

Our third quiet hero



[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"]F[/dropcap]or every fantastic community event, there is usually a band of hardworking, energetic, enthusiastic and lowly paid band of volunteers keeping it alive.

Look behind the scenes of many of the wonderful events happening around Port Fairy-Crossley at the moment, and there is fair bet that you will see **Carol McDonald** in there somewhere, helping out in some way.

The indefatigable Carol is technically 'retired', but she is not one to slip into her slippers and watch daytime television. Instead, she has become an invaluable supporter of the local arts community, particular through her involvement in the Port Fairy Ex Libris Festival of Words, held a fortnight ago, and the women's community choir, the [Red Tent Singers](#), who perform regularly throughout the South-West.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"]M[/dropcap>lost recently, however, Carol has been the driving force behind the wonderful [Fifteen Minutes of Fame](#) nights held on the first Friday of the month at the St Brigid's Church

community hall at Crossley. Carol and her team of volunteers have created an opportunity for newcomers to show their talents, and for more seasoned performers to reach a new audience, while providing a relaxed and entertaining night out for the audience. The hall is always crowded and each event helps to raise funds for the church building, which is community owned and operated by the Friends of St Brigid's.

Carol loves a laugh, loves a champagne and loves to spread her energy to the benefit of others and so she is our very worthy third quiet hero.

Bluestone Magazine is donating a voucher for coffee and cake to each of our quiet heroes. This week it will be at Slitti Cafe, Bank St, Port Fairy.

Swimming in words



[Image: Amelia Schmidt]

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[/dropcap]eople rarely need an excuse to go to Port Fairy, but if you love books, writing, or just words, this weekend is the perfect time to visit the quaint fishing town for the **Ex-Libris Festival of Words**.

The event runs from Friday to Sunday and this year's theme is *Dressed to Kill*, offering the tantalising combination of crime and fashion.

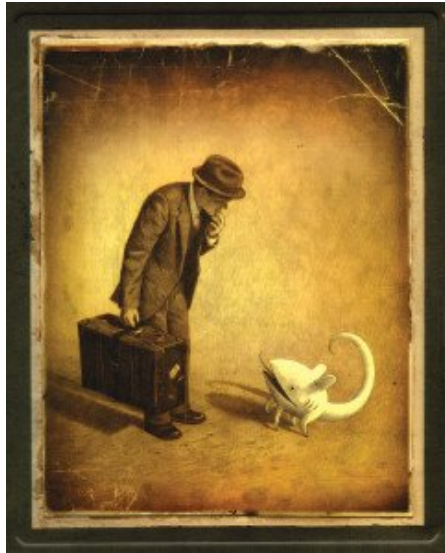
Once again festival co-ordinator Marg Sinnott and her team have pulled together an impressive line-up of authors and guest speakers, including the former editor-in-chief of Vogue Australia, Kirstie Clements, former detective Simon Illingsworth, prolific children's author Justin D'Ath and the Western District's own, much-loved ABC announcer Derek Guille.

In keeping with the community spirit of the festival, there is a vast array of events to suit all tastes and many are free.

For a full listing of guests and a downloadable copy of the program, please visit the Ex Libris [website](#).

In conjunction with the Ex Libris Festival of Words, quirky local bookshop **Blarney Books & Art** (James St) is holding its annual children's picture book illustration exhibition, which this year is called UNREAL.

Helen and Des Bunyon from Customs House Gallery are hosting the event, which is now – remarkably – in its 24th year.



The Arrival: Shaun Tan

Again, the line-up of work to be displayed is impressive and includes illustrations by the award-winning Shaun Tan, Leila Rudge, Judy Horacek, Felicity Marshall and Mark Wilson.

(And be sure to tuck an extra couple of dollars in your wallet, because it is almost impossible to walk out of Blarney Books without buying at least one secondhand gem tucked away on their shelves.)

For more about the illustration exhibition, visit their [website](#).