

DIALOGUE 2024

BOOK GROUPS CATALOGUE



BOX HILL
INSTITUTE

CAE



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Sign up to our newsletter to keep informed about upcoming literary events, book reviews, book and movie giveaways and lots more.

Box Hill Institute trading as Centre for Adult Education RTO 4687



Book Discussion Service. 527 Collins Street

Introduction

CAE (Centre for Adult Education)

A leading provider of adult and community education, the CAE has been providing lifelong learning opportunities since 1947. After more than 75 years, we continue our strong focus on delivering nationally recognised and accredited training as well as non-accredited short courses, and connecting the community through socially inclusive practices that recognise diversity and creativity. Located in the arts and café hub of Melbourne, we also provide online learning and adult education delivery in other locations. CAE offers a vibrant and supportive adult learning environment, flexible learning, skills recognition, practical training and supervised work placements. cae.edu.au

CAE Book Groups

Each Book Group makes their annual selection of books from the titles in Dialogue, as well as choosing meeting dates and times, members, and where to meet (e.g. a private home, a café or library). From international award winners to debut authors, we have over a thousand books to choose from. Most of our books are accompanied with discussion notes, including questions that can be used to frame group discussion. CAE Book Groups has a long history, reflected in our selection of titles, and in the way the notes are written. We like to think of it as a great trip down memory lane. We hope you do too.

Using Dialogue

Reactions (feedback on books our members have read), as well as staff favourites, are included here to provide a broad perspective on titles. Reactions from our groups provide vital feedback to CAE staff and members are encouraged to share their reactions on our website. Our catalogue includes 3 indexes: Author (arranged alphabetically by author surname), Title and Box Number. The Title index also advises which books are available as large print editions. Titles are grouped thematically, with fiction and nonfiction titles often sitting side by side. You will find a description of themes in the content list. Please ensure all members of your group have access to Dialogue, which can be downloaded as a PDF from our website or browsed online at www.cae.edu.au/bookgroups or scan the QR code.

Borrow an eBook

As part of your CAE Book Groups membership, you can borrow an eBook version in addition to the print copy. To be added as an eBook patron, please ensure you have completed the registration of interest on the enrolment form. Please note our eBook library does not contain all titles from Dialogue. Titles have limited availability and some are only available on request for support with increased visual accessibility.

Book Groups Online

Book Groups Online (www.cae.edu.au/bookgroups) is an online platform that allows you to browse the catalogue and perform enrolment tasks such as entering book selections and meeting dates. You can also use Book Groups Online to change your details throughout the year such as delivery address and contact details. If you would prefer not to use Book Groups Online, you can use the Selections and Enrolments forms at the back of this catalogue. If you need assistance with Book Groups Online, please email us at bookgroups@cae.edu.au



**BOOK
GROUPS
ONLINE**

www.cae.edu.au/bookgroups

Theme Icons

- F** Fiction
- N** Nonfiction
- S** Short Stories
- L** Large Print
- Adapted Books**
- ★** Book Group Favourite

New Icon →

Book Title →

Author →

Year Published →

Theme type →

Number of Pages →

Group Name →

NEW



The Testaments
Margaret Atwood

WINNER
Booker Prize

WINNER
ABIA Book of the Year

The much-anticipated follow-up to Atwood's dystopian classic *The Handmaid's Tale*. Fifteen years after the events of the previous novel, three women from Gilead risk their lives to tell their story. A story of hope and courage, and a thrilling read for our times.

2019 448pp B2330

A vivid, compelling read with much to discuss. A worthy sequel to satisfy avid readers of the Handmaid's Tale.
Nicole P, Book Groups Staff Member

← **Book Cover**

← **Literary Prize**

← **Box Number**

← **Group Reaction**

Join or Start a Book Group

Starting a Book Group

CAE Book Groups is a great way to connect with other readers in your community. Get together with friends, neighbours or colleagues to discuss the kind of books that might appeal to you as a group and then choose a suitable time and venue. Once you have between 8 to 15 people and have decided on the number of discussion meetings you would like to have, you are ready to take the next step of electing a CAE Book Group Secretary.

Email us at bookgroups@cae.edu.au to receive a New Group Pack so you can begin selecting your books.

Joining a Book Group

If you would prefer to join an existing group, please contact us so we can help you find a group in your area and confirm the appropriate pro-rata fee. To ensure that you and the new group are the right match, your first meeting with the new group is free.

Running a Book Group

CAE Book Group Secretary

Secretaries provide a permanent delivery address for books and liaise with CAE staff on book selections, payments, and enquiries from potential new members. Secretaries are vital to the success of a book group and ensure that CAE keeps in touch with the needs of each group. The role of secretary can rotate between group members from year to year. The secretary can log in to Book Groups Online to choose books, allocate meeting dates and view enrolled members.

Where do CAE Book Groups meet and how often?

CAE Book Groups choose to receive CAE books either 6, 9 or 11 times a year. Groups choose the time, place and format of meetings and direct their own discussions.

Books available for loan

Each month, CAE selects a book from the list of possible titles that your group has chosen from Dialogue. Groups have the option of requesting books in priority or random order. We only send books on your selected list.

CAE discussion notes

Stimulate your meeting with our discussion notes. While there is no formal tuition or assessment, the majority of books are accompanied by specially commissioned notes written by experienced note writers – including well-known Australian authors – complete with discussion questions. More than just a book review, these notes are guaranteed to help get your group talking.

How much time do we have to read the book before the discussion?

Books are delivered to the Group Secretary prior to the scheduled meeting. Members collect their copy of the book at the meeting from the Secretary and then meet again the following month to discuss the book they have just read and collect their next book.

How does each group receive and return books?

CAE sends a box in advance of each meeting to the delivery address nominated by the Secretary. Books are returned to CAE via the Secretary via courier. Prepaid return labels are included in the book tubs. Groups operate most efficiently when books are returned to – and collected from – the Secretary by each individual member at the scheduled meeting.

What do I get for my fee?

Fees cover the delivery and return of book boxes each month and access to the CAE eBook catalogue. Each box contains copies of the selected book (maximum 15 copies) and notes on loan for each individual member. Group Secretaries should only distribute books to paid members. Group members can also sign up for CAE Book Groups Newsletter to receive timely news on events and competitions, and book reviews by CAE Book Groups staff.

Victorian Annual Membership Fees 2024 (per member)

No of meetings	Full Fee	Seniors	Concession	Secretary
11	\$163	\$155	\$111	\$97
9	\$152	\$144	\$103	\$91
6	\$122	\$115	\$86	\$75

Interstate Annual Membership Fees 2024 (per member)

No of meetings	Full Fee	Seniors	Concession	Secretary
11	\$186	\$164	\$129	\$109
9	\$168	\$149	\$118	\$99
6	\$131	\$117	\$92	\$78

Enrolment form

Please see **page 77** of Dialogue for an enrolment form, or you can download it via our website www.cae.edu.au/book-groups.

The enrolment process can be handled by post, email or phone. If you are eligible for a seniors or concession fee, you must provide a photocopy or scanned copy of your Seniors or Concession card. Students are also eligible for a discount (same as the seniors' fee). For more details on discount eligibility, please see our website or contact us.

Growing Up, Moving On

Exploring the experience of childhood and finding one's way in the world. This chapter celebrates both fiction and non-fiction coming-of-age stories.



A

About a Boy 🗨️

Nick Hornby

Will, a 36-year-old bachelor who is delighted to be child-free, gets mixed up with 12-year-old Marcus and his newly separated mother. This entertaining novel is about families, being a man, being a kid ... and the importance of being cool.

F 1998 286pp **B1706**

A delightful and interesting book. The characters were well drawn and the social situations were believable and realistic.

Malvern East 16

All the Pretty Horses 🗨️

Cormac McCarthy

SHORTLISTED
National Book Award

While not a formula western or a 'man's book', this novel has very American themes. At 16, John Grady Cole leaves the Texan ranch where he grew up but has no future, so he can ride into the Mexican frontier. He finds adventure, romance and rough male justice. Strong masculine point of view, powerful landscapes and distinctive style.

F 1992 302pp **B1481**

Amnesty

Aravind Adiga

LONGLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Denied refugee status after fleeing Sri Lanka, a young man lives in difficult circumstances in Sydney as he attempts to build a new identity as a cleaner. But then he learns that one of his clients has been murdered and he thinks he knows who the killer is. Should he tell the police and thereby risk being deported, or keep quiet and allow the killer to go free?

F 2020 352pp **B2337**

An Australian Son

Gordon Matthews

An extraordinary life story without literary pretensions. Adopted into a Melbourne family in the 1950s, Matthews' distinctive colouring set him apart at school. In adolescence he lost the sense of where he belonged, until he identified as Aboriginal. His search to uncover his origins opens up questions of adoption, colour and Aboriginality.

N 1996 230pp **B1503**

B

Bad Blood

Lorna Sage

In Lorna's bizarre upbringing in a North Wales town, her dissolute vicar grandfather and furious grandmother are dominating figures. 'A totally unexpected book ... racy, painful, sometimes menacing and mad. Out of it all she has made something devastatingly funny, full of characters and full of exhilarating resilience and sly wit,' said reviewer Anthony Thwaite.

N 2000 281pp **B1663**

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress 🗨️

Dai Sijie

During Mao's Cultural Revolution, two sons of doctors are sent to the country for 're-education'. To keep sane, they have a sense of humour and some distraction from the charming daughter of a local tailor. When they discover a suitcase full of forbidden literature, new worlds open for them. Delightful, funny and unexpected.

F 2001 172pp **B1671**

Deceptively simple and very picturesque. Everyone in the group loved it. It was like reading a painting, very descriptive. A wonderful book and the writer is so clever at telling stories. Most of us were ignorant of the Cultural Revolution and found it very interesting to see how the characters coped. The humour was enjoyed, it was great.

Sydney Women's Club 2 Tuesdays

Barn Blind

Jane Smiley

This is a striking study of a woman of powerful will. Entirely focused on the world of horses and riders, Kate has conscripted all four of her children in the service of her vision. But their own adolescent natures assert themselves, and events move to a conclusion the family has never imagined. Written with superb insight into human nature and the young.

F **L** 1980 218pp **B1433**

Barracuda 🗨️

Christos Tsiolkas

From the author of *The Slap* comes an exploration of class, identity and the meaning of success. Danny, from a working class background, obtains a scholarship to a prestigious college and builds his identity on becoming an Olympic swimming

champion. But what happens when things come crashing down? Explicit language and content may offend some readers.

F 2013 516pp **B2202**

The Bean Trees

Barbara Kingsolver

Young Taylor Greer has grown up poor in rural Kentucky and achieved her first two aims – to avoid becoming pregnant and to get away from her hometown. She buys an old car, heads west, acquires an unexpected responsibility, stops somewhere in Arizona, and begins a surprising new life.

F 1988 246pp **B1869**

The Bell Jar 🗨️

Sylvia Plath

The only novel by this well-known poet. A brilliant treatment of the effect of society's expectations on a sensitive young woman who went to England, married the poet Ted Hughes, had two children and committed suicide seven years later.

F 1963 260pp **B0188**

Believe in Me ☆

Lucy Neave

This moving and deeply personal novel explores the relationships between mothers and their children across three generations. The book questions what we can ever truly know of our parents' early lives, even as their experiences weave ineffably into our identities and destinies.

F 2021 308pp **B2359**

The Boy in the Green Suit

Robert Hillman

WINNER
National Biography Prize

In 1965, 16-year-old Robert Hillman boarded a boat for Ceylon, wearing a green suit and carrying a suitcase of books and a typewriter. When the ship arrived in Athens instead, a penniless Hillman began an adventure that led him to Istanbul, Tehran and Kuwait. Punctuated by tales of growing up in rural Victoria, this is a tender, funny memoir of a young writer-in-the-making.

N 2003 232pp **B1872**

Breath 🗨️

Tim Winton

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

When paramedic Bruce Pike arrives too late to save a boy found hanged in his bedroom, he senses this lonely death is an accident. Pike, too, was once addicted to extremes, barely knowing when to stop. Winton's ninth novel returns to the remote West Australian coast and the fictional universe of Sawyer. Simple yet profound, *Breath* is a moving story of youth's reckless compulsion to oblivion.

F 2008 216pp **B1992**

Butterfly

Sonya Hartnett

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Plum Coyle is nearly fourteen and on the fringe of her peer group. When her glamorous next-door neighbour Maureen, a young wife and mother, befriends her, Plum feels reinvented. But Maureen has an ulterior motive for taking Plum under her wing. Gripping, disquieting and beautifully observed.

F 2009 215pp **B2045**

C

The Catcher in the Rye 🗨️

J.D. Salinger

Holden Caulfield is a 16-year-old American boy who has just flunked out of his third smart school. His own values reveal that he has a deep intuitive sense of what has gone wrong with the culture to which he belongs, and the book is written from his point of view and in his American period slang.

F 1951 224pp **B0257**

Cat's Eye

Margaret Atwood

A Canadian painter, returning to Toronto for a retrospective exhibition of her work, is caught up in a reflection of her life and of the driven relationship with her 'best friend', Cordelia. Comic, mind-stretching, terrible in its grasp of children's needs and cruelties, hopeful – and a compulsive read!

F 1988 421pp **B1249**

The Chosen

Chaim Potok

Two young Jewish boys growing up in Brooklyn around the time of the World War II study the Talmud together, but differences in upbringing, attitude and belief create tension in their friendship. Will Danny, the Rabbi's son, become a Rabbi himself or will he break with tradition? Zionism, the birth of the state of Israel and the destruction of the European Jews are important themes in this novel.

F 1966 281pp [B0121](#)

Coda

Thea Astley

Kathleen's memory and body show signs of failing, but she is still her feisty, independent self, wanting to lead her own life. How long, she wonders, before she becomes a dumped granny? In this brilliant small book, with its glittering satiric wit and aching poignancy, Astley is at her best.

F 1993 188pp [B1436](#)

A Complicated Kindness

Miriam Toews

This Canadian novel examines a family whose life within their fundamentalist Mennonite community has reached a crisis point. The narrative voice of teenage Nomi is superbly sustained; her voice funny, dark and piercing. Tuned in to every hypocrisy yet barely conscious of her own confusion, she is torn by her love of those who have left and the father who remains.

F 2004 246pp [B1920](#)

David Copperfield

Charles Dickens

This partly autobiographical novel wonders 'whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life'. A wonderful blend of comedy and pain, with Dickens' unforgettable characters: the Micawbers and Murdstones, Mrs Gummidge, Uriah Heep, Miss Betsey and Mr Dick.

F 1850 920pp [B0224](#)

Drinking Coffee Elsewhere

ZZ Packer

Surprising, witty and involving, these eight stories are connected by themes of race, black identity, religion and belonging. They range from a teenager who flees the Pentecostal fanaticism of her hometown, finding herself in a dangerous world of drugs and sexual exploitation, to a girl who stages a political sit-in at a local café.

F **S** 2003 243pp [B1829](#)

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close

Jonathan Safran Foer

Foer explores grief through the eyes of 9-year-old Oskar, whose father died in the 9/11 World Trade Center disaster. Oskar is an intelligent, sensitive and creative kid, whose business card lists Inventor, Amateur Entomologist, and Origamist as some of his interests. When he finds a mysterious key in his father's wardrobe, he embarks on an investigation to help him understand his loss.

F 2005 326pp [B1922](#)

For Today I Am a Boy

Kim Fu

As the only son of Chinese immigrants, Peter struggles with the strong patriarchal expectations of his parents – especially as he has always felt he should have been born a girl. This delicately handled coming-of-age novel follows Peter and his sisters as they journey into the wider world, finding their places and conquering the shadows of the past.

F 2014 256pp [B2203](#)

A Fortunate Life

A.B. Facey

Abandoned as a child by his widowed mother in the late 1890s, Facey endured extraordinary hardships in the pioneering days of the Western Australian wheat-belt, as he experienced Gallipoli, survived the Depression and, having taught himself to write, penned this powerful autobiography.

N 1981 326pp [B0360](#)

Fresh Fields

Peter Kocan

With little money, an indifferent mother and no home, a shy 14-year-old boy drifts between the city and the bush, becoming alienated and distrustful. *Fresh Fields* is a dark portrait of the evolution of a loner sustained only by a potent inner-life, where love and death are increasingly confused. As a lonely, silent teenager in 1966, award-winning novelist Kocan shot and injured Arthur Caldwell, the federal opposition leader of the day.

F 2004 373pp [B1880](#)

The Getting of Wisdom

Henry Handel Richardson

A semi-autobiographical account of Laura, a Victorian country girl whose quirky individuality creates awkwardness in the conformist atmosphere of a girls' private boarding school.

F 1910 240pp [B0131](#)

Ghost River

Tony Birch

WINNER
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

Ren and Sonny dedicate their free time to exploring the Yarra River and its secrets, stories and adventures. The Yarra winds itself through their lives as the boys grow, and they must eventually find the courage to face the threats to their river – but at what cost? An atmospheric and haunting novel from the bestselling author of *Shadowboxing* and *Blood*.

F 2015 305pp [B2230](#)

The Go Between

L.P. Hartley

A study of early adolescence, as an old man recalls his boyhood in a country house in the 1920s. His life has been shaped by involvement in the relationships and traumas of three adults. A profound novel about social stratification, adolescence and the sometimes destructive effects of love.

F **L** 1953 280pp [B0187](#)

The Hanging Garden

Patrick White

Critics have hailed this posthumously published novel as an unfinished masterpiece. It is World War Two, and a pair of children are sent to a house with a wild garden that overlooks Sydney Harbour. White tenderly explores the Sydney of his childhood, the nature of war, and the ceaseless human yearning for connection. This is an unexpected opportunity to re-connect with an iconic Australian novelist.

F 2012 240pp [B2161](#)

Hello, Goodbye

Emily Brewin

Set in 1968 during the time of the Vietnam War, sheltered 17-year-old May Callaghan's future is torn apart when she gets 'in trouble' with her high school boyfriend Sam, who has moved to Melbourne and is awaiting his conscription orders. Once she can no longer hide from small-town gossip and her conservative Catholic mother, May takes a train

to Melbourne and meets feminist Ruby and indigenous student Clancy who introduces her to the liberal anti-war movement that changes her life forever.

F 2017 344pp [B2271](#)

The Highest Tide

Jim Lynch

13-year-old Miles O'Malley is an avid beachcomber who discovers a rare giant squid washed up on the mudflats of the Washington state coast. Miles becomes an overnight sensation, attracting attention from scientists, spiritual healers, and media vultures. This charming coming of age story is funny and well-paced, and raises lots of material for discussion.

F 2005 246pp [B1924](#)

His Illegal Self

Peter Carey

He is the precocious son of radical student activists. Raised in isolated privilege and denied access to television and news, his timely rescue pitches him into a hippy commune in the jungle of tropical Queensland. Here he slowly confronts his life, learning that nothing is as it seems. Carey lends his narrative wizardry to a beautiful story of love between mother and son.

F 2008 288pp [B2020](#)

Hoi Polloi

Craig Sherborne

This boyhood memoir has a startling vividness. Its comedy and pathos derive partly from the remorseless candour with which Sherborne portrays his social-climbing parents and the sexual fumbblings of adolescent boys. His parents move to Sydney from a small New Zealand town, where they hope to join the 'hoi polloi', as his mother mistakenly calls the upper crust.

N 2005 197pp [B1908](#)

Honeybee

Craig Silvey

A heart-breaking but life-affirming novel which throws the reader headlong into a world of petty theft, extortion, botched bank jobs, daring dog rescues and one spectacular drag show. At its heart is Sam: a solitary, resilient young person battling to navigate the world as their true self.

F 2020 432pp [B2367](#)

How the Light Gets In

M.J. Hyland

SHORTLISTED
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

A bright 16-year-old cannot wait to escape from the poverty of her

family life in Sydney. Living as an exchange student with an American family seems like a dream come true, but things quickly begin to unravel. A masterly study of adolescent spirit, defiance and longing for acceptance, as well as the complexities of family dynamics.

F 2003 317pp **B1820**

Excellent book for discussion, the group were divided on opinions which led to a lively discussion and debate. Beautiful poise and sense of unease, some asked why, what's the point, others deeply moved by the character's experience.

Belconnen South

The Hundred Secret Senses

Amy Tan

SHORTLISTED
Orange Prize

Two half-sisters link the Chinese and American cultures when the life of five-year-old Olivia is taken over by her older sister's traditional Yin world of ghosts and stories. For thirty years she struggles to get away from them and live a 'normal', American life. But the marvellous story unfolds to surprise her, and us, into other ways of seeing life in both countries.

F 1995 345pp **B1468**

I

I for Isobel

Amy Witting

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

The small but unrelenting cruelties of Isobel's unloving parents make her life a misery, but her struggle for creative self-knowledge is sustained by glimpses of kinder adults and by the enchantment of words and writing. A shapely and vivid evocation of day to day Australian life.

F 1989 158pp **B1246**

This is a clever book and bought many positive and negative comments including, "I loved it. It was brave to write on this subject", "All the characters had problems", "I found it hard to deal with". A sad and strange book, with a very sad family life.

Sydney Women's Club 2 Tuesdays

J

Jasper Jones

Craig Silvey

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Summer, 1965. Charlie Bucktin, a bookish boy of thirteen, is startled by an unexpected visitor: Jasper Jones, an outcast in the regional mining town of Corrigan. Rebellious and solitary, Jasper represents

danger and intrigue, so when he begs for Charlie's help, Charlie nervously follows and witnesses Jasper's horrible discovery.

F 2009 368pp **B2061**

K

The Kite Runner

Khaled Hosseini

Amir and Hassan have an eventful childhood set against a backdrop of tumultuous Afghan history, from the fall of the monarchy and Soviet intervention, to the flight of refugees for America. When unforeseeable events take Amir back to Afghanistan in the rise of the Taliban regime, he must right old wrongs in this poignant, moving exploration of love and responsibility.

F 2003 324pp **B1860**

L

The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid

Bill Bryson

In 1950s Des Moines, Iowa, Bill Bryson is the thunderbolt kid. Via this superhero persona (with a handy death-ray for zapping morons) he vividly recalls the experiences of his childhood in baby-boomer America, and draws on a fascinating breadth of social history to bring alive an era of unprecedented affluence and downright weirdness.

N 2006 309pp **B1970**

Lilian's Story

Kate Grenville

The exuberant but painful story of a child born in Sydney in 1901, who bursts beyond constraining stereotypes to make herself as large and unique as her own sense of life. Lilian will stay with you long after you finish this moving, exceptional and unique novel. A must-read for any Grenville fan.

F **L** 1985 211pp **B0819**

M

Middlesex

Jeffrey Eugenides

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Because of a rare genetic deficiency, the narrator is a born intersex. The book covers a startling family history of Greek-American migrant experience and moves into an evocation of Callie/Cal's predicament: in this either/or world, what does it mean to discover that one is both and neither?

F 2002 529pp **B1792**

Everyone loved it. The book is complex but humorous. It was compassionate and rich in its characterisation and plot development. The book generated a wonderful discussion.

Hervey Bay

Milkman

Anna Burns

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

An utterly original novel that explores coming of age in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Burns' strange and ambiguous protagonist (named Middle Sister) is a brilliant narrator, and through her unique point of view, we are delivered a novel that is all too familiar, and at the same time, completely foreign. *Milkman's* captivating prose and portrayal of the stigma of standing out, the pressure for conformity, static gender roles and the divisions that exist in society will defy reading expectations and provoke a rich discussion.

F 2018 360pp **B2297**

Miss Gymkhana, R.G. Menzies and Me

Kathy Skelton

Skelton was born in 1946 and grew up in seaside Sorrento, Victoria. Subtitled 'Small Town Life in the Fifties', this book is a portfolio of snapshots and anecdotes evoking a world of red-hot 'commos', the young Queen, strict Catholics, the Petrovs, Billy Graham, the Olympic Games and the Saturday matinée. Sure to provide laughs of recognition and a wave of reminiscences.

N 1990 153pp **B1278**

Mister Pip

Lloyd Jones

After civil war trouble reaches Matilda's tropical island, one white man remains. When Mr Watts begins to read aloud from *Great Expectations*, Dickens' hero Pip comes alive for Matilda, but on an island at war, imagination can be a dangerously provocative thing. This is a moving, uplifting love letter to books and reading.

F 2006 220pp **B1959**

Modern Interiors

Andrea Goldsmith

After forty-one years of prosperous marriage, Philippa Finemore is widowed. Hoping to be not only a grandmother and babysitter, she makes major changes in her life – but the family circle responds with indignation and fury.

F 1991 242pp **B1414**

Mudeye

Bary Dowling

Dowling's memory is precise and detailed. His clear, sensuous writing brings to life the highly individual past

of the boy and his family; the provincial city of Ballarat – its lake, shops, schools, churches; the surrounding farms; the people. An emotional and powerful autobiography.

N 1995 266pp **B1465**

O

Old School

Tobias Wolff

SHORTLISTED
PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction

In an American boys' school in 1960 where a strong culture of literature and writing prevails, writers Robert Frost, Ayn Rand and Ernest Hemingway visit to judge a literary competition, the prize – a private audience with the writer. This exploration of adolescent identity, writing and the complexities which surround ambition, offers much to discuss.

F 2003 195pp **B1889**

One of the Wattle Birds

Jessica Anderson

In the days before her exams, Cecily is more concerned with questions about the recent death of her mother than with study. Her need to make sense of things provides the action in this funny and engaging study of the brio and independence of the young.

F 1994 192pp **B1419**

Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit

Jeanette Winterson

A young girl's world is forever changed when she falls in love with another girl. Winterson skilfully portrays the ensuing emotions and confrontations common to all human experience – but particularly acute in an evangelical household.

F 1985 171pp **B1312**

The Outcast

Sadie Jones

In 1957, 19-year-old Lewis travels home from prison in the south of England. His return echoes his father's return from war a decade earlier, before his mother died in a tragic accident. Her death strained the relationship between Lewis and his father, and as time blends Lewis' grief with anger, childhood friend Kit's attempts to help will release dark secrets.

F 2008 345pp **B2040**

Out Stealing Horses

Per Petterson

WINNER
Independent Foreign Fiction

15-year-old Trond witnesses the sudden breakdown of his friend, the first in a series of incidents in

the fateful summer of 1948 leading to the destruction of his family. This coming of age tale explores the relationship between father and son, and the impact of war. Winner of the International IMPAC Dublin Award.

F 2005 264pp **B1993**

Over the Top with Jim Hugh Lunn

Journalist Hugh Lunn was born in Brisbane in 1941. This engagingly down-to-earth book evokes his boyhood in the 1940s and 50s and is a breath of fresh air. Full of resonances for anyone who knew Australia in those years.

N **L** 1989 272pp **B1311**

P

Past the Shallows Favel Parrett

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

A deceptively simple story about two brothers growing up on the wild Tasmanian coast, and the tragedy that fractured their family beyond repair. The raw island landscape frames this story. Austere prose belies a book of great sensitivity and power. This debut novel is effortless and commanding, and the last third of it absolutely shattering. You will not forget Harry and Miles.

F 2011 254pp **B2127**

What a gem this book turned out to be. Good for discussion, thoroughly enjoyable. Easy to read and well-written. Parrett is clever in the subtle way she evolves the story. You get to know there is more there in the back story, and you can relate to the different characters – some you like, some you detest, some you feel sorry for. What comes through most though is the author's love for the sea and surfing. The descriptions made you feel you were there and could feel the life of the waves.

Glen Waverley Ralton Renegades

NEW

Pomegranate & Fig Zaheda Ghani

This lyrical and evocative story reveals the political entanglements and family dynamics that re heightened and shattered by conflict, taking us from the streets of Herat in Afghanistan in the 1970s, invaded by Soviet forces, to India in the 1980s, to the suburbs of Sydney.

F 2022 288pp **B2392**

NEW

The Promise Damon Galgut

WINNER
Booker Prize

In apartheid dominated South Africa, a Black woman is given the promise of her own land by a dying property owner. But after the funeral, that promise is ignored. As decades pass and the family assembles, can they ignore the repercussions of a broken promise?

F 2021 304pp **B2393**

Purple Hibiscus Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

15-year-old Kambili grows up in sheltered privilege in a Nigeria ravaged by political unrest. She lives in fear of her fanatically religious and tyrannical father, a charismatic Catholic patriarch. When Nigeria is shaken by a military coup, Kambili and her brother are sent to live with their aunt, which allows Kambili to blossom in a new life amid the turmoil of the old.

F 2004 307pp **B1933**

The Puzzles of Childhood Manning Clark

The author of the six-volume *History of Australia* undertakes the history of his own early years, from his infancy to his Melbourne Grammar days. His memories focus on his intensely religious parents whose existence together was riven by various conflicts. Moves between Sydney, Kempsey, Phillip Island and Belgrave.

N 1989 213pp **B1258**

R

Ride on Stranger Kylie Tennant

Written with a sly humour, this novel tells of the trials of the 'impossible' Shannon Hicks sent off to live with a doughty aunt at a tender age. The aunt is impossible too, so Shannon makes her own way in the world of the unskilled, conmen, eccentrics and losers, the world of Sydney in the 1930s.

F 1943 301pp **B0928**

The Road from Coorain Jill Ker Conway

This evocative, readable autobiography of the author's life to her mid-twenties conveys day-to-day details – the smells, sounds, weather, plants and people. Why did she leave Australia for a distinguished intellectual career, and how did her family and the drought-vulnerable plains of their sheep property in New South Wales shape her sensibility?

N 1989 238pp **B1289**

Romulus, My Father Raimond Gaita

WINNER
Victorian Premier's Award for Non-Fiction

From a life whose events were often historically horrific and personally tragic emerges an extraordinarily brave and dignified man. Deep gratitude infuses his son's frank, truthful biography. It allows us to see how wisdom, compassion and an ethical sense are developed in a growing child.

N 1998 208pp **B1554**

Roundabout at Bangalow Shirley Walker

This Australian memoir moves from a childhood in the lush rainforests of the Byron Bay hinterland to farming a sugarcane property in north Queensland; from the restrictive small town life of Grafton to an enjoyable time as a mature age student at university. Walker has a keen eye for her human and natural surroundings and her writing unfolds in a dryly amusing voice.

N 2001 232pp **B1805**

S

Saving Jessie Imogen Clark

Only names have been changed in this true story of a Canberra family who discover that their youngest child is addicted to heroin. Intelligent, talented and loved, Jessie did not fit the stereotype of the young person who turns to drugs to escape from pain or abuse. A candid, unsensational account of a family trying to learn how far it is possible to help.

N 1999 277pp **B1741**

Shadowboxing Tony Birch

A collection of ten linked stories about the life of a boy growing up in Melbourne's Fitzroy during the 1960s. Michael's world is one of simple pleasures, family life and love, punctuated by random acts of brutality. The reader follows as he matures into a sensitive adult who can forgive, but never quite forget, the past. A fascinating snapshot of working-class life in inner-city Australia.

F **S** 2006 178pp **B1912**

Sing Fox to Me Sarah Kanake

In 1986, 14-year-old Samson and his twin brother Jonah are sent to live with Clancy, the grandfather they've never met. As Samson, who has Down Syndrome, begins to understand the situation, both Jonah and Clancy fall into a wild obsession to find the Tasmanian tiger, a mystery linked to Clancy's long-missing daughter.

F 2016 264pp **B2248**

Skylarking Kate Mildenhall

Based on true events, the novel revolves around the friendship between Kate and Harriet, two daughters of lighthouse keepers in an isolated coastal town of late 19th century Australia. As the pair approach womanhood, the arrival of fisherman McPhail finds Kate torn by jealousy for McPhail's attention toward Harriet. Then, one moment at McPhail's hut, Kate's life is forever changed. A heart-breaking novel that explores the complexity of adolescent friendships and the price we pay for our mistakes.

F 2016 288pp **B2249**

The Smallest Color Bill Roorchach

In this fast-paced, funny, dark first novel, Roorchach builds an engaging portrait of the turbulent 60s in the USA: free love and drug experiments, the naïve innocence of some and the restless violence of others. Gradually, the entwining tales join – strands of the present and past, the man of 45 and the boy of 15, the 1960s and the 1990s.

F 2001 325pp **B1810**


Solid Bluestone Foundations

Former Associate Professor of History at the University of Melbourne, Kathleen Fitzpatrick evokes her South Melbourne girlhood, with its tensions between Protestant grandfather and Irish Catholic grandmother, trade and public service, her schooling and early university experiences. Full of Australian people and places.

N 1983 210pp **B1290**

Spies

Michael Frayn

 **WINNER**
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Set in Britain during World War II, *Spies* takes us into a world under threat, but a threat situated in the imaginings of two small boys living out the Blitz in a middle-class suburb. Superbly written, this novel combines suspense, anguish, humour and surprising twists.

F 2002 213pp **B1691**

T

Tell Me I'm Here

Anne Deveson

When her son Jonathan was 17, Deveson realised he had schizophrenia. Here she traces seven years of his illness, showing the fear and anguish which this condition produces in patients and in those close to them. An important book – informative, warm, humane, and deeply moving.

N 1991 269pp **B1342**

There Was Still Love

Favel Parrett

 **WINNER**
Indie Book Awards

 **SHORTLISTED**
Stella Prize

Prague, 1938. On the brink of war, Eva's actions will change the course of her life. Forty-two years later and halfway across the world, children and families try to find each other. A tale of two women binding families together across time and distance, and how love keeps us connected.

F 2019 224pp **B2331**

The Tin Moon

Stephen Lacey

'We had the rocket up on three house bricks and were ready to light the petrol,' begins this nerve-fraying account of young boys' doings in a small town outside Sydney. From a 10-year-old's viewpoint, we take in kaleidoscopic impressions of school, family, new words and a world which offers endless scope for getting into everything – including trouble. A cliff-hanging novel in which hilarity blends into darker comedy.

F 2002 300pp **B1693**

Tirra Lirra by the River

Jessica Anderson

 **WINNER**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Nora Porteous returns as an old lady to the Queensland town of her girlhood. With an ironic eye, she reviews her experiences there and tries to place them amongst the various strands of her life. A brilliant novel, free from illusion.

F 1978 141pp **B0120**

Too Close to the Falls

Catherine Gildiner

Growing up in respectable 1950s Lewiston, Catherine Gildiner had a highly unusual childhood. Probably today's hyperactive child, Cathy was set to work in the family pharmacy at age four under a doctor's orders. Prescription delivery rounds provided a fund of anecdote and escapade that Gildiner uses to brilliant effect in this captivating memoir.

N 1999 350pp **B1798**

Tuvalu

Andrew O'Connor

Outsider Noah exchanges his directionless life in Melbourne for a dead-end teaching job in Tokyo. His absent girlfriend and inability to speak Japanese are perfect excuses for isolation until the gorgeous, manipulative Mami Kaketa crashes into his life. This intriguingly offbeat debut explores love, lust, honesty and commitment. Perceptive and droll, O'Connor captures the darker side of the expatriate experience.

F 2006 347pp **B1957**

U

Uncle Tungsten

Oliver Sacks

Sacks takes a look at himself, unearthing the source of his scientific curiosity in a sometimes troubled childhood in wartime Britain. He was born into a distinguished, scientifically oriented London family, and developed a fascination with metals, gases, chemistry and the discoveries of pioneer chemists. An unusual, warm and witty book.

N 2001 337pp **B1661**

Under My Skin

Doris Lessing

An outstanding 20th-century autobiography, this first volume takes Lessing from her African childhood to London in 1949. Her freedom in the African landscape, her turbulent relationship with her parents, her intense involvements with people, politics, and everything around her are conveyed with keen intelligence. Small print.

N 1994 419pp **B1565**

Unpolished Gem

Alice Pung

Set in Melbourne's western suburbs, this documents the arrival of Pung's Cambodian Chinese family to Australia in the 1970s. Populating her pages with eccentric characters, she captures the essence of the Asian immigrant experience. This meditation on cultural difference is also a coming-of-age story of a talented woman struggling to balance her parents' dreams with her own.

N 2006 282pp **B1958**

V

The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam

Lauren Liebenberg

In Rhodesia in the late 1970s, Nyree and Cia's father is conscripted to fight against the black freedom fighters. The sisters inhabit an innocent world, roaming their run-down colonial farm, until their damaged, orphaned cousin Ronin arrives. A beautiful, sad story about childhood in a time of civil war.

F 2008 245pp **B2015**

W

Warlight

Michael Ondaatje


 **LOONGLISTED**
Man Booker International Prize

From the bestselling author of *The English Patient* comes a gripping historical narrative that questions what remains after war. In 1945 siblings Nathaniel and Rachel have been abandoned by their parents, and left in the care of a man they suspect might be a criminal. They are drawn into his circle of friends who seem to want to protect and educate them. Twelve years later, Nathaniel reflects on this experience, and how this time has shaped his life.

F 2018 304pp **B2295**

What Was Lost

Catherine O'Flynn

 **WINNER**
Costa Book Award

Ten-year-old junior detective Kate follows 'suspects' at a shopping centre and befriends a man called Adrian. But when she disappears, Adrian falls under suspicion. Years later, Adrian's sister Lisa and security guard Kurt glimpse a little girl on the centre's security cameras. Could it be Kate?

F 2007 242pp **B1996**

When the Night Comes

Favel Parrett

Isla and her brother see the world in grey until Bo enters their lives. A cook on a Danish ship bound for Antarctica, Bo lodges with them while his ship is in port, expanding Isla's world with his stories. This is an enchanting tale about the magic of the ocean, the mysteries of the universe, and of life and death, darkness and light.

F 2014 256pp **B2225**

When We Were Orphans

Kazuo Ishiguro

A celebrated detective is driven to solve the mystery of the disappearance of his parents when he was a child. The novel becomes a disturbing, challenging exploration of the relationship between the colonial British, China, and Japan, and of the way simplistic ideas of oneself and the world might distort reality. Set in England and Shanghai in the early and mid-20th century, this is an ironic, complex and deeply moving tragic comedy.

F 2000 368pp **B1652**

Wildlife

Richard Ford

In the summer of 1960, the town of Great Falls, Montana, is ringed by fires. When young Joe's father loses his job and goes off firefighting, his mother meets Warren Mitchell. In spare, understated prose Ford evokes a young male making his way in a world of adult upheaval which he only partly comprehends. This is a moving, memorable read.

F 1990 162pp **B1293**

Y

The Yield

Tara June Winch

 **WINNER**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

 **WINNER**
Prime Minister's Literary Award

 **SHORTLISTED**
Stella Prize

August Gondiwindi returns home after her grandfather's death. She has been living on the other side of the world for a decade. But the home she left is not the same, and she is confronted by the news that a mining company is trying to repossess their family home. An exploration of language and land, connection to home and Indigenous rights, Winch's novel of a culture dispossessed is a marvel.

F 2019 352pp **B2336**

Exceptional Women

These titles celebrate strong women in fiction, biography and other nonfiction, from intrepid and wise female detectives to Helen Garner's razor-sharp essays.



A

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle

Barbara Kingsolver

When bestselling author Barbara Kingsolver and her family move from suburban Arizona to rural Appalachia, they take on a new challenge: to spend a year eating locally produced food. Part memoir, part journalistic investigation, and complete with original recipes, this book makes a passionate case for putting the kitchen back at the centre of family life, and diversified farms at the centre of our diet. Small print.

N 2007 352pp **B2006**

Are You Somebody?

Nuala O'Faolain

Roddy Doyle said of this remarkable memoir: 'Writing about herself, Nuala O'Faolain has also written about Ireland. It is a cruel, wounded place – and this book has become an important part of the cure'. This extended 1998 edition, subtitled *The Life and Times of Nuala O'Faolain* also includes almost 200 pages of her lively and perceptive journalism.

N 1996 434pp **B1591**

B

The Bass Rock

Evie Wyld



A tale of three women on the Scottish coast, spanning different eras – the eighteenth century, the aftermath of World War Two and the present day, each subject to toxic masculinity and isolation but finding power and support from other women.

F 2020 368pp **B2338**

Enjoyed
Follow the Rabbit
Proof Fence?

Try *The Stolen Children*
by Carmel Bird
B1589

Black and Blue

Veronica Gorrie



With a great gift for storytelling and a wicked sense of humour, Veronica Gorrie explores the impact of racism on her family and her life, the impact of intergenerational trauma resulting from cultural dispossession, and the inevitable difficulties of making her way as an Aboriginal woman in the white-and-male-dominated workplace of the police force.

F 2021 241pp **B2360**

The Bloody Chamber

Angela Carter

Carter's subversive re-telling of familiar fairy tales restores their power to surprise and even to shock. Female or feminist? This sensual, daring and varied collection can provoke strong reaction and discussion. Small print.

F 1979 126pp **B1318**

C

The Chase

Ida Mann

To be female, born in England in 1893, and to leave school at 16 without university entrance qualifications: these seem unlikely beginnings for Oxford's first woman professor. This is a rare account of a woman whose passion for medical work is central to her dauntless and long life which included travelling, a passionate marriage in her fifties and work documenting and treating trachoma in Indigenous Australians.

N 1986 217pp **B1197**

Chocolat

Joanne Harris



'We came on the wind of the carnival.' So begins this magical tale of Vianne, her daughter Anouk, and a chocolate boutique nestled in the tiny French village of Lansquenet – seductive, sensual and just a little mischievous. It's the Church versus chocolate when the locals are tempted, the priest outraged. Try me ... test me ... taste me ... Who can resist?

F 1999 394pp **B1633**

The Countess from

Kirribilli

Joyce Morgan

Elizabeth von Armin may have been born on the shores of Sydney Harbour but it was in Victorian London that she discovered society and society discovered her. She made her Court debut before Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace, was pursued by a Prussian count, and married into European aristocracy.

N 2021 316pp **B2362**

The Courtesan's Revenge

Frances Wilson

Born in 1786, Harriette Wilson became one of the celebrated courtesans of Regency London. She entranced men with her wit and character as much as her beauty. Her conquests included royalty, at least three Prime Ministers and the Lord Chancellor. When her rich former lovers refused to pay her an annuity Harriette exacted her own revenge on the aristocracy, eliciting the Duke of Wellington's famous retort: 'publish and be damned'. Small print.

N 2003 359pp **B1815**

D

Death in the Ladies'

Goddess Club

Julian Leatherdale

Kings Cross, 1932. Aspiring crime writer Joan Linderman is living the bohemian life. One night she is thrown into a real crime when one of her neighbours is murdered. Determined to find the culprit, Joan's secret investigation leads her into the lives of Sydney's richest and its seedy underbelly. A riveting mystery with plenty of colour and style.

F 2020 400pp **B2315**

Desert Flower

Waris Dirie & Catherine Miller

Waris Dirie tells her life story in this co-authored book. A Somali desert child, she suffered her people's customary genital rituals, but at age 12 escaped from an arranged marriage. After years of domestic service, Waris is now an international model and Special Ambassador with the United Nations. Direct and without introspective profundity, this is genuinely 'the extraordinary journey of a desert nomad'.

N 1998 369pp **B1744**

The Diaries of

Jane Somers

Doris Lessing

The editor of a successful women's magazine, Jane Somers is elegant, competent, self-assured and self-contained until her attention is claimed by a tiny, fierce old woman who lives nearby, ill and in poverty. A difficult alliance develops between the two.

F 1984 510pp **B1270**

Divine Secrets of the

Ya Ya Sisterhood

Rebecca Wells



When an utterly original mother-daughter team get into a savage fight over a *New York Times* article that refers to the mother as a 'tap dancing child abuser,' the fallout is felt from Louisiana to New York to Seattle. But Vivi's intrepid gang of life-long girlfriends, the Ya Yas, unforgettable Southern belles, sashay in and conspire to bring everyone back together.

F 1996 356pp **B1682**

Drawn from Life

Stella Bowen

During her art school years in England, Stella Bowen met avant-garde artists of her day and, eventually, the writer Ford Madox Ford. The two lived together for ten years, first in Sussex where their daughter was born, and later in France. Witness the literary and artistic world of Paris in the 1920s and 1930s, the difficulties of doing work of your own while playing handmaid to the genius of another, the struggle to bring up a daughter and the break-up after Ford's affair with Jean Rhys.

N 1941 303pp **B1811**

E

Edna Walling and Her Gardens

Peter Watts

Peter Watts describes the life, career, style and influence of Edna Walling, a writer as well as a gardener. Generations of Australians have been able to absorb the Walling philosophy on plant groupings, colour, pathways, rockwork, and the integration of house and garden.

N 1991 136pp **B1988**

Elizabeth David

Lisa Chaney

England was still in the grips of post-war food rationing when Elizabeth David's first books appeared, *French Country Cooking* and *A Book of Mediterranean Food*. With her evocations of vibrant colours and flavours, she captured the imagination of a generation of cooks. Daughter of a Conservative MP she was courageous and independent, a complex character whom one reviewer called 'an elegant, witty, charming minor monster'.

N 1998 482pp **B1734**

Excellent Women

Barbara Pym

'... practically anything may be the business of an unattached woman with no troubles of her own, who takes a kindly interest in those of her friends.' Set in the shabby-genteel world of flats, academic societies and tea rooms of London after World War II, with an Austen-like ear for dialogue.

F 1952 238pp **B0776**

The Eye of the Reindeer

Eva Weaver

In 1913 Ritva is only sixteen when she is shipped off to Seili, an asylum for troubled women on an island in southern Finland. Her only hope comes in the form of Martta, a headstrong indigenous Sami woman with whom she embarks on a bold escape to the North, a mythical place of reindeer where freedom is possible. The novel explores love, family and betrayal and an exploration of the indigenous Sami people of Scandinavia.

F 2016 384pp **B2257**

F

A Fence Around the Cuckoo

Ruth Park

WINNER
The Age Nonfiction Book of the Year

A lively account of Ruth Park's early years in New Zealand. We see the dense bush of that country's isolated regions, the Maori people whose lives intersected with hers, the dramas within a battling Irish Catholic family, and the intense poverty during the Depression years.

N **L** 1992 294pp **B1372**

First Lady

Kay Cottee

Following her triumphant return after 189 days at sea, Kay Cottee was named 1988 Australian of the Year. Here is her detailed account of the voyage – its highs and lows,

the extremes she endured, and the dangers presented by icebergs, whales, rocks and huge seas.

N 1989 226pp **B1373**

Fishing in the Styx

Ruth Park

This second volume of Ruth Park's popular autobiography is set in Australia. Her warm, frank record reveals an admirably productive life – as writer of 'everything', wife of D'Arcy Niland, mother of five, and, above all, a getter of wisdom in work, trouble, loss and joy.

N **L** 1994 302pp **B1406**

Follow the Rabbit

Proof Fence

Doris Pilkington & Nugi Garimara

Nugi Garimara tells the story of three young girls who in 1931 escaped from the Moore River Native Settlement north of Perth intending to walk home to the northern desert. We see the realities of social policy at that time, but the focus is on an extraordinary effort of willpower, knowledge, strategy and stamina.

N 1996 133pp **B1756**

Friends, Lovers, Chocolate

Alexander McCall Smith

In this second novel in the Sunday Philosophy Club series, Isabel Dalhousie is an Edinburgh philosopher whose niece Cat has decided to take a holiday. Isabel agrees to help out at her delicatessen. One of the customers has recently had a heart transplant and is being haunted by memories he feels are not his own. Isabel soon finds herself following another risky investigation.

F 2005 297pp **B2051**

From Strength to Strength

Sara Henderson

Marriage to a glamorous American soon becomes life in a tin shack, in a sea of red dust on a remote Northern Australian cattle station. On Charlie's death, Sara discovers he has left her with massive debt and a failing property which she manages to rebuild.

N **L** 1992 337pp **B1376**

From the Beast to the Blonde

Marina Warner

Warner's book explores the origin of fairy tales in women's culture, using symbolic means such as magic castles, impossible tasks, beasts and blondes to address urgent life issues. A difficult, stimulating and sumptuously illustrated book.

N 1994 458pp **B1444**

The Full Cupboard of Life

Alexander McCall Smith

The fifth book in the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series. Mma Ramotse has been approached by a wealthy lady to investigate several suitors. Are these men just interested in her money? Alexander McCall Smith's 'novels are ... extremely funny: I find it impossible to think about them without smiling' – *Mail on Sunday (UK)*.

F 2003 212pp **B2049**

G

The Geography of Friendship

Sally Piper

SHORTLISTED
ABIA Literary Fiction Book of the Year

Twenty-year-old friends Samantha, Nicole and Lisa set off through the bush, but none of them realise what impact this adventure will have on them or the danger they will face. Decades later, they decide to revisit this hike to find what they have lost. A story of the value of friendship and how time changes us. [Contains language and scenes that some readers may find confronting.]

F 2018 264pp **B2294**

Getting Equal

Marilyn Lake

This 'History of Australian Feminism' is an eye opener, full of lively, sharp and generous portraits of significant (often forgotten) women and telling (often amusing) anecdotes. Can a mother be an independent woman? Do you want to be equal? Hugely readable and discussable.

N 1999 316pp **B1759**

The Girls

Robin Levett

Levett draws on an amazing memory and a sprightly, comic, forceful disposition to restore her part of the Australia of the 1920s and 30s and her war service in the 40s. You'll find it all here: Sorrento, South Yarra, the Hermitage, Toorak College, the National Gallery School, the WRANS and WAS(B), post-war England; the adventurous freedoms and startling constraints of her girlhood.

N 1997 264pp **B1533**

Girl, Woman, Other

Bernardine Evaristo

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

Grace, an orphan. Winsome, a young bride. Morgan, who used to be Megan. Twelve different characters and a portrayal of

contemporary Britain like no other, this outstanding and complex novel will get you talking. Some readers may find certain scenes confronting.

F 2019 464pp **B2319**

Gravity Well

Melanie Joosten

A beautifully constructed novel told from the points of view of two very different women: Lotte, an ambitious and free-spirited astronomer returning home after a devastating diagnosis, and her former best friend Eve, whose passion for sound is matched by her entry into motherhood. Joosten intelligently employs the use of gravity and solar systems to depict the complexity of relationships, collision of timelines, and the drifting apart and coming together of family: both the family that we are born to and the ones we choose.

F 2017 288pp **B2272**

H

Hanna's Daughters

Marianne Fredriksson

From 1871 three generations of a Swedish family live through marked social change: from primitive rural life to industrialised society to the information age. A complex chronicle of women's lives, unsentimental about the burdens of family history, gender and character.

F 1994 299pp **B1617**

Hidden Lives

Margaret Forster

Which lives are significant, and why? Forster's 'family memoir' traces three generations of women: her grandmother, her mother and herself – of working-class background, born and raised in Carlisle, an industrial town in North England, each experiencing radically different circumstances and opportunities. 'Let no one say that nothing has changed, that women have it as bad as ever,' Forster concludes.

N 1995 309pp **B1510**

The House of the Spirits

Isabel Allende

This is the beautiful, touching story of the Trueba family, following their lives through the post-colonial social and political upheavals in Chile in the Latin American magic realism style. Follow volatile patriarch Esteban, his wife Clara, their daughter Blanca and their granddaughter Alba in this epic novel of love, magic and fate.

F 1985 491pp **B1176**

I Don't Know How She Does It

Allison Pearson

A young mother juggles time for her family while struggling with the 'old boys' network'. Will she cope? Often hilarious, sometimes sad, this novel portrays working motherhood in the 21st century.

F 2002 357pp **B1785**

In the Company of Cheerful Ladies

Alexander McCall Smith

In this sixth book in the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series, Precious Ramotswa is now married to Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni, but life is still full of mishaps, mysteries and personality clashes.

F 2004 264pp **B2050**

The Invisible Woman

Claire Tomalin

This biography opens up the world of Ellen 'Nelly' Lawless Ternan, an actress who at age eighteen met older, married Charles Dickens. Tomalin makes a strong case for their parenting of illegitimate children. She follows Nelly's life through the decades after Dickens' death.

N 1990 333pp **B1512**

Jane Austen: A Life

Claire Tomalin

The heroines in Austen's six novels inhabit a world of stability and continuity, yet Tomalin sees Jane Austen as a woman living on the margins of a competitive, money-oriented world, part of a lively, chaotic family and a more volatile character than previously thought.

N 1997 358pp **B1583**

For an Austen fan, it was a fascinating read. We did enjoy talking about aspects of life and customs in Austen's time and role of women, and those who had visited the city of Bath or visited Jane Austen sights enjoyed sharing their travel stories.
Brighton East 4

Jane Eyre

Charlotte Brontë

Jane moves from a harsh, orphaned childhood to Thornfield Hall, where she falls in love with Mr Rochester, and is menaced by the madwoman in the attic. Her quest for independence, in romantic circumstances, has exceptional emotional power.

F 1847 560pp **B0024**

Joan Makes History

Kate Grenville

The several Joans whose stories animate this book put women into

the action of the last two centuries of Australian history. Vivacious, diversified vignettes are set into the narrative of Joan and Duncan, who also appear in Lillian's Story.

F 1988 285pp **B1202**

The Kalahari Typing School for Men

Alexander McCall Smith

The Kalahari Typing School for Men is the fourth volume of the bestselling No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series. Precious Ramotswa has competition from a new EX CID, EX NY, EX cellent detective agency and Mma Makutsi, who believes in 'enterprise with compassion', runs evening classes for men.

F 2002 210pp **B2009**

L

NEW

Lessons in Chemistry

Bonnie Garmus

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing. But it's the early 1960 and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute take a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one, a brilliant Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with – all things – her mind. True chemistry results.

F 2023 400pp **B2391**

The Little Coffee Shop of Kabul

Deborah Rodriguez

Sunny, a café proprietor, needs a plan to keep her customers safe; Halajan, her 60-year-old landlady, is willing to risk all for love; young, pregnant Yazmina needs protection; Isabel is a journalist with a story of her own; Candace, a wealthy American, follows her Afghan lover to Kabul. This novel captures the fears and longings of each woman making a life under the watchful eyes of the Taliban.

F 2011 304pp **B2124**

A Long Way from No Go

Tjanara Goreng Goreng

She began life without the advantages of her non-Indigenous peers, yet she showed great courage and talent. Facing many obstacles, including sexual and racial abuse, Tjanara proved herself remarkably resilient. This memoir

highlights the mistreatment and systemic barriers faced by aboriginal women in education, the courts and the public sector, in a life story of bravery at overcoming barriers.

N 2020 304pp **B2346**

Madeleine

Helen Trinca

WINNER
Prime Minister's Literary Award

Late blossoming author Madeleine St John (*The Women in Black*) was brilliant and troubled. This biography follows her childhood in Sydney to years in London council flats, culminating with the publication of four acclaimed novels in the last decade of her life.

N 2013 272pp **B2194**

Malinche's Conquest

Anna Lanyon

The gifted young woman who translated for Cortés in his 16th-century conquest of Mexico is remembered by the Mexican elite as a traitor but is celebrated in popular legend. Lanyon uncovers her 'survival amid catastrophe' to see the luminous traces of a woman who was among the founders of modern Mexico.

N 1999 233pp **B1739**

Miss Austen

Gill Hornby

Twenty-three years after the death of Jane Austen, her sister Cassandra visits the Fowle household in Kintbury, where she unearths a collection of family letters, the contents of which she is determined to hide. In the correspondence she delves into secrets of Jane's past, and her own. A beautiful imagining of the life of the Austen sisters, based on the real-life mystery of Jane's lost letters.

F 2020 352pp **B2325**

A Month of Sundays

Liz Byrski

Adele, Judy, Ross and Simone know each other through an online book club. When Adele decides to invite the group to the Blue Mountains, they finally meet in person. The books they bring reveal more about themselves and force them to face their fears. A love letter to books and readers

F 2018 352pp **B2299**

Morality for Beautiful Girls

Alexander McCall Smith

In the third in the bestselling No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, Precious Ramotswa has financial worries, puzzling cases to solve and the ethical dilemma of a beauty pageant.

F 2001 246pp **B1987**

Mrs Cook

Marele Day

Before James Cook departed on his final voyage, he had been at home with his wife Elizabeth for only four of their fourteen years of marriage. She raised their six children, only to outlive them. This 'nonfiction novel' imaginatively reconstructs the domestic life of the sea captain's wife.

F 2002 357pp **B1775**

We had a spirited discussion of what was real and what was imagined in the book. Some of the group members were irritated and doubted the intimate scenes in the book. The novel provided a good social history of the time and how people lived. Marele Day shows how well she has researched Mrs Cook and Captain Cook.

Mont Albert XQS

N

The Natural Way of Things

Charlotte Wood

WINNER
Stella Prize

Two women wake to find themselves held captive in the desert with a group of eight others, and slowly realise they all have something in common: in each of their pasts is a sexual scandal with a powerful man. But who is punishing them, and what for? This is a stark exploration of contemporary misogyny and corporate control – and the beauty (and courage) of sisterly love.

F 2015 320pp **B2237**

Nine Parts of Desire

Geraldine Brooks

Working in the Middle East, Brooks learned a lot about what life is like for Islamic women. Focusing on individuals in different countries and in various roles, professional and domestic, she traces the origins of today's practices, showing that oppression of women is inconsistent with Islam in its purest form. Informative, readable, discussable.

N 1995 255pp **B1543**

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency

Alexander McCall Smith

Expansive middle-aged female detective Precious Ramotswa brings her intelligence and intuition to bear on problems and mysteries in her small town in Botswana. Far removed from the darkness and blood of many crime novels, this is a book full of humour, good heart and gently ironic observation.

F 1998 235pp **B1794**

No Place for a Nervous Lady

Lucy Frost

Frost edits the diaries of 19th-century women pioneers in Australia's outback. Compelling and absorbing reading from a fascinating time in our history, which will lead to much discussion.

N S 1984 279pp **B0018**

One Life

Kate Grenville

One of our favourite storytellers is back with this moving tribute to her mother, Nance, a woman who was in many ways revolutionary. Grenville's voice punctuates her warm and heartfelt account which is partly crafted from Nance's own diaries. This is a story about Australian consciousness, and how the patterns of the past can be seen in the present.

N 2015 272pp **B2216**

Out of the Silence

Wendy James

At the turn of the last century, three women's lives are on a collision course: Vida, the fiery Melbourne suffragist; Elizabeth, far from home and grieving for her lost love; and the courageous young country girl, Maggie. Their experiences revolve around issues that still touch us deeply today: single motherhood, post-natal depression, and the role of women in public life.

F 2005 351pp **B1932**

Over My Tracks

Evelyn Crawford & Chris Walsh

65-year-old Evelyn Crawford, born into the Baarkanji tribal group, goes back over her tracks to tell us her eye-opening life story. Crawford lived in the red sand-hills back of Bourke: her years of hard work droving and mustering, the varying contacts she made with white Australians, and the ups and downs of coping with her fourteen children. Involvement in her youngest son's schooling takes her into the training of Aboriginal teachers.

N 1993 319pp **B1385**

There was a great deal to be learnt from that period, some of which we didn't know, and we felt it was a great companion piece to Jacksons Track which we read last year.

Evelyn's recollections of a long life of hard work, details of Aboriginal family life in the bush, on station and in missions is definitely a valuable historical record, and for us, a most enjoyable read.

Blackburn 5

Paradise

Toni Morrison

The all-black town of Ruby was founded by ex-slaves, determined to pass on the unchanging pure faith which had enabled them to survive in the antagonistic American South. Morrison's explosively imagined novel focuses on the lives of the women in and outside this fictitious town, confronting the difficult issues of black male violence.

F 1999 318pp **B1700**

The Prime of Miss

Jean Brodie

Muriel Spark

Miss Brodie is a schoolteacher; in Edinburgh of the 1930s, and in her prime, she decides to inculcate 'progressive' ideas about politics, sex and art into her pupils, much to the consternation of her conservative school.

F 1961 128pp **B0925**

Quicksands

Sybil Bedford

From WWI Germany to 21st century England via Europe and America, Bedford evokes a world of writers and diplomats, the dispossessed and the powerful. An elegant mosaic of lovers and tragedy, this is a spellbinding reflection on the intersection between history and personal experience.

N 2005 369pp **B1955**

Rain Birds

Harriet McKnight

A powerful and lyrical novel set in East Gippsland, Victoria, where the impact of climate change is destroying the habitat of the endangered black cockatoos. The storyline centres on recent retiree Pina and conservation biologist Arianna as they struggle to hold their lives together. Pina's once-loving husband is turning aggressive in the grips of early-onset Alzheimer's and Arianna deals with double standards and incessant misogyny from co-workers who question a woman's place in the field.

F 2017 288pp **B2290**

Rebecca West

Victoria Glendinning

West lived from 1892 to 1983 and in her long life was both an agent and a victim of change. She marched with the suffragettes, and had a ten year liaison with H.G. Wells. An accomplished and affectionate portrayal of a complex woman.

N 1987 288pp **B1578**

Reckoning: A Memoir

Magda Szubanski

WINNER
NSW Premier's Literary Awards

WINNER
ABIA Book of the Year

Magda Szubanski, one of Australia's most beloved comedic performers, recounts her life from growing up in the suburb of Croydon, her career as an actor, to the quest to find out the truth about her father, a Polish assassin during World War II. This multi-award winning memoir is a serious exploration on finding courage, acceptance, and a daughter's love for her father.

N 2016 384pp **B2266**

We were touched by the way Magda explored the deep and dark background of her family as she sought to deal with her gender and her ongoing issues with weight. In uncovering elements of her family history, she found a deep source of understanding and compassion.
Kangaroo Ground: Witty Winners

Return to the Little Coffee Shop of Kabul

Deborah Rodriguez

In this much-anticipated sequel, six women remain linked by their experiences in a café in Kabul. Now on opposite sides of the world, each will deal with the past in different ways as she faces the future. This delightful and poignant novel explores the legacy of war, the trouble with culture clash, and the importance of friendship.

F 2016 400pp **B2238**

A Room Made of Leaves

Kate Grenville

In this imaginative fictional memoir of Elizabeth Macarthur, wife of wool entrepreneur John Macarthur, we meet a passionate and highly capable woman in an unhappy marriage. This is brilliant and inventive historical fiction that brings the distant past alive.

F 2020 352pp **B2351**

The Rooms in My Mother's House

Olga Lorenzo

Driven from Cuba after the revolution, Dolores, Consuelo and Ana settle in an old farmhouse in Miami, where they battle with each other and the ghosts that remain in their hearts. The spirit world blends fabulously with their material one in this vibrant novel. Contains themes that may disturb.

F 1996 405pp **B1582**

A Scandalous Life

Mary S. Lovell

The biography of an Englishwoman who at seventeen married an older aristocrat who kept his mistress. Lady Jane Digby responded to this indignity with unusual spirit and a highly publicised divorce. The Austrian prince with whom she eloped was succeeded by a baron, a count, and a brigand, before she married a Bedouin sheikh twenty years her junior, and lived among the Syrian desert tribes.

N 1995 365pp **B1552**

The Secret Life of Bees

Sue Monk Kidd

In the Deep South of the 1960s, Lily lives with her strict father and servant Rosaleen. When racial tensions explode, Lily comes to Rosaleen's aid and the two run away together, finding sanctuary with three beekeeping sisters. A heart-warming and life-affirming tale.

F 2001 374pp **B2005**

The Stone Diaries

Carol Shields

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Daisy is born on a kitchen floor in 1905 in Canada, and the ordinariness of her life is made remarkable in this original and enjoyable novel. The unforgettable first chapter opens the way to further surprises and delights.

F 1993 361pp **B1460**

Stravinsky's Lunch

Drusilla Modjeska

WINNER
The Age Nonfiction Book of the Year

Stella Bowen and Grace Cossington Smith were born in the 1890s. One left Australia before World War I and remained in Europe; the other lived for decades on the outskirts of Sydney. Their lives and work are the focus of this moving meditation on the friction between creative and domestic life.

N 1999 364pp **B1623**

The Summer Without Men

Siri Hustvedt

Poet Mia Fredrickson has a severe breakdown when her husband leaves her. Returning to the prairie town of her childhood, she rents a house just down the road from her mother's retirement home and spends a summer in the company of some extraordinary women.

F 2011 224pp **B2136**

The Sunday Philosophy Club

Alexander McCall Smith

Amateur sleuth Isabel Dalhousie hosts the Sunday Philosophy Club and uses her philosophy training to solve murder and mayhem in Edinburgh. Warm-hearted with gentle humour, it is 'the literary equivalent of herbal tea and a cosy fire' – *The New York Times*.

F 2004 281pp **B1979**

Tears of the Giraffe

Alexander McCall Smith

This second in the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series starts with the engagement of Mma Ramotswe and Mr J.L.B. They find themselves with unexpected additions to their family. Mma Ramotswe and her secretary must also deal with questions of right and wrong in their Botswanan detective agency business.

F 2000 217pp **B1847**

The Tenth Muse

Catherine Chung

Katherine grows up in 1950s America knowing she is different, the child of an American father and a Chinese mother. Against all odds, she becomes a mathematician. While longing to conquer an impossible mathematical problem, she also strives to find secrets of her past concealed in Germany during World War II. A story of identity, ambition and belonging.

F 2019 304pp **B2329**

The Trauma Cleaner

Sarah Krasnostein

Sandra Pankhurst has been a trauma cleaner for twenty years, but before her life of cleaning up crime scenes and 'caves of filth', Sandra was many other things: husband, father, drag queen, sex worker, businesswomen and trophy wife. This touching memoir explores more than just cleaning up death and decay, but portrays an inspiring woman overcoming a personal history of trauma and works to bring care and dignity into the lives of the living and the dead.

N 2017 261pp **B2281**

True North

Brenda Niall

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

This fascinating biography of sisters Mary and Elizabeth Durack looks beyond the legacy of Mary's classic book *Kings in Grass Castles* to examine the dynamics of the Durack pastoralist dynasty and the personal lives of two creative, but very different, women. In particular, it focuses on their strong, lifelong ties to the Kimberley region and its people.

N 2012 275pp **B2147**

True Pleasures

Lucinda Holdforth

Ready for a change in direction, Holdforth abandoned a career in politics and diplomacy for a time in Paris, reading deeply about the lives of French women she had long admired and exploring the Paris locales with which they were linked. She reflects on the lives of women such as Marie Antoinette, Germaine de Staël, Coco Chanel, and writers such as Nancy Mitford, Edith Wharton, Gertrude Stein and Colette. Intelligence and lightness of touch makes her book a pleasure to read.

N 2004 227pp **B1940**

True Stories

Helen Garner

This evocative collection is drawn from a quarter of a century of Garner's nonfiction writing. Topics range from the (1970s) four-letter words sex lesson in a secondary school – she was sacked – to her accounts of 1980s marriages at the Mint in Melbourne and of autopsies at the morgue in Penrith (1995). A treasure chest.

N S 1996 242pp **B1501**

Everyone in our group enjoyed this book thoroughly. Beautifully written, non-judgemental, questioning mind revealed much to be pondered over and discussed. Members of the group also related to the descriptions of place, as well as the controversies that resulted from some of her books.
Mallacoota

Enjoyed Wicked but Virtuous?

Try Drawn from Life by Stella Bowen
B1811

The Unusual Life of Edna Walling

Sara Hardy

Independent and unconventional, Edna Walling was one of the first women to graduate from the Burnley School of Horticulture in 1917 and went on to become one of Australia's finest landscape designers. Though her gardens are well documented, Hardy draws on memories, anecdotes, facts and documents to explore Edna's private world – her family, friends, passions and sexuality, creating a tribute to a woman who was, in retrospect, way ahead of her time. A must read for green thumbs as well as lovers of Australian biography.

N 2005 304pp **B1945**

Most enjoyed the book and several of our group had been to Bickleigh Vale in the past. Interesting discussion about life at the time and determination which Edna had – she was certainly ahead of her time. Book was well written and extremely well researched.
Brighton East 4

Walking in the Shade

Doris Lessing

Following *Under My Skin*, this second volume of Lessing's autobiography begins with her 1949 arrival in grey post-war London (with the manuscript of her first novel and one of her three children) and takes us through to 1962. It offers a wonderful sense of those times as well as insights into Lessing herself. She speaks with candour about bringing up her son on her own, her love affairs, years of psychotherapy, the realities of living by her writing, and her growing disillusionment with the Communist Party.

N 1997 369pp **B1705**

Watched by Ancestors

Kathy Golski

It's one thing for trained anthropologists to do their adventurous work, but here an artist and her four children accompany her second husband to the remote highlands of Papua New Guinea where they live for two years, giving other, often surprising, dimensions to the lives of all concerned.

N 1998 270pp **B1732**

The Whole Woman

Germaine Greer

This sequel to *The Female Eunuch*, the book Germaine said she would never write, is vintage Greer: intelligent, wide-ranging, energetic, provocative, humorous and tender. Her angry thesis is that 'real women are being phased out', and it is certain to stimulate strong discussion.

N 1999 350pp **B1720**

Wicked But Virtuous

Mirka Mora

One of Melbourne's best-known artists, Mirka Mora arrived in Australia from Paris in 1951 with her husband and baby. Their restaurants were a magnet for the artistic life of the city. The book glows with examples of her work and splendid photographs. This account of an eccentric life lived to the utmost celebrates Mirka's lovers, work, family – and the rich array of characters who were drawn into her world.

N 2000 331pp **B1653**

Wild Swans

Jung Chang

WINNER
Australian Literature Society Gold Medal

Three generations, three women's stories in a period when the world's most populous nation endured almost unimaginable change. One way to begin to comprehend the recent history of China is through individuals who find the courage to experience and to voice the enormities which are the stuff of their everyday lives. Long, but compulsively readable.

N 1991 696pp **B1397**

NEW

Women of a Certain Rage

Liz Byrski



Twenty Australian women from different backgrounds, races, beliefs and identities take up the challenge of writing about rage. Contributors include Anne Aly, Eva Cox, Sarah Drummond, Rafeif Ismail, Margot Kingston, Mihaela Nicolescu, Fiona Stanley, Jane Underwood and Julianne van Loon.

N 2021 232pp **B2398**

Artist, Maker, Thinker

This chapter deals with the creative and cerebral, examining the lives of artists, writers and performers, and the spiritual, ethical and philosophical aspects of life.



21 Lessons for the 21st Century

Yuval Noah Harari

How do we make sense of the way the world is now? Today's issues are ever more pressing in a rapidly changing world where fake news is prevalent and advanced technology can be both friend and foe. In this stimulating book, Harari examines the future, how we can prepare for it and how we can forge our way to the next century.

N 2018 368pp **B2307**

A

Affluenza

Clive Hamilton

Looking at Australian society, Hamilton sees rampant consumption, associated with a trend towards overwork, stuff we accumulate and then send to landfill, financial over-commitment, and medications we use to help us cope. He also identifies a range of ills such as a lack of time, excessive stress, tiredness, depression and other health problems. He offers an alternative path: less attention to material goods, and greater connection with community and the things that matter.

N 2005 224pp **B1916**

An Artist of the Floating World

Kazuo Ishiguro

Ishiguro's elegant, restrained prose evokes the personality, career, family and society of Masuji Ono, an ageing painter living through the turbulent post-war shift from militarism to an Americanised democracy in Japan of 1948.

F 1986 206pp **B1228**

Author, Author

David Lodge

A great writer, but fiercely private: Henry James seems an unlikely subject for a biographical novel by a satirical writer. But Lodge's book is immensely lively, readable and discussion-worthy, as he focuses on the last decades of James' life. A fascinating and informative account of the crowded setting of the English literary, theatrical and social world, sibling rivalries, love and the refined and dedicated life within.

F 2004 389pp **B1870**

Autumn Laing

Alex Miller



SHORTLISTED

Prime Minister's Literary Award

Inspired by the relationship between iconic artist Sidney Nolan and his muse Sunday Reed, this is a skilfully drawn fiction of a person like Sunday might have become, having outlived the artists who were her peers in the 1930s. Through 85-year-old Autumn's reflections on the lives of the gifted, Miller explores the passions and ambitions of Australian art.

F 2011 464pp **B2157**

B

The Boyds: The Art of the Boyds

Patricia Dobrez & Peter Herbst – ART BOOK

Six generations of Boyds have been involved in the arts. This folio of lavish illustrations reflects the diversity of talent – pottery, writing, architecture, painting, sculpting and ceramics – in 'Australia's most visible and distinguished artistic family'.

N 1990 232pp **B0656**

C

Cider with Rosie

Laurie Lee

Chronicling the traditional village life which disappeared with the advent of developments such as the motor car, this enduring classic is the English Cotswolds of years ago, with Lee's bucolic childhood rendered in a bright and wryly humorous manner. A must-read.

N **L** 1959 240pp **B0395**

Consolations of Philosophy

Alain de Botton

Philosophy is not just for the ivory tower. Alain de Botton unfolds the thinking of six philosophers: Socrates on unpopularity (he died for it); Epicurus on not having enough money; Seneca on frustration; Montaigne on inadequacies various; Schopenhauer on a broken heart; and Nietzsche on the struggle. Immensely readable and satisfying. Occasional coarse language.

N 2000 265pp **B1635**

The Crane Wife

Patrick Ness

A crane lands in middle-aged George's back garden in London. Next day he meets artist Kumiko. Together their art causes a public sensation. The importance of family, love, and the power of storytelling are explored in this reimagined Japanese folk tale that merges the magical with the real. Contains strong language.

F 2013 320pp **B2189**

D

Dark Emu

Bruce Pascoe



WINNER

NSW Premier's Literary Awards



SHORTLISTED

Queensland Premier's Literary Awards



SHORTLISTED

Victorian Premier's Literary Award

Pascoe challenges the hunter-gatherer stereotype for pre-colonial Indigenous Australians with evidence of land cultivation. Pascoe's research includes diaries and records from early explorers. An important and thought-provoking read.

N 2018 278pp **B2314**

Death Sentence

Don Watson

Watson defends the language he loves (English with bite, flavour and life) against the verbal sludge which now threatens from every side. Managerial language has infiltrated the English of politics, bureaucracy, education and the media. Read, laugh, discuss, repent, abstain!

N 2003 198pp **B1828**

E

The Elegance of the Hedgehog

Muriel Barbery

Renée is the concierge of a grand Parisian apartment building on the Left Bank. Beneath her conventional facade she is passionate about culture and the arts. Several floors above, twelve-year-old Paloma Josse is determined to avoid a predictably bourgeois future laid out for her. The death of a privileged neighbour brings dramatic change and alters their lives forever. An international bestseller.

F 2008 320pp **B2046**

Elizabeth Costello

J.M. Coetzee



SHORTLISTED

Miles Franklin Literary Award

In the form of lectures given by an elderly Australian writer on tour, this challenging novel of ideas opens up questions of the systematic cruelties involved in farming animals for food; the Holocaust; the nature of belief and reason, writing and humanity; spirituality and morality; Kafka and the absurd. Nobel Prize winner Coetzee shares with his fictional character a reluctance to make public appearances.

F 2003 230pp **B1830**

F

Facing the Music

Andrea Goldsmith

For more than fifty years, Duncan Bayle's glorious talent as a composer was fed by the women in his life. Then his daughter Anna left Melbourne for London. While her father's gift faltered, her creativity flowered. Goldsmith portrays a toxic struggle between them, and family and friends caught in this paradoxically destructive creativity as the work moves to its conclusion.

F 1994 263pp **B1441**

Enjoyed Consolations of Philosophy?

Try Status Anxiety by Alain de Botton
B1845

Feet of Clay

Anthony Storr

Subtitled *A Study of Gurus*, this compares some notorious gurus, including Jim Jones and David Koresh, with some of the most respected leaders in the western world (Ignatius of Loyola, Jesus) to show they have more in common than meets the eye. Why do we view some as legitimate thinkers or spiritual leaders and others as madmen? Other 'gurus' considered in the book are Gurdjieff, Steiner, Freud and Jung. A rich field for reflection and discussion.

N 1996 254pp **B1569**

G

Ghost Species

James Bradley

A scientist agrees to participate in a secret climate project to resurrect an extinct species, the Neanderthals. Set in the near future, with civilisation on the brink, this gripping tale is as much about identity as ethics. Does the firstborn belong to a ghost species, or do we? Ultimately this is a hopeful exploration of what it means to be human.

F 2020 269pp **B2342**

The Gift of Asher Lev

Chaim Potok

In this sequel to *My Name is Asher Lev*, the painter is drawn back to the Ladover Hasidic community in Brooklyn. Again, he experiences the tension between his gift and the community, now facing the death of its revered Rebbe, and making strong claims on his family.

F 1990 370pp **B1323**

Girl with a Pearl

Earring 

Tracy Chevalier

This fine historical fiction evokes the mid-17th century Netherlands. Griet, a young servant girl, sits for painter Johannes Vermeer, her employer, and soon finds herself surrounded by rumour. A deeply revealing tale about the process of painting and the effects of passion, outrage and perceptions about human nature.

F 1999 248pp **B1621**

Glass After Glass

Barbara Blackman

Married for twenty-seven years to painter Charles Blackman, Barbara was also an artist's model, muse, writer and mother. The circle of artists at Heide, her friendships with Joy Hester and with others, and her adaptation to increasing blindness from a young age are all part of these fascinating memoirs.

N 1997 403pp **B1573**

The Goldfinch

Donna Tartt



WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

When Theo is thirteen, a traumatic experience inextricably entwines his fate with a 17th-century Dutch painting. An engaging cast of characters moves between high society, the world of antiques, and a murky criminal underground in this beautifully readable exploration of love, loss and the messy business of being alive.

F 2014 771pp **B2211**

This is a novel of epic proportions. It was easy to read because it was so interesting and from a very erudite author.

Bendigo Free Spirits

Grace Crowley:

Being Modern

Elena Taylor

Crowley played a central part in introducing modern art to Australia. Rejecting the expectations of her Edwardian upbringing, she pursued a career as an artist, leaving the parochial confines of Australia and replacing the convention of marriage with a series of close friendships. In this beautifully illustrated edition, Taylor paints an evocative portrait of Crowley.

N 2006 54pp **B1950**

A Great Hope

Jessica Stanley

John Clare was a titan in Australian politics. The head of a powerful union, he had long been tipped as a future leader himself. But now he has fallen, brutally, to his death. A terrible accident – or was it? Gripping, compelling and ambitious, this novel untangles the mystery of his fall through the eyes of those who knew him best – or thought they did.

F 2022 416pp **B2365**

Great Writers,

Great Loves

Ann Marie Priest

A fascinating and revealing journey through the love lives of eight famous writers: Sylvia Plath, Virginia Woolf, Vita Sackville West, D.H. Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield, Charmian Cliff, Dylan Thomas and Frank O'Hara. Priest delves into their letters and writings. Their stories anticipated and reflected revolutionary rethinking about love, sex and marriage that developed in the 20th century.

N 2006 298pp **B1918**

H

Half a Lifetime

Judith Wright

One of Australia's finest poets, Judith Wright was born into a family of New South Wales pastoralists. Jack McKinney, the philosopher who became her lover, partner, and the father of her daughter, was also her intellectual companion in a passionate lifelong commitment to environmental causes and justice for Aboriginal people. A poem by Wright stands as preface to each of the chapters in this luminous memoir, an added pleasure for the reader.

N 1999 296pp **B1760**

The Hare with

Amber Eyes

Edmund de Waal



WINNER
Costa Biography Award

After inheriting a collection of Japanese carvings (netsuke), de Waal felt compelled to trace its journey through the years. In doing so, he discovered his family's history from 19th century Odessa to modern Tokyo. An engrossing and moving blend of art and social history.

N 2010 354pp **B2140**

Harland's Half Acre

David Malouf

The life story of Frank Harland, an artist whose first drawings are made at night on his family's struggling dairy farm in Queensland. Malouf writes with insight about many themes: family life; the pressures of poverty and temperament; the vocation of the artist and the changing patterns of Australian social history. The natural world of Australia is rendered with poetic precision.

F 1984 230pp **B1043**

The Heartbeat of Trees

Peter Wohlleben

In an era of mobile phone addiction and ever-expanding cities, many of us fear we've lost our connection to nature – but Peter Wohlleben is convinced that age-old ties linking humans to the natural world remain alive and intact. Whether we observe it or not, our blood pressure stabilises near trees, the colour green calms us, and being in the forest sharpens our senses.

N 2021 272pp **B2366**

Here on Earth

Tim Flannery

We have left an ecological trail of destruction as human civilisation spreads across the planet. We will face continued climate change, decreasing biodiversity, and scarcity of water and food. Flannery, a palaeontologist and former Australian of the Year, suggests solutions to these problems. From the Stone Age to the modern globalised world, he presents a view of possible sustainability through cooperation rather than competition.

N 2010 316pp **B2114**

The Hours

Michael Cunningham



WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Cunningham takes Virginia Woolf's life and work as inspiration for this exquisite and subtle novel. He interweaves Woolf's struggle to begin her novel *Mrs Dalloway* with that book's effects on two subsequent readers in both 1940s Los Angeles and contemporary New York.

F 1998 228pp **B1642**

How Are We to Live?

Peter Singer

The distinguished Australian philosopher argues that in affluent Western society, the pursuit of material self-interest is the norm, trapping people into a sense that life is meaningless. Is there anything to live for? Likely to prompt unstoppable discussion.

N 1993 262pp **B1411**

I

I Am Melba

Ann Blainey



WINNER
National Biography Prize

A biography of Australia's first musical superstar, Dame Nellie Melba. From an early age in Richmond, Melbourne, she dreamed of fame. Her independent spirit took her to the Queensland cane fields and then to London and Europe. *I Am Melba* captures an extraordinary life.

N 2009 400pp **B2063**

The Imperfectionists

Tom Rachman

This collection of stories told from viewpoints of different staff members, such as Editor in Chief to the copy editor, at an international English language newspaper based in Rome. Private lives overlap with work and world events. Alternately hilarious and heart-wrenching.

F **S** 2010 274pp **B2089**

Inside Out

Robert Adamson

Sydney poet Robert Adamson grew up in Neutral Bay and on the Hawkesbury River in the 1950s and 60s. Bewitched by the natural world, fishing and birds, his later escapades led him to incarceration in boys' homes. Finally, a prison encounter with the work of writers and poets set him on the path of writing. Full of event, sensation, movement and life, this memoir makes wonderful reading.

N 2004 342pp **B1833**

Isobel on the Way to the Corner Shop

Amy Witting

Determined to make her way as a writer, Isobel has resigned from her job with very little to live on. Acute illness brings her to a sanatorium where she remains for a long time, maintaining her autonomy as best she can in claustrophobic surroundings.

F 1999 352pp **B1737**

K

Kandinsky: Wassily Kandinsky, 1866–1944 Hajo Düchting – ART BOOK

Kandinsky was one of the most important pioneers of abstract art, expressing feelings through a distinctive use of geometric shapes, brilliantly coloured and superbly disposed in space.

N 1991 96pp **B0716**

Killing Me Softly Philip Nitschke & Fiona Stewart

Nitschke and Stewart believe that people should have the right to make informed end-of-life decisions. Their book provides information about the current practice of slow euthanasia; what is wrong with palliative care; and anguishing decisions concerning the life or death of very ill babies. These writers envisage a world where a 'peaceful pill' could provide a peaceful, dignified death. An opportunity to reflect on and discuss the many questions presented by the euthanasia debate.

N 2005 354pp **B1885**

Klimt: Gustav Klimt, 1862–1918

Gottfried Friedl
– ART BOOK

The apocalyptic atmosphere of Vienna's upper middle-class society at the turn of the 20th century found expression through the art of Gustav Klimt. His art and the Viennese Secession movement are explored in this richly illustrated book.

N 1991 239pp **B0683**

L

The Lacuna Barbara Kingsolver

WINNER
Orange Prize

This is a grand tale told in various narrative forms: diary entries, memoir, letters and newspaper articles. Born in America and raised in Mexico, Harrison Shepherd works for Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. Later he befriends artist Frida Kahlo, and later still he works for Communist-in-exile Leon Trotsky, caught up in a world of art and revolution. Then the novel moves to the US where he is dragged into the public arena through the House Un-American Activities Committee.

F 2009 507pp **B2065**

We had a lively discussion about this book. We thought Kingsolver researched this book very well. The historical characters were woven into the fictional story well and gave it authenticity. Although quite difficult to read in the early section, it was very interesting and covered several controversial and difficult periods in American history.
Shoal Bay Bridge Bookies

The Life and Death of Sophie Stark

Anna North

Told through six different perspectives of the people closest to her, this novel explores the life of an unapologetic film director who values art over people. Sophie Stark uses her genius to make movies from the lives of people who fascinate her, which often entails destroying the relationships with those who love her most and results in her shocking end. The novel explores the lengths some will go for art and the cost of artistic integrity.

F 2015 304pp **B2247**

The Life to Come

Michelle de Kretser

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

An intelligent meditation set in Sydney, Paris and Sri Lanka, this novel consists of five sections: George, author and university lecturer; Pippa, a superficial writer who dreams of Man Booker success; Celeste, a manuscript translator blind to her married lover's intentions; Ash, an academic who blurs the memories from his childhood in Sri Lanka; and migrant Christabel, whose generosity becomes the target of Pippa's malice. The novel explores lies we tell to others, lies we tell ourselves, and the grand ego of Western Civilisation.

F 2017 384pp **B2278**

Lola Bensky

Lily Brett

Lily Brett drew on her own experiences as a music journalist in the 'Swinging Sixties' to create nineteen-year-old Lola. When not meeting rock icons such as Mick Jagger and Janis Joplin, she worries about her hair or her weight. Like many of Brett's characters, Lola carries the legacy of her Holocaust survivor parents. Funny and touching, this novel evokes a time of unique social change.

F 2012 267pp **B2176**

A Long Petal of the Sea Isabel Allende

Young 'miracle' doctor Victor Dalmau, caught up in the Spanish Civil War, is forced into exile with his sister-in-law, the pianist Roser Broguera. Boarding a ship for Chile, they hope for the promised freedom of 'the long petal of sea and wine and snow' which will affect generations to come. A lyrical story of love and struggle, including appearances by the poet Pablo Neruda.

F 2020 336pp **B2323**

The Lost Dog

Michelle de Kretser

Set in contemporary Australia and 20th century India, de Kretser's third novel is a love story entwined with a haunting mystery. Tom Loxley, an academic, is writing a book on Henry James in a remote bush shack when his dog goes missing. While searching for his dog, Tom revisits his emotional past and explores his troubled present.

F 2007 368pp **B2028**

The Lost Mother

Anne Summers

In 1933, Anne's mother had her portrait painted by a mysterious artist. Anne inherited this portrait after her mother's death. She feels compelled to unravel its mystery, exploring the difficult relationship she had with her mother. Anne's detailed research encompasses Paris, Cairo, Latvia and Russia and evokes memories of Melbourne's art scene in the 1900s.

N 2010 385pp **B2123**

M

The Magician Colm Toibín

When war breaks out in 1914, novelist Thomas Mann burns with patriotism and renewed hope for German literature and culture. But his complex relationship with the homeland reflect conflict in his own brilliant and troubled family. Though famous and admired, Mann is fearful and secretive. His blindness to impending disaster will force him to rethink his relationship with Germany as the Nazis come to power.

F 2021 448pp **B2373**

The Museum of Modern Love Heather Rose

WINNER
Stella Prize

WINNER
NSW Premier's Literary Awards

When New York film composer Arky Levin is asked by his terminally ill wife to keep a promise, it throws him into a devastating search for meaning. Arky discovers Marina Abramovic in The Artist is Present, drawn to her performance. He questions what it means to love and to be an artist. The novel explores relationships, illness and how art shapes us.

F 2016 296pp **B2253**

My Brilliant Career Miles Franklin

The first novel from one of the major Australian writers of her time, Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin, who wrote under the name Miles Franklin. Written as a romance to amuse the author's friends, the novel follows imaginative heroine Sybylla Melvyn growing up in rural Australia in the 1890s, and many of its concerns are still relevant to women writers today.

F 1901 232pp **B0062**

N

Nice Work

David Lodge

When Dr Robyn Penrose, temporary lecturer at the University is volunteered by the English Department to shadow Vic Wilcox, a managing director in the industrial town of Rummidge, it's a culture shock for them both. An astute account of Thatcher's England, particularly of its business and intellectual theory and practice. We laughed out loud.

F 1988 348pp **B1252**

North Face of Soho

Clive James

The fourth in his autobiographical series, this covers the period 1968 to the 1980s as James sets out to establish himself in literary London. In his trademark style, blending wisecracks with serious observation, Clive depicts the unrelenting deadlines involved in his work as reviewer, critic, essayist and commentator. An entertaining read with insights about writing.

N 2006 264pp **B1973**

O

O'Keeffe: Georgia O'Keeffe

Nancy Frazier – ART BOOK

O'Keeffe is best known for her near abstract paintings based on enlargements of flower and plant forms – works of great elegance, rhythmic vitality and sensuality. This book captures the haunting quality of her unique vision.

N 1992 112pp **B0694**

Oscar Wilde

Richard Ellmann

Wilde's witty comedies made him the darling of London theatregoers, but at the height of his success he was imprisoned after a notorious trial into allegations of homosexual practice. Physically and financially ruined, his decline led to an early death. Ellmann's account is full of understanding and humanity.

N 1987 632pp **B1585**

Other People's Words

Hilary McPhee

The story of a friendship between two women, the publishing company they built, and its contribution to literature in Australia. Helen Garner, Tim Winton and Drusilla Modjeska belonged to McPhee Gribble's impressive list. A readable book with much to discuss about the local and global publishing and the future of the industry.

N 2001 312pp **B1630**

P

The Philosopher's Dog

Raimond Gaita

Focusing on creatures who are part of our domestic lives and telling stories about animals he has known, the author of *Romulus, My Father* asks questions about how animals think and feel. This gentle enquiry into the connection between people and animals requires careful reading and discussion.

N 2002 214pp **B1689**

Piranesi

Susannah Clarke

WINNER
Women's Prize for Fiction

SHORTLISTED
Costa Book Award

His world is a vast house of statues and perilous tides, but almost no people. In this mystery within a mystery, Piranesi must struggle for survival against enemies of mind and body, in his quest for answers and resolution. This lyrical and frightening tale is both a triumph of the human spirit and a miracle of storytelling.

F 2020 253pp **B2350**

R

Reading by Moonlight

Brenda Walker

WINNER
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

In 2005, Brenda was diagnosed with breast cancer. This book follows her treatment, along with meditations on books that helped her on her road to recovery. Referencing authors from Dante to Donna Tartt, she writes about the consolation of the written word. This is a moving book that resonates deeply.

N 2010 240pp **B2133**

Religion for Atheists

Alain de Botton

The issue is not whether or not God exists, but where to go from here. Alain de Botton makes a case for the usefulness of religion in our lives, regardless of whether it is believable or not. This will challenge readers' thinking and is guaranteed to spark a great discussion.

N 2012 320pp **B2144**

Right and Wrong

Hugh Mackay

A humane, thoughtful book about personal, family, sexual, legal, business, consumer, social and political choices we all face. Veteran social researcher Hugh Mackay draws on his experiences with various focus groups to explore complex moral issues, making these accessible for reflection and group discussion.

N 2004 244pp **B1841**

The River

Patrice Newell

Newell's family lives in a close relationship with the river Pages which runs past their New South Wales property. She looks at the river's rich history (geological, and in Aboriginal and settler times) and its future (with competing demands from big business through to organic farms like her own). The condition of our waterways and life on the land is a topic of great national relevance.

N 2003 244pp **B1891**

A Room of One's Own

Virginia Woolf

This book arose from two lectures presented to Cambridge women's colleges in 1928 on the subject of 'women and fiction'. Woolf believed that only privacy (a room of one's own) and independence (five hundred pounds a year) would allow women to write freely and well.

N 1929 176pp **B0381**

S

The Secret Life of Money

Valerie Wilson

This book focuses on money in our everyday lives and how ordinary people think and feel about it. This is an exploration of the complex and contradictory role that money plays in our social world.

N 1999 224pp **B1719**

A Short History of

Richard Kline

Amanda Lohrey

Richard Kline has always felt that something in his life was missing. Now middle-aged and facing cycles of boredom and despair, he finds himself awakening to alternative spiritual pursuits and philosophies despite a natural cynicism, searching for 'bliss' in the midst of chaos. Lohrey probes the relationship between devotion and dependence in this comic yet moving exploration of masculinity and meaning.

F 2015 272pp **B2224**

The Sitters

Alex Miller

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

An ageing artist's meeting with an older woman opens enigmas of his childhood and returns him to painting. A complex, subtle story touching on theoretical art questions, the connections between loss and creativity, and absence and presence in words and images.

F 1995 131pp **B1459**

The Spiral Staircase

Karen Armstrong

Having left the religious life after seven difficult years, Karen Armstrong found herself in a changed world. She was troubled by her panic attacks and strange mental states. This memoir explores the years of transition, a long period of unbelief, and the unusual path by which she became a respected commentator on major world religions, matters of faith and fundamentalism of different kinds.

N 2004 342pp **B1894**

Status Anxiety

Alain de Botton

'This is a book about an almost universal anxiety ... about what others think of us; about whether we're judged a success or a failure, a winner or a loser.' In it the author examines lovelessness, snobbery, expectation, meritocracy, dependence; and offers some 'solutions'. Is this philosophy or does it belong in the self-help genre? The central subject of keeping up with the Joneses provides plenty to discuss.

N 2004 314pp **B1845**

NEW

Stolen Focus

Johan Hari

Why have we lost our ability to focus? What are the causes? And, most importantly, how do we get it back? The author has interviewed leading experts in the world on attention, discovering that everything he thought he knew about this subject was wrong. He has learned how we – as individuals and as a society – can get back our focus, if we are determined to fight for it.

N 2023 352pp **B2394**



T

A Tale for the Time Being

Ruth Ozeki



When sixteen-year-old Nao's diary washes ashore on a lonely Canadian coastline, Ruth feels compelled to read it. Nao's life is turbulent: her father is suicidal, she is tortured by schoolyard bullies, and her only friend is her grandmother, a Buddhist nun. Ozeki weaves together philosophy, the nature of time, cultural identity and the true meaning of courage in this absorbing, beautifully written novel.

F 2013 422pp **B2204**

Teacher

Gabbie Stroud



Gabbie loved being a teacher but in 2014 she resigned, frustrated with a system that no longer allowed her to teach children according to their individual needs and abilities. Now she tells the full story of her journey in education and how the system is unfair to both teachers and children. A powerful memoir.

N 2018 352pp **B2298**

NEW

They

Kay Dick

Lost for over forty years, Kay Dick's *They* (1977) is a rediscovered dystopian masterpiece. This short novel is a cry from the soul against censorship and a radical celebration of non-conformity – and a warning.

F 2022 128pp **B2395**



Toulouse Lautrec: Henri de Toulouse Lautrec

Matthias Arnold

– ART BOOK

Toulouse Lautrec's bold and arresting images were instrumental in gaining acceptance for both lithography and the poster as major art forms. This tells Lautrec's story and gives a vibrant picture of Parisian life.

N 1988 96pp **B0715**

W

Waging Peace

Anne Deveson

In this thematic memoir, Anne Deveson looks back on a long life, from her childhood during WWII to her experiences as a filmmaker and social commentator. She questions our species' urge to wage war, and discusses with hope the promotion of peace and conflict resolution. Whether or not you agree with her views, this book is bound to promote lively discussion.

N 2013 238pp **B2184**

Walking on Water

Chester Porter

This Sydney defence lawyer's memoir includes controversial cases and Royal Commissions of the last fifty years. Even more, through the many unpublicised cases with which its author was involved, the book reveals a life in the Law as experienced by a good man. Porter's humility and humanity shine through his prose, and may even raise the reader's estimation of the law, the police and legal practitioners.

N 2003 310pp **B1898**

The Waterlily

Kate Llewellyn

'A book that captures perfectly the exact pace and feel of life – the fine-tuning of one moment and one mood into the next' (Grenville). This 'Blue Mountains Journal' covers a year of Kate Llewellyn's life in the mountains, making a garden and determined to be happy.

N 1987 192pp **B1345**

In general, we found the book well written and in a poetic style. We enjoyed the nature descriptions as well as the recipes. She devoted little time in describing her relationship with her family.

Mallacoota

The Weather Makers

Tim Flannery

Though scientific, this is an engaging book for the general reader. We are the weather makers. Flannery wants to inspire all of us to do something about climate change. Insightful and inspiring, he suggests steps we can take to reduce our carbon footprint at the level of our own household decisions.

N 2005 332pp **B1943**

The Women's Pages

Debra Adelaide

Having read *Wuthering Heights* to her dying mother, Dove finds she cannot escape the novel's power. Instead of returning to normal life, she clings to a story she has begun writing about Ellis, a 1960s suburban housewife until she decides to leave her husband. A beautiful magic emerges as Dove teases out the secrets of Ellis's life, while she attempts to explore her own.

F 2015 305pp **B2241**

Relationships

Mainly fiction, but with a few biographies, this chapter contains books that tackle the myriad aspects of human connection – from grand tragedy to light and witty.



A

The Accidental Tourist

Anne Tyler

Sharing a common grief, Macon Leary and his wife Sarah now find their differences too great and they part. Macon ventures around the world to write a series of travel guides which reflect his need of defensive routines. Funnier than *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* but with that unmistakable ache and tenderness.

F 1985 355pp **B1193**

Addition

Toni Jordan

Grace Vandenburg counts. She counts the number of poppy seeds on her piece of cake, she counts the number of steps it takes her to reach her local café, she even counts the letters in her name. Then she meets Seamus O'Reilly. *Addition* is a quirky love story with a witty and unconventional heroine.

F 2008 256pp **B2036**

NEW

After Story

Larissa Behrendt



SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

25 years after the disappearance of her older sister, indigenous lawyer Jasmine takes her mother on a tour of England's literary sites. Then another child goes missing, this time on Hampstead Heath. Jasmine's mother is inspired to rediscover the wisdom of her own culture and storytelling. But sometimes the stories we can tell may be too great to bear.

F 2021 336pp **B2380**

Aftermath

Rachel Cusk

Subtitled 'On Marriage and Separation'. Cusk is not telling us how to live; this is her narrative on marriage, separation, the difficulties of motherhood, loss of identity, feminism and more. It is an honest exploration of the aftermath of her divorce and is guaranteed to spark a discussion in your group.

N 2012 152pp **B2169**

Ali and Nino

Kurban Said

Considered the *Romeo and Juliet* of Azerbaijan, this lesser-known masterpiece follows the cross-cultural marriage of a young Muslim prince and a rich Christian girl. Love does not run easily, but it works powerfully to try to overcome ancient tribal differences.

F 1937 237pp **B1658**

The Amateur Marriage

Anne Tyler

Pauline and Michael marry in haste. Slowly and painfully, they realise they are completely unsuited. A sensitively handled portrayal of family dysfunction and of lives lived wondering how things 'might have been'. Tyler's look at one family and American family life from the 1940s to the present day is incisive and poignant.

F 2004 306pp **B1817**

American Wife

Curtis Sittenfeld

Alice is a quiet, bookish only child from small-town Wisconsin, who experiences an event which shatters her identity and makes her understand the fragility of life. A decade later, Alice, a Democrat and school librarian, meets and marries Charlie, the outgoing wealthy son of a Republican family. When Charlie becomes President of the United States, Alice finds herself in a position of power, influence and privilege.

F 2008 555pp **B2044**

Atonement

Ian McEwan

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

A story that begins with three young people in the garden of a country house on the hottest day of 1935, and ends with three profoundly changed lives. A depiction of love, war, class, childhood and England, exploring shame, forgiveness, and the possibility of atonement.

F 2001 372pp **B1668**

Enjoyed The
Rosie Project?

Try Addition
by Toni Jordan
B2036

B

Bel Canto

Ann Patchett

WINNER
Orange Prize

A group of international guests in an unnamed Latin American country are taken hostage, but the target, the President, is not present. Among the hostages are a famous American opera singer and a Japanese businessman. A charming, unconventional story unfolds as *Bel Canto* explores themes of art, politics and love.

F 2001 318pp **B1991**

Between a Wolf and a Dog

Georgia Blain

WINNER
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

As the rain beats down one sodden Sydney day, four people will slowly come to terms with their pasts – and their futures. Ester is finally moving forward from her divorce from estranged husband, Lawrence. Her sister, April, wonders how she can heal the deep rift between her and Ester, while their mother Hilary considers the momentous decision she is making. Subtle, poignant and immersive.

F 2016 320pp **B2242**

Big Brother

Lionel Shriver

Pandora, a chef and entrepreneur, must deal with both her morbidly obese brother and her exercise and nutrition obsessed husband as circumstances bring the three of them under the same roof. In her distinctive style, the author of *We Need to Talk About Kevin* tackles family dynamics, addiction and our image-conscious society, asking the question: is blood really thicker than water?

F 2013 373pp **B2191**

Billie's Kiss

Elizabeth Knox

A novel for almost anyone, featuring a murder mystery, a traditional community faced with Edwardian modernisation, a sexy love story, pride and prejudice, family and community loyalties and divisions, set in a small island off Scotland.

F 2002 280pp **B1669**

Breakfast at Tiffany's

Truman Capote

When Fred's new neighbour Holly Golightly crawls through his window, he is captivated by this glamorous nineteen-year-old. Unlike the wildly successful Audrey Hepburn movie, the original novella has a more complex narrative that does not sanitise its sexual ambiguity and the struggle between the need for stability and the longing for freedom. Contains three short stories.

F S 1958 168pp **B2018**

Truman Capote's writing is outstanding and brought us into New York in the 50s.

Lugarno Book Club

C

Captain Corelli's Mandolin

Louis de Bernières

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

During World War Two, Italian troops occupy the Greek island of Cephallonia. Billeted with the local doctor and his daughter, Captain Corelli, a musician and comedian, tries to stay aloof. But it is no use: the two young people fall in love.

F 1994 436pp **B1472**

A Change in the Lighting

Amy Witting

This novel takes us into the feelings and decisions of a woman whose life changes when her husband leaves her suddenly for a younger woman. An insightful study of a woman in her fifties and her adult children. A must for appreciators of Amy Witting.

F 1994 291pp **B1401**

Childish Things

Robin Jenkins

After the death of his much-loved wife, 72-year-old Gregor McLeod becomes the focus of several women in his Scottish village and again in California, where he escapes for a break. Greed, selfishness and intrigues enliven this ironic, light-hearted and well-paced comic novel.

F 2001 248pp **B1778**

The Christie Affair ★

Nina de Gramont

Why would the world's most famous mystery writer disappear for eleven days? What makes a woman desperate enough to destroy another woman's marriage? What will someone do in the name of love? What kind of crime can someone never forgive?

F 2022 368pp **B2361**

City of Friends

Joanna Trollope

When high-powered career woman Stacey is made redundant from her job, her life is thrown into crisis. Cracks begin to form in her tightly knit friendship group. As tension increases, secrets emerge and friendships are pushed to the limit. A light and relatable read, the novel showcases various forms of working women who have to juggle personal and professional lives.

F 2017 336pp **B2259**

Cold Mountain ☹

Charles Frazier

Wounded during the American Civil War, a soldier deserts from the Confederate army and travels home. Meanwhile a 'lady' learns to be a woman on the frontier. As their journeys entwine, Frazier evokes the times and the southern Appalachians with great immediacy in this beautiful story of love and war.

F **L** 1997 357pp **B1557**

Crossing to Safety

Wallace Stegner

When Larry and his wife settle into their new home in Wisconsin in the late 1930s, they begin a friendship with the Langs that will echo through their lives. Exploring the mysteries of friendship, Stegner traces the bond that develops between the families in this eloquent, powerful narrative from this Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

F 1987 288pp **B1522**

D

Dirt Music ☹

Tim Winton

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

The coastal land of Western Australia is physically and psychologically perilous for people who live by it, and yet its beauty compels. Each member of the trio at the centre of this story is differently damaged and dangerous. Winton's narrative tension draws the reader into their struggles to break with the past and regain hope and love.

F 2001 465pp **B1664**

E

Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine

Gail Honeyman

WINNER
Costa Book Award

A thirty-year-old accounts assistant and office eccentric, Eleanor Oliphant, lives alone in a tiny flat in Glasgow. She keeps to a rigid routine and a timetabled life, making an effort to avoid social interaction. But when she meets Raymond, his kindness forces her to confront the tragedy in her past that holds her back. A funny, yet deeply moving book about profound loneliness, mental illness and survival.

F 2017 383pp **B2283**

Eligible

Curtis Sittenfeld

Seeking out the 'classic romance' in modern life, this *Bridget Jones* style adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* is fresh, fun and wholly enjoyable. After their father's heart surgery, Liz and Jane Bennet return home to Cincinnati, where their younger sisters run wild and their mother despairs that they will ever marry. Things change when ER doctor and reality television 'star' Chip Bingley arrives – but his friend, neurosurgeon Fitzwilliam Darcy, is unimpressed by the Bennets.

F 2016 528pp **B2244**

Emma ☹

Jane Austen

A social comedy about the development of a young lady, and the disconnection between an individual's inner life – her deepest fears and hopes – and the external world of customs and manners. Emma's spirit and vivacity make her one of Austen's most beloved characters. Inimitable prose.

F 1816 432pp **B0001**

The English Patient ☹

Michael Ondaatje

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

In the destruction and confusion surrounding the end of the World War Two, a small group of people find themselves together in Italy. Recreating both a devastated Italy and a desert world far away, Ondaatje fuses popular novel, war story, spy story and the erotic in a complex work of wisdom and beauty.

F 1992 307pp **B1370**

An Equal Music

Vikram Seth

The narrator's passionate love of chamber music is infused by his passion for Julia, who disappeared from his life when he left her in Vienna. Early in the novel, he sees her through the window of a London bus. What next? A CD in each box provides sound recordings of the music referred to in the novel.

F 1999 485pp **B1735**

Eucalyptus

Murray Bail

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Throughout his property, a man collects examples of every known eucalypt. He announces that his daughter will be a marriage prize to the first man who can correctly identify every tree. Is Ellen to have no say in her own destiny? A strangely exhilarating love story that blends European folktale with a piquant Australian rendering of landscape and longing.

F 1998 255pp **B1594**

Eyrie

Tim Winton

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Unlikable and self-pitying drunk Tom begins to feel compassion and desire when he encounters his neighbour, Gemma. Their meeting brings back memories of the past, forcing Tom to face a physical threat in his present which is far more dangerous than the demons in his head.

F 2013 424pp **B2210**

We have read several of Winton's books and found lots to discuss and enjoy ... We appreciated the portrayal of the underbelly of Fremantle. Several of our members could relate to this as they had spent time there. Toowoomba: The Great Escape

F

The Feel of Steel

Helen Garner

This non-fiction collection ranges from moods of loss and desolation to hilarity and awe. A brief diary of heartbreak following a marriage break up, a journey to Antarctica, fencing lessons, reading the Bible: these short pieces add up to a book with the texture of memoir.

N **S** 2001 223pp **B1659**

The Finkler Question

Howard Jacobson

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

Julian Treslove has two friends Sam Finkler and Libor Sevcik who are both lonely widowers. Julian wishes that one of his lovers would expire romantically in his arms, and wonders what it would be like to be Jewish. This novel touches on anti-Semitism and Zionism, as well as obsession in a complex and insightful way.

F 2010 307pp **B2105**

Firehead

Venero Armanno

A very Sicilian love story' in Brisbane of 1975 to 1995: love, police corruption and a changing city, searching for that one place in the world you can finally call home. A novel full of the urgency of desire in sensuous prose.

F 1999 401pp **B1754**

Flights of Love

Bernhard Schlink

In these seven sophisticated short stories Schlink takes up the theme of love, different kinds of sadness, devotion and desire, misunderstandings, betrayal, midlife crises and the search for renewal.

F **S** 2000 309pp **B1665**

Five Bells

Gail Jones

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

James and Ellie are haunted by the intimacy they shared; Catherine fled the UK, grieving her older brother; Pei Xing lost her parents during the Cultural Revolution and survived years in a re-education camp. Through their eyes we marvel at the Sydney Harbour's spectacular natural beauty and iconic architecture but, as forewarned by Slessor's poem 'Five Bells', its water also harbours death.

F 2011 216pp **B2112**

The Four Letters of Love

Niall Williams

In Dublin, the life of twelve-year-old Nicholas is upended when William, his father, quits his job in the civil service because God wants him to be a painter. Over on an island in the west, eleven-year-old Isabel thinks it is her fault when her beloved musical brother Sean is disabled after a fit. Can the plots of God and love override day-to-day trials?

F 1997 342pp **B1711**

The Full Catastrophe

Edna Mazya

Aware that his beautiful young wife is having an affair, Ian is compelled to track down her lover. Ian's actions grow increasingly bizarre and irrational, and his state of mind, super-sensitivity to reading moods and his appalling mother are brilliantly depicted in a suspenseful, funny psychological thriller.

F 2005 334pp **B1881**

G

NEW

The Golden Book

Kate Ryan

It's the 1980s, and in their small Australian town, Ali and her best friend Jessie are coming of age. In 'The Golden Book' they keep a journal of incantation and risk taking, as they begin to chafe at the restrictions put on them by teachers, parents and each other. Then Jessie suffers a devastating accident, and both their lives are forever changed.

F 2021 247pp **B2389**



The Grass Harp

Truman Capote

SHORTLISTED
National Book Award

Truman Capote was from the Deep South, and this novel is steeped in its symbolism and cultural associations. Three oddly endearing characters defy small-town society; its other levels of meaning will keep you talking for hours.

F 1952 192pp **B0155**

The Great Fire

Shirley Hazzard

Set largely in Japan in the aftermath of Hiroshima, the love story at its centre unfolds delicately and across continents. Peter Craven called this 'a riveting, slow intoxication of a novel which has a deliberateness and a density of verbal beauty of which most literary fiction has lost even the memory'.

F 2003 278pp **B1831**

The Ground Beneath Her Feet

Salman Rushdie

Rushdie's verbal pyrotechnics conjure up a musical love story between many worlds: India before and after Independence, America, the underworld, and above all the global worlds of rock'n'roll and late 20th-century showbiz. A heady and heart-stirring song of love, loss, pain and liberation.

F 1999 575pp **B1746**

H

Happenstance

Carol Shields

Parallel lives of contemporary marriages are linked in two companion novels within the one cover. Husband and wife in a twenty-year marriage each tell their story of a week apart, she at a convention where she is recognised as a gifted quilt-maker, he on home duties while keeping his academic job going. Observant and compassionate.

F 1982 390pp **B1446**

Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage

Alice Munro

WINNER
Man Booker International Prize

Munro writes about the lives of girls and women in her own mid-western rural Canada. Whole lives come into focus suddenly through single events or sudden memories which bring the past bubbling to the surface. Here are people who reinvent themselves, seize life by the throat.

F **S** 2001 323pp **B1676**

Heat and Dust

Ruth Praver Jhabvala

WINNER
Booker Prize

A young Englishwoman sets out to discover the full story of the scandal of her great aunt in the India of the last days of the Raj. In doing so, she sets that India against the 1970s republic, and evokes a country of heat, dust and passion.

F **L** 1975 181pp **B1168**

Heat Wave

Penelope Lively

In her country house in England, the love and jealousy of Pauline's early marriage resonates in her daughter's experience. While an unusually hot season takes its course, the family story moves to its startling climax in Lively's lucid, witty prose.

F 1996 215pp **B1534**

Hotel du Lac

Anita Brookner

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

Sophisticated and with a perceptive eye for the world of appearances and for human foibles and needs, this novel unveils the self-containment, loneliness, encounters and longings of a writer of romantic fiction in sanctuary in Europe after an indiscretion.

F 1985 184pp **B1325**

How to Be Good

Nick Hornby

Tired of her irascible husband David, Katie Carr embarks on an affair. Meanwhile, David falls under the spell of a faith healer and disrupts everyone's lives with his devotion to the general good. A dissection of modern morals, family life and a heartfelt diagnosis of divorce.

F 2001 244pp **B1643**

I

I Capture the Castle

Dodie Smith

When a new American 'squire' moves into the great house in her village, Cassandra and her wildly eccentric family become embroiled in plots and plans that test tempers and hearts. Cassandra observes the goings on in her journal – a modern Jane Austen, if not quite as sharp. Recently republished and a favourite with readers for many years.

F 1949 352pp **B1802**

The Idea of Perfection

Kate Grenville

WINNER
Orange Prize

Two Sydney people turn up on work projects in a struggling little town in outback New South Wales. The engineer has been sent to replace the old 'bent' timber bridge with a concrete one but some of the locals have their own thoughts on this. A novel with Grenville's incisiveness and comic flair.

F 1999 401pp **B1733**

Instances of the Number 3

Salley Vickers

'After Peter Hansome died, people were surprised that his widow seemed to be spending so much time with his mistress.' This novel explores the power of triangles: a man, his wife and his mistress, the three people he leaves behind – and more universal instances of the number three.

F 2001 307pp **B1686**

Iris

John Bayley

Oxford critic John Bayley first caught sight of Iris Murdoch (philosopher and writer) in 1954 and fell instantly in love. During the last four years of their long marriage, Murdoch's formidable intellect and imagination were consumed by the 'insidious fog' of Alzheimer's disease. Bayley writes in a moving, dignified way of the woman who was his wife, and their life together, in earlier days and at the time of writing.

N 1998 294pp **B1736**

The Ivory Swing

Janette Turner Hospital

A Canadian couple and their two children move to a region of southern India, where Indian expectations, especially about caste and women's roles, confound the visiting family. Hospital's first novel draws on her time in India, and presents a disturbing meditation on the clash of cultures and the rebellion and feminine rage in each.

F 1982 252pp **B1449**

J

The Jane Austen Book Club

Karen Joy Fowler

Five women and a man form a book group to discuss their favourite Jane Austen novels. Each chapter focuses on a different Austen book, interpreted through the life experience of the member hosting the month's meeting. This is an entertaining character driven comedy of manners. No prior knowledge of Austen's work is required but her fans will be especially thrilled to observe the lives of the members unfold under the guiding eye of a much adored 19th-century novelist.

F 2004 279pp **B1884**

Journey from Venice

Ruth Cracknell

In 1998, after 41 years of marriage, the incomparable Ruth Cracknell planned a well-earned holiday in Venice with her beloved husband. But then an unexpected stroke landed him in intensive care. This is a memoir of their love as they face the outcome, and further evidence of the indomitable spirit of this wonderful Australian woman.

N 2000 271pp **B1764**

L

Lady Susan, The Watsons and Sanditon

Jane Austen

Lady Susan is an epistolary novel that was completed but not published during Austen's lifetime. *The Watsons* is an unfinished fragment with a spirited heroine who finds her marriage prospects restricted by poverty and pride. The incomplete novel *Sanditon*, written in the last few months of Austen's life, is set in a seaside resort and contemplates a changing society. This volume includes an introduction by Margaret Drabble who examines these three pieces within the context of Austen's work and life.

F 2003 224pp **B1046**

The Last Bookshop ★ Emma Young

This uplifting book follows the efforts of a young bookshop owner to sustain a community business in the age of corporatism. It is a tender and witty tale about triumphing over the odds: a book about the love of books and lovers of books, for lovers of books everywhere.

F 2021 256pp **B2343**

Love, Again Doris Lessing

What happens when someone falls in love? Is it different for the young and the old? Is it a madness, a blessing, a rationalisation of lust? Lessing's leisurely, discursive novel interweaves the 19th century with the 20th to connect us with the pains, delights and puzzles of love, particularly that of an older woman for a younger man.

F **L** 1995 352pp **B1506**

Love in the Time of Cholera 🗣️

Gabriel García Márquez

Translated from Spanish, the consummation of Florentino Ariza's passionate love for Fermina Daza is delayed for fifty years by her highly satisfactory marriage to Dr Juvenal Urbino. Magical yet realistic – this astonishing work is crowded with life and love stories of the Caribbean country where it is set. Smallish print.

F 1985 348pp **B1247**

Love like Water Meme McDonald

After the death of her fiancé in Queensland, Cathy spends time in Alice Springs with her childhood friend, Margie, hoping to work out what to do with her life. Cathy's affair with aboriginal Jay reveals the underside of Alice Springs and the latent racism that simmers beneath the surface of Australian society. A light and enjoyable read that boldly confronts difficult issues of place, race and identity.

F 2007 349pp **B1951**

M Madame Bovary 🗣️

Gustave Flaubert

Translated from French, this is one of the classics of world literature, the story of a young woman stultified by marriage and motherhood in a confined society. Its portrait of bourgeois life in regional France in the 19th century is vivid and compelling reading.

F 1856 361pp **B0107**

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand

Helen Simonson

Major Ernest Pettigrew, a widower, is grieving for his brother when he answers the door to Mrs Ali, a widow. They find they share a love of literature, and their friendship soon becomes the subject of slanderous town gossip. Set in a rural English village, this story is told with insight, wit, and dignity. It is an unconventional, romantic comedy of manners that offers much to discuss.

F 2010 388pp **B2077**

Mansfield Park 🗣️ Jane Austen

This heroine lacks the obvious temperamental, physical and material advantages of Elizabeth Bennet or Emma Woodhouse. As Fanny Price struggles to make her way among luckier, more extroverted and less scrupulous people, Austen's writing combines metaphorical subtlety and comic delight.

F 1814 462pp **B0576**

Mateship with Birds Carrie Tiffany

This is a pitch-perfect depiction of the freedoms and strictures of country town life in the 1950s Australian countryside. Lonely neighbours Harry and Betty lust after each other. To complicate matters, Harry is also a father figure to Betty's son; but it all goes wrong when he tries to teach him about love and lust. Contains sexual references.

F 2012 211pp **B2159**

The Mint Lawn Gillian Mears

A 25-year-old woman's struggles with an unsatisfying marriage, childhood and her mother's death are conveyed in sensual, obsessively physical prose. A strong sense of a small New South Wales river town. Contains some unpleasant material that may offend.

F 1991 298pp **B1332**

The Mistake Wendy James

A decision to adopt out a baby illegally comes back to haunt Jodie Garrow twenty-five years later. The ensuing investigation puts pressure on the life and family she has since built as Jodie becomes entangled in a media witch hunt. Wendy James explores family dynamics, motherhood, and the powerful role of the media today.

F 2012 278pp **B2148**

Moral Hazard Kate Jennings

Cath's much-loved older husband begins to succumb to Alzheimer's.

To earn the money needed for his care, Cath finds work on Wall Street as an executive speechwriter and commutes between two dementias – one of men, power and greed, the other of the crumbling away of the love of her life. A mordant, harrowing, unsentimental novel.

F 2002 175pp **B1672**

The Morbids Ewa Ramsey

SHORTLISTED
ABIA Literary Fiction Book of the Year

After recovering from a near fatal car accident, Caitlin's confidence has been shaken. She retreats into her work, drinking more than she should, and joining a support group for victims of mortality anxiety, nicknamed The Morbids. When she meets an attractive young doctor, she determines to overcome her phobia and embrace life once more.

F 2020 368pp **B2347**

The Mother Wound Amani Haydar

WINNER
Non-fiction Prize: Victorian Premier's Literary Awards

The author lost her own mother to brutal domestic violence by her father. Five months pregnant, her perceptions were reshaped by this shocking murder. She reassessed everything she knew of her parents' relationship. A lawyer, she saw holes in the justice system for dealing with abuse and coercive control. Amani uses her strength and experience to help other survivors to find their voices.

N 2021 352pp **B2374**

The Mothers' Group Fiona Higgins

Following six very different women in a mothers' group through the first years of their babies' lives, this novel explores motherhood and themes such as marriage, new parenting, and dealing with loss. One day, a shocking event changes everything, testing the women's bonds and revealing secrets that threaten to shatter their lives.

F 2012 312pp **B2149**

N Normal People 🗣️

Sally Rooney

WINNER
Costa Book Award

Connell and Marianne are from the same town, but their lives shouldn't be this intertwined. A relationship forms between them as they grow up and attend Trinity College in Dublin. An intelligent and thoughtful insight into the complexities of intimate relationships and an unflinching exploration about femininity and

masculinity in a modern-day setting. The novel is sharp, the characters three-dimensional and the writing is intelligent. It is sure to provoke discussion on intimacy, relationships and so-called normality. Contains sexual content.

F 2018 288pp **B2293**

Northanger Abbey 🗣️ Jane Austen

A high spirited, enjoyable satire on romance mysteries and gothic tales of horror; one of Austen's earliest and most literary works that includes a spirited defence of novels.

F 1818 252pp **B1199**

O Of Love and Shadows

Isabel Allende

Irene, a journalist, has enjoyed a privileged upbringing and is engaged to an army captain when she is partnered with photographer Francisco. They soon become an inseparable investigative team. When they discover an unspeakable crime perpetrated under the chilling political regime of their country, they must risk everything to reveal the truth – and to admit the truth about their passion for each other. A magical, captivating read.

F 1987 298pp **B1349**

This is a beautifully written love story set amid the realistic words of a Latin American country with mass murders and uncertainty. The author has the skill to weave four different families so you could understand and engage with different characters.
Warrandyte 5

Olive Kitteridge 🗣️ Elizabeth Strout

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

This series of stories is connected by the character of teacher Olive Kitteridge in a small coastal town in Maine, and combines 'the sustained, messy investigation of the novel with the flashing insight of the short story... It illuminates both what people understand about others and what they understand about themselves' – *The New York Times*. Small print.

F **S** 2008 270pp **B2060**

On Chesil Beach 🗣️ Ian McEwan

It's 1962. Newlyweds Edward and Florence arrive at a hotel on the Dorset coast. They believe their marriage will bring them happiness but each faces their wedding night with unspoken fears. A brilliant portrait of how a word not spoken can shape an entire life. Contains sexual content.

F 2007 166pp **B1954**

P

Paula Isabel Allende

'In ... 1991 my daughter, Paula, fell gravely ill. These pages were written during the interminable hours spent ... beside her bed.' The novelist mother embarks on the most magical, real and passionate of all her stories, containing the family legends, Chile's dramatic history, and the poignant progress of Paula's illness. Perhaps more Isabel's than Paula's saga.

N 1994 330pp **B1493**

Perfect Skin Nick Earls

A single father juggles his day job as a consulting dermatologist with the needs of his six-month-old daughter Lily. Brisbane writer Nick Earls brings us a very now novel with a lot about bad 1980s fashion and music, email etiquette, and dating thirty-somethings. Full of insight, perceptive social comment and Earls' comedic instinct.

F 2000 354pp **B1688**

Persuasion Jane Austen

How far should one yield to persuasion from older, wiser, loving people? When is advice an interference? In Jane Austen's last completed work her characteristic incisiveness gains an autumnal tone.

F 1818 264pp **B0596**

The Philosopher's Doll Amanda Lohrey

What happens when one partner wants a child and the other doesn't? In a culture of affluence, what do we need to be happy, and how much control do we have over our lives? This is an accomplished novel exploring contemporary life and how to 'have it all'.

F 2004 306pp **B1822**

Plain Jane Joan Barfoot

A plain 28-year-old woman, living alone, working in a library, impulsively answers an advertisement to become the pen pal of a prisoner – and changes her life. Easy to read, wry and surprisingly tense.

F 1992 243pp **B1421**

Enjoyed *The Sense of an Ending*?

Try *Noah's Compass*
by Anne Tyler
B2084

The Poet's Wife Mandy Sayer

Sayer chronicles her turbulent marriage to poet Yusef Komunyakaa in this unflinching and intelligent memoir. She was twenty-two and he nearly forty when they met; she a busker, and he an out of work professor – yet each found a kindred spirit in the other. *The Poet's Wife* examines their troubled relationship, and follows Sayer's development as a writer.

N 2014 417pp **B2207**

Portrait of a Marriage Nigel Nicolson

Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville West were married for forty-nine years. During this time each had affairs with others of the same sex, notably Vita and Virginia Woolf, yet they remained inseparably united. Written by their son, much of the book is based on work obviously intended to be his mother's autobiography.

N 1973 237pp **B1073**

Poum and Alexandre: A Paris Memoir Catherine de Saint Phalle

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

Set in post-war Paris during the decline of the bourgeois class, this beautifully written memoir follows Catherine as she recounts her unconventional childhood through the life of her mother, Poum, and her father, Alexandre, two flawed eccentrics with a love of mythology and the old ways. A tender memoir about acceptance, loneliness and freedom through the observant eyes of a child.

N 2016 256pp **B2254**

Pride and Prejudice Jane Austen

Amusing and astringent. This brilliant novel has become Austen's most loved work. The delightfully spirited Elizabeth Bennet must contend with the antics of her inappropriate younger sisters, her hapless parents, and the suitors that begin approaching herself and older sister Jane. She must also learn to overcome her own faults as she deals with those of her romantic interests.

F 1813 327pp **B0210**

Prodigal Summer Barbara Kingsolver

Over one humid summer in southern Appalachia, as the urge to procreate overtakes the countryside, three characters discover their connections to one another and to the flora and fauna with which they share a place. A lavish and sexually exuberant read.

F 2000 447pp **B1690**

R

The Reader Bernhard Schlink

A fifteen-year-old German student becomes involved with a thirty-six-year-old woman. Long after she has disappeared from his life, Michael has cause to reassess the Hanna he knew. This haunting tale raises profound questions about action, choice, judgement and Germany's recent past. Good clear print.

F 1995 216pp **B1562**

The Rosie Effect Graeme Simsion

Simsion's humour shines throughout in the second book in the Don Tillman trilogy. Don is 'not fond of surprises, especially if they disrupt plans already in place', so he is dazed by Rosie's revelation of his impending fatherhood. Don's fears see him return to old ways, risking his newfound happiness as he comes to terms with the unpredictability of life.

F 2014 368pp **B2217**

The Rosie Project Graeme Simsion

In this first book in the Don Tillman trilogy, Don Tillman, professor of genetics, leads a very ordered life. He has launched 'The Wife Project' in a bid to find a suitable mate, but things go awry when impulsive barmaid Rosie Jarman enters his life and he finds himself agreeing to help find her father. This feel-good comic novel and celebrates difference, tolerance and the transformative power of the unexpected.

F 2013 324pp **B2182**

We all enjoyed this book, & felt it was a feel-good happy relaxed experience. Our discussion was indeed stimulated and we all felt that we would recommend this book to others. Simsion's succinct turn of phrase was greatly appreciated.
Lismore 2

The Rosie Result Graeme Simsion

A hilarious and heartfelt conclusion to the bestselling trilogy that began with *The Rosie Project*. Don and Rosie are back in Melbourne and facing new challenges. Don realises that is isn't enough to be the World's Best Problem-Solver – he has to embark on his most important project yet and learn how to be a satisfactory parent and partner.

F 2019 384pp **B2303**

S

Sense and Sensibility Jane Austen

Austen portrays sisters Elinor and Marianne, each with contrasting temperaments and inclinations. In their story, she explores distinctions between wisdom and feeling, reserve and secrecy, spontaneity and steadiness.

F 1811 368pp **B1085**

The Sense of an Ending Julian Barnes

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

Tony Webster has lived an ordinary, relatively unexamined life. Then, in retirement, an unexpected bequest forces him to revisit memories of his school friends and university days that he had thought immutable. This is a small novel that skilfully tackles big themes such as memory, ageing, love, truth, and regret.

F 2011 150pp **B2138**

Shadow Lines Stephen Kinnane

Englishman Edward Smith emigrated to Australia and met Jessie Argyle, who was born in the remote East Kimberley and taken from her Aboriginal family at the age of five. In a deeply racially divided society, Jessie and Edward fell in love and married. Despite official surveillance and harassment, their Perth home became a centre for Aboriginal cultural and social life.

N 2003 414pp **B1842**

Shallows Tim Winton

A small coastal town in Western Australia clings to one of its few surviving industries, whaling. The township witnesses struggle between whalers and conservationists; the community divides; a marriage founders.

F 1984 235pp **B1213**

Small Blessings Emily Brewin

The new novel by the author of *Hello, Goodbye* is a moving tale of motherhood and friendships. Rosie is struggling to make a life for herself and her son when her ex-boyfriend comes back into the picture. Isobel is trying to balance her career and starting a family, and past issues threaten to make themselves known. Circumstances brings the two women together in a story of hope, friendship and second chances.

F 2019 248pp **B2302**

Sorrow and Bliss

Meg Mason

The story of a woman who knows there is something wrong with her but she doesn't know what. By the time she does learn what is wrong, it no longer seems to matter. A sad and witty novel set in London and Oxford, dark and tender, full of pathos and fury.

F 2020 352pp **B2353**

A Stranger Here

Gillian Bouras

Three characters, each commenting on a crisis that concerns them: Irene, an Australian mother of three and wife to a Greek husband, suddenly quits her marriage and the village in Greece.

F 1996 247pp **B1507**

The Submerged Cathedral

Charlotte Wood

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Haunting story about the consuming love between an editor and a doctor. When their relationship is disrupted by family tragedy, grief forces them to separate and embark on personal journeys of discovery.

F 2004 302pp **B1846**

The gardeners in our group especially enjoyed the details.
Mullumbimby Huon Books

Sweet Old World

Deborah Robertson

When troubled teen Esther tumbles into his life, David's initial resistance to involvement changes. Examination of the often-ignored male side of yearning for parenthood, and the importance of hope.

F 2012 224pp **B2150**

T

Theft: A Love Story

Peter Carey

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

An artist, divorced and bankrupt, acts as caretaker for his patron's remote estate and his damaged brother. When he meets American beauty Marlene, a chain of unpredictable events unfolds. Darkly funny, thought-provoking story of love, responsibility and redemption.

F 2006 269pp **B1981**

Thinks . . .

David Lodge

An academic star in a trendy field of research meets a novelist arriving at university to teach, in recovery from the death of her husband. Despite their differences they begin an affair – with complicated and amusing consequences.

F 2001 342pp **B1678**

Three Dog Night

Peter Goldsworthy

A disturbing narrative of obsessive love, mortality and self-deception on a desert trip where the Australian landscape and Indigenous rituals amplify ambiguities and complexities of the characters.

F 2003 342pp **B1850**

The Time Traveler's Wife

Audrey Niffenegger

Clare and Henry, met when Clare was 6 and Henry was 36 and were married when Clare was 22 and Henry 30. Henry suffers from a rare condition where his genetic clock periodically resets and he finds himself pulled into his past or future. A moving love story.

F 2004 518pp **B2002**

To the Wedding

John Berger

An army doctor during China's Cultural Revolution, falls in love with a modern, educated woman, but he is trapped in an arranged marriage to a work-worn loyal wife in his village. Until she agrees to divorce him, nothing will be possible. A novel of love and enforced obedience highlights the chasm between new industrial China and ancient agricultural settlements.

F 1995 202pp **B1546**

Too Much Happiness

Alice Munro

Extraordinary events touch everyday lives in this collection of short fiction from Canadian writer and Nobel Prize winner. Intensely believable characters and rich social detail.

F S 2009 303pp **B2108**

The Transit of Venus

Shirley Hazzard

SHORTLISTED
National Book Award

Explores the power of love, and its passing, through the lives of two young Australian sisters who go to London in the care of a difficult relative. An incisive study of relationships. Demanding, but rewarding.

F 1980 337pp **B0162**

There were some wonderful descriptions and there was plenty of discussion.
Geelong Gardeners

V

A Visit from the Goon Squad

Jennifer Egan

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Bennie, ex-punk rocker and record executive, and Sasha, his troubled young employee: discover their pasts in intimate detail, along with the secret lives of other characters whose paths intersect, over many years, across the world.

F 2010 340pp **B2129**

W

Waiting

Ha Jin

Two families, two sons and two marriages, brought together by a friendship of two men, a New York art critic and an experimental artist. The story shifts from family and art into an urban thriller, complete with violence, duplicity, murder and erotica.

F 1999 308pp **B1897**

Water Under the Bridge

Sumner Locke Elliott

A novel of life in Sydney during and after the Depression. Murder, comedy and spoiled dreams are the stuff of this exceptional novel.

F 1977 367pp **B1132**

We Are All Made of Glue

Marina Lewycka

Georgie's husband's left her. Her son is obsessed with the End of the World. And now her elderly neighbour has decided they are related and names Georgie next of kin. She inherits a large house full of stinky cats that need looking after and estate agents intent on swindling her. Georgie must stop her life from falling apart

F 2009 432pp **B2048**

Enjoyed We Are All Made of Glue?

Try Two Caravans by Marina Lewycka B1982

The Weekend

Charlotte Wood

WINNER
ABIA Book of the Year

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

LOONGLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Sylvie has passed away. Her long-term friends Judith, Adele and Wendy head to Sylvie's beach house to clear it out at Christmas. But memories and frustrations loom as their friendship begins to disintegrate. An intricate novel of relationships, ageing and grief, full of humour as well as sadness.

F 2019 272pp **B2332**

What I Loved

Siri Hustvedt

The New York art scene is the context for this powerful novel about two families, two sons and two marriages, brought together by the friendship between the two men, an art critic and an experimental artist. With a change of gear, the story shifts from family and art into an urban thriller, complete with violence, duplicity, murder and erotica. Hustvedt's novel brims with ideas and emotion.

F 2003 370pp **B1851**

The Women in Black

Madeleine St John

1950s Sydney: women working at a famous department store see their hopes, fears and romances unfold in a confined and changing society as they experience a new chapter of their lives.

F 1993 228pp **B2041**

Wrack

James Bradley

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Historical detection, academic and amorous rivalry, with passions of love and war, focused on the wrecked Portuguese Mahogany Ship, a discovery that will rewrite history.

F 1997 341pp **B1548**

Wuthering Heights

Emily Brontë

Adopted by Catherine Linton's father, young Heathcliff is bullied by Catherine's brother. Returning later as a grown and powerful man, the consequences of Heathcliff's vengeance will be far-reaching.

F 1847 376pp **B0002**

Step Back in Time

Take a journey back to days gone by. Covering thousands of years of human activity, this chapter contains historical fiction, nonfiction and biography.



A

According to Queeney Beryl Bainbridge

Savour this complex and fascinating fictionalisation of the twenty-year relationship between the acclaimed Samuel Johnson and his benefactor, Mrs Thrale, according to her daughter Queeney. A wonderful observer of human folly, Bainbridge tells a candid story of unrequited love, passion, rejection and possession, skilfully exposing the sexual tensions that lie beneath the surface of Georgian London. Loosely plotted through a series of letters, her concise style brings a cast of remarkable characters vividly to life.

F 2001 244pp **B1947**

All the Light We Cannot See

Anthony Doerr

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Werner attends a Nazi boarding school, gratefully escaping the mines of his hometown; Marie Laure, blind from a young age, adores her father who brings the world alive for her. Their eventful childhoods unfold until their paths cross in Nazi-occupied France in the walled port city of Saint Malo, where Marie Laure hides from heavy shelling – and from a stranger who has hunted her from afar.

F 2014 544pp **B2228**

As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning Laurie Lee

Another re-creation of times gone by from the author of *Cider with Rosie*, this book deals with Spain before the Civil War, seen through the eyes of a young man destined to become a well-known British writer.

F 1969 186pp **B0524**

Enjoyed
At Home?

Try **The Secret Life
of Money**
by Valerie Wilson
B1719

At Home Bill Bryson

An entertaining, witty and illuminating look at how history shapes our everyday lives. From the history of hygiene brought to bear in the bathroom, to nutrition and the spice trade brought home to the kitchen, Bryson's great skill is making daily life simultaneously strange and familiar, helping us to recognise ourselves.

N 2010 544pp **B2096**

B

Bearbrass Robyn Annear

The authorial self-description sets the delightful and bracing tone: 'Robyn Annear is a typist and lives in country Victoria with somebody else's husband'. History has never been such fun, and Melbourne – 'Bearbrass' – won't be the same after this anecdotal, irreverent, informative book about its past and present.

N 1995 290pp **B1471**

Bereft Chris Womersley

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

In 1919, Quinn Walker returns home from war, having fled his hometown as a teenager falsely accused of killing his younger sister. On his return, he remains both an outsider and a wanted man. He meets a young orphan girl, Sadie, who seems to know more about the crime and about Quinn than she should, and she encourages him to take justice into his own hands.

F 2010 264pp **B2106**

The Birth House Ami McKay

During the First World War, young Dora befriends elderly Miss Babineau, midwife in a small fishing village in Nova Scotia, Canada. Together, they help the women of Scots Bay through difficult labour, infertility, and even marital troubles. But when Dr Gilbert Thomas moves to town with his promise of modern medicine, everything changes. 'An impressive novel, laced with quirky research and rippling with muscular poetry' – *Observer (UK)*.

F 2006 385pp **B2023**

Bomb, Book and Compass: Joseph Needham and the Great Secrets of China Simon Winchester

From the author of *The Surgeon of Crowthorne* and *The Map That Changed the World*. In 1937 Needham, a distinguished biochemist working at Cambridge University and married to a fellow scientist, was asked to supervise a young Chinese student named Lu Gwei Djen. He fell in love with both Lu and China and established himself as the pre-eminent China scholar, documenting everything from Chinese medicine to philosophy and nautical history.

N 2008 336pp **B2021**

The Book Thief

Markus Zusak

Liesel is sent to live with a foster family near Munich in World War Two, and with the help of her accordion-playing foster father, learns to read. She is soon stealing books, which she shares with her neighbours and the Jewish refugee hiding in the basement. 'Death' is the unconventional narrator of this international bestseller by an Australian author.

F 2005 550pp **B1995**

NEW

The Bookbinder of Jericho Pip Williams

In this beautiful companion to the international bestseller *The Dictionary of Lost Words* [B2317], Pip Williams explores another little-known slice of history seen through women's eyes. Evocative, subversive and rich with unforgettable characters. It is a story about knowledge: who gets to make it, who has access, and what is lost when it is withheld.

F 2023 432pp **B2382**

Bring Larks and Heroes Thomas Keneally

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

This imaginative reconstruction of a convict settlement in Australia in the 1790s tells of the physical and mental demands made on soldier poet Corporal Halloran: demands by his secret bride, his

superiors, his Irish comrades and most of all by his conscience.

F 1967 248pp **B0166**

Bring Up the Bodies

Hilary Mantel

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

The sequel to Man Booker Prize winner *Wolf Hall*, this novel concentrates on the short, brutal period of Anne Boleyn's downfall. Thomas Cromwell is at the height of his powers, masterfully negotiating court politics to secure Henry VIII a way out of his failed marriage. This is a 'must read' for those who enjoy Mantel's stylish prose and sly wit.

F 2012 410pp **B2155**

Burial Rites Hannah Kent

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

In Iceland, 1829, Agnes Magnúsdóttir awaits execution. *Burial Rites* chronicles the life that brought Agnes to this point, and explores the effect the doomed woman has on those who spend time with her in her last months. Kent evokes a harsh world in which residents battle for survival, a sense of identity and freedom.

F 2013 335pp **B2193**

Bush Studies Barbara Baynton

These sharply effective stories share time and setting with Lawson's. But Baynton's treatment strips away the romance and the heroics from the bush and its characters. Contains 'Squeaker's Mate', the basis of a controversial film.

F S 1902 140pp **B1055**

C

Caleb's Crossing Geraldine Brooks

SHORTLISTED
Queensland Premier's Literary Awards

Another compelling historical novel from the author of *People of the Book*, *Year of Wonders* and *March*. This is inspired by the life of Caleb Cheeshahteumuck, born in 1646, the first Native American to graduate from Harvard. He befriends Bethia, who lives within a Puritan settlement.

F 2011 369pp **B2109**

Célestine Gillian Tindall

In a French peasant village, Tindall, an English historian, came across a bundle of letters from the 1860s, addressed to a young woman, Célestine Chaumette, and used them to carefully reconstruct the lives of the village and its people. Subtitled 'Voices from a French Village', this thoughtful social history is detailed and complex, creating a vivid sense of ordinary daily lives and struggles.

N 1995 292pp **B1486**

Charles Hotham Shirley Roberts

Appointed governor of the colony of Victoria, Hotham was soon faced with troubles in the goldfields and the Eureka crisis. Before this, his naval career was distinguished and varied. Of particular note was his posting in West Africa where his squadron was engaged in suppressing the trans-Atlantic slave trade. A lucid and positive assessment of Hotham's contribution to public life. Pleasant hardcover volume: clarity of the print is excellent.

N 1985 201pp **B1241**

NEW

The Colony Audrey Magee



LONGLISTED
Booker Prize

A painter from England and a linguist from France arrive on a remote Irish island, both wanting to extract their own kind of truth. But the people who live there have their own views about what is being taken and what is given in return.

F 2022 372pp **B2384**

Come in Spinner Dymphna Cusack & Florence James

Wartime Sydney, and the influx of American servicemen, is illuminated through the eyes of six women working in the beauty parlour of a large hotel. An interesting portrayal of urban working class Australian society.

F 1951 445pp **B0568**

The Corset Laura Purcell

When sixteen-year-old Ruth is imprisoned and awaiting trial for murder, 'charitable' lady Dorothea wants to use Ruth to explore her theories on phrenology, the science of skull measuring. But when the two women meet, Ruth recounts her devastating life of entrenched poverty, child labour and the strange ability to channel her pain into her

embroidery. Can there be truth to Ruth's strange tale? This evocative gothic novel set in the rough streets of Victorian London asks the question: Is Ruth mad, or a murderer?

F 2018 416pp **B2296**

Cranford Elizabeth Gaskell

First published in instalments in a magazine edited by Dickens, this is an affectionate portrait of people and small-town customs and values in mid-Victorian England. In a series of satirical sketches, Gaskell describes with humour and tenderness the lives of good-natured spinster Miss Matty, her maid Martha, and narrator Mary Smith.

F 1853 312pp **B0010**

Dancing with Strangers Inga Clendinnen

WINNER
NSW Premier's Literary Awards

'These people mixed with ours,' wrote James Bradley, 'and all hands danced together.' What went wrong between the British settlers of New South Wales and the Australian inhabitants they encountered? Arthur Phillip and the local leader Bennelong pursued a difficult path to conciliation; we follow the painful end of that relationship as cultural differences asserted themselves.

N 2003 324pp **B1826**

The Dictionary of Lost Words Pip Williams

In the late 19th century, Esme hides beneath the sorting table as lexicographers find words for the first *Oxford English Dictionary*. Soon she discovers that certain words are deemed more significant than others, and this results in women's stories remaining untold. A hidden history of women and words, set around the suffragette movement, this is a lyrical joy to read.

F 2020 384pp **B2317**

The Dressmaker's Secret Rosalie Ham

It is 1953 and Melbourne society is looking forward to coronation season, the grand balls and celebrations for the young monarch-to-be. Tilly Dunnage is, however, working for a pittance in a second-rate Collins Street salon. Her talents go unappreciated and the madame is a bully and a cheat, but Tilly has a past that she is desperate to escape and good reason to prefer anonymity.

F 2020 384pp **B2363**

Electricity Victoria Glendinning

This high voltage, informative novel set in Victorian England is a portrayal of Charlotte Mortimer and her surprising life, illuminating the family, sexual and social mores of a culture undergoing great changes.

F 1995 250pp **B1527**

Empire Falls Richard Russo

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

A dying mill town in central Maine is the setting for Russo's portrait of ordinary people swept up in economic and political forces as seen through Miles, a cook at the Empire Grill. The characters' behaviour and preoccupations are utterly compelling without high drama or exaggeration. It gently reminds us that life itself, though often painful, must be cherished.

F 2001 483pp **B1684**

Fire Under the Snow Palden Gyatso

Tibet, the last spiritual society, met an avowedly materialist China, and lost. Gyatso, then seventeen, and a monk, tells the strangest story, and the history of contemporary Tibet. Is reality only materiality? Striving here, innocence, naïveté, brutality, brainwashing, imprisonment, hope, David and Goliath. Goliath wins, but the Wheel turns. A rarity.

N 1997 232pp **B1570**

The Fireflies of Autumn Moreno Giovannoni

In the Tuscan village of San Ginese, people dream of other places. Some leave, returning regretful; others never leave but wish they could. In these tales from the author's home town, the reader will explore Italian olive groves and piazzas, meet the Angel of Sadness, Tommaso the Killer, the Adulteress and the Dead Boy. A chronicle of feasts, war and miracles.

F 2018 272pp **B2341**

The Floating Brothel Siân Rees

The Lady Julian sailed in 1789 for Botany Bay with a cargo of female convicts. Rees writes vividly of the social pressures which led to female crime, of squalid prison conditions, the routines on an 18th-century sailing ship and a pragmatic approach whereby both men at sea and in the young colony might be provided with women. Both aboard

and in Australia, many women convicts found a life preferable to the one they had left behind.

N 2001 248pp **B1641**

The Forgotten Garden Kate Morton

This is an international bestseller of family secrets, gothic mysteries and fairy tales. When Cassandra travels from Brisbane to the Cornish coast and a cottage she inherited from her grandmother, she discovers a garden which holds the secret to her grandmother's birth and journey to Australia as a stowaway.

F 2008 549pp **B2116**

Galileo's Daughter Dava Sobel

Galileo was the foremost scientist of his day, fighting Church opposition for acceptance of his heresy that the sun, not the earth, was the centre of our solar system. His much-loved daughter Maria Celeste, consigned to a convent at an early age, wrote to her father throughout her life, and Sobel has woven a clever narrative around these. A fascinating account of everyday life in 17th century Italy.

N 1999 429pp **B1758**

The Glass Room Simon Mawer

Viktor and Liesel Landauer build their modern home in the countryside of the Czech Republic in 1928. But when the Nazis rise to power, the Landauers have to flee. The house witnesses the Nazis and the Soviet invasion, but when Communism falls and the Czech Republic becomes an independent country again, the Landauers can return home.

F 2009 404pp **B2125**

The Good People Hannah Kent

SHORTLISTED
Readings Prize

SHORTLISTED
Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction

When Nora Leahy loses her husband and her daughter, she is left as the sole carer for Michael, her four-year-old grandson who cannot walk or speak and demands her attention at all times. Desperate to end the superstitious gossip of the townsfolk surrounding Michael's deformities, Nora seeks out Nance Roche, a recluse who claims to have the otherworldly knowledge to banish the evil from her grandson. Set in 1900s poverty-stricken Ireland, *The Good People* is a chilling story about the extremes of superstition and faith.

F 2016 380pp **B2258**

Go Set a Watchman

Harper Lee

This newly rediscovered manuscript was intended as Lee's first novel before her editor suggested focusing on young Scout's perspective in what became the Pulitzer winning *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Lee's original text is published with no revisions, and sees an adult Scout returning to Maycomb twenty years after the events of *Mockingbird*. Whatever you think of the controversy surrounding the book's release, it will certainly stimulate discussion.

F 2015 320pp **B2218**

Gould's Book of Fish

Richard Flanagan

This novel plucks a real-life thief and prisoner, English forger William Gould, from the pages of history to act as protagonist-narrator. Sentenced to a prison colony off the Tasmanian coast, Gould recounts his life story as he paints the island's native fish, recalling his grim childhood and ill-fated life of crime. Flanagan's darkly humorous tale of the 19th-century world of convicts and colonists slips between the real and the fantastic.

F 2001 404pp **B1675**

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

Mary Ann Shaffer

In January 1946, Juliet receives a letter which leads to an ongoing correspondence with the members of a Guernsey group formed during the German occupation of the Channel Islands. When Juliet goes to meet her new friends, her life changes in unexpected ways. This warm and witty epistolary novel is a celebration of books and an exploration of friendship, love, and sacrifice.

F 2008 273pp **B2032**

Gulliver's Wife

Lauren Chater

London, 1702. Midwife and mother Mary Burton Gulliver has rebuilt her life in the absence of her husband, lost at sea. But when he returns, with wild tales of mythical lands, everything familiar is disrupted. In a world of poverty and violence, she must find the truth and a way forward for her family and the women in her care. An imaginative look at an untold side of Gulliver's Travels.

F 2020 416pp **B2321**

Guns, Germs and Steel

Jared Diamond

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize for Nonfiction

Ambitiously subtitled 'A short history of everybody for the last 13,000 years', this is a thought-provoking book on human history, tackling the difficult question of why human beings developed so differently on different continents. The writer of this Pulitzer Prize winning work on the origins of human inequality is an American scientist and explorer, whose writings aim to make science accessible. Small print.

N 1997 480pp **B1713**

H

The Help

Kathryn Stockett

In the American South in the early 1960s, aspiring writer Skeeter has graduated from university and returns home to pressure from her mother to get married. Aibileen is a black maid raising her seventeenth white child, with the knowledge that this child, too, will come to a certain age, and start to see her differently. Minny, Aibileen's best friend, keeps getting fired because she won't mind her tongue. The three women band together on a project that puts all of them at risk.

F 2009 451pp **B2074**

What a winner. All enjoyed this book for its challenging subject, its satire and in-depth interviews with the domestic help. We were all youngsters in the 60s and remember the racial upheaval in the US, the Ku Klux Klan and the assassination of Martin Luther King. It is almost autobiographical and a very brave subject to tackle. It was a very compelling read, a real page turner and not surprising it made a movie. It created much discussion and talk of generational opinions on racism from parents and grandparents.

Barwite Bookworms

A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters

Julian Barnes

Jokey, sorrowful, resilient, this unusual book is not so much a bird's as a worm's eye view of history – seeing it from the bottom up, hollowing out certainties, tackling the big human questions by storytelling and commentary.

F 1989 309pp **B1324**

Enjoyed
The Luminaries?

Try Nothing But Gold
by Robyn Annear
B1716

Human Croquet

Kate Atkinson

Isobel Fairfax, the appealing young narrator of this story, is both a character in her own right and representative of all storytellers. She has the ability to move in and out of 'normal' time, so that the novel consists of varied story strands with different and equally plausible endings. Part ghost story, part murder mystery, this novel is also a stimulating presentation of English history and people who have walked it.

F 1998 383pp **B1925**

I

Inglorious Empire

Shashi Tharoor

A former United Nations diplomat strikes back with the real story of the British colonial oppression and plunder of India. Tharoor reveals how Britain's Industrial Revolution with its wealth was founded on demolishing the Indian Empire, whose economy matched the entire European continent. An unapologetic and explosive look at the devastating effects of colonialism. Smallish print.

N 2017 336pp **B2287**

The Invention of Wings

Sue Monk Kidd

The new novel by the author of *The Secret Life of Bees* is inspired by the lives of abolitionist sisters Sarah and Angelina Grimké, born into a wealthy Charleston plantation in the mid-19th century. This is the story of their slave 'Handful', and the complex relationships with those around them, marked by guilt, defiance, and the uneasy ways of love.

F 2014 373pp **B2205**

The Invisible History of the Human Race

Christine Kenneally

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

What is the complex notion of identity? How can DNA shape cultures and whole nations? Award-winning journalist Christine Kenneally asks these questions and more, encompassing genealogy, science, cultural inheritance and the concept of race. This engrossing book explores what we inherit from the past, and guarantees hours of discussion.

N 2014 368pp **B2219**

J

Jack Maggs

Peter Carey

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Set in a vivid 19th century London, Carey's acclaimed novel in some ways reworks both *Great Expectations*, with Magwitch as Maggs, and the facts of Dickens' own life in the figure of Tobias Oates. Other characters like Mercy and Percy are pure Carey. Strongly, pacy and plot driven, it puts an Antipodean slant on the society from which Australia sprang.

F 1997 392pp **B1575**

L

The Lamp Still Burns

Isabel 'Spark' Gill

Brought up in the Victorian town of Clunes, Isabel Gill longed to be a nurse, and her autobiography records her training and experience in hospitals from 1936 to 1981. With many photographs, it provides a social history of changes in nursing, public health and medical practice.

N 1989 187pp **B1551**

The Law of Dreams

Peter Behrens

Behrens brings alive the catastrophe of the Irish potato famine with Fergus O'Brien, who is left alone at the age of fifteen. Sensing that he must keep moving if he is to live, he survives privation, danger and betrayals on his route to Canada.

F 2006 394pp **B1968**

The Lieutenant

Kate Grenville

Lieutenant Daniel Rooke arrives in New South Wales with the First Fleet in 1788 and sets up an observatory to study astronomy and navigation. Aboriginal people soon start to visit his isolated outpost and a child begins to teach him her language. As he meticulously records their conversations, an extraordinary friendship develops and Rooke soon faces a decision that will define not only who he is but the course of his entire life.

F 2008 320pp **B2031**



The Light Between Oceans

M.L. Stedman

 **SHORTLISTED**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Returned from WWI Europe, Tom is now lighthouse keeper on a remote island off Western Australia, with young wife Isabel his only companion. When tragedy touches their lives, they make a decision with far-reaching consequences. This moving story of love and loyalty probes the blurry line separating right and wrong, and the bond between mother and child.

F 2012 362pp **B2166**

The Little Wartime Library

Kate Thompson

In East London of 1944, Clara Button creates Britain's only underground library. A secret community thrives below – with thousands of bunk beds, a nursery, a café and a theatre – offering shelter and solace from the Blitz above. With her friend and assistant, Kate is determined to remain strong in the face of adversity. Based on true events, this is a gripping and heart-wrenching page turner.

F 2022 496pp **B2371**

The Luminaries

Eleanor Catton

 **WINNER**
Man Booker Prize

On the New Zealand goldfields in 1866, Walter Moody encounters twelve men gathered to solve a series of local crimes. In this vivid and intricate world, fortunes are made and lost and fate is governed by the stars. Ingeniously structured, *The Luminaries* reads like a 19th-century murder mystery, but with gripping hidden complexities.

F 2013 834pp **B2200**

The Madonnas of Leningrad

Debra Dean

As the German army blockades the beautiful city of Leningrad in World War II, all food stocks are destroyed, leaving the people to struggle for survival in the bombed out buildings. Recently employed as a custodian in the great art museum the Hermitage and now sheltering with others in its ruins, young Marina will always remember its great paintings of Madonna and Child. A moving exploration of the power of art and memory.

F 2006 231pp **B1971**

The Man Who Lost Himself

Robyn Annear

The author of *Bearbrass* tells a true story about a 19th-century adventurer with a difference. Annear's account of the contested Tichborne Inheritance sets out the evidence for readers to judge, yet retains the essential question: who was the Claimant?

N 2002 430pp **B1687**

March

Geraldine Brooks

 **WINNER**
Pulitzer Prize

Set during the first year of the American Civil War, Brooks evokes the life of John March, the absent father from Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. An anti-slavery idealist, March enlists with the Union troops – but his beliefs are challenged by the horrors of war. Familiarity with *Little Women* is not essential.

F 2005 338pp **B1888**

The author's descriptive powers were praised, whether highlighting the horrors of war or the pain endured on the cotton plantations.
Barwise Bookworms

Mary Barton

Elizabeth Gaskell

Gaskell's first novel is set in her native Manchester and follows two working-class families in the 1840s. John Barton begins questioning the unequal distribution of wealth, and becomes involved in the trade-union movement; his daughter, Mary, sees marriage as her only way out of poverty. Gaskell's wit shines through this clever, emotional tale of romance and murder.

F 1848 466pp **B0252**

Memoirs of a Geisha

Arthur Golden

Sold into a geisha house in 1929 at the age of nine, Sayuri describes the elaborate ritual of making the creature whose delicacy, artistry, conversation and seductiveness is captive to the entertainment of rich and powerful men. Artifice, eroticism, exploitation and survival are part of a world evoked in fascinating detail, and Sayuri's voice is perfectly captured by Golden.

F 1998 428pp **B1597**

Midnight's Children

Salman Rushdie

 **WINNER**
Booker Prize

 **WINNER**
Best of the Booker Winners

This vital, wide-ranging novel inventively relates stories and characters of India and Pakistan since independence, and shows how politics can penetrate the lives of ordinary and not so ordinary people. In the magic realism tradition, it is charged with Rushdie's intense creativity.

F 1981 463pp **B1145**

The Mirror and the Light

Hilary Mantel

 **SHORTLISTED**
Women's Prize for Fiction

The highly anticipated conclusion to Mantel's trilogy that began with *Wolf Hall* and *Bring up the Bodies*. Anne Boleyn has just been executed, and Thomas Cromwell celebrates with the victors as Henry VIII prepares to marry his new wife. But how long can Cromwell maintain his position, with the king turning on everyone around him? Recommended: a two month read.

F 2020 912pp **B2324**

Mr Darwin's Shooter

Roger McDonald

 **WINNER**
NSW Premier's Award for Fiction

 **WINNER**
Victorian Premier's Award for Fiction

What part did Syms Covington, Darwin's manservant, play in *On the Origin of Species*? Drawing on the sparse historical details of Covington's life, McDonald imagines his boyhood, his seafaring years, and his work collecting specimens with Darwin. Small print.

F 1999 369pp **B1598**

Mr Rosenblum's List

Natasha Solomons

Jakob is a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany who arrives in London in 1937, where he is handed a list of rules on how to assimilate. Jakob takes this seriously – he wants to fit in – and begins to update the list with observations of his own. His actions bewilder his wife Sadie, who clings to where they came from and who they left behind.

F 2010 311pp **B2081**

The Narrow Road to the Deep North

Richard Flanagan

 **WINNER**
Man Booker Prize

 **WINNER**
Prime Minister's Literary Award

In 1943, surgeon Dorrigo Evans is a prisoner of war on the Thai Burma railway. Haunted by his affair with the enigmatic Amy, his life intersects the lives of guards and fellow prisoners as they experience the daily brutalities – and their consequences. Juxtaposing beauty with terror, Flanagan explores the capabilities of the human spirit, and what makes up 'humanity' in a time of war.

F 2013 467pp **B2214**

The Night Watch

Sarah Waters

The Night Watch follows the intertwined lives and relationships of four characters, Kay, Helen, Viv and Duncan, revealing how the war has changed each of them. Through air raids, blacked out streets, illicit partying and sexual adventure, the novel begins in 1947 in peacetime and moves backwards to 1941, allowing Waters to connect her cast in sometimes startling ways.

F 2006 480pp **B1931**

This book was enjoyed by most of the group. It was agreed that it was a very well written and researched book. The riveting accounts of life in London during 1941 were deemed accurate by a member who lived through these years.
Baxter Bookworms

Nothing But Gold

Robyn Annear

The discovery of gold in Australia in 1851 tempted thousands to rush to try their luck. This spirited account of the first year or so of the Victorian goldfields conveys the day to day realities of getting there and making a go of it: winter's mud, summer's dust, the hard labour of digging, the unimaginable water and food, the violence and camaraderie, the exhilaration of being your own boss. A feisty recreation.

N 1999 329pp **B1716**

O

One for the Master Dorothy Johnston

Helen Plathe, a young girl, wife, mother, employee and citizen, tells her story in this powerful, modest and very readable novel set in Geelong, a Victorian country centre, in the decades after World War II. Johnston brings to life not only the characters in Helen's personal story but also the woollen mill with new technologies.

F 1997 270pp **B1544**

Orphans of History Robert Holden

A look at the lives of the thirty-four First Fleet children. Starting in the London of John Hudson, a nine-year-old chimney sweep sentenced to transportation, it follows the children to prison, the hulks, the voyage to Botany Bay and to Norfolk Island. Holden's tender, clear-sighted focus on children allows us access to new facts and insights about our nation's colonial origins.

N 1999 219pp **B1766**

P

Parrot and Olivier in America

Peter Carey

Aristocrat Olivier, inspired by the French nobleman Alexis de Tocqueville, who wrote *Democracy in America* travels to the new world to study the prison system, and to avoid another revolution; Parrot is a frustrated British artist who is sent with him as spy, protector and servant. On their journey, they develop an unlikely and enriching friendship.

F 2009 452pp **B2069**

A Passage to India

E.M. Forster

Set in the last decades of the Empire, this modern classic depicts a world of English, Hindu and Muslim difference and misunderstanding, and the land seems to have a mind of its own, opposed to friendship between races.

F 1924 280pp **B0012**

The Passion

Jeanette Winterson

Henri, a young French peasant, becomes Napoleon's chicken chef, and Villanelle is a Venetian fisher-girl born with webbed feet. The public and private passions of hero worship, war, gambling and love are explored with deft realism and magical inventiveness. A surprising and readable glimpse of early 19th century Europe.

F 1987 160pp **B1226**

People of the Book Geraldine Brooks

SHORTLISTED
Prime Minister's Literary Award

Pulitzer Prize winning author of *March* and bestselling novel *Year of Wonders* brings us the story of Hanna Heath, a renowned book conservator. She receives a call in the middle of the night about a medieval manuscript recovered from war-torn Sarajevo, and makes her way to Bosnia to restore the Sarajevo Haggadah, a Jewish prayer book, and to piece together the remarkable story of this manuscript.

F 2008 390pp **B1990**

Our group agreed in valuing the book and spoke of their enjoyment of the stories and research worked into the script.
Box Hill 2

Pure

Andrew Miller

Paris, 1785. Les Innocents cemetery is full of bursting and young provincial engineer Jean Baptiste Baratte is chosen to clear up the mess. The year he spends doing so, and the people he meets, are bound to change him forever. Pure is elegantly written, with fascinating characters and discussable subject matter such as themes of corruption, personal integrity and social unrest.

F 2011 352pp **B2146**

R

Ransom

David Malouf

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

A lyrical retelling of Homer's *Iliad*, set against the background of the Trojan War, Ransom is a meditation on grief and war. Described by the Australian as a 'masterpiece, exquisitely written, pithy and wise and overwhelmingly moving'.

F 2009 240pp **B2058**

The Red Tent

Anita Diamant

Narrated by Dinah, Jacob's only daughter in the Book of Genesis. From her upbringing by the four wives of Jacob, to becoming one of the most influential women of the time, Dinah's story brings to life women's lives during biblical times, from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt.

F 1998 395pp **B1997**

The Remains of the Day

Kazuo Ishiguro

WINNER
Booker Prize

For decades, Stevens has served as butler to Lord Darlington of Darlington Hall. Now he recalls a lifetime of service. Ishiguro perfectly captures the tone and outlook of one to whom dignity and correctness are all important. There is wonderful comedy here and a sense of the losses that may lie behind such a life.

F 1989 245pp **B1267**

Remembering Babylon David Malouf

WINNER
International Dublin Literary Award

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Gemmy Fairley stumbles into a white settlement perched on the Queensland coast in the middle of the 19th century. Is he white or black? In his new surroundings and with his affinity with the feared blacks, his presence is most unsettling. Another subtle reflection from Malouf on the sense of the self and the other.

F 1993 202pp **B1424**

S

The Safest Place in London

Maggie Joel

Two women, Nancy and Diana, flee with their three-year-old daughters to take refuge in an underground bomb shelter in London's East End, while their husbands are away at the frontlines of World War II. Set in 1944, the novel explores the struggles of those left behind and the hard choices that are made to remain safe.

F 2016 352pp **B2261**

Salt Creek

Lucy Treloar

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Fifteen-year-old Hester is troubled by her father's decision to move their family of nine from the comfort of 1850s Adelaide to a remote outpost on the Coorong River. When a native boy begins working and then living with their family, Hester watches powerlessly as colonialist prejudice comes to play out against the backdrop of a family – and a country – in flux.

F 2015 416pp **B2234**

Samuel Pepys Claire Tomalin

Pepys lived through and recorded the Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of London the following year, as well as the intimacies of daily life – theatre going, philandering, business affairs, tiffs with his wife, recorder lessons, hangovers, home improvements, clothes. Biographer Claire Tomalin revels in her subject's appetite for experience.

N 2002 499pp **B1797**

Sarah Thornhill Kate Grenville

SHORTLISTED
Prime Minister's Literary Award

Sarah is the daughter of William Thornhill of *The Secret River*. Nicknamed 'Dolly', she grows up in the relative privilege of her father's hard-won estate in early-settlement Australia, and she must come to terms with the tangled secrets and silent spaces wrought by violent colonisation. Kate Grenville's masterful story and colourful characters will stay with you.

F 2011 304pp **B2115**

Sea of Poppies Amitav Ghosh

India is on the eve of the first Opium War. Fleeing the violence of her village customs and caste laws, Deeti and 'untouchable' Kalua become servants on an old slave ship. The ship becomes a shelter to them and the people they meet on their eventful journey across the Indian Ocean. This is an immersive, rewarding read. Unmissable.

F 2008 480pp **B2017**

The Secret River

Kate Grenville

 **SHORTLISTED**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

 **WINNER**
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Grenville depicts the appalling poverty of William Thornhill, transported to New South Wales for theft, and his later awe at becoming a free man, able to claim land along the Hawkesbury and support his family. This novel brings alive the settler situation as well as the response of the Aboriginal people who already live on that land.

F 2005 334pp **B1934**

The Short Reign of Pippin IV

John Steinbeck

This light-hearted satire on French monarchy and politics is a long way from Steinbeck's usual subject – the landless farm labourers of America. As enjoyable as it is unexpected.

F 1957 168pp **B0212**

Sweet Caress

William Boyd

Amory Clay is a woman who knows her own mind. Born into a wealthy English family in 1908, her search for an interesting life will take her from scandal in 1920s Berlin to an affair in New York in the 1930s; from a stint as a war photojournalist in WWII France to the Vietnam War. The events of her life and the lovers she picks up along the way make for an engrossing story. Amory's spirit and humour will stay with you long after you finish this fascinating novel.

F 2015 464pp **B2243**

Sweet Tooth

Ian McEwan

In Britain of 1972 Serena is recruited by MI5 for Operation Sweet Tooth, a secret mission that brings Serena together with writer Tom Haley. Soon she falls in love and the rules of espionage fall away, but the truth is hard to discover. Set during the Cold War and a time of domestic terrorism, *Sweet Tooth* is complex, layered and beautifully written.

F 2012 370pp **B2178**

T

Tartar City Woman

Trevor Hay

Subtitled *Scenes from the Life of Wang Hsin ping, Former Citizen of China*. What understanding do you have of China's history between 1937 and 1990? This remarkable biography will make it live in your nerves and senses,

through Hay's account of the life of an outspoken, irrepressible Chinese woman, now living in Australia.

N 1990 181pp **B1291**

Tess of the D'Urbervilles

Thomas Hardy

Moral outrage greeted this classic story of a wronged woman, a child conceived outside marriage, and two men. Tess is bound up by the social forces of her time in this great 19th-century novel which remains relevant to the lives of women today.

F **L** 1891 512pp **B0084**

That Deadman Dance

Kim Scott

 **WINNER**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Award-winning author Kim Scott's novel is set in Western Australia in the 1800s. It tells the complex story of contact between Indigenous people and early settlers in a harsh landscape and is an engrossing tale of history. Scott offers a unique perspective on early European settlement.

F 2010 400pp **B2118**

The Thousand Autumns of Jacob De Zoet

David Mitchell

 **WINNER**
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

The novel begins in 1799 Japan. Jacob de Zoet is a Dutch bookkeeper, working for the Dutch East India Company, when he falls in forbidden love with a Japanese midwife. The Empire of Japan has shut out the outside world for a century and a half, but a European trading post keeps open a narrow corridor to the outside world. The midwife uncovers a dark and heart-breaking secret.

F 2010 480pp **B2093**

Tin Man

Sarah Winman

 **SHORTLISTED**
Costa Book Award

A tender and moving novel about two adolescent boys, Ellis and Michael, whose close friendship turns into first love until Annie walks into their life, and Michael disappears. As the novel switches from Ellis' to Michael's point of view, we discover the heartbreak of first love, the grief of moving on and the journey from boys to men. A short but beautiful read.

F 2017 224pp **B2285**

True History of the Kelly Gang

Peter Carey

 **WINNER**
The Age Book of the Year

 **WINNER**
Booker Prize

The enthralling voice of Carey's Ned draws the reader into understanding how a brave, loyal and gifted boy becomes the doomed, deluded yet compelling writer of Kelly's *Jerilderie Letter*. A wonderful exploration of family loves and tensions, rural poverty and hope, the novel gives a voice to Australia's oppressed, then as now longing to be heard.

F 2000 401pp **B1625**

U

Under the Same Sun

Andy Kissane

Two young Italian men migrate to Australia in 1951. One is a metalworker from northern Italy, the other an apprentice chef from the south. Part one immerses us in the different experiences and pressures leading to their journeys. Part two brings alive the opportunities, pains and prejudices they face, in their loves and their work, first in Sydney and then in the perilous Snowy Mountains Scheme.

F 2000 368pp **B1651**

W

Water for Elephants

Sara Gruen

Jacob Jankowski jumps onto a passing train and enters a world of swindlers and misfits. The second rate circus Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth is touring the backblocks of Depression era America. A former veterinary student, Jacob becomes caretaker of the circus menagerie. He meets Marlena, star of the equestrian act, her husband who is a violently unpredictable animal trainer, and Rosie, a seemingly unmanageable elephant.

F 2006 335pp **B1984**

We Must Be Brave

Frances Liardet

On a busload of passengers fleeing from the horrors of the Blitz to safety in a small English country town, local young woman Ellen finds a little girl alone on a bus. Ellen takes the child to her home convinced she will be claimed. As time goes by Ellen can't help getting attached. Is this the family she's been looking for? At times heart-wrenching and wondrous, this novel encapsulates a difficult time in history and questions the small moments that define what it means to be brave.

F 2019 464pp **B2310**

Wolf Hall

Hilary Mantel

 **WINNER**
Man Booker Prize

In England in the 1520s, Henry VIII finds himself without an heir by Catherine of Aragon, and charges Cardinal Wolsey with securing him a divorce already refused by the Pope. In comes Thomas Cromwell, whose rapid rise to power and ruthless agenda lead to reformation, uncertainty, and bloodshed. Two-month book.

F 2009 672pp **B2054**

Working for Rupert

Hugh Lunn

Hugh Lunn describes his seventeen years before the masthead on *The Australian* as Rupert Murdoch's 'foreign correspondent' in Queensland. Through most of the 1970s and 80s he parades us past a blur of editors, entertaining us in Lunn style, and talking about the newspaper world and how to write a story that people will read.

N 2001 244pp **B1655**

The Wreck

Meg Kenneally

Sailing from London to New South Wales in 1820, a woman fleeing arrest has escaped, or so she thinks. The ship is wrecked, leaving her as the only survivor. Adopting a new identity, she reinvents herself in a prosperous new life – until the past catches up with her.

F 2020 384pp **B2357**

Y

Year of Wonders

Geraldine Brooks

In 1665, the English village of Eyam became infected with the plague. Rather than risk spreading it, the villagers decided to quarantine themselves, and fear and superstition began to break down courage and faith. In Brooks' novel, housemaid Anna becomes an unlikely hero – but what is it like to survive while so many die? This is a poignant, unforgettable read told in Brooks' inimitable style.

F 2001 308pp **B1662**

Grand Visions

From the surreal to the speculative, these thought-provoking books cover consuming obsessions and alternate realities that challenge the way we view the world we live in.



1984 📖

George Orwell

Presents the classic dystopia, and a state in which the government has almost complete thought control. Orwell's ideas about totalitarian methods and speech are now part of the common language, and his depiction of suffering under totalitarian regimes is insightful.

📖 1949 312pp **B0029**

Our reactions to Orwell's writing and thoughts about the present and the future ranged from deep pessimism through to cautious optimism.

Mullumbimby Huon Books

A

The Accidental

Ali Smith



WINNER
Whitbread Novel Award

Amber, a seemingly harmless stranger, turns up at the Smarts' holiday home, and as she ingratiates herself with the family, the question of who she is fades away. Is her presence an innocent accident, or something more sinister? Smith presents a modern reworking of Passolini's 1968 film Theorem. Original, challenging and experimental writing, this skilfully crafted book will raise as many questions as it answers.

📖 2005 306pp **B1915**

Animal Farm 📖

George Orwell

Orwell's famous satire on mid-20th century political reality, telling how the animals revolt against the farmer and try to run their own affairs. Orwell raises issues about freedom and tyranny, and indicts Soviet leadership and totalitarianism.

📖 1945 120pp **B0071**

The Annotated Alice 📖

Lewis Carroll

This volume contains both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There* (1872) by Lewis Carroll, with drawings by Tenniel. As editor, Martin Gardner has included annotations to help explain some of Carroll's mysteries.

📖 1960 350pp **B0430**

Ape House

Sara Gruen

From the bestselling author of *Water for Elephants* comes this gentle, funny novel. Isabel is a scientist working with bonobos, who are capable of reason, love and developing relationships. When the bonobos are stolen and turn up on a reality TV series, Isabel teams up with journalist John in the fight to save them amidst a media circus.

📖 2010 303pp **B2126**

B

The Bees

Laline Paull



SHORTLISTED
Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction

Flora 717 is born a lowly worker bee, but unlike the others of her mute caste, she can speak. As Flora navigates the totalitarian regime of the beehive in this fascinating miniature world, she comes to a startling realisation – and then begins a double-life as a traitor to the hive. Illuminating in its exploration of difference, of feminism, and of institutionalised intolerance.

📖 2015 352pp **B2235**

All members present fully appreciated the research, imagination and writing skills that were very evident throughout the novel. We all delighted in the many exquisite descriptions and one member became truly involved in the book, calling it the best book she'd read in a long time.

Lismore 2 NSW

Beyond Black

Hilary Mantel



SHORTLISTED
Orange Prize

Mantel's imaginative thriller offers a darkly comic and unsettling universe: polluted 1990s Britain, where psychic medium Alison tours London with her sidekick, Colette. Intricately structured, elegant prose gives a biting portrait of dreads and desires which will evoke animated discussion, not least about the implications of facing one's past and demons. Contains themes that may disturb.

📖 2005 451pp **B1948**

NEW



Bila

Yarrudhanggalangdhuray

Anita Heiss



HIGHLY COMMENDED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

Set on timeless Wiradjuri country, where the life-giving waters of the rivers can make or break dreams, and based on devastating true events, *Bila Yarrudhanggalangdhuray* (River of Dreams) is an epic story of love, loss and belonging.

📖 2022 400pp **B2381**

The Blind Astronomer's Daughter

John Pipkin

Set in the 18th-century quest for scientific discovery, the story portrays a fictionalised account of astronomer, William Herschel, and his unknown rival Arthur Ainsworth and their obsession with decoding the night sky. When Arthur goes blind from staring at the sun, he chooses death, leaving behind his grief-stricken daughter to continue his work while confronting her own desires. Based on actual historical events, the novel explores the race to discover the planets, and the role women played in aiding these discoveries.

📖 2016 480pp **B2269**

Brave New World 📖

Aldous Huxley

A dystopian classic, this is a darkly humorous and poignant novel with much to discuss. In a future world dominated by mass production thanks to Henry Ford's innovations, a combination of genetic modification and brainwashing keep the population docile. But Bernard Marx is distressed and wants to break free from this society. This edition includes introductions by Margaret Atwood and David Bradshaw.

📖 1932 229pp **B2131**

C

Cabin Fever

Elizabeth Jolley

This second novel in the partly autobiographical trilogy concerns young Vera Wright and her efforts

in post-war England to survive as an unmarried mother in a world of scarcity and privation. A memorable, quirky study of loneliness and longing and the persistence of memory.

📖 1990 238pp **B1404**

Cape Grimm

Carmel Bird

Bird explores innocence and evil in a religious community on the coast of Tasmania. When cult leader Caleb sets fire to the group meeting house, all but three of the community perish. Blending traditional folk-tale elements with contemporary events, this explores our darker aspects and the reverberations of history.

📖 2004 302pp **B1825**

Capital

John Lanchester

Encompassing a cast of characters all connected to one suburban London street *Capital* reveals the state of British society at the start of the Global Financial Crisis. Sprawling but highly readable, this is a novel that addresses some big questions whilst remaining intimate and compassionate.

📖 2012 592pp **B2170**

Charades

Janette Turner Hospital

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

This novel interweaves an Australian girl's search for her father and her origins with her physicist lover's mind play about the origin of the universe, time and uncertainty. It ranges from Queensland's rainforests to Boston, to MIT and Toronto; from apparently sheltered Australian and Canadian lives to the aftermath of the Holocaust.

📖 1988 345pp **B1243**

A Child's Book of True Crime

Chloe Hooper

A young teacher has begun her first job at a Tasmanian primary school. Through her adulterous affair with the father of a pupil, she begins to confront issues surrounding childhood and adulthood. Distinctions between fantasy and reality blur. What is the true crime here?

📖 2002 238pp **B1670**

Circe

Madeline Miller

Born into the house of the sun god Helios, she is a strange child, scorned and rejected. Circe's powers of witchcraft cause her to be banished to a distant island. Her encounter with the mortal Odysseus will change everything. An utterly original novel told from the viewpoint of a defiant woman scorned by fickle gods, Circe is a must-read for fans of Greek mythology.

F 2018 352pp **B2301**

Closed for Winter

Georgia Blain

What happened to twelve-year-old Frances on that hot summer day at the beach? The question still haunts her younger sister, Elise, now in her twenties. Blain's evocative, well-wrought first novel uncovers past and present to arrive at an unexpected truth.

F 1998 249pp **B1709**

The Conjuror's Bird

Martin Davies

On the second expedition to the South Pacific by Captain James Cook, a rare species of bird was captured. He later presented the bird to naturalist Joseph Banks who displayed it until 1778 when it inexplicably disappeared from his collection. Two centuries later, the race is on to find the Mysterious Bird of Ulieta. Dual narratives shift between past and present to create an 18th-century romance inside a modern day thriller. Fast-paced and enjoyable.

F 2005 309pp **B1921**

A good yarn that allows the reader to do "some of the work". Loved the historical overtones with an Australian flavour. Interesting view of the changing values of conservation.
Camperdown: The Leura Literati

D

NEW

Daisy & Woolf

Michelle Cahill

Mina, a writer of mixed ancestry, refuses to lower her expectations. She discovers the 'dark, adorable' Eurasian character Daisy Simmons in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. Daisy vanished from those pages, with her story unfinished. Mina decides to write Daisy's story. In releasing Daisy from her fictional destiny, Mina finds the stubbornness and strength to also break free.

F 2022 304pp **B2385**



Death in Venice

Thomas Mann

An elegiac and disturbing evocation of life before the First World War. An austere German writer in his 50s, Gustav von Aschenbach, goes to Venice in failing health. While there he becomes obsessed by the beauty of a young boy and suffers a profound breakdown. A modern classic by this winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

F 1912 79pp **B1157**

Death of a River Guide

Richard Flanagan

WINNER
Victorian Premier's Award for Fiction

A drowning river guide is caught up in visions of the demanding story of his family, state and people. This strikingly imaginative Tasmanian novel conveys the feeling of the great Franklin River, and the uncensored experience and idiom of those who live in the physical, social and metaphorical wilderness.

F 1994 324pp **B1473**

The Devil's Larder

Jim Crace

Food is central to each of the sixty-four brief tales in this literary feast from English novelist Jim Crace, where meals are served with lashings of passion, recipes are spiced with unexpected challenges and hopes and the ingredients are hilarious, delightful and subversive. Full of exuberant invention.

F S 2001 193pp **B1683**

Dissection

Jacinta Halloran

Dedicated GP and mother of two boys, Anna's life begins to unravel when she is sued for medical negligence. Deeply ashamed of her mistake, she retreats into family life, only to become aware of her husband's growing interest in a younger woman. A confronting portrayal of a woman facing personal and professional crises.

F 2008 240pp **B2033**

E

Everyman's Rules for Scientific Living

Carrie Tiffany

WINNER
WA Premier's Award for Fiction

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

In 1934, Jean meets and marries soil scientist Robert. They settle in the impoverished Mallee, determined to realise Robert's ambition to live and farm by scientific principles. The ensuing struggle slowly chips away

at their idealism and relationship. Set against the backdrop of an impending threat of world war, Tiffany captures in a refreshing, quirky manner the hopes and disappointments of the era.

F 2005 256pp **B1906**

The Explosion Chronicles

Yan Lianke

Translated from Chinese, this story follows two feuding families and the second-born son's quest to transform his small village, called Explosion, into an urban metropolis. Poetic and imbued with elements of magical realism, the satirical novel critiques the rampant growth of capitalism in post-Mao China, and the consequences of corruption and greed.

F 2016 480pp **B2262**

The Eyre Affair

Jasper Fforde

In an alternate version of London in 1985, literary detective Thursday is on the trail of criminal mastermind Hades, who has been kidnapping characters from works of fiction. When Jane Eyre is snatched from between her pages, Thursday steps in as defender of literature in this exuberant, entertaining read. Fans of *Jane Eyre* will be rewarded, and those unfamiliar with the classic will want to read it.

F 2001 373pp **B1878**

F

Facts and Other Lies

Ed Coper

An exploration of 'fake news' in its historical and contemporary context, how disinformation contributes to recent fractures in society, and can even threaten democracy itself. This book helps to explain how and why disinformation is so potent, at the same time providing readers with constructive steps we can put into practice to help prevent destructive community conduct. Be prepared!

N 2022 400pp **B2364**

Foxybaby

Elizabeth Jolley

Miss Alma Porch journeys to a remote Summer School to present a version of her novel in progress to the Creative Drama students. Jolley's quirky subtlety combines with her sense of human hurtfulness, robustness and fragility.

F 1985 261pp **B1310**

The French Tutor

Judith Armstrong

Postgraduate student Emily begins an affair with a charismatic older academic who insists on keeping his options open. The Albertine rose

and the work of Proust are woven into the fabric of a psychological novel involving obsessive love, deception and betrayal.

F 2003 301pp **B1781**

G

Ghost Wall

Sarah Moss

LONGLISTED
Women's Prize for Fiction

Silvie is currently living in a hut with her family in Northumberland as part of an experimental archaeology dig. Her father enforces harsh rules from a time long past, and she is haunted by a bog girl. The desolate landscape threatens to both reveal and destroy. A short book but a thrilling and spine-tingling read, sure to elicit a strong emotional response.

F 2018 160pp **B2292**

The Great Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald

This is a modern classic: richly textured, a nuanced exploration of the darker side of the glamour of the Jazz Age. Seen through the eyes of outsider Nick Carraway, Jay Gatsby's dream of the beautiful Daisy symbolises the classic American dream.

F 1925 160pp **B0308**

H

The Handmaid's Tale

Margaret Atwood

WINNER
Arthur C. Clarke Award

A woman designated 'child-bearer' in a rigid society lives in a backlash against feminist aspirations and sexual liberation. A compelling depiction of society's flaws which raises questions about the present.

F 1986 324pp **B1189**

How to Be Both

Ali Smith

WINNER
Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction

The life of a 15th century Renaissance artist entwines with that of teenage girl George in this inventive novel. Smith challenges the convention that a story should run a reliably smooth course, asking whether history can exist simultaneously in the past and present. An element of chance determines which of the characters you meet first in your copy of the book – guaranteeing good discussion!

F 2014 284pp **B2229**



Humankind Rutger Bregman



With a new historical perspective on the last 200,000 years of human history, this book makes a fresh argument: that it is realistic as well as revolutionary to assume that people are good. When we think the worst of others, it brings out the worst in our politics and economics. Bregman shows us how believing in human kindness can act as the foundation for achieving true change in our society.

N 2020 496pp **B2368**



Klara and the Sun Kazuo Ishiguro

Klara, an Artificial Friend, watches those who come into the store and those who pass in the street outside. She hopes that a customer will soon choose her, but when her circumstances look like changing forever, Klara is warned not to expect too much from the promises of humans.

F 2021 320pp **B2369**

Kurikka's Dreaming Craig Cormick

In Russian controlled Finland at the end of the 19th century, Matti Kurikka persuades his followers to search for a utopia where they can achieve independence and prosperity. In 1899, they arrive near Cairns in Queensland, their land of 'eternal summer'; but they find themselves in a strange and hostile country, where dream becomes nightmare.

N 2000 218pp **B1644**



Larry's Party Carol Shields

Larry Weller was once a floral designer, but becomes a garden maze and landscape gardener. The book progresses episodically from 1977 across the next twenty years, through two failed marriages and into a third. Shields writes with her characteristic perceptiveness, irony and tenderness of this 'ordinary' man, as she reflects on what it is to be male.

F 1997 339pp **B1725**

The Left Hand of Darkness Ursula K. Le Guin



This is a modern science fiction classic. The planet Winter is much like Earth except for two things: its climate is always subarctic, and its inhabitants are all of one sex. Le Guin is a distinguished writer of speculative fiction and this book makes for compelling discussion of our attitudes here on Earth.

F 1969 205pp **B1064**

Life After Life Kate Atkinson

Ursula is born on a wintery night in 1910, and when she dies, is reborn on the same day and into the same family over and over. Each of her lives is fascinatingly different, woven throughout a backdrop of historical events including both World Wars. Beautifully written, original and moving.

F 2013 480pp **B2185**

Life of Pi Yann Martel



A cargo ship carrying zoo animals flounders at sea, and Pi, a sixteen-year-old Indian boy, is stranded on a life raft with a hyena, an orangutan, a zebra and a Bengal tiger. He must use all his daring and wit to survive. An engaging, dazzling novel.

F 2001 319pp **B1788**

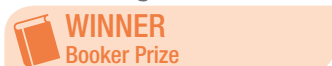
Lincoln in the Bardo George Saunders



Centered on the death of Abraham Lincoln's son William, Saunders' experimental novel is set in primarily in the 'bardo', which is the Buddhist transitory realm between death and rebirth. The novel weaves between passages drawn from historical texts and the points of view of Willie and other spirits within the bardo. Saunders blurs the line between the real and the surreal to deliver a reading experience that purposefully confuses fact with fiction, and touches on private grief versus public persona and the faults of the American democratic system.

F 2017 368pp **B2286**

The Line of Beauty Alan Hollinghurst



This beautifully nuanced comedy of manners portrays England's rich and powerful in the 1980s at the peak of the Thatcher years. The narrator is a young man, newly arrived in London and mesmerised by the opulent world of his Tory hosts as he independently discovers the pleasures of metropolitan gay life.

F 2004 501pp **B1886**

Lovesong Elizabeth Jolley

After many years in an institution, Dalton Foster is released into a world he barely recognises. What has he done? There are disturbing indications that a child was involved. Jolley's account of his loneliness and longings is lyrical and at times disturbingly comic.

F 1997 241pp **B1576**



The Map That Changed the World Simon Winchester

William Smith, orphan of a village blacksmith, was one of the first to link rock strata beneath the earth's surface to the characteristic fossils found in each layer. He worked twenty years on an enormous geological map, only to find his ideas pirated by gentlemen of science.

N 2001 338pp **B1666**

Mara and Dann Doris Lessing

An orphaned brother and sister journey together through excitement and danger in a future where an Ice Age covers all of the northern hemisphere, and much of Africa is dry and famine-stricken. Lessing opens up questions of how environments can change civilisations, testing human decency, endurance, imagination and love.

F 1999 407pp **B1765**

The Mother Fault Kate Mildenhall

A woman's husband is missing. The ubiquitous authority known as The Department wants to find him, having installed a tracking chip in the whole population. They interrogate her, forcing her to give up her passport and threatening her with removal of her children. She risks all their lives by going on the run, to find her missing husband.

F 2020 336pp **B2348**



Never Let Me Go Kazuo Ishiguro

Kathy, Ruth and Tommy attended an elite school in the English countryside that sheltered its students from the outside. Why were they there? Kathy narrates a retrospective journey through memory and fact, slowly unfolding details to a startling resolution. An unsettling tale that probes moral responsibility and scientific ethics.

F 2005 263pp **B1864**

Notes on a Scandal Zoë Heller

From the first day that beautiful, bohemian art teacher Sheba joins the staff of St George's, history teacher Barbara realises she is different from her colleagues. When Sheba is caught having an affair with a pupil, Barbara appoints herself her chief defender and closest ally. But all is not as it seems in this compelling read of obsession and loneliness.

F 2003 244pp **B1974**

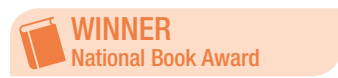
Not the End of the World Kate Atkinson

'And now for something completely different.' Imaginative and distinctive, these twelve linked stories create an unexpected sense of what it is to be alive. They portray ordinary people in confining, dangerous, or lonely circumstances that unexpectedly, even bizarrely, break into the mythic experience of Greek gods and magical transformations.

F **S** 2002 278pp **B1774**



The Ocean at the End of the Lane Neil Gaiman



Neil Gaiman explores memory, childhood vulnerability, and hidden trauma in this shadowy, atmospheric fairy-tale woven with his trademark touch of fantasy. As the unnamed narrator revisits his childhood home, memories long obscured lead him to the neighbouring farm where he spent time as a seven-year-old. He remembers Lettie, the girl who lived there, and what really happened during the summer they spent together.

F 2013 248pp **B2206**

Of a Boy

Sonya Hartnett

 **WINNER**
Commonwealth Book Prize

 **SHORTLISTED**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

In an Australian suburb, three children set off for the milk bar – never to be seen again. Nine-year-old Adrian watches the goings on of his suburban world and tries to keep his loneliness and fears of rejection at bay. Throughout the text weaves the aching true story of the missing Metford children.

F 2002 188pp **B1804**

Only the Animals

Ceridwen Dovey

 **WINNER**
Readings Prize for New Australian Fiction

The souls of ten animals tell captivating stories of their lives in times of human conflict, drawing on often surprising literary connections. Henry Lawson's camel witnesses the colonisation of Australia, Himmeler's dog ponders the meaning of Buddhism, and a dolphin in the US Navy composes a letter to Sylvia Plath. Amusing and touching, their tales explore the consequences of warfare from a unique and original perspective.

F S 2014 248pp **B2212**

The Orchid Thief

Susan Orlean

A nonfiction book which reads more like a novel, with a wonderful oddball cast of fanatics whose lives and crimes revolve around their mania for orchids. The pacy narrative follows John Laroche, self-confessed orchid thief, into the sucking mud of Florida's swampy Fakahatchee Strand.

N 1998 350pp **B1622**

We enjoyed reading about the relationship between the insects and the pollination of the orchids and how they have adapted.
Lugarno Book Club

P

The Patron Saint of Eels

Gregory Day

Noel and Nannette are long-time locals of a small coastal town in the grip of gentrification. When a freak flood leaves hundreds of eels trapped in the ditches around Noel's home, Fra Ionio, a 300-year-old Italian monk, comes to the rescue. Quirky and likeable characters together with lyrical evocations of bush and sea shine through in this delightful contemporary fable.

F 2005 181pp **B1865**

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Oscar Wilde

Scandal erupted over Wilde's novel when it was first published in 1890 as it 'violated the laws of public morality'; though perhaps less shocking now, this psychological thriller remains just as enticing over a hundred years later. It examines the cost of self-indulgence, and the havoc we wreak on our souls in the quest for satisfaction.

F 1891 247pp **B0112**

The Precipice

Virginia Duigan

A mix of literary thriller and psychological drama, with a welcome smattering of tongue in cheek wit. Thea is a retired school principal living in the Blue Mountains. When a young couple and their niece move in next door, old fears and paranoia begin to take over her life. Thea is an engrossing, funny and unusual protagonist, and there are a number of provocative issues to discuss.

F 2011 284pp **B2134**

R

Republic of Women

Merrill Findlay

Real people from history walk through the pages of this book, and anyone who knows Melbourne's St Kilda will recognise its threatened inner-city environment. 'In this novel of striking intellectual subtlety and authority, Merrill Findlay probes questions of sexual identity in a voice that is radical, humane and tender' (Raimond Gaita).

F 1999 280pp **B1752**

The Road

Cormac McCarthy

 **WINNER**
Pulitzer Prize

A man and his young son walk through a post-apocalyptic American wasteland. Danger and starvation lurk at every turn in this deeply disturbing yet ultimately redemptive story. A novel that asks what we might be capable of when pushed to the brink – and whether we could make it back in one piece. Harrowing scenes may disturb; this book will give your group a lengthy and vivid discussion.

F 2006 256pp **B1977**

S

Saturday

Ian McEwan

McEwan creates for us one day in the life of a London neurosurgeon, a man fully engaged in his work and blessed with a domestic life of contentment, until one Saturday he must deal with the fallout from a minor traffic accident that morning. Accomplished writing, 'beautifully alive to the fragility of happiness' – *The Times*.

F 2005 279pp **B1911**

The Scapegoat

Daphne du Maurier

After a chance meeting at a French railway station, John, a lonely professor, assumes another man's identity, and becomes involved in the complex family relationships, love affairs and business life of the selfish and arrogant man he is impersonating. An intriguing and suspenseful story.

F L 1957 320pp **B1126**

The Secret Cure

Sue Woolfe

Determined to find a cure for her autistic child and motivated by her own passion for science, Eva takes on work as a cleaner in a medical research laboratory. Owen is the strange reclusive man who has loved her for a lifetime. This moving novel explores what it means to be human, to be honourable, and, above all, what it means to love.

F 2003 429pp **B1823**

The Service of Clouds

Delia Falconer

Set in the Blue Mountains, this novel is almost hallucinatory in its evocation of cloud landscapes, and of the heroine Eureka's yearning for photographer Henry Kitchens. Katoomba's life, personalities and institutions in the early 20th century are deftly, even comically presented.

F 1997 322pp **B1580**

Solar

Ian McEwan

A Nobel Prize winning physicist and middle-aged philanderer, Michael is arrogant and selfish. His career has stalled – until he decides to claim for his own another man's work on alternative energy resources that just might save the planet. Solar spans several continents as it explores the frailties of humankind and the threat of climate change.

F 2010 432pp **B2066**

State of Wonder

Ann Patchett

 **SHORTLISTED**
Orange Prize

From the bestselling author of *Bel Canto* comes this compelling, thrilling novel. Scientists for a pharmaceutical company are researching an Amazonian tribe where women remain fertile until old age, in hope of selling their secret. When the head researcher disappears and the man sent to discover the findings dies, pharmacologist Marina leaves Minnesota to track down her former mentor in the depths of the Amazon.

F 2011 353pp **B2120**

The Strays

Emily Bitto

 **WINNER**
Stella Prize

When lonely only child Lily befriends Eva Trentham, she is entranced by the glamour of the Trentham family and their circle of *avant garde* artists – but their seemingly idyllic, bohemian way of life is not without its costs. A study of isolation mingles with the consequences of radicalism in this haunting and beautifully observed debut novel which draws on the legacy of Melbourne's Heide group of artists.

F 2014 350pp **B2226**

T

Tehanu

Ursula K. Le Guin

 **WINNER**
Nebula Award for Best Novel

Beautiful, challenging, deceptively simple writing explores the stories of a woman who adopts a girl crippled and scarred by abuse, and a once great wizard who has exhausted his magic. Can they survive among brutal enemies in a land rotten with evil? Le Guin reflects on power and powerlessness; the differing wisdom of women and men; and the possibility of healing.

F 1990 204pp **B1461**

The Telling

Ursula K. Le Guin

On an alien planet, Sutty now lives under the Corporation, a capitalist dictatorship which burns books and suppresses evidence of the past. From the mountain people, she learns of the extraordinarily diverse, vital, integrated culture that once existed here. This meditation on cultural decimation and colonialism is part of the cycle which includes *The Dispossessed* and *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

F 2000 264pp **B1806**

The Testaments

Margaret Atwood



The much-anticipated follow-up to Atwood's dystopian classic *The Handmaid's Tale*. Fifteen years after the events of the previous novel, three women from Gilead risk their lives to tell their story of hope and courage – a thrilling read for our time.

F 2019 448pp **B2330**

A vivid, compelling read with much to discuss. A worthy sequel to satisfy avid readers of The Handmaid's Tale.

Nicole P, Book Groups Staff Member

There'll Be New Dreams

Philip McLaren

McLaren weaves together strands of Aboriginal experience across the ages. Lottie, the city raised Aborigine, loses her children to the welfare system in the 1950s and her husband to a suspicious death; Matlong saw Cook sail by in 1770; and Dundiway goes to New York as a didgeridoo player in the 1970s. Sophisticated and profound, human and funny.

F 2001 309pp **B1667**

Things We Didn't See Coming

Steven Amsterdam



This collection of nine linked narratives is set in a near-future dystopia, recognisable and unsettling. A young boy is caught up in worldwide Y2K style panic, and becomes the book's nameless narrator, travelling from story to story and negotiating the lawlessness, epidemics, extreme weather, relationships and politics of a post-millennium world. Often dark, sometimes funny, this intriguing book should spark discussion about issues potentially facing us all.

F 2009 174pp **B2070**

Three Cups of Tea

Greg Mortenson

In 1993, Mortenson drifted into a village in Pakistan's Karakoram Mountains. Touched by the kindness of the villagers, he went on to build 55 schools in remote villages across Pakistan and Afghanistan while the Taliban was rising to power. Since publication, the book's accuracy has been questioned, both in a controversial 2011 documentary and by author Jon Krakauer.

N 2007 368pp **B2057**

The Tin Drum

Günter Grass

This is the autobiography of Oskar Matzerath, a 30-year-old detained in a mental hospital, and convicted of murder. It is taken down with the aid of his tiny drum, the chosen symbol of his way of life. A brilliant and challenging work which has been seminal in German writing by this Nobel Prize winner author.

F 1961 590pp **B0070**

The Tyrant's Novel

Thomas Keneally

In an oil-rich country, writer Alan is asked to produce a novel explaining the great deeds of its tyrannical ruler and blaming the country's difficulties on outside forces. Facing a moral dilemma and a tight deadline, Alan must resolve both at the risk of his own life and those around him. Keneally's portrayal of the experiences of asylum seekers is both terrifying and utterly compelling.

F 2003 292pp **B1867**

The Underground Railroad

Colson Whitehead



Cora, a young slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia is approached by Caesar, a fellow slave who tells her about the Underground Railroad, a network of tracks and tunnels that runs beneath their feet. When tragic events in her life gives her the courage she needs, Cora embarks on a harrowing journey to escape the horrors of slavery and a life lived in servitude. A brutal book with confronting scenes, it's not an easy read but a powerful novel on the dark history of slavery.

F 2017 400pp **B2270**

The Unknown Terrorist

Richard Flanagan

Set in post 9/11 Sydney, a Kings Cross pole dancer finds she has become the most wanted terrorist in the country, and is caught up in a vortex of murder, media hype and politically manipulated fear mongering. A fast-moving thriller, this is also an angry portrayal of contemporary Australia.

F 2006 320pp **B1983**

The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith

Peter Carey

The eponymous hero and narrator is born dwarfed and badly deformed, the vital and clever son of a beautiful, activist actress in one of the richly imagined countries in this unusual, mind-stretching novel. We follow Tristan's struggles and adventures through worlds which are new, yet disturbingly familiar.

F 1994 422pp **B1462**

Veronika Decides to Die

Paulo Coelho

Why would a young, attractive woman from a good family take an overdose? How will she feel when she survives, only to be told that the damage will quickly prove fatal? This novel by Brazilian writer Coelho will provoke strong discussion about sanity, madness, the meaning of contemporary urban lives, as well as medical and literary ethics.

F 1998 185pp **B1770**

The Vintner's Luck

Elizabeth Knox

Among the vines of Burgundy in 1808, Sobran Jodeau, a young winemaker, has the first of his annual meetings with an angel. But this angel is not all he seems, and complicates life even further. A daring, sensuous, unconventional, addictive novel.

F 1998 241pp **B1751**

Wide Sargasso Sea

Jean Rhys



In Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Mr Rochester is not free to marry because of Bertha, his mad and bad wife secreted in the attic. Dominican born Jean Rhys sympathetically re-imagines the Jamaican life of a young Creole heiress, Rochester's courtship and the early years of their marriage, turning many of Brontë's values and assumptions inside out.

F 1966 156pp **B0809**

A Wild Sheep Chase

Haruki Murakami

A girl with ears so exquisite that they improve sex a thousand-fold, a runaway friend, a right-wing politico, an ovine-obsessed professor, and a manic-depressive in a sheep outfit are all implicated in a hunt for a sheep that may or may not be running the world

in this singular masterpiece from Japan's finest novelist. Equal parts screwball comedy, detective story and heroic quest.

F 1982 299pp **B1654**

The Woman Who Cracked the Anxiety Code

Judith Hoare

The true story of Dr Claire Weekes, who changed the way we think about anxiety and how to treat it. She helped millions of people with to overcome their conditions with her pioneering approach. An intricate account of Weekes' achievements and her life devoted to helping others.

N 2019 352pp **B2335**

The Wonder

Emma Donoghue

When Nightingale trained nurse Lib is sent to a village in 1850s Ireland to investigate Anna, an eleven-year-old girl who stops eating and claims to be nourished by the Manna of Heaven for months, she has two weeks to determine if this girl is a fraud. Inspired by the historical cases of fasting girls, this historical thriller pits motherly love against blind faith, questioning what it means to be nourished.

F 2016 256pp **B2250**

The World Without Us

Mireille Juchau

Following their sister's death, Tess and Meg watch their devastated family come undone. Their mother Evangeline roams the forests of their farmland; their father, Stefan, retracts into himself. When an old car wreck is discovered with human remains inside, Evangeline is forced to confront her present along with secrets from her past life in a local commune. Atmospheric and gripping.

F 2015 320pp **B2236**

The Year of the Flood

Margaret Atwood

At a time when the human population has been decimated by a plague, the Corporations have taken over the world, including all scientific and technological developments. In this bleak dystopia, eco-religious sect the God's Gardeners try to work with nature as civilisation crumbles. The humanity and friendships of the female characters offer hope despite the grim atmosphere. This novel contains some of the characters from *Oryx and Crake* but is not a sequel.

F 2009 528pp **B2079**



44 Scotland Street

Alexander McCall Smith

McCall Smith's *Scotland Street* occupies a busy, bohemian corner of Edinburgh's New Town, where the old haute bourgeoisie rub shoulders with students, poets and portraitists. And Number 44 has more than its fair share of eccentrics and failures. Dry, funny and entertaining, *44 Scotland Street* was originally written as a serialised novel.

F 2005 326pp **B2052**

84 Charing Cross Road

Helene Hanff

Helene Hanff wrote from New York to Marks and Co., second hand booksellers in London: 'I enclose a list of my most pressing problems'. The reply and the books that were sent across the Atlantic began a joyous correspondence that lasted 20 years. This book celebrates friendship, the art of letter writing and a love of books and the English language.

N 1971 220pp **B1200**

A

All That Happened at Number 26

Denise Scott

The much loved comedian tells the stories that attach themselves to a family home, exploring married life and the trials and triumphs of raising children, and memories of her outer suburban childhood. Life outside Number 26 includes her career and friendships forged with other strong, funny women. Like the house itself, this book is a bit ramshackle but warm and fun.

N 2008 261pp **B2101**

And the Mountains Echoed

Khaled Hosseini

From the bestselling author of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* comes a multi-generational story that explores sibling bonds. Beginning in Afghanistan in the early 1950s, the story shifts to France and America, and back again, in a series of tales.

F 2013 416pp **B2197**

The Art of the Engine Driver

Steven Carroll

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

In late 1950s Melbourne, Vic longs to perfect his engine driving technique and achieve the perfect smooth ride; his son Michael dreams of fast bowling perfection; Rita, mother and wife, longs for a life with something more. A distinctively Australian novel with a luminous evocation of ordinary lives.

F 2001 278pp **B1674**

B

Basil Street Blues

Michael Holroyd

The acclaimed biographer of George Bernard Shaw, Holroyd never explored his own family's history until his parents' death, which left a vacuum he felt the need to fill. The result? A continuation of his never-ending love affair with human nature – part-detective story, part-family saga and part-oblique voyage of self-discovery.

N 1999 309pp **B1632**

Before We Were Yours

Lisa Wingate

WINNER
Goodreads Choice Award for Historical Fiction

Interwoven between present-day Avery Stafford, groomed to be her father's successor in politics, and twelve-year-old 'river rat' Rill in 1939, who helps take care of her four younger siblings in their boat home on the Memphis river. The novel is based on actual incidents of kidnapping and forced adoptions of the Tennessee Children's Home Society, who made a profit from stealing children from poor families to place with prominent society members.

F 2017 352pp **B2276**

Behind the Scenes at the Museum

Kate Atkinson

This four generation English family saga is captivating. Atkinson's imagination and remarkable way with words lay open family life – the mismatches of personalities and expectations, the strains and trivialities, the ridiculous and the tragic.

F 1995 382pp **B1520**

Births Deaths Marriages

Georgia Blain

In this beautiful collection of stories, the daughter of Anne Deveson revisits her bohemian childhood during the social change movement, the collapse of her parents' marriage, her brother's illness and her path to becoming a writer. Deftly examining her life's triumphs and disappointments, she teases out the universal qualities that make us both fallible and loveable.

N S 2008 224pp **B1998**

The Blind Assassin

Margaret Atwood

WINNER
Booker Prize

This sad, sharp, humorous reflection on family life spans most of the 20th century. With characters attracting sympathy and rancour, mysteries unravelling, and themes of sacrifice and betrayal, inspiring pathos and bathos, Atwood continues to surprise and intrigue.

F 2000 641pp **B1619**

The Book of Emmett

Deborah Forster

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

A heart-breaking exploration of domestic abuse. Emmett is an unpredictable alcoholic and violent father. His children, Louisa, Rob, Peter, Daniel and Jessie, are shaped by his destructive presence, but as he lies dying they must all come to terms with their past.

F 2009 296pp **B2100**

Breathing Lessons

Anne Tyler

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Married for twenty-eight years, Maggie and Ira Moran are an unlikely couple: Ira is reticent and detached; Maggie optimistic, confiding, impulsive, and an intervener in other people's lives. Marriage and family provide the focus for a wry, tolerant look at life's absurdity and underlying comedy.

F 1988 327pp **B1265**

Brideshead Revisited

Evelyn Waugh

This is Waugh's best-known novel, thanks largely to the sumptuous 1981 television series. When Charles meets glamorous Sebastian at Oxford, he is seduced by the exotic allure of Sebastian's aristocratic family and their grand country house, Brideshead. As his friend succumbs to alcoholism Charles develops a complex relationship with Sebastian's sister, Julia. This haunting novel is a portrait of love and faith, and a eulogy for a lost world.

F 1945 336pp **B2130**

The Burgess Boys

Elizabeth Strout

Haunted by the accidental death of their father, lawyers Bob and Jim Burgess leave behind their sister, Susan, and town in Maine for new lives in New York. But when Susan calls them back home to help her lonely son, who has thoughtlessly landed himself in deep trouble, old tensions surface. A beautifully written and complex story of sibling relationships.

F 2013 336pp **B2192**

C

Careless

Deborah Robertson

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Tragedy enters the lives of two strangers: widowed Sonia, and Adam, a young sculptor experiencing his first taste of artistic success. This superbly written, convincingly plotted debut Australian novel skilfully explores responsibility, for both the living and the dead.

F 2006 293pp **B1960**

The Casual Vacancy

J.K. Rowling

Through the microcosm of parish council politics in the rural town of Pagford, she brings together a multigenerational cast of characters reflecting many aspects of modern Britain. A compelling exploration of community and family dynamics.

F 2012 576pp **B2174**

The Children

Charlotte Wood

When Mandy and her siblings return home to watch over their critically ill father, they struggle to reconcile their past. Wardsman Tony has been waiting for Mandy's return, and as he insinuates himself into the family, pressure builds with devastating force. Wood's acutely observed third novel explores the tenacious grip of childhood and the price paid for bearing witness to the suffering of others.

F 2007 269pp **B2025**

The Children Act

Ian McEwan

Family Court judge Fiona daily takes momentous decisions concerning children, and must now rule on an unusual and intelligent 17-year-old whose faith has him unable to accept a lifesaving treatment. The consequences of Fiona's choices echo through her personal life, and will make you reconsider medical, religious and legal ethics. This is McEwan's succinct, gripping prose at its best.

F 2015 224pp **B2220**

This was a great book for discussion. It presents a number of moral, ethical, religious and personal dilemmas. We did pick up on threads of things – the right of children to make their own decisions; the part music played in the story; how we as a society deal with people's strongly held views.

South Yarra Readers 2

The Children's Bach

Helen Garner

A compact but densely styled novel which teases apart the threads of a number of complex inter-relationships. An imaginative and compelling treatment of inner suburban angst from the inimitable Garner.

F 1984 96pp **B0569**

City of the Mind

Penelope Lively

His marriage now evaporated, Matthew Halland shares in the bringing up of his 8-year-old daughter. An architect, his work takes him all over the ever-changing cityscape of London. Lively's characteristic fusing of feeling and intellect is evident in this most satisfying novel.

F 1991 220pp **B1367**

Cloudstreet

Tim Winton

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Two families of ordinary people – battlers and losers – share a ramshackle old Perth house called Cloudstreet. Over 20 years, the ups and downs of their lives bring them and the house closer together in this sprawling, moving novel.

F 1991 426pp **B1269**

The Color of Water

James McBride

McBride's unforgettable memoir tells his mother's brave, eccentric story in her own words. Daughter of a failed orthodox Jewish rabbi in the American South, she ran away to Harlem, became a Baptist, married a black man, raised 12 children and put them all through college. Around her story is McBride's story of his own struggles for identity, and towards faith in a God neither black nor white, but 'the color of water'.

N 1997 291pp **B1593**

The Corrections

Jonathan Franzen

SHORTLISTED
Pulitzer Prize

Alfred is elderly and increasingly ill, and his wife Enid wants only to have her three adult children home for a family Christmas together. These three moved to other cities, where they contend with their own messy adult lives. The black comedy and pathos in family living are counterpointed against biting portraits of America in the late 1990s. An engrossing, ambitious, powerful, funny, exceptional novel.

F 2001 568pp **B1677**

Members comments included – 'endlessly interesting', 'quick easy read' and 'remarkable woman'.

South Yarra Readers 2

Craft for a Dry Lake

Kim Mahood

Artist Kim Mahood drives and paints her way across the Tanami Desert and the cattle station where she grew up. Fiona Capp comments: 'This subtle, sharp-eyed, resolutely unsentimental memoir could well mark a new phase in our literature about Australian outback life and the complexities of a white woman's relationship with the land and with the Aboriginal people who inhabit it.'

N 2000 266pp **B1636**

Dark Places

Kate Grenville

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Albion Gidley Singer is the cruel, domineering patriarch from *Lilian's Story*. Grenville assumes his voice to give his carelessly misogynistic perspective on his life and values as a son, husband, and father in this disturbing and impressive novel that stands alone well, but perfectly complements *Lilian's Story*.

F **L** 1994 375pp **B1439**

The Death of Noah Glass

Gail Jones

WINNER
Prime Minister's Literary Award

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Art historian Noah Glass dies suddenly, leaving his adult children Martin and Evie to try come to terms with it. But when their father is considered a person of interest in the case of a missing sculpture in Italy, the mystery of Noah's life and death deepens. A thoughtful and lyrical reflection on the importance of family, culture and art.

F 2018 336pp **B2316**

Digging to America

Anne Tyler

Two families living in Baltimore each adopt a baby girl from Korea and meet up at intervals over the years: the all American Donaldsons and the Yazdani, an Iranian American family. International adoption is only one of the concerns here, as each parent, child and grandparent in this sensitively observed novel responds differently to questions of being a foreigner, belonging, and being American.

F 2006 277pp **B1962**

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant

Anne Tyler

SHORTLISTED
Pulitzer Prize

Pearl has been left to bring up two sons and an unruly, passionate daughter. Anne Tyler skilfully uses the power of youth's perceptions, and sets them off against the reality of 'adult' life. Loving descriptions of family relationships, including youthful jealousies flavour life into middle age.

F 1982 303pp **B0777**

NEW

Dinner with the Schnabels

Toni Jordan



Simon adores his wife and children, but since his business failed and he lost the family home, he is struggling. To keep everyone happy, he agrees to landscape a backyard for an important family event. Then his world starts to spin out of control. Who can he really count on when the chips are down?

F 2022 368pp **B2387**

Elephants with Headlights

Bem Le Hunte

Savitri doesn't want to marry anyone. Her brother Neel wants to marry an Australian girl. Their parents are most displeased, but maybe the family astrologer has a solution – how can he influence love and destiny? A warm, funny cross-cultural tale of Indian and Australian families and tradition vs modernity.

F 2019 304pp **B2318**

Every Secret Thing

Gillian Slovo

This astonishing book traces the life of the daughter of an imperilled South African family of passionate fighters against apartheid. What does it do to your personal life if your parents are white, communist and irrepressible? Nadine Gordimer calls this an 'extraordinary expression of the very nature of loving'. Compulsive reading.

N 1997 282pp **B1550**

Extinctions

Josephine Wilson

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

WINNER
Colin Roderick Award

69-year-old engineer Fred Lothian has given up on life, and moved to a retirement village after the loss of his wife and the estrangement of his two children. Surrounded by clutter, Fred reminisces on his failures as a husband and a father. Then Fred meets Jan, a bubbly woman who accepts no excuses, and challenges him to confront the wrongs in his life, starting with his children. Together, they embark on a journey of self-discovery, forgiveness, disability, ageing and racial discrimination.

F 2016 280pp **B2289**



F

Falling Leaves

Adeline Yen Mah

Embracing historical events of world importance, Mah's tale of her life as an unwanted daughter in thrall to the ideal of filial devotion is gripping from the beginning. A portrait of all the basic (and base) family feelings – love and tenderness, hate, pain, greed, resentment, indifference and malice.

N 1997 278pp **B1558**

Family Matters

Rohinton Mistry

Who in the family will care for its ageing patriarch, now helpless after a fall? His daughter's family take him into their crowded Bombay apartment. The resulting dilemmas and pressure are interwoven with the old man's remembrances of a forbidden love in his earlier life. 'A luminous compassion, an abundance of life and piercing moments'.

F 2002 500pp **B1818**

Fault Lines

Nancy Huston

Told from the perspective of a series of six-year-olds, the story reveals how scars from the past can shape the present. From California to New York, from Haifa to Toronto and Munich, family secrets unwind revealing disturbing truths including the family's history during WWII. Content may offend some readers.

F 2007 308pp **B1989**

The Fence

Meredith Jaffe

Gardening column writer and local sticky-beak Gwen and her husband Eric have lived in the same house in suburban Sydney for decades. When a new hipster family moves into the house next door with their four children and two loud dogs, it is the proposal of a fence that is the act of war for Gwen. Clashes between generations, personalities and lifestyle break out as the two headstrong women battle for more than just council approval. A relatable, witty look into the struggle between the old ways and the new.

F 2016 368pp **B2267**

The Fifth Child

Doris Lessing

Lessing's engrossing novel explores the 'old fashioned' idyll of a couple who meet, marry and lovingly fill their house with their families. The arrival of their fifth, and very different, child raises dark questions about their family – and about the human family in contemporary society.

F 1989 159pp **B1259**

The Fine Colour of Rust

P.A. O'Reilly

Single mum Loretta lives in the dusty rural town of Gunapan with her two kids. She gamely steps up when the local school is about to be closed and the council approves a dodgy development project near town. A book about love, friendship and community, covering contemporary issues with tenderness and humour.

F 2012 247pp **B2151**

Foal's Bread

Gillian Mears

WINNER
The Age Book of the Year

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Mears chronicles the hopes and heartbreaks of two generations of a NSW farming family, particularly the marriage of golden boy Roley to tough nut Noah. From the pre-war rural show jumping circuit to the changing world of the 50s, this is a powerful testament to the Australian landscape and the vulnerability of the humans within it.

F 2011 361pp **B2139**

It was surprising the number of members who rode horses during their childhoods. We agreed writing was excellent with interesting characterisation – a sad book.
Traralgon: Latrobe Ladies

A Fraction of the Whole

Steve Toltz

SHORTLISTED
Man Booker Prize

Heroes or criminals? Crackpots or visionaries? Relatives or enemies? From his prison cell, Jasper Dean tells the unlikely story of his scheming father Martin, his crazy uncle Terry and how the three of them upset an entire continent. Incorporating death, parenting and first love this is a scathingly funny, heart-breaking story of families and how to survive them.

F 2008 711pp **B2042**

Frangipani

Célestine Hitiura Vaite

This mother-daughter novel is full of Tahitian lore about men, women, children and the realities of life. Gossip, intrigues, family crises, and the mother's flavoursome advice to her headstrong daughter are conveyed with warmth, charm and gusto from this Tahitian-born author.

F 2004 295pp **B1879**

G

The Gathering

Anne Enright

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

The nine surviving children of the Hegarty clan gather for the wake of their wayward brother Liam. It wasn't the drink that killed him; it was the events of the winter of 1968 in his grandmother's house, which his sister Veronica must now come to terms with. Enright follows a line of hurt and redemption through three generations, as memories warp and secrets fester.

F 2007 261pp **B1985**

Gilead

Marilynne Robinson

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

From the author of *Housekeeping* comes a beautiful story of faith, family, and history. Towards the end of his life, Reverend John Ames begins a letter to his son about the strained relationship between his father, a pacifist, and grandfather, an abolitionist, who 'preached men into the Civil War'.

F 2004 282pp **B1963**

The Glass Castle

Jeannette Walls

Walls' father was a hopeless alcoholic, and her mother an artist who let her four children fend for themselves. Walls' attitude to her parents is almost always affectionate – but readers may not be so forgiving! This book will elicit passionate discussion.

N 2005 341pp **B1882**

The God of Small Things

Arundhati Roy

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

Twins Estha and Rahel live in the Indian state of Kerala, where cruel caste traditions coexist alongside a modern communist movement. This moving novel explores the joys and pains of moments of life for a family in a society where love laws 'lay down who should be loved. And how, and how much'.

F 1997 340pp **B1559**

The Good Parents

Joan London

Maya moves to Melbourne and begins an affair with her boss whose wife is dying of cancer. When her parents arrive to visit, they find out that their daughter has disappeared. The award-winning author of *Gilgamesh* unravels the complex bonds between parents, siblings, friends and lovers to create a portrait of contemporary Australia.

F 2008 351pp **B2014**

H

Hamlet's Dresser

Bob Smith

Having spent his earlier years caring for a disabled sister, in his teens he joined the backstage staff of a theatre company. Tender, restrained, and glowing with excerpts from Shakespeare, this book will fasten itself in your memory.

N 2002 285pp **B1782**

The Hand That First Held Mine

Maggie O'Farrell

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

Separated by fifty years, two women are connected in unexpected ways. Lexie is in her early twenties when she moves to London, becoming immersed in the 1950s Soho art scene. In contemporary London, artist Elina struggles to recover from a difficult birth, while her partner Ted faces questions from his past.

F 2010 341pp **B2094**

The Harp in the South

Ruth Park

This beloved Australian novel introduces Hugh and Margaret Darcy, doing their best to raise a family amidst the poverty and hardship of slum life in 1940s Sydney. Ruth Park combines robust and engaging characters with acute social observation. Her humanity, humour and skilful storytelling make *The Harp in the South* as fresh and readable as ever.

F 1948 225pp **B2198**

Home

Larissa Behrendt

Stretching back to the early years of the 20th century, *Home* describes three generations of an Aboriginal family. The novel begins in contemporary Australia with Candice, a young indigenous lawyer visiting her ancestral country with her father. Behrendt's characters are vividly drawn and there is a buoyancy and optimism in her vision.

F 2004 317pp **B1832**



The Household Guide to Dying

Debra Adelaide

Australian author and domestic advice columnist Delia Bennet is diagnosed with cancer. She knows she will leave behind her husband, two young daughters and five chickens. Trying to get her house in order, she writes lists, makes plans, and contemplates how she should spend her remaining time.

F 2008 386pp **B2011**

The House in the Light

Beverly Farmer

A divorced Australian woman returns to the Greek village where she was once welcomed as a bride. Against the earthiness and austerities of rural Greece, Farmer traces the affection, scratchiness and strain in the relationship between Bell and her ageing mother in law, the matriarch Kyria Sofia. Complex, with a luminous quality to the prose.

F 1995 235pp **B1447**

Housekeeping

Marilynne Robinson

Still at school, Lucille and Ruth have high hopes of their aunt Sylvie who comes to keep house for them after their mother's death. But the gentle Sylvie is a drifter and her behaviour too bizarre for some. One sister departs and soon Sylvie and Ruth must move on. There is bleakness here, but also oddity, beauty and a sense of stillness. A book that lingers in the mind.

F 1981 187pp **B1206**

The Immortalists

Chloe Benjamin

If you knew when you would die, how would you choose to live your life? Four adolescents Simon, Klara, Daniel and Varya visit a travelling psychic who claims she knows the exact date of their deaths. What they learn will influence the course of their lives. A story about family, choices and fate.

F 2018 368pp **B2300**

Indelible Ink

Fiona McGregor

Marie is fifty-nine, recently divorced with grown children and living in an affluent Sydney suburb. When drunk she decides to get a tattoo and develops an unlikely friendship with the tattoo artist, who shows her a different side of Sydney. An immersing family drama set in the Howard era.

F 2010 446pp **B2092**

Instructions for a Heatwave

Maggie O'Farrell

July, 1976. London is sweltering through a heatwave when Robert Riordan walks out on his wife and disappears. His three adult children return home, and family secrets are revealed as tensions mount on a journey to Ireland. Beautifully written with surprising twists, this is a moving portrait of a family that comes undone.

F 2013 338pp **B2179**

Isa and May

Margaret Forster

Isamay is writing a master's thesis about the role of grandmothers in women's history, which leads to an examination of her own grandmothers: pugnacious May and chilly Isabel. Each harbours intriguing secrets, which come to light as Isamay examines their lives. Forster's writing is entertaining and accessible, and a great catalyst for exploring the universal themes of family and the multiple roles of women.

F 2010 316pp **B2121**

Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam

Peter Goldsworthy

Rick, Linda and their two children represent the perfect Australian suburban family. When their daughter is diagnosed with cancer, their world is shattered. This novella poses important questions about death, the afterlife and the place of religion. The conclusion to this moving meditation on love, faith and fate will generate fiercely divided responses.

F 1993 133pp **B1863**

The Joy Luck Club

Amy Tan

SHORTLISTED
National Book Award

A vibrant evocation of four Chinese women and their first generation Chinese American daughters: this brave, heartfelt novel powerfully communicates the intricacies of a double cultural identity, illuminating traditional Chinese customs and modern mother-daughter relationships. Small print.

F 1989 288pp **B1283**

This book was well received by all. One member had been in England during that heatwave. Loved the characters, very well written.
Malvern East 16

K

The Kitchen God's Wife

Amy Tan

Winnie's story moves from Shanghai in the 1920s, through the Japanese occupation of China, World War II and the rise of the communists, to her decades in America after 1949. Her personal life contains much pain, courage and joy. Emotionally charged yet unsentimental, the novel explores relationships, uncovers secrets, and describes Chinese customs.

F 1991 415pp **B1330**

L

Ladder of Years

Anne Tyler

SHORTLISTED
Orange Prize

Sensing indifference in her family, Delia Grinstead vanishes from their lives. Walking along the beach, she keeps right on going to a town nearby where she takes on a new life as a single working woman with no ties. Where will things go from here? An unsettling look at marriage, family, human complexity and simple needs. Funny and plangent by turns.

N **L** 1995 326pp **B1466**

The Lake House

Kate Morton

A missing child and a family secret are at the centre of this enthralling mystery from the author of *The Forgotten Garden*. The Edevane family live an idyllic life in their beautiful Cornwall home – until their toddler son disappears. When disgraced police constable Sadie stumbles across the house decades later, she begins to unravel what really happened on that midsummer evening in 1933.

F 2015 608pp **B2240**

Last Friends

Jane Gardam

This is the final title in the trilogy featuring *Old Filth* and *The Man in the Wooden Hat*. It charts the life of Old Filth's great rival, Terence Veneering, from his unconventional childhood to old age in the English countryside. Gardam is a superb stylist and an astute navigator of the human heart. Last Friends is a must for any group that enjoyed her previous books.

F 2013 224pp **B2196**

Life in Seven Mistakes

Susan Johnson

Elizabeth Barton's art career is finally taking off. She's about to fly to New York for her first show at a prestigious gallery but first she must survive family Christmas on the Gold Coast. Johnson explores relationships and ageing in a black comedy with an unexpected climax.

F 2008 352pp **B2037**

Little Fires Everywhere

Celeste Ng

WINNER
Goodreads Choice Award for Fiction

When an artist and single mother and her teenage daughter rent a house from an affluent family, their growing connection to the seemingly picture-perfect family threatens the bonds between mother and daughter. Then a custody battle to adopt a Chinese-American baby tears the town apart. A witty exploration of white privilege, class snobbery and motherhood in the '90s that will leave you questioning: whose side are you on?

F 2017 338pp **B2273**

The Living Sea of Waking Dreams

Richard Flanagan

Anna's aged mother is dying – and the effects of grief ripple through her family, as well as her own body. When one of Anna's fingers vanishes and later so does her knee, she feels herself slipping away. Her siblings too begin to vanish in this strange and lyrical story by the Booker Prize-winning Tasmanian novelist.

F 2020 304pp **B2345**

Love and Vertigo

Hsu Ming Teo

Pandora is drawn back to her native Singapore to die, and her Australian-born daughter Grace tries to understand her mother's early life as the 'rubbish child' – the fourth daughter of a Singaporean Chinese family in the 1940s. In turn funny, sad and insightful about the tensions and mysteries in families fragmented by the dislocations of war and emigration.

N 2000 287pp **B1645**

Lovers' Knots

Marion Halligan

WINNER
The Age Book of the Year

A capacious, hundred year family novel which focuses on particular lives of individuals at key points. Like a moving photographic collage, it lets the reader glimpse the time shifts which show individual and family destinies from unexpected angles.

F 1992 377pp **B1380**



Lovesong

Alex Miller



In her Tunisian café on the outskirts of Paris, Sabiha falls in love with Australian John, and together they fashion a new life. When writer Ken meets them in Melbourne later in life, the sadness in Sabiha's eyes draws him to tell their story. This is a story about home, family, and human frailties, raising questions of morals and purpose.

F 2009 368pp **B2090**

Lucky's

Andrew Pippos



This is a story of family, a story about migration; it is also about a man called Lucky, his restaurant chain, a fire that changed everything, a New Yorker article which might save a career, the mystery of a missing father, an imposter who got the girl, an unthinkable tragedy, a roll of the dice – and a story of love lost, sought and won again (at last).

F 2020 351pp **B2372**



The Man in the Wooden Hat

Jane Gardam

Child of the Empire, spirited young woman, Establishment wife of lawyer Edward Feathers; Betty is every bit as intriguing and vivid as her husband. Gardam explores the landscape of a marriage, including its secrets and compromises, with wit and understanding. This novel stands alone well, and is a remarkable companion piece to *Old Filth*.

F 2009 233pp **B2073**

The Memory Keeper's Daughter

Kim Edwards

One evening in 1964, a blizzard forces Dr Henry to deliver his own twins. His son is born healthy, his daughter has Down syndrome. Making a decision that will haunt their lives forever, he asks the nurse to take their daughter to an institution, and tells his wife that the baby died. This international bestseller is a deeply moving exploration of family secrets and the redemptive power of love.

F 2005 401pp **B1972**

The Moor's Last Sigh

Salman Rushdie



This Indian family saga has a huge, surprising cast. Its mind blowing mixture of the private and public, the historical and invented is elegiac, outrageous, astute, funny. An imaginative and human challenge – vintage Rushdie!

F 1995 434pp **B1492**

A Mother's Disgrace

Robert Dessaix

An unusual and compelling autobiography written in mid-life to describe how Dessaix came to find and know the woman who is his birth mother. He offers a moving account of the apparently ordinary couple who adopted him and were such loving parents, and talks candidly about his move away from married life to discover himself as a homosexual.

N 1994 195pp **B1415**

Mother's Milk

Edward St Aubyn

Patrick's mother Eleanor, ageing and ailing, is determined to sign over his inheritance to a New Age Foundation, while his wife Mary is lost in her obsession with motherhood. A biting witty and sometimes heart-breaking novel about family dynamics.

F 2006 304pp **B1952**

My Family and Other Animals

Gerald Durrell

The Durrell family, their eccentric hangers on, and the local animals, birds and insects provide a steady stream of hilarious incidents in this light-hearted book, set in Corfu where the author lived as a boy in the 1930s. Small print.

N 1956 300pp **B0575**



Nine Days

Toni Jordan

Spend nine days immersed in the lives of members of one Melbourne family from the 1930s to the present day. Kit's family, including his sister, mother and grandchildren, are engaging and real in this evocative and compassionate novel about sacrifice and survival.

F 2012 245pp **B2172**

Noah's Compass

Anne Tyler

A retired teacher in his 60s, Liam lives a lonely life in a small apartment. His inertia is broken by an intruder, a knock on the head and a case of amnesia. His eccentric second ex-wife, his daughters and his grandson Noah all help Liam find direction. Noah's Compass explores the meaning of happiness and the connections that keep us anchored in our lives.

F 2009 277pp **B2084**

No Great Mischief

Alistair MacLeod



Driven from the Highlands in 1779, Calum MacDonald sails for Nova Scotia, where he and his people work as loggers and miners, struggling in the new land and its endless cold. Two centuries later, these red-haired, black-eyed MacDonalds are still linked by intense clan loyalty.

F 1999 262pp **B1627**



Old Filth

Jane Gardam

Edward Feathers is well respected and known affectionately as Old Filth. Filth was a Raj orphan, sent 'home' at a young age from what was then Malaya, to be fostered and receive a proper English education. Gardam's beautifully written, memorable novel pieces together the mosaic of experiences that make up the life of this one member of the Establishment, and by extension, a generation of children of the Raj.

F 2004 260pp **B1910**

On Beauty

Zadie Smith



From the bestselling author of *White Teeth*. Howard is an art historian at an East Coast college in the US. His marriage to Kiki is strained to breaking point, and their three children struggle to cope. When Howard's arch-rival accepts a post in Howard's faculty, a cascade of hilarious and tragic events ensues.

F 2005 446pp **B1953**

Once in a House on Fire

Andrea Ashworth

This is an account of the writer's early years following the accidental death of her father. The men her mother accepts become violent, and the family spirals downward into poverty and uncertainty. Ashworth's lucid prose and lack of self-pity and the child's protectiveness towards her beautiful, neglectful mother raise fascinating questions about human vulnerability and resilience.

N 1998 330pp **B1740**

One Hundred Days

Alice Pung



Alice 'One hundred days. It's no time at all, she tells me. But she's not the one waiting.' 16-year-old Karuna falls pregnant. Her mother, already over-protective, confines her to their high-rise public housing flat to keep her safe – and make sure she can't get into any more trouble. At times tense and claustrophobic, this novel also brims with humour, warmth and character.

F 2021 288pp **B2375**

The Orchard Thieves

Elizabeth Jolley

In this beautiful, autumnal work Jolley creates an insightful and artful work about families. The figures of the grandmother, the three sisters, and the young grandsons who give the book its title, open our imaginations to the poignant question of what one generation can pass on to following ones. More a fable than a novel. Clear print.

F 1995 134pp **B1477**

Other People's Children

Joanna Trollope

What does it feel like, for adults and children, when, after losing a partner by divorce or death, a man or a woman with children of various ages enters a new relationship? This absorbing, shrewd and sympathetic novel probing the complexities of modern family life will surely sound echoes for every reader.

F 1998 320pp **B1749**



The Other Side of the Bridge

Mary Lawson

Arthur and Jake Dunn are as different as two brothers can be. Arthur, who is older, is shy, dutiful and set to inherit the family farm in northern Ontario, Canada, while Jake is young and reckless. When Laura arrives in their 1930s rural community their uneasy relationship is pushed to the edge. A beautifully told story of love and family that spans the changes of rural life from the Great Depression to WWII.

F 2006 273pp **B2003**

Our Father Who Art in the Tree

Judy Pascoe

A funny, touching novel evoking a family in crisis. A man dies suddenly, leaving four bewildered children and a distraught wife. In the heat of a Queensland summer they contend with his absence, and young Simone is convinced her father is still speaking to her from where he now lives in the great tree behind the house.

F 2002 169pp **B1795**

Our Tiny, Useless Hearts

Toni Jordan

'Nothing much happens in the outer suburbs. It's just like a spa retreat. A nudist, adulterous spa retreat.' Caroline and Henry's marriage is teetering on the brink, so it's lucky that Caroline's sister Janice is there to look after their daughters. But Janice is busy dealing with her feelings toward her ex-husband, and to top it all off, Caroline's nosy neighbours seem to be having their own marital crisis. This entertaining, moving novel explores family, childhood, and the sacrifices we make for love.

F 2016 288pp **B2245**

P

Passing On

Penelope Lively

An unmarried daughter and son, of fifty-two and forty-nine respectively, are left by the death of their domineering mother to develop what remains of their lives. Compassionate, poised and finely written.

F 1989 210pp **B1347**

The Place on Dalhousie

Melina Marchetta

Rosie Gennaro's father rebuilt the place on Dalhousie, but passed away. Now Rosie has to share it with Martha – the woman her father married far too soon after her mother's death. An encounter with Jimmy Hailler takes her life in another direction, resulting in both Jimmy and Rosie reassessing what's important. A story of finding family, love and connections in unexpected places.

F 2019 288pp **B2311**

The Poisonwood Bible

Barbara Kingsolver

SHORTLISTED
Pulitzer Prize

Missionary preacher Nathan Price moves his family to the Congo in the '60s, a time of tremendous political and social upheaval. The narrative alternates between Nathan's wife and four daughters in this powerful, poignant and sometimes funny exploration of religious zeal, conscience, imperialist arrogance, and the many paths to redemption. Small print.

F 1998 543pp **B1728**

Precious Bodily Fluids

Charles Waterstreet

Eleven-year-old Charlie threads his way cheekily through a rollicking family memoir of the owners of Waterstreet's pub in Albury in 1961. Irish Catholic family and school culture, six o'clock closing, SP bookies, police raids and sinister plots to fluoridate the town's water are all part of a delightful and dreadful time, now gone.

N 1998 262pp **B1718**

A Private Man

Malcolm Knox

Set in contemporary Sydney, this is a portrait of three adult brothers and their parents, over the days following the father's unexpected death in curious circumstances. In Knox's look at different models of masculinity, the worlds of medical practice, test cricket and pornography merge in a literary thriller about a family under pressure. Strong language.

F 2004 385pp **B1838**

The Pure Gold Baby

Margaret Drabble

Jess is an anthropologist and single mother. Anna is her pure gold baby – a smiling child with a learning disability who never 'grows up'. Narrated by their neighbour Eleanor, *The Pure Gold Baby* profiles a changing society from 1960s London to the present day, exploring forms of human kinship, the experience of ageing, and the way we care for one another.

F 2013 291pp **B2201**

R

Reading in Bed

Sue Gee

Dido and Georgia have been friends since university. They live in a cultured English world of lovely gardens, good books and conversation. But for the first time, Dido has reason to question her marriage, while widowed Georgia has yet to come to terms with the loss of her husband; their children are unhappy in love and perfect health is no longer a given.

F 2007 340pp **B2016**

Our members could really identify with the two key characters in this book, as we are all a similar age and stage of life.
Blackburn South 3

The Rector's Wife

Joanna Trollope

In her early 1940s, Anna realises that her Rector husband's parish is 'the other woman in my life'. Her children's needs impel her to get a paid job. Trollope's account of the web of personal, family and parish life was reprinted thirteen times in its first two years as a paperback. Good black print.

F **L** 1991 243pp **B1423**

Revolutionary Road

Richard Yates

SHORTLISTED
National Book Award

Frank and April are bored by their 1950s suburban American lives and dream of being extraordinary. But their decision to change their life leads to tragedy. Tennessee Williams said: 'here is more than fine writing; here is what ... makes a book come immediately, intensely and brilliantly alive.'

F 1961 336pp **B2039**

The Riders

Tim Winton

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Fred Scully's desperate quest to get his Australian family together again drives him from Ireland across Europe, with his gutsy and loving daughter. In the background are the mysterious, waiting riders and the Australian experience. Gripping suspense.

F **L** 1994 377pp **B1455**

Rose Boys

Peter Rose

WINNER
Biography Prize

Robert Rose was a footballer and cricketer in a famous Melbourne sporting family. Suddenly left quadriplegic at twenty-two by a car accident, Robert became totally dependent on others. His brother Peter, a poet, writer and editor, has written a memoir about a family under great pressure, a tribute to his brother and parents and a book of quiet power.

N 2001 289pp **B1796**

Running in the Family

Michael Ondaatje

Ondaatje returned to his native Sri Lanka in the 1970s to retrace the baroque mythologies of his forebears, outrageous, eccentric, or embattled: 'Everyone was vaguely related and had Sinhalese, Tamil, Dutch, British and Burgher blood in them going back for generations. Love affairs rainbow over marriages and lasted forever so it often seemed that marriage was the greater infidelity.' An unforgettable book.

N 1982 207pp **B1650**

Running with Scissors

Augusten Burroughs

Burroughs' mother gave him away to her psychiatrist when he was twelve. His bizarre childhood, spent in the doctor's dilapidated mansion where he maintained a relationship with a paedophilic inpatient, is the basis for this harrowing, entertaining, and endlessly surreal memoir. Contains explicit content.

N 2003 304pp **B1892**

S

The Secret Agent

Joseph Conrad

This modern classic is a carefully developed human story of an agent's family in the grim world of the agent provocateur. It is based on a real incident, the attempted destruction of Greenwich Observatory, treated with Conrad's irony, scepticism and social insight.

F 1907 249pp **B1013**

Seducing Mr Maclean

Loubna Haikal

The daughter of a Lebanese family enrolls in Medicine to fulfil her family's dreams. Her Australian boyfriend, the suspect business dealings of her brothers, and parents slaving away in their restaurant, are ingredients in this fast-moving comic novel.

F 2002 318pp **B1679**

The Shipping News

Annie Proulx



A hapless New York hack journalist takes off with his two small, motherless daughters and redoubtable aunt to storm-battered Newfoundland, where he gradually makes a new life. The characters, wild setting and remarkable writing all come off the page with a blast of freshness. An irresistible comedy of human life and possibility.

F 1993 337pp **B1458**

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian

Marina Lewycka



Sisters Nadezhda and Vera haven't always seen eye to eye. But when their father's young, glamorous fiancée Valentina bursts into their lives 'like a fluffy pink grenade' they agree they must rescue him from her greedy clutches and his own geriatric fantasies. Enlivened with quirky characters and original dialogue, this spirited story is about love, old age, immigration, Ukrainian history and family secrets.

F 2005 324pp **B1893**

The Slap

Christos Tsiolkas



A man slaps a child at a suburban barbeque. The child is not his own. This event and its consequences have a rippling effect on the friends and family at the barbeque. Told from the viewpoints of eight people, *The Slap* is an unflinching look at the modern family. Strong language and explicit content may offend some readers.

F 2008 400pp **B2034**

The Sound of One Hand Clapping

Richard Flanagan



Sonja Buloh has gone to Sydney to make herself a carefully ordered life. Her return to Tasmania connects her with the traumas of her migrant parents' European and Australian pasts, and the childhood she has tried to forget. An important novel about dislocation, work, family.

F 1997 425pp **B1586**

The Spill

Imbe Neeme



The lasting impact of a car collision on a remote West Australian road, in which nobody was hurt, affects a family for four decades. An exploration of love and loss that can follow a family through misunderstood memories. This is a tale of sisters struggling and finding ways to reconcile.

F 2020 336pp **B2354**

A Spot of Bother

Mark Haddon

From the author of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*. George is trying to settle quietly into retirement, but his daughter is marrying an inappropriate man, his wife is carrying on with his ex-colleague, and an unsettling rash has appeared on his hip. As the Hall family slides into chaos, George quietly and politely begins to go mad.

F 2006 390pp **B1966**

Summer at Mount Hope

Rosalie Ham

Ham's second novel is a 19th-century romance. Feisty heroine Phoebe Crupp lives with her parents and sister on a small farm near Geelong. Her father moved his family from the city to establish a vineyard, a decision Phoebe's mother bitterly resents. With less black comedy than in *The Dressmaker*, Ham highlights the efforts of women a century ago to thwart tradition and pursue their dreams.

F 2005 296pp **B1936**

Swallow the Air

Tara June Winch

When May's mother dies suddenly, she and her brother Billy are taken in by Aunt. While Billy takes his own self-destructive path, May sets off to find her father and her Aboriginal identity. Written in a poetic style, with an excellent ear for dialogue, these skilfully crafted interlinked stories about growing up on society's fringes herald a distinctive and exciting voice in Australian indigenous fiction.

F S 2006 198pp **B1937**

The Sweet Shop Owner

Graham Swift

A decisive day in the life of 60-year-old Willy Chapman evokes the personal, family and social history of his life and his shop. Clear, compassionate writing reveals courage, pain, laughter, limitation and unexpected sweetness in an ordinary life.

F 1980 222pp **B1203**

Swimming with the Jellyfish

Vicki Hastrich

With a gift for humour and characterisation Hastrich evokes a small New South Wales coastal town through the eyes of a likable eccentric woman, still preoccupied by the disappearance of her mother twenty years back. A warm, quirky, insightful book with a cast of memorable characters.

F 2001 224pp **B1692**



A Tale of Love and Darkness

Amos Oz

The single child of a couple who migrated to Israel in the 1930s, Oz grew up in Jerusalem and is now one of Israel's foremost writers. His family chronicle is mesmerising: funny, intense, tragic. In the layers of his extended family in Israel – all transplanted from Eastern Europe and drenched in European languages and culture – we see the making of Jewish Jerusalem, and beyond that the emerging state of Israel.

N 2004 564pp **B1938**

There Should Be More Dancing

Rosalie Ham

On Margery's eightieth birthday she reflects back on her life. She has lived quietly in Brunswick (Melbourne) for the past sixty years but now she wants to jump off the balcony at her hotel. She doesn't trust anyone, least of all her family. However, she doesn't want to hurt anyone below the hotel so instead she thinks back and revisits her life. Told with Rosalie Ham's wit, humour and compassion.

F 2011 347pp **B2128**

A Thousand Acres

Jane Smiley



Dominating, implacable Larry Cook owns the largest, richest farm in Zebulon County, Iowa. Without warning he opts to retire, passing the farm to his three daughters and setting off a chain of events which will divide the family and bring dark secrets to light. In her modern reworking of Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear*, this American novelist produces a compelling tale about family, human nature, and this farming community.

F 1991 371pp **B1499**

A Thousand Splendid Suns

Khaled Hosseini

Brought together by war, loss, and marriage to the same cruel man, Mariam and Laila develop a lifelong friendship. Spanning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Afghan civil war and the rule of the Taliban, this is a moving tale of friendship, love and family.

F 2007 370pp **B1961**

The Tiger in the Tiger Pit

Janette Turner Hospital

The tiger is an old man facing his 50th wedding anniversary, irritated and alienated by present incapacities and past lost opportunities. His wife strives to recompose a family harmony, recognising that 'We are all capable of brutality, aren't we?' A deftly woven plot in this thought-provoking exploration of parents and children.

F 1983 256pp **B1244**

The Time We Have Taken

Steven Carroll



Summer, 1970: television and wireless shop proprietor, Peter, pronounces his Melbourne suburb one hundred years old. As his community prepares to celebrate progress, a mural is commissioned of the area's history. But what vision of the past will this painting reveal? The third in a trilogy, Carroll's novel is a meditation on the rhythms of suburban life during a time of radical change.

F 2007 327pp **B2027**

Tinkers

Paul Harding



Clockmaker George Washington Crosby lies dying and travels back in time through memories of his impoverished childhood in rural Maine, and of his father, a peddler who suffered from epileptic seizures. Harding's language dazzles, whether he's describing the workings of clocks or sensory images of nature.

F 2009 191pp **B2103**

Trespass

Valerie Martin

Chloe Dale is discontent with the American involvement in the Iraq war, and with her son Toby's girlfriend Salome Drago. An émigré from the former Yugoslavia, Salome has her own concerns and dangerous secrets from her past are about to catch up with her. A deft portrayal of two families haunted by the past.

F 2007 288pp **B2019**



Families

U

Unless

Carol Shields

Norah, beloved adult daughter of Reta Winters, opts out of normal life in order to sit on a gritty street corner mutely displaying a sign around her neck that reads 'GOODNESS'. Her mother's search for what drove her daughter to this turns into a funny meditation on where we find meaning and hope. A suspenseful fiction about supposedly ordinary lives from this exceptional Canadian novelist.

F 2002 213pp **B1696**

V

Various Pets Alive and Dead

Marina Lewycka

Unrepentant hippie Marxists Doro and Marcus realise the revolution is never coming. But why do their children have to embrace capitalism and consumerism so enthusiastically? A charming story about family values and the comedy of the new generation gap from the author of *A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian*.

F 2012 366pp **B2165**

W

We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves

Karen Joy Fowler

WINNER
PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction

SHORTLISTED
Man Booker Prize

Something in Rosemary's childhood turned her from a lively, chatty child into a quiet adult with a secret. Her siblings disappeared inexplicably; her father, a renowned psychologist, brought home his work in surprising ways. Rosemary attempts to reconcile her present with her jumbled memories, wondering what it is we relate to in others – is it the 'human', or the 'being'?

F 2014 336pp **B2215**

What the Light Reveals

Mick McCoy

Set in Melbourne in 1954, Australian-born communist Conrad, his wife Ruby and their two sons' lives are in shambles when Conrad is brought before the commission with false accusations of espionage during the peak of the Cold War. After being vilified by peers and the media, Conrad uproots his family to Moscow where the family must face up to their own lies and secrets. A family drama that explores identity, individual beliefs, family and politics during the Cold War period.

F 2018 368pp **B2288**

The White Earth

Andrew McGahan

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

WINNER
The Age Book of the Year

Do we own the land or does it own us? Who can claim to belong here? In the Darling Downs in the years when the imminent passage of Native Title is of huge concern to local landowners, a fatherless boy and his mother are taken in by the family patriarch. Part family saga, part history and part gothic thriller, this novel is set in a landscape haunted by the ghosts of black and white.

F 2004 389pp **B1852**

The White Girl

Tony Birch

WINNER
NSW Premier's Literary Awards

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Odette lives on the edge of a small town and is determined to keep her granddaughter Sissy safe. She knows authorities are removing fair-skinned Indigenous children from their homes, but it isn't until a new police officer comes to town that she is forced to risk everything. An intimate and devastating novel of the stolen generation from the acclaimed author of *Ghost River*.

F 2019 265pp **B2333**

White Teeth

Zadie Smith

WINNER
Whitbread Novel Award

This sparkling, noisy, comic epic of multicultural Britain makes joyful use of vernaculars, various, as it traces the inter-connections of three families, one Indian, one white and one mixed, over 25 years in North London and Oxford. A novel with a relish for ideas, for language and for the tragic comedy of human life.

F 2000 462pp **B1772**

Y

You Gotta Have Balls

Lily Brett

Ruth is a 54-year-old Jewish Australian running a successful business in New York. She worries about her weight, about her husband, and about her 87-year-old father, the irrepressible Edek. Enter Zofia: buxom Polish 60-something with one eye for business and another for Edek, and Ruth's worrying reaches hilarious heights. In this light-hearted but satisfying novel, Brett tackles serious themes with wit and verve. Frank and with occasional strong language, this is delightful social comedy about modern family life.

F 2005 293pp **B1944**

NEW

The Younger Wife

Sally Hepworth



SHORTLISTED
ABIA Literary Fiction Book of the Year

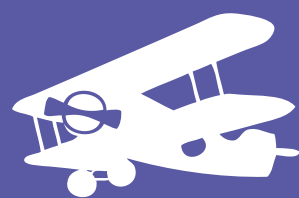
Tully and her sister are murderous when they discover their father has a new girlfriend. The fact that she's half his age isn't even the most shocking part. He's still married to their mother, stricken with Alzheimer's. One garage full of stolen goods, one old hot-water bottle stuffed with cash, and one blood-soaked wedding – and that's only the beginning.

F 2022 336pp **B2399**

Enjoyed **White Teeth**?

Try **Girl, Woman, Other**
by **Bernardine Evaristo**
B2319





1788 Watkin Tench

First-hand accounts of the First Fleet's expedition to Botany Bay written by a captain in the marines. Robert Hughes says: 'An eye that noticed everything, a young man's verve, a sly wit ... the most readable classic of early Australian history.'

N 1793 276pp **B1517**

A

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Mark Twain

This great American novel is a comic and searching examination of American society in the mid-19th century. The depiction of life on the Mississippi raises larger questions of individuality, conformity and escape.

F 1884 370pp **B0105**

Almost French Sarah Turnbull

A frank and engaging travel memoir from this Australian ex-pat about her new life in Paris with a 'very French Frenchman'. An honest, often amusing account of the highs, lows and culture clashes associated with living in a foreign country. Read this book for an insider's account of life in Paris – food, fashion, social rituals, bloody-minded bureaucrats and pampered pooches.

N 2002 309pp **B1776**

An Authentic Life Caroline Jones

Caroline Jones sees her book as an invitation to the reader 'to reflect on your own story, on your own experience, on the way you are living your life – to discover the revelation it has to offer you'. She reveals a few central moments in her own life story as she explores the stories she elicited in her ABC Radio National program 'The Search for Meaning'.

N 1998 312pp **B1707**

B

Balanda Mary Ellen Jordan

 **SHORTLISTED**
National Biography Award

'Balanda' is the word used by Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory to describe non-Aboriginal people. Fuelled by a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of indigenous Australians, Jordan spent a year working at a tiny arts centre in Arnhem Land. The transition from Melbourne to Maningrida was extreme and being a 'Balanda' proved more complex than Jordan bargained for. As her disillusionment grows, her opinions on race, culture, language, art and political correctness are constantly challenged. An honest, perceptive and engaging contribution to the relationship between black and white Australians.

N 2005 224pp **B1868**

Behind the Wall Colin Thubron

A finely written look at China. The big picture is made up of many tiny portraits of people who are simultaneously common and extraordinary. Thubron parades before us the little lives of babies, people who have nothing, the greedy and the powerful, all as individuals. Informative and rewarding.

N 1987 302pp **B1356**

Bloodletting and Miraculous Cures Vincent Lam

Dr Vincent Lam draws on his life experience as he follows a group of young doctors from medical school to emergency rooms. 'Each of these interconnected stories reveal nuances of different pressures – the immense sense of responsibility, sleep disturbances, psychological problems and the failures of imperfection' – *Toronto Star* (Canada).

F S 2005 350pp **B2024**

Brick Lane Monica Ali

 **SHORTLISTED**
Man Booker Prize

Life for Bangladeshi village girl Nazreen is duty and obedience until her father arranges her marriage to Chanu of Tower Hamlets, London. Nazreen struggles to reconcile herself both to fate and choice as she faces issues surrounding family, identity, Islam and community.

F 2003 492pp **B1813**

Brooklyn Colm Tóibín

Elis Lacey leaves her small town in south-east Ireland in the 1950s, setting off for a new life in Brooklyn. When tragedy strikes, she is faced with a difficult decision between love in her new land and the promises to her family back home.

F 2009 256pp **B2059**

C

Catfish and Mandala Andrew X. Pham

Pham's family escaped Vietnam in 1977. Twenty years later, Pham abandons his engineering career and makes an epic year-long bicycle journey on a shoestring budget through New Mexico, USA, Japan and finally Vietnam. Part travelogue, part memoir, this is a confronting book about cultural identity, framed within an exciting adventure story.

N 1999 342pp **B1874**

A Change of Skies Yasmine Gooneratne

A witty, multi-faceted exploration of differences and misunderstanding between cultures, and the impact of moving between cultures. Neither Australia nor Sri Lanka will look quite the same to you after this.

F 1991 329pp **B1319**

City of Djinns William Dalrymple

Subtitled 'A Year in Delhi', the book presents encounters with a range of individuals – Muslims, Sikhs, Anglo Indians, Punjabis, Sufi mystics, calligraphers, eunuchs, pigeon flyers – whose stories reflect the eventful history of this ancient city. Lively, diverting and informative: a real delight. Print smallish but clear.

N 1993 350pp **B1405**

NEW

Cold Enough for Snow Jessica Au



 **SHORTLISTED**
Miles Franklin Literary Award

 **WINNER**
Victorian Premier's Award for Fiction

A young woman accompanies her mother on a trip to Japan. This is a novel about the relationship between life and art, and between language and the inner world – how difficult it is to speak truly, to know and be known by another, and how much power and friction lies in the unsaid, especially between a mother and daughter.

F 2022 112pp **B2383**

Conditions of Faith Alex Miller

A young Australian decides to marry a Scottish Frenchman and follows him to 1920s Paris, where he is working on a design tender for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Inevitably the realities of her daily life as wife, pregnant woman and mother clash with her desire for liberty and the need to use her mind. A splendid account of the excitement and cruel sacrifices entailed in creative and intellectual commitment.

F 2000 406pp **B1634**

We loved this vivid odyssey about a Vietnamese man on a trip to rediscover his birth country. The author has managed to cover many themes, including poverty, displacement, dysfunctional relationships, transgender issues, family expectations and cultural identity. His descriptions of food, poverty and trauma were an absolute assault on our senses.

Warrandyte 5

D

A Death in Brazil

Peter Robb



Robb paints a picture of South America's largest and most mysterious country, blending personal journey with a portrait of a sensual, often violent society with extremes of poverty and wealth; a background of Portuguese and centuries of slavery, workers' strikes and organised crime – all flavoured with lime and coconut juice.

N 2003 372pp **B1827**

Diary of a Welsh Swagman, 1869–1894

William Evans

Joseph Jenkins worked on farms in the Ballarat and Castlemaine area and kept diaries for 25 years. These diaries lay in an attic (in Wales) for 70 years before they were found and interpreted as a valuable historical document which conveys the personality of the diarist.

N 1975 216pp **B1089**

Some of our group saw Jenkins as an exceptional man, others saw him as a self-serving person, therefore the discussion was lively.
Lugarno Book Group

Down Under

Bill Bryson

Of course, we all know that Australia is a huge, mainly empty country of aggressive climatic extremes and teeming with poisonous creatures. Even so, give yourself the pleasure of accompanying American born Anglophile Bryson as he lists many of the country's must-see destinations and draws conclusions for himself. He can't help just liking it here, but his account of Oz is still sharp-witted and aware.

N 2000 319pp **B1753**

E

Eat Pray Love

Elizabeth Gilbert

After a bitter divorce and a turbulent love affair, Gilbert realised it was time to pursue three things: pleasure, devotion and balance. Her spiritual quest unfolds in an engaging and highly enjoyable travel narrative that takes her to Italy, India and Indonesia.

N 2006 348pp **B2000**

The End of Seeing

Christy Collins



Ana is still recovering from the death of her daughter when her husband goes missing on a photojournalistic assignment overseas. Nick's last pictures were taken all across Europe, following a theme of refugees and forgotten people. Uncovering the trail left by his photographs, Ana sets out to find Nick – or, at least, the truth of what happened. Beautiful and haunting.

F 2015 240pp **B2233**

F

A Fez of the Heart

Jeremy Seal

The fez has played a central role in Turkey's conflicting desires to be both Eastern and Western, both Muslim and secular. Wearing the fez was banned in 1925 by Kemal Atatürk. In this book Seal sets out to trace its history and demise. An engaging, gentle, often funny travelogue offering real insights into Turkey.

N 1995 291pp **B1528**

The Fig Tree

Arnold Zable

Including his Polish Jewish parents and his wife's Greek parents, Zable collects stories about belonging and dislocation. We move from late migrant era Carlton to Ithaca, hearing tales of refugees and wanderers, singers and poets. Hospitality and the welcoming of strangers are recurring motifs in a book which remains relevant today.

N 2002 222pp **B1685**

Flight Behaviour

Barbara Kingsolver



Farm-wife Dellarobia sees her world ignited in a literal blaze of colour when rare Monarch butterflies make their home in the forests on her family's land. Class differences and societal values deepen as science clashes with religion around this small town American family, and the result is a thought-provoking reflection of humanity against a backdrop of a world in flux.

F 2012 436pp **B2190**

Floundering

Romy Ash



Abandoned by their unreliable mother, Tom and Jordy live with their grandmother until their mother's sudden reappearance. During a haphazard road trip, she leaves them again, this time on Australia's west coast. Desperate, the boys turn to an old man for help – but what danger does he pose?

F 2012 202pp **B2162**

Footsteps

Richard Holmes

These 'footsteps of a romantic biographer' appeal to lovers of biography, travel and history, telescoping the joys of several books. Walk with Robert Louis Stevenson through France; join in the French Revolution with Wordsworth and Wollstonecraft; visit Shelley's complicated household in Italy. Hunting his haunting subject, Holmes struggles towards his own mature identity.

N 1985 288pp **B1530**

From Rice to Riches

Jane Hutcheon

Born in Hong Kong and part Chinese herself, ABC correspondent Jane Hutcheon takes the reader on a journey into her family's past as well as across the new China. With refreshing directness she recounts her round as a foreign journalist – meeting characters from all levels of society, outwitting the Security Police and writing self-confessions when found out, and sampling the country's varied and delicious cuisine.

N 2003 371pp **B1819**

All our members found this to be great documentary of that time and were fascinated with the insight we were given into the lives of a range of ordinary citizens. However, the book did raise more questions than answers and some of us were overwhelmed by so much information, facts and figures. We liked the structure of the book.
Jervis Bay 1

G

Gilgamesh

Joan London



A small-town Australian woman journeys to war-torn Armenia to find the father of her child. Her retelling of the ancient Mesopotamian epic of the hero Gilgamesh, his mourning for his beloved friend Enkidu and his eventual homecoming, resonates with the journey taken.

F 2001 255pp **B1695**

A God in Ruins

Kate Atkinson

Teddy is the younger brother of Ursula in *Life After Life*, and in this companion novel we follow the life he would have had, had he survived the war which killed him in Ursula's story. Atkinson writes with sensitivity and humour of life's highs, including a bucolic childhood, and lows, such as Teddy's experience of war and the small disappointments of fatherhood – and of living.

F 2015 400pp **B2221**

H

Heart of Darkness

Joseph Conrad

In the Congo during its colonisation by Belgium, shocks and transformations resulted from the clash of cultures. This short novel follows a newcomer's journey up-river and inland to the heart of that experience.

F 1899 340pp **B0003**

Heart of the Grass Tree

Molly Murn

Pearl returns to Kangaroo Island with her mother and sister to farewell her grandmother Nell. But she does not expect to uncover Nell's secrets and the connection to the island's early-settler history with the Ngarrindjeri people. A heart-warming story about family, motherhood and connection to place and history.

F 2019 304pp **B2306**

Highways to a War

Christopher Koch



'Being in battle, like being in love, is one of the fundamental human experiences.' Set in the predominantly male world of war journalism, this novel opens in 1976 with the disappearance of a gifted war photographer in Cambodia, and follows the highways of his life into the countries and wars he covered.

F 1996 451pp **B1504**

I

I Heard the Owl Call My Name

Margaret Craven

Despite encroaching social change, tribal beliefs and ways are still important to the Indian tribe living in a village of British Columbia. How can their new Anglican vicar, young Mark Brian, find acceptance, serve them and learn from them? Canada's rivers, salmon, wild geese and changing seasons are central to this simple and moving tale. Fair sized print.

F 1967 133pp **B1235**

In Siberia

Colin Thubron

Thubron journeys by train, river and truck across the vastness of Siberia among the people most damaged by the collapse of Communism. He ranges from Mongolia to the Arctic Circle, from the site of the last Czar's murder and Rasputin's village to the graves of ancient Scythians, to Baikal, deepest and oldest of the world's lakes.

N 1999 287pp **B1762**

Inside Outside

Andrew Riemer

The Sydney based academic, writer and critic left Budapest during 1946 at the age of 10. In 1990 he returned for a visit, hoping to get some sense of his family's past there. A witty, lucid and memorable account of two worlds, also offering Riemer's views on issues such as the importance of language acquisition in a new country.

N 1991 218pp **B1328**

Interpreter of Maladies

Jhumpa Lahiri



Wherever each of these nine short stories is set, from Bengal to Boston, all in some way explore 'Indianness' and the complex mechanics of adjustment to new circumstances, relationships, cultures. In transparently simple writing, devoid of overt comment, Lahiri uses voice and viewpoint in such a way that the stories linger in the mind.

F S 1999 198pp **B1763**

Invented Lives

Andrea Goldsmith

In the 1980s, book illustrator Galina Kogan departs Leningrad and settles in Melbourne, knowing she can never return. She befriends the Morrow family, not realising the influence she will have on their lives. A story of the search for identity, diaspora and what it means to be exiled in different ways.

F 2019 336pp **B2322**

Iron and Silk

Mark Salzman

From the age of thirteen, this engaging young American was absorbed by all things Chinese. His account of two years he spent teaching English in Changsha in the early 1980s is a series of entrancing anecdotes about his students, friends and those who teach him more about the literature, calligraphy and martial arts he loves. Unforgettable vignettes of China and the Chinese way of doing things.

N 1986 211pp **B1304**

We all enjoyed this book. It was informative of the culture of China at the time of writing. Our discussion was animated, lively and energetic, just like the book.
Geelong Gardeners

The Island of Sea Women

Lisa See

A moving story that highlights the challenges faced by two young women on the Korean island of Jeju in the 1930s. Mi-ja and Young-sook work in the sea with an all-female diving collective. The novel traverses many decades and wars, which herald many changes and challenges for these women. Mi-ja and Young-sook endure great change and loss, but also a great friendship.

F 2019 384pp **B2309**

J

Journey to the Stone Country

Alex Miller



A Melbourne academic and an Aboriginal stockman meet again and travel together through the high ranges of remote North Queensland to the places they have known and come from. Miller's intimate knowledge of the outback resonates through his novel, both a cross-cultural love story and an exploration of identity, of how and where one belongs, and of our painful histories.

F 2002 364pp **B1803**

L

The Library of Legends

Janie Chang

This wartime adventure is a poetic journey threaded with magic. Students and teachers escape from Minghua University during the Japanese invasion of 1937 to walk a thousand miles into the safety of China's western provinces: to safeguard a priceless treasure, the 500-year-old collection of myths and folklore known as the Library of Legends. It is both a love story and celebration of storytelling.

F 2020 358pp **B2344**

M

Mahjar

Eva Sallis

Many books have been written about the experience of migrating to Australia from Europe and Great Britain. But these eloquent, linked stories take us into the very different lives of immigrants from the Middle East. Sallis explores exile, loss, personal displacement, growth and idiosyncrasy with empathy, comic warmth, and an undercurrent of anger in this timely book that is a joy to read.

F S 2003 168pp **B1834**

Mantras and Misdemeanours

Vanessa Walker

Former journalist Vanessa Walker decided to spend a year in Macleod Ghanj (home of the Dalai Lama) researching a book on Tibetans in exile and furthering her study of Buddhism, but unexpectedly fell in love with an ex-monk and became pregnant three months later. Part travelogue, part cross-cultural love story, this is an enjoyable, educational and insightful read.

N 2006 293pp **B1928**

The Many-Coloured Land

Christopher Koch

Koch's two great-grandmothers settled in Tasmania in the 1840s: one a Protestant gentlewoman, the other transported as a convict. He explores Tasmanian and Irish connections in a book which combines family history, childhood memoir and his travels in two rather different Irelands, in 1956 and in 2000.

N 2002 246pp **B1790**

The Memory of Running

Ron McLarty

Smithy, the middle-aged central figure in this American novel, is alone and in a bad way. Something prompts him to resurrect his old bicycle and head off for Los Angeles, through New York, St. Louis, and Denver, to find the sister who went missing years ago. His encounters on this cycling road trip show us an inarticulate, decent, and honest man. His story and voice carry the novel along.

F 2005 405pp **B1929**

Mermaid Singing; Peel Me a Lotus

Charmian Clift

Two modern classics in one volume. In 1954, Australian writers Charmian Clift and George Johnston moved with their young family from London to the Greek Islands – long before the 'sea change' books of more affluent writers. Clift records the passage of the seasons and her family's experiences, writing with perceptiveness, warmth and vivacity.

N 2001 (1956 & 1959) 422pp **B1791**

Miss Garnet's Angel

Salley Vickers

A retired teacher rents an apartment in Venice, changing her previously narrow life. Julia Garnet succumbs to the beauty of the city and its magnificent art and responds to the spirituality of the Catholic religion, becoming caught up in the lives of both locals and visitors. A gentle, kind, decorous, funny novel.

F 2000 342pp **B1647**

Mr Muo's Travelling Couch

Dai Sijie

Mr Muo, a forty-year-old student of Freud, returns from long years of study in Paris to his country of birth as its first psychoanalyst at large. China offers few patients and he is consumed by a new mission, to liberate his first love from prison where she has been consigned for political dissent. This comic novel follows its naïve hero's adventures and mishaps through the maze of present-day China.

F 2005 264pp **B1930**

N

The Namesake

Jhumpa Lahiri

A story about an Indian boy growing up in America (and afflicted with a pet name in honour of a Russian writer), this novel depicts a recognised pattern of cultural transition: the parents cling to their Bengali past, while the next generation cannot shed the old ways fast enough. Lahiri writes with subtlety and her characters are beautifully observed.

F 2003 291pp **B1835**

Night Letters

Robert Dessaix

SHORTLISTED
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Diagnosed with a terminal illness, the novel's protagonist travels to Italy as his exploration of the meaning in life in the proximity of death moves him from the world of doing into a realm of being. A beautiful, civilised work of tale-spinning, travel, and richly fanciful speculation.

F 1996 276pp **B1542**

Norwegian by Night

Derek B. Miller

Ex-marine Sheldon is in his eighties and has reluctantly moved to Oslo, where he remains haunted by his past. When he witnesses a woman's murder by a Balkan gang, he rescues her six-year-old son and makes a run for it, relying on military training now fifty years old. Both a thriller and an emotionally haunting novel about ageing and regret.

F 2012 305pp **B2186**

Notes from a Small Island

Bill Bryson

Bill Bryson is an unrepentant Anglophile who happened to be born in Iowa. He spent twenty years in England before deciding to return to the land of his birth. This account of his walking tour of the English countryside is full of genial fun poking at a country he adores.

N 1995 352pp **B1599**

Sheldon Horowitz, an 82-year-old, is certainly a surprising central character for a thriller. The ambiguity of his back story and the confusion in his failing mind made for interesting discussion. Most of us enjoyed both the humour and complexity of the novel.
Mullumbimby Huon Books

O

The Odyssey

Homer

Odysseus' long voyage home from the Trojan War takes him through the terrors of the one-eyed Cyclops, the seductive Sirens, and the wandering islands, before finally reaching Ithaca and his faithful Penelope. This early Greek epic has inspired readers, writers and artists down through the ages.

F C8thBC 376pp **B0335**

The Old Man and the Sea

Ernest Hemingway

In Hemingway's clear and direct prose, this story of an old man's fishing trip becomes the vehicle for the discovery of a new awareness of the dignity and beauty that can be found everywhere. A timeless tale.

F 1952 128pp **B0205**

The Old Man Who Read Love Stories

Luis Sepúlveda

Antonio Bolívar lives as a recluse deep in the Amazon jungle in Ecuador. When an ocelot begins attacking humans in the small settlement, he is obliged against his will to join a hunting party and confront the creature and his own past. A tale of life, death, atonement and the pleasures of reading.

F 1989 128pp **B1836**

One Thousand Chestnut Trees

Mira Stout

American-Korean Anna visits Korea to discover her mother's family, a powerful clan stripped of their lands during Japanese occupation. As the novel unfolds, details of Korean life are evoked with great piquancy and we come to appreciate the country's turbulent history.

F 1997 324pp **B1717**

Otherland

Maria Tumarkin

The author travels home to rediscover her roots and introduce her Australian born daughter to the place where she grew up – but the Russia and Ukraine she returns to is not the same as the one she left in 1989. Maria comes to realise she cannot force her daughter to feel and think things just because she wants her to.

N 2010 313pp **B2080**

The Other Side of the World

Stephanie Bishop

WINNER
Readings Prize for New Australian Fiction

WINNER
ABIA Literary Fiction Book of the Year

Set in the 1960s, Charlotte struggles with the demands of being a new mother. Her husband Henry makes a decision to move from their cottage in Cambridge to sunny Perth, convincing himself it's all for her sake. When their new life doesn't offer the hoped for solutions, Charlotte and Henry embark on personal journeys that threaten their life together. An emotional novel exploring nostalgia, identity and the decisions we make to find ourselves.

F 2015 352pp **B2268**

Our Woman in Kabul

Irris Makler

Freelance journalist Makler was one of the first people into Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001. With a humorous and lively insight into the life of a journalist in the field and the contradictions of the American involvement in Afghanistan, Makler writes with a deep sympathy for the Afghan people, particularly the women and children.

N 2003 356pp **B1837**

P

Paris Savages

Katherine Johnson

In 1882, three Batjala people are transported to Europe by a German scientist and his daughter, with the promise they will be able to share their culture and appeal to Queen Victoria to help their community. But what transpires is devastating. A compelling and often horrifying tale, inspired by the true story of human zoos.

F 2019 352pp **B2326**

Postcards

Annie Proulx

A Vermont farm clan declines after a son flees in terror following the violent death of his girlfriend. Barely literate, Loyal Blood makes his way across America, sending occasional postcards to his family, unaware that disaster has overtaken them. Heartbreak, hilarity and Proulx's unique style combine in this remarkable novel.

F 1992 340pp **B1495**

Q

Questions of Travel

Michelle de Kretser

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Laura is an Australian traveller who becomes a travel guide editor. Growing up by the sea in Sri Lanka, Ravi dreams of other places until calamitous events lead him to the uncertain life of a refugee. This tender, witty novel tells their stories across decades and around the world. De Kretser writes masterfully about identity, authenticity and connection.

F 2012 515pp **B2188**

Rewilding the Urban Soul

Claire Dunn

86% of Australians call a city home. Amid all the concrete and the busyness, can we also answer the call of the wild? A burnt-out Claire Dunn spent a year living off the grid in a wilderness survival program. Love and the possibilities of human connection drew her back to the city, where she soon once again found herself over-scheduled, addicted to her phone, and lost in IKEA like many of us. Given all that the city offers – comfort, convenience, community and opportunity – she wants to stay. But to do so, she'll have to learn how to re-wild her own urban soul. She soon learns to swim in river water, forage for undomesticated food in the suburbs, and explore other practices in her quest for connection. She realises the importance of learning to belong to our cities and our land. This is where real change begins.

N 2021 336pp **B2377**

River Town

Peter Hessler

Peter Hessler spent two years in Fuling, a remote city in China's Sichuan province. This charming travel memoir is remarkable for its author's frankness, curiosity and unceasing desire to understand the people of China. He provides a unique glimpse into the Chinese psyche as he considers the profound cultural differences between China and the USA.

N 2001 402pp **B1890**

Enjoyed
Tracks?

Try Craft for a Dry Lake
by Kim Mahood
B1636

S

Salvation Creek

Susan Duncan

Susan Duncan – forty-something, high profile, successful – seems to have it all. But a series of heartaches and tragedies means she must rebuild her life out of the self-destruction she's been indulging in. Despite the grief underscoring this memoir, Duncan crafts her story with honesty, humour and wit, wonderful characterisation and exquisite depictions of place.

N 2006 404pp **B2091**

Seize the Day

Marie de Hennezel

This moving compilation of a psychologist's diarised experiences at a palliative care unit in France explores terminally ill patients in their last stages of life. Compelling stories about love and family, giving up and taking charge, with a focus on what we can learn from the dying, make this an inspiring and emotional read.

N 2012 189pp **B2143**

Seven Years in Tibet

Heinrich Harrer

Tibet, though torn and vandalised, has still not played out its final act with China. Harrer's personal story is high adventure, but he also became a Tibetan official, friend and tutor to the eleven-year-old Dalai Lama, and fled with him before the advancing Chinese.

N 1953 288pp **B1360**

We all enjoyed this book. Most of us were driven to research Tibet and the Dalai Lama as a result of reading it.
Shoalhaven 1

Shadow of the Silk Road

Colin Thubron

Thubron traces the first great trade route through China, the mountains of Central Asia, northern Afghanistan, Iran and Kurdish Turkey. Over eight months and 7,000 miles he recounts his experiences along this historic route. Rich in humour, compassion and history.

N 2006 363pp **B2004**

Siddhartha

Hermann Hesse

Written in Hesse's 'Eastern' phase, this is a beautifully written novel about a young son of an Indian Brahmin. His search for truth is first through the spirit, then through the flesh, and finally through both.

F 1957 167pp **B0464**

Silences Long Gone

Anson Cameron

SHORTLISTED
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Belle watches as her town in Western Australia is carted away, vowing to remain and die in the land where she long ago dug the ashes of her family. This is a curiously life-affirming expedition into the Australian heartland, which considers spiritual allegiance to the land.

F 1998 358pp **B1767**

Sing and Don't Cry

Cate Kennedy

Kennedy describes her years as a volunteer in Mexico with vivid accounts of food, family life, and fiestas. This is a poetic travel book with a social conscience, which is both troubling and uplifting.

N 2005 300pp **B1935**

Summerwater

Sarah Moss

It is summer solstice in the Scottish highlands but the rain is unrelenting. Holidaying families notice strange things: a woman running in terror, a teenager risking waters of the loch in a kayak, and a retired couple driving too fast despite the rain. A mother and daughter draw everyone's attention. Where are they from? Should they even be there? As darkness falls, something is unravelling.

F 2020 208pp **B2378**

T

That Old Ace in the Hole

Annie Proulx

When naïve young Bob is sent to purchase land for a polluting hog farm, he finds a tough, wayward farming people intent on keeping their land despite all setbacks. The eccentric and tenacious locals and a brilliantly-evoked sense of place blend in this serious yet comic tale.

F 2002 361pp **B1849**

Things You Get for Free

Michael McGirr

Reader-friendly, funny and deeply thought-provoking. Maureen McGirr's long-delayed trip to Europe with her priest son Michael provides a framework for exploring life and character, Michael's relationship with his father, and the world, a bus load of fellow tourists and the touristic highlights.

N 2000 296pp **B1624**

This Book Will

Save Your Life

A. M. Homes

Richard trades stocks and shares out of his beautiful LA home, isolated – until an inexplicable and sudden burst of pain lands him in hospital. With his routine and his diet broken, Richard begins his journey to reconnect with life. This an entertaining and gently humorous novel that explores the quirkiness of LA and one man's search for meaning.

F 2006 372pp **B2007**

This Must Be the Place

Maggie O'Farrell

SHORTLISTED
Costa Book Award

Daniel's life has careened spectacularly off track – yet again. Banned from seeing his children, he has set up a new home in the Irish wilds with a startling woman; they are happy, until he hears news of a woman he loved (and wronged) twenty years ago. Across decades and continents and alongside a diverse cast of characters, Daniel will slowly learn about love, about forgiveness, and about living.

F 2016 496pp **B2246**

Throwim Way Leg

Tim Flannery

'An Adventure', promises the subtitle – a promise delightfully fulfilled by Flannery's account of his field-work in Papua New Guinea and Irian Jaya. It's a dazzling yet unpretentious combination of his work as a research scientist with his concerns over human rights and our planetary future, lightened by the marvellous stories of an incurably curious and candid man.

N 1998 326pp **B1564**

NEW

Time and Tide in Sarajevo

Bronwyn Birdsall

SHORTLISTED
Readings New Australian Fiction Prize

An Australian woman teaching English in Bosnia is confronted by a murder in the capital city. Locals turn out in force for protests as she discovers evidence that could ignite the situation further. Facing an impossible decision, she must choose responsibility as an outsider and the people she has come to love.

F 2022 288pp **B2396**

Tracks

Robyn Davidson

Davidson taught herself from scratch to tame and train camels, then travelled with four of them and one dog across 1,700 miles of desert from Alice Springs to the coast of Western Australia. This is her engrossing book about the journey with plenty to discuss.

N 1980 247pp **B0599**

Travels with My Aunt

Graham Greene

Staid, conservative Henry Pulling meets his Aunt Augusta for the first time in over 50 years, and soon finds himself accompanying her on journeys to exotic countries. Aunt Augusta is as fascinating as she is amoral.

F 1969 265pp **B1158**

Tuesdays with Morrie

Mitch Albom

A journalist renews his friendship with his old college professor who is dying. Mitch elects to help Morrie on his quest to make a study of life's last step. Written with a kind of unsensational sensationalism, this is a fearless book. Morrie and Mitch's stories are affecting and ultimately joyous.

N 1998 192pp **B1769**

Two Steps Forward

Graeme Simsion & Anne Buist

Recently widowed Zoe, a Californian artist, and recently divorced Martin, a Yorkshire engineer, are both looking to make a fresh start by walking the 2,000 km Camino trail stretching from France to Spain. As the pair meet and develop an unlikely companionship, their personal demons are always close behind. Written in alternate chapters by a husband-and-wife team, the novel explores personal renewal: physical, psychological and spiritual.

F 2017 368pp **B2280**

U

Unaccustomed Earth

Jhumpa Lahiri

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

From the Pulitzer Prize winning author comes a poignant collection of short stories that touch upon the immigrant experience. Eight stories take us from America to Europe, India and Thailand as they follow characters forging new lives.

F 2008 333pp **B2055**

Under the Tuscan Sun

Frances Mayes

Mayes opens the door to a new world when she and her partner buy and restore an abandoned villa in the Tuscan countryside. In sensuous evocative language, she celebrates what she calls 'the voluptuousness of Italian life'. Armchair travel at its most inviting.

N 1996 280pp **B1553**

Vanishing Points

Thea Astley

Astley's larrikin humour and lyrically evocative writing shine through these two linked novellas, centred on life on a tiny Pacific isle for a would-be hermit and a frustrated wife. Small print, well-spaced.

F 1992 234pp **B1394**

Poignantly written with subtlety and depth into the sadness of life as a slave. Morrison captures the moods, descriptions and experiences of this time, though the supernatural took a while to get used to. Half way through the book the ghost is revealed and the spirit drew people out. Emotive decisions and actions flooded the page through vivid descriptions of dark violence. The rhythm of her prose is compelling. Many members said they needed to read the book twice to unfold the layers. Not an easy read, perhaps because of its authenticity. It created deep discussion and comparison with the Underground Railroad on a similar topic.

Barwise Bookworms

Voyages to the South Seas

Danielle Clode

This is a swashbuckling tale of the adventures of the French explorers to Australia. Filled with colour illustrations, this lively account brings to life a classic cast of 18th-century notables, exploring the French perspective of colonisation.

N 2007 261pp **B2012**

Danielle Clode's nonfiction exploration of French explorers from 1791-1840 was thorough, detailed and her style brought individuals to life. She managed to provide social, scientific and political context to the examination of this period through detailed studies.

Leongatha 1

W

When in Rome

Penelope Green

Journalist Penelope Green abandons her comfortable existence and buys a one-way ticket to Italy. Wrestling with the language and culture, Green writes about Roman life in hilarious detail. This enjoyable and readable memoir outlines the risks and rewards of chasing a dream on the other side of the world.

N 2005 308pp **B2026**

Where the Fruit Falls

Karen Wyld



WINNER

Dorothy Hewitt Award for Unpublished Manuscript

A lyrical and haunting tale of aboriginal women across four generations; the heart and soul of a re-imagining of the epic Australian novel. Spanning different regions in an ever-changing yet ancient landscape, the story follows the women's efforts to unravel family secrets and recover what they have lost, as a way to find acceptance.

F 2020 320pp **B2356**

Enjoyed Under the Tuscan Sun?

Try Eat Pray Love by Elizabeth Gilbert
B2000

Surviving, Prevailing

Whether it is the inhumanity of actions or the conquering of personal demons, this chapter explores the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.



A

After the Fire, A Still Small Voice

Evie Wyld

WINNER
John Llewellyn Rhys Literary Prize

This debut novel set in Australia shows the impact of the violence of war. Frank moves to a seaside shack after he breaks up with his girlfriend. His father and grandfather before him each came to the shack after they served time in the Vietnam and Korean wars.

F 2009 296pp **B2102**

All the Birds, Singing

Evie Wyld

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Tinged with anxiety, Jake's solitary life tending sheep on an isolated and brooding island in England is somehow preferable to whatever she left behind in Australia – until something starts killing her flock. Tensions of her past mix with her present in this clever and thoughtful mystery which reflects on belonging and identity. Contains themes that may disturb.

F 2014 240pp **B2227**

All Quiet on the Western Front

E.M. Remarque

This anti-war polemic powerfully portrays the agony and futility of war. Remarque suffered personally through loss of his German citizenship as a result of this work. Many copies were seized and burnt by the Nazis.

F 1929 192pp **B0101**

Aman: Story of a Somali Girl

Aman

The disturbing story of a Somali girl's first 17 years in the 1950s and 1960s. It shows the strong traditional culture in which 'Father is your main blood', a young female is answerable to her brothers, female circumcision is customary, and any involvement with whites can precipitate violence. Enlightening about the tribal and city peoples of contemporary Africa.

N 1994 350pp **B1467**

Anil's Ghost

Michael Ondaatje

A forensic anthropologist returns to Sri Lanka, a land steeped in culture and tradition, to investigate organised campaigns of murder engulfing the island. Ondaatje blends the history, art, archaeology and folklore of his extravagantly beautiful birthplace, now ravaged by civil war. Telling of a culture's attempt to submerge its history, the novel weaves an intricate chain of human connection.

F 2000 311pp **B1629**

The Animals in that Country

Laura Jean Mackay

WINNER
Victorian Prize for Literature

Jean is not your usual grandma. She's never been good at getting on with other humans. Instead, she surrounds herself with animals, working as a guide in a wildlife park. As disturbing news arrives of a pandemic sweeping the country, she realises this is no ordinary flu; its victims begin to understand the language of animals. Unstoppable voices becomes overwhelming.

F 2020 288pp **B2358**

An Anthropologist on Mars

Oliver Sacks

Here are seven detailed stories about patients living with neurological conditions such as autism, the violent tics of Tourette's syndrome, and a sudden and lasting inability to see colour. Sacks' infectious sense of wonder informs these gentle, exploratory, thorough accounts as he moves into wider speculations about the nature of the mind.

N S 1995 319pp **B1518**

On the whole the group found the book interesting, enlightening and stimulating. 'The case history approach of seek' writing made his scientific knowledge of compassion. Several members of the group had related experiences in working with people of different abilities and this influenced how we read and understood the book.

Mallacoota

The Application of Pressure

Rachael Mead

Tash and Joel are paramedics, serving the Adelaide community as best they can. They try to remain upbeat and sane while facing trauma every day – but they can only take so much before they start to crack. A tense, engaging read with moments of humour, which highlights the difficulties emergency services face in an overloaded public health system.

F 2020 288pp **B2312**

The Assistant

Bernard Malamud

A Jewish storekeeper, in the poverty of New York, is badly hurt by an anonymous attacker who then becomes his assistant. A compassionate study of the human heart's growth out of violence.

F 1957 224pp **B0232**

B

The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu

Joshua Hammer

Young Abdel embarks on a journey across the deserts of Sahara to preserve and save the manuscripts of Timbuktu, first from the ravages of the desert, then from the hands of fundamentalist Islamists. The narrative follows the story of Abdel setting up library archives, both public and private, in Timbuktu and then the quest to evacuate them from the clutches of extremists. The book examines both the rise of radicalism in Northern Africa and Timbuktu's literary heritage.

N 2016 336pp **B2264**

The Bean Patch

Shirley Painter

Shirley Painter's indomitable memoir is sourced in her experience of the extreme child abuse she suffered, which was perpetrated within the family. This is a tribute to the teachers in government schools who opened her spirit so that she survived, even flourished, to write this confronting yet hopeful story. Likely to prompt animated discussion with very different viewpoints.

N 2002 310pp **B1801**

Beloved

Toni Morrison

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

This extraordinary novel reveals the haunting legacy of slavery and racism: 'Not a house in the country ain't packed to its rafters with some dead Negro's grief'. Morrison's love song to her people and to the country which has so abused the African Americans enables us to begin to 'understand the source of the outrage as well as the source of the light'. Smallish print.

F 1987 275pp **B1365**

Birds Without Wings

Louis de Bernières

An epic novel of love and war is set in the former Ottoman Empire. De Bernières recreates a lost world in which Greeks and Turks, Christians and Muslims, lived as neighbours, sharing their lives, their cultures intermingling. Harmonious village life is destroyed by the events of World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. This engrossing novel is both a celebration of humanity and a lament over the consequences of religious and racial intolerance.

F 2004 625pp **B1871**

Black Rock White City

A.S. Patric

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Serbian academics Jovan and Suzana move to the Melbourne suburb of Black Rock, leaving behind two dead children when they were forced to flee war-torn Sarajevo. While at his cleaning job at Bayside Hospital, Jovan discovers bizarre graffiti that escalates into acts of violence. For Jovan, the seemingly nonsensical graffiti he cleans away evokes the trauma of his past and he begins to see the meaning behind the vandalism. This literary award-winner offers a compelling insight into displacement, language and the immigrant experience.

F 2015 248pp **B2252**

The Boat

Nam Le



These short stories travel the globe and include a grim journey of Vietnamese refugees on a small boat and a child living in Hiroshima during WWII. Le intuitively conveys the psychological conflicts people experience when they find their hopes and ambitions slamming up against familial expectations or the facts of history.

F S 2008 312pp **B2022**

Boomer and Me

Jo Case

Jo Case's son, 'Boomer', was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome in primary school – something that led the writer to view herself and her family from a fresh perspective. This book (subtitled A memoir of motherhood, and Asperger's) is sure to spark discussion about what is 'normal', and whether difference necessarily means disability.

N 2013 337pp **B2195**

Brain on Fire

Susannah Cahalan

Cahalan was a bright young journalist when a sudden illness plunged her into terrifying psychosis, which was in fact a rare autoimmune disease affecting her brain. Part memoir, part journalism, part medical detective story, this fascinating book explores Cahalan's harrowing experience from multiple perspectives.

N 2012 264pp **B2175**

Burnt Shadows

Kamila Shamsie

After 9/11, an unnamed man waits to be clothed in the orange jumpsuit of Guantanamo Bay and wonders 'how did it come to this?' In August 1945 in Nagasaki, Hiroko Tanaka survives the bomb blast. Her fiancé Konrad Weiss does not. The novel spans the intervening years and the interweaving lives of two families.

F 2009 363pp **B2087**

Bury Me Standing

Isabel Fonseca

The Gypsies are the untouchables of Europe, the lowest of the low – a scattered nation of 12 million people without a homeland. Fonseca, a journalist, describes the four years she spent with them in various countries of Eastern Europe to bring back her insightful, personal account of this mysterious people and the way they live. Many photographs.

N 1995 322pp **B1521**



Café Scheherazade

Arnold Zable



You can go to this café in St Kilda and eat the delicious food. But to find its real life, you need to read this haunting novel. It interweaves the stories told by remarkably different Jewish émigrés from mid-20th century Europe – Avram and Masha, the proprietors, and three of their regulars, Yossel, Laizer and Zelman. Trauma and dislocation are here transfigured by awe and lyricism.

F 2001 223pp **B1620**

Close Range: Wyoming Stories

Annie Proulx



Wyoming forms the harsh territory of eleven stories peopled by rugged eccentrics – ranchers, rodeo riders, country women – all struggling to survive in a world of raw loneliness, brutality, longing, sexual urgency and sometimes bizarre events. Includes 'Brokeback Mountain', a story about two men gripped by a fierce attraction to each other when working as cowhands, which became a multi-award winning film.

F S 1999 318pp **B1907**

Confessions of a Clay Man

Igor Gelbach

The decay of a picturesque Black Sea resort during the decline of the Soviet empire forms the setting for this philosophical novel. The novel's main character, Bronhauser, struggles to make sense in a Kafkaesque world. Gelbach, who in 1994 was nominated for the Russian Booker Prize, now lives and writes in Melbourne. 'A wise and enchanting book,' says Robert Dossaix.

F 2001 184pp **B1657**

A Constant Hum

Alice Bishop

Families visit the remains of their homes and decide whether to return. A grieving mother witnesses a trial of the man accused of starting a bushfire. A firefighter deals with the aftermath. Tender short stories of grief, loss and recovery after bushfire.

F S 2019 240pp **B2313**

Coonardoo

Katharine Susannah Prichard

Coonardoo is an Aboriginal girl brought up by a white woman as companion to her little boy. The boy is indoctrinated against marrying black, and their love changes from an idyll to a stark tragedy. A moving account of the fate of black women in 'White' Australia.

F 1929 208pp **B0201**

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time

Mark Haddon



15-year-old Christopher finds a neighbour's dog lying dead on the lawn and decides to write a murder mystery about it. He has Asperger's syndrome, and his flair for maths and scientific investigation is offset by unease and unusual behaviour in the presence of other people. Christopher is a brilliant creation: this depiction of the world from his viewpoint leaves a strong impression with much to discuss.

F 2003 272pp **B1816**



Dangerous Love

Ben Okri

A love story alive with the sounds and the smells of Nigeria in the 1970s where the ordinary and the poor live in almost impossible conditions. Struggling with post-colonial realities and the aftermath of the civil war, the young artist and lover Omovo is still in touch with potent communal, cultural and spiritual traditions. A gripping novel from this Booker Prize-winning author.

F 1996 325pp **B1523**

The Day We Had Hitler Home

Rodney Hall

A blind Hitler illegally enters Australia in 1919 with our returning soldiers, and has to be smuggled out. Audrey McNeil, a young Australian cinematographer, grabs her chance to escape a difficult family, and goes to 1920s Germany. At first incredulous, we come to recognise home truths – about Australia's present and past, our insights and blind spots.

F 2000 351pp **B1637**

Disgrace

J.M. Coetzee



An academic faces retribution when his sexual encounters with one of his students are exposed. Refusing to offer the public apology demanded from him, he resigns and retreats to his adult daughter's isolated farm. A powerful, quietly disturbing study of moral and historical accountabilities in the new South Africa, from this winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

F 1999 256pp **B1745**

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly

Jean Dominique Bauby

At forty-two and the father of two young children, Bauby found himself speechless and paralysed after a massive stroke. His mind was unimpaired. To dictate this small book, Bauby blinked for each letter of every word. More extraordinary is the writing itself – the keen gaze, lightness of touch and sensuousness with which he evokes his present circumstances and memories.

N 1997 139pp **B1555**

Doom Creek

Alan Carter



Sgt Nick Chester seeks a quiet life as a policeman in New Zealand's south island. But a renewed gold rush and an enclave of gun-toting survivalists preparing for doomsday combine with a murder investigation to spoil his hoped-for peace and quiet. Local and international pressures plunge him into a battle between good and evil.

F 2020 304pp **B2339**

The Drowned and the Saved

Primo Levi

Levi's last book argues that as a Holocaust survivor he is a proxy witness for the true witnesses – those who were annihilated. He is lucid and with neither hatred nor forgiveness as he investigates the genocide and its relevance to the present. His insight into the issues of guilt and shame makes this an important book for any nation confronting violence and racism in its past and present.

N 1986 170pp **B1440**

E

Educated

Tara Westover

Westover grew up in a family of survivalists in the Idaho wilderness. She was isolated from mainstream society and forbidden to visit a school or hospital. There was no one to intervene when her brother became violent. Educating herself became a necessity – and she taught herself enough to be admitted to university. A moving story of Westover's struggle to find knowledge and herself amid family loyalty.

N 2018 352pp **B2308**

Edward Koiki Mabo

Noel Loos & Koiki Mabo

The 1992 Mabo Decision overturned the concept of terra nullius. Born on one of the remotest islands in the Torres Strait, Mabo found that he had no legal title to his land on Murray Island, which spurred him into a ten year battle as a land rights activist on behalf of his people.

N 1996 206pp **B1526**

An Evil Cradling

Brian Keenan

Keenan's story of his years as hostage in Beirut is remarkable for the humour, resilience and compassion which inform his experience and suffering. It includes the record of a friendship between the writer – a working-class Northern Irishman – and the upper class English public school humanist, John McCarthy.

N 1992 297pp **B1371**

The Eye of the Sheep

Sofie Laguna

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

This beautifully nuanced coming-of-age story follows Jimmy, a kid not quite like the others. Buffered by his mother's love, Jimmy negotiates the realities of his world as his father oscillates between alcohol and violence – and when his home life alters beyond recognition, Jimmy must learn to navigate an alien and grown-up world that the reader aches to protect him from.

F 1995 614pp **B2231**

F

The Fault in Our Stars

John Green

16-year-old Hazel knows she has a limited time to live, but everything she has ever thought about life, love and death is upended when she meets handsome Augustus Waters. A beautiful story about what it means to be truly alive – it will make you sob and laugh.

F 2012 313pp **B2181**

A Fine Balance

Rohinton Mistry

In India in 1975, two tailors and a college student come to the vast, teeming city and end up lodging in cramped quarters with a struggling widow. Their efforts to survive are at the heart of this unforgettable portrait of kindness, dignity, heroism, cruelty and corruption which is well worth the read. Small print.

F 1995 614pp **B1516**

The First Stone

Helen Garner

This is a fictionalised account of the sexual harassment case at the University of Melbourne, which led to the resignation of the master, despite being cleared of charges. The approach and the institutional issues raised make it both relevant and controversial.

N 1995 222pp **B1442**

Flying with Paper Wings

Sandy Jeffs

Poet Sandy Jeffs grew up in a violent family, and her world collapsed at 23 with the onset of schizophrenia. Since then, she has become a community educator and speaker about living with mental illness. An insightful look at mental illness, from the social and medical to the personal.

N 2009 268pp **B2082**

For Esther

Alex Sage

Born in 1924 into a devout Chassidic family, Alex Sage describes a childhood of acute poverty. A life of living off his wits ensued, until he reached Australia via a death camp and Palestine. Sage attended English classes at CAE, and conveys his story with compelling directness.

N 2000 281pp **B1757**

Fred Hollows: An Autobiography

Fred Hollows

Appalled by the eye diseases he found among outback Aboriginal Australians, ophthalmologist Fred Hollows gave years to a program which improved the eye health of thousands of them, and also worked in Eritrea and Nepal. This life story of a doer, a maverick and a humanitarian emphasises his public rather than private life.

N 1991 240pp **B1375**

G

The Golden Age

Joan London

WINNER
Prime Minister's Literary Award

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

The Gold family are immigrants from war-torn Hungary, and while 13-year-old Frank recovers from polio in a convalescent home in Perth, his parents can't help missing the elegance and charm of the city they left behind. This beautiful story touches on how we come to terms with the past, the many forms of recovery, and the healing power of music.

F 2014 256pp **B2222**

A Good Day to Die

Lisa Birnie

Is euthanasia either desirable or necessary, or could accessible palliative care supplant the need for it? In her search to understand what this question means, Lisa Birnie asked the patients, family and staff of McCulloch House (a short-term palliative care centre) to tell their own stories. With her commentary, they make a wonderful book, based on the compassionate conviction that everyone should die with dignity and free of pain.

N 1998 231pp **B1712**

The Grass is Singing

Doris Lessing

In this powerful novel set in South Africa in the 1930s, we experience the life of Mary Turner. Lessing writes with insight and compassion of Mary's formative years, her young adulthood and her marriage to Dick. We learn of the racial attitudes of that earlier society and the way in which blacks were treated during South Africa's Apartheid. First novel by this Nobel Prize winning author.

F 1950 220pp **B0427**

The Great World

David Malouf

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

This ambitious novel traces the lives of two Australian men who survive World War II and Changi. Malouf's usual interest in relatedness and wisdom is combined with an exploration of some key national myths. Print smallish but clear.

F 1990 332pp **B1275**

David Malouf is an author much loved by our members. While several felt this particular title suffered to some extent in comparison to some of his other books, all rated it highly for its poetic writing and for its sympathetic and sensitive treatment of the characters. Malouf deftly develops his characters through an unsentimental but insightful exploration of their psychological mediations and a mastery of dialogue. To appreciate his skill with words, we suggest you try reading parts aloud to hear how he captures the rhythm of vernacular speech. He handles the shifts in time and place smoothly and to good effect in developing the story.

Hawthorn Cato Bluffers

H

Half of a Yellow Sun

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

WINNER
Orange Prize

Set in 1960s Nigeria during the Biafran war, Adichie follows the lives of three characters caught up in the turbulent events of the time. As Nigerian troops advance and they run for their lives, their ideals, intimacies, and loyalties are severely tested. *Half of a Yellow Sun* is an emotional exploration of Africa, moral responsibility, race, class, and love.

F 2006 448pp **B1964**

Half the Sky

Nicholas Kristof & Sheryl WuDunn

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Written by the first married couple to win a Pulitzer Prize for journalism, *Half the Sky* grew from the authors' desire to tell the personal stories of women whose lives have been catastrophically impacted by factors such as poverty, sex trafficking and gender-based violence. It also examines the ways many women have reclaimed their lives from oppression, and offers suggestions to readers who want to help alleviate global poverty. Readers may find some material in this book distressing.

N 2009 295pp **B2111**

Hand Me Down World

Lloyd Jones

This is a hauntingly beautiful tale of a mother's search for her son, taken by his father when only a few days old. Told from the point of view of the people who meet the mysterious North African woman after she is washed ashore in Sicily, different versions of the truth emerge to reveal a complex narrative of a displaced person struggling for self-determination and justice.

F 2010 313pp B2122

Still a topical subject after decades of refugees, displaced persons, equality for women and human rights. The discrepancy between the characters' portrayal of events created lively discussion.

Exeter Book Group

The Happiest Refugee

Anh Do

In this popular memoir, comedian and actor Anh Do traces his family history from war-torn 1970s Vietnam to the current day. He also describes his own personal and professional journey with endearing candour and humour, in this story of strength, hope and forgiveness.

N 2010 232pp B2141

Hidden Agendas

John Pilger

As reporter, polemicist and partisan, Pilger crusades against the power agendas of the media and the global markets and supports those whom they ignore – the poor who are getting poorer, the peoples of Iraq, Africa, Burma, and East Timor. His immediate, urgent and lucid style, and the gripping subject matter are nevertheless highly readable. Plenty to talk about, probably with many different opinions.

N 1998 687pp B1574

Hindustan Contessa

Jane Watson

A book where myth blends with the everyday, and where the implications of cross-cultural relationships are tested. Indian born Milan and his Australian wife Tilly travel to India where they fall into the hands of kidnappers. They must accept their fate as prisoners and deal with the challenges they face within the intricacies of Indian culture.

F 2002 308pp B1783

Home Fire

Kamila Shamsie

SHORTLISTED
Costa Book Award

WINNER
Women's Prize for Fiction

A modern retelling of Greek tragedy *Antigone*, *Home Fire* is a story of familial loyalty, politics, sacrifice, and what it means to be Muslim in the West. The novel is told from different points of view: Isma, the responsible sister who leaves her two younger siblings to study in America; Aneeka, the beautiful and headstrong sister who worries about the fate of her naive twin brother Parvaiz, who has been recruited by ISIS. When Eamonn, the son of an influential British Muslim politician enters the lives of the two sisters, love and family loyalties collide and the two British families' fates are devastatingly entwined.

F 2017 272pp B2277

The Horses Too Are Gone

Michael Keenan

When drought took hold in New South Wales in 1994, like so many others, the Keenan property was overstocked. His efforts to keep his cattle fed and watered finally took Mike Keenan onto the stock routes of south-west Queensland, where he coped with one setback after another. This true account of his experiences is a page turner and a great Aussie yarn.

N 1998 348pp B1595

House Rules

Jodi Picoult

Jacob has Asperger's syndrome. He can't read social clues, doesn't like to make eye contact, and has a singular focus. He is obsessed with forensic analysis. He keeps showing up at crime scenes and telling the police what to do – usually he is right. But then his tutor is found dead and Jacob is accused of murder.

F 2010 529pp B2076

The Human Stain

Philip Roth

WINNER
PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction

A college professor is forced to retire when his colleagues declare him to be a racist. Not true, but the real truth about Silk would have astonished even his most self-righteous accuser. Set in the late '90s against the backdrop of the Clinton/Lewinsky affair, this novel interweaves one man's story with the wider history of modern America.

F 2000 361pp B1618

I

I Confess: Revelations in Exile

Kooshyar Karimi

Growing up in the slums of Tehran, Karimi had to hide his Jewish faith. Through force of will, he became a surgeon and successful author, until he was kidnapped by the Iranian Intelligence Service, and forced to betray his own people. He and his family fled to Turkey and now live in Australia.

N 2012 365pp B2173

The Inheritance of Loss

Kiran Desai

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

In an isolated house at the foot of the Himalayas live a retired, embittered Cambridge educated judge, his granddaughter, and his cook. A Nepalese insurgency soon disrupts their lives; while in New York the cook's son tries to stay one step ahead of US immigration services. Sometimes funny, sometimes sad, the possibility for hope or betrayal hangs over every moment. Small print.

F 2006 384pp B1967

We were impressed by the quality of the writing. We all thought the writing was wonderfully descriptive.
Willie Worms

In My Skin

Kate Holden

Highly explicit and confronting memoir told in a vivid narrative voice. Holden, a quiet, sensitive university graduate from a comfortable middle-class background, spiralled into heroin addiction and prostitution at the age of 21. The book is beautifully written in parts, but Holden's attitude to sex work will enrage some readers and intrigue others. Love it or hate it, this book will generate fierce discussion, not least about the relationship between female sexuality and self-esteem. Contains strong language, sex and drug use.

N 2005 285pp B1926

In the Country of Men

Hisham Matar

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

SHORTLISTED
Man Booker Prize

Set in Libya during 1979, Matar vividly evokes the brutalities of a terrifying regime from a child's perspective. Suleiman's father is away on business but Suleiman is certain he sees him standing across the street. Why doesn't he wave? Fears and whispers intensify and in an effort to save his family, Suleiman may end up betraying his friends, his parents and ultimately himself.

F 2006 360pp B1965

NEW

Isaac and the Egg

Bobby Palmer

A young man walks into the woods on the worst morning of his life and finds something there that will change everything. Sometimes, to get out of the woods, you must go into them. This is one of the most hopeful, honest, and wildly imaginative novels you will ever read.

F 2022 288pp B2390



J

Jackson's Track

Daryl Tonkin & Carolyn Landon

Not far from Drouin in the Gippsland district of Victoria, an almost utopian community of white and Aboriginal people lived and worked together in the timber industry from the 1930s onwards – yet Daryl Tonkin's choice of an Aboriginal wife caused a serious rift in his family. This life story of a hardworking, principled man and a vanished way of life offers much to discuss.

N 1999 297pp B1596

K

A Kindness Cup

Thea Astley

WINNER
The Age Book of the Year

A schoolteacher returns to a Queensland town's reunion, and attempts to force the citizens to recognise their cruelty to the town's Aboriginals in an incident in which they took part two decades previously.

F 1974 154pp B0437



L

The Land of Green Plums Herta Müller

This unusual autobiographical novel is a haunting account of a group of students in Ceausescu's totalitarian Romania. Weaving back and forth between the provinces and the city, the narrator traces the story of her survival and escape. A complex and poetic evocation of another country, culture and politics.

F 1998 242pp **B1747**

The Last Magician Janette Turner Hospital



Traces the link between a gifted photographer and the female image which compels him and others, as it moves between a Queensland rainforest childhood and contemporary Sydney. Disturbingly connects the powerful establishment and the desperate underworld of the young, the homeless and the vulnerable.

F 1992 352pp **B1379**

Light Perpetual Francis Spufford



In 1944, on Bexford High Street, a crowd gathers to witness a new delivery of aluminium saucepans. Other metals have been melted down for the war effort. An instant later, the crowd is gone: incinerated, atomised, including five children. The only way to know what future they have lost is 'to let run some other version of the reel of time.' This is a story of the everyday, the miraculous and the everlasting.

F 2021 336pp **B2370**

Little Bee Chris Cleave

Little Bee and her sister are from Nigeria; Sarah O'Rourke and her husband are British tourists. Their meeting on a beach in Nigeria involves a choice that impacts all of their lives. A few years later and Sarah and Little Bee (who has been in a British immigration detention centre) meet again. Some distressing material.

F 2008 378pp **B2119**

A Long Long Way Sebastian Barry

In this thoughtful, moving novel, Willie Dunne joins the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in 1914 and is sent to the killing fields of Europe. When the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland is brutally quashed, he and other Irish soldiers begin to wonder why they are fighting for the Crown. This is a fascinating insight into a rarely examined aspect of Ireland's troubled past.

F 2005 292pp **B1927**

M

The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat

Oliver Sacks

These extraordinary pieces show human beings striving to preserve their identity when things go wrong in different parts of the brain. The author is lovingly and respectfully curious about his patients and gifted in presenting their states briefly and memorably. A book to make you wonder.

N 1985 233pp **B1260**

The Mind's Eye Oliver Sacks

Neurologist and acclaimed author Oliver Sacks explores the relationship between the eye and the brain, and what happens to our perception of the world when this relationship is disrupted. Using his signature style, Sacks turns medical case studies into fascinating and moving human stories – particularly poignant because, this time, he includes his own experiences.

N 2010 240pp **B2199**

A Month in the Country

J.L. Carr

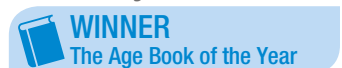


Returning from the Great War, the narrator goes to a small village to restore a historic wall painting. He works on it, works out its artist's story and is drawn into the local networks, making friends with another war survivor, and piecing his own life together during the English summer.

F 1980 111pp **B0783**

The Multiple Effects of Rainshadow

Thea Astley



Astley is on her Queensland home ground, earlier this century. The narrative, woven from many voices

and viewpoints, uncovers the extraordinary nature of everyday life for both Aboriginals and settlers. Poignant and revealing.

F 1996 296pp **B1541**

My Left Foot

Christy Brown

Christy Brown was born in 1932, one of the 23 children of a Dublin bricklayer. Born with cerebral palsy, he could not control his speech or his movement, apart from his left foot. Here he tells his own story of learning to read, write, paint and finally type with his left foot, and of his wonderfully supportive family. The film of the same name, starring Daniel Day Lewis as Christy, is based loosely on this book.

N 1954 184pp **B1301**

N

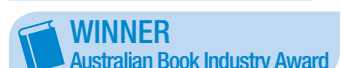
Nickel and Dime Barbara Ehrenreich

This US journalist gave up her comfortable middle-class life for three months to live and work for poverty-level wages. A readable book which examines the enormous disproportions in wealth that exist in America today and raises many discussable issues. Does the 'American dream' really apply to all citizens of the USA?

N 2001 221pp **B1793**

No Friend but the Mountains

Behrouz Boochani &
Omid Tofighian



While imprisoned on Manus Island, Boochani wrote this book one message at a time for Tofighian to translate. It is an essential exploration of the Australian government's horrifying treatment of 'boat people' on Manus Island. Boochani lays bare the daily life, abuses and the power structures of Manus Prison, and delivers a poetic novel that highlights his skills as a journalist and political commentator. The book is an urgent reminder of the horrors that exist on our shores.

N 2018 416pp **B2304**

O

An Orphan's Escape Frank Golding

In 1940, three young brothers were admitted to the Ballarat Orphanage, but like many of the children at the orphanage they had living parents. Frank Golding recalls the 12-bleak years of their time there and pieces together the story of his parents' struggle against the state to get their children back.

N 2005 247pp **B1946**

P

The Plague

Albert Camus

Translated from French, this novel by the Nobel Prize winning writer examines reactions of townsfolk to a plague which kills much of the population in Algeria in the 1940s. It is widely regarded as an allegorical treatment of the French resistance to Nazi occupation.

F 1947 288pp **B0098**

Pushing Time Away Peter Singer

Singer's biography of his Austrian grandfather David Oppenheim before his death in the Theresienstadt ghetto traces the personal, intellectual, family and cultural richness of his grandfather's life. A portrait unfolds of a complex, admirable, surprising man. Full of important and discussable matters.

N 2003 322pp **B1812**

R

Reading Lolita in Tehran Azar Nafisi

In the mid-90s seven young Iranian women gathered in Nafisi's home to discuss the work of forbidden Western writers. Their main focus was on *Lolita*, *The Great Gatsby*, and novels of Henry James and Jane Austen. A narrative which begins with secret literature classes expands into a picture of life in a totalitarian regime.

N 2003 347pp **B1839**

Resilience

Anne Deveson

Drawing on her own experience and her work with media and social justice organisations, Anne Deveson asks what enables individuals and communities to cope with adversity. Her book interweaves memoir and stories, and her writing is effortlessly readable, as usual.

N 2003 296pp **B1808**

The Rituals of Dinner

Margaret Visser

Visser's focus is on table manners – the customs, expectations and proprieties of eating together. Subtitled *The Origins, Evils, Eccentricities and Meaning of Table Manners*, this frolic will produce animated discussion.

N 1991 432pp **B1389**

The Road Home

Rose Tremain

WINNER
Orange Prize

After the death of his wife, Lev moves to London from his small town in Eastern Europe to look for work so he can support his young daughter and elderly mother. Despite isolation and loneliness, he finds a job at a restaurant, discovers a passion for cooking, and slowly begins to transform from dreamer to doer.

F 2007 365pp **B2013**

The Rugmaker of Mazar e Sharif

Najaf Mazari & Robert Hillman

Mazari was a shepherd in Afghanistan who fled the Taliban regime to Melbourne, where he set up a successful rug shop. His memoir, captured in his own voice by writer Robert Hillman, is a fascinating insight into what compels people to leave behind their homes and histories to search for peace for themselves and their children.

N 2008 253pp **B2010**

The Rules of Inheritance

Claire Bidwell Smith

This is a moving memoir of a woman whose identity was formed amidst the illness and death of her parents, both diagnosed with cancer when she was a teen. Unconventionally framed around the five stages of grief – denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance – the story follows Claire's journey as she battles to overcome and resolve her unhappy inheritance of grief.

N 2012 298 **B2163**

Enjoyed
The Spare Room?

Try The Household
Guide to Dying
by Debra Adelaide
B2011

See What You Made Me Do

Jess Hill

WINNER
Stella Prize

A searing investigation into the world of domestic abuse, this is a shocking but imperative read. Hill delves deep in the core issues behind domestic violence and coercive control and what we need to do stop this from happening. Strong themes of domestic abuse.

N 2019 416pp **B2327**

Shadow Child

Rosalie Fraser

Born in 1958, Rosalie Fraser was removed from her parents at two and a half years old. Her story is an eye-opener about the way children could be 'cared' for in foster homes and institutions, and how our governments saw to the 'welfare' of their wards during Australia's most prosperously comfortable decades. The teller's persistence, frankness and enduring spirit make the deprivation and brutalities of her life bearable in this 'memoir of the stolen generation'.

N 1998 270pp **B1730**

So Much for That

Lionel Shriver

SHORTLISTED
National Book Award

Shep Knacker has just sold his company and decided to move to an island paradise, hoping his wife Glynis will move with him. But Glynis has a bombshell of her own, and reveals she has been diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cancer. Personal neuroses and relationships are examined as the question arises – how much is a life worth?

F 2010 436pp **B2075**

Songs of a War Boy

Deng Thiak Adut, Ben McKelvey

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

Sydney-based lawyer and 2017 NSW Australian of the Year, Deng Adut overcame deadly adversity before calling Australia his home. At the age of six, he was conscripted as a child soldier into the Sudan People's Liberation Army, armed with an AK-47. Rescued by his brother John, Deng lived in refugee camps before coming to Australia as a refugee. This inspirational biography tells his journey of overcoming the horrors of war and the challenges faced by refugees to Australia.

N 2016 320pp **B2251**

The Spare Room

Helen Garner

WINNER
Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction

Helen prepares her spare room for her friend Nicola, who is coming to town to receive treatment for her advanced cancer. Helen becomes Nicola's nurse, protector, guardian angel and stony judge in this story of compassion and rage as two women negotiate their way through gruelling treatments. A provocative novel that provides rich material for discussion on friendship, faith and death.

F 2008 195pp **B1999**

Stasiland

Anna Funder

WINNER
Samuel Johnson Prize for Nonfiction

Forty years of communism in East Germany ended when the Berlin Wall came down in 1989. This book blends travel, history and biography in the true stories of bravery and betrayal under the Stasi, the omnipresent secret police of the former East German Government. Moving, exhilarating and at times funny.

N 2002 282pp **B1680**

Still Alice

Lisa Genova

Alice is a 50-year-old Harvard professor when she starts experiencing symptoms of early-onset Alzheimer's disease. She is forced to re-evaluate her relationship with her husband and three grown children. Genova cleverly addresses the fundamental issue of disease and mental illness: what is left of Alice?

F 2009 292pp **B2098**

The Stolen Children

Carmel Bird

Carmel Bird's short book of the stolen children's own stories sits alongside a copy of the formal Report of the National Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. Their unadorned accounts are anguishing, but it is necessary witness not only to tragedies and wrongs that were hidden and suppressed but to the importance of acknowledging the truth.

N 1998 188pp **B1589**

Stone Sky Gold Mountain

Mirandi Riwoe

WINNER
ARA Historical Novel Prize

SHORTLISTED
Stella Prize

A brother and sister flee their home in China to seek their fortunes on the goldfields of Australia. A tale of outsiders in the harsh conditions of nineteenth century colonial life, where displaced people face discrimination while striving for acceptance.

F 2020 264pp **B2355**

Streets of Hope

Tim Costello

Reverend Tim Costello is a Melbourne lawyer and minister of religion for whom private faith and social issues have always inter-connected. His book chronicles the time leading up to his election as Mayor of St Kilda and his battle for the democratic rights of St Kilda's street workers, drug users and homeless. It provides a rare insight into his life, his beliefs and his ongoing struggle on behalf of others.

N 1998 242pp **B1703**

Suite Française

Irène Némirovsky

Némirovsky depicted the experience of war and occupation as it affected the people around her, writing the two sections of Suite Française as events unfolded. The first part portrays a group of Parisians as they flee the Germans and make their way through the chaos of the French countryside. The second concerns the inhabitants of a small rural community under occupation.

F 2004 403pp **B1913**

The Tattooed Flower

Suzy Zail

When Holocaust survivor Emil is diagnosed with motor neurone disease, he gathers his family to share the secrets of his remarkable life. Emil's daughter Suzy Zail takes us through his past and present, crafting an inspirational story on father-daughter relationships and the extent to which we shape our own destinies.

N 2006 211pp **B1939**

The Tattooist of Auschwitz

Heather Morris

Based on the true story of Melbourne-based Lale Sokolov, a former Auschwitz-Birkenau tattooist and privileged prisoner who fell in love with Gita, a Jewish girl whose arm he was forced to tattoo with her prisoner identification number. The novel differentiates itself from other Holocaust memoirs by Lale's outlook: Lale is not just determined to survive, but to manipulate the system to ensure the survival of the prisoners and his lover Gita. A unique survivor's account and love story full of heartbreak, hope, and triumph inside and outside the walls of the Auschwitz prison.

N 2018 270pp **B2275**

The Tears of Strangers

Stan Grant

Grant recounts the story of the Wiradjuri people of New South Wales and the landowning Grants, descendants of an Irish rebel. White as well as black, he has ultimately to reconcile that he is descended from the oppressors as well as the oppressed and his personal success has removed him from the violence, alcoholism and despair experienced by many of his cousins.

N 2002 259pp **B1681**

Three Dollars

Elliot Perlman

WINNER
The Age Book of the Year

What effect has the emphasis on 'the bottom line' – downsizing, corporatising, consulting, outsourcing – had on the well-educated young couples who are supposed to be among its main beneficiaries? In his compassionate first novel, Perlman gives a moving and imaginative portrait of a loving family at risk in the heartless environment of contemporary Victoria.

F 1998 381pp **B1581**

The Tiger's Wife

Tea Obreht

WINNER
Orange Prize

Natalia is a doctor visiting orphanages in the Balkans after a devastating war when she receives news that her beloved grandfather has died. As Natalia struggles to understand his life's quest, Obreht spins around her a series of magical tales that bring home the tragedy of chronic conflict.

F 2011 336pp **B2117**

To Kill a Mockingbird

Harper Lee

WINNER
Pulitzer Prize

Atticus Finch is a lawyer who defends a black man who has been accused of raping a white woman. The best and worst of life in a Southern town are brought to life through the eyes of Scout, Atticus' young daughter.

F **L** 1960 290pp **B0037**

Touching the Void

Joe Simpson

In 1985 two climbing friends succeeded in scaling the spectacularly dangerous West face of the Siula Grande, a peak in the Peruvian Andes. Catastrophe struck on the descent, leaving one severely injured, the other also in extreme danger. Would both perish? Could one survive? This anguishing dilemma, Joe's almost unbelievable will to persist and the quality of his writing make this a gripping modern classic of mountain writing.

N 1988 216pp **B1866**

Traitor

Stephen Daisley

WINNER
Prime Minister's Literary Award

Barely released before being swamped under awards and praise, Traitor asks the question: What would make a soldier betray his own country? This is an important book about love, loneliness, compassion, war and the bond between two people. Both brutal and beautiful, the writing is nuanced and personal, and gently suffused with the Sufi philosophy. The writing style is unusual but stick with it and you will be rewarded.

F 2011 293pp **B2132**

The Turning

Tim Winton

The run-down coastal town of Angelus in Western Australia's south is the setting for seventeen overlapping stories, men and women, young and old, their hopes, longings, second thoughts, disappointments, as they scan the horizon, looking to the world beyond and caught at a point of change or altered awareness. The natural world and human destinies within it are superbly evoked: this is Winton at his best.

F **S** 2004 317pp **B1896**

V

NEW

The Very Last List of Vivian Walker

Megan Albany

Vivian's life is ordinary and routine, even including her terminal illness. She does not expect spiritual enlightenment or last-minute success. Yet she manages to keep her wicked sense of humour and cynical take on life. Vivian will make you ugly-cry, snort tea out your nose from laughter, and want to embrace humanity in all its selfishness, beauty and awkwardness.

F 2022 320pp **B2397**

W

Wanamurraganya

Sally Morgan

Morgan met Jack McPhee while searching for her extended family in Western Australia's north. Here, aged 84, he tells her his life story. Of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry, he worked from the age of seven as an itinerant station hand and mine worker in the Pilbara. Despite the harsh government policies which affected his life, his story is told without rancour. Photographs through the text.

N 1989 196pp **B1254**

Well Done, Those Men

Barry Heard

As a young man from a small Victorian country town, Barry Heard was conscripted into the army at age 21, fought in Vietnam and came back to cope as best he could. In his laconic, Aussie, blokey voice, Heard tells us simply what happened – during his training, in action, and after his return to civilian life. Writing this memoir marked his emergence from the massive breakdown which finally overtook him. Gripping, at times funny, affecting, alarming, this book enlarges our understanding of the damage war can do.

N 2005 290pp **B1914**

Enjoyed To Kill a Mockingbird?

Try Jasper Jones
by Craig Silvey
B2061

The Woman Who Walked Into Doors

Roddy Doyle

Paula Spencer's uncensored voice convincingly takes us into her brave attempt to struggle free from a violent marriage, her drinking problem and her own denial: 'After all the years and the broken bones and teeth and torture I still keep blaming myself.' Doyle's writing pulls no punches as she is seen in the wider context of the poor in Ireland.

F 1996 226pp **B1505**



Dark Deeds

These titles explore the darker side of life with psychological thrillers, true crime, world politics, spy tales and more.



A

Alias Grace

Margaret Atwood



A large, complex fiction combining murder mystery with social comment on class and sexual relationships, and based on historical fact: a notorious murder case in Canada. Atwood explores the ambiguities of 16-year-old Grace Marks, and also brings her usual wit and insight to psychology, morality and the management of Victorian homes and prisons. A must for Atwood lovers. Small print.

F 1996 545pp **B1556**

All That I Am

Anna Funder



Funder's debut novel moves between contemporary Sydney, Weimar Germany, and wartime New York and London. It fictionalises the true story of German revolutionary Ernst Toller and his circle of friends and associates as they struggled to publicise the brutality of the Nazi regime. A compelling exploration of sacrifice, betrayal, and the need to bear witness.

F 2011 365pp **B2137**

Amsterdam

Ian McEwan



Two friends of many years are among the mourners gathered at the North London funeral of Molly Lane, one an esteemed composer, the other, editor of a quality broadsheet. Also present is the Foreign Secretary. Each, it transpires, had at one time been Molly's lover. Incriminating revelations are made, and the careers and destinies of the three men are in question. A cleverly plotted, blackly comic morality tale.

F 1998 178pp **B1861**

Another World

Pat Barker

Wonderful writing combines sharp observation of today's family lives with resonant evocations of murders and mysteries. The power

of old wounds to hurt or heal the present is explored in another intelligent, honest, generous-spirited novel by Pat Barker. It concerns two blended families, one 19th and the other late 20th century, and the centenarian Geordie, who fought in World War I.

F 1998 278pp **B1588**

The Arsonist

Chloe Hooper



In 2009 the worst bushfires Victoria had ever seen ripped through the landscape, claiming the lives of 173 people. Unthinkably, some of these fires were deliberately lit. Hooper explores the Gippsland fires and the investigation and prosecution of the arsonist behind the devastation, and the impact on the wider community. She goes deep into the issue and asks: What causes someone to create a tragedy?

N 2018 272pp **B2291**

B

Berlin Syndrome

Melanie Joosten

A psychological thriller by a debut Australian author. Clare is a young backpacker who meets native Berliner Andi at Checkpoint Charlie. He invites her to move in with him and a tale of obsession and psychological intrigue begins. This is an intelligent novel with a masterful description of the loneliness and isolation that can be found in a foreign city – and the potential vulnerability of a woman travelling alone.

F 2011 246pp **B2113**

Black Tide

Peter Temple

A ne'er do well son has fled his ageing parents, and Jack Irish, AFL devotee and one-time solicitor, promises to look into it. The action shifts from Fitzroy pub to Toorak and across to the horsetrack. Peter Temple's settings are masterly, his characters are convincing, and he writes some of the best dialogue on the current Australian scene.

F 1999 356pp **B1853**

Blood from a Stone

Donna Leon

In Venice, Commissario Brunetti looks into the case of an African street vendor shot dead while selling fake goods to tourists. The man's illegal status and his country of origin are linked into the investigation, and matters with disturbing international implications are interwoven with Venetian family living.

F 2005 320pp **B1858**

The Bone People

Keri Hulme



An unusual exploration of the lives of a woman, a child and a man. This novel portrays startling psychological and physical terror as the characters move towards a resolution which weaves together Maori spirituality and the traditional wisdom of East and West. Not easy to read, but a gripping novel with a considerable reputation.

F 1983 450pp **B0404**

Borderliners

Peter Høeg

This chilling, suspenseful novel is about what we owe to our young. Three abandoned, damaged children end up at a select school where students are rigidly controlled in an atmosphere of subtle menace. One, a boy in his teens, has to work out why, and what can be done.

F ① 1993 252pp **B1483**

The Broken Shore

Peter Temple



Joe Cashin is sent to a quiet Victorian coastal town to do the undemanding work of a country cop. But a brutal attack on the town benefactor brings him back into the thick of things. A novel about place, family, politics and power which reads less like crime fiction and more like literary fiction. Strong language.

F 2005 345pp **B1917**

The unanimous verdict was that this is an excellent book that is brilliantly written with a superb ear for dialogue. The characters are well drawn, with some eliciting visceral reactions.

Murrumbidgee 2

The Brush Off

Shane Maloney

From the opening sultry sex scene between the ministerial minder and the editor of a small circulation arty magazine, this entertaining thriller deftly mixes humour, satire and the pleasures of the whodunit, as Maloney highlights the hypocrisy in the carryings on of politicians, the acquisitive art world and the greedy corporate high fliers.

F 1996 314pp **B1484**

The Butcher's Wife

Li Ang

In a small traditional town in Taiwan, a wife kills her husband, and her community cannot believe that she does not have a lover. In showing what led to this violent act, Li Ang does not censor the crude language or the brutality of the husband. A haunting and horrific tale, with insight into the gentle, driven woman at its centre.

F 1983 142pp **B1366**

C

Case Histories

Kate Atkinson

Private investigator Jackson Brodie finds himself immersed in three unsolved mysteries, and as he traces the threads of these interweaving tragedies we discover his own painful misfortunes. This unconventional detective novel focuses on those who are left to pick up the pieces, trapped by their need to know the truth. Each character is haunted by desperation to remember their loved ones, while seeking the relief of closure.

F 2004 304pp **B1873**

The Child in Time

Ian McEwan



The only child of a young couple suddenly disappears in McEwan's complex, haunting, almost magical interweaving of the themes of loss, memory and the human capacity for regeneration.

F 1987 220pp **B1316**

The Cove

Ron Rash

In a gloomy valley in the Appalachians there is a farm that the locals believe is cursed. The farm's owners are Laurel, an object of derision with a port wine birthmark, and her brother Hank, maimed from war in Europe. When mute stranger Walter enters her life, Laurel finds happiness she has never known. But will Walter's secret destroy them?

F 2012 255pp **B2158**

The Cuckoo's Calling

Robert Galbraith
(J.K. Rowling)

Private Investigator Cormoran Strike, a wounded war veteran with too many debts and not enough clients. When Strike is asked to investigate the death of a famous supermodel, he enters the privileged world of the rich and famous where things are never what they seem.

F 2014 560pp **B2265**

D

NEW

Day's End

Garry Disher

Hirsch's beat is wide: daybreak to day's end, dirt roads and dust. Today he's driving an international visitor, whose backpacker son went missing while the borders were closed. But the stories don't quite add up. A call comes in about a roadside fire: a suitcase set alight, with a body inside. It seems the visitor knows more than Hirsch about forensic evidence – also, the body is not her son's.

F 2022 400pp **B2386**

Dead Man Walking

Helen Prejean

This passionate case against capital punishment comes from a nun brought into contact with violent criminals on Death Row. Remarkable for exploring evil, love, and grace.

N 1993 358pp **B1502**

Diamond Dove

Adrian Hyland

Drifting back to the Aboriginal community she left years ago, Emily doesn't know where she belongs. Within hours of her return, an old friend is brutally murdered and an old enemy is the only suspect. This outback crime yarn tackles issues of land, lore and relations between black and white Australians. Strong language may offend some readers.

F 2006 322pp **B1949**

The Dinner

Herman Koch

Paul and his wife are on their way to a dinner, which he knows neither of them will enjoy, and his satiric, humorously snide observations slowly reveal the reasons for this over five courses. Expertly paced twists expose dark events, and the veneer of middle-class respectability is questioned in the face of parental angst, loyalty and justice.

F 2012 309pp **B2171**

NEW

Dirt Town

Hayley Scrivenor

WINNER
Davitt Award for Debut book

In the town of Durton, friends Ronnie and Esther leave school together. Esther never makes it home. Ronnie determines to find her – she has a plan. Lewis offers to help. Detective-Sergeant Sarah Michaels has seen what people are capable of. She knows that anyone, in a moment of weakness, can be driven to do something they never thought possible. Lewis can believe it. But he cannot reveal what he saw that afternoon without exposing his own secret. Then, Esther's body is discovered.

F 2023 368pp **B2388**

The Dressmaker

Rosalie Ham

Tilly returns from fashionable Europe to her mother, 'old Mad Molly', and to the small country town in the Victorian wheat-belt where she grew up. In this inventive first novel, part pastoral, part Gothic, there is much comic brio as Tilly brings haute couture to the backblocks.

F 2000 296pp **B1638**

The Dry

Jane Harper

WINNER
CWA Gold Dagger Award

Set in draught-ravaged rural Victoria, 36-year-old Federal Agent Aaron Falk arrives back in his hometown Kiewarra to attend the funeral of his former best friend, Luke Hadler, who allegedly committed suicide after shooting and killing his wife and their 6-year-old son. Falk's unwelcome arrival unearths the suspicion of a mysterious death that digs up a long-buried secret that has been covered up for 20 years.

F 2016 339pp **B2274**

E

Eight Detectives

Alex Pavesi

An entirely fresh approach to the classic murder puzzle. Past and present combine the efforts of eight individuals in a linked series of investigative episodes, all leading the reader towards solving a central mystery. No one is quite what they seem; nor is the past dead and buried, but very much alive.

F 2020 352pp **B2340**

Emergency Sex and Other Desperate Measures

Kenneth Cain,
Heidi Postlewait &
Andrew Thomson

The authors, former UN employees, met on peacekeeping assignment in Cambodia. The trio cross paths in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia, and their friendship strengthens. Interweaving stories reveal idealism, humour and desire, beneath accounts of war that will educate and outrage. Confronting descriptions of sex and genocide will offend some, but this is well worth the effort for its brilliant investigation into the human cost of global politics.

N 2004 352pp **B1877**

Enduring Love

Ian McEwan

Joe becomes the object of obsessive attentions from a young man whom he has only seen once before. Under this stress, his previously happy marriage begins to fail. A chilling study of the troubling phenomenon of the stalker, from a novelist with an uncanny ability to portray disturbing states of mind.

F 1997 247pp **B1710**

F

Farewell, My Lovely

Raymond Chandler

Chandler is one of the most enthralling thriller writers and this, his best-known book, withstands the test of time. You may have seen the film with Robert Mitchum and Charlotte Rampling in the leading roles.

F 1940 253pp **B1060**

This book elicited very good discussion. Opinions were varied, ranging from 1.5 to 4 stars. Most admired Chandler's use of language, with his pithy dialogue and description of place.

Shoalhaven 1

Fatal Remedies

Donna Leon

Police investigator Guido Brunetti deals with domestic tension as his articulate, strong-willed wife makes a stand on an issue of great concern.

As crime escalates from the local to the international scene, Leon deals with issues of corruption in the local scene of Venice, where she has lived for 25 years.

F 1999 303pp **B1855**

The Fig Eater

Jody Shields

Vienna in 1910. It seems at first that this will be a straightforward historical crime novel, but it mines the fertile tension between morality and passion that provided such rich material for Freud himself. Beneath the imperial city's respectable facade are layers of deception, abuse and sexual perversion. Interweaving two parallel investigations of a young girl's murder, Shields explores the nature of investigation itself. What is the role of logic, and what of intuition?

F 2000 349pp **B1640**

Fingersmith

Sarah Waters

Sue grows up in a house of fingersmiths (petty thieves) in a grimy back alley of Victorian London. Baby farming, gloomy mansions, inheritances and conspiracies, hanging, oppressive relatives and eccentrics and lunatic asylums – it's all here. Full of deceptions, twists and unfolding romance, this novel is brilliantly written. The lesbian love interest and reference to the thriving Victorian pornography industry are post-Dickensian.

F 2002 548pp **B1807**

G

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo

Stieg Larsson

Translated from Swedish, this is the first book in the Millennium trilogy. A gripping mystery that delves into social issues, particularly about violence against women, it is the story of journalist Mikael Blomkvist, hired by a wealthy businessman to investigate the disappearance of his niece. Lisbeth Salander, an anti-social, tattooed, computer hacker becomes his unlikely assistant. Content may offend some readers.

F 2008 533pp **B2067**

The Godmother

Hannelore Cayre

WINNER
Grand Prix de Littérature Policière

Widow Patience Portefeu is an underpaid translator. When she interprets some wiretaps ahead of the authorities, she decides to intervene and becomes embroiled in the drug trade. An offbeat and sly crime novel with a hint of French noir.

F 2019 208pp **B2320**

Gone Girl

Gillian Flynn

When a seemingly happy woman disappears without a trace, convincing evidence points to the involvement of her oddly unemotional husband. This well-crafted psychological thriller surprises with each turn of the investigation, unfolding disturbing information with every twist. The unpredictable characters, absorbing storyline and creative structure are stimulating discussion points, and questions and interview with author Gillian Flynn are included.

F 2012 496pp **B2177**

H

The Hamilton Case

Michelle de Kretser



WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

This brilliant evocation of life in 1930s Ceylon, at the end of the British colonial period, focuses on the murder of an English tea planter and the tangled personal life of the narrator. A Ceylonese lawyer who prides himself on being more English than the English, Sam's complex character and distorted view of the world are beautifully sustained. De Kretser's historical novel is complex and satisfying.

F 2003 369pp **B1862**

The Harmony Silk Factory

Tash Aw



WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

A kaleidoscopic portrait of Johnny Lim, textile merchant, petty crook and inventor, who marries local beauty Snow Soong. Years later, their son Jasper seeks to unravel the truth about his parents' relationship. Dealing with loyalty, love, and betrayal in 1940s Malaysia on the brink of abandonment by the British, Aw brilliantly exposes the cultural tensions of an era.

F 2005 362pp **B1923**

Havana Bay

Martin Cruz Smith

Arkady Renko first appeared in 1981 as the maverick Moscow policeman in Gorky Park. Now Arkady has arrived in Cuba to investigate the death of a Russian embassy worker. A richly intricate spy thriller, made more compelling by its evocation of a threadbare, vibrant, dangerous Havana with the insinuation of music never far away.

F 1999 453pp **B1761**

J

Joe Cinque's Consolation

Helen Garner



WINNER
Ned Kelly Award

In this 'true story of death, grief and the law' Garner unravels the bizarre killing of an unsuspecting young man by his girlfriend. Why did those who knew of the murder do nothing? An onlooker during the legal proceedings, Garner comes to know the Cinque family, especially Maria, Joe's mother.

N 2004 328pp **B1859**

K

The Killing of Sister McCormack

Anne Henderson

Sister Irene McCormack was the first Australian Catholic missionary to be murdered abroad. What prompted her to travel to in rural Peru, where she lived simply and taught the children of the poor? Henderson skilfully teases out the many different facets of Sister McCormack's life and death: theology, politics, terrorism, relationships, mission work, and passion.

N 2002 308pp **B1673**

Kittyhawk Down

Garry Disher

Set on the Mornington Peninsula not far from Melbourne, this crime novel offers dead bodies, manhunts, suspense and intrigue. Disher's character development is excellent, especially in unfolding the private and professional life of his police investigator, Hal Challis.

F 2003 275pp **B1787**

L

The Legacy

Kirsten Tranter

Reimagines The Portrait of a Lady by Henry James. Ingrid inherits a fortune, moves to New York, marries, becomes stepmother to teenage Fleur, and immerses herself in the art scene. The morning of September 11, Ingrid disappears after an appointment downtown, and her cousin Ralph asks his friend Julia to find out what happened.

F 2010 438pp **B2095**

The Little Stranger

Sarah Waters



SHORTLISTED
Man Booker Prize

In post-war rural Warwickshire, country GP Dr Faraday becomes involved in a spiralling series of disturbing events involving the crumbling estate of grand local family, the Ayres. A ghost story, a family in decline, and a rapidly changing society make this compelling reading from this popular author.

F 2009 501pp **B2038**

The Lovely Bones

Alice Sebold

14-year-old Susie is brutally murdered, and tells her story looking down from heaven. Haunting, compelling, and unsettling, this is an original and challenging novel about healing, recovery, and moving on towards a newly defined future.

F 2002 328pp **B1789**

M

Midnight in Sicily

Peter Robb

A fascinating collage of Italian art, history and travel – and the story of the Mafia in Sicily. Robb claims that during the 'season of distinguished corpses', the 'men of honour' built on their conservative Sicilian power base, and with the support of the anti-left Vatican and CIA, moved into the top positions in Italy. A crime story like no other.

N 1996 326pp **B1549**

Midnight In the Garden of Good and Evil

John Berendt

This ornate, readable book transports us to the lush setting of Savannah, Georgia, a city which is inward looking, ingrown, and caught in a time warp. It's full of eccentric people and anecdotes, with a murder and four trials for good measure.

N **L** 1994 388pp **B1476**

The Midnight Watch

David Dyer

On the night the Titanic sank, her passengers and crew noticed another ship nearby. That ship was the Californian, and as the details of the tragic night emerge, reporter John Steadman is intrigued by the reactions of her crew. Based on true events, this gripping novel explores the human failings of those who could have prevented disaster – and yet, stood by.

F 2016 336pp **B2239**

Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow

Peter Høeg



WINNER
CWA Silver Dagger Award

A small boy fell to his death from the roof of an apartment block. But was this really an accidental death? Smilla Jaspersen, descended from the Inuit people of Greenland, has a feeling for snow – and she thinks not. The action moves from Denmark to the Arctic icecap, and snow and ice, beauty and extremity are central to the world of this unusual thriller.

F 1992 410pp **B1413**

Everyone wanted to talk about this book which created vigorous discussion with an unusual female protagonist written by a male author. We had a love-hate relationship with Miss Smilla who was funny and eccentric. The relationship between Greenland and Denmark was fascinating and well highlighted with echoes of the treatment of the indigenous population in Australia. It was written in a very visual style, especially with the boat moving from scene to scene and we can see why it became a movie.

Barwite Bookworms

The Moonstone

Wilkie Collins

A superb novel which has been regarded as the first modern detective story, and was originally serialised in Charles Dickens' magazine. After a theft in a grand home, Sergeant Cuff must solve a mystery with as many facets as the priceless missing diamond, including tracking down a missing nightgown as the key to a murder.

F 1868 526pp **B1170**

Morality Play

Barry Unsworth

In 14th-century England, a troupe of travelling players is beset by winter, plague and banditry. The players decide to replace their usual miracle play with an improvisation of the events leading up to a recent murder. Historical novel and murder mystery blend as we witness the birth of modern drama.

F 1995 188pp **B1511**

N

Nice Try

Shane Maloney

Melbourne may be the Australian capital of performance comedy and Maloney lives up to this reputation with this delightful tale. Murray Whelan's involvement with Melbourne's bid to stage the Olympic Games allows hilarious insights into 1990s politics, gym culture, and Aboriginal activism.

F 1998 312pp **B1577**

Nineteen Minutes

Jodi Picoult

Picoult delves into small-town life to explore 'difference' in our society. In Sterling, New Hampshire, 17-year-old Peter has endured years of verbal and physical abuse at the hands of classmates. One final incident sends Peter over the edge, leading him to an act which forever changes the town's residents. Rich with psychological and social insight, Picoult asks: how well can we really know someone?

F 2007 600pp **B2001**

O

One Good Turn

Kate Atkinson

At the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Jackson Brodie (from *Case Histories*) becomes enmeshed in a number of murders that ripple out from a road rage incident. An array of characters, from the quirky to the bizarre, feature in this fast moving, deftly plotted comic novel.

F 2006 396pp **B1975**

On the Java Ridge

Jock Serong

SHORTLISTED
Indie Book Award

Skipper Isi Natoli is in charge of tour boat Java Ridge, currently hosting a group of rich Australian surf tourists in search of perfect waves in the remote Indonesian islands. When a storm approaches, the crew and passengers are anchored beside an idyllic reef where they come into contact with the wreckage of Takalar, a people-smuggling boat harbouring asylum seekers. The novel deals with the unfolding political dilemma in Canberra, at the same time as depicting the desperation to survive.

F 2017 309pp **B2279**

One drama followed the next keeping us interested and waiting for the next incident. We noted how well the author Jack Serong described swimming, surfing, diving and the sea, we really felt we were seeing or doing the actions. His knowledge of these activities was evident. Altogether a fascinating and well written book which we all enjoyed, although challenging.
Tathra

Orpheus Lost

Janette Turner Hospital

There is an explosion on the underground, terrorists are suspected, and Leela, a gifted American mathematician, is taken to an interrogation centre outside the city. Her childhood friend, Cobb, is conducting an unconventional investigation and

reveals that Leela's love interest Mishka, a talented Australian musician, is not who he seems.

F 2007 358pp **B2008**

Over My Dead Body

Dave Warner

Dr Georgette Watson, granddaughter of Dr John Watson and living in New York, has learned how to revive dead animals. But now she wants to revive a human life. Meanwhile a serial killer is stalking apparently unconnected victims. Georgette enlists the help of a revived Sherlock Holmes. But can even the Great Detective solve a case two centuries after he's supposed to be dead?

F 2020 256pp **B2349**

P

The People in the Trees

Hanya Yanagihara

Scientist Norton Perina reflects on his controversial Nobel Prize winning discovery amid a media storm of allegations of child abuse. His matter of fact viewpoint contrasts his questionable morality, lending a dark psychological element to a book which will leave you considering Western colonisation, ecological disruption, and the subjective way we view ourselves – and our heroes. Endlessly discussable. Contains themes that may disturb.

F 2013 384pp **B2209**

Perfume: The Story of a Murderer

Patrick Süskind

Translated from German. Jean-Baptiste Grenouille is born with an astounding sense of smell, yet he himself has no scent. He learns the art of the perfumer, creating a scent for himself that can fool people's perceptions of his personality. Inspired to possess the scent of a young girl, he murders her, embarking on a journey to the dark side of humanity.

F 1985 263pp **B1453**

The Poison Principle

Gail Bell

Enticingly subtitled *A Memoir of Family Secrets and Literary Poisonings*. Bell's grandfather was known inside the family to have poisoned his two young sons with strychnine in 1927. Herself a trained pharmacist, Bell spent years disentangling these events, and interweaves her discoveries with precise detail about how arsenic, strychnine, and cyanide work, and accounts of famous poisoners and their victims.

N 2001 279pp **B1660**

R

The Railway Station Man

Jennifer Johnston

Helen has retreated to a small town on the Irish coast as she recovers from the tragic death of her husband. She begins painting again, and slowly forms a relationship with war hero Roger who lives at the nearby railway station house – but happiness can be fleeting among the tensions of life. An explosive, well-plotted novel from this Whitbread Novel Award-winning author.

F 1984 187pp **B1234**

The Rain Heron

Robbie Arnott

WINNER
The Age Book of the Year

Ren lives alone on the remote frontier of a country devastated by a coup. She survives by hunting and trading – and forgetting. But when a young soldier comes in search of a local myth, Ren is drawn into an impossible mission. As their lives entwine, unravel and erupt, myths merge with reality. Ren and the soldier must confront what they regret, love and fear.

F 2020 272pp **B2376**

Reading in the Dark

Seamus Deane

SHORTLISTED
Man Booker Prize

In the town of Derry in Northern Ireland, a young boy from a Catholic family is gripped with secrets, fears, suspicions and betrayals, all having to do with IRA involvement and the police. The boy's gradual piecing together of events provides chilling suspense, but together with this bleakness Deane renders a magical world of a child's imaginings; of tales, songs and myths.

F 1996 233pp **B1545**

Rebecca

Daphne du Maurier

WINNER
National Book Award

Max de Winter's second wife lives with him in a suffocating atmosphere of mystery and rising menace, as she becomes vested in the mystery of what became of his first wife, the dazzling Rebecca. A classic thriller and still a gripping story even if you know Hitchcock's film version.

F 1938 397pp **B1137**

Restless

William Boyd

In the summer of 1976, Ruth discovers the strange truth about her elderly mother, Sally. Russian by birth, she worked for the British Secret Service during World War II. A suspenseful novel of a female spy that sheds a fascinating light into wartime British American relations and explores the consequences of betrayal and duplicity.

F 2006 304pp **B1976**

Resurrection Bay

Emma Viskic

WINNER
Ned Kelly Award

WINNER
Davitt Award

Deaf since childhood, Caleb has always relied on his instincts. When his best friend is murdered, Caleb begins an investigation that will force him to face the demons from his past. Laced with a dark humour, this original, fast-paced thriller questions what it means to pass for 'normal' in a world where otherness is often seen as 'disability', asking intriguing questions about identity and belonging.

F 2015 192pp **B2232**

The Return of the Dancing Master

Henning Mankell

WINNER
Gumshoe Award Best European Crime Novel

In a remote location in northern Sweden, an off the job policeman decides to find out more about the violent death of a colleague. Mankell is a master of suspense and tension, able to take on big ideas such as the resurgence across Europe of neo-Nazism. Intelligent, complex crime writing.

F 2000 520pp **B1840**

The Robber Bride

Margaret Atwood

WINNER
Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Zenia was 'pure, freewheeling malevolence', a manipulator who brilliantly exploited the generosity and weaknesses of friends. They attended her funeral with relief – but now she returns to disrupt their lives again. Atwood at her best: wittily observant, emotionally engaging, and positive about friendship.

F 1993 470pp **B1456**

Room 

Emma Donoghue



Five-year-old Jack lives in one room with his mother, and believes they are the only real people in a world that exists only within 'Room' – until his mother confides her terrible secret. Jack is by turns poignantly naïve and wise beyond his years, and his story will haunt you long after you finish this powerful novel. Disturbing content with plenty of material for discussion.

F 2010 400pp **B2110**

The Ruin

Dervla McTiernan



Detective Cormac Reilly doesn't expect to be revisiting a case from 20 years ago. He's never forgotten the two children left behind after their mother's body was discovered in their house. And what is the connection with a body found in the river? In this gripping crime debut set in Ireland nothing is what it seems.

F 2018 400pp **B2305**



The Scholl Case

Anja Reich-Osang



When a woman's body is found in the forest near Berlin, suspicion falls on her husband, Heinrich Scholl, former mayor and well-respected member of the community. They had been married almost fifty years and were considered the perfect couple, could he really be capable of her murder? But when award-winning journalist Anja Reich-Osang investigates deeper into their marriage, she discovers not everything is what it seems. This is a true crime that reads more like a fiction novel.

N 2016 213pp **B2263**

Secrets of the Jury Room
Malcolm Knox

What happens if twelve randomly chosen men and women do not easily reach a unanimous decision? Prompted by his own experience of jury duty in a criminal case, Malcolm Knox (literary editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*) has produced a readable book about jury trials, and their advantages and disadvantages.

N 2005 352pp **B1956**

The Shark Net 

Robert Drewe

In this memoir, subtitled *Memories and Murder*, Drewe captures key images from his youth in Perth. After his family's transfer from a more conservative Melbourne he experiences the Perth locals as strange and fascinating. There's humour, perceptiveness and also dread – as a serial murderer menaces the city, a figure who turns out to be more closely connected with their family than anyone realises.

N 2000 358pp **B1843**

Sheerwater

Leah Swann

Ava takes her two boys to the Great Ocean Road for a fresh start, away from her husband, Laurence. But when she stops to assist at the scene of an accident, her children disappear. What could have happened to them? A raw visceral and often shocking tale. Strong themes of domestic abuse.

F 2020 304pp **B2328**

Silvermeadow

Barry Maitland

A missing teenager and a sighting of a vicious bank robber are both linked to Silvermeadow, a glitzy new shopping centre on the outskirts of London. Maitland brings his architecture background into play, not just with the design of the mall but with the social psychology that underpins it. Well written and plotted, with convincing characters. Small print.

F 2000 346pp **B1856**

Snow Falling on Cedars 

David Guterson



In 1954 on an island off the Pacific coast of America, a fisherman is found dead, and a second-generation Japanese American is accused of murdering him. This novel about a small community examines prejudice, racial injustice, war, love and conscience. A page-turner offering much to discuss.

F 1994 404pp **B1497**

Something Fishy

Shane Maloney

It may be summer at the beach, but the Hon. Murray Whelan MP is onto something: criminality in one area of the fishing industry. There are sharply observed scenes of Lorne, and Maloney's usual liking for fast, funny action.

F 2002 242pp **B1844**

Started Early,
Took My Dog

Kate Atkinson

The fourth Jackson Brodie book in the bestselling series that began with *Case Histories* and was followed by *One Good Turn* and *When Will There Be Good News?* This gripping mystery is as compelling as its precursors.

F 2010 400pp **B2088**

Sucked In

Shane Maloney

The discovery of a body in a recently drained lake in country Victoria sends Murray Whelan into investigation mode. Are these the remains of a union leader, drowned 20 years back? Maloney brings us a sharp-witted picture of Melbourne during the late 1990s.

F 2007 276pp **B1978**

The Summer That
Melted Everything

Tiffany McDaniel

When 13-year-old Sal arrives in the summer of 1984 to Breathed, Ohio, claiming to be the devil, he is adopted into the Bliss family as one of their own. As the Bliss family struggle with their own personal demons, a scorching heat-wave brings out a fanatical hysteria of the town's people that question the nature of good and evil. A poetic, lyrical and literary depiction of a fractured family and a small town in crises.

F 2016 320pp **B2256**

The Surgeon of
Crowthorne 

Simon Winchester

The *Oxford English Dictionary*, a massive work which took 70 years to complete, was based on the contributions of thousands of volunteers, but a mystery surrounded W.C. Minor, one of the most prolific and helpful of these. Winchester's bestselling book sets out the bizarre tale of Minor and his torments, and also offers a diverting account of dictionaries.

N 1998 207pp **B1704**

Surrender

Sonya Hartnett

Gabriel once did a thing unforgivable in the eyes of his community. Now 20 years old and dying, he has only his faithful dog and his childhood friend Finnigan with whom he made a chilling pact. This demanding, disturbing and exhilarating psychological thriller explores the impact of suffering on a child's mind.

F 2005 245pp **B1895**

The Suspicions of
Mr Whicher

Kate Summerscale



The murder of a child lies at the heart of this biography of a middle-class Victorian family, Summerscale's meticulous research turns a mystery into an accessible social history of Britain's 19th-century love affair with detectives, and the birth of the detective novel.

N 2008 372pp **B2085**

The Tainted Trial
of Farah Jama

Julie Szego

A Somali teen in Melbourne was convicted of the rape of an Australian woman – but the tireless efforts of his lawyer led to shocking revelations 18 months later. Raising questions about justice, migration, cultural taboos, prejudice and gender politics, this is a confronting story about the legal system in Australia.

N 2014 242pp **B2213**

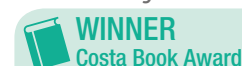
The Tall Man 

Chloe Hooper



In 2004, Cameron Doomadgee was arrested for swearing at a white police officer. Within 45 minutes he was dead in a watch house cell, the main suspect is well respected Senior Sergeant Christopher Hurley. Hooper tells the full story of the subsequent trial and its repercussions. Her reports won her a Walkley Award and were published around the world.

N 2008 288pp **B2062**

The Tenderness of Wolves
Stef Penney

1867, Canada. As winter grips the isolated settlement of Dove River, a man is brutally murdered and a 17-year-old boy disappears. Tracks outside the dead man's cabin head north. One by one journalists, trappers, and traders set out across a desolate and dangerous landscape; pursuing the tracks before the snow erases the past for good. But do they want to solve the crime or exploit it?

F 2006 440pp **B1980**

The Thirteenth Tale

Diane Setterfield

Angelfield House was once the home of the March family – the manipulative Isabelle, her brutal brother Charlie, and wild twins Emmeline and Adeline. But now the house stands forgotten, its chilling secrets hidden from view – until a biographer begins investigating Angelfield's past.

F 2006 459pp **B1994**

This House of Grief

Helen Garner

Garner was shocked by the tragic story of a man whose three children drowned when his car plunged into a dam on Father's Day in 2005. Here, she follows the engrossing twists of the man's court case and various appeals in this true crime story, watching as the theatre of the law tries to determine: was this accidental, or deliberate?

N 2014 288pp **B2223**

This Is How

M.J. Hyland

This is a vividly imagined novel about a young man on the edge of sanity. Patrick is moving into a boarding house on the English seaside, leaving behind his parents, an unfinished university degree, and a failed engagement. There is a mounting sense of unease as we follow the emotionally inarticulate Patrick in this study in claustrophobia and loneliness.

F 2009 320pp **B2056**

Trespass

Rose Tremain

Antiques dealer Anthony escapes his fading London life to his sister's house in France, where his presence disrupts her life and relationship. When he decides to buy the run-down family home of local siblings Aramon and Audrun, he becomes entangled in a struggle between brother and sister which runs deeper than he can know. Tremain explores family history and what it means to 'trespass' in this haunting novel.

F 2010 253pp **B2072**

This book was very much enjoyed by our group. Although at times it was painful for some to read, there were many themes running throughout the story, which provoked much discussion.

Rylstone DGGs

Enjoyed
Two Caravans?

Try **Small Blessings**
by Emily Brewin
B2302

The Tribute

John Byron

SHORTLISTED
Victorian Premier's Literary Award

A serial killer stalks Sydney, hell-bent on recreating a tribute to scenes from the Fabrica, a 16th century foundation text of modern anatomy. His cold, methodical attacks have the city of edge, but the serial killer may not even be the darkest player in this story. Its subversive take on modern masculinity and misogyny is told through an irresistible crime narrative.

F 2021 4327pp **B2379**

Truth

Peter Temple

WINNER
Miles Franklin Literary Award

Inspector Stephen Villani is head of the Victoria Police Homicide Squad and he faces a series of new murders to solve. A dark novel that explores corruption, deceit and truth. 'Truth is both confronting and electrifying. It is Temple's best book' – *The Age*.

F 2009 387pp **B2083**

Two Caravans

Marina Lewycka

From the author of the international bestseller *A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian* comes a hilarious, yet gritty look at what lies behind the arrival of food at our tables. Lewycka's depiction of the exploitation involved in the global labour market is just one part of a tale involving itinerant migrant workers, young love and a caravan journey from the strawberry fields of Kent.

F 2007 310pp **B1982**

The Unfortunate Victim

Greg Pyers

Set in the gold-mining town of Daylesford in 1864, this historical crime fiction revolves around the brutal murder of a newlywed, and the chase to find her killer. Based on a true story, the novel offers plenty of discussion around the treatment of female victims and the state of law enforcement during Australia's gold-rush period.

F 2017 320pp **B2260**

The Untouchable

John Banville

Quintessential member of the English Establishment, Anthony Blunt was disgraced in 1979 when he was revealed as one of the Cambridge spies recruited in the 1930s. The central figure in Banville's exploration of the spy's mentality is loosely based on Blunt, with a supporting cast of randy, heavy

drinking dissemblers. A dazzling read: cool, ironic, sad and funny.

F 1997 405pp **B1566**

Everybody enjoyed the book for various reasons. The discussion flowed easily. Question was, what made him do it?

Box Hill North 2

The Verge Practice

Barry Maitland

The glamorous world of architect Charles Verge is disturbed when his second wife is murdered, and he disappears. Is Verge the killer, now on the run, or has someone killed both Verge and his wife? The action moves between London, Barcelona and the British countryside as police investigators Kolla and Brock follow the trail. Small print.

F 2003 313pp **B1854**

Vernon God Little

D.B.C. Pierre

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

WINNER
Whitbread Novel Award

The riotous adventures of 15-year-old Vernon Gregory Little in small-town Texas and beachfront Mexico mark one of the most spectacularly irreverent, satirically acute and critically acclaimed debuts of the 21st century. Strong language.

F 2003 279pp **B1941**

We Need to Talk About Kevin

Lionel Shriver

WINNER
Orange Prize

When her son commits mass murder days before his sixteenth birthday, Eva is robbed of everything important to her. In a series of letters to her estranged husband, Eva revisits the events that led to the horrific incident. This chilling, deeply psychological novel asks controversial questions about parenting and family in the modern age.

F 2005 468pp **B1942**

When Will There Be Good News?

Kate Atkinson

From the bestselling author of *Case Histories* and *One Good Turn* comes the third literary mystery with Jackson Brodie. Dr Hunter is missing and Reggie raises the alarm. In a series of deadly coincidences, Jackson joins Reggie's search and reconnects with Detective Chief

Inspector Louise Monroe. With strong character development and multiple plot twists accompanying Atkinson's dark, humorous style.

F 2008 348pp **B2029**

White Dog

Peter Temple

Jack Irish, gambler, cook, cabinet maker and one-time lawyer has a quiet, understated appeal. In a rainy autumn he moves in a world of shady property deals, the squalid exploitation of young women, and untimely death. Peter Temple is admired for his superb ear for dialogue and Australian idiom and his disillusioned portrayal of the Melbourne and Australian scene.

F 2003 337pp **B1799**

The White Tiger

Aravind Adiga

WINNER
Man Booker Prize

The son of a rickshaw puller, Balram leaves school to work in a teashop. When a rich village landlord hires him as a chauffeur in Delhi, Balram's re-education begins, but to access the wealth and opportunity of the city he must embrace a new morality. Provincialism and the caste system clash with the economic glitter of the techno-boom, where murder is sometimes the best option.

F 2008 336pp **B2030**

The Wife and the Widow

Christian White

WINNER
Ned Kelly Award

Kate goes to pick up her husband from the airport after a work trip, only to find he was never on the plane – or on a work trip. Kate seeks answers in an island community where her husband used to live, where Abby is also delving into secrets about her own husband that will turn all their lives upside down. A fast-paced layered mystery.

F 2019 384pp **B2334**

The Woman in White

Wilkie Collins

One of the first mystery novels and still a fine example of the genre one hundred and fifty years after it was written. Walter helps a distressed young woman dressed in white, then realises that she had escaped from a nearby asylum. This sets up a surprising plot involving insanity, hidden identities and illegitimate children. It is said that politician William Gladstone cancelled an evening at the theatre to read it; novelist William Makepeace Thackeray sat up all night to finish it – and it may produce a similar response in you. Small print.

F 1859 648pp **B1059**

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B2087	52	B2140	16	B2201	42	B2250	36	B2301	33	B2349	61	B2398	14
B2088	62	B2141	54	B2202	5	B2251	56	B2302	24	B2350	18	B2399	44
B2089	16	B2143	49	B2203	6	B2252	51	B2303	24	B2351	13		
B2090	41	B2144	18	B2204	19	B2253	17	B2304	55	B2353	24		
B2091	49	B2146	30	B2205	28	B2254	24	B2305	62	B2354	43		
B2092	40	B2147	14	B2206	34	B2256	62	B2306	46	B2355	56		
B2093	31	B2148	23	B2207	24	B2257	11	B2307	15	B2356	50		
B2094	39	B2149	23	B2209	61	B2258	27	B2308	53	B2357	31		
B2095	60	B2150	25	B2210	21	B2259	21	B2309	47	B2358	51		
B2096	26	B2151	39	B2211	16	B2260	63	B2310	31	B2359	5		
B2098	56	B2155	26	B2212	35	B2261	30	B2311	42	B2360	10		
B2100	37	B2157	15	B2213	62	B2262	33	B2312	51	B2361	21		
B2101	37	B2158	59	B2214	29	B2263	62	B2313	52	B2362	10		
B2102	51	B2159	23	B2215	44	B2264	51	B2314	15	B2363	27		
B2103	43	B2161	6	B2216	13	B2265	59	B2315	10	B2364	33		
B2105	21	B2162	46	B2217	24	B2266	13	B2316	38	B2365	16		
B2106	26	B2163	56	B2218	28	B2267	39	B2317	27	B2366	16		
B2108	25	B2165	44	B2219	28	B2268	48	B2318	38	B2367	6		
B2109	26	B2166	29	B2220	38	B2269	32	B2319	11	B2368	34		
B2110	62	B2169	20	B2221	46	B2270	36	B2320	59	B2369	34		
B2111	53	B2170	32	B2222	53	B2271	6	B2321	28	B2370	55		
B2112	21	B2171	59	B2223	63	B2272	11	B2322	47	B2371	29		
B2113	58	B2172	41	B2224	18	B2273	40	B2323	17	B2372	41		
B2114	16	B2173	54	B2225	9	B2274	59	B2324	29	B2373	17		
B2115	30	B2174	37	B2226	35	B2275	57	B2325	12	B2374	23		
B2116	27	B2175	52	B2227	51	B2276	37	B2326	48	B2375	41		
B2117	57	B2176	17	B2228	26	B2277	54	B2327	56	B2376	61		
B2118	31	B2177	60	B2229	33	B2278	17	B2328	62	B2377	48		
B2119	55	B2178	31	B2230	6	B2279	61	B2329	14	B2378	49		
B2120	35	B2179	40	B2231	53	B2280	49	B2330	36	B2379	63		
B2121	40	B2181	53	B2232	61	B2281	14	B2331	9	B2380	20		

Book Groups Enrolment Form



Centre for Adult Education (CAE) Box Hill Institute
Level 2, 253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, VIC 3000 | Ph 9652 0620 | Email bookgroups@cae.edu.au



Group Name: _____

Group Number: ZZ 24

Have you enrolled at CAE or Box Hill Institute before? Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please supply your student number: _____

Surname: _____ Given names: _____

Preferred name: _____ Home phone: _____

Mobile: _____ Email: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Residential address: _____

Postal address (if different to Residential): _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Do you wish to join/re-join our complementary eBook service? NO EXTRA COST ☐ Yes ☐ No

Book Groups E-Newsletter: Please tick box if you DO NOT want to receive Book Groups Newsletter by email ☐

CAE Marketing: Please tick the box if you DO NOT want to receive any marketing communication from us ☐

Fee Schedule 2024

Please select either VICTORIA or INTERSTATE. Tick the number of meetings your group is having and tick the appropriate fee.
If you are a new member or group starting partway through the year, please contact our office for the applicable pro-rata fee.

VICTORIA					INTERSTATE				
No. of group meetings	Full Fee	Seniors Fee	Concession Fee	Secretary Fee	No. of group meetings	Full Fee	Seniors Fee	Concession Fee	Secretary Fee
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> \$163	<input type="checkbox"/> \$155	<input type="checkbox"/> \$111	<input type="checkbox"/> \$97	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> \$186	<input type="checkbox"/> \$164	<input type="checkbox"/> \$129	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> \$152	<input type="checkbox"/> \$144	<input type="checkbox"/> \$103	<input type="checkbox"/> \$91	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> \$168	<input type="checkbox"/> \$149	<input type="checkbox"/> \$118	<input type="checkbox"/> \$99
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> \$122	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$86	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> \$131	<input type="checkbox"/> \$117	<input type="checkbox"/> \$92	<input type="checkbox"/> \$78

Please note: Interstate membership fees differ due to postage/delivery charges.

Seniors, Students and Concession Fees If you are claiming a reduced fee, please attach a photocopy of your card.

Senior Fees – Must have a valid Seniors Card or Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (Senior Business Card not included).

Student Fees – Same as the Seniors Fee. Must have a valid Student Card.

Concession Fees – Must have a valid Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Card or Veterans Affairs Gold Card.

☐ Senior/Student ☐ Pensioner ☐ Health Care ☐ Veterans Affairs Gold

Payment Details:

Box Hill Institute will no longer accept personal cheques or cash for any payments. Bank cheques are acceptable. Credit card and EFTPOS payments can be made in person at the CAE Customer Service Hub, Level 2, 253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne. We cannot accept any personal cheques or cash in person or in the mail.

☐ Bank Cheque (to Box Hill Institute) ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard Total Amount \$ _____

Card No. _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ Exp. ____ / ____ CVC: _____

Card Holders Name: _____ Card Holder's Signature: _____

Please note: Your credit card statement will say Box Hill Institute upon payment. Receipt Options (please tick one): ☐ Send by email ☐ Mail by post

Terms and Conditions

Refunds, less a \$30 administrative fee, will only be made if requested at least 4 working days prior to the group's first discussion date. Otherwise, no refunds or credit notes will be issued. CAE is a brand of Box Hill Institute and you will be enrolled as a Box Hill Institute student. By enrolling in this book group you agree to abide by the policies, procedures, regulations, Student Code of Conduct and General Conditions of Enrolment of Box Hill Institute available to be viewed at www.boxhill.edu.au

OFFICE USE ONLY	Date Received ____ / ____ / ____	BG Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Sign
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Book Groups Selection Card

Only one book selection form is required to be submitted per group by the nominated group secretary.

Please ensure you have accurately entered the book number as re-deliveries due to inaccurate entries will incur a surcharge fee.

When completed, please email this form to **bookgroups@cae.edu.au**. Alternatively, Book Group selections can be completed on Book Groups Online.

**BOOK GROUPS
ONLINE**



www.cae.edu.au/bookgroups

Please cut along this line

Number of Members: _____	
Meeting Week:	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 5 th
Meeting Day: _____	
Meeting Time: _____ AM / PM	
Age Range: _____	
Membership: Female / Male / Mixed	
Refer New Members?: Yes / No	
Office Use Only	VIC / INT Date received:
Local / Non Local / Remote	Meetings: 6 9 11
Processed	

Do not write in Office Use section

GROUP SECRETARY DETAILS*

*Please note that an email address is required for the secretary

Name: _____

Phone: () Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Delivery Address: (if different from Secretary's address) _____

Special Delivery Instructions: _____

Group Name						Group Code							
Book Selections Please choose to receive your books in either: <input type="checkbox"/> priority order from 1-30 or <input type="checkbox"/> no particular order						If you're having... 11 meetings – provide 30 selections 9 meetings – provide 22 selections 6 meetings – provide 15 selections				Meeting Dates			
										Handout Date		Discussion Date	
1	B		11	B		21	B				Feb		
2	B		12	B		22	B		Feb		Mar		
3	B		13	B		23	B		Mar		Apr		
4	B		14	B		24	B		Apr		May		
5	B		15	B		25	B		May		Jun		
6	B		16	B		26	B		Jun		Jul		
7	B		17	B		27	B		Jul		Aug		
8	B		18	B		28	B		Aug		Sep		
9	B		19	B		29	B		Sep		Oct		
10	B		20	B		30	B		Oct		Nov		
									Nov		Dec		
									Dec		Feb		

7 Reasons Why Reading is Good for You

For most people, the act of reading is a reward in itself. However, studies show that reading books also has benefits that range from a longer life to career success. If you're looking for reasons to pick up a book, read on for seven science-backed reasons why reading is good for your health, relationships and happiness.

Reading reduces stress

Stress is a common hazard of our modern lives. A study by the University of Sussex demonstrated that six minutes of silent reading can reduce stress levels by 68 per cent. In fact, reading works better and faster than other methods such as listening to music, going for a walk or sitting down for a relaxing cuppa.

There are many reasons for the profound stress relieving effect of reading. First, reading allows the mind to focus and concentrate on the words, which pulls the reader away from anxious thoughts. Reading also has the effect of suspending reality. When we read, we escape into another world or another person and enter into an altered state of consciousness, which alleviates tension in the muscles and heart.

The relaxing effect produced by books is not determined by the type or genre of book you are reading, as long as you can lose yourself in the narrative.

Reading promotes wellness

Reading has an unexpected bonus of increasing your lifespan. A 2016 study published in *Social Science & Medicine* journal found that reading for at least thirty minutes a day extended the lifespan of participants by an average two years, with book readers who read more than three hours every week at an advantage over their peers who read magazines and newspapers.

Booktrust, the UK's largest reading charity, conducted a survey of 1500 adults in the UK and found that people who read books regularly are on average more satisfied with life, happier, and more likely to feel that the things they do in life are worthwhile.

In the case of mild to severe depression, reading self-help books or being read to can assist in recovery. While books cannot replace the role of psychologists and therapists, in the case of mild depression, bibliotherapy can be as effective as standard medical care. In fact, UK organisation Reading Well has a selection of book titles and evidence-backed booklists endorsed by medical experts to promote health and wellbeing.

Reading helps combat Alzheimer's and Dementia

Reading is a workout for the brain, and keeping your mind active can help preserve brain health later in life.

Research shows that elderly patients who read books or play mentally challenging games are two and a half times less likely to develop Alzheimer's. Reading is also associated with lower risk of developing dementia. The study found that it didn't matter if people began reading or other mentally engaging activities early or late in life, there was a slower rate of decline either way, so it's never too late to pick up a book.

Reading helps with sleep

Reading before bed helps with sleep, especially if you transform your reading into a night-time ritual.

There are a few reasons why reading before bed is good for your sleeping habits. The main reason is the decrease in stress, anxiety and muscular tension associated with reading. Helping you relax and unwind before sleep can make a difference in being able to push aside anxious thoughts and allow your consciousness to drift off.

Another reason is that the habitual ritual allows your mind to associate bed and reading with sleep. To do this, it is important not to mix up your habits.

Make sure you switch your smartphone or tablet with a paperback book or eReader as backlit screen devices can disrupt the production of melatonin, and browsing the internet or scrolling through email and social media on your phone can keep your mind alert and in an active state.

Reading improves relationships

Reading has an indirect effect of improving our relationships through increased empathy, a vital trait for successful and rewarding relationships. Despite the solitary bookworm stereotypes, studies have proven a link between reading literary fiction and an increased ability to understand the emotions and thoughts of others, better social skills and relating to others whose lives are different from ours.

The brain doesn't distinguish reading about an experience and living it – the same regions are activated. Reading literary fiction produces a simulation of reality, which allows us to experience the emotions and thoughts of characters. In this regard, literary fiction acts as a bridge to better understand other people and points of view that are vastly different from ours.

Although participants in the study were tested on their reactions after reading non-fiction, genre (popular) fiction and literary fiction, the results specifically identifies literary fiction as having an effect on empathy.

This is thought to be because literary fiction explores the psychology and relationships of the characters in more depth than genre fiction and non-fiction books.

Reading inspires success

Have you heard of the saying 'not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers'? Well, there's a lot of truth in that.

Many historical leaders were known to be avid readers, and some of the most successful business leaders such as Bill Gates and Oprah Winfrey have associated reading with their career success. Studies in the US show that active readers are likely to earn up to five more times than those who spend little or no time reading.

The link between reading and success is thought to be driven by the desire for knowledge. Reading makes us better thinkers by improving our critical thinking and problem-solving skills, boosting our general and specific knowledge and developing our social and communication skills.

Reading decreases loneliness and social isolation

For most, the act of reading is a solitary act but this doesn't have to be the case. Reading can be turned into a social event by finding a like-minded group of friends or members of your community and joining a book group.

The benefits of book groups is transforming an isolated practice into a social ritual and being able to discover a group of individuals that share the same passions. Reading and discussing books have the effect of getting a deeper understanding of the story through listening and debating different points of view.

If you've been procrastinating your reading, perhaps now is a great time to pick up the paperback?



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