

A History of the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies 1966-2016

by COLIN RODERICK &
LYNDON MEGARRITY



Published by the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies
Townsville 2016

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INTRODUCTION

The Foundation for Australian Literary Studies (FALS) is that rare thing: an organisation that has made a difference to the public understanding and appreciation of Australian literary culture from a regional rather than a metropolitan setting. This publication has been prepared to commemorate and celebrate the first fifty years of FALS, an organisation designed to promote and encourage Australian literature at a local and national level. It is the work of two authors.

The first author is Professor Colin Roderick (1911–2000), the original driving force behind FALS and its first Executive Director (1966–76). The Foundation published Roderick’s account of the organisation’s first decade in 1989, and while Roderick prepared a manuscript for the second decade, this has remained unpublished until now. Therefore, in this publication, the first twenty years of the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies are presented from the direct perspective of Colin Roderick. There has been some very minor editing to preserve continuity and context within the publication as a whole. Roderick skilfully captures the energy and enthusiasm of the early years of the Foundation, which elevated the importance of Australian literature and showcased North Queensland’s potential as a cultural centre. Roderick’s narrative of the first twenty years of FALS is followed by an account of the three decades from 1987 to 2016. This has been written by historian Dr Lyndon Megarrity, and will focus on how the Foundation has evolved since the 1980s.¹ It will also show how Roderick’s vision has helped sustain the organisation over five decades.

Townsville in the 1960s was consolidating its reputation for being a regional hub and centre of national importance, especially with developments such as the Townsville University College (now James Cook University) and Lavarack Barracks, the largest army base in Australia. It was a town with strong economic infrastructure, but its cultural infrastructure was less developed. The establishment of the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies in 1966 was a sign that Townsville and North Queensland as a whole could be a location for cultural as well as economic advancement. As a former FALS Executive Director, Adjunct Professor Don Gallagher, has stated,

You have to remember that Townsville was a very different place in 1966 and the Foundation created quite a lot of excitement among the educated for bringing really well known people to the city—not just the Governor-General—but big names in writing, e.g. the first Lecturer, Rohan Rivett. It seemed the beginning of a cultural awakening in the city ... ²

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¹ Dr Megarrity is an adjunct lecturer at James Cook University. He would like to thank Don and Mary Gallagher, Victoria Kuttainen, Hannah Cameron, Harry Heseltine, Sarah Galletly and the Megarrity family for their support in this project.

² Don Gallagher to Lyndon Megarrity, Email dated 15 August 2016.

*The Foundation for
Australian Literary Studies:*

A Note on the First Ten
Years 1966-1976

by

Colin Roderick

CBE, MA, MEd, PhD, DLitt *honoris causa* Caen

Emeritus Professor

Foundation Professor of English

James Cook University of North Queensland

Originally published in 1989 by the
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James Cook University of North Queensland
Townsville

P R E L U D E

THE FOUNDATION FOR AUSTRALIAN LITERARY STUDIES of the James Cook University of North Queensland, like so many North Queensland enterprises undertaken since Leichhardt opened up the area with his journey of exploration in 1844-5, originated in Sydney.

There, shortly after Dr Colin Roderick had in July 1965 accepted the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Fred Schonell, to take the foundation Chair of English at the University College of Townsville, two crucial meetings occurred.

Dr Roderick, then a Director of the publishing company of Angus and Robertson Ltd, invited an interested group of bookmen to join him at two luncheons at Claude Fay's Metropolitan Hotel, on the corner of Bridge and George Streets, a hundred metres from the publishing offices of the Company. To the first meeting came Sir Norman Cowper, Chairman of the Company; George Adie Ferguson, CBE, Managing Director; the poet and critic Douglas Stewart, OBE, a member of the Company's literary staff and formerly editor of the Red Page of the Sydney *Bulletin*; the poet Kenneth Slessor, OBE, then literary critic of the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* and President of the Journalists' Club; Harry Kippax, drama critic of the *Sydney Morning Herald*; and Dr Clement Semmler, of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

At that meeting Dr Roderick broached the idea of the establishment of a literary foundation in association with his Chair, for the close affiliation between the community and the Chair of Australian Literature at the University which he had worked to establish had not eventuated. The aim of the proposed foundation was to bring writers, teachers, critics, and readers of Australian literature into closer contact with each other and with the reading public. This, Roderick said, could occur through public lectures, seminars exploring the practical aspects of literature, social occasions with a literary flavour, nation-wide symposia on the problems of communication between writer and reader, and by publications inspired by activities of the Foundation. He wished it to be free of Government or University financial support and to rely for its continued existence on public appeals to the spirit of the initiative.

At that time North Queensland had no public Art Gallery, no regional well-stocked library, and no organized theatre. The population of Townsville was 48,000. The University College, instituted in 1961, occupied a small building in an inner suburb and had no more than a hundred students in the Department of English. The demand for a cultural impetus to North Queensland was clamant. All present at that first meeting in Sydney were in favour of the idea and undertook to support it if it were established.

At the second meeting the same gentlemen attended and met the newly-appointed Warden of the University College, Dr K.J.C. Back, as he was passing through Sydney on his return from sabbatical leave. Dr Back, a bio-chemist, undertook to support the venture on its being made clear that no call would be made on University funds on its behalf. George Ferguson pledged his support by way of publication by Angus and Robertson of monographs consisting substantially of a series of annual public lectures sponsored by the Foundation.

In anticipation of success, Dr Roderick requested the notable author and commentator Rohan Rivett of Melbourne to hold himself in readiness as the first guest of honour at the inaugural dinner envisaged for July 1966 and as the Foundation's first public lecturer.

Resigning as a Director of Angus and Robertson on 5 January 1966, Dr Roderick entered on his duties as Professor of English on 19 January 1966. The Department of English was at the time a subsidiary of the Department of English of the University of Queensland, of which Professor K.G. Hamilton was Head. The courses of both Departments ran in parallel, and with Professor Hamilton's agreement, it was possible to institute two years of study of Australian literature at both institutions from the beginning of 1967.

Meanwhile Professor Roderick, carrying a letter of introduction from the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Alderman (later the Honorable) Harry F. Jensen, conferred with the Mayor of Townsville, Mr Angus Smith, OBE, and with Mr Andrew Dale, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee of the University College, on the inauguration of the Foundation. The Chairman of the Advisory Council of the University College, Mr H.T. Priestley, agreed to act as foundation Chairman.

A Steering Committee consisting of Professor Roderick, Mr Andrew Dale and Mr Justice Russell Skerman arranged an inaugural subscription dinner at which the Foundation would, following approval of the Advisory Council of the University College, come formally into existence.

At this dinner, held on 18 July 1966 in the Orchid Room of the Hotel Allen, Townsville, then the only commodious dining-room in the city, seventy citizens with the Mayor of Townsville in the Chair heard the formal proposals to establish the "Foundation for Australian Studies", as it was first called. Among them were the former Commonwealth Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, judges of the North Queensland jurisdictions, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops, Dr Peter Delamothe of Bowen, then Minister for Justice and Attorney-General of Queensland, and leaders of commerce and industry in the city.

To it came messages of support from leading figures in Australian literary and academic fields. Sir John Barry, Senior Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria, expressed the hope that the influence of the proposed Foundation would be nation-wide. Sir Stephen Roberts, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, described the formation of the Foundation as "a major educational achievement." The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Fred Schonell, saw it as "a means of charting the past, vitalizing the present, and influencing the future for the increasing number of Australians seeking a literary conscience."

Mr Rohan Rivett, responding to the toast of the guest of honour, predicted that the University College would grow into one of the important universities of the Southern Hemisphere. "Where you have a strong and virile university, you see enormous growth and prosperity," he said.

Moving the resolution to establish the Foundation, the Warden of the College, Dr Back, said that the progress of the humanities at the College being spearheaded by Professor Colin Roderick would provide essential balance in the development of the University. Mr John Saint-Smith, CBE, remarked that his own profession of engineering would benefit from the improvement in expression which he expected would follow from the activities of the Foundation.

Following the reading of the congratulatory telegram from the former Governor-General Sir William McKell, Professor Roderick dealt briefly with the proposed aims of the Foundation. "While a university must serve the mind of man," he said, "inspiring man by its research and teaching in the various disciplines, it must never lose sight of the fact that its great object was to serve the community."

He was certain that the Foundation would carry the name of Townsville not only before the rest of Australia, but around the world.

Dr Peter Delamothe summed up the enthusiasm displayed for the project by remarking on the historical significance of the evening's proceedings for North Queensland. "History will record," he said, "that on this night we went back to what our forbears studied first and foremost—humanity."

The resolution carried by the meeting not only formally established the Foundation but appointed a preliminary committee to draft a constitution. Its members were:

Chairman:

Mr. H.T. Priestley, Chairman of the Advisory Council of the University College of Townsville

Deputy Chairman:

Dr K.J.C. Back, Warden

Executive Officer:

Professor Colin Roderick, CBE, Professor of English

Honorary Secretary:

Mr Andrew Dale, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee of the Advisory Council of the College

Honorary Treasurer:

Mr R.J. Barnett, Assistant Registrar

Honorary Solicitor:

Mr G.V. Roberts, CBE, Deputy-Chairman of the Advisory Council

Members:

The Honourable Justice Russell Skerman of the Northern Supreme Court; Mr John Saint-Smith, CBE (Manager of the Copper Refineries Pty Ltd); Mr W.E. Hunt, Manager of the Commonwealth Bank, Townsville; Mr Gordon Lee, of Gordon Lee Motors; Mr Andrew Dale; Mr H. Neil Smith.

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PUBLIC LECTURES

The Steering Committee's first guest of honour, the Melbourne author of *Behind Bamboo* and political commentator Rohan Rivett was also the embryo Foundation's first lecturer.

Rohan Rivett, BA, born in 1917—died 1977—was educated at Wesley College, Melbourne, the University of Melbourne and Oxford University. During the Second World War he was a war correspondent with the Australian Forces. He was news editor of the Malaya Broadcasting Commission when the Japanese overran the peninsula. Along with fellow Australians he slaved on the Burma-Siam railway during the dark days of the war. His captivity ended only with the surrender of Japan.

After the war he joined the staff of the Melbourne *Herald* and served as its correspondent in China and Britain. In 1951 he became Editor-in-Chief and a Director of News Limited, Adelaide. He was a Director of the International Press Institute, Zurich, in 1962-3 and was an Honorary Life Member of the organization.

Rivett's lectures followed on the heels of the inaugural dinner. His subject was "Writing About Australia". He dealt with it in four lectures, two given in the Town Hall, Townsville and two in the College Refectory. In the chair for the first lecture, delivered in the Town Hall to some 200 people who attended, the Chairman of the Advisory Council of the College presided. In it, Mr Rivett traced the origins of post-war Australian writing in the work of such war reporters as Alan Moorehead, Chester Wilmot, and George Johnston. The second lecture, dealing with the writing of Australian history, was delivered to an equally large and enthusiastic audience in the Refectory of the University College with the Mayor of Townsville presiding.

So the pattern of linking the community with the University College was set from the beginning.

Mr Rivett's remaining two lectures, on Australian travel literature and biography, attracted audiences of more than 200.

In due course the series appeared under the imprint of Angus and Robertson. The Company met all costs of publication and paid a royalty to the Foundation.

PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

The Preliminary Committee met for the first time on 27 July 1966 at the Reef Motel, Strand, where subcommittees were formed to draft a Constitution and to organize finance.

The Constitution Committee consisted of the Warden, Mr Justice Skerman, Professor Colin Roderick, and Mr G.V. Roberts. The final draft was the work of Mr Justice Skerman and Professor Roderick and was adopted by the Senate of the University of Queensland.

The Finance Committee began its operations with a credit balance of \$846 after payment of establishment expenses, including the inaugural dinner.

Four major immediate aims suggested themselves to the Steering Committee: to conduct an annual series of public lectures on various phases of Australian life; to arrange to publish them in a monograph; to endow an annual prize for the best book published in Australia; and to sponsor three-day schools in English Expression to which secondary schools in North Queensland might send one senior secondary school student.

A long-term aim was to encourage graduates, either from Australian universities or from others, to pursue postgraduate studies in Australian literature.

In general terms the Foundation was to do all that it could to enrich the cultural life of the community.

How far these aims were realized will appear as this record of the Foundation's activities unfolds.

The Foundation was to remain an arm of the Department of English. Membership was to depend on the making of donations to the University College that would enable the Foundation to achieve its aims. The scale of donations to be suggested to those invited to become members was as follows:

Full member:	\$50
Benefactor:	\$150
Life Member:	\$300

The Preliminary Committee's second meeting occurred on 16 February 1967 at Lang's Hotel, Flinders Street, by which date the Foundation had a credit balance of \$6,221.93.

The Committee agreed to invite Professor G.A. Wilkes, Professor of English at the University of Sydney, to deliver three lectures on the Australian novel to coincide with the Annual Dinner on Monday, 29 May 1967.

The Foundation's Annual Award for the best book dealing with any aspect of Australian life and published in 1967 began with a prize of \$500, the funds for the first award being donated by the Australian book publishers on the representation of Mr George Ferguson.

With the encouragement of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Fred Schonell, Mrs Margaret Lawrie began research under the auspices of the Foundation into the myths and legends of the Torres Strait. The project was successfully completed. The ensuing book, *Myths and Legends of Torres Strait*, splendidly illustrated with paintings by Islanders, appeared from the University of Queensland Press and won the Foundation's Annual Award.

JOURNALISM SEMINAR

During the week-end of 27-28 May 1967 the Executive Director, Professor Colin Roderick, co-editor of *The Journalists' Craft* (Sydney, A & R, 1965) attended a seminar organized by the University of New England at Armidale for the provincial press.

His address dealt with the need for closer ties between tertiary education institutions and the press. Sub-graduate courses such as the meagre diploma courses in journalism offered by some universities were insufficient. The status of journalism had to be lifted. What was needed was a marriage of the practical training by the cadet tutor and the broad educational basis provided by the discipline of a university degree. He broached the proposal that universities appropriately placed might create the degree of Bachelor of Journalism.

To thrash the question out he proposed holding a symposium on it in 1968 in Townsville under the auspices of the Foundation. His proposal was accepted, and he was asked to convene a conference to discuss education in journalism. He was empowered to invite representatives of the Australian Journalists' Association, metropolitan and provincial newspaper proprietors, and radio and television newsmen and public relations officers to attend, together with interested university faculties.

The conference was tentatively fixed for May 1968, during the university vacation. It was opened by His Excellency Lord Casey, Governor-General of the Commonwealth and presided over by His Honour Mr Justice Else-Mitchell. Lord Casey subsequently bestowed Vice-Regal patronage on the Foundation and this all subsequent Governors-General have maintained.

FIRST ANNUAL DINNER

At the first Annual Dinner, held in the Orchid Room of the Hotel Allen on 29 May 1967, 77 members and their guests met the Guest of Honour, Professor G.A. Wilkes, and his wife, and heard the Chairman, Mr H.T. Priestley, present an Interim Report embodying most of what is in these notes.

At that date there were 53 members, three benefactors, seven life members, and 26 contributors of sums ranging from \$2 upwards. Members ranged from private citizens to the biggest commercial and industrial companies in Australia. The Foundation's credit balance stood at \$6,274.43.

Proposing the toast of the University College of Townsville, Mr J.J. Casey, District Manager of the Mutual Life and Citizens Assurance Company, predicted that the growth of the young university of a thousand students would exceed expectations.

"The College," he remarked, "is now occupying the first buildings on the permanent campus at Douglas, which is designed to accommodate 10,000 students."

He saw the future university as a focal point for education not only for North Queensland but also for our neighbours to the north. "I wonder," he said, "Whether this enrolment of 10,000 is as far away as many people think."

In response, the Warden, Dr K.J.C. Back, said that he and his staff were very conscious of the fact that the University was, and would continue to be, a part of the community. He cited the Foundation as "an admirable example of how university activity and community interest were brought together."

Professor Wilkes's lectures on the theme, "Australian Novelists Look at Life", delivered at the Town Hall and the College Refectory on 30 May, and 1 and 5 June 1967, drew attendances of 129, 60 and 165 respectively. Angus and Robertson Ltd subsequently published an enlarged version of his lectures as *Australian Literature: A Conspectus*. It proved to be a strong seller and was long in demand as a concise introduction to Australian creative literature.

ANNUAL LITERARY AWARD

During the year the Board of the Foundation resolved to establish an annual literary award to be known as the Townsville Foundation for Australian Studies Award.

The Assistant Registrar, Mr R.J. Barnett, who was both Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary of the Foundation, promulgated the rules relating to the Award in June 1967.

The Award was from the outset meant to recognize merit in the writing of Australian non-fiction and to march with the Miles Franklin Award given annually for merit in the writing of the Australian novel. Since the Miles Franklin Award did not take in poetry and the short story, the Board decided to widen the scope of the Townsville Award to include publications in any field of Australian writing. The essential qualifications were, and remain:

- (a) that the publications entered be published in Australia, even though they might be printed elsewhere; and
- (b) that they deal with some aspect of Australian life.

The judges appointed to the panel for the 1967 Award were Professor G.A. Wilkes of Sydney, Dr Stephen Murray-Smith of Melbourne, and Professor Colin Roderick of Townsville.

The prize money was fixed at \$500 until 1976, when it became \$750.

The Award has usually been made by the guest of honour at the Annual Dinner. The first Award went to the poet Douglas Stewart for his *Collected Poems 1936-1967*.

SCHOOL IN ENGLISH EXPRESSION

In the aim of enlarging interest in the work of the Department, the Foundation began the organisation of an annual weekend school for secondary school students. To this two Senior level students from each of the secondary schools of North Queensland came. The Premier (and Minister for Education), Mr J.C.A. Pizzey, approved the scheme, and the Railways Department provided the young students with free passes to attend. Along with the Regional Director of Education at Townsville, Mr W.H. Hooper (who was a member of the Advisory Council of the University), the Principals of the secondary schools supported the scheme enthusiastically.

The first school, in Australian language and literature, occurred on 22-23 June 1967. The poet and novelist, David Rowbotham, participated in the programme, as did members of staff of the English Department.

Angus and Robertson Ltd provided five prizes for the best written accounts of the school submitted subsequently by participants. Miss Barbara Vissers, 16, of the Townsville State High School, won the first prize with a report that revealed a talent for creative writing worthy of cultivation.

Of the 29 students who participated, 21 subsequently enrolled as students at James Cook University.

In subsequent years similar week-end schools were held. In 1968 59 Senior students participated in one on "Australian Ballads and Songs" conducted by Hugh Anderson of Melbourne.

The first session, on "Folk Song and Popular Ballads", dealt with traditional songs of the British Isles and their survival in Australia. The second, "Stringybark and Greenhide", reviewed songs reflecting Australian settlement, goldfield life, bush life, and journalistic songs. The third, "The Ballads", leaned heavily on Lawson, Paterson, and the balladists of the Sydney *Bulletin*. The fourth, "Folk Song in Australia", revealed that North Queensland was the last "golden hole" for the collection of bush songs and mining ballads.

On the Saturday evening, the students enjoyed a Campfire Singabout on the campus in the foothills of the Mount Stuart Range. For the first time—and, as it happened, the last—the hills re-echoed to the strains of "The Wild Colonial Boy", "Click Go the Shears, Boys", "The Dying Stockman", and scores of other Australian ballads.

Next morning, at Cape Pallarenda, Mr Anderson discoursed on "Songs of the Sea and of Sailors". In a fascinating session he took the students through the primitive work songs and explained the evolution of the sea chanties as songs of entertainment as well as accompaniments to labour on the ropes and at the capstan. The session culminated with the salt-water ballads of E.J. Brady and ended with a Chanty Sing-song.

The students having presented Hugh Anderson with an inscribed boomerang, he came again in 1969 with Shirley Andrews, President of the Victorian Folk Music Club, for a school on Australian song and dance. The school took place on 12-13 September 1969.

In addition to more on Australian song from Mr Anderson, the students learned some of the simple country dances and on the second day went through their paces in the Anglican Synod Hall on Melton Hill.

E. J. BANFIELD

The late 1960s was also notable for the Foundation's acquisition for James Cook University of the half-acre surrounding the burial cairn of E.J. Banfield and his wife on Dunk Island. Until then the land on which the cairn stands had been the property of Avis Rent-a-Car. Mr Eric McIlree, Chairman and Managing Director of the Company, visited Dunk Island on 9 October 1967 with the Chief Commissioner of Lands for Queensland, Mr E.C.J. Muir; the Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr A. Trist; Sir Raphael Cilento, of the National Trust; Professor Colin Roderick, Executive Director of the Foundation; and Mr Keith Brazier, a Townsville surveyor. The purpose of the visit was to select and mark out a reserve for a proposed Banfield Memorial Centre.

Mr McIlree, whose untimely death shortly afterwards in a motor boat explosion in Sydney Harbour deprived the Foundation of a firm friend, surrendered the half-acre surrounding the cairn to the Crown, which then gazetted it as trust land to be vested in the University College of Townsville, later James Cook University. Avis Rent-a-Car undertook to provide access to the Centre from the northern bank of the embouchure to the Goo-Tchur Creek by a footway leading up to the creek bank to a dam to be built by the Company adjacent to the site of the Centre. In the event of the University erecting a building on the site, the Company would provide assistance with a tractor and trailer to haul building materials and would provide an honorary caretaker.

Mr McIlree further proposed to erect a dormitory block on a suitable site on the Company's land which would be made available to University students and participants in schools organised by the University at a price lower than the normal tariff.

In the event of a Banfield Museum being erected, with rooms suitable for research in marine science, the question of charging an admittance fee was left open, depending, as it would, on the quality and attractiveness of the exhibits.

The Advisory Council of the University College accepted these proposals. By an Order in Council dated 28 January 1971 one rood 7.9 perches in the Innisfail Land Agent's District, Cardwell, being Reserve 12668 as shown on plan 2387 deposited in Survey office 71-1828 S.A. (R.C. 25948), was handed over to the trustees gazetted, being the Chairman and Deputy Chancellor of the Council of James Cook University, the Warden (Vice-Chancellor), Assistant Registrar (Registrar), the Chairman of the Buildings, Grounds and Development Committee, the Professor of English, and the Professor of Marine Biology. Access was, and remains, by a pathway leading to the northern corner of the lot, being lot 3 RD 23282, formerly lot 2, the land being gazetted as a Reserve for Museum (Banfield Memorial Purposes).

Professor Roderick, who was then engaged on research into the life of Edmund James Banfield, visited Ararat in the ensuing vacation and informed Banfield's niece, Miss Lorna Banfield, of the University's intentions. Miss Banfield thereupon donated to the University a large collection of Aboriginal and New Guinea artefacts which Banfield had got together during his time in North Queensland, together with an extensive collection of shells which he had gathered on the beaches and environs of Dunk Island. These were packed under Professor Roderick's supervision and were delivered to the Warden's office in what is now University Hall. The case being large—some 12 feet by 15 inches by 18 inches—the Warden had it stored in one of the unused buildings in Stuart that had earlier served as accommodation quarters for students.

When in 1976 a Professor of Materials Science was appointed, the case could not be traced. It was supposed that it had become accidentally entangled with the wreckage of the hut in which it was housed when Cyclone Althea struck on 24 December 1971 and that it was most likely carted away with the derelict timber and iron to one of the city's dumps and there entombed—to provide a discovery for some archaeologist.

In 1974, on Professor Roderick's return from study leave, a beginning was made to enlist Governors and Life Governors of the Foundation whose major interest would be in the construction and care of the Banfield Memorial Centre. Other ventures precluded any advance until 1976, when Mr Eric Martel became the first Life Governor of the Foundation.

The land remains vested in the James Cook University and the burial cairn of Banfield and his wife is open to public inspection by anyone visiting the island, access being by the footway in the Crown sanctuary alongside Goo-Tehur Creek and across the dam built by Avis Rent-a-Car's heirs to the property surrounding the cairn. [Postscript: "Responsibility for the Banfield Gravesite was transferred to the Queensland State Government in February 2015, so JCU no longer has any responsibility for the site."]³

A MEMORABLE ANNUAL DINNER: 1976

The year 1976 was notable in the annals of the Foundation for the visit of the Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, as the Foundation's guest of honour, and Lady Kerr.

Several events that occurred during the dinner made it a memorable occasion.

In November 1975 Sir John, as Governor-General, had dismissed the Labor Government led by the Prime Minister Mr E.G. Whitlam on the ground that he was unable to command supply from the Parliament. Much controversy had followed, and Sir John and Lady Kerr had during the year succeeding suffered from much calumny.

His visit to Townsville was calm, and for that much of the credit goes to the good sense of the citizens, who took their example from the Mayor, Alderman P.G. Tucker, who had formerly been Leader of the Labor Opposition in the Queensland Parliament.

During his address to the 136 guests in Lowth's Hotel on 17 September 1976, Sir John announced that he was writing a book in which he would traverse events leading to the climax in 1975. "His difficulty," he told the gathering, "was in reconciling his own feelings about the events of his life with objective fact."

An amusing incident was Sir John's presentation of a cheque for \$750 to a representative of the winner of the Foundation's Literary Award for 1975. This turned out to be Dr Denis Murphy, of the University of Queensland, for his biography of a former Queensland Labor politician, T.J. Ryan. Dr Murphy was then on study leave in the United States, and Miss Marilyn Bitomsky, representing the publishers of the book, accepted the cheque.

Sir John described the book as an exercise of some distinction. It was during his comments on the book that he referred to the difficulty of writing autobiography but he said: "It is a very congenial task to sit in Government House reflectively and quietly recording recent history." He recalled Sir Phillip Game's dismissal of J.T. Lang in 1932 and commented dryly that compared to those days of crisis the present was a time of tranquillity—"especially in Queensland," he added.

This was the last year in which the winners of academic prizes donated by members of the Foundation received their Awards from the hands of a distinguished guest at the Annual dinner—on this occasion Lady Kerr. In 1977 these prizes went to augment those presented at the Vice-Chancellor's

³ See Agenda for FALS Board Meeting Wednesday 23rd September 2015. The information on the Banfield site was reported by Vice Chancellor Professor Sandra Harding.

Prize-giving Ceremony held at the University. It is therefore fitting to record the names of the last winners of the Foundation's literary Awards to receive their prizes from the Foundation's annual guest of honour. They were, with the names of the prizes:

Miss Pamela Greet (the Bank of New South Wales Prize)
Miss Christine McMahon (the Athena Deane Memorial Prize)
Miss Elizabeth Allen (the Kern Bros Ltd Prize)
Miss Nancy Wallace (the Samuel Allen and Sons Ltd Prize)
Miss Pamela Gilbert (the E.S. Martel Prize for literary research)
Mrs Elizabeth Outram (the Douglas Suthers Memorial Prize and the Colin Roderick Prize).

It was also the last occasion on which the Fourth-year Honours students acted as receptionists and ushers to the guests. This omission of the students in gowns and mortarboards robbed the event of its communion between town and gown. Severing the link between the Foundation and its members' prize winners also marked the end of the donation of such prizes, for since then none has been added to the impressive list of prizes for English subscribed between 1968 and 1976.

P.F. ROWLAND AWARD

Another advance that became effective in 1976 was the inauguration of the P.F. Rowland Annual Award of \$500 to the student whose thesis for the Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in English or for the Master of Letters degree in English is the most outstanding of the year.

The first Award for 1977 was made to Madame Catherine Apard, a Masters of Letters student from the University of Caen, for her thesis on "Australian Convict Literature: Fact and Fiction". (The Award was again made in 1980 to Catherine Mary Madden.)

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*The Foundation for
Australian Literary
Studies*

DECADE TWO: 1977-1986

by

Colin Roderick

Prepared for publication circa 1992
(previously unpublished)

On 31 December 1976 the retiring Head of the Department of English, Professor Colin Roderick, ceased under the Constitution of the Foundation to be its Executive Director. In the succeeding year Associate Professor H.P. Heseltine was appointed Professor of English as from January 1978. Until he could assume the office of Executive Director, his duties were carried out under great stress by the acting Head of Department, Mr R.S. Smith, assisted by the Chairman and Deputy Chancellor, Mr H.T. Priestley, members of an executive committee of the Board, and Dr Elizabeth Perkins of the English Department.

Their duties were augmented by the loss of a body of Foundation members through death or departure. Mr H.R. ("Bert") Jones, a member of the Board, died on 31 May 1977. His death, and that of Miss Ethel Green, a generous founding member, were a grievous loss to the Foundation. Two other members of the Board also left, Mr H. Neil Smith for Tasmania, and Mr John Saint-Smith, CBE, for Brisbane.

The efficacy of the activities of the Chairman and his committees during the year were notable. Dr Perkins undertook delivery of the Foundation's public lectures with a lively series on Australian drama. The Professor-Elect, with Dr Clement Semmler, former Deputy General Manager of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and Dr Stephen Murray-Smith, of the School of Education in the University of Melbourne, and editor of the periodical *Overland*, comprised the panel of judges for the best Australian book of the year.

PATRONAGE

The literary award for 1976 went to the journalist, Gavin Souter, for the second time, with his historical work, *Lion and Kangaroo*. On this occasion he had to face the competition of thirty-nine other contenders. He received the prize from the then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Zelman Cowen, at the Annual Dinner of the Foundation on 12 August 1977. Since Sir Zelman had shortly before been appointed to succeed Sir John Kerr as Governor-General of the Commonwealth, the Honourable Justice Sir George Kneipp, Chancellor of James Cook University and a Director of the Foundation, in an eloquent tribute to Sir Zelman's legal eminence, wished him well in his new office on behalf of both University and Foundation. As Governor-General Sir Zelman continued the Vice-Regal patronage of the Foundation which had begun with Lord Casey within two years of its establishment in 1966.

During 1977 the tradition of presentation at the Annual Dinner of prizes for excellence in English funded by members of the Foundation was superseded by its transfer to a prize-giving ceremony at the University. This practice continued throughout the decade.

During the University's Open Week of 9-13 August 1977 the Professor-Elect visited the University, attended the Annual Dinner, and announced a number of new Foundation ventures that he planned to introduce. Meanwhile two European students, one from France, the other from Austria, both studying Australian literature, also attended. At the event, Madame Catherine Apard, from the University of Caen, supervised by Dr Perkins, took the Master of Letters degree and the P.F. Rowland prize for the best minor thesis with an impressive discourse on "Convict Literature: Fact and Fiction". The prize came into being through the generosity of the Foundation's Life Governor, Mr E.S. Martel, and Mrs Thelma Martel.

OVERSEAS VISITORS 1978

The practice of inviting distinguished scholars in Australia from abroad to the Annual Dinner continued in 1978. One of the most eminent was Professor Lucien Leclaire, Head of the Department of English at the University of Caen, Normandy, an expert on the regional novel, and Mme Leclaire, together with Madame Maryvonne Nedeljkovic, also of the University of Caen. Another was Professor Bernard Hickey, a Queenslander who had devoted himself to spreading the gospel of Australian literature in Italy, with his headquarters at the University of Venice. Professor Leclaire brought with him the news that the Council of the University of Caen had resolved to award the Foundation's founding Executive Director, Colin Roderick—now by resolution of the Council of James Cook University Emeritus Professor—the degree of Doctor of Letters—Litt.D.—*honoris causa*.

Also present was the celebrated author, Xavier Herbert, whom the University of Queensland had honoured with an honorary doctorate, and who was in residence at James Cook University as an honorary research consultant in the Department of English. At the function the guest of honour, Ms Nancy Keesing, former head of Australia Council's Literature Board, presented the Foundation's Award for the best Australian book of 1977 to Mrs Jenny O'Meara, daughter of the short story writer Alan Marshall, whose *Complete Stories* had won him the prize.

The Board having resolved in 1977 to rename the Foundation's annual public lectures, the series for 1978, now known as the Colin Roderick Lectures, was delivered by the prize-winning novelist, Thea Astley, on "Three Australian Writers", namely, Bruce Dawe, Barbara Baynton, and Patrick White.

RESEARCH

In the same year work began on a pioneering bibliography of North Queensland writing by Mr Ross Smith and Ms Cheryl Frost (later Mrs Cheryl Taylor) of the Department of English with a Foundation grant-in-aid, supplemented later with a grant from the Australian Research Grants Commission (ARGC) that enabled them to employ a recent Honours graduate as a research assistant. Dr Elizabeth Perkins also received an ARGC grant to assist her in the preparation of a massive scholarly edition of the poems of Charles Harpur, published in due course by Angus and Robertson.

Old ties were renewed in 1979 when the guest of honour at the Annual Dinner, Mr Walter Stone, the Sydney publisher and bibliophile, in his address to the gathering recalled the campaign of 1956-8 to establish the Chair of Australian Literature at the University of Sydney. During that time he had acted as Honorary Assistant Secretary to the Foundation's first Executive Director. The dinner took on the air of a tribal gathering to applaud Mr Stone's presentation of the Foundation's Literary Award for 1978 to the veteran drama critic and historian, Mr Leslie Rees, for his two-volume *History of Australian Drama*.

Closely linked with Mr Stone's reminiscences was the presence of Dr Stephen Murray-Smith, of the University of Melbourne's School of Education. Dr Murray-Smith was in North Queensland to deliver the Colin Roderick lectures. In 1954 he had founded the literary periodical *Overland*, devoted to an analysis of the development of an indigenous culture. His lectures traced the fortunes of that enterprise and appeared under the Foundation's imprint as *Indirections: A Literary Autobiography*.

In the course of the dinner, at which Mr John Bremner, a trustee of the Rockhampton Grammar School, was present, the Chairman, Mr H.T. Priestley, announced that in 1981 the Foundation's Annual Dinner would be held at Rockhampton to mark the centenary of the School. The Foundation, he said, had undertaken the publication of a monograph by Lorna McDonald on the life of the School's former headmaster and notable English teacher, H.A. Kellow. Kellow, he said, had made an impact on the development of literary culture with his pioneering work, *Queensland Poets*. To which Professor Roderick added his praise of Kellow's widely used textbook, *A Practical Training in English*.

The Annual Dinner of 1979 was about to pass into history when the Foundation suffered the loss of its most zealous devotee, H.T. ("Tom") Priestley, Deputy Chancellor of the University and the founding Chairman of the Foundation. Mr Priestley died suddenly on 29 August 1979. To mark his influential service the H.T. Priestley Memorial Medal was struck in two classes, the silver medal for presentation each year to the winner of the annual literary award, the gold for the occasional presentation to persons who had made an outstanding contribution to Australian literary culture.

The first recipient of the H.T. Priestley gold medal was to be a native of Townsville, Dr C.H. ("Clem") Christesen, founder of the leading Australian literary quarterly, *Meanjin*, and its editor for more than thirty years. That presentation occurred in 1980.

During Professor Harry Heseltine's time as Executive Director (1978-81), the Foundation's liaison with practitioners of literature and with the public continued with zeal. The Executive Director organised a widely acclaimed week-end seminar on "Recent Australian Theatre and Drama". He threw his weight into the organising of a fruitful Book Fair in association with the Townsville Pacific Festival. Notwithstanding eminently satisfactory receipts from the sale of books and substantial enrolment fees, the Foundation for the first time found itself faced with a deficit in its general fund exceeding \$2,000. To remedy this the Executive Director and his predecessor reviewed the membership lists and made an appeal to Life Members. Their responses were most encouraging. They brought the Foundation's working capital to \$20,000—sufficient to maintain a lively practical programme.

NEW VENTURES

Among the new ventures was an enlarged publishing list. Besides printing the annual Colin Roderick lectures, a well-chosen series of monographs followed Lorna McDonald's *H.A. Kellow 1881-1935* (1981). During the decade they included Cheryl Frost's *The Last Explorer: The Life and Work of Ernest Favenc* (1983), Nicola Tareha's *The Legend of the Leap* (1986), and in association with Hale and Iremonger, Mark O'Connor's *Selected Poems* (1986). The Cleveland Bay New Writing Series also accounted for four titles. For a cover drawing for this series Miss Marjorie Green (Member) made a special donation to the University.

Despite a decrease in the number of titles entered in 1979 for the book prize, there was no fall in quality, as the unanimous choice of Thea Astley's *Hunting the Wild Pineapple* testified.

BOOK PRIZE LIFTED

In 1980 the value of the literary award was doubled to \$1,000, the first author to take the augmented prize being Allan Grocott of the University of Sydney with his seminal historical work, *Convicts, Clergymen, and Churches*. "Clem" Christesen and his wife Nina, who pioneered the teaching of Russian in the University of Melbourne, were at the Annual Dinner to applaud the Foundation's award to Mr Grocott. Accompanying him was a bevy of literary academics, including Dr R.F. Brissenden, Chairman of the Literary Board of the Australia Council, Professor Leonie Kramer, a former guest of honour, Ms Nancy Keesing, and Mr Chris Wallace-Crabbe, of the University of Melbourne. During the ensuing week Mr Wallace-Crabbe delivered the Colin Roderick lectures on the contentious subject of "Three Notable Absences in Australian Writing"—those absences, he advanced, being love, metaphysics, and form.

As a contribution to the University's celebration of the tenth anniversary of the receipt of its charter from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Foundation conducted a series of special activities, including an important seminar on the subject of "Writing in North Queensland". Notable also was the award for the P.F. Rowland Prize to Catherine Mary Madden.

ROCKHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The cherished aim of the first Chairman of the Foundation, Mr H.T. Priestley, to hold the Annual Dinner of the Foundation at Rockhampton was achieved in 1981, as part of the centenary celebrations of the Rockhampton Grammar School.

The veteran actor, Leonard Teale, interpreter of events in the life of Henry Lawson, was the guest of honour. Among the representatives of the teaching staff of James Cook University was Professor Keith Sinclair, Chairman of the Academic Board.

DEPARTURE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On leaving the Chair of English at the end of 1981 to take up an appointment at Canberra, the retiring Executive Director left the choice of guest of honour at the Annual Dinner of 1982 to the Acting Chairman, Professor K.J.C. Back, Vice-Chancellor of the University, and Emeritus Professor Roderick, who agreed to act as Executive Secretary (Honorary) until a successor to Professor Heseltine should take up duty. Dr Elizabeth Perkins accepted appointment as liaison officer acting on behalf of the Department of English and was concerned as such in the day-to-day management of the Foundation's affairs. Before leaving, Professor Heseltine took the precaution of securing the agreement of Dr Vivian Smith of the University of Sydney to deliver the Colin Roderick lectures in 1982. It was with sympathetic regret that the members learned that Dr Smith's state of health for a considerable period early in that year prevented his coming: his place was filled by the poet Les A. Murray, on whom Dr Smith had intended to lecture.

An immediate step by the Board was to draw the attention of publishers and authors to the rise in the value of the Foundation's Literary Award to \$1,500, it becoming clear to the Board that this Award had become a symbol of the Foundation's aim to create public interest in the works of

Australian writers in all genres. The result was that at the close of entries for the 1981 award on 28 February 1982 the number of entries exceeded that of any other year. The winner of that award was Gavin Souter, for his outstanding history of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, published as *A Company of Heralds*. This made Mr Souter a triple Foundation winner, a point that did not escape the Foundation's guest of honour, the Rt. Hon. Sir Harry Gibbs, AC, GCMG, KBE, PC, at the Annual Dinner on 2 July 1982, organised by Dr Elizabeth Perkins and Miss Anne Deane.

The 1982 Colin Roderick lectures were delivered by Les Murray during 17-20 August. The incoming Professor of English, Dr A.J. Hassall, was in attendance as the guest of the University and was assured on his meeting with members of the Board of their support in his office as Executive Director of the Foundation.

PROFESSOR A. J. HASSALL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On assuming leadership of the Foundation at the beginning of 1983, Professor Hassall established a Membership Committee with the aim of enrolling additional members. Miss Anne Deane's indefatigable efforts as a member of the Committee resulted in the receipt of pledges from forty new members in the various categories of membership. An appeal to Life Members for a contribution to convert the deficit in the general fund to a surplus met with a generous response, and by the end of the year the fund showed a healthy credit.

The 1983 Annual Dinner, held in the refectory of University Hall on 3 August, brought a galaxy of talent to the University. His Excellency Sir Ninian Stephen, AK, GCMG, GCVO, KBE, who succeeded Sir Zelman Cowen as Governor-General, continued Vice-Regal patronage of the Foundation and lent his presence to the dinner. His Excellency was pleased to present the eminent historian, Dr Geoffrey Serle of Melbourne, with a prize for the best Australian book of the year, a biography of Sir John Monash, together with the commemorative H.T. Priestley medal.

It fell to the Chairman of the University's Academic Board to introduce the doyen of Australian poetry, Professor A.D. Hope, to the guests as the Colin Roderick lecturer for 1983. Professor Hope's lectures, delivered at the University during the following days, dealt with the past, the present, and the future of Australian poetry. As was anticipated, his inspiring lectures duly appeared under the imprint of the Foundation as *Directions in Australian Poetry*. The toast of the Foundation was fittingly proposed gracefully and with good humour by its guest, Mr George Ferguson CBE, who as Managing Director of Angus & Robertson in 1965 had lent his inspiring aid to its establishment. The presence of the Rt. Reverend John Lewis, Bishop of North Queensland, who pronounced grace, reminded guests of the ancient link between church and university that had contributed powerfully to the emergence of Western man from the barbarism of the early Middle Ages.

1983: NOTABLE EVENTS

Several notable events occurred in 1983.

The Executive Director, Professor Hassall, and Dr Elizabeth Perkins, a member of the Board, forged a link with the Association for the Study of Australian Literature by accepting appointment to its executive committee. Four publications, as listed in the Appendix, appeared. The Foundation gave financial support to the publication in the English Department's periodical, *LiNQ*, of the first of the series of bibliographies in North Queensland writing compiled by Mr Ross Smith and Mrs Cheryl Taylor which it had four years earlier encouraged with a modest research contribution.

VICE-PATRON

The University marked Emeritus Professor Colin Roderick's acceptance of the office of Vice-Patron of the Foundation by instituting the so-called Vice-Patron's Award. By it a prize was established for an essay based on original research and dealing with a historical personage who had contributed substantially to the development of the arts in Australia. The Award was open to postgraduate students in any French or Australian university. No entries for the Award being received during the ensuing two years, the capital was transferred to the fund for the annual literary prize award, the prize for which was accordingly augmented. A happy event of the year was the appointment of the Deputy-Chairman of the Foundation, Professor K.J.C. Back, as Officer of the Order of Australia. A sad one was the death of John Saint-Smith, CBE, a founding Director of the organisation.

TOM SHAPCOTT: POET

The Foundation's guest of honour at the Annual Dinner held on 15 August 1984 at the University was an old and valued friend of many members of the Foundation, Mr Tom Shapcott, with whose literary work they were familiar. He attended as Director of the Literature Board of the Australia Council and presented the Foundation's award and the H.T. Priestley medal to the historian, novelist, and senior ambassador, His Excellency Dudley McCarthy, for this work, *From Gallipoli to the Somme: The Story of C.E.W. Bean*. Dudley McCarthy, who had had a colourful career in the Territorial and diplomatic service, paid a glowing tribute to the historian of the Australian fighting men during the Great War of 1914-18. He was accompanied by his wife, and his publisher, Mr John Ferguson.

TAXATION ON BOOK PRIZE

In his address the guest of honour, in his capacity of accountant, to some extent clarified the vexed question of tax liability by an author who became the winner of some such literary prize as that awarded annually by the Foundation. It appeared that under the Act a winning author who had entered his book for the Award or caused his publisher to enter it on his behalf was liable for taxation on his winnings as part of his income. If a wager made on the likely winner proved to be successful, it would be possible for the winning bettor to argue a case for exemption from taxation on his winnings much as a punter on a horse race might. If the Foundation made an independent selection and judgement of eligible books, the prize would be regarded as a windfall and tax would not be payable. The case of a publisher's submitting a book of his own motion, that is, without consulting the author, had not been tested.

In view of the substantial difficulty that would confront the panel of judges if each judge had to survey the entire production of literary works in any one year, acquire copies of the works at his own expense, make the selection, and then begin the process of arriving at a decision, it was decided subsequently by the Board to leave it to the publisher or author to submit books for entry for the Award at their discretion.

COLIN RODERICK LECTURES

The guest of honour remained in Townsville in 1984 to hear Mr Bruce Bennett, Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Australia, deliver three lectures between 14 and 17 August under the general title of *Place, Region, and Community*. This series proved entirely worthy of publication. In addition, Mr Shapcott adhered to the community interest of the Foundation by giving an evening of poetry reading from his own composition in the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in the city.

A notable publication that was launched at the Annual Dinner was the first volume of the Rockhampton poet Bob Hay's verse, *Love and the Outer World*. During the year a third grant was made to the Department of English for the publication in its periodical *LiNQ*, of the third of the series of bibliographies of North Queensland writing compiled by Mr Ross Smith and Mrs Cheryl Taylor. This, and similar grants in aid, were made possible by the augmentation of the Foundation's income through the adoption of a suggestion by its Life Governor, Mr Eric Martel, that Life Members be invited to continue making donations to the University for the purposes of the Department's Foundation arm.

THE HON. MR JUSTICE ELSE-MITCHELL

In 1985 members had the pleasure of renewing acquaintance with the distinguished jurist, the Hon. Mr Justice Else-Mitchell, CMG, QC, DLitt, FRAHS, Chairman of the Commonwealth Grants Committee, as its guest of honour. His Honour had presided in 1968 over the Foundation's influential seminar on "The Education and Training of Journalists". Also present at the Annual Dinner was veteran critic, Dorothy Green, who had won the Foundation's literary award in 1973 with *Ulysses Bound*, and who was in Townsville in 1985 to deliver the Colin Roderick lectures. In presenting the literary award and the H.T. Priestley silver medal on this occasion to the novelist Alan Gould, the Vice-Chancellor (and Deputy Chairman of the Foundation), Professor K.J. C. Back, remarked on the realism of Mr Gould's winning novel, *The Man Who Stayed Below*. The Executive Director, Professor A.J. Hassall, introduced the University's Writer-in-Residence, Mr Alex Buzo, as one of the leaders of the renaissance of Australian drama in the 1960s.

It was with regret that members present received the announcement of the Honorary Solicitor Dr G.V. Roberts, that the Deputy-Chairman, Dr Ken Back, was to depart at the end of the year for an administrative post at Canberra. Dr Roberts recalled the enthusiasm that had marked the inauguration of the Foundation on 19 July 1966 and the steadfast support it had had from Professor Back during the nineteen years succeeding. As Warden of the Townsville University College he had moved the resolution to establish the Foundation. As a mark of its appreciation of his unfailing support and on behalf of all the members, Dr Roberts presented him with a framed photograph of that occasion, observing as he did that it would remind him of the many friends who had over the years learnt to esteem him.

This was also the last gathering over which the Foundation's Chairman, Dr R.A. ("Bob") Douglas, presided. Professor Hassall paid a warm tribute to the retiring Chairman, who had taken over almost coincidentally with himself and had seen the Foundation through a difficult and challenging period.

CONFERENCE

A noteworthy event of 1986 was the holding of the Conference of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature at the University. Some three hundred delegates—writers, teachers, publishers, journalists, students and readers—attended to make it the largest of the Association's conferences to that date. Previous guests of the Foundation who attended were Thea Astley, who opened the conference, Professor G.A. Wilkes, the Foundation's guest of honour in 1967, Bob Hay, Mark O'Connor, and Tom Shapcott. Dorothy Green observed that James Cook University was one of the best places to be if one were interested in Australian literature.

An equally distinguished group of guests honoured the Foundation's last Annual Dinner of its second decade, held on 4 September 1986. Queensland's eminent and popular Governor, His Excellency the Hon. Sir Walter Campbell, AC, QC, KStJ and Lady Campbell were present. His Excellency presented the Foundation's literary award and H.T. Priestley Medal for 1985 to John Gunn for his historical work, *The Defeat of Distance: Qantas, 1919-1939*.

In reporting on the book, the Executive Director, Professor A.J. Hassall referred to the factor of human interest that had lifted John Gunn's work above the routine treatment more often expected in a Company history. It had the movement and the air of a novel, so lively and gripping was the writing. Mr Gunn said that after the basic research he had come to the conclusion that the Qantas saga was not merely the history of an airline; it was, in effect, a chapter in the larger story of the development of Australia as an influential member of the British Commonwealth.

In addition to the publication of three monographs in 1986, the fifth of the bibliographies of North Queensland writing appeared in *LiNQ* with the support of a grant by the Foundation.

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Figure 1. Townsville 1966, photographer unknown (CityLibraries Townsville, Local History Collection)



*Figure 2: (L to R) with key early members of FALS highlighted in bold: Robert “Duke” Bonnett MHR, **Dr Colin Roderick**, **H.T. Priestley**, Dame Annabel Rankin, **George Roberts** and **Ken Back**, 1966. University Hall under construction can be seen in the background. (National Archives of Australia: M2127, 5)*



The University College of Townsville

Department of English

FOUNDATION FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDIES

Annual Dinner

held in the Orchid Room, Hotel Allen, Townsville

to mark the opening of a

NATIONAL SEMINAR

On the Education and Training of Journalists

by the

Guest of Honour

His Excellency the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

The Rt Hon. Baron Casey, C.C.M.G., C.H., D.S.O., M.C.,
P.C., Kt. St. J., M.A.

Friday, 10th May 1968

CHAIRMAN: MR H. T. PRIESTLEY, B.E.,

Chairman of the Advisory Council of the University College of Townsville and

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Foundation for Australian Studies

Figure 3: Front of FALS dinner menu, 1968 (Source: Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, "1968 Media Clippings", held at JCU Records, James Cook University)



Figure 4: Rohan Rivett, author, who was the Foundation's first lecturer in 1966. (National Archives of Australia: A12111, 1/1958/11/37)



Figure 5: An early FALS guest: James McAuley, poet and academic. (National Archives of Australia: A1200, L36562)



Figure 6: The poet Douglas Stewart, winner of the Foundation's first book award, pictured here in 1971. (National Archives of Australia: A6135, K11/10/71/22)



Figure 7: Thea Astley, photograph of author. Astley was a Colin Roderick Lecturer in 1978 (Source: Fryer Library Photograph collection, UQFL477, PIC823, Fryer Library, University of Queensland Library)

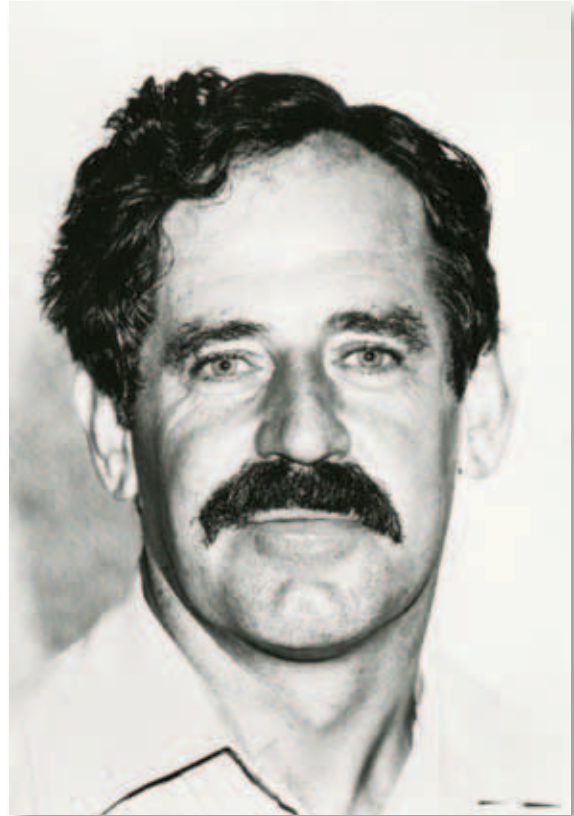


Figure 9: Professor Harry Heseltine, Head of Dept of English and second FALS Executive Director (Source: NQID 24688, D. Thomson Album, NQ Photographic Collection, James Cook University Library Special Collections)



Figure 8: Fourth year English Honours students Jan Perry, Anne Sherriff, Zora Leon and Father Fidelis (John) Stinson OFM, with Professor Leonie Kramer and Colin Roderick, 1970. (CityLibraries Townsville, Local History Collection)



Figure 10: (L to R) Stephen Edgar, Ashley Hay, The Honourable Keiran A. Cullinane AM and Prof. Don Gallagher OAM, 2014 annual dinner. (Photo: Joseph I. Leong)



Figure 11: Ashley Hay and Stephen Edgar, joint winners of the Colin Roderick Award for 2013, pictured at the 2014 annual dinner. (Photo: Joseph I. Leong)



Figure 12: Annual Dinner, Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, 2015. (Photo: Joseph I. Leong)



Figure 13: (L to R) Anna Goldsworthy (Colin Roderick Lecturer 2016), Sarah Galletly, Victoria Kuttainen, Lorna Hempstead, Helene Kotzas-Lazaredes and Mary Gallagher, St James' Anglican Cathedral, Townsville, 18 July 2016. (Photo: Hannah Cameron)

*The Foundation for
Australian Literary Studies:*

A Short History of
the Foundation from
1987 to 2016

by

Lyndon Megarrity

2016

A SHORT RETROSPECTIVE

When Colin Roderick finished his task of chronicling the first twenty years of the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, many of the traditions and events of the Foundation had been well established. It is testament to the vision of Roderick that many of the original aims and functions of the Foundation remained a strong focus between 1987 and 2016. Despite some changes in their form and function, three events set up in the early years of the Foundation remained central to the Foundation's annual calendar. Firstly, there is the annual Colin Roderick lecture, which gives an opportunity for a celebrated writer or academic to formally discuss an aspect of Australian literature with a North Queensland audience. Secondly, there is the annual book prize, awarded by the organisation's judges to the book which they deem the most outstanding publication on an Australian theme in the preceding year. Finally, there is the annual dinner for the Foundation's members, during which the book prize is awarded. The evolution and development of these events will be discussed in later pages.

In 2016, as in 1966, the Foundation's event program continues to bring the best of Australia's nationally recognised public intellectuals, academics, and writers to North Queensland. As the focus of much literary activity remains tied to the Australian capital cities, the visits of poets, novelists, historians and other writers to the regional hubs of Townsville and Cairns through the Foundation's activities serve a useful purpose for those who are passionate about literature. The Foundation's memorable guests have included playwright David Williamson, political scientist Robert Manne and novelist Drusilla Modjeska. Former Executive Director Professor Harry Heseltine remembered that one "dinner was enlivened—for me at least—by the spectacle of Xavier Herbert [author of *Poor Fellow My Country*] very conspicuously hiding behind a potted palm when the loyal toast was proposed" to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.⁴

The passing of Professor Colin Roderick on 16 June 2000 marked the end of an era. In Professor Peter Pierce's words, after retiring in 1976, Roderick "remained a familiar, formidable ... figure in the town and at the university",⁵ maintaining a keen interest in the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, especially as its Vice-Patron and as a regular judge for the annual FALS book award. He lives on through his biographical and critical studies of Australian authors such as Henry Lawson, A.B. "Banjo" Paterson and Miles Franklin. His legacy remains strong within the Foundation particularly as a result of his original "generous bequest" and the invaluable financial and moral support from Mrs Margaret Roderick, Vice Patron from 2000.

Like the history of most organisations, the story of the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies is one of both continuity and change. The following brief descriptions of the activities of FALS since 1987 demonstrate an organisation determined to retain many of the traditions established by Roderick, but one which is also prepared to reshape those traditions as circumstances change.

⁴ Harry Heseltine to Lyndon Megarrity, email dated 26 June 2016. In possession of the author.

⁵ Peter Pierce, "Farewell to a Literature Patriot", *Age*, 17 June 2000, p. 19. See also Donat Gallagher, "Champion of Bush Literature", *Australian*, 20 June 2000, p. 17.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FOUNDATION

The original constitution of the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies stipulated that the Head of the English Department at the University College of Townsville (now James Cook University) would be the Executive Director and Secretary of FALS. The Foundation also established a board which reported to the University Council. Accordingly, Professor Colin Roderick as Head of the English Department (1966-76) was the first Executive Director and Secretary of the Foundation. This leadership role was subsequently filled by all succeeding Heads of Department.

The Foundation's work involved numerous administrative duties, including preparing manuscripts for publication. Originally a secretary was employed by FALS to perform these tasks, but later these duties were performed by departmental staff. During busy periods, such as preparing for the Annual General Meeting and the annual dinner, members of the English Department and Mrs Margaret Roderick would provide their assistance.

In the latter half of the 1990s, the University replaced academic departments with schools situated within broadly-based faculties. The Foundation remained linked with the English discipline, but its administrative and publishing work became the responsibility of an assistant employed on a part-time basis, at first Ms Jillian Bond and later Ms Louise Lennon.

Professor Peter Pierce (1997-2006) was the last Professor of English to be *ex officio* Executive Director of the Foundation. Executive Directors since 1966 have been:

Colin Roderick	1966-76
Harry Heseltine	1978-81
A.J. Hassall	1983-95
Donat Gallagher	1995-97
Peter Pierce	1997-2006
Stephen Torre	2007-11
Michael Ackland	2011-

INCORPORATION

Originally the Foundation was a formally constituted body situated within the English Department but reporting to the Council of the University. At the request of the University, FALS incorporated in 2007 and became the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies Limited, a company limited by guarantee and a fully independent not-for-profit arts organisation. Incorporation required a new constitution, which expresses the "Objects" of the Foundation in the same spirit but in a more detailed form than had previously been the case: "a) to promote, foster, develop and assist studies in Australian literature and language at JCU and elsewhere; b) to arrange for lectures, schools, conferences, publications, scholarships, awards or prizes or for other activities ... consistent with the other objects set out above; and c) to solicit donations, gifts, and bequests from the public to further any of its objects." ⁶

⁶ Foundation for Australian Literary Studies Limited Constitution (as amended 25.11.2011), p. 3. Held by FALS Ltd.

Incorporation required that the Foundation appoint a Company Secretary who also participated in running the company's activities. The first Company Secretary was Don Gallagher (2007-2014).⁷ As always, the University's Financial Services division provided accounting support for FALS Ltd, and prepared the accounts for the Foundation's auditors, Price Waterhouse Coopers and their successors, who have generously undertaken the audit *pro bono*.⁸

The Foundation has also continued to be grateful for crucial administrative support from JCU, most recently via the University's Directorate of External Engagement (within the Division of Global Strategy and Engagement).

COLIN RODERICK LECTURE

From 1966 to 1996, the Colin Roderick lecturer delivered a series of lectures, usually three in total, over the course of a few days. More often than not the lecturers were academics with a national reputation in their own fields, such as Julian Croft (1988), Michael Wilding (1992) and Graeme Turner (1995); there were also a number of creative writers represented in the lecture series such as the Queensland poet Val Vallis (1987) and Professor A.D. Hope (1983). The themes chosen by the annual lecturers were generally ones which allowed them to reflect on the nature and development of Australian literature, with a strong bias towards historical discussion.

Helen Garner's Colin Roderick lectures constituted something of a turning point in the nature of the lecture series. As the author of controversial works such as *The First Stone* (a narrator-driven account of a sexual harassment case at Ormond College, Melbourne University), Garner had an existing media profile which attracted strong crowds to all three of her talks. This had not always been the case with previous Colin Roderick lecturers, no matter how compelling their ideas. Then Executive Director Professor Peter Pierce was particularly pleased with Garner's high turnout:

She attracted people from the whole Townsville community ... I'd like to think it was an indication of the fact that just because we're right up here doesn't mean people of the highest quality won't come and won't enjoy coming ... Helen Garner showed that we are on the map and gave us a benchmark with which we can continue to work.⁹

Given the Foundation's investment in the annual lecturer's airfare, accommodation and lecture fees, it is perhaps not surprising to learn that following Garner's presentation, many of the lecturers invited have had high public profiles that encouraged good attendance levels. Helen Garner was also the last speaker to be asked to present a series of three talks as Colin Roderick lecturer. From 1998,

⁷ Adjunct Professor Don Gallagher has been associated with FALS since 1966. He has made a continuing contribution to the organisation as an Executive Director, an office holder, board member and as a Colin Roderick Award judge. He taught English language and literature at James Cook University for many years and was Dean of the Faculty of Arts (1986-1993). His wife, Mary Gallagher, has also been an enthusiastic worker for the organisation and in more recent years has been a board member. She taught English language and literature at the University of Queensland, Townsville Teachers' College and JCU. She was Head Librarian at the Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE (1988-2007).

⁸ One of the benefits of incorporation was that the Foundation was now eligible to apply for grants from funding bodies. For example, FALS Ltd successfully applied for funding from the Townsville City Council to assist North Queensland author Sylvia Kelso run a poetry reading and workshop in April 2010. See Report of the Chairman, FALS Limited, Year Ended 31 December 2010. I am grateful to Don Gallagher for his advice on the administration and incorporation of FALS.

⁹ Pierce, quoted in Francene Norton, "Garner Lectures Cover Fact and Fiction", *JCU Outlook*, Vol. 9, No. 8, 18 June 1997.

lecturers have been required to deliver a single presentation in Townsville, which is then repeated in Cairns. This innovation was a reflection of the fact that Townsville was no longer the only campus of James Cook University. From small beginnings in 1987, the Cairns campus grew until by around 2010 it constituted approximately 25 per cent of JCU students.¹⁰ As a consequence, the Foundation's lecture series now serves both the major regional hubs of North Queensland: Townsville and Cairns.

Colin Roderick lecturers in recent decades have ranged from actor-turned-biographer Graeme Blundell discussing his biography of TV legend Graham Kennedy ("Graeme on Graham," 2006); to former speechwriter Don Watson on the decay of public language (2003). Other prominent presenters included crime writer Gabrielle Lord (2001), well-known novelists such as Drusilla Modjeska (2014), and the playwright and screen writer David Williamson (2011). Public intellectual and political scientist Robert Manne gave a well received talk in 2005 which discussed the controversial and topical case of Cornelia Rau, a permanent Australian resident who was wrongly detained as an illegal immigrant for several months in 2004-05.

In its fiftieth year of encouraging Australian literature and writers, the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies was pleased to present the 2016 Colin Roderick Memorial Lecture, delivered by Anna Goldsworthy, the celebrated Australian pianist who has also made her name as a memoirist, essayist, playwright, librettist and festival director. Goldsworthy found an appreciative North Queensland audience for her speech, which asked "Is classical music still relevant? Does it have anything to offer us in today's world? Can we find the time for it?" In her address, Goldsworthy argued forcefully that classical music did have a place in today's world, playing the piano live for the audience to highlight her passion for the genre.

COLIN RODERICK AWARD

The Foundation's Annual Literary Award was renamed the Colin Roderick Award in December 1991 by the FALS board. The name change was made to honour Roderick's long contribution to Australian literature and to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the award. In Professor A.J. Hassall's words,

The Award will continue to be made to the book of the [preceding] year which deals with some aspect of Australian life and which in the opinion of the judges makes a more notable contribution to Australian literature than any other publication in any category submitted to them.¹¹

The Colin Roderick Award is presented to the winner at the FALS annual dinner. The award winner receives both the financial prize and a silver H.T. Priestley medal. (As mentioned previously, the gold H.T. Priestley medal is awarded on rare occasions to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Australian literary culture. David Malouf was presented with a gold H.T. Priestley medal in May 2015 as part of the Townsville City Council's Savannah Literary Festival).¹²

¹⁰ Peter Bell, *Our Place in the Sun: A Brief History of James Cook University 1960-2010*, James Cook University, 2010, p. 56.

¹¹ A.J. Hassall, letter to prospective entrants for Colin Roderick Award, 7 October 1992, in Foundation for Australian Literary Studies filing cabinet, Building 4, James Cook University.

¹² The Savannah Literary Festival was part of Townsville's sesquicentennial celebrations.

One of the major attractions of the Colin Roderick Award for publishers and authors is that it does not confine itself to a specific genre. Any Australian-themed book, including poetry, fiction, history, travel, natural history, memoir or biography, has a chance of being selected. While there have been peaks and troughs, interest by publishers and authors in the Colin Roderick Award has generally been strong. For the 2015 award, for example, 179 titles were received by the judges for consideration.¹³

The panel originally consisted of three judges, with the Executive Director of the time generally being included. Since 2012, the number of judges has expanded to four. Colin Roderick remained a judge for most of the annual book awards between 1987 and 1999; and Don Gallagher has also frequently been on the panel. Other judges have included author Thea Astley (for the 1987 award), Mary Vernon (former *Townsville Bulletin* journalist) and Victoria Kuttainen (Margaret & Colin Roderick Scholar in Comparative Literature at JCU). Mary Vernon has given *Townsville Bulletin* readers a rare glimpse into the lot of a FALS judge:

When the first box of books for judging arrives in February it's exciting—the intoxicating smell of the ink and paper, the limitless possibilities offered by their brightly-coloured covers ... now the hard work begins ... All of us have our favourites and we fight for them passionately, but in the end the decision is made by a vote on all the books we have selected and a table is made showing which books got the most votes.¹⁴

A quick glance at the award winners for 1987 to 2015 (see Appendix) shows a highly varied selection of titles that have made a contribution to Australian literature. High profile novelists such as Thomas Keneally (2003; 2012), Peter Carey (1988; 2000), Christopher Koch (1999) and Ruth Park (1992) have all won Colin Roderick Awards, along with historians (James Boyce, 2008; Michael Cathcart, 2009), biographers (Don Watson, 2002), and poets (Stephen Edgar, 2013). At times, the panel choices reflect some of the major Australian public issues of the time. For example, the 1993 award went to Cassandra Pybus's *Gross Moral Turpitude*, which concerned a 1950s scandal over a relationship between a university student and a teacher ("The Orr Case"). Since gender and issues of power between the sexes were being canvassed widely in the 1990s, the Award was topical. Similarly, the choice for the Colin Roderick Award for 2010, Karen Kissane's account of the tragic 2009 bushfires in Victoria (*Worst of Days: Inside the Black Saturday Firestorm*), perhaps reflects the growing public discussion on the impact of natural disasters such as fires and cyclones upon the wider community and individuals.

By 1999, the prize for the winning entry was valued at \$5000. Later, as a result of a "generous bequest from the late Professor Colin Roderick", the prize money for the 2003 award was raised to \$10,000.¹⁵ Recognising the need to remain competitive against a growing number of major awards for Australian literature, the Foundation subsequently determined to increase the prize money once more. From 2016 onwards, the annual Colin Roderick Award winner will receive \$20,000. This outcome was achieved entirely through the generosity of Mrs Margaret Roderick, whose long-term contribution to the Foundation has been immense. In the Foundation's fiftieth year, the judges have given the Colin Roderick Award to Gail Jones for her novel, *A Guide to Berlin*:

¹³ "Record Entry for Literary Award", *Townsville Bulletin*, 16 October 1997, p. 7. See also Minutes from the second meeting of the Board for FALS Ltd, 13 April 2016.

¹⁴ Mary Vernon, "Well Read", *Townsville Bulletin* [Townsville Eye Edition], 18 October 2014, p. 9.

¹⁵ See various FALS Directors' reports. The quote comes from FALS Directors' report 2003.

A Guide to Berlin is in some ways a very Australian book, but not one parochially so—it reconnects the Australian story to the experience of travel, to displacement, to unsettlement, and to world literature which is also the shared Australian heritage. Jones’s sentences are crystalline like the snow she writes about so beautifully and poignantly.¹⁶

ANNUAL DINNER

The annual dinner of FALS is a celebration of Australian literature, the highlights being the presentation of the Colin Roderick Award and a discussion of all the judges’ shortlisted books and their respective merits. Most winners of the award have been able to attend the dinner to receive their award formally, although as board member Mary Gallagher has recalled, there are sometimes unexpected obstacles and challenges for dinner organisers:

More than one winner nearly missed the dinner ... When Malcolm Knox came directly from addressing a conference, his late plane was delayed—fortunately or unfortunately the Chair of the Board, Justice Cullinane, was on the same plane. We had to go ahead with the dinner. The judge had a car waiting at the airport; he and the winner arrived at the local RSL restaurant just in time for dessert, and, as Malcolm Knox cheerfully said, to collect his winnings and run. Not every winner could attend in person. Peter Carey’s agent caused one of those moments of incredulity when he impersonated the author to collect the prize on his behalf. Karen Kissane had to send her acceptance speech from London, as moving as the book’s account of the Black Saturday fires.¹⁷

Representatives of Townsville’s Mary Who? bookshop regularly attend the dinner and sell the winning book, which the Award recipient usually signs for purchasers. Mary Who? also attend the annual lecture to sell copies of the lecturers’ latest publications. The involvement of the bookshop helps to foster a sense of literary occasion.¹⁸

In recent years, about 100 people have attended each annual dinner. Organisers have been able to keep the event affordable for all lovers of literature without compromising on the quality of the wine or food. FALS has enjoyed many dinners at the local TAFE training restaurant in the suburb of Pimlico, which “brought back happy memories for many, including Mrs Margaret Roderick, as it is sited on the original campus [of James Cook University].”¹⁹

SECONDARY SCHOOLS’ BOOK REVIEW COMPETITION

In 2001, the Foundation began a competition for North Queensland high school students aged eighteen and under, in which eligible students were invited to write a review (600–750 words) of one of the several books short-listed for the Colin Roderick Award. Each participating school was asked to first assess all their own students’ reviews, and then send the best two to FALS for final judging.

¹⁶ FALS Judges comments on Jones’s book.

¹⁷ Mary Gallagher, email to Lyndon Megarrity dated 8 August 2016.

¹⁸ Kerry McIlroy and Sue Cole from Mary Who? bookshop have regularly been among the dinner attendees.

¹⁹ Mary Gallagher, email to Lyndon Megarrity dated 8 August 2016.

The winning prizes were \$500 plus medallion (1st), \$300 (2nd) and \$200 (3rd). The competition ran for two years. However, it failed to gain momentum: a symptom, perhaps, of the crowded curriculum of 21st century secondary schools. According to then Executive Director, Professor Peter Pierce, “It was an idea whose time has not come, it seems.”²⁰ The first prize winners of the competition were:

2001: Felicity Jensen, Peace Lutheran College, Cairns

2002: Ryan Anderson, Peace Lutheran College, Cairns

FOUNDATION FOR AUSTRALIAN LITERARY STUDIES: PUBLICATIONS

The Foundation’s original intention was to publish each annual Colin Roderick lecture series in monograph form. Angus & Robertson published three early Foundation lectures, but for whatever reason, this practice was not continued. From 1979 to 1996, FALS generally acted as publishers of the talks created by each annual Colin Roderick lecturer. The lectures would be revised by the author, and subsequently typeset and printed at the James Cook University campus in Townsville. The last Colin Roderick lectures to be published in short monograph form were Graeme Turner’s lectures on “Literature, Journalism and the Media”. The subsequent change in the lecture format (from a three-part lecture series to a single talk) probably discouraged the publication of future lectures.

Aside from the regular publication of Colin Roderick lectures, the Foundation published a wide variety of Australian-literature-themed monographs. For example, the two volume *North of Capricorn* series (1988-89) brought together over 100 years of verse and prose, bringing “vividly to life the experience of living in North Queensland.”²¹ A number of contemporary creative works also gained publication with FALS, including Brian Unkles’ short play *Monologue for Two Voices* (1996) and Robert Handicott’s poetry anthology *The Worry Egg* (1998), with its lyrical description of Burdekin Falls Dam:

A lanky, laid-back inland sea,
Matt brown as over-milky tea
Except where faintest blue creates
Illusions of far-off estates²²

Other poems were given life through publication in *Three North Queensland Poets* (Stefanie Bennett, R.G. Hay & Anne Lloyd: 1990). In this FALS-produced volume, Stefanie Bennett’s “After the Fall” is a moving and inventive expression of love:

And I will love you because
The world never did.
And I will cloak you in syllables

²⁰ Peter Pierce, email to Jillian Bond, 28 January 2005, in FALS records, Building 4, James Cook University..

²¹ See back cover of *North of Capricorn: An Anthology of Prose*. For more details see Appendix.

²² Robert Handicott, “At Burdekin Falls Dam”, in *The Worry Egg*, FALS, Townsville, 1998, p. 35.

To keep inquiring eyes at bay.
And I will cover our footprints
With such daring fiction
That no one will ask
 Ever again
For a sequel to love and loveliness.²³

With equal sensitivity and insight, Anne Lloyd writes of family life:

Auntie Beryl dishes hot chocolate thick with love when
Mutti is scratching away at shingles. She doles out fairy-
 bread,
pointillist perfection glued to the buttery slice of white
triangular in conception if not execution. I eat hot
 chocolate,
slurp down the babiest rainbow balls you ever saw, for
 breakfast,
and Popeye nods on, smiling Ba'hai, hello:
nothing worries him that much any more.
"Cocoa is nourishing," Auntie Beryl's red nose reiterates.
I watch the hundreds and thousands melt and pattern in
 finger
swirls swimming on the plate. Beryl's easy to rub along with.²⁴

On rare occasions, the Foundation published historically relevant pieces which might not have otherwise been preserved. *The Making of Xavier Herbert's "Poor Fellow My Country"* (edited by A.J. Hassall 1988) was a transcript of a Newcastle University English Department forum from 1975 where academics Laurie Hergenhan and Harry Heseltine discussed Herbert's work, and the great man himself was there to give thanks: "I want to pay my homage to these two men. Now, they can both stand up and take a bow." (p. 31) Another exercise in preservation was *The Grahame's Vengeance* (1996), a play written by the convict James Tucker in 1845 and edited for the Foundation by Colin Roderick. Tucker and Roderick already had a long history together. During the post-war years, Roderick had established the identity of James Tucker as the author of a number of manuscripts and edited two of Tucker's creative works for publication.²⁵

The Foundation for Australian Literary Studies marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1992 by publishing Herbert C. Jaffa's *Townsville at War: A Soldier Remembers*. The book had a long gestation. A New York University academic with a strong passion for Australian literature and the poems of Kenneth Slessor, Herbert Jaffa (1920–2013) was invited by his friend Harry Heseltine to deliver the Colin Roderick lectures in 1980. Jaffa's travelling schedule would not permit it, but he later revisited Townsville, where he was stationed as a US soldier during World War Two. The ultimate outcome of his brief return to Townsville was *Townsville at War*, launched by

²³ Stefanie Bennett, extract from "After the Fall", in Stefanie Bennett, R.G. Hay and Anne Lloyd, *Three North Queensland Poets*, FALS, Townsville, 1990, p. 11.

²⁴ Anne Lloyd, extract from "Family Fugue", in Bennett, Hay and Lloyd, *Three North Queensland Poets*, p. 41.

²⁵ Colin Roderick (ed.) *The Grahame's Vengeance by Otto von Rosenberg (James Tucker)*, FALS, Townsville, 1996, p. 2.

Brigadier Michael Keating, Commander, Third Brigade, Lavarack Barracks, on 29 April 1992. While focused on his personal story as a young man, the book provides striking and sympathetic impressions of a long-vanished Townsville that is ripe for rediscovery by today's historians.²⁶

The Foundation's publication program effectively ended in 1998, although in 2010 FALS published a limited edition of former Pimlico State High School teacher Robert Handicott's *Tales Out of School*. At the time this book was launched by FALS Secretary Don Gallagher, Handicott was teaching at the Bingham Academy in Ethiopia. The stories in the book were "dedicated to my colleagues at Pimlico over the past 30 years and colleagues in Ethiopia in the past three years ... it's about the bonds between teachers and it acknowledges the other side of teaching—the wonderful relationships with some kids."²⁷

Along with other organisations, the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies has continued to support Australian literature through financial assistance to *Literature in North Queensland (LiNQ)*, a journal focused on showcasing new creative work. Founded in 1971, *LiNQ* was originally co-edited by JCU English lecturer Dr Elizabeth Perkins (1933–2004), a strong supporter of FALS for many years.²⁸ Many FALS past publications can now be accessed via the *LiNQ* website and will no doubt find a new audience.²⁹

SPECIAL FOUNDATION EVENTS

From time to time, the Foundation has sponsored events outside its usual annual program. Such an event was the FALS contribution to Q150 (Queensland's 150th anniversary of separating from New South Wales), celebrated in 2009. The FALS Q150 lecture on 3 August 2009 was delivered by Dr Cheryl Taylor, a leading researcher and scholar of North Queensland writing. Her lecture explored "late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century poetry and fiction that constructed the tropical as a place where female fantasies of freedom and love could be fulfilled."³⁰ The event was held at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, one of the key venues used by FALS for the Colin Roderick lectures in recent decades.

In 2016, the Foundation is sponsoring a Town Hall Q&A style forum called "Looking Forward/Looking Back: Writing Women in Australia". Invited speakers include Australian authors Sarah Holland-Batt and Ariella Van Luyn, along with scholars of Australian literature such as Leigh Dale, Carole Ferrier and Katherine Bode. The forum will focus on the place of women in Australian literature and will aim to encourage public discussion. This event reflects the Foundation's continuing contribution to encouraging, promoting and celebrating Australian literature as it heads towards its next fifty years.³¹

²⁶ Harry Heseltine to Lyndon Megarrity, email dated 30 June 2016; FALS, Invitation to Launch of Herbert C. Jaffa's Townsville at War, ca. 1992, FALS filing cabinet, Building 4, James Cook University; Herbert Jaffa to Don Gallagher, 14 February 1992, FALS filing cabinet, Building 4, James Cook University.

²⁷ "Celebrating Teachers", *Townsville Bulletin*, 31 July 2010, p. 36.

²⁸ Perkins and David Foott were the founding co-editors of *LiNQ*. See Cheryl Taylor, "An Excellent Teacher and Lover of Literature: Elizabeth May Perkins O.A.M.", *Australian Literary Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2005, pp. 128–9.

²⁹ For the archives of the *LiNQ* website, see <https://journals.jcu.edu.au/linq/index>

³⁰ Flyer for Cheryl Taylor Q150 lecture, printed circa July 2009, in FALS filing cabinet, Building 4, James Cook University.

³¹ At the time of writing (August 2016) preparations were still underway for this event, due to be held on 18 October 2016 at the James Cook University Medical Theatre.

CONCLUSION

At a time in our history when the future is frequently defined in terms of science and technology, the challenge for organisations such as FALS is to continue to demonstrate that Australian literature and the humanities have an important role to play in shaping the future of Australia on a local, regional and national stage. Fortunately, since 1966, the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies has successfully promoted and encouraged the creation and discussion of Australian literature within North Queensland and the wider community. Building on its history, the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies will continue to pursue its fine literary and cultural aims for many years to come.

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APPENDIX

Colin Roderick Award

Winners of the Award since its inception in 1967 have been:

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1967 | Douglas Stewart, <i>Collected Poems, 1936-1967</i> |
| 1968 | Gavin Souter, <i>A Peculiar People</i> |
| 1969 | Francis Webb, <i>Collected Poems</i> |
| 1970 | Margaret Lawrie, <i>Myths and Legends of Torres Strait</i> |
| 1971 | Geoffrey Serle, <i>The Rush to be Rich</i> |
| 1972 | Sir Keith Hancock, <i>Discovering Monaro</i> |
| 1973 | Dorothy Green, <i>Ulysses Bound</i> |
| 1974 | David Malouf, <i>Neighbours in a Thicket</i> |
| 1975 | Denis Murphy, <i>T.J. Ryan</i> |
| 1976 | Gavin Souter, <i>Lion and Kangaroo</i> |
| 1977 | Alan Marshall, <i>The Complete Stories of Alan Marshall</i> |
| 1978 | Leslie Rees, <i>History of Australian Drama</i> |
| 1979 | Thea Astley, <i>Hunting the Wild Pineapple</i> |
| 1980 | Allan Grocott, <i>Convicts, Clergymen and Churches</i> |
| 1981 | Gavin Souter, <i>A Company of Heralds</i> |
| 1982 | Geoffrey Serle, <i>John Monash: A Biography</i> |
| 1983 | Dudley McCarthy, <i>Gallipoli to the Somme</i> |
| 1984 | Alan Gould, <i>The Man Who Stayed Below</i> |
| 1985 | John Gunn, <i>The Defeat of Distance: Qantas 1919-1939</i> |
| 1986 | Fr Tom Boland, <i>James Duhig</i> |
| 1987 | Nancy Phelan, <i>Home is the Sailor and The Best of Intentions</i> |
| 1988 | Peter Carey, <i>Oscar and Lucinda</i> |
| 1989 | Chris Symons, <i>John Bishop: A Life for Music</i> |
| 1990 | Roland Griffiths-Marsh, <i>Sixpenny Soldier</i> |
| 1991 | Joan Dugdale, <i>Struggle of Memory</i> |
| 1992 | Ruth Park, <i>A Fence Around the Cuckoo</i> |
| 1993 | Cassandra Pybus, <i>Gross Moral Turpitude: The Orr Case Reconsidered</i> |
| 1994 | Patrick Buckridge, <i>The Scandalous Penton: A Biography of Brian Penton</i> |
| 1995 | Judy Cassab, <i>Diaries</i> |
| 1996 | Tim Flannery, Alex Szalay, Roger Martin and Peter Schouten, <i>Tree Kangaroos</i> |
| 1997 | Peter Edwards, <i>A Nation at War</i> |
| 1998 | Robert Dessaix, <i>(and so forth)</i> |
| 1999 | Christopher Koch, <i>Out of Ireland</i> |
| 2000 | Peter Carey, <i>True History of the Kelly Gang</i> |
| 2001 | Peter Rose, <i>Rose Boys</i> |
| 2002 | Don Watson, <i>Recollections of a Bleeding Heart: A Portrait of Paul Keating PM</i> |
| 2003 | Thomas Keneally, <i>The Tyrant's Novel</i> |
| 2004 | Alan Wearne, <i>The Lovemakers Book Two: Money and Nothing &</i>
Tim Winton, <i>The Turning</i> |
| 2005 | Peter Temple, <i>The Broken Shore</i> |
| 2006 | Deborah Robertson, <i>Careless</i> |

2007	Malcolm Knox, <i>Jamaica</i>
2008	Graham Freudenberg, <i>Churchill and Australia</i> & James Boyce, <i>Van Diemen's Land</i>
2009	Michael Cathcart, <i>The Water Dreamers</i>
2010	Karen Kissane, <i>Worst of Days: Inside the Black Saturday Firestorm</i>
2011	Gillian Mears, <i>Foal's Bread</i>
2012	Thomas Keneally, <i>The Daughters of Mars</i>
2013	Stephen Edgar, <i>Eldershaw</i> & Ashley Hay, <i>The Railwayman's Wife</i>
2014	Michael Wilding, <i>Wild Bleak Bohemia: Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall: A Documentary</i>
2015	Gail Jones, <i>A Guide to Berlin</i>

Colin Roderick Lecture

Presenters since 1966 have been as follows:

1966	Rohan Rivett, <i>Writing About Australia</i>
1967	Professor G A Wilkes, <i>Novelists of Australia</i>
1968	Professor J McAuley, <i>The Personal Element in Australian Poetry</i>
1969	Doris Fitton, <i>The Independent Theatre</i>
1970	Professor Leonie Kramer, <i>The Modern Australian Novel</i>
1971	H G Kippax, <i>Drama in Australia</i>
1972	Dr N Macainsh, <i>The New Australian Poetry</i>
1973	Dr L T Hergenhan, <i>Australian Convict Literature</i>
1974	M Xavier Pons, <i>The Australian Short Story</i>
1975	Professor H P Heseltine, <i>Acquainted with the Night</i>
1976	Dr Clement Semmler, <i>Four Modern Writers</i>
1977	Dr Elizabeth Perkins, <i>Australian Drama Alive</i>
1978	Thea Astley, <i>Three Australian Writers</i>
1979	Dr Stephen Murray-Smith, <i>Books and the Man—A Literary Biography</i>
1980	Chris Wallace-Crabbe, <i>Three Absences in Australian Writing</i>
1981	Mark O'Connor, <i>Modern Australian Styles</i>
1982	Les A Murray, <i>Reflections of an Australian Poet</i>
1983	Professor A D Hope, <i>Directions in Australian Poetry</i>
1984	Bruce Bennett, <i>Place, Region and Community</i>
1985	Dorothy Green, <i>The Writer, The Reader, and The Critic in a Monoculture</i>
1986	Dr Brian Matthews, <i>Romantics and Mavericks: The Australian Short Story</i>
1987	Dr Val Vallis, <i>Heart Reasons, These...: Commentaries on Five Australian Poets</i>
1988	Julian Croft, <i>The Federal and National Impulse in Australian Literature 1890-1958</i>
1989	Jennifer Strauss, 'Stop Laughing! I'm Being Serious', ... <i>Contemporary Australian Poetry</i>
1990	W H (Bill) Wilde, <i>The Search for Identity in Australian Biography</i>
1991	Dr Shirley Walker, <i>Vanishing Edens ... Mary Gilmore, Judith Wright and Dorothy Hewett</i>
1992	Michael Wilding, <i>The Radical Tradition: Lawson, Furphy, Stead</i>
1993	Helen Thomson, <i>Bio-Fictions: Brian Matthews, Drusilla Modjeska and Elizabeth Jolley</i>
1994	Dennis Haskell, <i>Australian Poetic Satire</i>

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- 1995 Graeme Turner, *Literature, Journalism and the Media*
 1996 Robert Jordan, *Australia's Early Convict Theatres*
 1997 Helen Garner, *The Art of the Dumb Question*
 1998 Morag Fraser, *Australia: Shadows and Substances*
 1999 Peter Conrad, *The Second Discovery of Australia*
 2000 Raimond Gaita, *Politics and Morality*
 2001 Gabrielle Lord and Roger Johnson, *Psychological Thrillers*
 2002 Peter Rose, *The Consolations of Biography*
 2003 Don Watson, *Death Sentence: the Decay of Public Language*
 2004 Alex Miller, *Prophets of the Imagination, or, The Journey's Not Over Yet, Old Mate*
 2005 Robert Manne, *The Strange Case of Cornelia Rau*
 2006 Graeme Blundell, *Graeme on Graham (Kennedy)*
 2007 Nicolas Rothwell, *The Language of Nature and the Language of Man*
 2008 John Clanchy, *Consolations of an Australian Writing Life*
 2009 Peter Steele, *Past, Present and Future: Poetry as the Mind in Love*
 2010 Peter Goldsworthy, *The Film of the Book: Stories and their Mutations*
 2011 David Williamson, *Dead White Males Revisited*
 2012 Frank Moorhouse, *Stories from the Archives: Creating the Edith Trilogy*
 2013 Drusilla Modjeska postponed on account of illness
 2014 Drusilla Modjeska, *The Informed Imagination, Writing PNG: Land of Unlikeliness*
 2015 Joanna Murray-Smith, *The Autobiographical Imagination*
 2016 Anna Goldsworthy, *The Art of Listening: An Evening of Music and Conversation*

PUBLICATIONS

Works published by Angus & Robertson (originating from the Foundation's annual lecture series)

- *Rohan Rivett, *Writing about Australia* (1969)
 *G.A. Wilkes, *Australian Literature: A Conspectus* (1969)
 *James McAuley, *The Personal Element in Australian Poetry* (1970)

Works published by the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies

- Else Mitchell (Chairman), *The Education and Training of Journalists, Being a Report on the Proceedings of a Seminar on the Subject Held at the University College of Townsville, 11th-12th May 1968 under the Chairmanship of Else Mitchell* (1970)
 Anne McKay, *Percy Fritz Rowland: A Brief Biography* (1974)
 *Harry Heseltine, *Acquainted with the Night: Studies in Classic Australian Fiction* (1979)
 *Thea Astley, *Three Australian Writers: Essays on Bruce Dawe, Barbara Baynton and Patrick White* (1979)
 Lorna McDonald, *Henry Arthur Kellow (1881-1935)* (1981)

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- *Stephen Murray-Smith, *Indirections: A Literary Autobiography* (1981)
- *Mark O'Connor, *Modern Australian Styles: Three Lectures on Verse and Drama* (1982)
- *Chris Wallace-Crabbe, *Three Absences in Australian Writing* (1983)
- Cheryl Frost, *The Last Explorer: The Life and Work of Ernest Favenc* (1983)
- *A.D. Hope, *Directions in Australian Poetry* (1984)
- *Bruce Bennett, *Place, Region and Community* (1985)
- *Dorothy Green, *The Writer, the Reader and the Critic in a Monoculture* (1986)
- Mark O'Connor, *Selected Poems* (published in association with Hale & Iremonger) (1986)
- Nicola Jane Tareha, *The Legend of the Leap* (1986)
- *Brian Matthews, *Romantics and Mavericks: The Australian Short Story* (1987)
- Anthony J. Hassall (ed), *The Making of Xavier Herbert's "Poor Fellow My Country"* (1988)
- *Val Vallis, *Heart Reasons, These: Commentaries on Five Australian Poets* (1988)
- Elizabeth Perkins & Robert Handicott (eds), *North of Capricorn: An Anthology of Verse* (1988)
- *Julian Croft, *The Federal and National Impulse in Australian Literature, 1890-1958* (1989)
- Des Petersen & Stephen Torre (eds), *North of Capricorn: An Anthology of Prose* (1989)
- Colin Roderick, *The Foundation for Australian Literary Studies: A Note on the First Ten Years 1966-1976* (1989)
- *Jennifer Strauss, *Stop Laughing! I'm Being Serious: Three Studies in Seriousness and Wit in Contemporary Australian Poetry* (1990)
- *W.H. (Bill) Wilde, *The Search for Identity in Australian Biography* (1991)
- Herbert C. Jaffa, *Townsville at War: A Soldier Remembers* (1992)
- *Shirley Walker, *Vanishing Edens: Responses to Australia in the Works of Mary Gilmore, Judith Wright and Dorothy Hewett* (1992)
- *Michael Wilding, *The Radical Tradition: Lawson, Furphy, Stead* (1993)
- *Helen Thomson, *Bio-fictions: Brian Matthews, Drusilla Modjeska and Elizabeth Jolley* (1994)
- *Dennis Haskell, *Australian Poetic Satire* (1995)
- Colin Roderick (ed.) *The Grahame's Vengeance or the Fate of James the First King of Scotland: A Historical Drama in Three Acts by Otto von Rosenberg (James Tucker)* (1996)
- *Graeme Turner, *Literature, Journalism and the Media* (1996)

* the asterisk indicates publications that originated from the Colin Roderick Lectures.

Cleveland Bay New Writing Series (published by FALS)

Yetta Rothberg, *Thousands of Years through the Eyes of a Child; and The Great Wall, or, Waiting for Hank!* With illustrations by Mary Hammond (1980)

Anthony R. Huntington, *Behemoth* [sic], with illustrations by Anita Jetnikoff (1983)

Peter John Kirkpatrick, *Water Music* (1983)

R.G. Hay, *Love and the Outer World: Selected Poems* (1984)

Stefanie Bennett, R.G. Hay & Anne Lloyd, *Three North Queensland Poets* (1990)

Brian Unkles, *Monologue for Two Voices* (1996)

Robert Handicott, *The Worry Egg* (1998)

Robert Handicott, *Tales Out of School* (2010)

Many of these publications can now be accessed via the LiNQ website at:
<https://journals.jcu.edu.au/linq/index>

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