

# 2006 NATIONAL LITERARY AWARDS

*conducted by the Fellowship of Australian Writers (Victoria)*

## RESULTS

### PART 1: BOOK AWARDS

**FAW MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING AWARD** – in its thirty-fourth year, an award for a non-fiction book first published in Australia, of sustained quality and distinction with an Australian theme. *Sponsored by* **Melbourne University Publishing**

|                  |                   |   |     |   |
|------------------|-------------------|---|-----|---|
| Winner (\$1000)  | Paul Collins      | Burn: The Epic Story of Bushfire in Australia               | NSW | Allen and Unwin   |
| Highly Commended | Ruth Gooch        | Frontier French Island                                      | VIC | Prahran Mechanics Institute Press                       |
|                  | Garrie Hutchinson | Pilgrimage: A Traveller's Guide To Australia's Battlefields | VIC | Black Inc., an Imprint of Schwartz Publishing Pty. Ltd. |
|                  | Alice Pung        | Unpolished Gem  | VIC | Black Inc., an Imprint of Schwartz Publishing Pty. Ltd. |

#### Judges' report: Jean Thornton and Bill Anderson

There was a large and varied number of entries this year and, in general, the standard of entries was good. Although it was fairly difficult to decide on the final selection, the judges found they were able to agree on the winner and the commendations.

Paul Collins's history of bushfire in Australia was judged the outstanding book entered in this award. "Burn" is not only an important contribution to Australian historiography it is a finely written, engrossing book. Collins tackles an important subject with great energy and sensitivity and the book is insightful and entertaining. This is a splendid history and a major contribution to our understanding of an important aspect of Australian life.

Ruth Gooch's history of French Island is a model local history. It is extremely well researched, the illustrations are excellent and it is written with great warmth. "Pilgrimage", Garrie Hutchinson's guide to Australian battlefields, is the fruit of immense research, it is written with passion and great skill and contains a wealth of fascinating information - this is historical research and writing of a very high order. Alice Pung's memoir "Unpolished Gem" is a delight. In this, her first book, Pung displays remarkable storytelling skills; this is a vastly entertaining, insightful and witty book.