

Writing a star-studded novel



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

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[/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:

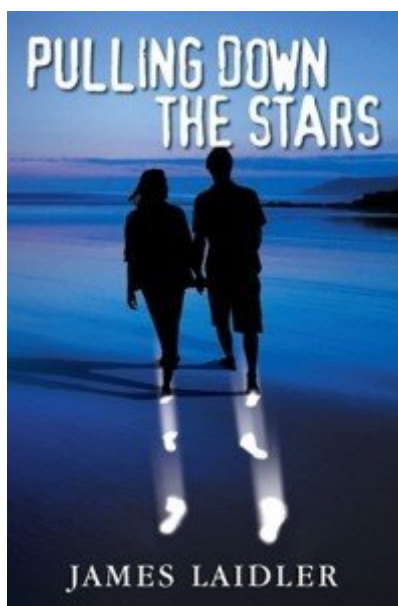
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Set in Warrnambool, and incorporating some of the city's most famous landmarks, *Pulling Down the Stars* is the second novel by award-winning local author, James Laidler.

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!

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