A secret gift: how one man's kindness—and a trove of letters—revealed the hidden history of the Great Depression / Ted Gup

Shortly before Christmas 1933 in Depression-scarred Canton, Ohio, a small newspaper ad offered $10 to 75 families in distress. Readers were asked to submit letters describing their hardships to a benefactor calling himself Mr B. Virdot. Discovering these letters to his grandfather in a suitcase 75 years later, Ted Gup set out to unveil the lives behind them, searching for records and relatives all over the country who could help him flesh out the family sagas in the letters. Ted weaves these fascinating revelations seamlessly into a tapestry of Depression-era America.

Diplomatic ladies: New Zealand's unsung envoys / Joanna Woods

Tells the inside story of New Zealand's diplomatic wives and daughters over a hundred years of diplomacy. Based on private letters, MFAT archives and personal interviews, it records many unknown episodes in New Zealand's diplomatic history, including the part played by the spouses in Baghdad during the first Gulf War, and the perils faced by diplomatic wives in Saigon and Tehran. It also gives a unique insight into the workings of diplomatic life and the role of the diplomatic hostess.

The good nurse: a true story of medicine, madness, and murder / Charles Graeber

After his December 2003 arrest, registered nurse Charlie Cullen was quickly dubbed "The Angel of Death". But Cullen was no mercy killer, nor was he a monster. He was a favorite son, husband, beloved father and celebrated caregiver. Implicated in the deaths of as many as 300 patients, he was also perhaps the most prolific serial killer in American history. Now, the whole story is presented for the first time. Based on hundreds of pages of previously unseen police records, and interviews, the author weaves an urgent, terrifying tale of murder and friendship, painting an incredibly vivid portrait of madness, and offering a penetrating look inside America's medical system.

Far out isn't far enough: life in the back of beyond / Tomi Ungerer

Tiring of the hectic pace of 1970s New York, graphic designer Tomi Ungerer and his wife relocated to a wreck of a house in Nova Scotia, Canada. In his inimitable witty style Ungerer records in a 12-month diary of the couple's unexpected successes, dramatic calamities and touching personal moments as they fix up their house, rear livestock and get to know their unusual neighbours. More than 150 beautiful and evocative drawings accompany Ungerer's detailed descriptions, creating a vivid impression of the harsh landscape, the townsfolk and the wildlife. Ungerer's attempt to escape the rat race is both a delight to read and a true inspiration to all those who dream of becoming self-sufficient.

The occupiers: New Zealand veterans remember post war Japan / Alison Parr

Twelve thousand New Zealand men and women served in the occupation of Japan immediately after the Second World War. Based on revealing interviews with soldiers, airmen, nurses and members of the New Zealand Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, The Occupiers explores Kiwi life in the former enemy territory between 1946 and 1948. Veterans recall the horror of witnessing the devastated city of Hiroshima. They describe their culture shock and adjustment to unfamiliar customs. Unexpected, honest and touching, these stories uncover a little-known but fascinating aspect of New Zealand's post-war experience.
Crooks like us / Peter Doyle
In the 1920s, Sydney police began quietly assembling a gallery of the city's most light-fingered, fleet-footed, silver-tongued rogues - con artists, housebreakers, thugs, gunmen, shoplifters, drug dealers, pickpockets and hooligans. These extraordinary images resurfaced in the 1980s, long after the original paperwork had been lost and the crooks, cops and all who remembered them had passed on. Based on years of research into police files, court records, newspapers and other sources, Doyle offers a glimpse into the difficult lives of these fugitive souls. Illustrated with rich, emotionally charged police 'special photographs' from the Justice and Police Museum, Sydney, Crooks Like Us opens a secret door on to Sydney's hidden histories.

The architecture electric / Jared Kennard, Tyson Schmidt, Nathan Horne
The Architecture Electric records central Wellington electrical substations photographically to highlight and showcase these overlooked utilitarian buildings. Hiding at the end of the street, under office towers, in carparking blocks, or next to your garage at home, these vital links in the electrical infrastructure are often camouflaged and ignored. Architectural styles reflect the era they were built and the attitude of the day with proudly displayed pediments, ornate trimmings or brutalist precast concrete form.

Amelia Earhart : the turbulent life of an American icon / Kathleen Winters
When Amelia Earhart disappeared over the Pacific in 1937, she was at the height of her fame. And her mysterious disappearance continues to inspire speculation. Acclaimed aviation historian Kathleen Winters draws on a wealth of contemporary accounts, airline records, and other original research to reveal a flawed heroine who was reckless and lacked basic navigation skills, but who was also a canny manipulator of mass media. Sympathetic yet unsentimental, this biography helps us to see Amelia Earhart with fresh eyes.

Am I my genes? : confronting fate and family secrets in the age of genetic testing / Robert L. Klitzman
Genetic testing is rapidly spreading; every year dozens of new tests are developed which analyze our genetically inherited predisposition toward certain diseases. For all the inevitable progress, this knowledge presents ever new dilemmas for patients. Psychiatrist Robert Klitzman explores how individuals confront these complex issues in their daily lives. Klitzman's gripping presentation of the human face of these new technologies is important, useful, and ultimately compelling.

More
Before Marilyn : the Blue Book modelling years / Astrid Franse and Michelle Morgan
The biggest estate on earth : how Aborigines made Australia / Bill Gammage
Blackhorse riders : a desperate last stand, an extraordinary rescue mission, and the Vietnam battle America forgot / Philip Keith
Blade runner / by Oscar Pistorius
Clipper ships and the golden age of sail : races and rivalries on the nineteenth century high seas / Sam Jefferson
Finding Merlin : the truth behind the legend / Adam Ardrey