



BALSTON LIBRARY

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

Editorial

In this newsletter we present guest reviews by regular contributors David Hudson on “The Prince Rupert Hotel for the Homeless” and Tim Welborn on “The Stream of Music”.

During February an interesting presentation on the MG TC was put on by The Motoring Group and featuring Mike Sherrell.

The function was well attended and a surprising number of attendees had history with MGs.

The Library is purchasing Mike Sherrell's books “TCs Forever” and “TCs Forever more”.

Dr Hugh Pritchard
Honorary Librarian

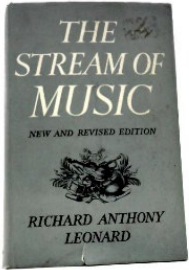
Book Group

The Book Group traditionally meets at 12.00 noon on the third Thursday of each month in the Balston Library for a light lunch and to talk briefly about the books Members have been reading.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 18 April, 2024. Members may register their attendance in advance with the Communications and Interest Group Coordinator, Kirsty Kelly, via an email to communications@weldclub.org.au or on telephone number 9323 7008.



Guest Reviews



The author was a popular NBC broadcaster of drama and classical music. His books are out of print and he is virtually unknown now. But he had a profound knowledge of the history of music and his lyrical style of writing on this topic is unsurpassed.

In his Introduction he states that -

“...to understand music requires a backward glance into the recesses of German history, to the middle of the 17th century, when a stream of music began to flow from that perpetually disturbing land which lies between the Alps and the plains of Denmark. The stream grew into a torrent, fed all through the 18th and 19th centuries by one man of genius after another, and until it became one of the most fabulously productive movements in the history of any art. Today, unless all signs fail, it has dropped again to the merest trickle, the impulses which originally called it into being having disappeared as mysteriously as they began”.

The author goes on to describe the lives and musical careers of the great German, Russian and Scandinavian composers.

Leonard describes 18th century Russia as an impenetrable murk of barbarism. No important music emerged until the 19th century. Mussorgsky (1839-1881), the author considers, was the greatest of all the Russian classicists. He used Russian folk tunes. His symphonic poem “*Pictures at an Exhibition*” is his most popular work and is in the repertoire of every symphony orchestra.

Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) is described as a writer of 'popular' classical music, and indeed the most famous of all the Russian composers. He was a man of personal charm but extreme shyness. Throughout his life he was burdened by a terrible secret, his unspeakable homosexuality. Some of his most agonising harmonies reflect his utter inner despair.

Throughout his life he was generously sponsored by an immensely wealthy widow Nadezhda von Meck. She loved his music intensely. Tchaikovsky did undertake a show marriage to one Antonina Miliukova.

Stravinsky (1882-1971) was strongly influenced by Rimsky-Korsakov, and then came under the hypnotic spell of Diaghilev, the father of Russian ballet. The pinnacle of his achievement was the music for the ballet “the Rite of Spring”. This is a story of pagan Russia, describing primitive man's wrestling with the earth and the ritual sacrifices he made to consecrate the arrival of spring. At its premiere in 1913 the audience yelled, hissed, and stamped in defiance. Many of his subsequent works met with frigid reception by the public. Stravinsky stated that “...*they cannot and will not follow me in the progress of my musical thought*”.

Dr Tim Welborn AO

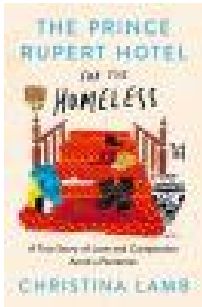
Leonard, Richard Anthony

The Stream of Music

London: Jarrolds, [1950]

Not held in Library





The book is a heart-warming story of human kindness and compassion that took place during the pandemic in the UK at The Prince Rupert Hotel.

The Prince Rupert hotel is set in the historic town of Shrewsbury in the county of Shropshire and is regarded as having one of the best examples of Tudor buildings. Surrounded on three sides by the River Severn, with a castle in the centre of the town, made it a formidable fortress.

It was not surprising that Prince Rupert, a much admired German/English army officer and grandson of King James of Scotland and England, chose Shrewsbury as his base to fight Cromwell. The battle of Shrewsbury in 1401 is enshrined by the area known as Battlefield.

The hotel is made-up of three historic buildings including the house that Prince Rupert occupied and is famous for its ghosts. Situated at the top of Butcher Row and facing the Bear Steps and St Alkmund's church, it is in the very centre of town.

When Mike Matthews decided to return to the UK from his many years managing The Sandy Lane golf course in Barbados, he chose to buy the Prince Rupert hotel despite never having been to Shrewsbury. With only a few years under his belt and with 30+ staff it was with growing concern when the pandemic struck and trepidation when lockdown was being mentioned. However, the government in their wisdom decided that all rough sleepers had to be brought in 'off the streets' and housed.

Mike was approached by the council to see if he would accommodate 33 such people as most hotels had refused and were closing down. After discussion with Charlie his manager and Jackie the accountant they all felt compelled to help those in need

Whilst the initial intake was 33 homeless people it did grow over the 12 months of the pandemic to more than 100. You can imagine the challenges faced by the staff who were used to dealing with four-star guests but were confronted by people whose norm was to live rough. The shock proved too much and nearly all the staff resigned leaving just Mathew, Charlie and Jackie to run the show.

The three felt that considering the effects and spread of the virus it would be safer for their families if they (the three) moved into the hotel and Charlie decided she would be the chef with help from Jackie.

The book goes on to detail the ups and downs of life at the hotel and the challenges in looking after those not used to having a roof over their heads, and the pitfalls of dealing with drug users and alcoholics. The three never lost faith and strove to help their guests start a new life. There were a few successes but mostly once the pandemic was over the majority went back to their old way of life.

As the story unfolds 'the cast of characters' takes on an individuality that allows one to understand why they arrived in their present plight and to empathise with them and leaves a lasting sympathy as 'to why it took a pandemic' to look after them.

An unquestionable story of self-sacrifice in order to help those less fortunate during a world pandemic and one that shows kindness at its best and the human side of those we may ignore when passing a shop door or approached by someone begging.

Mr D.I. Hudson MBE

Lamb, Christina

The Prince Rupert Hotel for the homeless : a true story of love and compassion amid a pandemic.

London : William Collins, 2022.

On order



Book Reviews



Few would condone piracy but the actions of Somali pirates had a legitimate origin. Having seen their fish stocks plundered by super-trawlers from the US, Japan and elsewhere, local fishermen banded together to demand (by force) recompense.

They also legitimately objected to the dumping of toxic waste including radioactive material in their coastal waters.

Piracy for profit followed and many impoverished Somalis risked life and freedom for a chance at riches.

This well-written book details the events and the measures taken.

An interesting read.

Dr H.K. Pritchard

Boyle, John

Blood ransom : stories from the front line in the war against Somali piracy.

London : Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015.

364.164 BOY



Simon Schama is a Jewish writer and this book reflects the contribution Jewish scientists and medicos have made to the science of microbiology, especially Waldemar Haffkine. Smallpox, cholera and plague have caused many millions of deaths and vaccinations have prevented millions.

Refusal to acknowledge proven results by governments and medical authorities slowed the acceptance of vaccinations.

This up-to-date book (2023) includes Covid 19 and provides an interesting history of the early attempts to inoculate.

Schama's books are very readable and full of interest.

Highly recommended.

Dr H.K. Pritchard

Schama, Simon

Foreign bodies : pandemics, vaccines and the health of nations.

London: Simon & Schuster, 2023.

614.9 SCH





This is a novel about a young woman's experiences working in Britain's secret services. Her love affairs embroil her in a complicated situation where her true feelings clash with her professional loyalty.

In the midst of this, events overtake the principal characters in an unexpected way.

A typical McEwan novel: beautifully written, absorbing and a most enjoyable read.

Recommended.

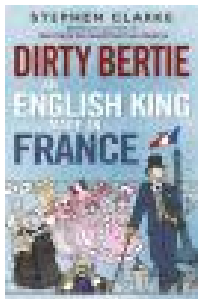
Dr H.K. Pritchard

McEwan, Ian

Sweet tooth.

London: Vintage Books, 2013..

Fiction MCE



A most enjoyable account of the affable, popular, dissolute Prince of Wales who, late in life, became Edward VII.

His childhood was spent under the disapproving gaze of his mother, Queen Victoria, and his straight-laced authoritarian father, Prince Albert.

Little wonder he was seduced by the French court and the French way of life to which he became an ardent devotee.

In spite of his philandering and gluttony, he was well-liked.

His capacity to get on with everyone made him an ideal diplomat. Unfortunately, his smoking habit, especially cigars led to his premature death.

The author proposes that if he had survived, his influence over the Kaiser and his other royal connections, could have prevented The Great War with its appalling loss of life.

Well written and enjoyable.

Dr H.K. Pritchard

Clarke, Stephen

Dirty Bertie : an English king made in France

London: Arrow Books, 2015

941.083 CLA



Book Donations

Presented by A.S. Ingram Esq

Bate, Weston, 1924-. *Light-blue down under : the history of Geelong Grammar School*. Melbourne : Oxford University Press, 1990.

373.9452 BAT

De Serville, Paul, 1943-. *Melbourne club : a social history 1838-1918*. Melbourne, Victoria : Melbourne Club, 2017.

367.99451 DES

Presented by Dr I.N. Sinclair

Egerton_Warburton, Arley. *Yeriminup : the first 100 years 1840 to 1940*. [Denmark, WA] : [A.G. Egerton-Warbuton], [2023].

994.1 EGE

New Books

Aboriginal Australians - Biography

Fullagar, Kate. *Bennelong and Phillip : a history unravelled*. Cammeray, NSW : Scribner, 2023.

994.0049915 FUL

Americanisms - History

Bryson, Bill. *Made in America*. [London] : Black Swan, 1998.

973.92 BRY

Antisemitism

Ryvchin, Alex. *The 7 deadly myths : antisemitism from the time of Christ to Kanye West*. Boston : Cherry Orchard Books, 2023.

305.892 RYV

Berlin (Germany) - History - 20th century

McKay, Sinclair. *Berlin : life and loss in the city that shaped the century*. [London] : Viking, 2022.

943.155 MCC

Church schools - Victoria - History

Bate, Weston, 1924-. *Light-blue down under : the history of Geelong Grammar School*. Melbourne : Oxford University Press, 1990.

*Presented by A.S. Ingram Esq

373.9452 BAT

Clubs - Victoria - Melbourne - History

De Serville, Paul, 1943-. *Melbourne club : a social history 1838-1918*. Melbourne, Victoria : Melbourne Club, 2017.

*Presented by A.S. Ingram Esq

367.99451 DES



Comedians - Australia - Biography

Dean, Rowan. *The many lives of Barry Humphries : a treasury of reminiscences.* Melbourne, Victoria : Wilkinson Publishing, 2023.
792.028 DEA

Emperors - Rome - Biography

Beard, Mary, 1955-. *Emperor of Rome : ruling the ancient Roman world.* London : Profile Books, 2023.
937.06 BEA

English poetry

Jones, Griff Rhys (foreward). *The nation's favourite poems.* London : BBC Books, 1996.
821

Generals - Australia - Biography

Perry, Roland. *Monash : the outsider who won a war.* North Sydney, NSW : William Heinemann, 2014.
940.4144 PER

Ocean travel - History

Maxtone-Graham, John. *The Only way to cross.* Cambridge (UK) : Patrick Stephens Limited, 1983.
387.542 MAX

Papacy - History

Bull, George 1929-. *Inside the Vatican.* London : Hutchinson, 1982.
262.136 BUL

Political culture - United States

D'Souza, Dinesh, 1961-. *United States of Socialism : who's behind It. Why it's evil.* New York : All Points Books, 2020.
973 DSO

Politicians - Australia - Biography

Henderson, Anne, 1949-. *Menzies vs Evatt : the great rivalry of Australian politics.* Redland Bay, QLD : Connor Court Publishing, 2023.
994.05 HEN

Romances - Fiction

Minton, Mary. *Don't laugh at fools.* London : Sheridan Book Co, 1994.
Fiction MIN

Rome - History - Empire, 30 B.C.-476 A.D.

Holland, Tom. *Rubicon : the last years of the Roman Republic.* New York : Anchor Books, 2005.
937.06 HOL

Soccer players - Biography

Matthews, Stanley. *The Way it was : my autobiography.* London : Headline Book Publishing, 2000.
796 MAT

Sports - Humour

Stanford, J.K., 1892-1971. *The Twelfth : being the life and death of George Hysteron-Proteron.* [Reading, England] : The Sportsman's Press, 1963.
Fiction STA



Ukraine - History - Russian Invasion, 2022

Matthews, Owen. *Overreach: the inside story of Putin's war against Ukraine.* London : Mudlark, 2022.
947.7 MAT

Vaccination - History

Kennedy, Robert Francis, 1954. *The real Anthony Fauci : Bill Gates, big pharma, and the global war on democracy and public health.* New York, NY : Skyhorse Publishing, 2021.
362.1962414 KEN

Walking - Australia - Guidebooks

Ball, Melanie. *Top Walks in Australia.* Melbourne : Hardie Grant Explore, 2022.
919.4 BAL

Waters, Laura. *Ultimate walks & hikes : Australia.* Richmond, Victoria : Hardie Grant Explore, 2022.
919.4 WAT

Western Australia - History

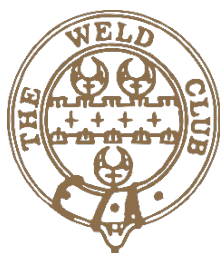
Egerton_Warburton, Arley. *Yeriminup: the first 100 years 1840 to 1940.* [Denmark, WA] : [A.G. Egerton-Warbuton], [2023].

*Presented by Dr I.N. Sinclair

994.1 EGE

World War, 1914-1918 - Biography

Talbot, JP. *Who we once were: life, love, and loss, before, during, and after the catastrophe of 1914-18.* London : Perihelion Imprint, 2023.
940.481 TAL



The Librarian is available in the Library to assist Members on Fridays between 9.00am and 4.30pm.

If you would like to reserve any of these books, please contact the Librarian
E: library@weldclub.org.au T: 9323 7090 (Friday Only)

Newsletters are also available on the Balston Library page of the Weld Club website.
www.weldclub.org.au

