

Cat's Eye Weekly

alias *The Ferret*

No. 142

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#1 New York Times bestselling author

Brené Brown



ATLAS OF THE HEART

Mapping Meaningful Connection and
the Language of Human Experience

Inside:

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1954 Sunbeam Talbot
Alpine MK1



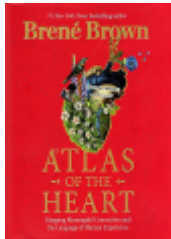
Any excuse for stirring up the universe

*Edited by
Graham Price*

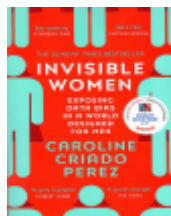
Once was weekly now highly irregular in more ways than one

HIGHLIGHTS

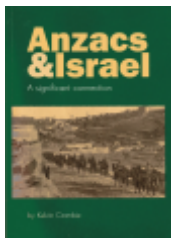
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The editor's desk

Where has CEW been since April? We are in good company. The editor of the ex-RAAF magazine Radscl has stated the same for his magazine. Seems like numerous items have been put on the back-burner this year. Well, stuff it, no point hiding these issues. So surviving one's crashes — things seemingly come in threes the old adage claims, and that may or may not be true. Bad things? My three crashes began with a slip on some rubbish at a shiny new supermarket floor, coming down hard and dislocating my right elbow. Good fun, sitting on the floor rather amused that this should occur. Off to hospital in an ambulance. Ripped tendons to the left thigh (discovered much, much later) but no fractured or broken bones. The second crash was caused by a tram driver doing an emergency stop just several metres from my stop, sending me into the air like a flying monkey on a trapeze and then THUD. Rather bruised but thankful for no broken bones. Driver couldn't be bothered getting out of the seat to check on passengers. I added a torn rotator cuff left shoulder from that episode. The third time was a flying trip from a piece of jagged concrete plonked upon an asphalt footpath by careless renovators. Spun around about 180 degrees and then CLUNK. So, whether it was the combined activity of monkeying around, or the last one that did the real damage, I was unable to walk via both legs for a while, apart from other minor damage. Again, very thankful for no broken bones. Wobbly for several weeks, then a walking stick required, possibly forever but still an unknown factor. Ha ha, the torn tendons on the left hip simply had to have a couple of mates, and that had been accomplished by the last accident ripping two from the right hip. A delicate balancing act, no doubt!

But was this the so-called curse of three things similar to the reported curse of King Tut's tomb? Or was it simply a progression of gradual fatigue from three hard shocks? Something had occurred that shook up, not only the physical body but also mental capacity, not to mention the shake-up of the jelly-like brain. Neurological? Well, to my mind, if you can — it is better to do as Shakespeare wrote, not to "suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," but instead to "take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them."

I am reminded of Cynthia Banham's words "Life is not defined by the bad things that happen, at least not to me." Cynthia survived an air crash in Indonesia where 60% of her body was savagely burnt; she lost two legs, one below the knee, one above the knee, with one arm also severely affected. Under surgery she almost lost her life twice. At times she thought there was nothing much left of her. Cynthia Banham—solicitor turned journalist, world traveller, covering terrorist bombings in Tanzania; loving Nepal, Tibet, Iraq, was suddenly no longer that person. "At what point would they remove so much of me that I would cease to be human?" Cynthia determined that this was not going to beat her, and she went on with her life bearing the scarring and walking on two artificial legs, went back to work, flew again with airways, then she married the young man who had stood by her during all the hell she went

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**Feedback to Cat's Eye Weekly
is always welcome.
Click onto my purrfect nose!**





through, and between them they created a beautiful son. *So, life is not defined by the bad things that happen.*

You may have noticed the sometimes wildly expressive hand movements of certain politicians, TV presenters, etc., who reap the air as if it was full of dust, much to be swept away on the breeze from one's clammy mit. It seems Shakespeare warned about this hundreds of years ago, viz *Hamlet Act III, Scene II* "Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do you saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently." Some speakers, these days, use the hand far from gently, thus cutting and sawing the air in front of them as if they were conductors of some new garish opera. Naturally enough, certain psychologists assume that this exhibition of hand display shows warmth, ability to communicate, and that a presenter using lots of hand movements will usually go down well with the crowd. But, it can also be a form of distraction. Personally, I'll vote for the one Shakespeare has recommended. So be it, Shakespeare lives! And the woke lefty people who wish to have done with him, remove him from schools, libraries etc. are simply the destroyers of realistic art.

Now, don't forget to read our political correspondent's vast article on China's reaching hand — pages 14 and 15, a realistic exposé to which a great deal of Chinese Australians give their support.

Travelling on with much blessings,

Graham

Excerpts from CEW 001, 11 May 2008

You can get yourself in trouble by doing nothing. A few weeks ago I was walking down Southey Street, Elwood, which I often do as I used to live in that street and it is a short cut down to St. Kilda. I had paused opposite a fairly distinguished looking Victorian era home that had long attracted my attention. I must have walked past a hundred times. Suddenly, this grey-haired man came running out accusing me of taking photos. Aye! Wot photos? No camera. This very agitated man accused me of spying on his home. After a time of explaining, arguing with him, I walked away. When I arrived home I thought "Blow this, I have to find out why he acted so," and I returned to the house and knocked him up (mind your manners!) He was a Greek gentleman. I told him he had serious problems and it certainly was not with me. Eventually, he owned up to having some worries with the neighbours on the north side of his property, and that the girl who lived in there often came to the window naked. *I got out of there very fast!*

Bird brain.

Walking through this suburb early morning on my way to part-time work I am now coming across several families of magpies, sociable creatures who warble and carol on in the misty air. This morning (Monday) one was sitting on a short fence as I came past. He (or she) lifted a wing, looked at me with beady eyes and stayed there within half a metre of me, not moving. "Good morning, sir," I said. He, I reckon it was, cocked his head on one side and gave me a vocal rendition better than any of Beethoven's symphonies. What a blessed world this is! It's probably only humans who have the bird brains.

Tuesday's morning walk down Mitford Street, Elwood. Saw a posted sign on a property "LOST White Rabbit! Oh dear, perhaps the sign should now read "Lost, skinned rabbit covered in white sauce?" •

The Council to Homeless Persons

Established in 1972, the Council to Homeless Persons is the peak Victorian body representing individuals and organisations with a stake or interest in homelessness. Our mission is to work towards ending homelessness through leadership in policy, advocacy and sector development.

<http://www.chp.org.au/>

See our Consumer Participation Resource Kit at:

http://www.chp.org.au/public_library/cpkit/index.shtml



Something to keep your heart serene

This is a beautiful book. You can skip the introduction if you wish, but do not skip anything else. It will make your life richer, and by that I do not mean in monetary terms, but in life experience. It will make you gentler and more secure in your own space. The first page may seem a little off-putting if you are very young, but believe me if you dismiss the book at that page, you will regret it.

It's not a get-well happiness book — it is about life's experience, about feeling what we all feel at times: anxiety, vulnerability, sadness, not fitting in. It's about finding a way back to ourselves when things go wrong.

And things do go wrong — bad things happen. The world turns upside down and you are suffocating. But here is a research professor who understands, because it has happened to her — numerous times.

And to explain what it is like when emotions grip us in their talons, one only has to read part of her introduction on page xxi to know that this person writes with the utmost of feelings: "Imagine if you had a shooting pain in your left shoulder that was so severe it actually took your breath away. The pain kept you from working, sleeping, and fully engaging in your life. When you finally arrive at the doctor's office and asks what's going on, there's suddenly tape over your mouth and your hands are tied behind your back. You try yelling through the tape and freeing your hands so you can point to your shoulder, but there's no use. You're just there—inches and minutes from help and possible relief—but you can't communicate or explain the pain . . . This is not that different from what can happen to us when we are unable to articulate our emotions." Yep, been there, felt that. So have you.

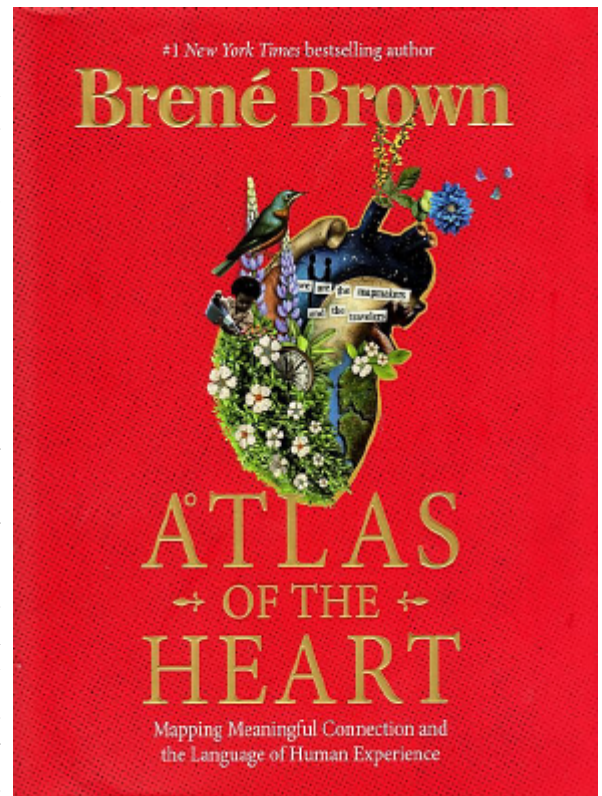
Brown comes in early with a ripper of a quote: "**Stressed is being in the weeds. Overwhelmed is being blown.**" Overwhelmed is the extreme level of stress. And so, she begins to dissect anxiety for the reader, which she lovingly

"Hope is a function of struggle—we develop hope not during the easy or comfortable times, but through adversity and discomfort."

calls The Willy Wonka S**t Tunnel, which as the boat goes faster and faster in the tunnel more horrid and scary things emerge — and there seems no end to them. And that's what anxiety is. Loss of control — "total uncertainty." Brown is very much aware of this and also aware that hope is a gravelled road and not a smooth highway. *Atlas of the Heart* p101 "It is also important to know that hope is learned . . . As someone who struggles watching my kids struggle, I can tell you—this is hard. I remind myself of the saying 'Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child.' One thing that bolsters my commitment to letting my kids figure out on their own things that are both developmentally appropriate and possible is thinking about the alternatives: hopelessness and despair."

Brown blesses us with paragraphs that simply live. *Atlas of the Heart* p106: "**Sadness and depression are not the same thing.** Sadness is sometimes referred to as 'depressed mood.' However, sadness is a common but not essential feature of clinical depression. Technically, depression is a cluster of symptoms that persist over a period of time. Those symptoms can include lack of interest in pleasant activities, loss of appetite, excessive fatigue and/or insomnia, and difficulty concentrating."

P108: "**There's a reason we love sad movies.** We like to be moved. We like to feel connected to what it means to be human, to be reminded of our inextricable connection to one another. Sadness moves the individual 'us' toward the collective 'us' "



Atlas of the Heart by Brené Brown

Vermillion—Penguin

Hardback, semi-gloss pages

Retail \$AUD45.00



Stepping up for their rights

the imbalance of gender

These are books that all males should read, and females also who wish for enlightenment. First up is Caroline Criado Perez's *Invisible Women*, a modern day classic explaining how the world has been designed mainly for men.

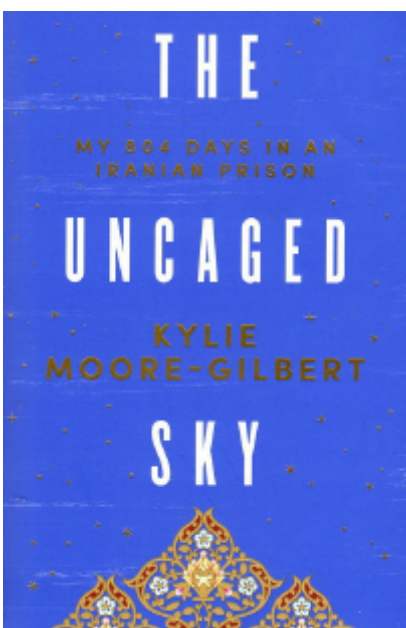
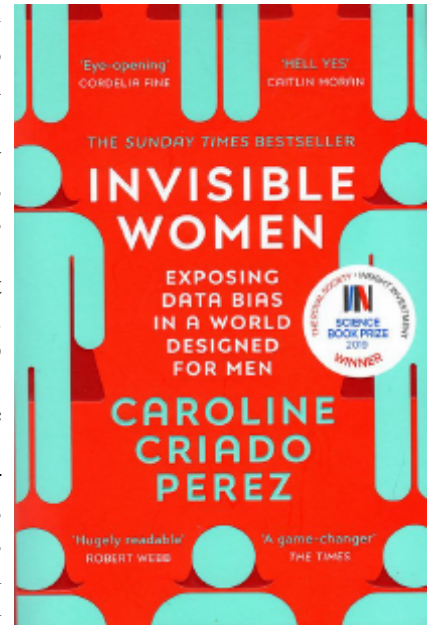
Take the piano. Look at the keyboard, with keys so wide that they are mainly comfortable for a large hand — a man's hand. Women, in general, have smaller hands so that their spread of fingers does not reach with comfort. The piano and its accompanying keyboard musical instruments were designed by men for men's hands.

Perez is big on mentioning the lack of data for women. For so long, data that has been collected on chemical exposure, for instance the testing processes for safety, have usually been done in the past on men. So, we have 'Reference Man' who represents humanity as a whole, one-size-fits-all. But how can it?

Invisible Women pp116-117: "Men and women have different immune systems and different hormones, which can play a role in how chemicals are absorbed. Women tend to be smaller than men and have thinner skin, both of which can lower the level of toxins they can be safely exposed to. This lower tolerance threshold is compounded by women's higher percentage of body fat, in which some chemicals accumulate. The result is that levels of radiation that are safe for Reference Man turn out to be anything but for women. Ditto for a whole range of commonly used [kitchen & bathroom] chemicals. And yet the male-default one-level-to-rule-them-all approach persists."

Perez emphasises how chemicals — particularly household products — may be instrumental in breast cancer, also heavy usage of nail polish, perfumes etc. used in beauty treatments, and urges for more data to be made available on these items. The list may be endless. Smart phones too big for female hands, crash car testing using dummies designed as male, seat belts that don't work for pregnant women, medical textbooks mainly oriented towards the male body which leads to ill-informed doctors; blood pressure drugs developed using male subjects don't work as effectively for female patients, research using women in trials still mainly lacking. 69 pages of research notes! The sheer weight of evidence in this book concerning gender inequality will blow your mind.

Invisible Women by Caroline Criado Perez
Vintage Press paperback
\$AUD24.99



When Kylie Moore-Gilbert was stopped at Teheran's major airport by three shabbily dressed men and a women covered in a black chador, she little realised that this was the beginning of almost two and two-thirds years of incarceration within Iran's ill-kept putrid prisons. After attending conferences for a research program paid for and organised by the University of Melbourne, Kylie was keen to arrive back home in Australia to see her husband, family, and friends.

Forced into prison — often solitary, damp and putrid, Kylie endured months without contact of the outside world, except when brought to court or into interrogation rooms, where she was denounced as a spy for Zionist forces. The courts, naturally enough, were simply kangaroo courts where one was guilty before presentation, where a signature was required to already prepared forms. The country was — and still remains — under control of the dictatorial religious Iran Revolutionary Guards.

Kylie refers to a small balcony where female prisoners were sometimes escorted to for a short time, for fresh air, where there was little they could see but the sky. But at one time, Kylie managed to climb out and up onto the roof — where, after being locked up for months, she could at last see the prison grounds and the city before her. *The Uncaged Sky* pp152-153: " 'Basteh digeh!' I screamed. 'Enough already!' Remembering that I was on top of the interrogation block, I suddenly had a great idea: I'm going to disrupt all the interrogations! I paced across the roof, banging it with my stick and screaming profanities in English. It had the desired effect. 'What do you



want?' Nilofour translated for Mr Hosseini 'What can we do so that you will come down?' 'I want to go to court — I want the trial over and done with!' I yelled down to them 'I want to call my family. I want the ban on embassy meetings lifted. I want all the books the embassy has given to Qazi Zadeh [a cunning interrogator] delivered to my cell.' " This time, Kylie's rage worked. They were too nervous that she would jump off the roof, and how would they explain that to the Australian and British embassies? But Kylie's brave and opportune act would not always result in agreement in the future. She was destined for even worse treatment, convicted of espionage by a kangaroo court and then transferred to the notorious Qarchak prison — where the most horrific prisoners were held. All in all, her sentence was for ten years. Despair, loneliness, physical and psychological deprivation would intensify out of all proportion. She had just stepped into the gates of hell. •

The Uncaged Sky
By Kylie Moore-Gilbert
Ultimo Pres NSW & London
Large paperback Dymocks \$AUD

“Calm down, you’re being an emotional female,” Not what you would expect from a senior doctor, but if Yumiko Kadota is to be believed, that kind of attitude was — and still is — prevalent within the Australian hospital world, particularly in surgical.

That Yumiko was Japanese and female should have had little to do with the treatment she received from senior male surgeons. Her thirteen-year journey as a surgeon began in Sydney, shifted to Melbourne and culminated in a return to Sydney where the dedication to her profession dramatically changed.

During her time in the public hospital system Yumiko met and worked with good and caring doctors and nurses, but there were times more than anyone would possibly think when things went kind of rotten. During a counselling session with a professor, the man introduced her into a meditative exercise but Yumiko froze when the touching began. Later, after being advised to report the incident, Yumiko felt at cross purposes because she knew that the professor was an excellent clinical teacher.

The names in *Emotional Female* are changed because of privacy and legal reasons, but viewing the names of the males who dished out painful messages to Yumiko, it seems apparent that most of them were Caucasian or of Indian ancestry. One professor must have thought he was some kind of overlord. Yumiko had been given ascent by administration to have her usual Thursday afternoon off, but this professor who seemed like a Mother Superior in an 19th Century convent, had other ideas. *Emotional Female* p179: “You know, Yumiko, you were our best resident last year,” he started. ‘I don’t know what happened to you but you’re heading down a slippery slope.’ I was shaken. Was I really being reprimanded about an afternoon off?

‘I’m sorry. I spoke to Cornelius already about my afternoon off and he approved it so I didn’t think there was an issue,’ I explained.

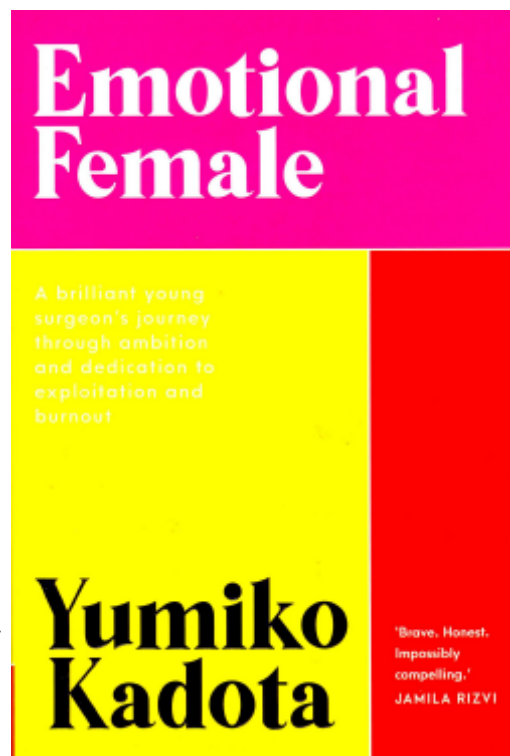
‘Listen, I think you’re getting too confident. This is your third term in Neurosurgery. You should know by now that as the clinical director everything has to go past by me first. You think you’re so important that you can take off any day you want without first asking my permission?’

Yumiko was to run into this sneering type of pretentious superiority numerous times during her career along with the good and caring colleagues. But what she didn’t know was that there was another curse that was resulting in doctors and nurses leaving the public hospital service in droves, and that was burn-out. Yumiko was now 29 and had survived the hospitable system with honours. She cared for her patients and was loved by many of her colleagues. The times were changing — resident doctors were required to work longer hours.

Emotional Female p287: “When I was working at the Children’s Hospital, weekends off were a time for activities like yoga, running, coastal walks, bike rides and cafe brunches with friends. These days I spent the weekends either working, or slumped in my apartment recovering from my twelve-day fortnight.”

Yumiko was back in Sydney when the expletive hit the fan. Her exhaustion had reached explosive levels and something had to break. The body and the mind began to unravel and she found herself unable to cope, which led to a spell as a patient in hospital — experiencing medicine from the other side of the blanket. She eventually handed in her notice and saw a psychiatrist. Her recovery was slow and in time she returned to Japan to enjoy a wonderful reunion with her two sisters and walks with her grandma. In 2019 Kumiko was back in Sydney receiving heartfelt messages from doctors, nurses and allied professionals. As she says “I may have given up surgery, but I am still a doctor.” Yumiko Kadota is now teaching anatomy to students of a Sydney university and keeping her hand in as a part-time surgical assistant in a private service. •

***Emotional Female* By Yumiko Kadota**
Penguin large paperback
\$AUD34.99 Dymocks
Other suppliers various prices





The sons of Anzacs help to redeem Israel

Gallipoli had been a shemozelle from start to finish, but behind the various strategies of WWI was a bigger picture — driving the Turks out of the region following their 400 years domination of land they had colonized, and the protection of the Suez Canal to enable free passage of much needed cargo ships to eastern and southern lands.

Kelvin Crombie's *Anzacs & Israel: A Significant Connection* reveals hidden dimensions in that war — which was the connection of the Australian Light Horse diggers with the Jewish community. Crombie — who spent 24 years living in the Middle East, in particular Israel — portrays during the first 27 pages, the history of the land from 539BCE, then through Roman occupation, to the rise of Mohammed, the Crusades, on to the control of the land by the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the unwise decision by the Turks to join Germany in WWI.

Crombie depicts all the battles from Gaza to Jerusalem and then on to where the Light Horse captured Damascus. What is generally not known by Australians today is that a 'Jewish Legion' was formed with about 500 Jewish men on mules. According to Crombie, by the end of the war there were about 5,000 Jewish men in the 'Jewish Legion' helping the allies to win the war.

The rise of Nazism: It had its beginning in the 1920s but rose to power in Germany during the 1930s. Germany's 'defeat' during WWI brought about an intense feeling of shame and humiliation among many German people. Leadership after the war had been messy and had accomplished little in the eyes of the German folk, so it was not surprising that when Hitler and his cronies came to power in 1933 an incredible number of the population viewed them as a party that would make Germany strong once more. *Anzacs & Israel* p83: "Many people wanted answers as to how mighty Germany could have been so humiliated. Scapegoats were sought and the Communists and Jews were at the top of the list . . . In keeping with his known policies, Hitler immediately began persecuting the Jewish people of Germany. Many Jews left Germany and a large number went to Palestine."

As more Jewish refugees poured into Palestine — the ancient land of Israel and Judah — Arab violence erupted which the British authorities could not control, so they formed a Jewish police force: *Anzacs & Israel* p84: "Many of these men had received military experience during the First World War . . . And the hat adopted by this force was none other than the Australian slouch hat."



Jewish Police Force

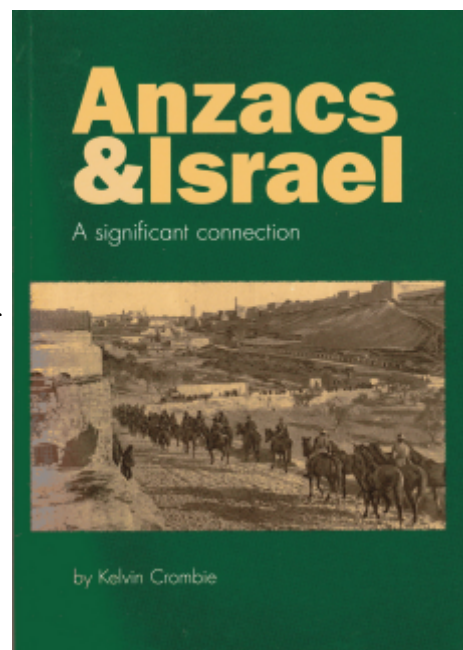
Force."

In January 1940 Australian and New Zealand troops arrived in Egypt with seven camps based in Palestine. Crombie writes that the Australian General, Thomas Blamey, had a special liking for the Jewish people and some of this no doubt brushed off on him from experiences with General Sir John Monash, Australia's Jewish hero of WWI. Crombie gives an impression that Blamey in no way patronized the Jews, but admired them for their culture: "their fortitude in the face of persecution down the centuries, and the discipline of their family life . . . And he was a frequent guest in the homes of the most distinguished Jewish thinkers in Palestine." It is significant to note that his troops felt the same.

When Anzac Day 25th April 1940 arrived, at a service in Gaza at the War Cemetery, 1500 troops participated "And in Tel Aviv 500 Australian soldiers marched through the streets, watched and applauded by thousands of Jewish spectators . . . the returning Anzacs gave them hope, inspiration and happiness during a difficult period."

Australians, generally unaware of the political hostilities that simmered in the background between the British government and the freedom-loving Jewish community longing for Statehood, went about on the streets, in the homes and on the farms infusing their down-under sunny disposition into the Jewish community, and in particular, loving the children and bringing them much laughter and joy.

The second half of Crombie's book deals with the war as it comes to the Middle East — from the Italian invasion of Egypt, with comments about Australia's first battles at Bardia, Tobruk and Derna, the war to Greece and the entry of the German general Rommel, to Iraq, Crete — the Aussies first into Damascus again, on to El Alamein, and the eventual Statehood for Israel. •



Story time? An Aussie soldier with Jewish children.



The Animal Rehoming Service

For further information,
please log onto
<http://www.tars.org.au/>
The Animal Rehoming
Service Inc. is a
registered charity.
Donations over \$2 are tax
deductible. (ABN: 51 275
837 567)



Pablo is a 2 year old de-sexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 30kg male Harrier Hound, who's looking for a loving home.

He's an active, loving, stubborn and intelligent boy who loves human company so would suit an active family happy to include him in their adventures and daily life. An all adult home or one with older, dog savvy teenagers would be great.



He loves other dogs so would suit a home with another medium to large dog for company. As with most scent focused hounds, he has no recall, so should be kept on lead at all times. Maybe down the track he might be OK off leash in a 100% securely fenced park but pack your treats just in case! He's not good with cats.

If you don't have another dog, someone who's home during the day would suit, such as someone working from home or an active, sure-footed, newly retired person. Pablo, as you can see from the photos, thinks he owns the couch so will occasionally nip at you if you try to move him unexpectedly or hurriedly, but he'll happily move if you call his name and ask him to move. Pablo's food possessive so needs to be fed separately if there are other dogs in the home.

He's crate trained and enjoys an indoor/ outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors.

Pablo's adoption fee is \$550 Microchip Number: 956000012185448. Pet Exchange Register Source Number: RE100709. If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (Werribee based, but we go to you).

Queen Elizabeth II Memories



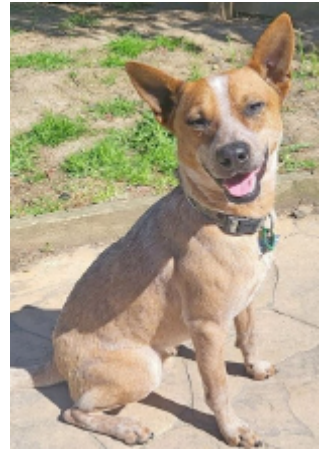
When she was sixteen



With her Fell ponies April 2022

Arrow is an 18 month old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 15kg male Red Heeler x who's looking for a loving home.

He's a very loving and cuddly boy who would suit a relaxed, happy but active home, with an active family. He loves being with his favourite people as well as going on his daily walks or runs. An all adult home or one with dog savvy, gentle teenagers would suit.



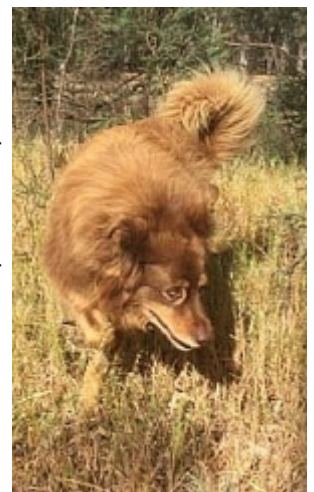
This would be his fourth home (through no fault of his own), so he's understandably a little shy with strangers and new dogs, but a calm, relaxed, experienced and capable owner in a calm home environment would be exactly what he needs. His last home was excellent, but he was too active for their much older dog unfortunately, so a home with an active dog under 5 years of age or a home where someone experienced is home during the day, would be ideal. (He doesn't have separation anxiety, but he'd love daytime company).

Arrow will still occasionally mouth to get attention and is occasionally food possessive, but is improving in both regards. He chases cats. He enjoys an indoor/outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors. Arrow's adoption fee is \$450.

Microchip Number: 956000013128614. Pet Exchange Register Source Number: RE100709. If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (Bayswater North based, but we go to you).

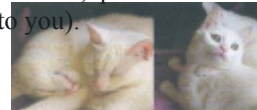
Ted is a 9 year old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 32kg male Red Setter x Kelpie who's looking for a loving home. (He's the height of a Red Setter).

He's a loving, sweet-natured, well behaved and playful boy who's very much a Red Setter in terms of temperament. He loves human company and would suit someone who's home during the day, either working from home or an active, retired person. An all adult home or one with older children would also suit.



Ted isn't a fan of cats, but is great with other dogs and would enjoy a home with another dog for company. He's great on lead and loves his daily walks. Health-wise he's in exceptional condition, with no arthritis etc. He's also low shedding.

He enjoys an indoor/ outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors. Regular brushing would also be required. (Ted also gets a clip every summer). Ted's adoption fee is \$450 Microchip Number: 943094320197395. Pet Exchange Register Source Number: RE100709. If interested, please call 0409213131 (Frankston based, but we go to you).



We are now much loved in our new home and very grateful to TARS Inc. Such a new lease of life!



The search for happiness is killing us



Current Western lifestyle is not conducive to good mental health. Western lifestyle in general, is the cause of the rise of depression in our society. The way we live, continuously searching for happiness, is detrimental to not only our mental health, but also our physical health.

Recent studies by Professor Brock Bastian and his team from the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences, University of Melbourne, indicate that experiencing a negative setback in a happiness oriented culture is worse than if you experience the same setback in an environment that does not emphasise the value of happiness. In societies where mood changes are accepted as normal, depression is rare, whereas in the happiness-oriented Western culture it is becoming an overwhelming priority. Correcting moods with anti-depressants and psychotherapy is not the answer. It is similar to attempting to remove a rubbish tip with a teaspoon when a large machine is needed.

When a child is born in today's Western culture, that child has everything needful and almost everything she or he wants through primary school, throughout high school, college and possibly university. It's all there on a platter, and if there is considerable disappointment in obtaining the want, then current society sometimes slips into depression. It is deeply ingrained into the Western cultural mind. More natural cultures do not expect that, hence Western culture needs to change.

An article in *Psychology Today* cuts to the chase. "In one study, people were asked a number of questions about how much they value happiness and how much they believe it is important to work toward being happy. When in the midst of great stress, people were generally unhappy. For everyone else, the greater emphasis put on happiness, the least successful they were at obtaining it. It didn't matter how happiness was defined. People putting the greatest emphasis on being happy reported 50% less frequent positive emotions, 35% less satisfaction about their life, and 75% more depressive symptoms than people that had their priorities elsewhere. And in case, you are shaking your head at this narrow definition of happiness, take note that people that valued happiness the most also reported ~15% less psychological well-being . . . In sum, the more you value happiness, try to be happy, organize your life around trying to become happy, the less happy you end up."

During an interview by Dr. Andi Horvath in April 2021, Professor Bastian remarked: "I think it's fair to say that it's very hard to really experience any happiness in life if we don't also have its opposite. That means sometimes leaning into, I suppose fearlessly in some way, those experiences which can seem difficult, challenging, hard, even painful. It's actually through that process that we achieve happiness . . . Focus on other things that you think are actually going to make a difference and that are going to contribute to the world and to your own life in meaningful ways. Then you'll probably find along the way that you'll notice one day that you wake up and think I'm actually a little bit happier than I was."

The less 'toys' you have in your life, the more content you are. Why do you think boot camps for errant teenagers work? Simple. Because they take away the toys and 21st Century lifestyle gadgets that we all love and cherish, thus turning moody and depressed lads and lasses into forward looking people. Why does National Service in certain countries work? The same reason. Taking away the luxury of modern life works like a charm in numerous instances. People change for the better.



But today almost everyone is consuming and living a lifestyle that is doing much harm, and to try and remove ourselves from anxiety and depression we turn to self-help “happiness” books, most which promise to lead us onto the correct path. Walk into any bookshop — what do you find? There is a whole section of bookshelves which promise to elevate you to a life of happiness, and because most times they offer no panacea to unhappiness, one’s feeling of unhappiness continues.

And the toys are not only technical or readable — they are demonstrated by the utter excess of items in our supermarkets. Rows and rows of unnecessary items sparkle on the shelves, which we must have to satisfy our cravings for the good life. Happiness doesn’t come at the end of a special candy bar, though some of us seem to think it does. As has been said by many an entrepreneur storekeeper “If there wasn’t a need for it, it wouldn’t be on our shelves.” But let’s understand one thing: it’s not ‘need’, it’s ‘want’. Two diametrically opposed affections. If we are to find contentment in life, there is an urgent need to change our lifestyle — accepting mood changes as normal, reducing the amount of unnecessary ‘toys’ that surround and beguile us, and accepting that Western lifestyle striving for happiness is an unreal pursuit. •

In the autumn of life

From CEW106, March 2015

The autumn days of one’s life are sometimes the most productive. Retirement and being freed from an often laborious workforce can trigger a new age. Sir Robert Menzies, prime minister of Australia 1931-41, 1949-66 retired from public office at the age of 71 and began to write a biography of sorts, titled *Afternoon Light*.

The title was fitting. Here was a man who had seen his country through two world wars and who had even been given the illustrious dub of ‘Pig Iron Bob’ by the wharf labourers of the 1940s. He was a person of great humour and that title amused him greatly. His tongue-in-cheek replies at political rallies were similar to what Sir Winston Churchill batted to his own audiences in Great Britain. Menzies was once badgered by a woman who attended one of his rallies: ‘Sir, I wouldn’t vote for you if you were the Archangel Gabriel.’ To which he replied: “Madam, if I were the Archangel Gabriel, I’m afraid you wouldn’t be in my constituency.” Obviously she would have been in a much warmer place.

The years of afternoon light bring reflection and sometimes emotional tears to many who now have the time to relax and remember. But they are years in which there is no need to sit around, for the world beckons as it has not beckoned before. Some people in this softer time of autumn take up painting — often choosing the more lighter and easily managed water colours. Others invest in a more complex camera and take up photography. Still others, who have served their country in the military and have seen more than their share of sorrow, become carers and advocates for those old comrades less advantaged, thus giving their time and energy to ex-service and homeless organisations.

The myriad of opportunities for people in the autumn years of their lives is boundless. There are opportunities everywhere, and most if not all, lead to a fulfillment and peace of mind that could not possibly have been there prior to retirement. Men and women, who have not sought leadership in their earlier years, often find it in retirement when they take on voluntary work — support for cancer and leukaemia organisations, children’s charities, animal welfare, even joining in grey political activities.

Afternoon Light is surely that: a time of re-construction; a time to look at the world in a different manner, which may well be a mellow light but also may be a fiery light, burning bright, as Dylan Thomas wrote: “Do not go gentle into that good night; Old age should burn and rage at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”

To those who are entering the autumn time of their light, it is time to think of it as an afternoon of jewelled wonders — simply filled with opportunities for planting more seeds of care and wisdom into the world and if necessary, taking on a caretaker role for those who come after. •

“For the reasons I have recounted, my father’s formal education was prematurely ended; while my mother, out in Creswick, had ended her schooling when she was about thirteen. But they both understood what many people with University degrees do not understand; that very frequently true education begins when formal studies end. For formal studies are but a means of securing a later enlargement of the mind and spirit; they are not an end in themselves.”

Sir Robert Gordon Menzies in

Afternoon Light -- Cassell Australia 1967



HAN SUYIN

A BRIDGE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

REMINISCING — BY GRAHAM PRICE

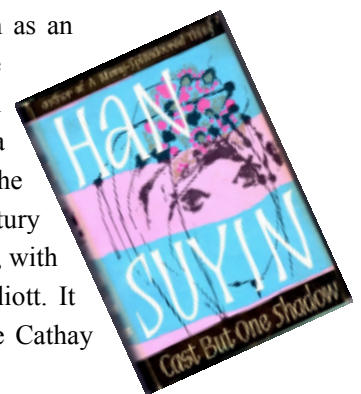
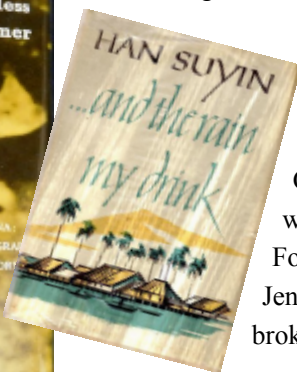
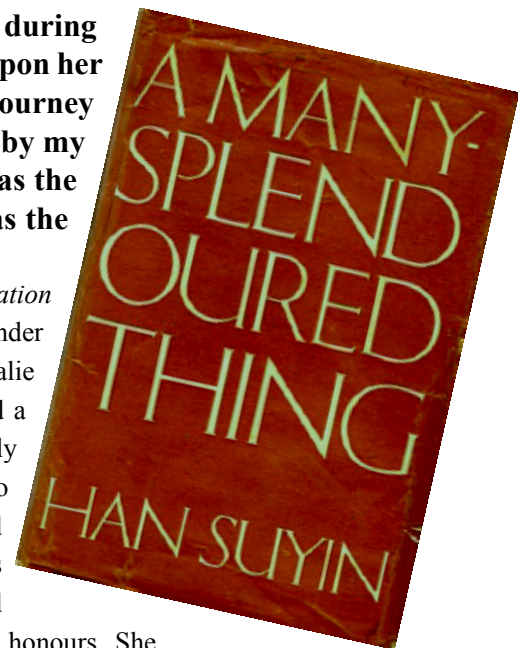
From CEW 118 Nov 2016

I first became aware of Han Suyin's writings in Malaya during 1958, when at an Indian friend's bookstore I chanced upon her novel *A Many Splendoured Thing*. Thus began a long journey down the corridors of time with this author almost always by my side. The book was first published in 1952, but my copy was the 14th impression of 1957. The sales figures were immense as the novel steadily swept all before it.

Ten years previous she had written a semi-biography *Destination Chunking*, which slanted somewhat towards Red China's politics under chairman Mao Tse Tung [Mao Zedong]. Han Suyin was born Rosalie Matilda Kuanghu Chou in 1917 to a Chinese engineer, Chou Wei, and a Flemish-Belgium mother, Marguerite Denis. She spent much of her early life in China with her parents, then at Yanjing University; from there to Belgium where she studied science. In 1938 she returned to China and married a young Nationalist military officer, Tang Pao Huang, who was soon to become a General. Pao died in 1947 fighting the Communists and Suyin went to London to take her final medical degree, passing with honours. She returned to Hong Kong in 1949 where she took up a residency at the Queen Mary Hospital. It was there that she met an Australian war correspondent and they fell in love, which sparked considerable gossip among the British and Chinese residents of the colony. He was killed in 1950 while covering military operations in Korea, and it was this passionate association that caused her to write an exceedingly frank description of their love affair in *A Many Splendoured Thing*. In the novel, the correspondent Ian Morrison became Mark Elliott.

Over the years her biographical and other literary books would find her slightly at odds with British authorities, but later in life she came to a realisation that some of her early interpretations concerning the communist rule were somewhat biased. Perhaps with the wisdom of age she then cast a more critical eye upon Mao's China and some of its brutal ways. When she arrived in Malaya (prior to it becoming Malaysia) her book *And the Rain my Drink* again showed some of the British administration in a shadowy light, even to the extent that

her second husband, Leon Comber, resigned from his position as an intelligence officer in the British Special Branch. The couple divorced in 1958. Always regarding herself as more Chinese than the half of her that was Occidental, she generally wrote from a Chinese perspective. Her books made her famous throughout the world and *A Many Splendoured Thing* was taken up by 20th Century Fox and made into a movie titled *Love is a Many Splendoured Thing*, with Jennifer Jones cast as Han Suyin and William Holden as Mark Elliott. It broke box office records and was shown to packed audiences at the Cathay



The Morning Deluge
Mao Tsetung & The Chinese Revolution 1893-1954
Han Suyin

Little, Brown



Cinema in Singapore. Suyin claimed that she never went to see the film, even though the Hollywood adaptation mostly stayed within guidelines set down by the book.

Apart from her novels, which she turned out like a demon possessed, Suyin wrote an immense amount of factual series about China before, during, and after the revolution, but it is her four volume biographical study that reveals her expert knowledge of China from 1885 to 1975. In Volume One *The Crippled Tree* covering 1885-1928, she writes: "Much has been written about England's ugly role in the railways of China. Like the Opium wars, the story is not pleasant, and has left on the Chinese side emotional sores, raw places, where old wounds quickly rub new again. But no single Western country can be singled out more than any other for perverseness in this matter. If there is more material available, printed and published, about England's nineteenth-century exploitations, that is because she was the dominant power, in all her greatness and also in all her meanness. But had Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm been the dominant colonial exploiter of the time, things might have been even more hideous."

Then in *Birdless Summer*, 1938-1942: "Yet all the time, all round us was the marvellous big land, land of China, people of China, robust and suffering, ruined and verminous and poor and so barbarously treated by their own ruling class, and so magnificent, that the heart swelled with their greatness, a transport and a rush of love which made me know my terrors and griefs trivial compared to the tidal waves of suffering endured round me so stoically. On the great wind of life which coursed and surged through the talismanic gibber of traditional 'wisdom', of Confucian loyalty, revered by those who prefer mummies to live men, at last became only gibberish..."



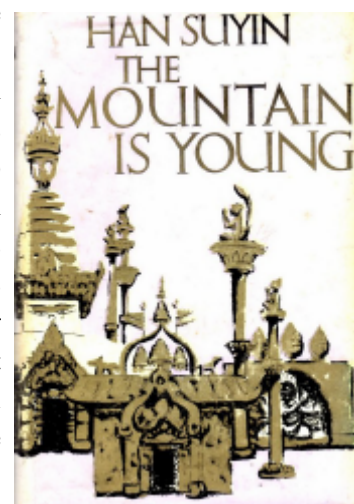
She loves China, even when it is cruel to her; when all its minions are in despair and fear, when the future is black and unknown. She loves the courage and endurance of the Chinese people. She loves that great river, the Yangtze, rolling on under the moonlight nights; she loves the history of the great land, even if some of it seems unfathomable and as far from modern life as anything can be in the old walled cities and walled homes. The city of Chungking she loves with a passion, for it is where her Chinese ancestors lived. Even the muddy canals, alongside which the willows grow, give off a certain atmosphere that belongs to China alone. She loves her large Chinese family with Third Aunt and Third uncle gracious and accommodating and with Third Grandmother much the same age as Suyin — Third Grandfather having married three times. Her Chinese family is indeed bountiful and generous, but not without its faults.

But time gathers her up in its welcoming arms and moves her from country to country, hospital to hospital, husband to husband, and from book to book. She amasses an incredible array of writings over the years, all touched with her passionate enquiring spirit and the seeking after truth, whatever that may well be. By 1958 she and Leon Comber are divorced and in 1960 she marries an Indian Colonel, Vincent Ruthnaswamy, who appears to have an enormous family. Suyin stated that they had to hire buses to accommodate them for the wedding. Alas, though the couple have many years together, it is not to last and they eventually separated. Perhaps Suyin could not escape from that one true love back in Hong Kong with the war correspondent, Ian Morrison? A many splendoured thing indeed.

Meanwhile, Suyin continued to write, adding more books to her name. By 1985 she had produced eleven novels and then seven autobiographies and seven historical studies.

The West Australian writer, Gerald (G.M.) Glaskin, who became a good friend of Suyin's in Malaya, wrote a memoir for her titled *A Many-Splendoured Woman*, which gave great insight into her work as a doctor during Malaya's Emergency war in the 1950s. As a Eurasian, Suyin was not welcome in the old colonial clubs of Singapore, such as the Tanglin Club, and Glaskin felt much the same. He held a British passport, but was still regarded as an Australian and as such was viewed with some diffidence by the British ruling class of Singapore.

Suyin, for all her urgency in standing up for Chinese women's rights, never regarded herself as a feminist. In *The Straits Times* of 1996 Suyin wrote: "Chinese



Suyin's third grandfather Taohung



women are much too wise to cut themselves off from men. My best friends are in the National Federation of Women, but they never talk in terms of feminist theory. I think the word ‘feminism’ makes the situation wrong. It’s womanpower — but not feminist power. Womanpower is equality, and equality is based on economic equality. Now I don’t think women have full equality in China, but I do think that, on the whole, it’s not too bad.”

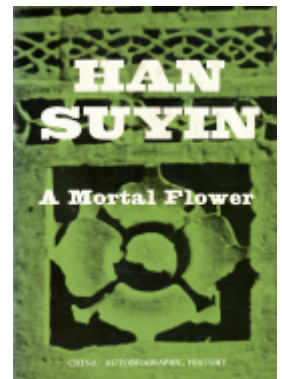
In regard to Mao Tse Tung’s wife, Suyin had this to say: “Mao’s wife puzzled me. She always talked about herself, no matter what question you asked. She never got out of acting a role.” So, there are women in high profile life who are actors, but you could never class Suyin as one of them. She never acted out roles, except in the writing of her novels. In life she was *what you see is what you get*.

It took her ten months to write *A Many Splendoured Thing* in Hong Kong during 1950-1951, but it has endured over these many decades, enthralling many a lover with its rapturous words. It sits on my bookshelf with many of her other works, to be handled occasionally and to be dipped into for a light read. Her words at the end of the book still ring clearly: “For now, like Mark, I do not know what is reality and what is dream. And if it is a dream, then I have dreamed a wonderful dream to shield me from the night, and the breath of heaven itself cannot blow my dream away.

“I have dreamed a wonderful dream; of life, and love and death, of laughter, and tears, and good and ill, and all these things which are equal under Heaven, which equalizes all things. A wonderful dream, my many-splendoured thing.” •

Han Suyin died in 2012 at the age of 95 at her home in Lausanne, Switzerland, where she had lived for many years. Obituaries in the newspapers of the day and in magazines were numerous. •

NB: Having missed as a collection, the second copy of Han Suyin’s historical autogographies, *A Mortal Flower*, a very kind friend appeared on my doorstep recently with the missing hardback, having searched and found a copy in excellent condition. Isn’t it wonderful, having friends like that?



The Crippled Tree Vol 1 1885-1928. First published 1965, Johnathan Cape, London.

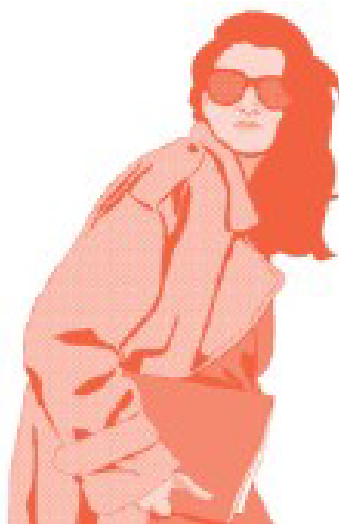
A Mortal Flower Vol II 1928-1938 First published 1966, Johnathan Cape, London.

Birdless Summer Vol III 1938-1948 First published 1968, Johnathan Cape, London.

Additional: The Morning Deluge: Mao Tsetung & the Chinese Revolution 1983-1954. First published 1972, Little, Brown, Canada.



Han Suyin



Mercury O'Proud

Political correspondent

China special

The Dragon extends its claws. You can't get much closer to Australia than this if you are seeking to establish bases in the South Pacific far from your own native land.

After China's successful security treaty with the Solomon Islands, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi set out on a fast and furious tour of South Pacific countries close to Australia, from May 26th to June 4.

While the new Labor government was in opposition, together with the Greens and other Independents, the call was for Australia to be more active on climate change for these small countries, but that is much lower on China's agenda. China is said to be offering some help with it and these South Pacific countries require it, but China's main focus is on security, policing, cyber support, together with a so-called trade agreement.

The massive team of 20 officials touring small South Pacific nations recently, led by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, sends a clear message to the West that China is hungry for world domination, which has certainly been clear for some time with China's inroads into other areas of Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and South America. Suddenly, the South Pacific becomes most important to China strategically and it's not climate change they are primarily concerned with.

Craig Simons book *The Devouring Dragon* — Scribe 2013, shows how China has surpassed the United States and Europe as the planet's worst polluting superpower; how it is the world's largest consumer of wildlife, how China imports vanishing animals such as tigers and elephants to meet consumer demands. The world's forests, wildlife, and climate are in danger because of China's overwhelming consumer requirements. *The Devouring Dragon* p89: "Over the long term those indirect consequences of China's growth—the destruction of habitat to build roads and dams, the introduction of invasive species to newly opened forests, the increase in pollution from new factories, the general rise in our global economic metabolism—may prove most harmful to wildlife. But during the coming decades, the effects of direct Chinese consumption will be more serious, a fact driven home when a small ship stalled off the coast of China's southern Guangdong province in early 2007. When Chinese coastguard officers boarded the abandoned boat they found hundreds of crates of endangered species. Included in the cargo were forty-four leather-back turtles, nearly three thousand monitor lizards, over a thousand Brazilian turtles, and thirty-one pangolins. Twenty-one bear claws were wrapped in newspaper. Trade in each of the species was banned under international laws, but all of the animals and parts could also be found in Chinese restaurants, markets, and medicine shops."

Reducing greenhouse gases won't be easy, but until big factory polluter China comes to terms with its own inconsistencies and works with the rest of the world instead of seeking to control it, then we are unlikely to see much of a reduction anytime in the near future. And of domination, the picture of Wang Yi with his hand held up, is symbolic of China's approach to the world of recent times.

As for security, China's ambitions have been clear for some time, but Western nations have been slow to develop barriers to thwart Chinese military expansion toward the South Pacific. Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea are South Pacific or Oceanic countries, but none had fully recognised China's reaching ambition into the South Pacific seas until recently; in fact, Papua New Guinea just off Australia's northern coast, invited China in to assess building port facilities. The question arises, would PNG become like Sri Lanka which has failed to repay port facility debts to China, thus ending in China's 'repossessing' much of the port. How deep into debt can some of these countries go until the realisation of China's hold on them takes effect? Allowing access to ports and infrastructure by a dictatorial regime can only end in tragedy. It is extremely naive of anyone to think that there is no harm on the horizon, when China's spy networks are known to be active across the seas — only recently China's formidable spy ship Yuan Wang docked at Sri Lanka, which had India worried



Courtesy *The Australian* 26th May 2022



Continued from page 10

considering the extreme proximity to its shores. And several months previous had sailed around Australia's coastline, for one simple task — listening into Australia's defence facilities.

After WWII, Britain's intelligence bureaus became notoriously infected with Russian aligned sympathisers who were sending information back to Russia. Prior to the Japanese Empire's invasion of South-East Asia, there were numerous Japanese born folk in Malaya [now Malaysia] reporting back to the military command in Japan with photographs of installations and other data of use to military planners, but in Singapore a British soldier — Captain Patrick Heenan, of the British Indian Army — was arrested for radioing Japan with critical information regarding British and allied troops in Malaya and Singapore, some of which resulted in the destruction of RAF aircraft at Alor Setar [Star] in northern Malaya. Japanese aircraft were aware that the British planes were still on the ground and dealt them a devastating blow. In a similar fashion, China is gathering an immense portfolio of Western and allied countries military facilities, preparing for a future which may not be as peaceful as it is at present.



When Clive Hamilton's book *Silent Invasion* about China's expansionist strategies was published in 2018, the Trotskyites and Jx Jinping's appeasers came out in force, including some milder CCP adorers such as Australians Bob Carr, Paul Keating and businessman Andrew Forest. But the real eye-opening comments came from a professor of Sydney University, John Keane, who related that China was 'a kind of democracy'. Several left-wing journalists and human rights officials joined the foray, lambasting the book as a reaction of 'White Australia', but *Silent Invasion* was read and applauded by numerous — and previously silent — Chinese Australians, with almost 800 people turning up to listen to Hamilton at the Writers Festival in Adelaide 2018. Naturally, the Communist Party of China labelled the book fear-mongering and racist bigotry. The publisher, Hardie Grant, was also attacked. Numerous publishers would not touch the book, fearing a backlash from Communist China and its supporters, but Hardie Grant saw realism in the pages of the book and decided that, against the odds and against advice, they would publish. The book sold out quickly and was read by Canberra politicians, embassy staff, and numerous Chinese Australians. In a forthcoming book by Clive Hamilton, he writes: "A diplomat from one Asian country said of China's spreading influence 'If nothing's done to stop it, we'll no longer be a sovereign nation.'"

Silent Invasion was followed in 2020 by *Hidden Hand*, co-authored by Clive Hamilton and Mareike Ohlberg. Ohlberg was research associate in Berlin at the Mercator Institute for China Studies. She has an MA in East Asian Studies from Columbia University and a PhD in Chinese Studies from the University of Heidelberg. *Hidden Hand* sets out to show how the Chinese Communist Party is using its influence and subversion to undermine democracies throughout the world. A large paperback of 425 pages, *Hidden Hand* has an extensive bibliography and notes of 113 pages — quite an authoritative tome. The book's major sections include: A Leninist party goes out to the world; Political elites at the centre: North America; Political elites at the centre: Europe; Mobilising the Chinese diaspora — Overseas Chinese work, modus operandi, threats and harassment; The ecology espionage; Media: 'Our surname is Party'; Culture as battleground — crushing cultural deviance; Thought management: CCP influence in Western academia. This last section being one of the most dangerous and influential of the CCP. The book is an immense resource for people concerned about the CCP's long reach into almost all areas of the world. It is a scholastic work which will silence many critics of *Silent Invasion* and delineate how the CCP has used trade and the *Belt and Road Initiative* to influence small countries, which has now become unveiled to many Western security forces. One writer recently explained this as "China's hidden hand had overreached and received a rap on the knuckles that has caused it to curl into a fist."

Paul Monk*, in a review of *Hidden Hand*, commences his article with "Read this book. It will knock your socks off. This is a book that neither Beijing nor its agents of influence in Australia and elsewhere want you to be allowed to read; which, of course, is precisely why you should."

In view of China's long-term interests in the Middle East and Africa it comes as no surprise to discover (*The Age* 27 Aug 2022) that China has 310 projects in Africa worth \$87 billion. These projects, which include a \$850 million hydropower plant in Guinea and a \$2.8 billion gas extraction and pipeline in Angola, have given China a boost in the United Nations, because these numerous African nations — 20 or more — have given China support when it comes to voting time in the UN. There is little doubt that the West has been — and still is — slow to learn from Beijing's long-term strategy of infiltration.

Now, there is firm evidence that the CCP wishes to embrace much of the South Pacific together with the Indian Ocean and by reaching out with 'gifts' for new ports and road infrastructure, the temptation for small Pacific nations to agree is overwhelming. Mainland China's dialogue insists that civilian merchant facilities and infrastructure are separate from military, but the cold hard facts on the table are that all merchants and their goods, facilities etc., are finally and utterly responsible to the dictatorial militarist Communist Party of China — something that countries seeking help with infrastructure, should remember. •

* Paul Monk is the author of *Dictators and Dangerous Ideas* (2018) and *Thunder from the Silent Zone: Rethinking China* (2005). He was head of the China desk in the Defence Intelligence Organisation 1994-1995.



Pet medical crisis

from Jennifer Hunt

Today we'd like to introduce you to one of our furry friends Senshi. Senshi's owner was under severe financial stress, and struggling with numerous health issues when his owners family contacted us in desperate need of some assistance.

As a loving, loyal and caring companion, 7-year-old Senshi is an important and integral member of the family. As well as providing company and friendship to his owner, Senshi is a therapy and assistance pet who performs a vital job of monitoring blood sugar levels and blood pressure.

Having survived numerous strokes and heart attacks, Senshi's owner suffers from a deteriorating health condition and is currently unable to work.

When Senshi became unwell from mastitis and cancer requiring operation, his owner didn't know what to do. After exhausting all other options, Senshi's owner and family turned to Pet Medical Crisis for much-needed support.

Thanks to our friends at the Southern Animal Hospital and the generosity of our kind donor community who made it possible for us to support Senshi. PMC was able to provide \$1000 for the surgery, saving Senshi and keeping these best friends together.

If you would like to help best friends like Senshi and his owner who are in desperate need of financial relief, please consider donating today via <https://bit.ly/3OkB2bt> #pmc #petmedicalcrisis #charity #pets #bestfriends



Astro - Keeps his dad happy and healthy



Steve was diagnosed with a mental health condition over 3 years ago and has been unable to work from that time. Pre COVID-19 he managed to house sit for small amounts, however that has stopped since the virus hit Victoria. Living from payment to payment is a hard slog for most pensioners and Steve is no different, but his gorgeous pooch 'Astro' keeps his spirits high and helps greatly with his mental wellbeing.

"Astro is my whole world. I have trained him and he has become my life saver, especially over the past 5 years. My doctor recommended Astro be certified as a mental health service animal." Steve told PMC about his 11yo Schnauzer X Poodle who he adores.

After noticing that 'Astro' started to develop a very fast growing lump on his foot Steve got his best friend to the vet as quickly as he could. After the Family Vet Centre Wodonga took a look at the foot they knew he would need an operation to fix it before it was too late. Due to the unexpected cost of the procedure Steve had no idea how he would pay for it, he borrowed what he could but was still going to be short of the amount needed. After finding Pet Medical Crisis, Steve applied for our help.

Once PMC approved the application and the brilliant vets discounted as much as they could 'Astro' was able to have operation required. The very friendly pup is now back with his dad doing what he does best, keeping his dad well and happy.

So many of us don't really understand how hard it can be for pensioners to survive and how dependant they are on their loved animals. Our job is to help them, making it possible for more people to own pets and get the life benefits they give.

If you have the funds to help us please donate at our website, and if not a simple share can make a huge difference. Thanks for all your support.

Pet Medical Crisis

A not for profit fund to save pets whose owners cannot afford their emergency care.

www.petmedicalcrisis.com.au

Email: petmedicalcrisis@gmail.com

PMC is now on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PetMedicalCrisis/>

Also, a walking harness — 'Dog-A-Long' — is available to assist your dog to become more mobile — supports dogs with hind leg problems associated with ageing, arthritis, hip & spinal problems. For suitability check with your Vet.





by Dr Lisa J. Griffiths, OzChild Chief Executive Officer

While National Child Protection Week reminds us that every child, in every community, deserves a fair go, parents must be afforded the same right.

Protecting children is everyone's business, but sadly unless you're exposed to the statistics, are familiar with the rising number of children and young people receiving child protection services, the magnitude of the problem is understood by very few Australians.

The need for a dedicated week that focuses on child protection should be enough for all Australians to stand up and say, enough is enough, we must, and we can do better when it comes to protecting our most vulnerable. Endless reports, Royal Commissions, and shocking headlines tell us what has been done is not working.

Across Australia, many parents are struggling with mental ill health, unhealthy addictions and relationships, domestic and family violence and poor health and access to services that can treat them.

Parents must be given a fair go, so children have every chance to thrive and be healthy, and it starts with specialised support, support that is accessible and focuses on whole of family treatment.

For too long our child protection system has broken families apart into silos, sending parents in different directions and separating children from them under the guise of protecting children.

A child protection system alone cannot keep children safe, and those who work within the system suffer the criticism when a child known to them tragically loses their life, regardless of whether that child has also been known to health, police, or the education department as a child at risk. There may have been many other opportunities for intervention, yet it's always the child protection system at fault.

The silos we have built do not serve families well. They do not consider the interrelated issues and family dynamics but rather take a threshold approach as the lever to intervene in the life of the individual. Each silo has its own threshold for entry for that individual and it can take weeks, months, or years for an individual to hit that threshold for a response.

Consider the weeks, months, and years that a child must wait if their parent waits for a response, what impact, what damage, what trauma do they experience while the adult in their life waits hopelessly for help?

In addition to this, is the response or intervention offered based on evidence? How does that response consider that adult as a parent and caregiver to a child who by now has likely developed complex trauma or behaviours from their parents' afflictions and inability to cope without the support they need?

What if, instead of failing these kids so catastrophically, we intervene much earlier, we truly listen to what parents, children and families say they need to succeed and look at what the research and evidence tells us works.

Parents don't set out to fail. I'm certain, there is not one parent around who wants their child to be removed from their care. Yet the government on behalf of the taxpayer seems to prioritise things like infrastructure over the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Child protection isn't a vote winner, you only have to look at successive election commitments over many years by both sides to see the truth in this.



Now more than ever we need to advocate for parents, for children and young people. To encourage conversation and challenge attitudes. Providing the right support at the right time for families facing vulnerable times will not only help to improve prospects for children and young people but provide benefits for the whole community.

I think the pandemic has generated a greater sense of goodwill within the community. I had hoped greater understanding and conversation around vulnerability would ensue, and an awakening would follow, whereby all children would be viewed as everybody's responsibility, because that age old saying, that it takes a village to raise a child has never been more pertinent.

It's now well and truly time we examine the need for a co-creation approach which involves collaboration between researchers, policy makers, agencies, intersecting systems, young people, and families. To deliver programs and services that work, that drive down the rates of child abuse and neglect, keeping children and young people with family.

Greater investment in early intervention and prevention, evidence-based models that focus on treating families together, is not negotiable. We all want the best possible service system for children, young people, and families in need and that system must include solutions that are evidence-based.

I want to imagine a world where we don't need a week called Child Protection Week, a world where parents have the capacity to keep their children safe and happy in their care. I would like to work my way out of a job, out of the lives of families and children because they don't need a child protection system. •



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Lisa has a Doctorate of Business Leadership, researching evidence-based ethical leadership models for the community services sector, and teaches the principles of Evidence-Based Leadership across Australia.

MS Australia

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Wire

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Exchange**

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A dream of Angels

One night as I slept securely I dreamed a dream so vivid and pure. The bedroom became alive with a fine mist that changed into millions of dancing diamonds. And standing before me was the Arch-Angel Gabriel. He was speaking. “And this is our repair section. Unlike popular human opinion we don’t have magic wands or anything like that to change things — everything takes hard work to accomplish, and time is required, much time indeed. Nothing is ever carried out in a hurry.

I peered into the workroom. This young angel was sitting beside a sewing machine. I could hardly believe my eyes! He was repairing a coat that had been torn in several places and patching it at the bottom. I turned to Gabriel. “What’s happening here?”

“The coat belongs to a little refugee boy, and while he sleeps we are repairing it.”

“Why not simply give him a new coat?”

“Oh, you are so naive, that’s not the way the universe works . . . It takes what is already there and repairs or re-molds. No doubt you are aware of your Biblical phrase “That which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been?”

“Sounds strange to me!”

He smiled. You have much to learn.”

I watched as the young angel put the coat aside.

“He missed a thread there, I see.”

“You have more than much to learn — you are seeking perfection, but there is no such thing as perfection, which of course, doesn’t mean we do not stop trying to do the best we can.”

I laughed. “Sure thing!”

His eyes sparkled. “Let’s move on!” I was walking, was he floating? Hard to tell. Perhaps he was on an invisible skateboard?

“Come through here,” he said, pulling a sparking diamond like curtain aside, and we zoomed into a jungle.

“No thanks,” I said.

“Oh, it’s quite safe . . . that is, while you are with me. I simply wish to show you something.”

“Ah so, you do have special powers to keep me from harm!”

He mused. “Hmm, not all that much, after all, I am in your environment now and subject to its laws.”

I was surprised. “But you can over-ride them, if you wish? That’s what we are told.”

“In an emergency, yes, but otherwise, no.”

“I was taught that you angels are perfect.”

“There you go again, seeking for that which does not exist in this environment.”

“Now you’re scaring me, and its pretty darn well dark in here.”

“Yes, but we are in the deepest of jungles, although if I wish I may display a brighter luminescence than otherwise, which will lighten our path.”

“So you do have special powers!”

“Personal attributes, not powers, which we angels have earned by diligence and attention to what is right.”

“How do you know what is right?”

“Oh, but it’s all there in the testaments — you know some of them as the ten commandments.”

“Ah yes. Something that does not age with the times. As true today as it was yesterday.”

Gabriel laughed. “Well, well, there’s hope for you yet.”

I smiled. “As long as I give up this idea of perfection, here and now, eh?”

“It’s but a human engineered word. You should be seeking to attain the best you can do with the gifts you have been given from birth and the skills you have attained since then. It is always an upward path; think of it as climbing a high mountain — it is rough going and you will stumble and slip many times. The mountain doesn’t care, it is simply there for you to reach the peak — the peak of your attributes. When you reach the top, it won’t have been an achievement of perfection because there will be many other mountains in your life for you to conquer, always — until the day you pass through the veil. Now, let us explore. I will light your way.” •



Motoring Memoirs

1954 Sunbeam Alpine Mk1



This vehicle competed in the 1990 Lucas Grand Prix Rally, in which Sir Stirling Moss approached the car and remarked “Ah yes, I remember these well, no brakes but at 90mph on ice who needs brakes?” but added that they were so solid and reliable that if he happened to run off the road as long as he could get a push back on he would complete the event. The owners considered the brakes more than adequate, having competed in various Dutton rallies, Grand tours and Australian Mille events.

Estimated worth in 2022 is \$70,000.

