

Dancing on the drainboard

Lynn Hard sees his new book launched

Robin Wallace-Crabbe gave a witty and sensitive speech at the Solander Gallery in Canberra last month to launch a book of poetry by ADFA Librarian Lynn Hard. (Well up to the standard of Lynn's own description of himself on the cover: 'Mr Hard keeps fit by getting up for more ice cubes and nursing grudges.')

Lynn has been deeply involved in support of Australian literature since he took up his post at ADFA. Now he has returned to his own writing and a delightful surprise it turns out to be. Lynn is an enthusiast for jazz, and jazz rhythms come through many of the poems, some lyrical, others tinged with irony or bitterness, all letting us share the special insights that are the gift of the poet's vision.

The title piece is a love song for two blowflies ('Ginger Bodgie and Fred Despair'). Lynn's own choice for a brief quote is the final stanza of a longer poem about sitting on a fence next to a graveyard waiting for a taxi:

*The taxi keeps me idling here
but I am content
with time to seriously consider
jumping down from my fence
and standing upright
so that the sky
can stain my hair blue.*

(*Dancing on the Drainboard*, ISBN 0 207 17950 6, is published by Angus and Robertson, rrp. \$14.95.)



Lynn reads from his book at the launch

Australia Day Achievement medallion for Elizabeth Thompson

Joanne Cheah writes on a well-merited distinction

The Department of Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories awards National Australia Day Achievement Medallions annually to its staff members for outstanding service to the portfolio. Elizabeth Thompson was one of this year's winners.

The medallion was presented by Mr Tony Blunn, the Secretary of DASET at a gathering of Commission staff and commissioners in February. News of the award had been a well-kept secret and it was a very surprised and stunned Elizabeth who received the medal. Commis-

sion staff were delighted with the announcement as Elizabeth is much liked and greatly appreciated for the invaluable services provided by the library.

Elizabeth established the Commission's library in 1980 and until 1989 carried out the task of collecting, organising and maintaining the special library single-handedly.

In 1986, she was largely responsible for establishing the HERA (Heritage Australia Information System) database. Under her guidance HERA has developed into an important research and information tool used by conservationists, researchers and fellow librarians with a wide range of access through Ozline, Australia, CD-ROM and hard copy updates.

Elizabeth, rendered speechless, receiving her medallion from Tony Blunn.

