

EXTRA READER RECOMMENDATIONS READING LIST

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

***The Kid From Port Douglas* / Sandra Penny McCallum Non Fiction 2023**

You are transported into this huge-hearted girl's world and gasp at the earthy honesty of a child condemned to a life of hard-working business-owning parents as she goes on to unfold the similarities in her own eventual career and life path. Some of the stories will break the hardest of hearts or produce the heartiest belly laughter.

***The Close* / Jane Casey Fiction 2023**

At first glance, Jellicoe Close seems to be a perfect suburban street - well-kept houses with pristine lawns, neighbours chatting over garden fences, children playing together. But there are dark secrets behind the neat front doors, hidden dangers that include a ruthless criminal who will stop at nothing. It's up to DS Maeve Kerrigan and DI Josh Derwent to uncover the truth. Posing as a couple, they move into the Close, blurring the lines between professional and personal as never before. And while Maeve and Josh try to gather the evidence they need, they have no idea of the danger they face - because someone in Jellicoe Close has murder on their mind.

***After the Fire* / Jo Spain Fiction 2021**

On a crowded Dublin city street, a young woman appears, naked, traumatised and bearing burn marks. Tom Reynolds, now Chief Superintendent, is no longer head of the murder squad. But when it transpires the woman escaped from a house fire started deliberately and that there are more victims, Tom is sucked in. What begins as a straightforward case of arson soon becomes something much more sinister. The people in that house never wanted to be there in the first place. Now more are missing. As Tom tries to locate the others, a terrifying spider's web of domestic and international crime unfolds. And not everybody will survive the fallout.

***Darling Girls* / Sally Hepworth Fiction 2023**

For as long as they can remember, Jessica, Norah and Alicia have been told how lucky they are. Rescued from family tragedies and raised by a loving foster mother on an idyllic farming estate, they were given an elusive second chance of a happy family life. But their childhood wasn't the fairy tale everyone thinks it was. And when a body is discovered under the home they grew up in, the foster sisters find themselves thrust into the spotlight as key witnesses. Or are they prime suspects?

***Flawed Hero : truth, lies and war crimes* / Chris Masters Non Fiction 2023**

With a Victoria Cross and Medal for Gallantry, Ben Roberts-Smith was the most highly decorated Australian soldier, the best of the best. When he returned to civilian life, he became a poster boy for a nation hungry for warrior heroes. He embodied the myth of the classic Anzac, seven-foot-tall and bulletproof. But as his public reputation continued to grow, inside the army rumours were circulating. Gold Walkley Award winning journalist Chris Masters was one of the first to investigate the rumours of summary executions, bloodings and bullying, and began to examine more closely the man we wanted to hero-worship. When the stories hit the headlines, and with a billionaire media baron's backing, Ben Roberts-Smith sued. So commenced the defamation trial of the century, a courtroom contest of tightrope tactics and fierce wit. Chris Masters tells the extraordinary story of Ben Roberts-Smith, the man at the centre of this de facto war crimes trial, from the battlegrounds of Afghanistan to the front lines of the Federal Court.

***House of Correction* / Nicci French Fiction 2020**

Tabitha is accused of murder. She is in prison awaiting trial. There is a strong case against her, and she can't remember what happened on December 21st. She is alone, frightened and confused. But somehow, from the confines of her cell, she needs to prove everyone wrong.

***Mr Smith to You* / Kerry Taylor Fiction 2023**

"A novel based on the true story of Australian jockey Bill Smith - a life lived in secret"--Cover.

For most of his 76 years, Bill Smith preferred solitude over socialising, horses over people and confidentiality over confidantes. As a jockey, he was known for always turning up already fully kitted out in his silks. But now, in his advancing years, a fall lands him in full-time care and it becomes impossible to maintain his privacy. Nurse Maureen Bannon resents having to look after 'the geriatrics', especially grumpy old buggers like Mr Smith, but when she discovers Bill's secret, an unlikely alliance is formed. Bill was assigned female at birth, a fact that shaped his life but never limited his ambition. With Mr Smith's health declining and time running out, Maureen wants to find someone who knows and loves him, but only one name seems to mean anything to Bill - Catherine, his first love. Can Maureen find out more to help Bill find peace?

When the Heavens Went on Sale : the misfits and geniuses racing to put space within reach

Ashlee Vance Non Fiction 2023

When the Heavens Went on Sale tells the remarkable, unfolding story of this frenzied intergalactic land grab. Through his trademark immersive reporting, Ashlee Vance follows four pioneering companies - Astra, Firefly, Planet Labs, and Rocket Lab - as they build new space systems and attempt to launch rockets and satellites into orbit by the thousands. While the public fixated on the space tourism being driven by the likes of Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson, these new companies arrived with a different set of goals: to make rocket and satellite launches fast and cheap, thereby opening Earth's lower orbit for business - and setting it up as the next playing field for humankind's technological evolution, where we can connect, analyze, and monitor everything on Earth. With the most detailed and intimate reporting of Vance's career, *When the Heavens Went on Sale* reveals the spectacular chaos of the new business of space, and what happens when the idealistic, ambitious minds of Silicon Valley turn their unbridled vision toward the limitless expanse of the stars. This is the most pressing and controversial technology story of our time, a tale of fascinating characters chasing unimaginable stakes as they race to space.

***The Flying Vet* / Dr. Ameliah Scott Non Fiction 2023**

Ameliah isn't your average vet - flying solo over a staggering territory of 200,000 square kilometres of red dirt and bush to tend to animals of all shapes and sizes, she's a rare combination of female flying vet and fifth generation farmer in remote Australia. She brings much needed solace, care and reassurance to remote farming communities in the heart of the country, while also raising her own young family.

***The Light Through The Leaves* / Glendy Vanderah Fiction 2021**

In a moment of crisis, Ellis Abbey leaves her daughter, Viola, unattended - for just a few minutes. But when she returns, Viola is gone. A breaking point in an already fractured marriage, Viola's abduction causes Ellis to disappear as well - into grief, guilt, and addiction. Convinced she can only do more harm to her family, Ellis leaves her husband and young sons, burying her desperate ache for her children deeper with every step into the mountain wildernesses she treks alone. In a remote area of Washington, a young girl named Raven keeps secrets inside, too. She must never speak to outsiders about how her mother makes miracles spring from the earth, or about her father, whose mysterious presence sometimes frightens her. Their journeys will converge in unexpected and hopeful ways, pulled together by the forces of nature, love, and family.

***Lonesome Dove* / Larry McMurtry Fiction 1985**

Set in the late nineteenth century, *Lonesome Dove* is the story of a cattle drive from Texas to Montana - and much more. It is a drive that represents for everybody involved not only a daring, even a foolhardy, adventure but a part of the American Dream - the attempt to carve a new life out of the last remaining wilderness. Augustus McCrae and W. F. Call are former Texas Rangers, partners and friends who have shared hardship and danger together without ever quite understanding (or wanting to understand) each other's deepest emotions. Gus is the romantic, a reluctant rancher who has a way with women and the sense to leave well enough alone. Call is a driven, demanding man, a natural authority figure with no patience for weaknesses and not many of his own. The two men could hardly be more different, but both are tough, redoubtable fighters who have learned to count on each other, if nothing else.

***Taking to the Field : a history of Australian women in science* / Jane Carey Non Fiction 2023**

If asked to name an Australian woman scientist from the past, very few could. Histories of Australian science largely overlook women. Their absence gives the impression that, until recently, there were no Australian women scientists. But this is far from true: women formed a much larger proportion of the scientific community from the 1900s to the 1940s in Australia than in Britain or the United States, and numbers have only grown since. Why don't women scientists make it into history books? Because women's work is less cited than men's and more likely to be forgotten. *Taking to the Field* is the first comprehensive history of Australian women in science from the colonial period to contemporary times. This untold story shows that women have played a greater role than is commonly recognised. From the first years of colonisation, women engaged in myriad scientific endeavours, ranging from botany to genetics to organic chemistry. There was a vibrant culture of women in science in the years up to 1945 - as academics, researchers, lab workers, teachers, writers and activists for science-based social reform. They outnumbered men in some fields. This is not a straightforward tale of progress or a simple celebration of unsung heroines. Some women were involved in darker episodes of colonial science and eugenics. Few women of colour were given opportunities for scientific exploration. But within these limitations, many remarkable individuals illuminated our understanding of the world.

***Tears of the Maasai* / Frank Coates Fiction 2004**

After a disastrous affair, Jack Morgan is at an emotional crossroads. When he's offered a UN posting in Kenya he grabs it, believing time spent on foreign soil will help him forget and move on. But Africa is a land of danger, adventure and temptation, and within weeks of arriving Jack is seduced - by the spectacular Serengeti National Park, the rich Kenya culture, and a beautiful Maasai woman named Malaika.

***My Father and Other Animals : how I took on the family farm* / Sam Vincent Non Fiction 2022**

Sam Vincent is a twenty-something writer in the inner suburbs, scrabbling to make ends meet, when he gets a call from his mother: his father has stuck his hand into a woodchipper, but 'not to worry - it wasn't like that scene in *Fargo* or anything'. When Sam returns to the family farm to help out, his life takes a new and unexpected direction. Whether castrating calves or buying a bull - or knocking in a hundred fence posts by hand when his dad hides the post-driver - Sam's farming apprenticeship is an education in grit and shit. But there are victories, too: nurturing a fig orchard to bloom; learning to read the land; joining forces with Indigenous elders to protect a special site. Slowly, Sam finds himself thinking differently about the farm, about his father and about his relationship with both. By turns affecting, hilarious and utterly surprising, this memoir melds humour and fierce honesty in an unsentimental love letter. It's about belonging, humility and regeneration - of land, family and culture. What passes from father to son on this unruly patch of earth is more than a livelihood; it is a legacy.

***Red Dirt Road* / S.R. White Fiction 2023**

In Unamurra, a drought-scarred, one-pub town deep in the outback, two men are savagely murdered a month apart - their bodies elaborately arranged like angels. With no witnesses, no obvious motives and no apparent connections between the killings, how can lone police officer Detective Dana Russo - flown in from hundreds of kilometres away - possibly solve such a baffling, brutal case? Met with silence and suspicion from locals who live by their own set of rules, Dana must take over a stalled investigation with only a week to make progress. But with a murderer hiding in plain sight, and the parched days rapidly passing, Dana is determined to uncover the shocking secrets of this forgotten town - a place where anyone could be a killer.

***Bhutan to Blacktown* / Om Dhungel Non Fiction 2023**

I lost my possessions, my salary, my status, my career, my country. And in that fall, I gained everything. Bhutan is known as the land of Gross National Happiness, a Buddhist Shangri-la hidden in the Himalayas. But in the late 1980s, Bhutan waged a brutal ethnic-cleansing campaign against its citizens of Nepali ancestry, including Om Dhungel and his family. *Bhutan to Blacktown* tells Om Dhungel's remarkable story — his journey from a remote village to a senior position in the Bhutanese Civil Service, to life as a human rights activist in Nepal and, eventually, to his work as a community leader in Blacktown, western Sydney. Every step prepared Om for the central role he would play in settling more than 5000 Bhutanese refugees, in one of the most successful refugee initiatives in Australia's history.

***The Only Woman in the Room* / Marie Benedict Fiction 2023**

Her beauty almost certainly saved her from the rising Nazi party and led to marriage with an Austrian arms dealer. Underestimated in everything else, she overheard the Third Reich's plans while at her husband's side, understanding more than anyone would guess. She devised a plan to flee in disguise from their castle, and the whirlwind escape landed her in Hollywood. She became Hedy Lamarr, screen star. But she kept a secret more shocking than her heritage or her marriage: she was a scientist. And she knew a few secrets about the enemy. She had an idea that might help the country fight the Nazis...if anyone would listen to her. A powerful novel based on the incredible true story of the glamour icon and scientist whose invention revolutionised modern communication.

***Kate Kelly* / Rebecca Wilson Non Fiction 2021**

Kate Kelly, the daring sister of legendary bushranger Ned Kelly, was mysteriously found dead in a lagoon outside the NSW town of Forbes in 1898. At the inquest, Kate's husband Bricky Foster claimed that she was addicted to drink and frequently spoke of suicide. However, a neighbour testified that she had only known Kate to drink since the recent birth of her baby and that she never spoke of suicide. Was it suicide, accident or murder, and why had she changed her name to Ada? While only a teenager, Kate rode as a messenger and decoy for the Kelly Gang, and was present at the gruesome Glenrowan siege. After Ned's execution, she appeared at public gatherings around Australia. Huge crowds came to see her talk and ride, and she helped to popularise the Ned Kelly story as a celebrity in her own right. Then she disappeared from the public eye. Rebecca Wilson is the first to uncover the full story of Kate Kelly's tumultuous life. It will surprise anyone who thought they already knew the story of Australia's most famous outlaw.

***Australia's Wild Weather* / Mark Tredinnick Non Fiction 2011**

Marrying photographs from the collection of the National Library of Australia with an evocative and contemplative essay by poet Mark Tredinnick, *Australia's Wild Weather* is a lyric field guide to Australia's climate. Tredinnick considers what it means to be living at time when weather is no longer small talk; it is most of the news. Beautifully written, the author contemplates what weather means to us and how it affects our daily lives.