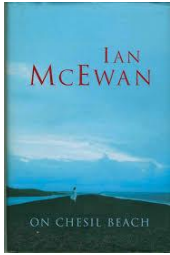


SUMMER READING GUIDE

10 NEW BOOKS TO READ DURING SUMMER 2017



ON CHESIL BEACH by Ian McEwan

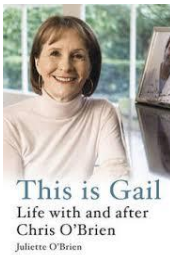
This slim volume packs a powerful emotional punch and delivers far more than would seem possible from a story so brief.

Two people fall in love; get married and then..... ! Well I won't give away the tale but it is more than a straightforward love story, and much more complex than it initially appears.

It's also an exploration of whatever it takes to make us the people that we ultimately become, and also a reminder that life is full of 'cross-road' moments when we can make a decision that will take us down either of two pathways.

McEwan must be one of my favourite authors and with this book has written something so simple; so direct and expressive that it's hard not to read without being moved. My only criticism is that the standards and behaviour portrayed are more aptly addressed to a time in the 1950's rather than the early 1960's. but apart from that I enjoyed every word.

Please note that this review come with a caution – keep the tissues handy!



THIS IS GAIL by Juliette O'Brien

Standing by while someone you love is slowly dying, must be one of the most terrible ordeals to cope with in life. Gail O'Brien's daughter has written a beautiful tribute to her mother's strength and fortitude in the aftermath of the demise of both her father and her brother, who died only a short time afterwards.

Chris O'Brien was the renowned cancer surgeon, labelled 'Dr Gorgeous' after being seen on television, but he was also a loving husband and father with a wonderful manner when dealing with his patients. In the most awful ironies of life, cancer was the disease that struck Chris; and there was no cure for this talented man.

This story is written with love, and takes the reader on the journey from heartbreaking loss to renewal and new purpose.

Before his illness, Chris was everyone's focus, and Gail was viewed as the woman 'behind the man'. After his death, and that of her son, she found the strength to re-start her career after a twenty year gap, and reinvent herself, finding the courage to prove that she could – and would – survive. To read this book is to both humbled and inspired.



PASSION PLAY: THE OBERAMMERGAU TALES by Valerie Volk

This tells in readable verse form the inner thoughts of a motley group of travellers on a bus tour to the Oberammergau passion play which has been staged every tenth year since 1634.

The format is made to resemble that of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales". There are twenty tales with Chaucerian titles such as 'The Knight's Tale' – about a certain Douglas, worried about his illicit relationship with a married woman.

'The Prioress's Tale' – about Elinor, a school principal mediating on her career and marriage, and 'the Parson's Tale' about Adam, a parish priest bewailing his supposed failings. A narrator, Caroline, with newspaper experience, provides a helpful connection between the very varied tales and incidentally useful tourist guidance between Sydney, Munich, and Oberammergau.

Reviewed by Bryan Forbes



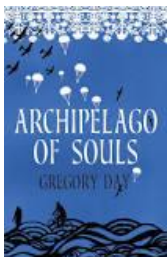
PRAGUE FATALE – A BERNIE GUNTHER THRILLER by Philip Kerr

This book contains lots of naughty words and nasty incidents, but as other reviews suggest, it is 'gripping'. The general nastiness stems from its setting in Hitler's Nazi Germany and occupied Europe of the 1930's and 1940's.

Gunther is a Berlin police officer who dislikes the Nazis but in carrying out his duties gets involved with the ambitious and heartless SS General Reinhard Heydrich in Prague.

The book has been well researched and provides a convincing impression of life in those difficult times when torture and genocide were common tools of the Nazi regime.

Reviewed by Bryan Forbes



ARCHIPELAGO OF SOULS a novel by Gregory Day

This story is set during the aftermath of the Second World War, and concerns an Australian soldier (and farm boy from Colac), Wesley Cress, who was a hero of the underground resistance on German occupied Crete.

Transplanted to lonely King Island in Bass Strait after the war, Wesley seeks solace and comfort, and is aided by a cast of unusual characters on the island.

The story is skilfully woven between events on the two islands, at opposite ends of the earth.

Australia's role in the 1942 Battle of Crete is not widely discussed, and the veterans of that siege are still among us.

This thoughtful story raises realities of nationhood, war, morality and love, and is well worth reading.

Reviewed by Jill Kerr



RUSH OH! a novel by Shirley Barrett

The setting for this tale is at a tiny whaling station in Eden, on the coast of N.S.W., during the period when whales were avidly hunted in that part of the world.

Mary Davidson, the eldest daughter of a whaling family that has lost its mother and wife, sets out to record the difficult season of 1908, a year that is filled with humour, drama and misadventure.

The reader will learn much about the business of whaling, as seen through Mary's eyes, as she struggles to care for her father and siblings. The men that hunt the whales are aided by a pod of killer whales, led by "Tom", in a unique allegiance of historical fact!

The scenes are often amazing, graphic and sometimes brutal.

Mary's hopes and disappointments, both domestic and romantic, are interspersed with the daily challenges that beset the little whaling station, and make enjoyable reading.

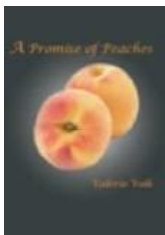
Reviewed by Jill Kerr



ON THE BLUE TRAIN by Kristel Thornell

What did happen to Agatha Christie during her mysterious eleven-day disappearance just as she was on the cusp of fame?

In this entrancing novel of creativity and grief, Kristel Thornell combines fact and fantasy to reconstruct Agatha Christie's retreat from a life that had become too difficult. With verve and sensitivity, Thornell imagines what Christie could not write.

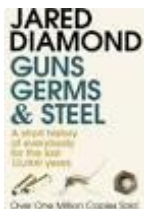


A PROMISE OF PEACHES a verse novel by Valerie Volk

This story is told unusually in verse form, and is set mainly in Melbourne in the early 1950's. It explores the culture clash of 1950's immigration, when a well-meaning couple take two Czech post WW2 refugees into their working class home. They could not foresee the cultural tensions this would create, or the impact it would have on their teenage daughter coping with the unfolding of adolescent sexuality.

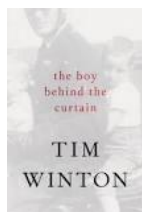
This is a thoughtful and compassionate account, and Volk deals with the subject matter in a sensitive and sympathetic manner, with respect for all the main characters in the story.

Reviewed by Jill Kerr



GUNS GERMS & STEEL A short history of everybody for the last 13,000 years by Jared Diamond

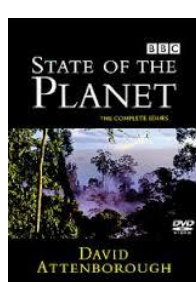
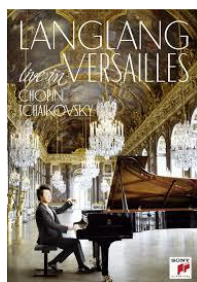
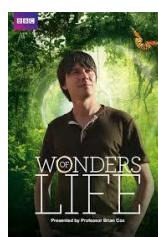
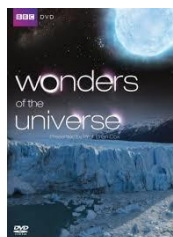
Jared Diamond puts the case that geography and biogeography, not race, moulded the contrasting fates of Europeans, Asians, Native American, sub-Saharan Africans, and aboriginal Australians. An ambitious synthesis of history, biology, ecology and linguistics, *Guns, Germs and Steel* is a groundbreaking and humane work of popular science.



THE BOY BEHIND THE CURTAIN an autobiography by Tim Winton

The extraordinarily powerful true stories that make up *The Boy Behind the Curtain* take us behind the scenes, revealing the accidents, both serendipitous and traumatic, that have influenced his view on life and fuelled his distinctive artistic vision.

NEW TO THE LIBRARY – THESE DVDS



The Theory of Everything – The extraordinary story of Jane and Stephen Hawking.

The Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers

The Lord of the Rings – The Return of the King

Wonders of the Universe – Presented by Professor Brian Cox

Wonders of Life – Presented by Professor Brian Cox

LangLang live in Versailles playing Chopin and Tchaikovsky

The Secret Life of Elephants – A compelling series featuring the emotional, dramatic and heart-warming personal stories of wild elephants in Northern Kenya.

The Doris Day Classic Collection

State of the Planet by David Attenborough