ron Blaber** teaches in Cultural Studies in the Faculty of Media, Sociology and Culture at Curtin University. He has a background in postcolonial studies, and is currently researching the populist imaginary in Australian writing.

**Jonathan Bollen** is a lecturer in drama at Flinders University. He was previously a postdoctoral fellow in theatre studies at the University of New England. His research on masculinity in Australian theatre, undertaken in collaboration with Adrian Kiernander and Bruce Parr, is published in Australasian Drama Studies.

**Moya Costello** recently graduated with a PhD (Creative Writing), The University of Adelaide. Her books are two collections of short fiction: Small Ecstasies (UQP 1994) and Kites in Jakarta (Sea Cruise Books 1985); and one novel: The Office as a Boat: A Chronicle (Brandl & Schlesinger 2000). This semester she taught in writing subjects at Flinders University and online for the University of Canberra.

**Ralph Crane** is Associate Professor of English and Head of the School of English, Journalism and European Languages at the University of Tasmania. His research interests include Anglo-Indian (Raj) fiction, Indian English fiction, and J.G. Farrell. He is currently editing a series of Raj novels for OUP India: Charles Pearce's *Love Beseiged* (2003), and Maud Diver's *Lilamani* (2004) have already been published and editions of Margaret Wilson's *Daughters of India* and A.E.W. Mason's *The Broken Road* will be published in 2006 and 2007. He also co-edits the journal *new literatures review*.

**Julian Croft** was born in Newcastle NSW and educated there. He came from a shipping and coal mining family, and spent his holidays at his grandparents' house at Toronto on Lake Macquarie. He has published poetry since 1962 and published in most other creative and academic genres over the same period.

**Caroline Ford** is currently researching a PhD on the development of Sydney's ocean beach culture between 1810 and 1920, tracing the transformation of the beach space from a largely unused natural location in the early nineteenth century, to a physically crowded site which was prominent in the collective local and national imagination by the 1920s. This paper has come out of that thesis. Caroline also works for Surf Life Saving Australia, as a researcher and contributor to their centenary history book, which is due for release in late 2006.

**Lucy Frost** is Professor of English and Director of the University of Tasmania's Centre for Colonialism and its Aftermath. Her research interests focus on the representations of female convict experience in Van Diemen's Land, and at present she is writing about the female convict transports.

**Chad Habel** is currently labouring in the throes of end-of-year marking whilst thrusting his PhD thesis out into the deathly birthplace of examination. In his spare time he concocts exemplary bad puns to evoke the scorn and contempt of his esteemed colleagues.

**Anna Johnston** is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Tasmania. She has published on colonial missionary writing; settler colonialism; travel writing; and autobiography. She is co-editor of *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire* (2002) and author of *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (2003). She is one of the Deputy Directors of the Centre for Colonialism and Its Aftermath at UTAS, and co-edits *new literatures review* with Ralph Crane.

**Bridget Jolly** has been a free-lance professional historian for the past seven years, following two years as cultural development officer in local government after eleven years at Flinders University (School of Humanities) preceded by five years' farming (at Springton). Her research degrees were on the somewhat
intractable philosophy of the designer-geometer R. Buckminster Fuller, and on European 1920s–1930s austerity shelter-building. She is now learning about South Australia—the history of the beekeeping industry; the handling of commercial explosives; and, currently, South Australia's water resources management from 1970, and the 20th century history of Kangaroo Island. In her head and heart she is also a visual art printmaker.

Ben Kooyman undertook his BA and BA Honours at Flinders. His honours thesis was on Shakespeare. He is currently working on a PhD that deals with Shakespeare in mythology and in film. He is also the writer and illustrator of an insanely unpopular comic book series called Hamlet VS Faustus.

Gay Lynch has published five stories for Macmillan Education, and worked on several novels. After completing her Masters of Creative Writing at Adelaide University in 2003 she commenced a doctorate at Flinders University. She is presently tutoring in Fiction For Young Readers, while writing a novel about an Irish family on the frontier of S.E. S.A. Cleanskin, another adult novel, should be in the bookshops early in the New Year.

Peter Manthorpe is a post-graduate in creative writing at Flinders University. His recent life has undergone a land-change, from seafarer to suburban family-man and student. His writing draws from his past, in which he was richer and stranger.

Brian Matthews was appointed lecturer in English at Flinders University in 1968, Reader in English in 1976, and was awarded Flinders’ first Personal Chair in English in 1994. He has taught in many European universities, was Fulbright Scholar at the University of Oregon (1986), Head of the Menzies Centre for Australian Studies at the University of London (1993-97), and was elected to Fellowship of the Australian Academy of the Humanities in 1995. He has been described (Oxford Companion to Australian Literature) as a writer of ‘spare, polished stories’ and as having a ‘hilarious comic gift’. He has published twelve books of fiction, non-fiction and essays, including Louisa (Penguin 1987, UQP 1998) and A Fine and Private Place (Picador 2000) and has won the Victorian, NSW and Queensland Premiers’ Literary Awards, the Gold Medal of The Australian Literature Society, and, jointly, the John Hetherington Bicentennial Prize for Biography. Well known as a columnist, he won the ARPA Award for the best humorous column of 2003-04.

Hamish Maxwell-Stewart is a senior lecturer in History and Classics at the University of Tasmania. He has written a number of works on convict history including American Citizens British Slaves: Yankee Political Prisoners in an Australian Penal Colony (2002) co-authored with Cassandra Pybus. He is also an editor contributor (with Lucy Frost) to Chain Letters: Narrating Convict Lives (2001).

Michele McCrea lives in a house overlooking the sea on the Fleurieu Peninsula. She has worked in film, television and radio as a writer and assistant editor, in corporate communications and as a professional counsellor. She enjoys walking on the beach, painting, designing mosaics, reading and, of course, writing. Michele teaches creative therapies, and is writing her first book (a multi-generational mystery set in a mythical country not too different from Australia) for her PhD in Creative Writing at Flinders University. Her short story Moving On will be published in the Spiny Babbler Anthology of Creative Writing in the near future.

Russell McDougall was born in Newcastle, into a railway and shipping family. His father worked for the BHP mines (John Darling, Burwood, Lambton B and Stockton Borehole) and at the Awaba State Mine; and Russell grew up in the mining community on the Lake at Toronto. With "Coal River on A Sunday," he won the Traditional Bush Ballad Song-Writing Competition of the Henry Lawson Festival of Arts in Grenfell (N.S.W.) in 1987. He has published widely on Australian and other post-colonial literatures.

John McLaren spent many years teaching at Footscray Institute of Technology and Victoria University, and is now practising to be a retired gentleman. His interests are in literature and Australian Pacific Studies.

Kay Merry is a second year postgrad student in the Flinders History Dept. She grew up in Hobart and is a sixth generation Australian via First and Second Fleet ancestors, who were fortunate enough to win a free passage to Sydney, then, eventually to Hobart in 1808, via Norfolk Island, where they had been successful farmers and raised nine children. In the same year, another ancestor - a Tasmanian Aboriginal woman - as an adolescent, was either purchased or abducted from her tribe by a British sealer. The discovery of her
interesting family origins in the early 1990s stimulated her passion for Australian colonial, convict and contact history. Her PhD research topic is the 'Maria' or Coorong massacre of 1840.'

**Stephen Muecke** is an Australian Professorial Research Fellow in Cultural Studies at the University of Technology, Sydney, and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. He has worked extensively in Indigenous Australia and more recently on the historical and contemporary links between culture and commerce in the Indian Ocean. He helped promote Aboriginal literature from the early 80s, and edited (with Adam Shoemaker) the lost manuscript of the first major Indigenous writer in Australia, David Unaipon: *Legendary Tales of the Australian Aborigines*, (University of Melbourne Press, 2001). He is co-editor with Chris Healy of the *Cultural Studies Review*, and a recent book is *Ancient & Modern: Time, Culture and Indigenous Philosophy* (UNSW Press 2004).

**Christine Nicholls** is a writer, curator and academic. From 1982-1992 she lived and worked at Lajamanu, a remote Aboriginal settlement in the Tanami Desert of the Northern Territory of Australia, first as a linguist and then as the Principal of the local Warlpiri Lajamanu School. She subsequently held the position of Principal Education Officer with responsibility for the Northern Territory’s bilingual education programmes in Indigenous languages and English. Christine Nicholls has published more than 100 articles about Indigenous Australian art and languages, many of which have been translated into languages other than English. Recently she published a biography of Eastern Anmatyerr artist Kathleen Petyarre, in a book entitled *Kathleen Petyarre: Genius of Place*, co-authored by Professor Ian North. The latter book was the co-winner of the award for the best art book published in Australia and New Zealand in 2002. In 2003 a number of the children’s books Christine Nicholls edited and/or wrote won the national award as part of the best educational kit in Australia, and in 2004 another children’s book she wrote introducing children to the Indigenous art of Australia won an award at the 2004 Australian Children’s Book awards. Christine has curated many art exhibitions both in Australia and overseas, and has lectured extensively throughout Europe and Japan. From 2004-2005 she held the post of Professor of Australian Studies at The University of Tokyo.

**Maria Nugent** is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the School of Historical Studies at Monash University. She is the author of *Botany Bay: Where Histories Meet* (Allen & Unwin 2005).

**Rebecca Pannell** is completing a PhD in Cultural Studies and Theology at Flinders University. She is currently Associate Dean at Flinders Housing and teaches occasionally in Australian Studies and Theology at Flinders. Her research interests include theology and film, religion and literature and postcolonial studies. Her thesis is about the body and religion in performing arts genres in Australia. Bec has published in the area of postcolonial theory, religion and film and runs workshops for clergy and parishes on religion, media, and popular culture.

**Michael X. Savvas** is endlessly completing a Ph.D., whose ending looms before him like a lurid 3D image, close enough to touch, yet inevitably elusive. He is allegedly writing a crime novel set in Port Adelaide. Michael’s favoured method of writing involves sitting on his balcony with a cup of Ethiopian Mocha coffee and Beaufort cheese on water crackers, watching the trees, and occasionally—accidentally—putting pen to paper. He once worked as a shearers’ rouseabout. However, he decided that being splattered with blood whilst holding sheep being castrated was slightly less palatable than a life of writing.

**Susan Sheridan** is Professor of Womens Studies at Flinders University. Her books include /Christina Stead/ (Harvester 1988), a study of Australian women’s writing from the 1880s to the 1930s entitled /Along the Faultlines: Sex, Race and Nation/ (Allen & Unwin, 1995), and most recently /Who Was That Woman? The Australian Women’s Weekly* in the Postwar Years/ (UNSW Press, 2002). She has published widely on women’s writing, feminist cultural studies, Australian cultural history and women’s studies. Current research project is a study of mid c.20th women writers in Australia.

**Kirpal Singh** currently facilitates Creative Thinking at the Singapore Management University. In recent years several ideas contained in his latest book *THINKING HATS & COLOURED TURBANS: Creativity Across Cultures* (Prentice-Hall, 2004 -see amazon.com for reviews, etc...) have begun to be debated and discussed all over the world. In the midst of these the author is constantly being invited to provide insights into his theories and ideas about Creativity and how Creativity can contribute to better cross-cultural interactions. Of course the turbaned writer still delights his audiences by his irreverence and his many fictions and poems.
Anna Solding writes. She writes novels and short stories. Reviews and articles. Occasionally, she writes an academic paper. Mainly to be able to attend a conference. To listen to other papers. To see new places. Trying to grasp post-colonial, or perhaps post-structural theory. She loves the challenge but ultimately she always returns to the pure word, the story, that which needs to be told in just that way. Fiction. Anna Solding is a writer.

Rev Tracy Spencer (Deacon) is an ordained Deacon in the Uniting Church in Australia, currently undertaking research for a PhD (Theol) through Flinders University, developing a contextual and narrative theology based on the lives of Jim Page and Rebecca Forbes, produced through oral histories and post-colonial life writing. Previously she has worked in ministry in remote South Australia, and will soon take up an appointment at the Alice Springs congregation of the Uniting Church.

Heather Taylor Johnson moved from America to Australia in 1999 and since then has obtained an MA in Creative Writing from the University of Adelaide, a true-blue Aussie husband, a son and permanent residency. She is currently anticipating the birth of her second child and the completion of her PhD.


Graham Tulloch has a longstanding research interest in Walter Scott. He is the author of The Language of Walter Scott (1980) and has edited Ivanhoe for the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels (1998). More recently he has begun to publish work on Robert Louis Stevenson, an author he has loved since childhood.

Annie Werner is a PhD student at the University of Wollongong who is writing about representations of indigenous tattooing in first-contact and post-colonial literature. She has forthcoming articles in Social Semiotics and Kunapipi Journal of Postcolonial studies, and has presented her work at numerous conferences throughout Australia and overseas.

Richard White teaches Australian history and the history of travel and tourism at the University of Sydney. His publications include Inventing Australia, The Oxford Book of Australian Travel Writing and Cultural History in Australia as well as numerous articles on national identity, travel and cultural history. His most recent book, a collaborative monograph, is On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia (Pluto, 2005). He is currently writing a history of the cooee and working on Australian drive tourism in Europe and overland through Asia.