

Recommended Reading List: *Christmas Gifts*

<https://www.grc.qld.gov.au/homepage/108/library-lovers-book-group-online>

Non Fiction

***Home For Christmas But Five Years Late* : a record of Australian POWs in the hands of the Japanese, 15th February 1942 to 15th August 1945 : compiled from diaries and notes kept at the time by those who were there / collected by Bob Mutton 1995**

A record of Australian POWs in the hands of the Japanese, 15th February 1942 to 15th August 1945, compiled from diaries and notes kept at the time by those who were there.

***A Christmas Card in April* : station life on the Palmer River in the 1940s and 1950s / John Illingsworth, editor ; drawings by Lynette Illingsworth 1990**

***Kindness* / Kath Koschel 2023**

Kath Koschel has faced almost unimaginable hurdles. In her mid-twenties, she broke her back and was told she may never walk again. Shortly afterwards, she lost her beloved partner to suicide. Then, just as she was piecing her life back together, she was hit by a drunk driver while cycling and forced to relearn to walk a second time. In the midst of these harrowing experiences, Kath created the Kindness Factory on social media to share her small acts of kindness, hoping to inspire a groundswell of people to join her. Her idea blew up: millions of acts have since been logged, giving birth to the 'Kindness Curriculum' - a blueprint for happiness, resilience and connection which has now launched in schools across three countries. In 2016 she put her beliefs to the ultimate test, leaving home with nothing but a change of clothes, her phone and a toothbrush - no food, money or water. Her goal? To see how long she could survive on the kindness of strangers. Her journey took her to every state in Australia, where she met with people from all walks of life to share her kindness manifesto.

***The Power of Small : why little things make all the difference* / Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval 2009**

From the compliment you give your partner at the end of the day to the hasty thank you note you dashed out to your childhood friend; from the quick once-over glance you give an email before clicking send, to remembering a client's special moment - little acts go a long way and can make such a difference to so many lives (including your own)

***The Language of Kindness : a nurse's story* / Christie Watson 2018**

Christie Watson was a nurse for twenty years. Taking us from birth to death and from A and E to the mortuary, *The Language of Kindness* is an astonishing account of a profession defined by acts of care, compassion and kindness. We watch Christie with a new mother holding her premature son who has miraculously made it through the night, we stand by her side as she spends many hours watching agonising heart and lung surgery, and we hold our breath as she washes the hair of a child fatally injured in a fire, attempting to remove the toxic smell of smoke before the grieving family arrive. In our most extreme moments, when life is lived most intensely, Christie is there by your side. She is a guide, mentor and friend. And in these dark days of division and isolationism, she encourages you to stretch out your hand.

***The Gift of Kindness* / by Pam Ahern; photographs by Kyle Behrend 2013**

Inspiring true stories of rescued farm animals.

***A Secret Gift : how one man's kindness - and a trove of letters - revealed the hidden history of the Great Depression* / Ted Gup 2010**

A timely and powerful work of America at its worst - and Americans at their best - woven from the stories of Depression-era families who were helped by gifts from the author's generous and secretive grandfather.

***A Gift of Hope : helping the homeless* / Danielle Steel 2012**

In her powerful memoir, *His Bright Light*, Danielle Steel opened her heart to share the devastating story of the loss of her beloved son. In *A Gift of Hope* she shows us how she transformed that pain into a campaign of service that enriched her life beyond imagination. For eleven years, Danielle Steel took to the streets with a small team to help the homeless of San Francisco. She worked under cover of darkness distributing food, clothing, bedding, tools, and toiletries to the city's most vulnerable citizens. She sought no publicity for her efforts and remained anonymous throughout. Now she has chosen to tell her story to bring attention to their plight. In this unflinchingly honest and deeply moving memoir, the famously private author speaks out about her work among the most desperate members of society. Determined to supply the homeless with the basic necessities to keep them alive, she ends up giving them something far more powerful: a voice.

***An Hour to Live, an Hour to Love : the true story of the best gift ever given* / Richard Carlson and Kristine Carlson 2007**

If you had one hour to live and could make just one phone call, who would you call? What would you say? And why are you waiting? Richard Carlson's sudden, tragic death in December 2006 left his millions of fans reeling, but even their many letters, calls, and e-mails couldn't erase the loss felt by his wife and partner, Kristine. To assuage her grief, she pored over a quarter century's supply of love letters, reliving the emotions and cherishing her late husband's memory. In a profoundly moving act of healing, she focused on one letter full of particularly apt questions, which Richard had given to her on their eighteenth anniversary, and answered these questions with keen insight and fresh passion. Kris offers her heartfelt response to Richard's moving letter. Both an intimate look inside a special relationship and a gift to the many people whose lives were changed by Richard's work, *An Hour to Live, An Hour to Love* will have readers everywhere wondering how they themselves would answer the question: if you had one hour to live, what would you do, and who would you call? *An Hour to Live, An Hour to Love* is inspiring and uplifting, and shows the importance of treasuring each day as the incredible gift that it is.

***The Case for Christ : solving the biggest mystery of all time* / Lee Strobel 2016**

Is there credible evidence that Jesus of Nazareth really is the Son of God? Now a major motion picture, *Case for Christ*, Strobel retraces his own spiritual journey from atheism and former legal editor of the *Chicago Tribune* to faith. Strobel cross-examines a dozen experts with doctorates from schools like Cambridge, Princeton, and Brandeis who are recognised authorities in their own fields. He challenges them with questions like: How reliable is the New Testament? Does evidence for Jesus exist outside the Bible? Is there any reason to believe the resurrection was an actual event? Strobel's tough, point-blank questions read like a captivating, fast-paced novel. But it's not fiction. It's a riveting quest for the truth about history's most compelling figure. The new edition includes scores of revisions and additions, including updated material on archaeological and manuscript discoveries, fresh recommendations for further study, and an interview with the author that tells dramatic stories about the book's impact, provides behind-the-scenes information, and responds to critiques of the book by sceptics.

Fiction

***The Ballroom Girls: Christmas Dreams* / Jenny Holmes 2023**

The second novel in a brand-new WWII saga series from Jenny Holmes about the ballroom dancing scene in wartime Blackpool.

Even during wartime, the glitz and glamour of the ballroom shines through at Christmas and Blackpool is determined to celebrate against all odds. After all, the show must go on...

***Christmas at the Lake* / Anita Hughes 2023**

Anita Hughes's *Christmas at the Lake* is a heart-warming holiday romance set in a charming Christmas village on the shores Lake Tahoe.

***The Christmas Love Letters* / Sue Moorcroft 2023**

Tucked into a crook of the Norfolk coast lies Nelson's Bar – an idyllic village where time seems to stand still. Maddy Cracey has called this beautiful spot home all her life, as had her husband Adey – until an epic row sent him storming out into a blizzard, with no sign of him since that fateful night.

Six years on, and Maddy's life in the village has settled into a gentle pattern with her young daughter and Great Aunt Ruthie. However, when handsome stranger Raff turns up with a handful of long-forgotten love letters, their quiet life is upended as family secrets from the past are unearthed.

***Christmas Presents* / Lisa Unger 2023**

As Christmas approaches and a blizzard bears down, Madeline and her childhood friend, Badger, return to a past they both hoped was dead - to find answers questions that have haunted them both. They discovered that the truth is more terrible and much closer to home than they think.

Coupling a picturesque, cozy setting with a deeply unsettling suspenseful plot.

***A Christmas Vanishing* / Anne Perry 2023**

Mariah Ellison, Charlotte Pitt's grandmother, accepts her longtime friend Sadie's gracious invitation to spend Christmas with her and her husband, Barton, in their picturesque village. But upon arrival, Mariah discovers that Sadie has vanished without a trace, and Barton rudely rescinds the invitation. Once Mariah finds another acquaintance to stay with during the holiday season, she begins investigating Sadie's disappearance.

***Midnight at the Christmas Bookshop* / Jenny Colgan 2023**

Christmas comes early - far too early - to McCredie's little *Old Town bookshop* in Edinburgh. It's summer, but an American production company has decided that McCredie's is the perfect location to film a very cheesy Christmas movie. After all, who can resist the charmingly narrow historic street with its Victorian grey stone buildings and warmly lit shop windows? Carmen Hogan, the bookshop's manager, is amused and a bit horrified by the goings-on, but the money the studio is paying is too good to pass up. She uses the little windfall from filming to create new displays and fend off a buyout offer from an obnoxious millionaire who wants to turn McCredie's into a souvenir shop selling kilts made in China and plastic Nessies.

***The Twelve Dogs of Christmas: A Novel* / Susan Wiggs 2023**

"Don't miss this charming Christmas tale of thawing hearts, escaping dogs, and finding home. I couldn't help digging into this book with both paws." - Debbie Macomber, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author. A delightful novel about a Christmas transport of rescue puppies that's guaranteed to warm readers' hearts.

Christmas in Bellbird Bay / Maggie Christensen 2022

Libby Walker never imagined she'd be moving into the dream house she and her husband had purchased for their retirement as a widow. Intent on making a new life for herself in the quiet coastal town of Bellbird Bay, Libby's life is upended by an unexpected call from her daughter. Adam Holland's unhappy childhood and broken home has left him scarred. Content with the life he has built for himself as a journalist and author of political thrillers, Adam arrives in Bellbird Bay to fulfil the deathbed request of an old friend. Will the peace and tranquillity of Bellbird Bay help these two move on from old hurts and make this a Christmas to remember.

The Christmas Postcards / Karen Swan 2022

It had been a make-or-break holiday for their marriage, but Natasha and Rob's rekindled romance is short-lived when their daughter's beloved soft toy, Moola, disappears on the journey home. Natasha turns to social media to help locate the toy. Miraculously, Moola is found. But her new guardian, Duffy, is thousands of miles away, trekking the Himalayas with Moola as his lucky mascot. When Duffy promises to keep Natasha updated with pictures of Moola on her travels, the pair begin a daily correspondence that soon becomes more meaningful to both of them. But as the weeks pass and Duffy heads deeper into the mountains, Natasha begins to notice a change in him. Then one day, the messages stop. Is Moola lost forever? Is Duffy? Too late, Natasha wonders why Duffy had ever needed a lucky mascot at all.

The Christmas Spirit : a novel / Debbie Macomber 2022

Peter Rhinehart and Hank Meyer are best friends, but their lives couldn't be more different. Peter is a local pastor who is dedicated to his community. He spends his time visiting the flock, attending meetings, and with the holiday season approaching, preparing for the Christmas service and live nativity. As a bartender, Hank serves a much different customer base at his family-owned tavern, including a handful of lonely regulars and the local biker gang. When Peter scoffs that Hank has it easy compared to him, the two decide to switch jobs until Christmas Eve. To their surprise, the responsibilities of both bartender and pastor are similar, but much more difficult than either of them expected. As Peter and Hank begin to see one another's lives in a new light, and each discovers a new love to cherish, their lives are forever changed.

Keeping a Christmas Promise / Jo Thomas 2022

Freya has one wish this Christmas... to visit Iceland and track down the illusive Northern Lights in memory of her beloved friend. Nothing - not even a snowstorm - is going to stop her. But when an avalanche leaves her stranded in a remote village with no way to contact the outside world, handsome and enigmatic Petur comes to her rescue, giving her a place to stay in his farmhouse. In this harsh yet beautiful landscape, Petur and his community must come together in order to survive. Stepping up to help Petur with the Christmas celebrations, chef Freya is determined to make the most of her time here, cooking delicious fresh food and delivering it to the friendly locals.

Christmas at Brigadier Station / Sarah Williams 2019

When Tom Carmody buys a run-down cattle station in outback Queensland he is shocked to discover that the woman living next door is none other than Harriet McGuire, his high school crush - the woman who mysteriously never returned to boarding school after the summer break. In a time when women did as their fathers bid, Harriet agreed to marry the charming Daniel McGuire and move to Brigadier Station. But she soon paid the price for her naivety. Forced to protect her children from her abusive husband, she never forgot Tom's kindness. More than thirty years after their innocent school flirtation, Harriet and Tom begin to rekindle their friendship only to find the flames of their attraction are stronger than ever. As Christmas approaches, rain storms finally break the decade long outback drought. But can the floods wash away the ghosts of the past? Or will they cause yet another disaster?