

# YOU MUST READ THESE! -Recommendations by Book Club Members

What a Christmas cracker-full of interesting books the members of our two Book Clubs have chosen for you this year!!

## SHORT STORIES

*This Year Will be Different* by Maeve Binchy

Cherie starts us off with an appropriately seasonal collection of Maeve Binchy's Christmas Stories. "Warm, humorous, full of wisdom and generosity" Cherie said.



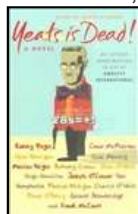
Marce is a fan of *Joe Wilson's Mates* (by Henry Lawson) which "captures the sunsets and sadness of people in country Australia".

## NOVELS

*Shantaram* (by Gregory Roberts) is a big book (931 pages), but Di says "from the first page I was hooked – it's a love story about India - totally-absorbing".



A smaller, delightful read was Carmen's choice: *Sleeping Arrangements* by M Cunningham. It tells the story of Lily, raised by two eccentric uncles in "mayhem which touches your heart."



Madelon says of *Yeats Is Dead*, edited by J. O'Connor, "It begins with a murder (which maybe isn't), a coded message and an unpublished manuscript. From there unfolds an outrageous raucous tale where simply everyone is 'up to something'. The fascinating thing is that each chapter was written by a different author - yet the tale holds together seamlessly."

*Someone Knows My Name* (by Laurence Hill) is an historical novel which Marie enjoyed. It is about the slave trade and "opens up a whole new culture. Beautifully written!"

Also on the theme of abolition is *March* by Geraldine Brooks, which is Shirley's choice. She found this author's *People of the Book* very evocative also.

Val said Richard Flanagan's *Death of a River Guide* and James Boyce's *Van Dieman's Land* were "history with flesh and bones on it."



This year Jai and Eileen chose the same book! *The Pact* by Jodi Picoult, is a best seller which delighted them with its dramatic story about topical issues.

## TWO UNUSUAL NOVELS



*Pip* (by Lloyd Jones), chosen by Bernadette, is set in Bougainville. It retells Dickens' classic tale *Great Expectations* in strange new ways. *The Sparrow* (by Mary Doria Russell) sends scientists to a remote planet, only a Jesuit survives, and Madelaine says the book is about his discovery of what it means to be human.

## INSPIRATIONAL

Phyllis' favourite was the classic by Rabbi Harold Kushner, *Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People*. Anna recommends *A Gift Of Healing* by Francis Vaughan & Roger Walsh, for its affirming view on life.

## LIFE STORIES

Yvonne liked *Trader Faulkner's* biography of *Peter Finch*, especially the record of the star's early years.

Jean was wrapt in *Desert Queen*. Susanna de Vries' readable story of Daisy Bates, a gutsy "Irishwoman who invented a glamorous childhood for herself, lived with aborigines and briefly married (among others) Breaker Morant!"



The heart wrenchingly honest account of sudden widowhood, *Year Of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion, captured Cheryl's heart.

Denis liked a travel book *Dancing on Coral* by Glenda Adams.

Thank you Book club members! To readers everywhere, may your stocking have at least 1 good book in it!

*Jean Di Benedetto, from the Book Club.*