



ACT Government
2005-2006 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

EXPANDED POETRY PRIZE 'GOES NATIONAL'

The ACT's annual poetry awards will go national this year, with a \$10,000 boost taking the prize pool to \$20,000, Chief Minister and Minister for Arts Jon Stanhope said today.

"The competition has now been running for two years and this funding boost will allow the Government to expand it considerably," Mr Stanhope said. "The competition has been re-named the National Poetry Prize and the number of categories will increase from one to four, giving the Government scope to encourage and reward greater numbers of outstanding new and established poets.

"The National Poetry Prize will be open to Australian poets from outside the ACT, an exciting development and one that I hope will result in a prestigious field and a competition with a truly national profile."

The categories for the 2005 National Poetry Prize are to be named for four individuals who have contributed a great deal to poetry in the Territory. The categories are:

Awards for an Unpublished Poem

- The Rosemary Dobson-Bolton Award for an unpublished poem by an Australian poet (valued at \$3,000)
- The David Campbell Award for an unpublished poem by an ACT poet (valued at \$2,000)

Awards for a Collection of Poetry

- The Judith Wright Award for a published collection by an Australian poet (valued at \$10,000)
- The Alec Bolton Award for an unpublished manuscript by an Australian poet (valued at \$5,000)

Rosemary Dobson-Bolton is a distinguished, multi-award-winning Canberra poet who has published more than a dozen books of poetry and has edited numerous anthologies.

David Campbell, who died in 1979, was a farmer poet who was born in the Monaro. In addition to being an accomplished poet in his own right he inspired new generations of poets.

Judith Wright divided her energies between poetry and environmental activism. From a pioneering pastoral family, she spent the final decades of her life in the Canberra region.



Alec Bolton was a Canberra publisher who did much to promote the work of some of Australia's finest poets. He established the publishing program at the National Library of Australia, before establishing Brindabella Press, which published such poets as Bob Brissenden, James McAuley, Les Murray and Kenneth Slessor.

Submissions for the 2005 National Poetry Prize will be called for shortly, with winners announced in December 2005.

Books nominated for the award for a published collection must have been published in Australia during 2004, while nominations for the unpublished manuscript award must not be under consideration by a publisher.

"Just last month I had the pleasure of inducting the late A.D. Hope, one of Australia's best-loved poets, into the ACT's new Honour Walk, in recognition of his contribution to the intellectual and artistic life of the city," Mr Stanhope said.

"I believe that by encouraging poets and poetry the ACT Government is helping support the A.D Hopes and Dorothea Mackellars of the future, those who will conjure the iconic images and words that will be familiar to future generations.

"The National Poetry Prize will be a celebration of literature and the enrichment it brings to our society. I encourage all poets to enter.

"Through The Canberra Plan the ACT Government is committed to building a city that displays and nurtures the best in Australian creativity. The National Poetry Prize and a range of other arts initiatives in this Budget will enhance Canberra's growing cultural and artistic standing, and the quality of life of every Canberran."

Statement ends