



## **CEW Bean Prize Citation – 2005**

### **Dr Rosalind Hearder**

‘Careers in Captivity: Australian Prisoner-of-War Medical Officers’

PhD, University of Melbourne

The plight of Australian prisoners of war is one of the great tragedies of World War Two. A third of the men captured by the Japanese died in POW camps; most of those who returned to Australia owed their survival to the dedication, skill and self-sacrifice of their Medical Officers.

Dr Rosalind Hearder has told the story of Australian doctors at war. We hear their voices through the many and diverse primary sources she has uncovered, including a vast store of diaries, letters and reminisces seldom consulted by historians. Her narrative also makes deft use of oral history and successfully surveys a vast secondary literature in a number of different disciplines.

Dr Hearder alerts us to the many hardships and difficulties medical officers faced in the camps. Her thesis offers a complex and searching analysis of the relationship between captor and captive, officers and men, and the Australian and British medical staff. It concludes with a compelling account of repatriation to Australia, and the physical and psychological legacy of those long dark years of captivity.

“Careers in Captivity: Australian Prisoner-of-War Medical Officers” is a tribute to men of great courage and even greater compassion. It is a worthy recipient of the inaugural CEW Bean prize.