



BOOK CLUB PACKAGE TITLES 2010 NON-FICTION

6 of the most popular titles requested by clubs have been added

Albom, Mitch (Australian author)

Tuesdays with Morrie

Most widely known as a film, this heart warming story of the time spent with a beloved college professor is a powerful study of the sense of mortality, and wonderful to enjoy at a readers pace. (199 pages)

Anderson, Joan

Year by the sea

Joan Anderson is an American journalist. Her family grown, she grasps at the chance of a year by herself in a Cape Cod cottage, refusing to accompany her husband when he is moved in his job. This is a motivating tale of self-discovery and transformation. (195 pages)

Armstrong, Lance

It's Not About the Bike

In 1996, 24-year-old Lance Armstrong was ranked number one cyclist in the world, but that October, tests revealed that advanced testicular cancer had spread to his lungs and brain. Here he reveals his journey from a 20 per cent chance of survival, to fatherhood and victory in the Tour de France. (289 pages)

Bryson, Bill

Down Under

Down Under could be just another very entertaining travel book from this perceptive writer. But this time it is our country and our way of life under the microscope. The tensions between what Bryson sees as exotic or noteworthy and what we think of Australia and Australians adds spice to a great read. (394 pages)

Bryson, Bill

Notes from a small island

After nearly two decades in Britain, Bill Bryson made the decision to move back to the States for a while, to let his kids experience life in another country, to give his wife the chance to shop until 10 p.m. seven nights a week, and, most of all, because he had read that 3.7 million Americans believed that they had been abducted by aliens at one time or another, and it was thus clear to him that his people needed him. But before leaving his much-loved home in North Yorkshire, Bryson insisted on taking one last trip around Britain, a sort of valedictory tour of the green and kindly island that had for so long been his home. His aim was to take stock of the nations public face and private parts (as it were), and to analyze what precisely it was he loved about a country that had produced Marmite, a military hero whose dying wish was to be kissed by a fellow named Hardy, place names like Farleigh Wallop, Titsey, and Shellow Bowells, people who said Mustnt grumble, and shows like Gardeners Question Time. (351 pages)



Cain, Kenneth

Emergency Sex: True stories from a war zone.

This book has been described as having the humour of M.A.S.H., the pace of E.R and the indignation of Stupid White Men. In the early 1990s three people meet in Cambodia linked by the common interest of the UN. However, as their stories interweave through the years, from Rwanda, Bosnia and Somalia to Haiti, the trio reveal a world of witnessed atrocities, primal fear, desperate loneliness and base desires. They ask hard questions about the world order that America has created the true power of the UN and whether there is any possibility for change.

(320 pages)

Clifford, Lisa NEW (Australian Author)

Death in the Mountains: The True Story of a Tuscan Murder

"This is the true story of the murder of Artemio Bruni, a peasant farmer in the mountains of Casentino, north-eastern Tuscany, in the winter of 1907. Artemio was my husband's great-grandfather. For reasons not understood by my husband's family, Grandpa Artemio's death was never investigated. It was not reported to the police, nor did Bruna Bruni, Artemio's wife, ever demand justice. How could that be possible, I asked my mother-in-law - was it because of the mafia? 'No, no, you don't understand,' she answered. 'Things were different in the mountains one hundred years ago. Grandpa and Grandma were poor farmers, no one could have cared less about them. Grandpa was a nobody and life was cheap in Tuscany then.'" When Australian author and journalist Lisa Clifford moved to Florence to be with her Italian husband, an unsolved murder in his family became part of her life. The more Lisa found out about it, the more intrigued she became - so much so that she was driven to investigate the tragic events of a century ago. 'Death in the Mountains' is Lisa's brilliant recreation of the life and death of Artemio Bruni, and an evocation of the world of the Tuscan mountains in the early 20th century. It is both a murder mystery and a beautifully observed picture of a lost Italy.

(262 pages)

Dirie, Waris

Desert flower

Born of nomadic parents, Waris Dirie lived a traditional childhood in Somalia and ran away after being sold into marriage at 13. She later became a fashion model and an advocate of African women's rights.

(369 pages)

Drewe, Robert (Australian Author)

Shark net

The Shark Net is set in the 1950s in a Perth haunted by the menace of an elusive serial killer. This unusual memoir brilliantly evokes an adolescence lived under the shadow of a killer who eventually murders eight people, including one of Drewe's friends.

(358 pages)

Duncan, Susan (Australian Author)

Salvation creek

At 44 Susan Duncan appeared to have it all. Editor of two top-selling women's magazines, a happy marriage, a jet-setting lifestyle covering stories from New York to Greenland, the world was her oyster. But when her husband and brother die within three days of each other, her glittering life shatters. In shock, she zips on her work face, climbs back into her high heels and soldiers on - until one morning eighteen months later, when she simply can't get out of bed. Heartbreaking, funny and searingly honest, Salvation Creek is the story of a woman who found the courage not only to begin again but to beat the odds in her own battle for survival and find a new life - and love - in a tiny waterside idyll cut off from the outside world.

(416 pages)



Durrell, Gerald

My family and other animals

Escaping the ills of the British climate, the Durrell family - acne-ridden Margo, gun-toting Leslie, bookworm Lawrence and budding naturalist Gerry, along with their long-suffering mother and Roger the dog - take off for the island of Corfu. In a series of colourful villas, the Durrells give a sometimes reluctant home to a trail of local fauna, among them scorpions, geckos, toads, bats and butterflies. Recounted with immense humour and charm, this is a wonderful account of a rare and magical childhood.

(410 pages)

Dyson, Catherine (Australian Author)

Swing by sailor: true stories from the war brides of HMS Victorious

In the of winter 1946, the British aircraft carrier, HMS Victorious, was modified to ensure the safe passage of over 600 Australian war brides from Sydney to Plymouth. The reverberations of WWII were still being felt around the world, but for these women the trip of a lifetime lay ahead and the chance to finally begin their married lives with their British husbands on the other side of the world. Catherine Dyson has brought together the stories of seventeen of these women, now in their eighties. Delightful, funny and sad tales emerge - the tumult of the era, the fear of leaving home, the highlights of the sea voyage, the conditions onboard, the emotional experience of stepping into a future unknown. Each woman remembers the time from subtly and sometimes strikingly different perspectives. From Woolloomooloo to Fremantle, then on to Colombo and beyond, the voyage would prove a rite of passage for many who previously had never left their hometowns, let alone dreamt of foreign shores. On their arrival in Britain, the women faced the coldest winter for fifteen years and stricter rationing than they had experienced during the war years.

(273 pages)

Eggers, Dave

Heartbreaking work of staggering genius

Forget the title till you have read the book. This very clever, very funny, self-mocking memoir plays games with the whole autobiographical genre. Dave Eggers, a prototype member of 'Generation X', brings up his 7-year-old brother in San Francisco following the deaths of their parents from cancer.

(437 pages)

Evans, Kathy (Australian Author)

Tuesday's child

'When journalist Kathy Evans wrote what was to become an award-winning series of articles about the birth of her third child, Caoimhe, she was inundated with responses. The result is a beautiful and intensely moving account of life with Caoimhe that goes beyond memoir to explore wider concerns of prejudice and the ethics of the cutting-edge science of genetics. Kathy and her husband had spent months agonising over whether to have a third child, then, at thirty-five, Kathy decided it would be now or never. When Caoimhe was born there was nothing to suggest anything was wrong. The following day a midwife baldly told Kathy her baby had Down syndrome.

Tuesday's Child tells of Kathy's journey through shock, anger and grief to, ultimately, a kind of acceptance. From the bombshell of diagnosis - the defining moment that was to reshape her life - she charts her initial obsession with 'Why?', the impact on the family, the often hurtful, ignorant responses of strangers (and friends), and, most importantly of all, the battle to reclaim Caoimhe as an individual, not just a 'Downs child'. As Kathy wrote in her original article: 'I don't know where she fits in society, but a family is a world in microcosm. and I do know that right here, right now, she fits perfectly within my arms.' A compelling mix of heartfelt personal story and investigative journalism, Tuesday's Child highlights society's attitudes to difference and the ongoing ethical debate about genetics, as well as exposing the minefield that is prenatal testing.

(304 pages)



Facey, A.B. (Australian Author)

A Fortunate Life

Born in 1894, Facey lived the rough frontier life of a sheep farmer, survived the gore of Gallipoli, raised a family through the Depression and spent sixty years with his beloved wife, Evelyn. Despite enduring hardships we can barely imagine today, Facey always saw his life as a 'fortunate' one. It is the story of a life lived to the full - the extraordinary journey of an ordinary man.
(421 pages)

FitzSimons, Peter (Australian Author)

Nancy Wake: A Biography of Our Greatest War Heroine

Tells how in the early 1930s Wake was enjoying a bohemian lifestyle in Paris but by the end of the Second World War she was the Gestapo's most wanted person. Recounts her rise from courier to leading an underground fighting force in her fight against the Nazis. Includes photos, bibliography and index. Author is a journalist and presenter with Fox television sports service.
(400 pages)

French, Dawn (NEW)

Dear Fatty

Dawn French is one of the greatest comedy actresses of our time, with a career spanning nearly three decades and encompassing a vast and brilliant array of characters that would eventually establish her as a national treasure. She first appeared on the British entertainment scene as part of the groundbreaking alternative comedy group, the Comic Strip, which marked a radical departure from the more traditional comedy acts of the time. Later came the all-female Girls on Top with Jennifer Saunders, Ruby Wax and Tracy Ullman. Then, as part of the wildly successful duo, French and Saunders, Dawn helped create a repertoire of brilliantly observed recurring characters parodying popular culture and impersonating everything from Madonna and Harry Potter to The Exorcist. Dawn's more recent role in The Vicar of Dibley again has showcased not only her talent but also her ability to take a controversial issue and make it mainstream and funny. From her early years as an RAF child to her flat-sharing antics with Jennifer Saunders, from her outspoken views on sizeism to her marriage to Lenny Henry, Dear Fatty will chronicle the fascinating and hilarious rise of a complex, dynamic and unstoppable woman.
(384 pages)

Funder, Anna (Australian Author)

Stasiland

Australian-born Anna Funder has collected true stories of life under the Stasi (Communist secret police) in the former East Germany. Stasiland records heartbreaking tales of bravery and betrayal, of suffering and stoicism amid the daily chaos.
(288 pages)

Garner, Helen (Australian Author)

Joe Cinque's consolation

In October 1997 a young university student murdered her boyfriend. She and her best friend were later charged with murder. Garner followed the Supreme Court trial, and writes about how and why Joe Cinque died, the gap between ethics and law, conscience, culpability and much more.
(328 pages)



Golding, Frank (Australian Author)

An orphan's escape: memories of a lost childhood

As late as 1961, nearly seven thousand children were in the custody of Victorian institutions or under the care of the Children's Welfare Department. Frank Golding and his two brothers were among this number. On Christmas Eve 1940, the boys - Frank (not yet three), Bob (four), and Bill (six) - found themselves on the doorstep of an orphan asylum. They were certainly not orphans, but the boys spent most of their lost childhood inside the walls of the Ballarat Orphanage. It would take Frank fifty years to learn what had been happening 'outside the wall' while he was inside, and what had happened to his parents.

(256 pages)

Goossens, Renee (Australian Author)

Belonging

Autobiographical account of the youngest daughter of Sir Eugene Goossens, former Chief Conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Renee Goossens was left in a convent near Paris and abandoned by her family at age 14. Details the author's struggle to come to terms with her father after a Sydney scandal, and to find a life and identity for herself independent of her status as a member of a famous musical family.

(176 pages)

Grogan, John

Marley & me: life and love with the world's worst dog

The story of a family in the making and the wondrously neurotic dog who taught them what really matters in life. Is it possible for humans to discover the key to happiness through a bigger-than-life, bad-boy dog? Just ask the Grogans.

(304 pages)

Hawes, Annie

Extra Virgin – amongst the olive groves of Liguria

Annie and her sister, in the area by chance, are persuaded to purchase a ramshackle hillside stone cottage in the Italian Riviera. This is a story of city girls on a steep learning curve, and of a rural village and the olive-farming families who live there.

(339 pages)

Herrera, Hayden

Frida : A Biography of Frida Kahlo

In Frida, art historian Hayden Herrera vividly portrays of a woman of strength, talent, humor, and endurance. Frida Kahlo's early years were influenced by the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution and a bout with polio. An accident when she was nineteen transformed her life and she entered a long period of convalescence during which she began to paint self-portraits. This book illuminates and amplifies Frida Kahlo's life story, her importance as an artist, and her ultimate triumph over tragedy

(440 pages)

Holden, Kate (Australian Author)

In my skin

Kate Holden understands better than most the secrets that people keep hidden. This astonishing autobiography follows her journey from the safe and leafy suburbs of Melbourne to the all-consuming attractions of heroin and the sex industry. This is a moving, at times brutal, memoir and a wonderfully written account of a life on the streets, on drugs and on the skids.

(304 pages)



Hooper, Chloe (NEW) (Australian Author)

The Tall Man: Death and Life on Palm Island

The Tall Man is the story of Palm Island, the tropical paradise where one morning Cameron Doomadgee swore at a policeman and forty minutes later lay dead in a watch-house cell. It is the story of that policeman, the tall, enigmatic Christopher Hurley who chose to work in some of the toughest and wildest places in Australia, and of the struggle to bring him to trial. Above all, it is a story in luminous detail of two worlds clashing - and a haunting moral puzzle that no reader will forget.

(288 pages)

Krakauer, Jon (NEW)

Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster

"Into Thin Air ranks among the great adventure books of all time . . . a book of rare eloquence and power that could remain relevant for centuries." --Galen Rowell, The Wall Street Journal From the Hardcover edition.

(432 pages)

Li, Cunxin (Australian Author)

Mao's last dancer

An 11-year -old Chinese peasant boy was chosen to become a student at the Beijing Dance Academy. After a summer school in America he defected, and became a principal dancer for the Houston Ballet.

(445 pages)

Lyden, Jackie

Daughter of the Queen of Sheba

One day in 1966, Lyden returned home from school to find her mother garishly made up and convinced that she was the Queen of Sheba. For the next 20 years, Lyden and her two younger sisters were subjected to their mother's frequent episodes of manic-depressive behaviour.

(272 pages)

McCourt, Frank

Teacher man: a memoir

Frank McCourt arrived in New York young, impoverished and idealistic. He didn't know what he wanted except to stop being hungry and to better himself. He joined the New York Public Library and every night when he came back from his hotel work he would sit up reading the great novels. Building his confidence and his determination, he talked his way into NYU and gained a literature degree and so began a teaching career that was to last 30 years, working in New York's public high schools.

(272 pages)

McGregor, Ewan & Boorman, Charley

The Long Way Round

Fellow film actors and bike enthusiasts travel 20,000 miles around the world by motorbike encountering many challenges ranging from extreme weather to impenetrable terrain, caviar fishing in the Caspian, wrestling with the Mongolian Olympic team and riding with the Canadian Mounties.

(320 pages)



McInnes, William (Australian Author)

A Man's got to have a hobby

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.

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.

This Australian memoir tells of a time that will be familiar to many readers and a delight for all.
(282 pages)

Mode, Dorian (Australian Author)

The Mozart maulers

Suffering acute anxiety attacks, a sensitive young musician, is encouraged by his therapist to try 'anger therapy' (sport) as an alternative to medication. So is born the Mozart Maulers, an unlikely rugby team of Conservatorium of Music students. A memoir about a troubled soul who slowly discovers life just might work out okay.

(264 pages)

Moody, Mary (Australian Author)

Last Tango in Toulouse

Autobiographical account of events that challenged Mary's 30 years of stability, monogamy and motherhood. Gardening writer Mary Moody ran away from home, family and work to live for six months in a remote French village. Mary finds herself grappling with the intense emotion of an affair and its consequences for her marriage and family. She also rediscovers a sister not seen by the family for nearly fifty years.

(287 pages)

Nowra, Louis (Australian Author)

Twelfth of never

Louis Nowra, acclaimed Australian writer, never understood why, as a child, his birthday was not celebrated. In this explicit memoir he looks back at a traumatised family and impoverished boyhood.

(377 pages)

Obama, Barack (NEW)

Dreams from my Father : A Story of Race and Inheritance

Before Barack Obama became a politician he was, among other things, a writer. DREAMS FROM MY FATHER is his masterpiece: a refreshing, revealing portrait of a young man asking the big questions about identity and belonging. The son of a black African father and a white American mother, Obama recounts an emotional odyssey. He retraces the migration of his mother's family from Kansas to Hawaii, then to his childhood home in Indonesia. Finally he travels to Kenya, where he confronts the bitter truth of his father's life and at last reconciles his divided inheritance.

(368 pages)



O'Brien, Chris (NEW) (Australian Author)

Never Say Die

In November 2006, Chris O'Brien was diagnosed with glioblastoma multi-forme, a malignant and extremely aggressive form of cancer. As one of the country's most eminent cancer specialists, O'Brien knows that the chances of beating the brain tumour are tiny; even with chemotherapy, surgery and radiation few sufferers survive past 12 months. Nevertheless, he is determined to beat the odds. With the support of his close family and an international network of surgeons, friends and well-wishers, O'Brien took the option of radical brain surgery under the supervision of his friend Dr Charlie Teo. His level of fitness, optimistic outlook and relative youth (he was 55 when diagnosed) give him a shot at survival. Currently he is in remission. Funny, charming and fearless, O'Brien has said he is not afraid to die - but he doesn't plan to just yet. Here, in his inspiring memoir, he takes a look back over his life and the forces which shaped him - from his modest beginnings as part of a typical Australian-Irish family, to his early years as a doctor and football player, to life, 'living on the smell of an oily rag' as a young doctor with a family in London and the US, through to the shocking news which literally changed his life.

(320 pages)

Painter, Shirley (Australian Author)

The Bean Patch

Shirley Painter is 83 years old. She shouldn't be. When she was four years old she was so badly injured she was pronounced dead and taken to the morgue. In this book Shirley confronts what she thinks happened to her as a child and we are confronted with the issue of repressed memories.

(310 pages)

Pung, Alice (Australian Author)

Unpolished Gem

"This story does not begin on a boat." So commences Alice Pung's memoir. This is an original take on a classic story - how a child of immigrants moves between two cultures. In place of piety and predictability, however, Unpolished Gem offers a vivid and ironic sense of both worlds. It combines the story of Pung's life growing up in suburban Footscray with the inherited stories of the women in her family - stories of madness, survival and heartbreak. Original and brave, this is a girl's own story that introduces an unforgettable voice and captures the experience of Asian immigrants to Australia.

(286 pages)

Rose, Peter (Australian Author)

Rose Boys

Writer Peter Rose's first-hand account of two very different brothers growing up in a famous Victorian sporting family. When tragedy strikes one of the young men, there are long term repercussions for the whole family.

(289 pages)

Sedaris, David

Naked

A riotous collection of memoirs which explores the absurd hilarity of modern life and creates a wickedly incisive portrait of an all-too-familiar world. It takes Sedaris from his humiliating bout with obsessive behaviour in 'A Plague of Tics' to the title story, where he is finally forced to face his naked self in the company of lunatics. At this soulful and moving moment, he brushes cigarette ashes from his pubic hair and wonders what it all means. This remarkable journey into his own life follows a path of self-effacement and a lifelong search for identity leaving himself both under suspicion and over dressed.

(352 pages)



Seierstad, Asne

The bookseller of Kabul

In the spring of 2002, journalist Asne Seierstad went to Afghanistan to live with a family for several months. Here she reveals her experiences, telling the story of Sultan Khan - who defied the authorities for 20 years to supply books to the people of Kabul - and his family.
(288 pages)

Simon, Rachel

Riding the bus with my sister : a true life journey

An insightful story of the disabled Beth and her busy journalist sister Rachel. Beth's every day is absorbed by riding on buses and she extracts a promise from her sister to accompany her for a year to experience this very different lifestyle. It starts as a chore for Rachel but ends up a delightful, often sad, life changing experience.
(304 pages)

Tonkin, Daryl (Australian Author)

Jackson's Track

In 1936, Daryl and his brother set up a timber mill in West Gippsland. There he fell in love. But he was white and Euphie black and neither of them was prepared for the conflict their love ignited. This book recaptures a time and way of life now vanished from sight.
(296 pages)

Turnbull, Sarah (Australian Author)

Almost French

After backpacking around Europe journalist Sarah meets a charming Frenchman and her travel plans change forever. Put a very French Frenchman together with a strong-willed Australian girl and the result is some spectacular - often hilarious – cultural clashes.
(309 pages)

Winchester, Simon

Surgeon of Crowthorne : a tale of murder, madness and love of words

Have you ever wondered about the compilation of the first dictionary? W.C.Minor was a dedicated volunteer involved with the first Oxford English Dictionary who unfortunately was also considered to be a 'lunatic and a murderer'. Set in the 1800s, this is a fascinating true account of dedication and intrigue.
(224 pages)



Wisner, Franz

Honeymoon with My Brother

This is the true story of Franz Wisner, a man who thought he had it all - a high profile career and the fiancé of his dreams - when suddenly, his life turned upside down. Just days before they were to be married, his fiancé called off the wedding. Luckily, his large support network of family and friends wouldn't let him succumb to his misery. They decided Franz should have a wedding and a honeymoon anyway - there just wouldn't be a bride at the ceremony, and Franz' travel companion would be his brother, Kurt. During the "honeymoon," Franz reconnected with his brother and began to look at his life with newfound perspective. The brothers decided to leave their old lives behind them. They quit their jobs, sold all their possessions, and travelled around the world, visiting fifty-three countries for the next two years.

(274 pages)

Young, Rusty

Marching Powder

Account of life in Bolivia's notorious San Pedro prison. Looks at prison life, corruption, drug lords, violence and crime, and the trafficking of cocaine. Based on author's experience inside the prison where he shared a cell with Thomas McFadden, a convicted English drug trafficker. Describes the friendship that developed between Thomas and the author, and explores San Pedro as a place of extremes where horror lives side by side with compassion.

(395 pages)