

February 2014 Book Reviews

Reviewed by Bryan Forbes

MEMOIR

WELCOME TO YOUR LIFE by Anna Goldsworthy



When Anna, pianist, writer and perfectionist, falls pregnant with her first child, her excitement is tempered by the daunting journey ahead. She shares the dizzying wonder and crippling anxiety that come with creating new life. This captivating memoir combines warmth and humour to reveal the love that binds families together.

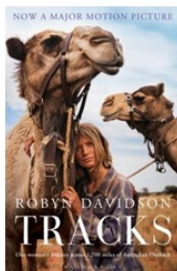
Reviewed by Margaret Pittman

TRAVEL TRACKS

by Robyn Davidson

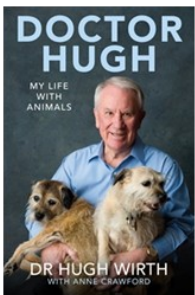
Robyn writes with such honesty of her trek across Australia from Alice Springs to the Indian Ocean just below Carnarvon. She takes with her four camels and her dog. The companionship she shares with her beloved animals makes engrossing reading.

Reviewed by Jenny Barabas



BIOGRAPHY

DOCTOR HUGH – MY LIFE WITH ANIMALS by Hugh Wirth



This is an intriguing peek into the successful life of a well-known and influential Victorian veterinary surgeon who works uncompromisingly for the well-being of animals (even fish).

His childhood and early education were in north eastern Melbourne, as was his main practice later. He memorably endured the strict regime of a Jesuit college but had to go to Brisbane for his university training. Many amusing and some sinister incidents occurred during his active business life. After retirement in 2006 he continued his long honorary career which included leadership in the RSPCA and the World Society for the Protection of Animals, helping other bodies dealing with animals, and even regular talkback radio sessions.

GENTLE CRIME FICTION

THE MINOR ADJUSTMENT BEAUTY SALON by Alexander Mc Call Smith

The latest from THE No. 1 LADIES' DETECTIVE AGENCY

Here we have more of the engaging records of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency in Botswana, apparently God's own country. In the course of pursuing some minor villainy (including poisonous communications about an excellent beauty salon) the lady detective of traditional build and lover of cups of redbush tea with generous slices of fruit cake, exudes good will and politeness. As ever, she is critically aided by her lady secretary, who proudly graduated with ninety-seven per cent from Business College, and morally supported by her mechanic husband, owner of Speedy Motors. There is a colourful description of scenery and everyday life in Botswana.

Reviewed by Bryan Forbes



NON-FICTION

A LONG WAY HOME by Saroo Brierley

This aptly –named book relates how a lost five-year old boy made an accidental rail journey of over 1100 kilometres across India, was happily adopted for twenty-five years by a Hobart couple and then rediscovered his original family. Village life had been hard, and vagrant life in Kolkata was dangerous but he struck luck when he was passed on to a friendly orphanage and thence to Australia. At age thirty Saroo felt the compulsive need to find his Indian family. Miraculously, after long searching with Google Earth, he located his home town northeast of Mumbai and was re-united with his Indian birth mother. To quote its back cover, the book “celebrates the importance of never letting go of what drives the human spirit – hope.”

Reviewed by Bryan Forbes

