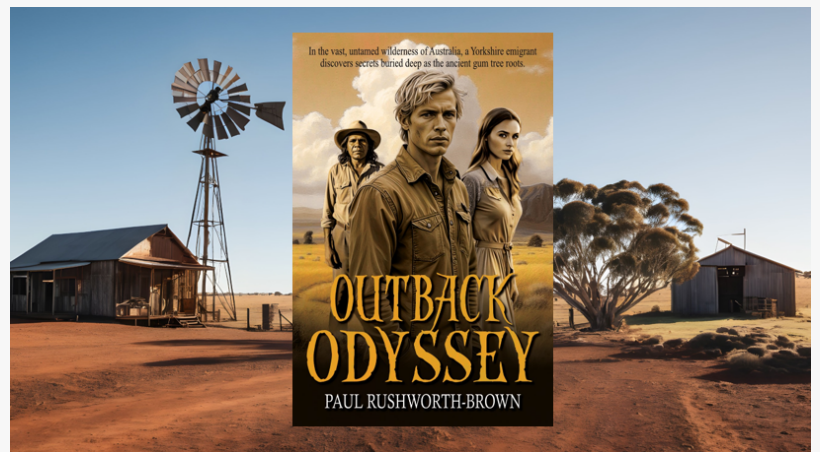


New Novel Unmasks Rural Australia's Quiet Mental Health Crisis—and the Legacy of Colonisation

In 1950s outback Australia, one man unravels and another finds healing through land, silence, and First Nations wisdom

SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA, May 20, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ --

With suicide rates in rural Australia nearly twice those of urban areas and First Nations communities still grappling with intergenerational trauma, acclaimed historical fiction author Paul Rushworth-Brown is using the power of story to bring those issues to light. His new novel, "Outback Odyssey", is more than historical fiction—it's a profoundly human reflection on masculinity, legacy, reconciliation, respect for First Nations' culture and the cost of silence.



A sweeping, character-driven tale of survival, healing, and the voices colonialism tried to silence.

“

We're proud to publish an Australian story with such global resonance—Outback Odyssey speaks to healing, heritage, and the emotional truth men everywhere often keep buried.”

Dee Marley, CEO Historium Press (US)

“Derek’s unravelling comes from a place I know intimately,” says Rushworth-Brown. “I’ve seen it in the men around me and felt it in myself—in those who were raised to endure, not to speak. Taught to survive, but never shown how to heal.”

This release aligns with Mental Health Awareness Month (May/Oct), NAIDOC Week (July), and national conversations about rural suicide, colonisation, reconciliation, and post-war identity.

The Novel

Set in 1950s Australia, Outback Odyssey follows Jimmy Brown, a post-war English migrant

seeking healing and belonging in a vast, unforgiving landscape. Looming over his journey is Derek Olsen—a commanding landowner driven by entitlement, haunted by irrelevance, and obsessed with control. But Derek is no one-dimensional villain. Beneath his hardened exterior is a man quietly fracturing under the weight of emotional repression and unspoken trauma.

Derek’s character becomes a powerful, haunting reflection of unaddressed mental illness, particularly as it manifests in rural Australia, where men are often taught to suppress emotion, identity, and vulnerability.

The novel draws a striking contrast between Derek and Jimmy. While Derek treats First Nations people with disdain, viewing their land and presence as obstacles to power, Jimmy unexpectedly finds healing through connection with the Munarrakalai people. Where Derek enforces division, Jimmy finds strength in community and belonging, not by conquering the land, but by learning to listen to it.



“Healing in silence: After brutality, Jimmy is cared for by Ngarra, a Munarrakalai elder, while Amanda stands watch. A scene from Paul Rushworth-Brown’s Outback Odyssey.”

[Outback Odyssey will be available via Historium Press, Amazon and major](#) online distributors in May 30 2025

Why It Matters Now

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, men in rural and remote regions are twice as likely to die by suicide as those in urban areas. Outback Odyssey doesn’t preach—it reflects. Through quiet emotional depth, the novel challenges readers to consider what happens when silence is mistaken for strength, and legacy is pursued without empathy.

For journalists and producers, Paul Rushworth-Brown is available for interviews across radio, television, print, and podcast formats. Talking points and media kit available upon request.

Story At A Glance

Title: Outback Odyssey

Author: Paul Rushworth-Brown

Publisher: Historium Press (USA)

What: A historical drama addressing post-war migration, colonisation, reconciliation, and rural mental health

Why It Matters: Echoes real issues facing rural Australia: suicide, intergenerational trauma, colonial legacy, and the allegorical weight of the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum.

Ties In With: Mental Health Awareness Month (May/Oct), NAIDOC Week (July), post-war history

Media-Ready: Author available for interviews (TV, radio, podcasts)

About the Author

Paul Rushworth-Brown is an English-born Australian novelist known for richly immersive historical fiction. His work has been featured in The Author's Porch Magazine, The New York National Times, and Book Publishing Industry Today, and he has appeared in interviews on ABC and BBC Radio. Though born in Kent, England, Rushworth-Brown's lived experience in Australia gives his writing an outsider's clarity and an insider's heart.

He is the author of three previous novels—Skulduggery, Red Winter Journey, and Dream of Courage—each praised for its vivid historical realism and emotional depth.

Outback Odyssey, published internationally by Historium Press (USA), is his most personal and socially resonant work to date. It is a novel that not only honours the beauty and brutality of the land but also grapples with what it means to belong, to listen, and to heal.

He is a thoughtful and articulate speaker on historical storytelling, rural identity, and the emotional cost of silence. He is available for interviews across all formats. [Click here to schedule an interview with the author.](#)

[Learn more at Paul Rushworth-Brown's official website.](#)

Media Contact



"I wrote Derek not just as a villain, but as a man unraveling," says Rushworth-Brown. "There are ghosts in the land—but also in ourselves."

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