

Thomas Keneally

Award-winning Australian author, National Living Treasure

Thomas (Tom) Keneally is one of Australia's most prolific and best known novelists. As the multi-award-winning author of more than 30 novels, dramas, screenplays and books of non-fiction, he is also one of its most distinguished.

In 1982 he won the Booker Prize for *Schindler's Ark*, which was made into the Academy Award-winning film *Schindler's List*. His novels *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith*, *Gossip from the Forest* and *Confederates* were all short-listed for the Booker Prize, while *Bring Larks and Heroes* and *Three Cheers for the Paraclete* won the Miles Franklin Award.



A playwright as well as author, Tom is as eloquent off the page as on it. He is both erudite and earthy with an engaging, self-deprecating sense of humour that appeals to audiences worldwide.

His telling of how he first learned of the Oscar Schindler story while having his briefcase mended in a small Los Angeles store owned by one of Schindler's holocaust survivors is both moving and warmly humorous.

Born in Sydney in 1935, Tom studied for the priesthood as a young man and then began a career in school teaching before his literary success enabled him to become a full-time writer.

In addition to the Booker Prize and the Miles Franklin Awards, Tom Keneally has also won the Los Angeles Book Prize, the Royal Society of Literature Prize, the Scriptor Award of the University of Southern California, the Mondello International Prize and the Helmerich Prize (U.S.).

Tom Keneally's history of Irish convictism, *The Great Shame* and *The Commonwealth of Thieves* about the penal origins of Australia were both published in all the English language markets. A copy of *Lincoln*, his short biography of the American president and signed by Tom was given by then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to President Obama of the United States as a gift.

He has also published two volumes of *A History of Australians* and is working on another volume which will take the story as far as the fall of Singapore in 1942. More recently he has published *Three Famines*, a narrative history of famine, and the novel, *The Daughters of Mars*.

Thomas Keneally holds a number of national and international honorary doctorates and is particularly proud of the one awarded by the National University of Ireland. He has also been awarded the Gold Medal of the University of California. In 1983 he received the Order of Australia

for his services to Australian Literature and in 1997 was declared one of Australia's '100 Living Treasures'.

He was the founding chairman of the Australian Republican Movement, and served on the Australian Constitutional Commission and the Australia-China Council. He has also been President of the Australian Society of Authors.

A keen sports follower, Tom Keneally is Number 1 ticket-holder of the Manly-Warringah football League team. He occasionally writes for newspapers about important events on the League calendar.

Client testimonials

“ Tom was received very well. I was a real treat for everyone and we received many positive comments. He was light, engaging and a real breath of fresh air at the end of the day.

- *Oxford University Press*

[VIEW SPEAKER'S BIO ONLINE](#) 