

# Grand insight into the minds of animals



*Making Animals Happy*  
by Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson  
Bloomsbury, \$35

**E**VEN if the closest you get to animals is shooing the neighbour's cat, the insights in Temple Grandin's book *Making Animals Happy* will have you quoting her ad nauseum to anyone who'll listen.

If you have ever wondered whether a cow can stay calm in an abattoir right until the end, you need to read this.

And if you're a dog-owner, you could definitely do with the knowledge that the "wolf-pack leader" theory trumpeted by every dog whisperer has largely been debunked by L. David Mech.

Apparently, a domestic dog is something of a wolf in permanent adolescence and needs more of a parent.

American animal scientist Grandin is an icon in her field. She is no animal liberationist.

Grandin works with the livestock industry and audits animal welfare for fast-food giants. She has designed a slaughterhouse system that aims to keep animals free of fear, as long as workers do their job right, something many fail to do without camera observation.

It is her work at the heart of the industry that makes her insights so worth reading.

She watches animals die, she closes her eyes to feel how fast the hearts of small chickens beat to compare beak-trimming methods.

It sounds confronting, but the book is easy to

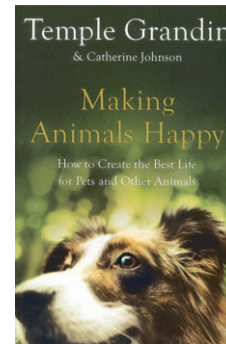
read and far from nightmare fodder.

Only with chickens does she reveal distressing facts because, she says, only layer hens have such dreadful lives, making it impossible to separate the physical from the emotional.

Intriguingly, Grandin is autistic, which she believes gives her much in common with animals, acutely attuned as they are to visual and other stimuli (yellow is most unnerving for cattle).

Grandin discusses the main motivators: seeking, rage, fear and panic.

Named by neuroscientist Jaak Panksepp, these



core emotions are the same in humans and animals — lighting up the same parts of the brain.

Herd animals are strongly motivated by fear.

Horses are especially so, explaining why a horse hit by a man wearing a hat is likely to fear men in hats forever.

Sprinkled through the book are gems, from the social lives of cattle to pigs' need for novelty, often-endearing tidbits despite Grandin's straightforward telling.

"What does an animal need to be happy?"

Grandin poses on the opening page.

What she spells out — with a chapter each on dogs, cats, horses, cows, pigs, poultry, wildlife and zoo animals — gives us an easy way to enrich or ease the lives of the creatures around us.

Grandin's co-author is Catherine Johnson, a writer specialising in neuropsychiatry.

Read the book and do the animals in your life and on your plate a favour.

MICHELLE PAINE

# Brothers in arms



*Hurrah For The Next Man*  
by Phil Davenport  
Beachcomber Press, \$32

**I**T'S been a long time between books for World War II air force veteran and former yachtsman Phil Davenport, of Richmond.

In 1953, Davenport's account of sailing to the UK and Scandinavia, *The Voyage of the Waltzing Matilda*, was published in Britain and the US. The *Waltzing Matilda*, a sturdy 14m timber cutter built by Hobart yachting legend Jock Muir for Davenport, was co-skippered by them to line honours in the 1949 Sydney-Hobart race.

Davenport, 91, who moved to Tasmania from NSW three years ago, has now published an account of his time — together with younger pilot brothers Jack and Keith — flying from Britain during the war. He also recounts his post-war adventures in China.

This book is one of three he has been writing for the past 13 years, and it is a coincidence that it was published in the same month that Kristen Alexander's biography of his late, legendary brother, *Jack Davenport: Beaufighter Leader*, was launched.

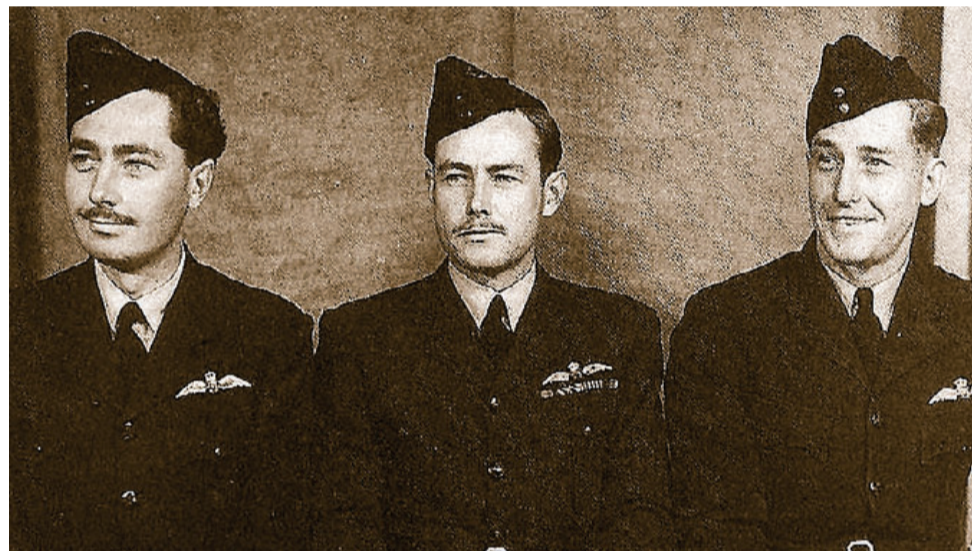
Phil Davenport swapped the uniform of a Sydney cinema usher for RAAF kit in 1940. After training — and high jinks — in Rhodesia and South Africa, he joined RAF Coastal Command, piloting Sunderland flying boats to seek out and destroy German U-boats.

He opens his memoirs with a dramatic re-enactment of a 1943 battle over the Bay of Biscay, and recounts the ferocity of the Battle of the Atlantic: "U-boats sailed in packs, attacked indiscriminately... they raged across the Atlantic, sinking 2828 merchant ships..." As well as taking on the might of the Luftwaffe, the Sunderland crews faced heavy banks of anti-aircraft armaments from the U-boats.

Davenport was a bit of a rebel, questioning why Australians should be defending Britain as Japan threatened their home.

An "episode of gross stupidity" in which he flew so low over an officers' mess that he "glimpsed a man with his mouth wide open" ended with him being court-martialled and sent to disciplinary school. Later, tiring of being a Sunderland test pilot, he went back into battle with the 235 Mosquito Squadron.

On April 11, 1945, on his 89th sortie of the war, Davenport and his navigator were shot down as they flew to attack German shipping in Porsgrunn Harbour, Norway. Their Mosquito crashed into a frozen lake in Telemark and sank. They were rescued by farmers but were later



**HEROES:** The three brothers, from left, Phil, Jack and Keith Davenport at the end of the war in 1945.

## Leadership honed in war

*Jack Davenport: Beaufighter Leader*  
by Kristen Alexander  
Allen & Unwin, \$35

**T**AKE a 20-year-old suburban Sydney bank clerk, put him in a uniform, train him to kill, and send him off to Europe.

Not an unusual scenario for 1939, but one which gave a particular lad a start in adult life that served him and his fellow Australians well for years to come.

That lad was Jack Davenport, who rose to Wing Commander during an RAAF career in World War II that saw his leadership and courage gain him a Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar, Distinguished Service Order and George Medal.

He put his skills to good use in postwar Australia, eventually rising to be head of the Monier concrete company, as well as holding seats on many boards, including the Reserve Bank of Australia, Qantas Ltd, AGL, Alcoa of Australia and the Australian War Memorial.

Much of his wartime was spent in and around Scotland, where he battled the Germans from the air and rose through the ranks.

Kristen Alexander has made a speciality of military history with her previously successful biography of *Clive Caldwell, Air Ace*, Australia's most successful fighter pilot of WWII.

In *Jack Davenport: Beaufighter Leader*, Alexander has given us a very readable life

story of another Australian WWII hero, from childhood to his death from cancer in 1996.

As a young airman, Jack Davenport and his colleagues were in a situation where survival was a day-to-day proposition, and he is recorded as having a particular rapport with those under his command. His many exploits and acts of courage are described in fascinating detail.

Civilian life may not have been quite as dangerous but success in business required many of the same talents. War has very few redeeming features, but one of these is probably the leaders it produces, such as Jack Davenport.

Indeed, Jack appreciated that fact. Late in life he looked back on his business career and lamented: "I observed more leadership in the RAAF during a month than I have seen in commercial organisations during the last decade."

DAVID WHITTINGHAM



captured by Germans and held as PoWs until May 8. Ironically, it was Davenport's wing commander brother Jack who had planned the operation.

After the war, a restless Davenport signed up with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to oversee projects in North Kiangsu, one of China's regions hardest hit by the Japanese occupation. It was a move that would put him on the frontline of the civil war as Chiang Kai-shek's nationalists and Mao Zedong's communists battled for control.

Davenport's memoir, full of lively anecdotes, is both a historical document and a rage against war. He takes his title from a mantra of gloom in World War I air force messes: "So, stand to your glasses steady/ This world is a world of lies./ Here's to the dead already/ Hurrah for the next man to die."

CARLENE ELLWOOD

● **Phil Davenport's book can be ordered from Beachcomber Press (phone: 6257 8575) at a cost of \$32 plus postage.**

# Laughing all the way to the butchers

*Finger Lickin' Fifteen*  
by Janet Evanovich  
Headline, \$32.99

**J**ANET Evanovich's 15th Stephanie Plum novel has flown off the shelves so fast it seems almost redundant to review it.

Fans would already have consumed this spicy little number with gusto.

For the uninitiated, however, here's a taste of what to expect.

As a newcomer to the series myself, I was struck by the resemblance to the work of another glandularly overproductive comic author, Alexander McCall Smith.

Evanovich stays on just the right side of twee, unlike the good Scottish doctor, but she also extracts plenty of laugh mileage from stereotypes.

McCall Smith has his Botswana lady detectives; Evanovich has Lula, the oversize "ex ho" in undersize clothing who works with our heroine Stephanie at the Vincent Plum Bail Bonds agency in Trenton, New Jersey.

Lula is a classic big fat mamma — an unstoppable force in a red Firebird, all heaving bosoms and big mouth, which she is generally stuffing with fried chicken and doughnuts.

When Lula witnesses two men beheading a celebrity barbecue chef with a meat cleaver in the street, she is in fear of becoming dead meat herself. The homicidal pair pursues her through the book, attempting to behead her, burn her or blow her up.

In a bid to get the killers locked up and claim a \$1 million reward, Lula decides to enter the barbecue cook-off that brought the celebrity chef to Trenton.

She sets about learning to cook, with the aid of a dodgy borrowed barbecue, a dodgy Chinese-made pressure cooker and eager assistance from Stephanie's Hungarian grandmother.

Stephanie, meanwhile, is trying to help ultra-hunky security company boss Ranger solve a series of break-ins at clients' homes.

She is also making her usual clumsy attempts to apprehend bail absconders.

Stephanie Plum is spectacularly unsuccessful at her job.

And that's the great charm of this proto-private eye — she's messy. She drives a rubbish car, she's always getting spattered in paint or food and always throwing the pursuit of bad guys aside in favour of eating or going to bed.

But she's also irresistible to the super-cool Ranger and dishy Jersey police detective Joe Morelli. She's one of us, but with her choice of men.

*Finger Lickin' Fifteen* is all romp and not much plot. It grates in places, such as when the old ladies of the neighbourhood get upset with Stephanie for taking the local flasher into custody. But it's great for belly laughs.

GABRIELLE RISH

