

Shortlist announced for prestigious Business Literature Prize

7/2/12

Four fascinating and diverse books have been shortlisted in Australia's largest award for business writing, the State Library of NSW announced today [Tuesday 7 February].

The shortlisted books for the \$30,000 Blake Dawson Business Literature Prize for this year are:

- **Anna Krien** - *Into the Woods: The Battle for Tasmania's Forests*, Black Inc.
- **Charles Massy** - *Breaking the Sheep's Back: The Shocking True Story of the Decline and Fall of the Australian Wool Industry*, University of Queensland Press
- **Trevor Sykes** - *Six Months of Panic: How the Global Financial Crisis Hit Australia*, Allen & Unwin
- **Suzanne Welborn** - *Freehills: A History of Australia's First National Law Firm*, NewSouth Publishing

The shortlist was selected by an external independent judging panel: Alan Cameron AO, Professor Richard Fisher AM, and Narelle Hooper, editor of *AFR Boss* magazine.

Chair of the judging panel Alan Cameron said: "The judges this year were impressed with the wide range and calibre of books nominated, and were particularly impressed with the analysis and insight into Australian business demonstrated by the authors shortlisted."

Launched in 2004 by top-tier commercial law firm Blake Dawson and the State Library of NSW, the annual prize is now acknowledged as Australia's most important award for business literature. It was established to encourage the highest possible standards of literary commentary on Australian business and financial affairs.

Chairman of Blake Dawson Mary Padbury said: "We are proud of our association with such a prestigious prize, especially as this year it will be awarded during one of the most significant phases in our firm's history. On 1 March Blake Dawson will be combining its Asian practice with that of leading international law firm Ashurst and rebranding as Ashurst in Australia and in all other markets."

Media Release



The winner will be announced at a special presentation dinner on Thursday 15 March 2012.

The Blake Dawson Business Literature Prize is presented by Blake Dawson and administered by the State Library of NSW.

For more information, interviews and images please contact:

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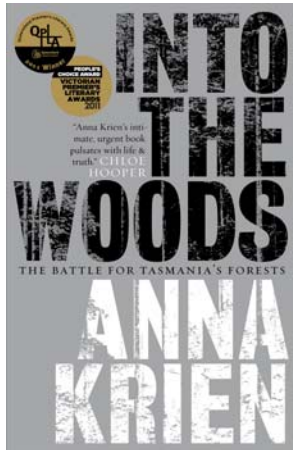
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Note to Editors

On 1 March Blake Dawson will be combining its Asian practice with that of leading international law firm Ashurst and rebranding as Ashurst in all other markets. Due to this rebranding, the Blake Dawson Business Literature Prize will be known as the Ashurst Business Literature Prize from 1 March 2012.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS INFORMATION

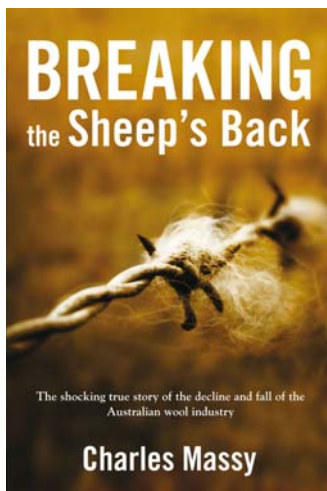
Anna Krien - Into the Woods: The Battle for Tasmania's Forests, *Black Inc*



For many years, the Tasmanian wilderness has been the site of a fierce struggle. At stake is the future of old-growth forests. Loggers and police face off with protesters deep in the forest, while savage political games are played in the courts and parliaments.

In *Into the Woods*, Anna Krien, armed with a notebook, a sleeping bag and a rusty sedan, ventures behind the battlelines to see what it is like to risk everything for a cause. She speaks to ferals and premiers, sawmillers and whistleblowers. She investigates personalities and convictions, methods and motives. This is a book about a company that wanted its way and the resistance that eventually forced it to change.

Charles Massy - *Breaking the Sheep's Back: The Shocking True Story of the Decline and Fall of the Australian Wool Industry*, *University of Queensland Press*



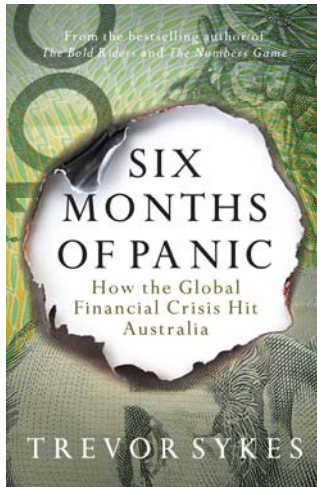
Breaking the Sheep's Back is the untold story of the events that led to Australia's biggest industry disaster.

Once a great nation-building icon, the wool business today is but a third of its size when Australia 'rode on the sheep's back'. The story is a tragedy that reaches into the offices of prime ministers and Cabinet members across seven federal governments and its agencies. Despite this politically sanctioned collapse, there has never been a royal commission. Until now, no one has investigated what precipitated the great crash of February 1991 or the industry's ongoing decline.

It has taken author Charles Massy ten years to research and write this book. In the process he spoke to most of the major players and gained access to the key documents and correspondence. He has gone inside cabinet and political offices, the Wool Corporation, the boardrooms of international wool buyers, wool processors and designers, and the living rooms of farmers across the country.

Breaking the Sheep's Back is Massy's private royal commission – a must-read account of the decline and fall of the Australian wool empire.

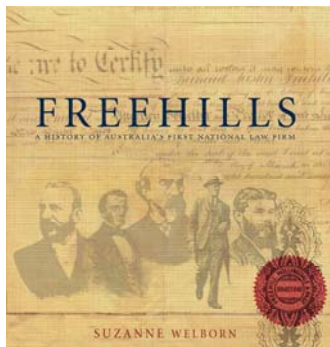
Trevor Sykes - *Six Months of Panic: How the Global Financial Crisis Hit Australia,*
Allen & Unwin



Few Australian writers can match Trevor Sykes' understanding of the murkier waters of Australian business, as readers of his Pierpont column and his magisterial works *The Bold Riders* and *Two Centuries of Panic* have shown. He has now turned his eagle eye on what has become known as the GFC, and the waves of panic that began with the subprime crisis in America and flowed with tsunami like force across Europe, Asia and Australia.

This was a crisis which was borne from an excess of greed, and immorality, and Sykes singles the Wall Street banks out for particular blame. He explains how the subprime phenomenon came about, and how the fall of Lehman brothers marked the beginning of the slide. Inevitably the crisis reached Australia, with Centro and MFS the first dominoes in the chain. With the same blowtorch he earlier applied to the likes of Alan Bond he dissects the questionable dealings which caused the fall of high flyers like Allco, Babcock and Brown, ABC and many more, and summarises the pain and harm caused by the myriad small companies and individuals feeding from the frenzy.

Suzanne Welborn - *Freehills: A History of Australia's First National Law Firm,*
NewSouth Publishing



By any measure, Freehills is one of the nation's strongest and most respected commercial law firms. It employs almost 2000 people and acts for most of Australia's largest listed public corporations. It has come a long way from the small nineteenth-century practices that marked its beginnings.

But what is the story behind Freehills? How did it transform from a small number of independent law firms into a leading national practice? This fascinating history tells how five Australian law practices merged to become Freehills, and how each influenced the character of this successful law firm.

It traces the story from the solid colonial businesses of Frederick Moule, Samuel Vaughan, Stephen Parker, Bernard Freehill and John Nicholson, to the vigorous expansion of the post-war years and the unprecedented development leading up to integration of Freehills as a single partnership in 2000.

The book follows the firm's growth in the context of the economic and social changes of the time, the clients who came along for the journey, and the people who built Australia's first truly national law firm.
