



# National Year of Reading 2012



## THE NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2012 ANNOUNCES ITS PATRON: WILLIAM MCINNES

**Monday 14 February, 2011:** Award-winning actor and bestselling author William McInnes has accepted the role of patron of the National Year of Reading 2012.

Margaret Allen, Chair of the National Year of Reading founder partners (and State Librarian of Western Australia), explained, "We wanted someone who was familiar to all Australians, both keen readers and people who struggle with literacy, and someone who would be a highly credible and enthusiastic advocate for reading. William McInnes is the author of four highly-regarded books, including *The Making of Modern Australia*, which became an ABC TV series in 2010. He writes with humour and affection, and we're sure this, combined with his status as a much-loved household name, will add considerable weight to our campaign."

There are 15 organisations behind the National Year of Reading, including all the state libraries, territory libraries and public library associations across Australia. Although libraries are the driving force behind the campaign, partnerships are being forged with writers, publishers, booksellers, schools, government, media and the companies behind some of Australia's most famous household name brands.

The founders recognise the great work that Australian reading promotion and literacy organisations already do and hope that by attracting further attention to the issue for a 12-month period, there can be a step-change in people's awareness of the enormous value of books and the joy of reading.

According to the 2006 *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey*<sup>1</sup>, nearly half of all Australians (46%) don't have the literacy skills they need to cope with everyday life and work.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4228.0>

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Margaret Allen again, “If we can use the National Year of Reading to help embed a reading culture in the home and at school, we can improve the lives of current and future generations of Australians. Recreational reading has the power to influence well-being in the way it inspires, informs and transforms our thinking.”

The official launch of the National Year of Reading will be on 14 February 2012.

## ENDS

Download images and logos from the website [www.love2read.org.au](http://www.love2read.org.au).

More information about the National Year of Reading is available at [www.love2read2012.wikispaces.com](http://www.love2read2012.wikispaces.com).

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

William McInnes is one of Australia’s most popular stage and screen actors and with the publication of his memoir *A Man’s Got to Have a Hobby*, his novel *Cricket Kings*, and the laconic *That’d be Right*, he has become a much loved writer too.

In 2006, *A Man’s Got to Have a Hobby* was selected as one of the Books Alive 50 Great Reads and William was named ‘Australian Newcomer of the Year’ at the Australian Book Industry Awards. The following year *Cricket Kings* was shortlisted in the ‘Australian General Fiction Book of the Year’ category for these awards. William grew up in Queensland and now lives in Melbourne with his wife Sarah Watt, and their two children.

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