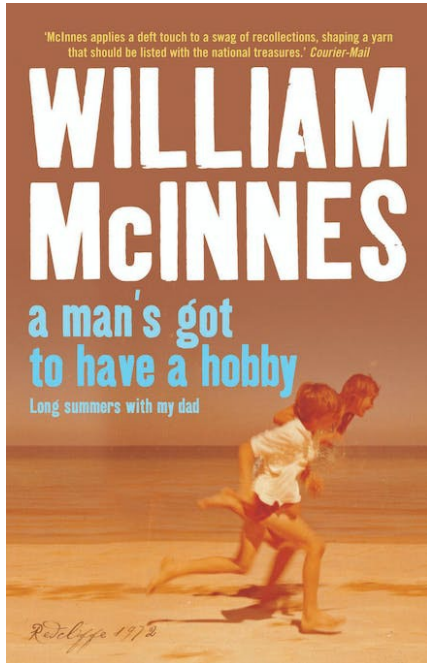


Featured Title

A Man's Got to Have a Hobby : long summers with my dad

McInnes, William Non Fiction 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 reminds us of the changes that growing up brings - for parents and for children.

A tail-end baby boomer, William recalls summer holidays that seemed to go on forever, when he and his mates would walk down to fish in the bay, a time when the Aussie battler stood as the local Labor candidate and looked out for his mates, and a time when the whole family would rush into the lounge room to watch a new commercial on TV. He writes about his father, a strong character who talks to the furniture, dances with William's mother in the kitchen, and spends his free time fixing up the house and doing the best for his family. In William's

writing you can hear his father speaking, listen to his mother singing, and his sisters and brothers talking in the yard.

This is a book about people who aren't famous but should be. It's about cane toads and families, love and hope and fear, laughter, death and life. Most of all, it is a realistic, down-to-earth book by a man who had a great time growing up. His warmth and humour come through on every page.

Other Books by William McInnes

Cricket Kings (2006)

That'd Be Right (2008)

The Making of Modern Australia (2010)

Worse Things Happen at Sea (2011)

The Laughing Clowns (2012)

Cricket Was the Winner (2012)

The Bird Watcher (2013)

Holidays (2014)

The Waler: Australia's Great Wr Horse (2015)

Full Bore (2016)

Fatherhood: Stories About Being a Dad (2018)

Christmas Tales (2020)

Yeah, Nah!: A celebration of life and the words that make us who we are

Due for Release November 2023

Central Queensland University Alumni

<https://www.cqu.edu.au/>

William McInnes is a multi-talented and highly acclaimed Australian film and television actor, who became a household name with roles in Australian dramas *Blue Heelers* and *Sea Change*. On top of his successful acting career, William has gone on to become a bestselling author, columnist and guest speaker.

William won two Logie Awards for Most Outstanding Actor for *My Brother Jack* in 2002 and *Sea Change* in 2000, and both an AFI Award and Film Critics Circle of Australia Award for *Unfinished Sky* in 2008. He was also awarded the Sydney Morning Herald, Sun Herald and The Age Australian Star of the Year Award. He has a long list of television roles and feature films include titles such as *The Shark Net*, *My Brother Jack*, *Stepfather of the Bride*, *Curtin*, *East West 101* and *Look Both Ways*.

To add to his repertoire, William has published (a number of) books – five reaching the best seller list. *A Man's Got to Have a Hobby* won a 2006 Australian Book Industry Award, *Cricket Kings* was a 2007 Australian Book Industry Award nominee, and *Worse Things Happen at Sea*, co-written with his late wife Sarah Watt, was awarded the 2012 Indie Non-Fiction Book of the Year.

William graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from CQUniversity in 1986 and was honoured in 2010 with an Honorary Doctor of Performing Arts.

Actor, Writer, Speaker

<https://www.platinumspeakers.com.au/>

William McInnes is a highly acclaimed and accomplished actor and writer. He shone in dramatic lead television roles in dramas such as *The Shark Net*, *My Brother Jack*, *Blue Heelers*, *Stepfather of the Bride*, *Seachange*, the critically acclaimed ABC telemovie *Curtin*, and the hard hitting SBS series *East West 101*.

For his unforgettable role in the feature film, *Look Both Ways*, William won the Film Critics Circle of Australia Award for Best Actor and received an AFI Award nomination Best Lead Actor. In 2008, William received both an AFI Award and a Film Critics Circle of Australia Award for his performance in *Unfinished Sky*. William's other feature film credits include *David Caesar's Dirty Deeds* and *Prime Mover*, *Blessed* directed by Ana Kokkinos, and *The Hopes and Dreams of Gazza Snell*. In 2006, William was awarded the Sydney Morning Herald, Sun Herald and The Age Australian Star of The Year Award.

William is the author of (a number of) best selling books - *A Man's Got to Have a Hobby*, winner of a 2006 Australian Book Industry Award, *Cricket Kings*, which was a 2007 Australian Book Industry Award nominee, *That'd Be Right* and *The Making of Modern Australia*. William's fifth book, *Worse Things Happen at Sea*, co-written with his late wife Sarah Watt, was awarded the 2012 Indie Non Fiction Book of the Year. *The Laughing Clowns*, was released in October 2012.

William starred in the ABC telemovie, *Dangerous Remedy*, alongside Claudia Karvan in *The Time Of Our Lives* and as the host of *Auction Rooms* and *Hello Birdy*.

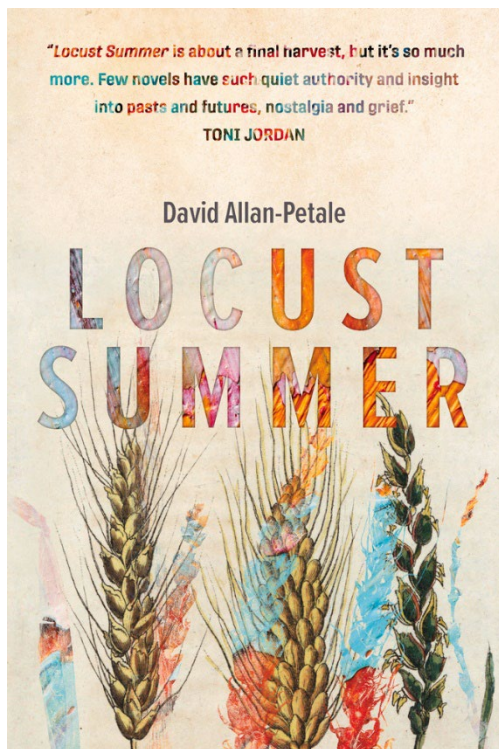
William's guest speaking engagements include The History Council of Victoria Annual Lecture, Voices on the Coast Literary Breakfast, the Preoperative Nurses Conference and the 2012 ETAWA Teachers Conference. He has MC'd for the Australia Day Concert and the Australia Post Bicentenary Event.

William is also a warm and engaging speaker who can present on a range of topics surrounding his five best selling books

Featured Title

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

Fiction 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.

About the Author

David Allan-Petale is a writer from Perth, Western Australia, whose debut novel *Locust Summer* was published to critical acclaim by the renowned Fremantle Press and long-listed for the 2022 ALS Gold Medal for "an outstanding literary work."

The manuscript was shortlisted for the 2017 The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award, with judge Stephen Romei praising it as 'a sharp meditation on the separation of life from land.'

Locust Summer was selected for a development fellowship at Varuna, The National Writers' House, which kindled an 18-month road trip around Australia in a caravan where David explored the country with his young family while advancing the manuscript, typing 'the end' on a beach at Kalbarri.

David is now back home in Perth working on a new book, raising two daughters with his beautiful wife, all while restoring a yacht in the driveway.

Reviews

<https://www.goodreads.com/>

I wrote the book, so naturally I gave it five stars.

But you should have seen the first draft...!

Locust Summer took the better part of ten years to write and publish and I enjoyed every twist and turn along the way as I followed the Brockman family and told their story.

Now it's out in the world, and it's yours.

Family, identity, love, hope, mistakes, redemption - and the incredible power, beauty and terror of the Australian landscape.

Thank you for reading.

David

Some evocative writing here - describing the wheat crops and farming in Western Australia - but more than that - splintered relationships, the yearning for love and acceptance, forgiveness and redemption.

"My car was a charmless Holden without air conditioning that became a heat sink for even the slimmest chink of sun. The radio was busted. So I wound down all the windows and decided to relish the heat, became a reptile crawling up the Great Northern Highway at 110 k's an hour, the blond land and black road smeared together by the bow waves of passing road trains."

An example of the way the author pulls you in. You can feel the heat and visualise the hectares of wheat crops, the tired family homestead and exhausted mother and fading father. Some beautiful sections where the father is lucid and connects with his son and environment. Congratulations to the author on this gritty debut novel.

Jan

They say don't judge a book by its cover, but in this instance I think you can get away with it.

Locust Summer is gorgeous inside and out. The main character, Rowan, is very realistic. It's like Allan-Petale ran a harvester over any cliches or stereotypes, and left us characters that feel like people we know. Rowan has a good balance of earnestness and imperfection. He stuffs up, but in every mistake we see the growth that propels him through the story. Rowan's journey wasn't predictable - I couldn't see ahead as to where all the pieces would fall in the last few pages.

Lydia

Featured Title

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



This book brings to life a forgotten summer when America came of age, took centre stage, and changed the world.

Goodreads Choice Award Nominee for Best History & Biography (2013)

In *One Summer* Bill Bryson, one of our greatest and most beloved nonfiction writers, transports readers on a journey back to one amazing season in American life.

<https://www.goodreads.com/>

The summer of 1927 began with one of the signature events of the twentieth century:

On May 21, 1927, Charles Lindbergh became the first man to cross the Atlantic by plane nonstop, and when he landed in Le Bourget airfield near Paris, he ignited an explosion of worldwide rapture and instantly became the most famous person on the planet.

Meanwhile, the titanically talented Babe Ruth was beginning his assault on the home run record, which would culminate on September 30 with his sixtieth blast, one of the most resonant and durable records in sports history.

In between those dates a Queens housewife named Ruth Snyder and her corset-salesman lover garroted her husband, leading to a murder trial that became a huge tabloid sensation.

Alvin “Shipwreck” Kelly sat atop a flagpole in Newark, New Jersey, for twelve days—a new record.

The American South was clobbered by unprecedented rain and by flooding of the Mississippi basin, a great human disaster, the relief efforts for which were guided by the uncannily able and insufferably pompous Herbert Hoover.

Calvin Coolidge interrupted an already leisurely presidency for an even more relaxing three-month vacation in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

The gangster Al Capone tightened his grip on the illegal booze business through a gaudy and murderous reign of terror and municipal corruption.

The first true “talking picture,” Al Jolson’s *The Jazz Singer*, was filmed and forever changed the motion picture industry.

The four most powerful central bankers on earth met in secret session on a Long Island estate and made a fateful decision that virtually guaranteed a future crash and depression.

All this and much, much more transpired in that epochal summer of 1927, and Bill Bryson captures its outsized personalities, exciting events, and occasional just plain weirdness with his trademark vividness, eye for telling detail, and delicious humor. In that year America stepped out onto the world stage as the main event, and *One Summer* transforms it all into narrative nonfiction of the highest order.

Review: New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/>

By Kevin Baker

Nov. 22, 2013

Sometimes, one magnificent season can define an era. At least, that's the view in trade publishing of late, where "year" books have become something of a mania: "19__ : The Year Our World Changed/Began/Ended/Learned to Love the Macarena." But it's not hard to argue that the apogee of the wild ride America took in the 1920s came in the summer of 1927.

It was the summer — if one allows "summer" to occasionally include parts of both spring and fall — that Babe Ruth hit 60 home runs, much of the country was engulfed by a catastrophic flood, Jack Dempsey lost the famous "long count" fight to Gene Tunney, Calvin Coolidge announced he wouldn't run for another term, the world's leading bankers made the policy adjustment that would do so much to bring down Wall Street in 1929, "The Jazz Singer" was released, radio and tabloid culture came into their own, an American audience got its first public demonstration of television, work started on Mount Rushmore, Sacco and Vanzetti were executed, and Henry Ford stopped making Model T's. And oh, yes, most of the world went mad over a 25-year-old prodigy named Charles Lindbergh, who flew a flimsy plane to Paris from New York.

This isn't to mention all the other fascinating characters Bill Bryson brings splendidly to life in "One Summer" — people like Al Capone and Dorothy Parker; Philo T. Farnsworth, the young man who played a critical role in inventing the television; and the New York Times reporter Richards Vidmer, who married a rajah's daughter and was "also perhaps the most memorably dreadful sportswriter ever."

The author of more than a dozen previous books, including "A Short History of Nearly Everything," Bryson writes in a style as effervescent as the time itself. Lindbergh's plane, the Spirit of St. Louis, was "little more than a flying gas tank," and piloting it for his landmark flight "would have been rather like crossing the ocean in a tent." Before 1920, pitchers might apply spit or "at least two dozen other globulous additives" to a baseball, and the habit of drying out ball fields by lighting gasoline fires on them was "hardly conducive to a fine, delicate tilth."

No one is immune to Bryson's irreverence. Ty Cobb was "only a degree or two removed from clinical psychopathy." When the wife of the Chicago Tribune publisher Robert McCormick died, "he had her buried with full military honors, a distinction to which she was not remotely entitled (or very probably desirous)." And "there was almost nothing Henry Ford did that didn't have some bad in it somewhere." Warren Harding "fell considerably short of mediocre" and, when it came to women, "truly was a bit of a dog." Coolidge's sense of humor "was that of a slightly backward schoolboy," while Herbert Hoover proved "there was no matter too small to escape his numbing pomposity."

Inanimate objects are sent up just as delightfully. We meet a railroad that "wandered confusedly around the upper Midwest, as if looking for a lost item," while in a Chicago movie palace, "the marbled lobby was said to be an almost exact copy of the king's chapel at Versailles except presumably for the smell of popcorn."

This makes for a wonderful romp, though the hyperbole of the age frequently runs away with Bryson. Great as Babe Ruth was, he does not still hold the record for shutouts by a left-handed pitcher in a season, and he did not hit three home runs in his last game, or compile 26 outfield assists in 1919 (the correct number is 14). The cartoonist Tad Dorgan did not invent the name "hot dog"; someone in Al Capone's "camp" did not coin the phrase "Vote early and vote often"; and it was not true that Lindbergh "would no longer be anybody's hero" by "the time America was ready to take to the air properly." The advent of the talking picture in 1927 was not the "last hurrah" for Broadway, and Hoover did not win the presidency in 1928 with "nearly two-thirds of the popular vote."

A little more seriously, Bryson makes the wild charge that Hoover “illegally bought chemicals from Germany” during World War I “as part of his business operations,” thus engaging in “an act that could have led to his being taken outside, stood against a wall and shot.” I’m unaware that Hoover was engaged in any business during the war beyond feeding starving Belgian and French citizens, and working as the United States Food Administrator. A few, histrionic accusations of this sort were flung at him by a disgruntled employee and a couple of political opponents — and thoroughly discredited by a British court of inquiry at the time.

Bryson is best at deflating our nostalgia for the era, even as he upholds its importance. The America of the 1920s, with its laissez-faire economics, rugged individualism, and relentless public piety and patriotism, was a Tea Party utopia. I find the period’s allure understandable. The country was rich and loaded with miraculous new things: the car, the radio, the refrigerator. Every big city had its proud new skyscraper, and we had just pioneered the mall and the planned suburb. We added more phones every year than Britain had in toto, and Kansas had more automobiles than France. We held half the world’s gold and made almost half its goods, and seemed to churn out a similarly abundant supply of heroic young daredevils.

We were, at the same time, a curiously dysfunctional nation, one where two-thirds of the murders went unsolved, and the average homicide rate was exponentially higher than it is now in much of the country. We were barely able to build a road or a functional airfield, or to efficiently coordinate our extensive rail system. When the Mississippi overflowed in the worst flood in its history — inundating 16.5 million acres, costing over 1,000 lives (“and perhaps several times that,” Bryson writes; the human tallies “weren’t more scrupulous because, alas, so many of the victims were poor and black”) and resulting in up to \$1 billion in losses — Coolidge, anointed earlier this year in a biography by Amity Shlaes as the model of a modern right-wing president, refused to provide even an autographed picture to be auctioned off for flood relief. Aid was provided largely by the private sector and charitable organizations, which managed all of \$20 per victim in loans.

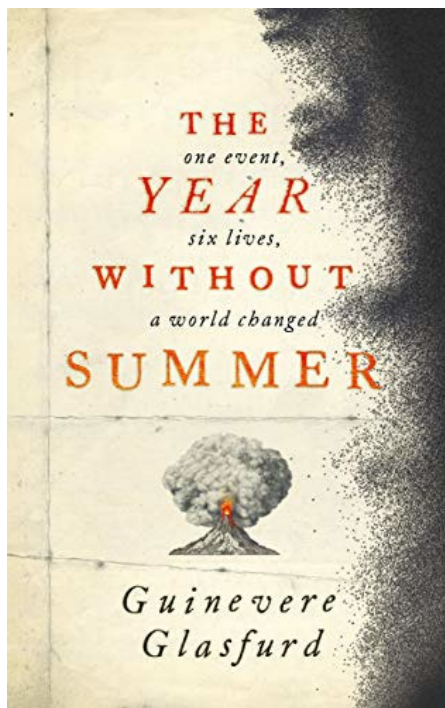
“There may never have been another time in the nation’s history when more people disliked more other people from more directions and for less reason,” Bryson writes, referring to the era as “the Age of Loathing.” He has a point. Americans in the 1920s flocked to join the Ku Klux Klan and rushed to embrace the new pseudoscience of eugenics. The Supreme Court backed these extremists, upholding the “right” of states to forcibly sterilize tens of thousands of supposed “imbeciles,” who were in fact often just poor, black or unmarried women. There seemed, every-where, to be an undercurrent of malicious madness that could be glimpsed in the hysteria surrounding celebrities and scandalous murder cases. Having created the modern mobster, we then refused to prosecute him, turning state power instead on dissidents and unions, while enforcing Prohibition by lacing alcohol with poisons. There was even a school massacre in 1927, perpetrated by an anti-tax maniac.

Disappointed in the world, we had refused to join the League of Nations and slammed the golden door shut to immigrants. Nonetheless, we reached out despite ourselves, with our ideas and our culture, riding the air and the airwaves. Every time you turned around, it seemed, Americans were starting another magazine, newspaper or bold new publishing house, or developing a musical form.

The capper was the moving picture. We produced 80 percent of the world’s movies by 1927, and the rise of the “talkies” would popularize, as Bryson notes, not only American speech but “American thoughts, American attitudes, American humor and sensibilities. Peacefully, by accident, and almost unnoticed, America had just taken over the world.”

Featured Title

The Year Without Summer / Guinevere Glasfurd Fiction 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.

The Year Without Summer is the story of the books written, the art made; of the journeys taken, of the love longed for and the lives lost during that fateful year. Six separate lives, connected only by an event many thousands of miles away. Few had heard of Tambora - but none could escape its effects.

Review

www.fictionfanblog.wordpress.com

In April 1815, Mount Tambora in Indonesia erupted. This far away, almost unreported event would have wide-reaching consequences as unusually bad weather conditions raised food prices and created famine around the world. Through the stories of six people in different spheres of life, Glasfurd shows some of the impact of the volcano and, without beating the drum too loudly, hints at what we might expect in a future of uncontrolled climate change.

The six main characters in the book are unconnected to each other except by the impact of the volcano, so that in a sense it works like a collection of short stories, although the format means that we get a little of one story followed by a little of another, and so on. This can make it seem a bit fragmentary at first, and not completely balanced since some of the stories are stronger than others. But together they give a good picture of how life was affected in different places and by different sections of society at the same moment in time, and so once I got used to the format, I felt it worked well.

Henry is the surgeon aboard the British ship *Benares*, sent to Sumbawa Island to investigate reports of loud explosions there. It is through his letters home that we are told about the immediate devastation of the volcano on the local population, and of the dire failure of the

British rulers to provide adequate aid to the surviving islanders, whose entire crops were destroyed and water sources polluted. Some of the descriptions have all the imagery of horror stories, made worse by knowing that they are true.

Glasfurd then swings away from Indonesia to our more familiar world some months later, once the atmospheric effects of the volcano had begun to seriously affect weather patterns around the world. We meet John Constable, trying to make his way as a painter and gain entry to the prestigious Royal Academy; and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, travelling with her lover Percy Shelley and her young son on the fateful trip during which she would find the inspiration to write her masterpiece, *Frankenstein*. But Glasfurd shows us the lives of commoners too – Sarah, a peasant girl doing jobbing work on farms in the Fens at a time of famine and increased mechanisation, and caught up in the protests and riots arising out of the desperation of the rural poor; Hope Peter, a soldier returned from the Napoleonic Wars to a land not in any way fit for heroes, desperately seeking some means of earning a living in a country that showed him no welcome home; and across the Atlantic we meet Charles, a preacher in Vermont, caught up in the lives of the farming community there as crops fail and the already hard life becomes even harder.

While I found all of the stories had enough interest in them to hold my attention, the two that stood out most for me were Mary Shelley's and the young farm worker Sarah's. Mary's story centres on the famous challenge among the group of friends that included Byron and John Polidori to each write a story – a challenge that only Polidori and Mary met, with Polidori's *The Vampyre* perhaps owing its place in history mostly to its connection to Shelley's *Frankenstein*. But this is not a cosily described fun vacation – Glasfurd shows the hardness of Mary's life, partly because of the harsh weather of the year, but also because of the grief she still feels over the loss of her first child and the uncertainty of her unconventional status as an unmarried woman living openly with her lover. Byron doesn't come out of it well, and nor does Shelley really – although they both encourage Mary to join in with the challenge by writing her own story, they don't treat her seriously as an equal. Of course, since her legacy turned out to be vastly superior and more influential than either of theirs, I guess they were right, but not quite in the way they thought... 😊

Young Sarah I loved – she stole my heart completely with her frank and funny outlook on her hand-to-mouth existence and her irreverence and lack of respect for the farmers, ministers and general do-gooders who felt that the poor should be grateful for a penny of pay and a bowl of thin soup after twelve or fourteen hours of physical labour. Her section is given in the first person, and her voice reminded me a lot of the wonderful Bessy in *The Observations*, another feisty young girl uncowed by the circumstances of her life. As the younger farm workers gradually band together to demand better pay and conditions, I was cheering Sarah on, but with a sense of dread since this was a period in which the authorities showed no mercy to challenges from those they saw as potential revolutionaries.

The book has had a rather mixed reaction because of the way the stories are rotated without ever becoming linked. It worked for me, perhaps because earlier reviews meant I knew what to expect going in. While my enjoyment of the various strands varied, I found it a great way to give a panoramic view of the year, from rich to poor, artist to labourer, and of how all of society was affected in different ways by the climatic effects of the volcano.