

## Rusland Reading Group - Books for 2011-2012 Season

The group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month (apart from August and December) at 08:00 p.m..

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Book</b>	<b>Author</b>
<b>Sept 15th</b>	Mandy Lane, Lilac Cottage, Oxen Park	The Balkan Trilogy	Olivia Manning
<p>Olivia Manning felt that her literary worth had never been recognized, and with good reason. If one were to evaluate her work on the strength of the Balkan and Levant trilogies alone, she would stand head and shoulders above most writers of her generation. In an uncomplicated yet beautiful writing style, she tells the stories of individuals caught up in war, their lives suspended in Romania, Greece, and Cairo. The shadow of the Nazi threat hangs over everything they do and plan. Her main characters are as great as anything in Dickens or in much other literature. Guy Pritchard, a man loved by everyone, who cares deeply about his fellow human beings, is a disaster as a husband, and one of the most memorable (and irritating) characters in modern fiction. His wife Harriet carries the moral weight of the tale. In the first trilogy, the impoverished Count Yakimov (brilliantly played by Ronald Pickup in the otherwise appalling BBC adaptation) is outrageous and unforgettable. A host of other characters come in and out, creating a magnificent tapestry in a fiction you will want to return to often as the years go by.</p>			

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<b>Oct 20th</b>	Fiona Baxter, Dane's Howe	Mountains of the Mind	Robert McFarlane
<b>Nov 17th</b>	Jan Benefield, Dale Park	The Help	Kathryn Stockett
<b>Jan 19th</b>	Sally Pike, Crosslands	The Way We Live Now	Anthony Trollope
<b>Feb 16th</b>	Jean Crabtree, Force Mills	A Star Called Henry	Roddy Doyle
<b>Mar 15th</b>	Carol Driver, Windy Hall	Child44	Tom Rob Smith
<b>Apr 19th</b>	John Walton, Oxen Park	The Glass Room	Simon Mawer
<b>May 24th</b>	Sue Brooks, Force Mills	Learning to Breathe	Andy Cave
<b>Jul 19th</b>	Liz Cringle, Dale Pk	The Hare with the Amber Eyes And How It all Began	Edmund de Waal  Penelope Lively
<b>Sep 20th</b>	Helen Pierce, Canal Foot	Germinal	Emile Zola

**Rusland Valley Reading Group: Other Suggested books:**

<b>Book</b>	<b>Author</b>
Brooklyn	Colm Toibin
Possession	A.S. Byatt
44 Scotland Street	Alexander McCall-Smith
The Other Hand	Chris Cleave
Ordinary Thunderstorms	William Boyd
The Leopard	Giuseppe Tomasi Di Lampedusa and Archibald Colquhoun
A Burnt Out Case/The Comedians/The Honorary Consul	Graham Greene
The Help	Kathryn Stockett
<b>'Adventure' Books:</b>	
Mountains of the Mind	Robert Macfarlane
The Lonely Sea and the Sky	Francis Chichester
Mood of Future Joys: Around the World by Bike -	Alastair Humphries
To the End of the Earth: The Race to Solve Polar Exploration's Greatest Mystery -	Tom Avery
The White Spider	Heinrich Harrer
Seven Years in Tibet	Heinrich Harrer
Travels with My Donkey	Robert Louis Stevenson

### **Mood of Future Joys: Around the World by Bike - Alastair Humphries**

Alastair Humphreys' round the world journey of 46,000 miles was an old-fashioned adventure: long, lonely, low-budget and spontaneous. Cycling across five continents and sailing over the oceans, his ride took four years to complete, on a tiny budget of hoarded student loans.

Moods of Future Joys is the story of the first remarkable stage of the expedition. Just two weeks into the ride the September 11th attacks changed everything. All Humphreys' plans went out the window and, instead of riding towards Australia, he suddenly found himself pedaling through the Middle East and Africa and on towards Cape Town. But his journey did not end there. In fact, this was only the beginning...

Moods of Future Joys recounts an epic journey that succeeded through Humphreys' trust in the kindness of strangers, at a time where the interactions of our global community are more confused and troubled than ever.

### **To the End of the Earth: The Race to Solve Polar Exploration's Greatest Mystery - Tom Avery**

This is the gripping true story of how Briton Tom Avery led three men, one woman and sixteen dogs to the North Pole in just under thirty-seven days, in doing so breaking the world record and solving the greatest mystery of polar exploration. The electrifying true story of a race against time to solve the greatest mystery of polar exploration. Facing some of the most hostile terrain on the planet, how did Arctic pioneer Robert Peary travel 413km in just 37 days to reach the North Pole with only dogs and wooden sleds as his transportation? 100 years later, British explorer Tom Avery and his team set themselves against the elements to recreate Peary's journey, risking their lives to break the record and rewrite history.

### **Three Cups of Tea - Greg Mortenson and David Renin**

'Here we drink three cups of tea to do business; the first you are a stranger, the second you become a friend, and the third, you join our family, and for our family we are prepared to do anything - even die' - Haji Ali, Korphe Village Chief, Karakoram mountains, Pakistan. In 1993, after a terrifying and disastrous attempt to climb K2, a mountaineer called Greg Mortenson drifted, cold and dehydrated, into an impoverished Pakistan village in the Karakoram Mountains. Moved by the inhabitants' kindness, he promised to return and build a school. "Three Cups of Tea" is the story of that promise and its extraordinary outcome. Over the next decade Mortenson built not just one but fifty-five schools - especially for girls - in remote villages across the forbidding and breathtaking landscape of Pakistan and Afghanistan, just as the Taliban rose to power. His story is at once a riveting adventure and a testament to the power of the humanitarian spirit.