



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Passion in Wuthering Heights— Friends Bookclub

Read *Wuthering Heights*, then join Dr Rich Pascal and others on the Winter Solstice for an interactive discussion on Emily Bronte's classic gothic novel. Refreshments available.

Date: Thursday 22 June

Time: 6pm

Venue: Friends Lounge

Cost: Friends \$10, non-members \$15

Bookings: (02) 6262 1698

For bookings, details of membership and subscriptions, contact:

Friends of the NLA
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June Friends

Yesterday afternoon set in misty and cold. I had half a mind to spend it by my study fire, instead of wading through heath and mud to *Wuthering Heights*.

The days are getting shorter and, if you are finding the afternoons misty and cold, why not sit in front of your fire and follow in Lockwood's footsteps, paying a visit to *Wuthering Heights*? Emily Bronte's Gothic novel is the focus of this month's Friends event, *Passion in Wuthering Heights*, and on the shortest day of the year, we'd love you to join the Australian National University's Dr Rich Pascal for a discussion about this much-loved book.

Today, *Wuthering Heights* is recognised as a classic of English literature. But in 1847 it was published to poor reviews and even poorer sales (thereby offering hope to all authors). Bronte's tale of passionate, unbridled love and cruelty shocked Victorian readers and even Bronte's sister Charlotte, herself the author of another classic gothic novel, *Jane Eyre*, was ambivalent. Writing a preface to an edition of the book following Emily's death in 1848, Charlotte said, 'Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know. I scarcely think it is.'

Heathcliff's reputation has fared better in the twentieth century—he and Catherine are often included in lists of 'great lovers' and you can even buy a 'Heathcliff' paper doll online. Films have been made and a film star,

Heath Ledger, named after him. *Wuthering Heights*, too, has created its own publishing phenomenon. The National Library holds many copies, including one in Chinese and one translated into Braille. Tucked away in the Library's stacks is a rare treasure: an 1858 edition of *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey*, published under the authors' pseudonyms of Ellis and Acton Bell, and including a preface and memoir of both authors by 'Currer Bell', Charlotte Bronte's pseudonym.

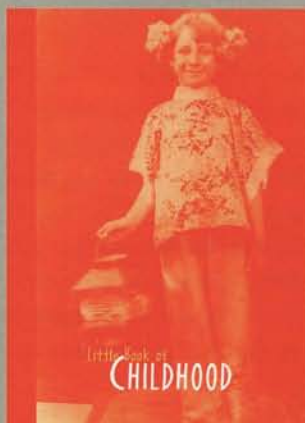
So if it has been a while since you opened your copy, spend a couple of chilly winter afternoons or evenings reacquainting yourself with the story of Heathcliff and Catherine. Then join us for an evening of invigorating discussion.

By the time you read this, the Friends' Executive Officer, Jillian Edwards, will be back at her desk after her overseas adventures. I am sure she will be only too pleased to relive her travels when she sees you at Friends' events over the coming months, so don't hesitate to ask.

KATHRYN FAVELLE
Publications and Events Branch

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top: Donald Friend (1915–1989)
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(detail)

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