



MEDIA RELEASE

Gay Bilson wins Kibble Literary Award for Women Writers

10 MAY 2005

EMBARGOED UNTIL 6.00PM

Perpetual Trustees Limited (Perpetual), Manager of the 'Nita B Kibble Literary Award for Women Writers' (the Kibble Award), today announced Ms Gay Bilson as the 2005 winner for her work *Plenty: Digressions on food* (Penguin Group - Australia).

Worth \$20,000, the Kibble Award was established eleven years ago by Ms Nita May Dobbie to recognise achievements in women's literature. Past winners of the Award include Gail Jones, Jacqueline Kent, Inga Clendinnen and Fiona Capp.

Gay Bilson is a well-known chef and was the owner of the Berowra Waters Inn in the 1990s, then one of Australia's most influential and acclaimed restaurants. She has written much about food and gastronomy, contributing articles and columns to major newspapers.

According to the judges, *Plenty* is an abundance of wonderful writing which brings together the mind and the body, feeding the senses at the same time as it challenges and enlarges our ideas and appreciation of the world.

Also short-listed for the Kibble Award in 2005 were Susan Johnson for her work, *The Broken Book* (Allen & Unwin), and Helen Garner for *Joe Cinque's Consolation* (Pan Macmillan).

Perpetual also announced Ms Paulette Gittins the winner of 2005 'Dobbie Encouragement Award' (the Dobbie Award) for a first published work by an Australian woman writer for her novel *The Secret World of Annette Robinson* (HarperCollins Publishers). The Dobbie Award is valued at \$2,500 and has previously recognised new writers like Shirley Painter, Julie Marcus, Kim Mahood and Danielle Wood.

Commenting on *The Secret World of Annette Robinson*, the judging panel said the book was a significant addition to the many memorable works of Australian literature which had been inspired by the life of Kings Cross and Darlinghurst.

Paulette Gittins is a teacher of English, French, History and Japanese. She has written a large body of short stories, a number of which have won prizes in national literary competitions.

Other short-listed entries for the Dobbie Award include *The Kingdom Where Nobody Dies* by Kimberly Starr (University of Queensland Press) and *Salt Rain* by Sarah Armstrong (Allen & Unwin).

Mr Scott Riedel, Head of Private Clients at Perpetual, said that the Kibble and Dobbie Awards had developed into the premier literary event for recognising the achievements of women writers in Australia.

"By establishing the Awards, Ms Dobbie has given us the opportunity to acknowledge some of Australia's most talented writers, many of whom are publishing for the first time," he said. "We hope the Awards will encourage them to continue in their endeavours."

For further information, please contact:

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Editors note: 'The Nita B Kibble Literary Award for Women Writers' and 'The Dobbie Encouragement Award' will be held at the State Library of New South Wales on Tuesday 10 May 2005 at 5.30 pm for 6.00 pm. To arrange interviews with the authors, please contact:

Gay Bilson (Winner of the Kibble Award)
Penguin Group - Australia
250 Camberwell Road
Camberwell VIC 3124
Kate Dunlop - Adult Publishing Department

Helen Garner (Short-listed for the Kibble Award)
MacMillan Publishing
St Martins Tower (Level 18)
31 Market Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Christine Matthey - Publishing Assistant

Susan Johnson (Short-listed for the Kibble Award)
Allen & Unwin
83 Alexander Street
Crows Nest NSW 2065
Misha Donohoe - Publishing Assistant

Paulette Gittins (Winner of the Dobbie Award)
Harper Collins
PO Box 321
Pymble NSW 2073
Lucie Crowhurst - Awards Co-Ordinator

Kimberley Starr (Short-listed for the Dobbie Award)
University of Queensland Press
PO Box 6042
St Lucia QLD 4067
Rosemary Chay - Sales and Marketing

Sarah Armstrong (Short-listed the Dobbie Award)
Allen & Unwin
83 Alexander Street
Crows Nest NSW 2065
Misha Donohoe - Publishing Assistant

Background

Ms Nita May Dobbie was born on 21 August 1904 in Maitland, New South Wales. She worked as a librarian and research officer at the Standards Association of Australia for 33 years, retiring in 1972.

A writer herself, Ms Dobbie was concerned with the difficulties faced by female writers and recognised the need to foster women's writing in the community.

In her will, she established the Nita B Kibble Literary Award in the name of her aunt who raised her. Ms Nita Bernice Kibble was the first woman to be appointed a librarian with the State Library of New South Wales and held the position of Principal Research Officer from 1919 until her retirement in 1943. Miss Kibble was a founding member of the Australian Institute of Librarians.

In addition, she established the Dobbie Encouragement Award for a first published work by a female writer.

Ms Dobbie founded the Awards to benefit women writers of a published book of fiction or non-fiction, classified as 'life writing', to advance Australian literature and to help provide incentive to female writers. It can only be awarded to a female author of a work written and published during the period of the Award, and which also describes day to day Australian life.

The first Awards were presented in 1994 with Perpetual Trustees and Mr Bryan Small as co-trustees.