



AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Regional fiction writer Fleur McDonald currently lives in Esperance, on the far south coast of Western Australia with her energetic Kelpie, Jack. As well as writing two books a year, Fleur still owns a farm and works on the land.

Fleur grew up in the South Australian town of Orroroo. She studied Agribusiness and later became one of the first jillaroos in the south east of SA, taking on the blokes in a male dominated industry. In 1992, Fleur began farming.

In 1996, Fleur and her then husband bought a farm near Esperance, where they lived in a donga on the property without a toilet or power. They ran a generator a few hours a day for the necessities, and finally installed power five years later when Fleur's daughter was one year old and her son had just been born.

In 2004, the family moved into a newly built farmhouse, but although they had toilets, water and power, life wasn't easy. As well as working on the farm, Fleur looked after her two young children, both with disabilities, but was particularly challenged by her son's behaviours, which she later discovered were due to him having autism. Because of this, and her daughter's dyspraxia (she didn't speak until she was four), Fleur taught both her children Makaton sign language to communicate.

When her children were still little and not sleeping through the night, Fleur rediscovered her passion for writing. She wrote snippets on pieces of paper in between late night feeds, shifting sheep in the ute, while on the tractor during harvest, and in rare moments of peace under a tree in a paddock. To this day, Fleur still prefers to write out in the back yard under a gum tree, or in the bush sleeping in a swag.

Her debut novel Red Dust made her the highest selling debut author of 2009. Since then, she's gone on to write 16 novels and two children's books. She writes about what she knows, stories set in regional areas around Australia with salt-of-the-earth characters.

In her personal life, Fleur put a lot of the money from her book sales into something else close to her heart – a charity to help people in regional areas who are experiencing domestic and family violence. Fleur drew on her own experiences to establish DVassist (formerly Breaking the Silence), a not-for-profit which has set up an online directory of domestic violence services in regional areas of WA, and has recently launched a phone counselling service.

Fleur is an authentic, down to earth and engaging speaker, who can talk about rural fiction, writing, autism, domestic violence, overcoming hurdles and country life.



For more photographs, information and upcoming events please visit www.fleurmcdonald.com/