

Book reviews

Children's Literature

Curly and the fent

by Sally Morgan with Ambelin and Blaze Kwaymullina and others, Illustrated by Adam Hill

Random House

ISBN: 978 1 74166 292 4

128pp RRP: \$12.95

Sally Morgan, author of the widely read *My Place*, adapts her word skills to this children's tale. Colloquial language and imagery (such as Roses chocolates for example) makes it an easily identifiable Australian story. The protagonist is Curly, son of an Aboriginal father and Irish mother. Curly gets in trouble enough, but when the monster in the cupboard turns out to be a mischievous little creature called a Fent, Curly is about to find out where the trouble really starts! A light and breezy tale.

Poetry



Anonymous premonition

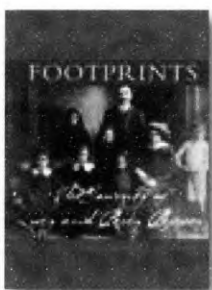
by Yvette Holt

University of Queensland Press

ISBN: 978 0 7022 3571 RRP: \$24.95

A member of the Bidjara Nation, Queensland, Yvette Holt's first collection of poetry illustrates what it is like to be an Indigenous woman in today's Australian society. Themes of identity, Aboriginal culture and history as well as the sisterhood loom large. It is a text that resonates with poetic activism, and her use of language is powerful and evocative.

Non-Fiction



Footprints: The journey of Lucy and Peter Pepper

ISBN 978 1 920807 61 0, 132pp

RRP: \$10.00

An Aboriginal family, described in 1907 terminology as 'half caste' has left a trail of letters illustrating how such families were stuck between two worlds in the early 20th century.

Published jointly by the National Archives of Australia and Public Record Office Victoria, this book reveals the lives of an Aboriginal family from Gippsland, affected by laws and government policies that defined who was 'Aboriginal' and who was not. The Peppers' struggle to survive ill health and poverty and keep their extended family together is told through private and official letters.

Percy Pepper had served in World War I, had received a soldier settler's block, owned a bike store and written letters to the Premier of Victoria, all of which left a paper trail in archives and are now reproduced.



A concise companion to Aboriginal history

by Malcolm Prentis

Rosenberg Publishing

ISBN: 978 1877058622 RRP: \$29.95

Providing an overview of Australian Aboriginal history from the creation stories through to Aboriginal cultural and political activity in the 21st century, this title provides teachers, researchers and other interested readers, a window by which to glance into a very complex and dense part of our nation's identity.

With entries listed alphabetically, the text provides quick reference to such topics as native title, invasion and the Torres Strait Islands as well as personalities pivotal to the understanding of the subject matter. There are also suggested further readings and a handy timeline.

Although it is not the definitive history text, the book does well as a supplementary research guide.

Indigenous Literacy Day

On Wednesday September 3, 2008 all Australians are invited to participate in the second Indigenous Literacy Day (ILD) to raise urgently needed funds to address the literacy crisis in remote Indigenous communities.

What will happen on ILD:

- Indigenous Literacy Day events will be held across Australia.
- Libraries and schools will initiate different awareness raising events in their local communities to support Indigenous Literacy Day.
- Individuals can help by attending activities in their local area; buying a book at a participating bookshop on September 3, 2008 or organising their own private fundraising literary lunches and morning teas.

More information is available <http://www.worldwithoutbooks.org/ILD/Index.aspx>

Gates Foundation Access to Learning Award

Applications are being called for the 2009 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Access to Learning Award, which recognises the innovative efforts of public libraries and similar institutions outside the United States to connect people to information through free access to computers and the Internet.

Previous recipients include the Northern Territory Library (NTL) which provides Indigenous people living with technology tools and training. Through NTL's 'Our Story' program, residents' build digital literacy skills while creating digital archives of their traditional stories and songs.

2008's recipient will be announced in August at the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) annual conference in Quebec.

Applications close 31 October 2008. Visit <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/globaldevelopment/globallibraries>

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