



2024 Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival Catherine Martin Literary Award

Catherine Edith Macauley Martin née Mackay (1848–1937) was an Australian novelist and poet who published her work anonymously or under pseudonyms such as M. C., Mrs Alick Macleod and Ishbel.

Catherine migrated with her family to South Australia in 1855, settling in Robe and later in Naracoorte. In the course of her education she acquired a love of German language and literature and by the early 1870s she was helping her sister Mary to run a school at Elm Cottage, Crouch Street, Mount Gambier.

From 1872 Catherine's poems and translations of German poetry appeared in the *Border Watch*. As 'M.C.' she published *The Explorers and Other Poems* (1874), which included translations from French and German, as well as a long poem about the Burke and Wills expedition. She moved to Adelaide in about 1875, tried to make a living by journalism and became a friend of author Catherine Spence. In 1882 she married Frederick Martin, an accountant whose work took them to Waukaringa, a gold mining town in the north of South Australia.

In 1890 she published anonymously the novel, *An Australian Girl*, which was well received in Australia and reprinted twice the following year. Under the pseudonym 'Mrs Alick Macleod', Catherine Martin published another novel *The Silent Sea* (1892), which drew upon her experience living in a mining town.

In 1906 she published, under the name Ishbel, *The Old Roof-Tree*, some impressions and thoughts while abroad in the form of letters to her brother. She published, under her own name, *The Incredible Journey* (1923) which, written very effectively from an Aboriginal woman's point of view, was about a mother's desert journey to recover her son, taken by a white man.

Mrs Martin died in Adelaide on 15 March 1937 in her ninetieth year. She was never as well-known as she deserved to be, partly because almost all of her work was published anonymously or under a pseudonym. *An Australian Girl* is an interesting book written by a woman of thoughtful and philosophic mind, and *The Incredible Journey*, with its sympathetic appreciation of the point of view of Indigenous Australians, is among the best books of its kind in Australian literature.

Catherine Martin published essays, stories, poems and serialised novels in the Australian press. Scattered through her work were many literary references, especially to work by European writers. She was sympathetic to the situation of both Australia's Aborigines and the working-class poor of large cities in Britain and Germany. Her female characters were drawn from a feminist point of view, something she shared with her friend Catherine Spence. Criticism of Catherine Martin's work has varied, but many have praised her lyrical descriptions of Australian landscape.



Novels

- *An Australian Girl* (1890)
- *The Silent Sea* (1892)
- *The Old Roof Tree* (1906)
- *The Incredible Journey* (1923)

Poetry

- *The Explorers and Other Poems* (1874)



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Terms & Conditions

1. Maximum **TWO** entries per person
2. Works are to be a short creative story
3. Entries must be typewritten and be the original work of the entrant.
4. This entry form must accompany the work.
5. Works must have the writer's name, school, date of birth, contact details and title clearly displayed
6. Entries close Friday 10th May 2024. Works are to be emailed in Microsoft Word Format to literary@artsfestival.com.au or delivered in person to Penola Community Library, 43 Cameron Street, Penola SA 5277 by entry closing date.
7. Winners will be announced as part of the Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival at the Penola Town Square at the Festival Friday event on Friday 17th May 2024 at 5.30pm.
8. The Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival Committee reserves the right to display any entry submitted for competitions including on their website – www.artsfestival.com.au
9. The Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival Committee reserves the right not to display any entry without explanation.
10. The judging panel will consist of one local judge and at least one visiting judge. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
11. The work(s) must adhere to the 'Criteria' set out below.

Criteria

This award is motivated by Australian Literature, and Australian themed writing.

It is with this intent that we ask participants' work to be inspired by the idea of "**Perseverance**" within an Australian context.

Categories:

- Entrants aged 10 – 12 years old, 350 – 500 words. Winner \$75/ Runner Up \$25.
- Entrants aged 13 – 15 years old, 500 – 800 words. Winner \$100/Runner Up \$50.
- Entrants aged 16 – 18 years old, 800 – 1000 words, Winner \$150/ Runner Up \$75.

Title of Work:

Name:

Date of Birth:

School:

Contact Details: