

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Event
Entry ID: AWE2109

Eldridge Award

(1998 -)

Born 1 January, 1998, Australian Capital Territory

Occupation Writing Award

Summary

The Marian Eldridge Award is a national award to encourage an aspiring female writer to undertake a literary activity such as a short course of study, or to complete a project, or attend a writers' week or a conference. There is no age limit.

The award was established in 1998 under the auspices of the National Foundation for Australian Women, as a legacy of Marian Eldridge (1 February 1936 – 14 February 1997), an acclaimed short story writer, a novelist, poet and teacher who spent most of her creative writing years in Canberra, where *inter alia* she was instrumental in establishing the ACT Writers' Centre.

In the last months of her life she planned a gift to establish a professional development award to nurture writers. She said that the recipient should not be established but someone whose writing showed promise, and that the writing need not be fiction. Marian said that "when trying to assist aspiring writers 'every little bit helps' and that such recognition would be an important milestone in a developing literary career.

An Advisory Group selected by Marian Eldridge's family decides each year on guidelines for applicants, assesses applications and selects the recipient of the award.

The first four competitions (\$1000 cash prize) were confined to residents of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and New South Wales (NSW), and brought in a total of 78 applications. The winners of those competitions were:

- Sarah St Vincent Welch (1998)
- Julie Simpson (1999)
- Rose de Angelis (2000)
- Elanna Herbert (2001)

A wider Advisory Group has since been established, which now includes representatives from the National Library of Australia, the School of Creative Communication at the University of Canberra and the ACT Cultural Council. From its fifth year, the award was open to applicants throughout Australia. National competition winners have been:

- Annah Faulkner (2002/2003)
- Caroline Lee (2005).

The award amount is currently \$1500.

(This entry is sponsored by generous donation from Christine Foley.)

Published resources

Photograph

Collection of Marian Eldridge photographs, 1994,
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an20811737>

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

[Marian Eldridge interviewed by Heather Rusden \[sound recording\]](#)

Author Details

Barbara Lemon

Created 1 June 2006

Last modified 15 January 2009