



Cry of the Curlew

Peter Watt

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A stark and vivid novel of Australia's brutal past.

An epic tale of two families, the Macintoshes and the Duffys, who are locked in a deadly battle from the moment squatter Donald Macintosh commits an act of barbarity on his Queensland property.

Their paths cross in love, death and revenge as both families fight to tame the wild frontier of Australia's north country.

Cry of the Curlew is the first bestselling novel in the compelling Duffy and Macintosh series depicting our turbulent history as never before.

Cry of the Curlew Details

Date : Published August 1st 2000 by Pan Australia

ISBN :

Author : Peter Watt

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Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction

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From Reader Review Cry of the Curlew for online ebook

Lauren Young says

This book took about 50 pages for me to really start to like it. Can not wait to read the second and find out what happens to Luke Tracey (who is not even a leading character in this but for me is a very strong character)!!

Would just like to say I am not a fan of the MacIntosh family and I hope the Duffy family finally prevail.

Robyn Lobb says

For anyone interested in Australian history particularly outback Queensland of the second half of the nineteenth century this is the novel for you. It reminds me of the early books of Wilbur Smith - sweeping family sagas.

Linda_pilko says

Lots of interesting history about Queensland. An epic tale of pioneering families which does not hide the atrocities committed on our indigenous Australians.

Ray Ramsay says

If you haven't read Peter Watt's Frontier series. You should!

A great read, a riveting story, and a multitude of sub plots.

Awaiting for the release of the 8th book, I've read them all.

I started reading Cry of the Curlew when I was living in London , back in 2000. And every time Peter releases a new one, I get it quick.

Cry of the Curlew gives deep in sites into a period of Australian history few have heard about. Especially the dispersals in Queensland, the Maori wars, and the social rifts between the socialites and the children of Irish and convict stock. The story of the macintoshes and the Duffy's continues throughout the series, and is a thoroughly enjoyable tale.

Terry Wheeler says

do not tarry
where the curlews cry

that mournful sound
is too profound

a cacophony of spirits
lost and found

all for which
the bush was witness

do not tarry there
the air carries distress

Jill Smith says

Peter is a masterful writer who displays a wonderful ability to make every word count. Carefully researched this is a something akin to an historical romance similar to Robyn Burrows work, however, Peter presents a broader picture on this base.

The brutal dispersal of native Australians is graphically told. The conflict between the Duffy and the McIntosh families is born in murder. The hatred and deception it breeds is bitter and tangible to the reader who eagerly devours each page. The strong affinity developed by the reader for the characters helps sow the seed of intrigue.

Enid McIntosh is like stone, or is she? Her strength as a businesswoman is one to be reckoned with. Douglas, her husband, belongs in the bush on his beloved property 'Glen View' and not in their grand Sydney mansion. Angus their eldest son is being toughened to the land to take over the sheep station in his fathers' stead. Fiona, their daughter, is a naïve and protected young lady. Her brother David would rather be in England than being groomed to run the family business. Granville White is their nephew and Fiona's cousin, and a ruthless businessman who wants all the power he can obtain from the McIntosh name.

Patrick Duffy, the Irish immigrant, who fights against the British establishment in the Police at Eureka Stockade in the Victorian town of Ballarat on the Gold Fields. He meets and untimely end years later in Queensland at the hands of an insane Police officer. Michael, his son, is a lovable Irish rogue who is an artist and street fighter. Kate, his sister, is a young girl in trouble and yet she is also a strong willed Duffy ready to take on the world. Tom, the young bullocky who accompanies his father and aboriginal friend Billy on long journeys delivering their bullock wagon hauls, is transformed by the tragedy of his fathers' death to become a feared and murdering bushranger.

All of Peters characters, and I've mentioned only some that make up the tapestry of this book, are strong and believable because of the weaknesses they each posses. The very frailty brings that element of humanity to each one that the reader can easily identify with. Greed, lust and hunger for power, these are the motivation for the continuing tale.

Although 'Cry of the Curlew' is a solid 704 page novel, it is temptingly incomplete. Each of the characters are presented at a stage in their lives that must go on. Peters next work 'Shadow of the Osprey' will add to the gripping saga as will 'Flight of the Eagle' the volume to follow.

I have been fortunate enough to meet Peter on a few occasions and have been impressed by his forward planning. He takes great care over the cover design and marketing and has been rewarded with International sales for his efforts. I wonder what those overseas readers think of Australia with such a depiction of our brutal past. For that matter, what do we think when faced with the knowledge that genocide was practiced in our land?

For those who have not yet read 'Cry of the Curlew' I suggest you put it on your next 'must buy' shopping list. You will be glad you did.

Martin Hoffman says

In every respect this is an excellent book. It is the first book in what is now a 7 (and continuing) book series. I looked at the initial three box series in the bookshop for some months prior to succumbing to the salespersons constant suggestions to read. I relented, and I now rate the initial 3 books in the series as the best ever Australian historical fiction published.

It is a rolling saga based in Central Qld which balances historical events and the origination of the Duffy and MacIntosh ongoing family dispute perfectly. I walked away from this book determined to read the next two (which I finished within the week) both of which were every bit as good as the first.

Angus Mcfarlane says

I think this is a story which uses, at best, some of the extremes of Australia's colonial characters. Some of the more moderate in the cast are themselves the victims of the violence of the extremes, so brutality is rarely far from any of the scenes. There are a variety of elements of early Australia - the Scots, English and Irish, with their imported class and parochial prejudices, and strongly featuring indigenous Australians. Except for the latter, there are a mixture of heroes and villains, especially villains. It's not how I view most of my ancestors of that period, but I guess that's not the purpose of the book. Like all history, there's a perspective authors are seeking to give, in this case the roughest aspects of colony life. There is a point to be made, and the life of ordinary people is perhaps less entertaining.... Also, the multiple point of view seems out of place for the period and at times flicked from one to another mid paragraph - not my thing. So I have mixed feelings about the book! It's an accessible read to early Australia, with stories that need to be told, but not a classic and requires some tolerance for the license taken.

Joancollins says

over the top aussie adventure
but readable
instant miniseries if it had been written in the 80s

Jill Smith says

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Balthazar Lawson says

This is an historical family saga set in 1860's Australia and the beginning of a long series of books. It's the story of two families, their extended families, and those they come in contact with, in conflict with each other. It's all a bit of a stretch of the imagination though.

However, the most interesting part of this book is the setting. Colonial Queensland in the 1860's is a time of white man pushing further into the lands of Aboriginals, this in itself causing life changing events for the families. It explores a dark and often not spoken about time in Australia's history and the cruel treatment of Aborigines.

The story jumps about a bit and at times I found that there were too many story lines. Just when one story line was getting interesting it would be dropped and off you go with another. I generally find this kind of writing frustrating.

This book though could appeal to those who want to read a story set in a time when Australia was just a collection of colonies.

Trina-Jean Peters says

Well written, great plot. Not sure how it's going to pan out over 12 books (certainty this book is pretty much self-contained) but I guess I'll see soon enough!

Librarychick4405 says

I met Peter Watt at a library author visit this week. What a personable, enthusiastic, passionate, self-effacing and knowledgeable all round good bloke. Oh, and his novels aren't half bad either

Annette says

Cry of the Curlew by Peter Watt was a complete surprise to me. I had no idea what the story was to be about and was extremely surprised at the graphic description of violence in the first few chapters. However the tales of the Duffy and MacIntosh families had me intrigued. It is great to be able to read a real story. The violence dispersed throughout the novel is hard to believe and certainly strikes at your emotions. The treatment of aborigines is appalling, the evil of some of the characters is distressing. The characters are drawn with interest. It is a little over the top every now and again but it makes it exciting. The animosity within families is intriguing and also the differences between the Irish and English. I want to read the next book in the series. It was a great read.

Sarah Harrison says

Awesome!! Just frustrated that I haven't been able to get hold of the rest of the series as yet!
