

Authors @ the Library

September and October 2007 were very exciting months at Cairns Libraries, with four visiting authors. They were Robert G. Barrett, Shane Maloney, Archimede Fusillo and Monica McInerney. Tours by Robert G., Shane and Archimede were part of the World Link Cairns Project funded by the State Library of Queensland, Library Strategic Development Grant. Monica's visit was funded by the Courier Mail, State Library of Queensland and ABC radio in the Big Book Club promotion.

In response to demand from our many local readers and writers Cairns Libraries will endeavour to continue sponsoring author tours and writers' workshops.



Robert G Barrett

Crime writer Robert G Barrett entertained a large number of enthusiastic fans and readers during three sessions. As part of Festival Cairns the sessions attracted a diverse group of readers who purchased books for Robert to sign.

He visited Smithfield, City and Earlville Libraries and spoke about his work, how he writes his stories and exchanged tales with his many fans.



The crowd in the City Library



Robert G with an enthusiastic fan.



Copies of Robert G's books were available from Collins Booksellers



Robert G signing his books for his devoted fans.

Robert G. with Simon, Manager of Angus & Robertson, Earlville.



Shane Maloney

Humorous crime fiction writer, Shane Maloney, visited 3 branches of Cairns Libraries during his tour of Cairns.

At the City Library a group of enthusiastic writers discussed the writing and publishing process with Shane.

Babinda Library was almost overflowing with avid readers and emerging writers who grilled Shane with probing questions and comments during his entertaining session at the library.

At Earlville Library many readers happily spent their Saturday afternoon discussing writing and politics with Shane.



Shane Maloney at Babinda Library



Shane Maloney at Earlville Library

Cairns Libraries hosted a three day visit from author Archimede Fusillo as part of the World Link Cairns project. During this time, Children's Librarian, Kristie Jones caught up with Archie on where he gets his inspiration and how his writing career began.

Archie Fusillo



There were butterflies in my stomach as I waited in Cairns Airport for Archimede Fusillo's plane to arrive. I was about to meet the author of some of my favourite books for young people and the winner of prestigious awards that include the Alan Marshall Award and the Mary Grant Bruce Award for Children's Literature.

My apprehension turned out to be unnecessary. Archie's charm put me at ease immediately, partly because of how intently he listens to what people have to say. 'I'm interested in people in general,' he admits. 'You never know what might turn up.' Archie often gathers material for his writing this way as well as drawing upon people he has known, without exploiting them or making them into characters.

Archie's young adult books explore topics that are deeply personal to him. *The Dons* is predominately about dementia and how this affects family. Archie experienced this first hand when his grandmother, his Nonna, developed the disorder. *Bruises* deals with various issues that have affected friends in his life, including homosexuality and terminal illness. His first novel, *Sparring with Shadows* explores his own experience of feeling like an outsider as a first generation Australian growing up in Melbourne.

Although his novels contain links to his own cultural background, he says this was more unconscious than deliberate. 'I am drawn to it naturally,' he says. 'It is what I know. Also, I'd never read books about my kind of background as a kid.'

This was one reason why he didn't like reading as a young person. His Year 10 English teacher told him he should write his own stories instead. He took her advice and began working towards what would become a career. At seventeen and a half, he left school and started rewriting advertisements for companies, often without payment. His big break came when he applied for a position in a magazine, working his way from the bottom up. When an assignment came up for a food critic to visit Italy, Archie convinced the magazine he was the man for the job. 'I told them I could speak and write Italian. That I could understand the people I was writing about. They could see that made sense.'

The assignment was three and a half weeks in Italy with a Ferrari at his disposal. It was to lead to future assignments as a food critic not only in Australia, but across the world. He had the opportunity to travel widely but it left him with no time to write his own stories.

It was this continuing desire to write his own material that led to his decision to teach. While teaching full time, he squeezed in sessions each day to write his first novel. It took him two years to finish *Sparring with Shadows* and then a publisher lost it. 'It was handwritten, my only copy.' He spent another two years rewriting it before it was accepted by Penguin. Within months of the publication of the book, Archie found that he had so many requests for workshops that he was able to leave teaching.

Archie's novels usually begin with 'a character who gets into my head and wants me to tell their story'. He doesn't like to plan too much to begin with as 'that comes along later'. Instead, he keeps a notebook for

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each project, recording thoughts as they come to him. He also keeps a general journal for interesting incidents and a diary to record his feelings.

His latest young adult/crossover novel took two years to research in Australia and overseas, then another three years to actually write. After investing five years of his time on the project, a computer virus destroyed his hard drive *and* the only electronic copy of the novel. Fortunately, his publisher had a hard copy but, unfortunately, he then had to spend further time painstakingly retyping the novel. Much to his relief, the novel has now been contracted and is due to be published in a year's time.

For aspiring writers, Archie gives two pieces of advice that continue to resonate with me. The first is to have persistence: 'never give up and don't take rejection personally'. The second is to 'have faith in yourself. This separates published writers from those who give up'.

Kristie Jones, Children's Librarian, Cairns Libraries.



Archie at Hambleton State School



Archie at St Andrews, Redlynch

Who met Dewey @ the City Library?



These very excited student from Hambleton State School met Dewey the white-lipped green tree frog, who is Cairns Libraries mascot. The students were attending a special Festival Cairns Storytime with Taipan star Matt Smith at the City Library on September 12. The students also enjoyed visiting the "Earth Quest" exhibition from Questacon, the National Science Centre in Canberra.



Monica McInerney



Monica McInerney, bestselling Australian author, was The Courier-Mail Big Book Club selection for October 2007 with her newest release ***Those Faraday Girls***. A captivating, funny and moving story spanning thirty years in the life of a complicated, unconventional family.

A group of enthusiastic readers met with Monica at Earlville Library on Monday 29th October.

The Courier-Mail Big Book Club's is supported by the Australia Council for the Arts, ABC Radio, The State Library of Queensland and The Courier-Mail.

The Club's aims are to promote the love of reading, encourage readers to give other titles that they might not necessary read a go, support emerging and established Queensland and Australian authors and facilitate the bringing together of authors, libraries, communities, and booksellers in both regional and metropolitan areas.

Set in Tasmania, New York and Ireland, ***Those Faraday Girls*** centres on an eccentric grandfather, five charismatic sisters, the niece they've collectively raised – and a secret that could destroy everything these women have grown up believing. Filled with Monica's trademark warmth and humour and featuring a cast of unforgettable women, *Those Faraday Girls* is sure to engage readers of every generation. One of the stars of Australian fiction, Monica McInerney is the author of the internationally bestselling novels *A Taste for Upside Down Inside Out*, *Spin the Bottle*, *The Alphabet Sisters* and *Family Baggage*.



Monica McInerney at Earlville Library

What's happening next ...

Smithfield Library

The Smithfield Library is temporarily closed for major renovations and will reopen on Monday 7 January 2008.

The refurbishment of the Smithfield library is part of Council's continuing program to update and upgrade all Library facilities in Cairns.

A limited collections and services will be available from a small site adjacent to the library until Saturday 29 December 2007.

All services and facilities will be closed from 12 noon Saturday 29 December 2007 until Monday 7 January 2008.

Manunda Library

Work has begun on the Manunda Library which is being erected next to The Warehouse in the Raintrees Shopping Centre. The library is scheduled to open in March 2008.

New satellite library at Bethlehem Nursing Home.

Library staff have begun stocking shelves of a small library at the Bethlehem Nursing Home. For the use of residents of the home, the library will house large print and talking books. The establishment of another satellite library in the Cairns area means that even more readers will have access to the collections of Cairns Libraries.

Library Technology ...



To save paper, time and energy Cairns Libraries has begun to send reservation letters via email.

Do we have your latest email address?

If not, next time you at a branch of Cairns Libraries please inform us of your latest email address.

Help us do our bit for the environment and make sure you receive your notices in a timely manner.

RECHARGE: keeping people on the move

RECHARGE: keeping people on the move is an initiative of Cairns Libraries and the Spinal Injuries Association as part of improving disabled access in our region.

The program, "Recharge, keeping people on the move" is directed at citizens who use powered wheelchairs and scooters. This program will enable disabled patrons to recharge scooters or wheelchairs at selected branches of Cairns Libraries.

The Recharge facility will initially be available at:
City, Earlville, Gordonvale & Babinda Library
As well as at Hambleton House, (next door to Edmonton Library).

Look for this sign. For further information ask at any branch of Cairns Libraries or check out www.cairnslibrary.com.au.

