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Stanner Award Recipient celebrates Aboriginal Architecture

A landmark publication on Australian Aboriginal architecture has won the 2008 Stanner Award for its unique contribution to understanding Australia's rich and diverse Indigenous cultural heritage.

In *Gunyah, Goondie & Wurley: the Aboriginal Architecture of Australia*, Australian architect and anthropologist Professor Paul Memmott presents a ground-breaking study on Aboriginal architecture. 'Gunyahs' and 'wurlies' are the colloquial names given to the makeshift huts made of grass and bark that constituted the Aboriginal camps observed by Europeans during early explorations across Australia.

In announcing the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' (AIATSIS) 2008 Stanner Award, Chairperson Professor Mick Dodson said, "*Gunyah, Goondie & Wurley* is a richly illustrated and well designed study that advances the world's knowledge of Aboriginal architecture. As a well researched, authoritative resource about traditional Aboriginal architecture, Professor Memmott makes a pivotal contribution to the appreciation of the nation's rich and diverse Aboriginal heritage."

"Recognising that the Aboriginal architectural tradition is yet to be fully understood or appreciated by the general public or by scholars, this book promotes wider awareness and understanding of this field of Aboriginal knowledge and I encourage Australian architects and designers to take on this knowledge and see where it leads," said Professor Dodson.

Gunyah, Goondie & Wurley represents more than 30 years of research by Professor Memmott and features more than 200 photographs, paintings and drawings. Professor Memmott and his co-authors present the architectural forms, materials and construction techniques of Aboriginal architects through different times and locations. The book, which is published by University of Queensland Press, promises to be a leading reference in Australian Aboriginal architecture.

Diverse topics covered in the book include Indigenous architecture and settlement including regional overviews of shelters and houses; traditional camps; the relation of shelter study to anthropology; town camps or fringe camps that emerged after colonisation; how architects have and could apply traditional cultural ideas in design; and the symbols and meanings of shelters and houses.

The Stanner Award is awarded each year by AIATSIS to the best scholarly, published contribution to Australian Indigenous studies. The Award is named after one of the Institute's founders, the late anthropologist Emeritus Professor W.E.H. (Bill) Stanner.

AIATSIS commends Darren C. Garvey's *Indigenous Identity in Contemporary Psychology: Dilemmas, Developments, Directions* (Thomson Learning) and Fiona Magowan's *Melodies of Mourning: Music & Emotion in Northern Australia*, (UWA Press), both of which were also short-listed for the Award.

The Stanner Award presentation to Professor Memmott is scheduled to take place at AIATSIS in February 2009.

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