

## Media Release

### **Literary awards celebrate Australian female authors Philanthropists Kibble and Dobbie's legacy endures**

- Fiona McFarlane's *The High Places* awarded 2018 Kibble Award
- Sarah Krasnostein's *The Trauma Cleaner* wins 2018 Dobbie Award

**Wednesday 25 July 2018**

A collection of stories that focus on life's pivotal moments when fortunes can change, and a biography described as one of the strangest and most fascinating reads were announced as winners today at the [2018 Kibble and Dobbie Literary Awards](#) (the Kibble Awards).

Fiona McFarlane's *The High Places*, a collection of 14 stories, was announced as the recipient of the 2018 Kibble award for an established author. The Dobbie Award for a first-time published author was awarded to Sarah Krasnostein for her biography, *The Trauma Cleaner: One Woman's Extraordinary Life in Death, Decay & Disaster*.

The Kibble Awards celebrate Australian female authors who, through their writing, aim to improve and advance literature for the benefit of the Australian community. Established in 1994, with Perpetual as Trustee, the Kibble Awards are held biennially in honour of Nita Kibble, the first female librarian of the State Library of New South Wales. The winner of the Kibble Award receives \$30,000 and the Dobbie Award winner receives \$5,000.

The judging panel of the Kibble Awards includes Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Webby AM, State Library of New South Wales Coordinator – Education and Scholarship, Dr Rachel Franks, and author Dr Eleanor Limprecht.

Speaking on behalf of the panel, Professor Webby said: "The continuing high quality of life writing by Australian women is inspiring and exciting to read. This year's winning works are especially notable for their originality and literary excellence."

"The Kibble awards help Australian female authors continue to realise their passion for writing, while celebrating female talent in Australia's literary sector and inspiring the next generation of women writers.

"The irony in Nita Kibble's story is that she was only able to begin her career in the Public Library of New South Wales when her signature was mistaken for a man's. Now these awards are helping to celebrate and advance the careers of female authors," said Prof Webby.

Perpetual's National Manager of Philanthropy and Non-Profit Services, Caitriona Fay, congratulated Fiona and Sarah on their winning works.

"The Nita B Kibble Awards is one of Perpetual's flagship philanthropic trusts that has awarded more than \$630,000 to Australian female authors. Some of Australia's leading women writers have been recipients.

"The Kibble Awards are a great example of how individuals can support creative passions through a charitable trust and create a legacy for the inspirational work of a generation gone-by that has a positive tangible impact on the careers of current and future generations.

"We are very proud to be involved in keeping the legacy of Nita May Dobbie and Nita Kibble alive," said Caitriona.

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**About the winners:**

**2018 Kibble Literary Award Winner – Fiona McFarlane**

**'The High Places' - Synopsis:**

The dazzling stories in this collection find those moments when people confront the strangeness and mystery of their lives. The revelations of intimidating old friends on holiday. An accident on a dark country road. A marine biologist in conversation with the ghost of Charles Darwin. The sudden arrival of American parachutists in a Queensland country town. A lottery win. A farmer troubled by miracles in the middle of a drought. The people in *The High Places* are jolted into seeing themselves from a fresh and often disconcerting perspective.

**2018 Dobbie Literary Award Winner – Sarah Krasnostein**

**'The Trauma Cleaner: One Woman's Extraordinary Life in Death, Decay & Disaster' - Synopsis:**

Before she was a trauma cleaner, Sandra Pankhurst was many things: husband and father, drag queen, gender reassignment patient, sex worker, small businesswoman, trophy wife.

But as a little boy, raised in violence and excluded from the family home, she just wanted to belong. Now she believes her clients deserve no less.

A woman who sleeps among garbage she has not put out for forty years. A man who bled quietly to death in his lounge room. A woman who lives with rats, random debris and terrified delusion. The still life of a home vacated by accidental overdose. Sarah Krasnostein has watched the extraordinary Sandra Pankhurst bring order and care to these, the living and the dead—and the book she has written is equally extraordinary. Not just the compelling story of a fascinating life among lives of desperation, but an affirmation that, as isolated as we may feel, we are all in this together.

For more information about the Award, please visit [www.perpetual.com.au/kibble](http://www.perpetual.com.au/kibble)

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For enquiries related to winning books or authors, please contact their publicist:

| Author/Book                          | Publisher               | Contact  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Fiona McFarlane<br>'The High Places' | Penguin<br>Random House | Bella Arnott-Hoare<br><a href="mailto:bahoare@penguinrandomhouse.com.au">bahoare@penguinrandomhouse.com.au</a><br>(03) 8537 4587 |

Sarah Krasnostein  
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Woman's Extraordinary Life  
in Death, Decay & Disaster*

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### **About Nita May Dobbie**

Nita Dobbie established the Kibble Literary Awards for Women Writers in recognition of her aunt, Nita Kibble, who raised her from birth after her mother died. In the late 1800s, Miss Kibble had successfully answered an advertisement for a junior assistant at the Public Library of New South Wales, when her signature was taken for a man's. She later became 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. Throughout her career she worked hard to raise the status of the library profession and was a founding member of the Australian Institute of Librarians.

Miss Dobbie followed her aunt into the library profession and recognised the need to foster women's writing in the community and so established the Awards, named after her inspirational aunt, through her will. Since the inception of the Kibble Literary Awards in 1994, many of Australia's leading women writers have received prizes, each benefiting from Nita Dobbie's foresight and vision. The trust behind the Awards was established with just under \$400,000 and is managed by Perpetual. Today, it's worth more than \$750,000 and has awarded over \$630,000 to writers.

### **About Perpetual**

Perpetual is a financial services group operating in funds management, financial advisory and trustee services. Our origin as a trustee company, coupled with our strong track record of investment performance, has created our reputation as one of the strongest brands in financial services in Australia. For further information, go to [www.perpetual.com.au](http://www.perpetual.com.au)

Perpetual is one of Australia's largest managers and distributors of philanthropic funds with \$2.4 billion in funds under advice (as at 30 June 2017). Perpetual is trustee for over 1000 charitable trusts and endowments and provides individuals and families with advice on establishing charitable foundations and structured giving programs. Perpetual also assists charities and not-for-profit organisations with investment advice and management.