

Preserving Indigenous stories



Fiona Clarke and a collaborative work, *Strata*, produced with NZ sculptor [Chris Booth](#). Image: Chris Booth.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DDCE8D;"] L
[/dropcap]ocal Indigenous artist **Fiona Clarke**, of the Kirrae Whurrong people, is well-known and widely respected for her work in tapestry and painting, but her talents as a storyteller are also gaining attention.

Michaelie Clark, from **Warrnambool Books**, has chosen Fiona's first children's book as her choice for this week's Bookmarks; it tells the story of Minkgill (the Kirrae Whurrong word for 'star') and features a dozen of Fiona's illustrations.

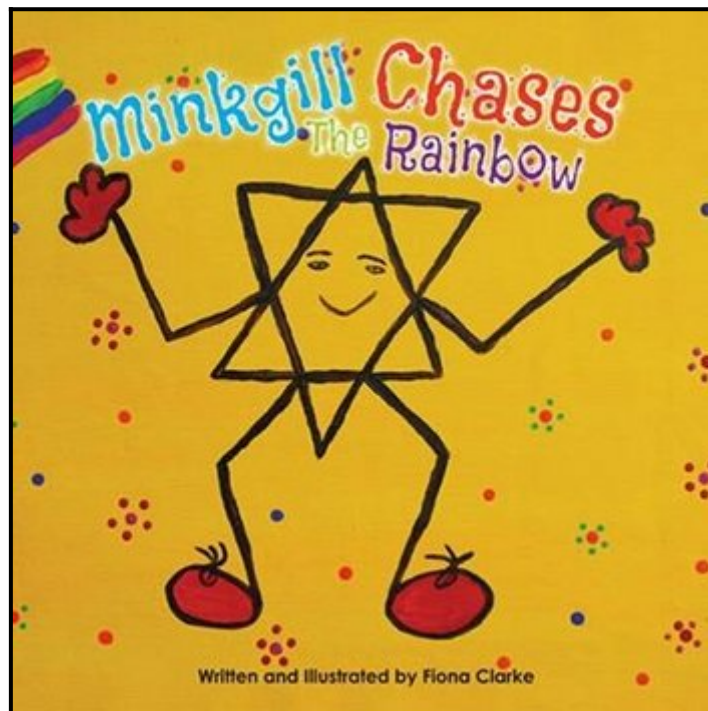
Importantly, it also introduces Indigenous culture to non-Indigenous children and helps preserve the Kirrae Whurrong language.

Over to Michaelie:

Minkgill Chases the Rainbow is a beautiful, poignant picture book inspired by elements of the Dreamtime, Australia's history and the experiences of our Indigenous people, and the desire for a positive future for all children. It's a simple yet powerful tale

of hope, belonging, and of finding your way back up when you fall.

With vibrant images that tell the story as much as the text, we follow Minkgill, a star who tumbled from the sky and walked the earth, searching for his true place in the world. Feeling lost and lonely and sad, Minkgill wanders until he finds a rainbow, which leads him up to meet the Rainbow Serpent, who helps him make his way back home.



[box] Keep up to date with new releases from Warrnambool Books on their [Facebook page](#). [/box]



Catch up on our other Bookmarks...

[James Laidler's star-studded novel](#)

[Matt Porter: the lighter side of teaching](#)

[At last, a cookbook you can use!](#)

[Ben Sanders: Retro meets whimsy](#)

[Gorgeous working dogs](#)

Shaking up the atomic age



[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] A
[/dropcap]nd this week in Mum's Drawer we have some little bombs...

Well, the 1950s was a time full of admiration for the atomic bomb and what better way to 'celebrate' (?) such an achievement than to have a pair of small salt-and-pepper bombs on your kitchen table?

These little bakelite gems were most likely an engagement gift.

By the way, did you know that bakelite is made from formaldehyde and phenol and its formal name is polyoxybenzylmethyleneglycolanhydride?

Keep that one in mind when next playing Scrabble.



More from Mum's Drawer...

[Do you remember the Drive-In?](#)

[To Hoover or not to Hoover?](#)

[A well-travelled junket](#)

[Bowlin, bowlin', bowlin'...](#)

[Lunch order, 1975?](#)

[signed, Fletcher Jones](#)

Writing a star-studded novel



Poet, author and teacher James Laidler at the 2010 Ex-Libris Festival, Port Fairy. (Image courtesy of Ex-Libris).

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] B
[/dropcap]oy, we have some talented school teachers in South-West Victoria.

Not only do they have the exhausting and often unappreciated task of fronting up to a classroom each day to teach, but they are often also writers, poets, musicians and novelists in their “spare” time.

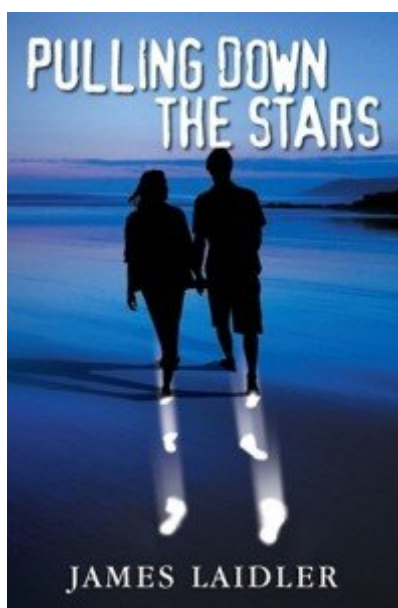
This week, **Michaelie Clark** from [Warrnambool Books](#) has chosen a book by Emmanuel College teacher, poet and novelist **James Laidler**, who is rapidly building the sort of CV that makes your eyes water, such is the spectrum of his talent. Here is Michaelie’s summary of his latest work:

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] S
[/dropcap]et in Warrnambool, and incorporating some of the city’s most famous landmarks, *Pulling Down the Stars* is the second novel by award-winning local author, James Laidler.

Infused with vignettes and the evocative language that defines Laidler's style, the book bridges teen and adult themes and spans genres with its eclectic mix of humour, romance, drama and suspense.

The story revolves around Charlie, a young psychiatric nurse living with his widower father and stroke-affected grandfather. Burdened with the dysfunction and responsibilities of his family, as well as the guilt of wanting to be free to do as he pleases, shy, deep-thinking Charlie finds an outlet in his song-writing while he waits for life to look up.

Instead, his life is turned upside-down when he meets Maxine, a spiky, hot-blooded surfer-girl who works at the local abattoir in order to rebel against her well-to-do parents. Thrown together by unconventional circumstances, a trust and understanding slowly builds between Charlie and Maxine, but unbeknownst to either of them, there is a dangerous threat lurking in their midst...



Find out more about James via his [website](#).

And congratulations to Warrnambool Books for taking out the social media prize at the recent Warrnambool Small Business Awards!

[box] Keep up to date with new releases from Warrnambool Books [Facebook](#) page. [/box]



Catch up on our other Bookmarks...

[The lighter side of teaching](#)

[At last, a cookbook you can use!](#)

[Ben Sanders: Retro meets whimsy](#)

[Gorgeous working dogs](#)

[Getting fit the fun way with Marie Bean](#)

[Can Paul Jennings put a foot wrong?](#)

Our quiet heroes: the Drylies



Tony and Claire Drylie with some of the St Joseph's Primary School display boxes...and the huge display board!

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] W
[/dropcap]hat we love about our quiet hero section is that we get to celebrate people doing things that might not always make the news: the small things, the little things that often go unnoticed or happen without much fuss.

This week our quiet heroes are **Claire** and **Tony Drylie**, who are well-known around Warrnambool for their kindness, their cheerfulness and, in recent years, their involvement in the grassroots arts scene.

While Claire is an artist, Tony is usually not far from the action, helping keep track of the finances (as he did with the former Quarry studio), or carting some piece of equipment from here to there in his four-wheel drive.

In the past few days, the pair has been involved in putting the final touches to an art project Claire has developed with art teacher **Kathryn McMeel** at **St Joseph's Primary School**, where each of the 180 children in grades five and six have

created small 'portrait' boxes that they have fitted out with objects that they believe capture who they are.

Imagine a chocolate box, without the lid, and a tiny, individual world created inside: a child's world.



Capturing little lives: some of the children's work they have developed with Claire.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] W
[dropcap]orking from an industrial shed at the back of a Warrnambool business, Tony has assembled and painted a 2-point-something metre display board in bright red, upon which Claire has been methodically gluing the boxes in preparation for their display at the school within the next fortnight.

(**Ryan's Removals** have kindly agreed to deliver the display board which simply won't fit in Tony's four-wheel drive, no matter how hard he tries).

The final display is going to look spectacular.

Artists working with children has to be one of the most mutually beneficial relationships in existence and that is why Claire and Tony, and those like them, are our quiet heroes for

this week.

[box] Our Quiet Hero will receive a coffee and cake voucher from this week's sponsor [Lozzar's Lounge Cafe](#), Warrnambool – thankyou Lozzar's. [/box]



Meet some of our other quiet heroes...

[Susie Alexander fights cancer...and aims for a fun run](#)

[Holden Club helps out](#)

[Caring for the environment](#)

[Embracing diversity](#)

Art as medicine: Glenn Morgan

As one of South-West Victoria's most successful and prolific artists, Glenn Morgan could have easily become pompous and aloof, but instead he remains refreshingly down to earth and committed to his home town.