

Recommended Reading List: *Summer*

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Non Fiction

***The Summertime Of Our Dreams : on mateship, mortality and the road home / Michael Pascoe* 2022**

An unforgettable celebration of life, a hymn to the land, and a meditation on the memory and dreams of youth. To be invited to walk beside a dying man, a good man, to be asked into his mind as its existence is counted down, to be offered his gaze into the abyss, to know another soul in the honesty of the deathbed. A privilege. Here is a moving and unusual memoir by Michael Pascoe about his relationship with Jim, his friend since boarding school in Queensland, as he faces up to terminal illness. We see a group of friends as they meet occasionally to talk about their shared youth and their mortality. Eloquent, profound, and sometimes funny, as mates can be with one another, these encounters, as well as Michael and Jim's correspondence about living, dying, memory and family, will resonate deeply with readers. The narrative is also a reflection on the author's own story from son of a country cop to one of Australia's best-known journalists, taking the reader on a journey, both literal and metaphorical, as he drives north in his beloved Alfa Romeo, exploring along the way what it means to be a son and a father, how one ages and deals with one's own mortality. We were just boys, forming bonds we didn't know existed until we dared reach for them and found them strong.

***Happy As : stories of summer, childhood and the magic of family / Larry Emdur* 2022**

Larry Emdur is one of Australia's most popular and enduring TV personalities. *Happy As* is a memoir of becoming Larry. Long before the game shows and morning TV, Larry Emdur was just Larry, a cheeky kid from Bondi who grew up paddling round the kiddies' pool on a foam surfboard, and rocking a safari suit and bowl haircut. It was an idyllic childhood growing up in the 1970s and '80s, dominated by endless summers, adventures with mates, sunburnt noses and board rashes, all underpinned by his dad's simple rule: 'Be nice to everyone.' Told with wit and warmth, *Happy As* charts Larry's career as a professional show-off, from winner of the Rose Bay Public School marching parade to living-room fixture. From his first 'job' pinching golf balls to that big TV break; from awkward teen romances to true love; from the less-than-impressed prize winners on *The Price is Right* to unexpectedly bonding with Yoko Ono, this is a life-affirming collection of stories about the enduring love of family and friends, and just how far being nice to everyone will get you. A perfect blend of nostalgia, side-splitting humour and heartbreaking pathos that will leave you wishing it was the '80s again.

***The Summer of '82 / Dave O'Neil* 2016**

That's what this book is about -- the summer in which Dave finished school and waited ten weeks to find out whether he'd make it into uni or have to get that trade his dad kept banging on about. *The Summer of '82* is a hilarious and heartfelt journey of a boy becoming a man in suburban Australia.

***One Summer : America 1927 / Bill Bryson* 2013**

In summer 1927, America had a booming stock market, a president who worked just four hours a day, a sensational murder trial, and an unknown aviator named Charles Lindbergh who became the most famous man on earth. This book brings to life a forgotten summer when America came of age, took centre stage, and changed the world.

***One Hundred Summers : a family story / Vanessa Branson* 2020**

Taking the reader on a journey from the dying embers of Edwardian England, through the trauma of two world wars, the hedonism of London in the 1980s and 'Cool Britannia' in the 1990s right up to the present day, *One Hundred Summers* is a portrait of a century as it was experienced by one extraordinary family. Along the way, Vanessa Branson recalls the rough and tumble of her chaotic but happy post-war childhood; growing up alongside her older brother Richard, who was entrepreneurial even as a teenager, she would have a front-row seat at the birth of Virgin, one of the most remarkable success stories in British business. She goes on to share her many adventures in a fascinating life, from opening an art gallery on London's Portobello Road and founding an arts festival in Morocco, to turning an ancient palace into a world-famous hotel and finding a real-life Neverland in the Scottish island of Eilean Shona, where J. M. Barrie once wrote a screenplay for *Peter Pan*. Touching, humane and at times heartbreakingly honest, Branson's family memoir is a vivid and charming tapestry of English eccentricity, fortune, fate and passion.

***One Italian Summer : across the world and back in search of the good life / Pip Williams* 2017**

Pip and Shannon dreamed of living the good life. They wanted to slow down, grow their own food, and spend more time with the people they love. But jobs and responsibilities got in the way: their chooks died, their fruit rotted, and Pip ended up depressed and in therapy. So they did the only reasonable thing, they quit their jobs, pulled the children out of school and went searching for la dolce vita in Italy. *One Italian Summer* is a warm, funny and often poignant story of a family's search for a better way of living in the homes and on the farms of strangers. Pip sleeps in a woodshed, feasts under a Tuscan sun, works like a tractor in Calabria and, eventually, finds the good life she's always dreamed of -- though it's not at all the one she expected.

***Boys of Summer / Peter Skrzynecki* 2010**

Boys of Summer is set in the 1950s when American film stars and teenage rock'n'roll idols were beginning to influence Australian culture. It is a coming-of-age account of Tom Krupa's childhood in Sydney's outer western suburbs with his Polish migrant parents. His is a world of backyard adventures, radio serials and comic-book heroes.

Tom is the eye-witness to two seminal incidents, the implications of which reverberate through the novel. Neither is quite as it appears and Tom is confronted with terrors that lie in wait beyond the community and others that lurk within.

***Bradman and the Summer That Changed Cricket : the 1930 Australian tour of England / Christopher Hilton* 2009**

Sir Donald Bradman is widely considered to be the greatest batsman who has ever lived. In 1930 he arrived in England, a callow youth whose lack of technique, or so the English thought, would be mercilessly exposed. By summer's end he had redefined the possibilities of the game and changed it forever. This fascinating book reconstructs that Australian tour from the first day to the last, in the most lively detail, including every run in Bradman's legendary 300 scored in one day during the Leeds Test.

***A Man's Got to Have a Hobby : long summers with my dad / McInnes, William* 2005**

This looks back at the life of Colin McInnes, handyman, father of five and habitual stubbie wearer, and his wife Iris, lover of shopping centre openings, Volkswagens and Dean Martin. Through the memories of their second son, William, we are transported to a time when incinerators took up space in every yard and K-Tel glass cutters were the pride of many a home. William McInnes has created a memoir that poignantly reminds us of the changes that growing up brings - for parents and children.

Fiction

***An Italian Island Summer / Sue Moorcroft* 2023**

After her marriage falls apart, Ursula Quinn is offered the chance to spend the summer working at a hotel on a beautiful island off the coast of Sicily, Italy. Excited by a new adventure, she sets off at once. At Residenza dei Tringali, Ursula receives a warm welcome from everyone except Alfio, son of the Tringali family. He gave up his life in Barcelona to help his mother Agata with the ailing business, and is frustrated with Ursula's interference - and she in turn is less than impressed with his attitude. As they spend more time together, though, they begin to see each other in a different light. But what with Ursula's ex-husband on her tail, family secrets surfacing and an unexpected offer that makes Alfio question his whole life, there's plenty to distract them from one another. Can she face her past and he his future, and together make the most of their Sicilian summer?

***The Summer Party / Rebecca Heath* 2023**

Summer, 2000. In the tranquil town of Queen's Point in southern Australia, the Whitlam family marks the end of every season with a lavish party in their clifftop mansion. Here, clutching her first glass of real champagne, the summer breeze intoxicating on her skin, sixteen-year-old Lucy Ross is kissed for the very first time. And then, in the shadows of the rose garden, she sees something she shouldn't. Winter, 2019. After two decades of silence, Lucy is back in Queen's Point. She hasn't planned on staying long. But when human remains wash up on the freezing beach, the police close the town. Unable to leave, Lucy is forced to rekindle old friendships - and examine old truths - she has long ago tried to forget. As long-buried secrets start to surface, Lucy must decide. Will she confront the past and tell the truth? Or will she still do anything to protect the people she loves?

***The Summer Place / Janette Paul* 2023**

As three women return to the summer place of their youth, each is grappling with the cards life has dealt them. But the journey back to this sleepy coastal town will bring them to far more than just a beach wedding. Erin, still recovering from a vehicle accident and grievous injuries, is the reluctant maid of honour. Wearing a dress that shows her scars for all to see is the last thing she wants. Years ago, Jenna fell in love with the groom at his family's treasured holiday spot. Will seeing him marry someone else finally allow her to get over him? Cassie, now living in Barcelona and recently widowed, is desperate for a new lease on life. The invitation to return to Australia for the wedding will give her a much-needed break and more than she bargained for. As the trio find themselves in a place that reminds them of what they've lost, they will be deeply confronted by paths they don't wish to travel down. Emotions run high as each of the women face a crossroad, yet they will find that the place at the coast offers all of them a chance to learn to heal, love and belong.

***The Summer Skies / Jenny Colgan* 2023**

Born into a family of successful pilots, Morag is used to flying high. But when a tragic accident above the clouds grounds her, could the future she'd always imagined be suddenly out of reach? When she receives a call telling her that her beloved grandfather has been taken ill, Morag leaves her fast-paced life in London to return home to the tranquil Scottish Highlands. With her grandfather out of action, Morag has no choice but to take over flying the local route in his rickety old plane, ferrying locals across the beautiful islands of the archipelago. But as the weather takes a dramatic turn, Morag is forced to crash-land on a remote island and suddenly finds herself far from civilisation and all alone. Then she discovers Gregor, the gruff and reclusive ornithologist taking care of the island for the season. Though the pair don't see eye to eye, Morag is forced to seek shelter at his cabin and it seems the pair are stuck together until help arrives. However long that may be. As she awaits rescue, might Morag discover that a remote Scottish island, cut off from real-life, is exactly the place she needs to be?

***The Sweet Remnants of Summer* / Alexander McCall Smith 2022**

Our favourite moral philosopher is caught up in a delicate dispute between members of a prominent family as her husband, Jamie, is dragged into his own internecine rivalry. Isabel accepts an invitation to serve on the advisory committee of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, but soon finds herself swept up in an all-too-familiar dilemma. David is the grandson of a Scottish clan chief and is supportive of Scottish nationalism. But his fervent beliefs are threatening family harmony, especially because his sister Catriona's socialist views put her at odds with her brother. When their mother, Laura, a fellow committee member, asks Isabel to intervene, she tries to demur. But always one for courteous resolutions to philosophical disagreements, Isabel can't help but intercede.

***End of Summer* / Anders de la Motte ; translated by Neil Smith 2016**

Summer 1983: Four-year-old Billy chases a rabbit in the fields behind his house. But when his mother goes to call him in, Billy has disappeared. Never to be seen again. Today: Veronica is a bereavement counsellor. She's never fully come to terms with her mother's suicide after her brother Billy's disappearance. When a young man walks into her group, he looks familiar and talks about the trauma of his friend's disappearance in 1983. Could Billy still be alive after all this time? Needing to know the truth, Veronica goes home to the place where her life started to fall apart.

***Locust Summer* / David Allan-Petale 2021**

On the cusp of summer, 1986, Rowan Brockman's mother asks if he will come home to Septimus in the Western Australian Wheatbelt to help with the final harvest. Rowan's brother, the natural heir to the farm, has died, and Rowan's dad's health is failing. Although he longs to, there is no way that Rowan can refuse his mother's request as she prepares the farm for sale. This is the story of the final harvest - the story of one young man in a place he doesn't want to be, being given one last chance to make peace before the past, and those he has loved, disappear.

***One Summer Between Friends* / Trish Morey 2020**

With a failed marriage behind her, and her career dreams in tatters, Sarah returns home to Lord Howe Island to run the family store. Paradise to most, Lord Howe is the last place Sarah wants to be, trapped on an island with her two ex-best friends, Floss and Jules. Floss has the life she always wanted: married to her high school sweetheart, Andy, with five gorgeous children. But something is missing from her marriage. And now she has a secret that threatens to tear her happy family apart, and the only person she can talk to is the woman who pushed her away. For Jules, forgetting the past is impossible. Her four-year-old daughter is an everyday reminder of the friendships she has lost. But when a discovery turns her life upside down, she knows this is an opportunity to set things right. This summer, can these women overcome the pain of the past and find their way back to friendship?

***The Year Without Summer* / Guinevere Glasfurd 2020**

1815, Sumbawa Island, Indonesia. Mount Tambora explodes in a cataclysmic eruption, killing thousands. Once a paradise, the island is now solid ash, the surrounding sea turned to stone. But worse is yet to come as the ash cloud rises and covers the sun, the seasons will fail. 1816. In Switzerland, Mary Shelley finds dark inspiration. Confined inside by the unseasonable weather, thousands of famine refugees stream past her door. In Vermont, preacher Charles Whitlock begs his followers to keep faith as drought dries their wells and their livestock starve. In Britain, the ambitious and lovesick painter John Constable struggles to reconcile the idyllic England he paints with the misery that surrounds him. In the Fens, farm labourer Sarah Hobbs has had enough of going hungry while the farmers flaunt their wealth. And Hope Peter, returned from the Napoleonic wars, finds his family home demolished. He flees to London, where he falls in with revolutionaries who speak of a better life, whatever the cost. As desperation sets in, Britain becomes racked with riots - rebellion is in the air.