

# Yarram Community Learning Centre's Annual Literary Competition – 2009

## Judges' Report – Open Poetry Section

We were delighted to be asked once again to judge the Poetry Section of the Annual Literary Competition for the Yarram CLC. This proved to be an enjoyable but, as ever, challenging task.

The competition was of a high standard. We were offered a diverse range of subject matter and styles. Most entries gave us plenty to ponder.

Through the process of reading and re-reading, we finally settled on a short list of ten poems. Fortunately, the poems chosen by each judge for this list were surprisingly similar.

With fine tuning, many of the poems short listed would be capable of winning a competition or finding publication in the future.

In general, comments were made about the use of clichés, unattractive line spacing/inappropriate shaping, too many adjectives, obscurity, muddled construction and grammatical errors. Some entries had imperfect or erratic rhyming patterns. Poems were often let down by weak endings. It is important that a poem should lead to a satisfactory conclusion.

Our congratulations go to the winner and placegetters, fine poems and yet each one varying in scope and content.

The winner, **An Idiot's Guide to ....** A free verse poem, which examined the practice of writing poetry. A clever, sensitive work with lovely imagery. It was different and offered a fresh approach to the writing process.

Second place, **Drought**. A poem of just 12 lines, which encapsulated, as the title suggests, the devastation of drought. Succinct, this entry said it all in raw imagery. This topic has been covered many times before, but is done honestly and very well with this entry.

Commended:

**Rebirth** An entry that tackles the topic of aging. The narration is well presented, beautifully expressed and leads to hope for the future as it ends on a positive note.

**Daybreak** A lot of depth and detail is woven into this poem's rich imagery. Beautifully evocative and presented in a contemporary layout, this entry fell away somewhat at the end.

### Encouragement Award for a Local Writer

**New Moon** -A competently written free verse entry that examines the cycle of the moon with sensitivity and a finely honed awareness of the poet's surroundings.'

We urge all other contestants to continue writing and entering competitions. Many came close. There were numerous competently written entries of a pleasing standard. Good luck to all in future poetic endeavours.

**Cynthia Rowe and Gavin Austin**