

The Phryne Fisher Series

by Kerry Greenwood

(originally published in Australia – official series website: www.phrynefisher.com)



1 – Cocaine Blues [1991]

The London season is in full fling at the end of the 1920s, but the Honourable Phryne Fisher - she of the green-grey eyes, diamond garters and outfits that should not be sprung suddenly on those of nervous dispositions - is rapidly tiring of the tedium of arranging flowers, making polite conversations with retired colonels, and dancing with weak-chinned men. Instead, Phryne decides it might be rather amusing to try her hand at being a lady detective in Melbourne, Australia.

Almost immediately from the time she books into the Windsor Hotel, Phryne is embroiled in mystery: poisoned wives, cocaine smuggling rings, corrupt cops and communism - not to mention erotic encounters with the beautiful Russian dancer, Sasha de Lisse - until her adventure reaches its steamy end in the Turkish baths of Little Lonsdale Street.



2 – Flying Too High [1992]

In this, the second Phryne Fisher mystery, the 1920s' most talented and glamorous detective flies even higher, handling a murder, a kidnapping and the usual array of beautiful young men with style and consummate ease - and all before it's time to adjourn to the Queenscliff Hotel for breakfast. Whether she's flying planes, clearing a friend of homicide charges or saving a child from kidnapping, she handles everything with the same dash and lan with which she drives her red Hispano-Suiza.



3 – Murder on the Ballarat Train [1993]

When the glamorous Phryne Fisher, accompanied by Dot, decides to leave her delightfully fast, red Hispano-Suiza at home and travel to the country in the train, the last thing she expects is to have to use her trusty Beretta .32 to save their lives.

What was planned as a restful country sojourn turns into the stuff of nightmares: a young girl who can't remember anything, rumours of vile white slavery and the body of an old woman missing her emerald rings. And Phryne is at the centre, working through the clues to arrive at the incredible truth before another murder is committed.



4 – Death at Victoria Dock [1992]

The Honourable Miss Phryne Fisher, beautifully dressed in loose trousers, a cream silk shirt and a red-fox fur has just had her windscreen shot out inches in front of her divine nose. But worse is the fate of the pale young man lying on the road, his body hit by bullets, who draws his final blood-filled breath with Phryne at his side.

Outraged by this brutal slaughter, Phryne promises to find out who is responsible. But Phryne doesn't yet know how deeply into the mire she'll have to go - bank robbery, tattoo parlours, pubs, spiritualist halls and the Anarchists.



5 – The Green Mill Murder [1993]

Gorgeous in her sparkling lobelia-coloured georgette dress, delighted by her dancing skill, pleased with her partner and warmed by the admiring regard of the banjo player, Miss Phryne Fisher had thought of tonight as a promising evening at the hottest dancehall in town, the Green Mill.

But that was before death broke in. In jazz-mad 1920s Melbourne, Phryne finds there are hidden perils in dancing the night away like murder, blackmail and young men who vanish.



6 – Blood and Circuses [1994]

Peeling off her wealth and privilege, Phryne takes a job as a trick horse-rider, wearing hand-me-down clothes and a new name. Someone seems determined to see the circus fail and Phryne must find out who that might be and why they want it badly enough to resort to poison, assault and murder.



7 – Ruddy Gore [1995]

Running late to the Hinkler gala performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Ruddigore*, Phryne Fisher meets some thugs in dark alley and handles them convincingly before they can ruin her silver dress. Phryne then finds that she has rescued a gorgeous Chinese, Lin Chung, and his grandmother, and is briefly mistaken for a deity.

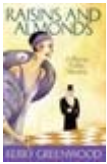
Denying divinity but accepting cognac, she later continues safely to the theatre. But it's an unexpected evening as her night is again interrupted by a most bizarre death onstage.



8 – Urn Burial [1995]

The redoubtable Phryne Fisher is holidaying at Cave House, a Gothic mansion in the heart of the Victorian mountain country. But the peaceful country surroundings mask danger. Her host is receiving death threats, lethal traps are set without explanation around the house and the parlourmaid is found strangled to death.

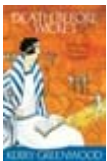
What with the reappearance of the mysterious funerary urns, a pair of young lovers, an extremely eccentric swagman, an angry outcast heir, and the luscious Lin Chung, Phryne's attention has definitely been caught.



9 – Raisins and Almonds [1997]

In investigating the poisoning of a young man in a bookshop at the Eastern Market, and the wrongful arrest of one Miss Sylvia Lee, Phryne Fisher is plunged into a world of Jewish politics, alchemy, poison and chicken soup.

Stopping only for a brief, but intensely erotic, dalliance with the beautiful Simon Abrahams Phryne picks her way through the mystery with help from the old faithfuls - Bert, Cec, Dot and Detective Inspector 'Call Me Jack' Robinson. But ultimately it is her stealth and wit which solve the crime - and all for the price of a song...



10 – Death Before Wicket [1999]

Phryne Fisher has plans for her Sydney sojourn - a few days at the Test cricket, a little sightseeing and the Artist's Ball with an up-and-coming young modernist. But these plans begin to go awry when Phryne's maid discovers her thoroughly respectable sister has left her family for the murky nightlife of the Cross. And Phryne is definitely not the woman to say 'no' when two delightful young men come to her on bended knees, begging for her help in finding their friend innocent of theft. Phryne's plans for a simple day or two of pleasure are postponed for good.



11 – Away With the Fairies [2001 or 2005]

It's the 1920s in Melbourne and Phryne is asked to investigate the puzzling death of a famous author and illustrator of fairy stories. To do so, Phryne takes a job within the women's magazine that employed the victim and finds herself enmeshed in her colleagues' deceptions.



12 – Murder in Montparnasse [2002]

Seven Australian soldiers, carousing in Paris in 1918, unknowingly witness a murder and their presence has devastating consequences. Ten years later, two are dead ... under very suspicious circumstances.

Phryne's wharfie mates, Bert and Cec, appeal to her for help. They were part of this group of soldiers in 1918 and they fear for their lives and for those of the other three men. It's only as Phryne delves into the investigation that she, too, remembers being in Montparnasse on that very same day.



13 – The Castlemaine Murders [2004]

In this thirteenth Phryne Fisher mystery, Phryne returns with a flourish to solve the most horrifying crime yet which takes her from a funfair ghost train to an abandoned mine in the old gold fields.



14 – Queen of the Flowers [2004]

In 1928 St Kilda's streets hang with fairy lights. Magic shows, marionettes, tea dances, tango competitions, lifesaving demonstrations, lantern shows, and picnics on the beach are all part of the Flower Parade.

And who else should be chosen to be Queen of the Flowers but the gorgeous, charming and terribly fashionable Hon Phryne Fisher? Phryne needs a new dress and a swimming costume but she also needs a lot of courage to confront her problems: a missing daughter, the return of an old lover, and a young woman found drowned at the beach at Elwood.



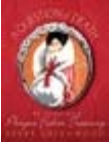
15 – Death by Water [2005]

Phryne Fisher, with her Lulu bob, green eyes, Cupid's bow lips and Chanel travelling suits, is exactly the sort of elegant sleuth to take on a ring of jewellery thieves aboard the high seas - or at least, aboard the SS Hinemoa on a luxury cruise to New Zealand. With the Maharani - the Great Queen of Sapphires - as the bait, Phryne rises magnificently to the challenge.



16 – Murder in the Dark [2006]

The delectable Phryne Fisher has been invited to the Last Best party of 1928. When three of the guests are kidnapped Phryne finds she must puzzle her way through the scavenger hunt clues to retrieve the hostages.



A Question of Death [2007]

The Honourable Phryne Fisher - she of the Lulu bob, green eyes, Cupid's Bow lips and diamante garters - is the 1920's most elegant and irrepressible sleuth. This collection of Phryne short stories and other Phryne miscellany - including Phryne's favourite shoes and hats, decadent cocktail recipes and her best tips for discouraging unwanted admirers - is a gorgeously collectable treat for all Phryne fans. Lavishly illustrated with divine colour illustrations by Beth Norling, *A Question of Death* will bring joy to the hearts of Phryne Fisher fans everywhere.



17 – Murder on a Midsummer Night [2008]

Melbourne, 1929. The year starts off for glamorous private investigator Phryne Fisher with a rather trying heat wave and more mysteries than you could prod a parasol at. Simultaneously investigating the apparent suicide death of a man on St Kilda beach and trying to find a lost, illegitimate child who could be heir to a wealthy old woman's fortune, Phryne needs all her wits about her, particularly when she has to tangle with a group of thoroughly unpleasant Bright Young Things.

Prepared for the Just Desserts mystery fiction discussion group meeting on September 25, 2008.