The Coliseum (*Mayfield*)

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Declaration: This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.
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Abstract

The Coliseum (Mayfield) is about the life of local Newcastle eccentric Leo Maley. After Leo’s death in 2000 it was discovered that this man who lived like a pauper, was in fact a millionaire. This fictional biography explores some of the stories that surround Leo, where memories of him have come to possess almost mythical status.

Within The Coliseum these myths are at times counterbalanced by other stories, making the truth about Leo Maley as intangible as his reclusive life.

The Coliseum (Mayfield) also reveals some of the many faces of Mayfield, as it exists within Newcastle; a place with perhaps as much ambiguity as Leo Maley himself.

A critical and reflective exegesis The Coliseum: Storytelling, archetypes and place as icon follows the creative component. This work investigates the challenges associated with collecting oral histories, how people fit stories of their lives around their personal notions of archetype-in particular, the eccentric-and how these stories in turn reflect upon and influence change in the place in which they are told.
The Coliseum
(Mayfield)

Meg Vertigan

The Coliseum circa 1990
THE COLISEUM (MAYFIELD)

Preface

*The Coliseum (Mayfield)* is an imaginative biography of infamous Mayfield eccentric, Leo Maley. Leo Maley lived his entire life in a shop named The Coliseum. Upon his death, local newspapers ran stories trying to uncover the mystery of Leo’s life. His friend, Peter Boyd, put a notice in the paper announcing a memorial service for Leo Maley. Many locals attended and told their stories of Leo and The Coliseum.

The stories within this book were collected from newspaper articles, court transcripts, family letters and local stories told by people who lived within the community of Newcastle. These local stories may or may not be able to be substantiated, but they all have helped to create the legend of Leo Maley.

The new emperor of The Coliseum, George Burke, allowed access to his private collection of letters, photos, newspaper articles and other memorabilia of his predecessor. George Burke has done a wonderful job of renovating The Coliseum with respect for its history, and has always welcomed customers’ stories of Leo Maley.

All the names within *The Coliseum (Mayfield)* have been changed.