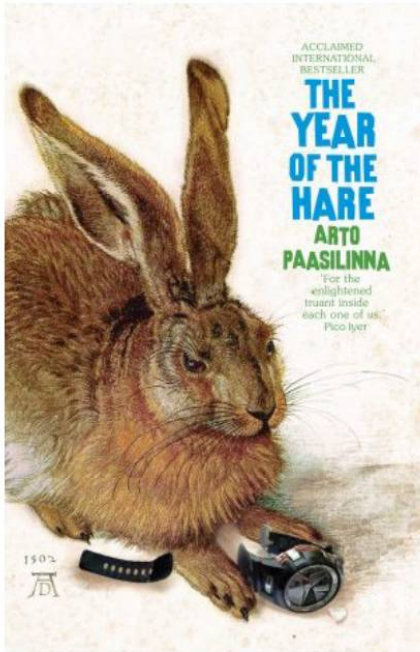


March 2017



Review by Gail

For March, Gold Coast Booklovers discussed [The Year of the Hare](#), a novel by Finnish writer [Arto Tapio Paasilinna](#). The author, a former journalist, is renowned as one of Finland's most successful novelists. With over seven million books translated into 27 languages, he has a broad international readership.

First published in 1975, [The Year of the Hare](#) was later translated into English in 1995. It has also been made into a feature film.

The novel begins with Kaarlo Vatanen, a middle-aged, alcoholic journalist who rescues a wild hare, after accidentally running over it in a car. Something triggers in Vatanen, a crisis of mid-life. He decides to leave his wife, job, friends and colleagues to live in the wild with his new found companion, the hare. Vatanen becomes the “irreverent outsider” which is part of a grand Finnish comic novel tradition.* There are times during the book when this outsider seems to be the only sane person in the plot. While other characters mill around Vatanen, perceiving him as the crazy one, his actions seem to be the most reasonable ones. The narrative follows Vatanen and his hare through many parts of the Finnish countryside over the course of a year.

Most of our group considered the book entertaining, humorous and an easy read. One described the novel as “a boys own adventure” and most agreed. Two members disliked the novel finding it neither funny nor enjoyable and finding the perspective of a middle-aged alcoholic man tiresome. All agreed that the location of Finland is the most redeeming feature of the book. We all imagined a similar book set in an Australian context would be unappealing.

Ratings: Alexa 3, Claudia 3, Di 4, Gail 3.5, Janet 3.5, Kim 2.5, Nicola 3.5, Penny 3.5 and Viv 3.5.

Next month we get together on the 10/04/17 at 6:30pm at [Preece House, 50 Nerang St Bischof Pioneer Park, Nerang \(next to 54 Nerang St. shops\)](#) to discuss [Cold Sea Stories](#) by Polish writer [Paweł Huelle](#).

This continues our year of European novels in translation. Hope

Other Books We Read

March 2017

Our book of the month was [The Year of the Hare](#) by [Arto Tapio Paasilinna](#), but we also read other books.

Maximum rating is 5.

About Grace by Anthony Doerr, 4.

The Notebook Trilogy : The Notebook, The Proof and The Third Lie by Ágota Kristóf, 4.5.

The Door by Magda Szabó, 3.5.

Johnno by David Malouf, 5.

Harland's Half-Acre by David Malouf, 4.

An Isolated Incident by Emily Maguire, 3.5.

The Whole Wild World by Thomas Dusevic, 2.5.

Alone in Berlin by Hans Fallada, 2.5.

Silence by Shusaku Endo, 2.

Moonglow by Michael Chabon, 4

Commonwealth Ann Patchett, 3.5

The Rector's Wife by Joanne Trollope, 3.

A Village Affair by Joanne Trollope, 3.

The Hate Race by Maxine Beneba Clark, 4.

A Very English Scandal by John Preston, 3.

The Shell Seekers by Rosamund Pilcher, 3.

Barbed Wire and Cherry Blossoms by Anita Heiss, 4.