

Red Centre inspired author

Justin Raymond

THE Red Centre of Australia is at the heart of a Bendigo-based writer's debut novel.

Award nominated author Mary Pomfret spent 10 years in Central Australia and injects some of that outback knowledge into her psychological rural mystery *The Hard Seed*.

The novel is about an elderly writer who tries to make sense of her murky past through her writing. But she

discovers that dangerous writing can sometimes have fatal consequences.

"I lived in Alice from the time I was about 18 and left in 1980 when I was 28; I even got married to my husband John there," Ms Pomfret said.

"The section of the novel that is set in the Outback, and there is quite a lot of it, has been inspired by that time I spent in Alice.

"But there are no historic truths there, no characters or

anybody that was alive and the same with the town of Alice. The novel is not about Alice, it is set in a fictitious place."

The short story titled *Hard Seed* won Ms Pomfret the Katherine Susannah Prichard Short Fiction Award in 2016.

"The short story is a condensed version but the ideas from it are still at the heart of the novel," she said.

"The structure of the novel is one of nested stories - stories within stories each telling a dif-

ferent version of similar but different traumatic events.

"People who have experienced deep trauma ... need to tell their stories over and over again, each time in a different way until finally the story changes into something else which is more bearable.

"People don't always have the language to express profound hurts and betrayal.

"Psychological wounds are sometimes 'unspeakable', hence the metaphor of the

seed (in the book's title). Layers of stories hide damage until finally some kind of release is found through story.

"My novel is the creative interpretation of the pattern of trauma which sometimes is passed on down the generations until the unspeakable story finds a way of being told and, perhaps more importantly, heard by others."

The Hard Seed is available from Red Kangaroo Books in Todd Mall.



Mary Pomfret Picture: SUPPLIED

Legacy of Uncharted series continues to thrive



THE *Uncharted* video games are known for their cinematic action scenes and gameplay like no other before it.

The series is about searching for treasure and artefacts in exotic places. And *Uncharted: The Lost Legacy* is no different, however, it makes some major changes that some folks might not have expected, playing as a completely new character.

Instead of playing as the legendary Nathan Drake, players are put in the shoes of Chloe Frazer, and another strong female character is along for the ride, Nadine Ross. *Uncharted: the Lost Legacy* is an action-packed, fast paced game that continues to push the narrative forward in interesting ways.

The dialogue between the characters is top-notch, the writing in the game carries a real weight to it and represents realistic conversations.

The gameplay is highly engaging, it's an action-romp, so expect many platforming and navigational challenges, puzzle solving, and of course shoot-outs on your adventure.

Now, it might not be blindingly obvious that players will use guns a lot, however, it's the primary way to engage in combat. Chloe and Nadine have strong hand-to-hand skills and melee is a viable option, in intense situations though players will rely on trusty guns.

It's actually the only major criticism I have — and I see it frequently online — that *Uncharted* games have too many situations that players need to shoot their way out of. The gunplay and combat feel good mechanically though.

It is set along the Western Ghats of India; this proves to be an excellent design decision due to the variety provided.

Chloe and Nadine travel through a diverse range of settings, from lush jungles teeming with flora to snowy mountaintops.

The stakes are high for Chloe and Nadine, both have important things to consider on their adventures.

The game is set in India, which is where Chloe's heritage lies.

The characters are on a



Screen grabs taken from the PlayStation 4 of the enjoyable and action-adventure video game *Uncharted: The Lost Legacy*.

Picture: SUPPLIED

treasure hunt of sorts, they are after the Tusk of Ganesh, and they must adventure to places of importance to find this relic.

In ancient religious history, Ganesh lost the Tusk while defending his father's temple, his father was the Hindu deity Shiva — this is consistent with religious historic stories.

Nadine is also at an interesting point in her life — previously in the series she was the leader of a private military organisation called Shoreline,

she is tough, let me tell you.

The pair first visit Hoysala's capital, Halebidu, in this fictional setting the city is under control of military soldiers and to make matters more complicated, its Nadine's previous military group.

Although this might give our duo an edge, Nadine understands how this military group operate, she also knows how well resourced and powerful these guys are and the challenge the pair face.

The private military group that players encounter were hired by the antagonist of the game, I won't go into details about the enemy's motivations and place in the story to avoid spoilers, but you can be assured that plays a pivotal role in the game.

Uncharted: The Lost Legacy is visually amazing and all the game's elements feel great. It's a must play game for any PlayStation 4 owner — purchase a copy from EB Games.

WHAT'S ON IN ALICE THIS WEEK

■ **School's Out Pool Party**
Today, 3pm, Alice Springs Aquatic & Leisure Centre, entry for children is free.

■ **Brass on the Grass with the Back Creek Stevedores Union Brass Band**
Tonight, 6.30pm-7.30pm, Flynn Church Lawns, Todd Mall.

■ **Soul Sessions (Last one for 2018)**
Tonight, 8pm, Epilogue, free

■ **Funky Mowtown Party with the Boney Maronies**
Tomorrow, 8pm, Epilogue, free.