

Little fiction among facts

Rod Bennett

AVALON historical author and filmmaker Jonathan King said he was concerned about writing fiction to help set the scene at the beginning of each major event in his latest book *Great Moments in Australian History*.

He said the dramatic elements which he wrote to preface the historical accounts of defining Aussie moments were pretty worrying to him before he began writing.

"It's a totally different mindset," he said. "But once I started writing I discovered I already had these characters in my head. And they came out and spoke readily."

His latest book will be launched by Senator Bob Brown at Parliament House on Tuesday, December 1.

"I was surprised at the way these characters spoke," he said. "They said things which I didn't want them to say, I lost control."

The man responsible for the First Fleet Re-inactment in 1988 said all the biggies in our history were in the book – from Captain Cook and Burke and Wills through to Gough Whitlam and Anna Bligh. "I've tried to put as much in there as I can," King said.

He has received good responses from schoolteachers, who've read the book in advance, with the general feeling being they wished something like this existed.

"Especially dramatic introductions to historical stories," he said. "They mentioned that kids would be able to act out scenes in front of the class before the historical discussion."



Jonathan King, capturing Australian history. Picture: MARTIN LANGE.