

Timeline

Colin Johnson/Mudrooroo

- 21 Aug 1938 Colin Johnson born in East Cuballing, WA, two months after death of his father
- 1947 Separated from destitute mother, sent to Clontarf Boys' Home, Perth, WA
- 1955 Release from Clontarf, care of Catholic Welfare Office
- 1956 Perth Children's Court, convicted of breaking and entering, assault; sentenced to 12 months prison in Fremantle Jail
- 1957 Second conviction, car theft; sentence increased to 18 months
- 1958 Meets Mary Durack, after release from prison short stay in her house, moves to Melbourne, care of Aboriginal Advancement League
- 1960 First publication: short story 'Finish' (Westerly, 3, 1960)
- 1960-64 Various jobs as public servant, including State Library of Victoria; studies for Matriculation Certificate
- 1965 Publication of 'Wild Cat Falling' (Sydney: Angus & Robertson); 'first novel by part-Aborigine' (Mary Durack)
Marries Jenny Katinas, a refugee from Lithuania; first trip with Jenny to London (overland, via Thailand, Cambodia, India, Nepal), return to Melbourne January 1966
- 1967 Constitutional referendum passed: Aborigines to be included in census, Federal Parliament given power to legislate Aboriginal affairs
- 1967 Second trip to Asia; Jenny returns to Australia (1968) while Colin spends next six years in India as travelling Buddhist monk
- 1972 Aboriginal Tent Embassy, Canberra, ACT
- 1974 Return to Melbourne
- 1975 Travels to San Francisco, meets Ferlinghetti, ends up living on the streets and in Salvation Army asylum; work on second novel, 'Long Live Sandawara'
Return to Melbourne, meets Indigenous activist Harry Penrith (Burnum Burnum), beginning of long history of involvement in Aboriginal politics and protest movement
- 1976 Works with Colin Bourke at Aboriginal Research Centre, Monash University
Travels to Tasmania to research work-in-progress, 'Dr. Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World'
Contact with Tasmanian activists (Mansell family)

- 1977 Begins study towards B.A. (Hons.) at University of Melbourne; teaches course for Aboriginal students at Koorie College (Victoria Aboriginal Health Service)
- 1979 Publication of 'Long Live Sandawara' (Melbourne: Quartet Books; ETT Imprint 2020)
- 1980 Marriage to Julie Whiting, university librarian; son (Kalu) born 1985, daughter (Malika) born 1988
Publication of 'Before the Invasion: Aboriginal Life to 1788' (Melbourne: OUP), co-authored with Colin Bourke and Isobel White
Co-founder, with Jack Davis, of National Aboriginal and Islander Writers, Oral Literature, and Dramatists Association (AWOLDA)
- 1981 South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature, Christchurch, NZ
- 1982 Writer in Residence: Murdoch University, Organiser First Aboriginal Writers' Conference
- 1983 Conference on Commonwealth Literature, Bayreuth, Germany
Publication of 'Dr. Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World' (Melbourne: Hyland House; ETT Imprint 2019)
Tutor, Koori College, Melbourne
- 1986 Association for Commonwealth Literature Conference, Singapore
Commonwealth Literature Conference, Edinburgh
- 1987 Completion of B.A. (Hons.), Murdoch University, Perth
Lecturer, University of Northern Territory
Co-convenor, with Jack Davis, AWOLDA conference, Perth, 'Telling our stories ... our way'
First National Black Playwrights Conference, Canberra, workshop 'Wild Cat Falling'
- 1988 Widespread protests against bi-centenary celebrations
Divorce from Julie Whiting
Lecturer, University of Queensland
Colin Johnson moves to Bungawalbyn, Northern NSW; adopts pen/trade name Mudrooroo (legally registered as Mudrooroo Narogin, later Mudrooroo Nyoongah)
Visit to remote Aboriginal communities
Publication of poetry collection, 'The Song Circle of Jacky and Selected Poems' (Melbourne: Hyland House)
Publication of 'Doin' Wildcat: A Novel Koori Script as Constructed By Mudrooroo' (Melbourne: Hyland House; ETT Imprint 2016), and 'Dalwurra: the Black Bittern' (Perth: UWA Press), ed. Veronica Brady and Susan Miller (cycle of poems)
XIth Conference on Commonwealth Literature, Aachen-Liege
Antipodes Conference, Amsterdam

- 1989 Death of mother (aged 91)
Western Australia Literature Award for 'Dalwurra'
Senior Writers Fellowship, Australia Council (July 1989 - July 1991)
Lecturer, University of Queensland (1988/89), Introduction of Indigenous Literature Course
- 1990 Publication of 'Writing from the Fringe: A Study of Modern Aboriginal Literature in Australia' (South Yarra, Vic.: Hyland House), and 'Paperbark. A Collection of Black Australian Writings' (St. Lucia, Qld.: UQP), ed. by J. Davis, S. Muecke, Mudrooroo and A. Shoemaker), contains Mudrooroo, 'Struggling. A Novella' (pp. 199-290)
Participates in 'Belles Étrangères' (Australian Writers Program in Paris, May 1990)
Member, Aboriginal Arts Board, Australia Council (until 1992)
- 1991 Appointment as Head of Aboriginal Studies, Murdoch University, Perth (5-year contract)
Stanner Award, for 'Writing from the Fringe'
Publication of 'Master of the Ghost Dreaming: A Novel' (Sydney: Angus & Robertson; ETT Imprint 2020), and 'The Garden of Gethsemane: Poems from the Lost Decade' (South Yarra, Vic.: Hyland House)
July-September, Writer-in-Residence, Centre for Performance Studies, University of Sydney; work on the 'Mudrooroo/Müller Project'; including two-week workshop with Brian Syron and Aboriginal actors, followed by public reading of 'The Aboriginal Protesters' at Belvoir Theatre, Surry Hills
Human Rights Commission Award (Media), for 'Master of the Ghosts Dreaming'
- 1992 Publication of 'Wildcat Screaming' (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson)
Publication of 'Wild Cat Falling', Imprint Classics Edition, introd. by Stephen Muecke (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson)
Double Winner of WA Premier's Award (Best Entry and Best Poetry Collection)
Reunion with siblings, Perth
- 1993 Publication of 'The Mudrooroo/Müller Project. A Theatrical Casebook', ed. Gerhard Fischer (Sydney: UNSW Press); 'The Kwinkan' (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson)
Special Prize, NSW State Premier's Award, with special reference to 'The Aboriginal Protesters'
- 1994 Publication of 'Aboriginal Mythology: An A-Z Spanning the History of Australian Aboriginal Peoples from the Earliest Legends to the Present Day' (London: Aquarian; ETT Imprint 2020)

- 1995 Publication of 'Us Mob: History, Culture, Struggle. An Introduction to Indigenous Australia' (Sydney & London: Angus & Robertson), and 'Pacific Highway Boo-Blooz: Country Poems' (St. Lucia, Qld.: UQP)
- 1996 Marries Janine Little; moves to Macleay Island (Moreton Bay, Qld.)
 Premiere of 'The Aboriginal Protesters' at The Performance Space, Redfern, Festival of Sydney (10 January)
 June-July, tour with cast of 'The Aboriginal Protesters' in Germany, performances in Weimar and Munich (July 1996).
 Begins work on verse drama 'Iphigeneia in Buchenwald' (based on Goethe's 'Iphigenie in Tauris')
 Publication of 'Identity Crisis' by Victoria Laurie, 'The Australian Magazine' (20-21 July)
 Dumbartung Aboriginal Association, Perth, releases public statement denying Mudrooroo's claim to Nyoongah identity and Aboriginal descent (27 July)
 Kate Challis RAKA Award for 'Us Mob'
- 1997 Publication of 'The Indigenous Literature of Australia: Milli Milli Wangka' (Melbourne, Vic.: Hyland House)
- 1998 Publication of 'The Undying' (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson; ETT Imprint 2021)
- 1999 Publication of 'Underground' (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson; ETT Imprint 2021)
 Referendum to establish Australian Republic fails
- 2000 Publication of 'The Promised Land' (Pymble, NSW: Angus & Robertson; ETT Imprint 2021)
- 2001 Leaves Australia to begin self-imposed exile in India and Nepal
 Lecture tour to Italy, following G-8 Summit at Genoa
- 2002 Marriage to Sangya Magar, native of Kapan, Nepal; son (Saman) born 2002
- 2011 Return to Australia for medical treatment, resides at Brisbane
- 2013 Mudrooroo reads 'Wild Cat Falling' for Bolinda Audio
 Publication of 'Old Fellow Poems' in India and recording for ETT Audio
- 2015 Publication of 'An Indecent Obsession' (ETT Imprint; ebook)
- 2017 Publication of 'Old Fellow Poems' (Sydney, ETT Imprint)
 Publication of 'Balga Boy Jackson' (Sydney, ETT Imprint)
- 2018 Publication of 'Tripping with Jenny' (Sydney, ETT Imprint)
- 20 Jan 2019 Death of Mudrooroo, Brisbane