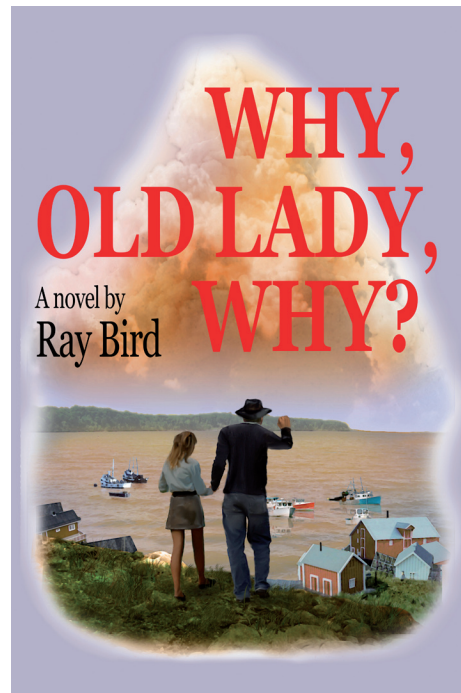


Why, Old Lady, Why?

A Novel by Ray Bird

Trouble on the lake means trouble in town...



Lightning flashes and thunder rumbles across the district as an impending storm chops up the surface of the lake known as the Old Lady. As he rows home from his friend John Arnold's house on this wild night, Brownie ponders the parallel turbulence that has followed him throughout his life.

He hadn't been welcomed when he arrived in the coastal fishing community. He hadn't been welcomed by Anna's family when they fell in love. Just as he'd walked away from his family, Anna too had abandoned her home and her strict Greek upbringing... for love.

With the help of Thelma Lamb, a local eccentric known as The Good Shepherd, Anna and Brownie overcome their cultural differences as they are gradually accepted into the community.

But things are not always what they seem, and events come to a startling head when the local playboy is found murdered. The evidence points to Brownie. Has he really returned to the violent ways of his youth — or is someone setting him up?

About the Author

Ray Bird is a product of the bush. His father was a railway fettle and his mother, a former nurse. Because of his father's work Ray and his elder brother and younger sister grew up in small country villages in New South Wales.

His family was one of considerable achievement. His mother was an accomplished writer of haiku, his brother became a senior officer in the armed forces and his sister is a significant figure in the aged-care industry.

Ray's first taste of urban life occurred at Newcastle when at age 16 he accepted a scholarship to Newcastle Teachers College. He taught in country one-teacher schools and went on to become a Principal and a District Inspector of Schools. In 1990 he resigned from the Department of Education

to take up a position as an advocate for prisoners incarcerated in New South Wales goals.

Throughout his life, in childhood and in New South Wales schools and prisons, he has enjoyed a close contact with aboriginal people and their communities.

Ray has always been a solo operator with a highly developed social conscience. He believes in the power of the individual to make a difference. Many of his friends see him as an acceptable aberration — a bit of a novelty who can liven up their barbeques and dinner parties.

Ray lives on the Central Coast of New South Wales where he is working on a second novel. He and his wife Pamela have a daughter and a son, four grandchildren and a family cat named Dhaka.

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