



*Pictured from left: back row, Danuta Earle, Rae Sinclair (Youth Education Centre SA), Robyn Stannard (Oxford Falls Grammar NSW), Richard de Crespigny, Benjamin Gibson (Redeemer Baptist School NSW), John Lemon, president; front row, Mila Stone, project officer, Elisabeth Sulich (SCEGGS NSW), Josiah May (Knox Grammar NSW), Jarrod Hoy (North Curl Curl Public School NSW), Alpay Filizkok (Redeemer Baptist School NSW), Glenda Millard, Sally Murphy, Coral de Crespigny. (Image courtesy Namoi Valley Independent)*

# Dorothea MacKellar Poetry awards mark another huge year

This was a big year for the Dorothea MacKellar Poetry Awards, marking its 29th birthday with a very healthy turnout; 10,000 budding poets from over 700 schools submitted work of a precociously high standard, another ringing endorsement of poetry’s popularity among young writers.

Winners were announced at the National Presentation Ceremony, which was held at Gunnedah on Friday 30th August, the town from where Dorothea MacKellar drew much of the inspiration for her iconic verse.

The judges this year expressed their amazement at the standard of work submitted, which both delighted them and made the task of selecting a winner for each category that much more difficult.

Entrants were given the option of writing to a theme, ‘Wherever the Wind Blows’ or on any topic they wanted. As a result there was a vast array of topics and forms submitted for judging.

Author Sally Murphy, a well-known figure in children’s literature and judge of the secondary schools category said, “Because poetry is, by its very nature, subjective, what appeals to one will not necessarily appeal to others, because poetry is successful when it speaks to the reader or listener in some way.

“The poems which rose to the top in this year’s awards were those which offered the reader (in this case, me) the chance to look at something in a new way, or experience something new. This happens via two means: what is said about the subject, and how it is said. Together those two elements combine to create a third: an impact on the reader.”

Judge of the primary section Glenda Millard, who returned for a second time this year, was equally impressed

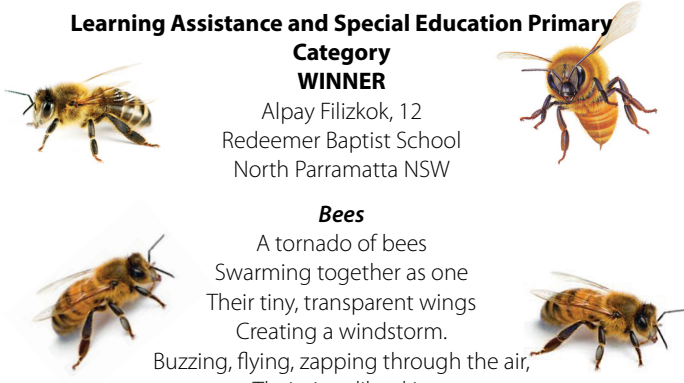
“The poems which I selected for awards of commended or higher ranged in topic, in form and in length. There were lengthy poems and haiku,

**Learning Assistance and Special Education Primary Category WINNER**

Alpay Filizkok, 12  
Redeemer Baptist School  
North Parramatta NSW

**Bees**

A tornado of bees  
Swarming together as one  
Their tiny, transparent wings  
Creating a windstorm.  
Buzzing, flying, zapping through the air,  
Their tiger like skin  
Spell danger.



highly rhymed and structured forms and free verse and experimental.

“This being my second year as a judge, I am better acquainted with the awards, and so in some ways I was more prepared for the deluge of entries as they arrived. But I think it would be impossible for me to ever be prepared for the joy I feel when I read an entry which is unique and well-written.

“Like precious jewels, cut and polished until they gleam, they excite and inspire and remind me of why I agreed to take on this task once again. I must admit to feeling awed at the quality of some of this year’s poems.

**Upper Primary Category  
WINNER**

Jarrold HOY, 11  
Curl Curl North Public School  
North Curl Curl NSW

**Letters and Numbers (excerpt)**

Green and black systems,  
Intricate wires weave like lines on a map.  
The roads beat with ancient, solemn, knowledge,  
Speaking secrets never told.

A city of silicon,  
Battery towers and buildings hung with marvellous wire tapestries  
Pulsing and glowing.  
A universe built of perfect numbers

There is a galaxy of electricity  
Nebulae and fire,  
Dust and wind,  
Endless possibility  
A map I cannot read Alien images, a code that cannot be broken  
Circuit boards sparkling with meteors of knowledge that I can  
never reach.



**Junior Secondary Category  
WINNER**

Elisabeth SULICH, 12  
SCEGGS Darlinghurst  
Darlinghurst NSW

**Where Poppies Grow (excerpt)**

The young larks fly over rusted wire  
Over the fields where guns did fire  
Over the fields where diggers fell  
Over the fields, the gates of hell

The young larks fly over poppies red  
Over the fields where the young men bled  
Fly over the hills where shots rang out  
Over the hills where poppies sprout  
The young larks fly over crosses white Where sleet lashed down in  
the cold, dark night  
Over the land where blood did stain



**Learning Assistance and Special Education Secondary  
Category Learning assisted  
WINNER**

Benjamin GIBSON, 17  
Redeemer Baptist School  
North Parramatta NSW

**Salute To The Fallen (excerpt)**

The bravest field that's ever been  
Will wear a cloak of scarlet  
For all the blood that on her flowed,  
For all the death she met.

So listen well, who've yet to hear  
The story of this flower,  
Whose fame was born in war and strife  
In this world's darkest hour.

Petals caught the blood of heroes  
The soldiers' stories go  
Though now stained red as ruby,  
Were once as white as snow.

Just as life seeped from dead men's bones  
Then into soil dark  
The land still cries in pain from wounds  
A battle's dreadful mark.

When on this poppy's bloody colour  
Next time you turn your gaze,  
Remember all those Aussie men  
Who died in smoke and haze;

For on that field there died the men  
With courage like no other.  
They were prepared to give it all  
They fought to save their brother.



**Lower Primary Category  
WINNER**

Josiah MAY, 9  
Knox Grammar Preparatory School  
Wahroonga NSW

**Images of Australia (excerpt)**

The wind takes us on a rainbow of many colours-  
to the rich orange of the outback  
reflected in the wilderness of the sky  
with fingers of gold stretched across a canvas  
of burnt red.  
Giant clouds painting the sky like a bucket of spilt paint and...  
below  
a single tree, a green twisted shape, taunted by its aloneness. and  
the breeze moves on...

Down below  
the land stays gold  
for thousands of miles  
before seeping into reds greens, yellows and browns.  
Becoming a quilt of many patterns...  
white dimples on brown stems,  
illuminated leaves trailing down,  
stained hills of scrub  
seamed by wooden stitches.  
and yet... the breeze moves on...

Past horribly twisted ghost gums,  
subjects of paranoia, laughing and cackling  
as they glow underneath the pure white moon and point their  
cold contorted fingers  
upwards  
surrounded by frozen plants who,  
beheld their icy souls,  
and, themselves, were paralysed.  
with a shudder, the breeze moves away...



From the team that brought you

**EduTECH**

Australia's leading education technology event



# Future Schools

12 - 14 March 2014 • Australian Technology Park • Sydney

Approaches to new physical learning spaces and the online classroom

## Confirmed International Keynotes



### Stephen Heppell

Europe's leading expert on online education & learning space design



### Eric Mazur

Harvard Professor & pioneer of peer instruction and flipped learning

**And many more...**

## Key Themes Include:

- ✓ **School of the future**  
Schools and classrooms in the changing paradigm of education
- ✓ **Designing learning spaces**  
Designing environments that best support all learning styles and needs
- ✓ **Virtual places**  
Exploring the role of online and blended learning to foster learning and engagement
- ✓ **Collaboration**  
Formulating student-lead learning into more cohesive group environments
- ✓ **Next generation teaching**  
From lecturer to facilitator, the changing role of teachers

**REGISTER NOW! EARLY BIRD - SAVE \$100**

**[www.acevents.com.au/futureschools](http://www.acevents.com.au/futureschools) (02) 8908 8555**

**Senior Secondary Category**

**WINNER**

Jobelle ROSCAS, 16  
Rosny College  
Rosny Tas

**Hiroshima**

At 8.15 in the morning  
on August 6th, 1945  
the clocks froze  
in Hiroshima.

I can't remember  
at what temperature  
the air boiled that morning  
when the day had barely begun,  
but I know it was hot enough  
for the fathers stepping out of their homes  
the mothers kissing their husbands goodbye  
the children on the street  
to instantly turn  
to ash.

When Death shuffled along the road that day  
collecting souls in his arms,  
He walked quietly and carefully  
not knowing who it was He was stepping on.  
Even He shed a tear.

How deceiving the dust of humans looked  
dancing through the air  
falling on half-melted roofs  
like snow.

On a wall somewhere,  
the outline of a person  
still remains.  
the only reminder  
they left behind.

No, Hiroshima.  
God was not punishing you

for whatever sin you may have committed  
once long ago.

No amount of sin could equal this tragedy.  
This was made by people  
just like you.

I bet those men in their tin cans, slicing through  
the air,  
cradling that bomb in the belly of their plane  
that morning, had no idea  
how devastating this could be.

Yet three days later  
they dared to drop one more  
on Nagasaki.

And if they knew,  
I know they're kicking themselves now.  
Sometimes I can hear those men crying  
on the laps of their mothers  
asking, what did we do?  
what have we done?

Hiroshima, I imagine your streets in the days  
that followed.  
How the ashes waltzed in the breeze  
and formed hands outstretched like wings,  
how shadows on walls  
rose to their feet and walked instinctively  
home, closing a door that was once there  
on the day  
they wish never happened.

There is word in Japanese  
that literally means  
'explosion-affected people.'  
Years later,  
we are writing your stories.  
We are thinking of you.

We are all  
hibakusha.

a kiss on the cheek which make these real people  
rather than simply numbers."

As an indication of the breadth of topics  
and variance of form of the poems submitted,  
Alpay Filizkok's 'Bees' which won the Learning  
Assistance and Special Education Primary  
Category, captured its subject in a perfectly-  
formed seven lines.

"The poet has used wonderfully graphic  
language. Is tornado the collective noun for  
bees? If not, it should be. Wonderful!" was the  
judge's comment.

Prizewinners in recent years have been  
presented with individual mementoes, designed  
and crafted by members of Gunnedah's art  
community. This year's trophy is a linocut  
'Blowing in the Wind' by Gunnedah artist Anne  
Pickett who works in ceramics, watercolours,  
pencil and printmaking.

The awards' overarching mission is to  
propagate poetry in schools and the resources  
for teachers on the website offers some  
invaluable advice from some of our best  
authors in how to approach the writing and  
teaching of poetry, see <http://www.dorothea.com.au/resources.php>

**This year's winners**

- Senior Secondary – Jobelle Roscas Tas
- Junior Secondary – Elisabeth Sulich NSW
- Learning Assistance and Special Education, Secondary – Benjamin Gibson, NSW
- Upper Primary – Jarrod Hoy NSW
- Lower Primary – Josiah May NSW
- Learning Assistance And Special Education, Primary – Alpay Filizkok NSW
- Community Relations Commission (NSW) Award – Mele Fifita NSW

**The Sheelah Baxter Award For Primary Schools**

- Oxford Falls Grammar, Oxford Falls NSW
- Schools' Award, Secondary
- Youth Education Centre Cavan SA
- This year's runners up:
- Senior Secondary – Rani Jayasekera Vic
- Junior Secondary – Simone Engele Vic
- Learning Assistance And Special Education, Secondary – Theophilus Din NSW
- Upper Primary – Prajusha Mukhopadhaya NSW
- Lower Primary – Elaine Hansen ACT
- Learning Assistance And Special Education, Primary – Snigdha Singh NSW

**Schools' Award, commendations**

- Saturday School of Community Languages, Smiths Hill High School Keiraville NSW
- MLC Burwood NSW
- Hornsby Girls' School Hornsby NSW
- Mackellar Girls' High School Manly Vale NSW
- Redeemer Baptist School North Parramatta NSW
- Griffith Public School Griffith NSW
- Tamworth Public School Tamworth NSW
- St Patrick's Parish School, Gundagai NSW



"I must reiterate how very difficult it is to judge entries of this magnitude and quality. Because of this, it can be as little as a spelling mistake or a typographical error, which distinguishes one poem over another," she said.

A stirring piece on the Hiroshima bombing from Jobelle Roscas took out the Senior Secondary prize and is a good example of

the evocative, sensitive work submitted. It is powerful stuff, on which the judges commented, "This is a poem which is spine tingling. To be able to deal with such a disturbing topic in a way, which embraces the reader shows great maturity. Images of fathers, mothers, children turning instantly to ash are wonderfully powerful, made more so by little details such as