



2007 BYRON BAY WRITERS FESTIVAL

Festival Writer: **Barbara Ewing**

Barbara Ewing was born and educated in New Zealand and has a BA degree in English and Maori. A New Zealand government scholarship sent her to study acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London where she was awarded the gold medal for best student.



She has worked in theatre all over the world; has appeared in horror movies like *Dracula has Risen from the Grave* (which to her embarrassment is still re-shown on British television); and has appeared in many other films and television series. But when Glenda Jackson decided to give up acting to become an MP rather than 'wait for the phone to ring with the few middle-aged parts available to women', Barbara decided to write novels. She still acts, but turned much of her rage at how older actresses were treated (while older actors were in their prime) into what was later described as 'a thoughtful bonkbuster' called *The Actresses* which was sold at airports, with a purple cover.

Her next novel *A Dangerous Vine* was long-listed for the prestigious Orange Prize, and she has written several historical novels of which *The Mesmerist*, the story of the rise of mesmerism and hypnotism in early-nineteenth-century England, is the latest.

the festival for thinkers

the festival for thinkers