Dr William (Bill) Metcalf, a long-term member of AHA, has just had his latest book released. *Brisbane: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Nightmares*. It tells the stories of little-known, peculiar aspects of Brisbane’s colourful and highly contested history.

This book reveals eleven authors from the 19th and 20th centuries who wrote about how wonderful, ‘utopian’, Brisbane could become – or how dreadful, ‘dystopian’, it could also become.

Some writers imagined a future utopian Brisbane where inequality has been eliminated, where everyone is prosperous, living in the most beautiful city with wide, tree-lined boulevards, wonderful opera-houses and museums, bubbling fountains and grand squares. They saw Brisbane becoming the centre of the civilised world, a model for humanity.

Other writers depicted Brisbane as having been annihilated, violently wiped off the face of the earth except for a few stone ruins overgrown with lantana. These dystopian images saw Brisbane residents enslaved in a racial, civil-war nightmare, beset with poverty and ‘ethnic-cleansing’ violence, their lives being precarious at best.

What led to these utopian and dystopian visions? Who were the visionaries? What do they tell us about a little-known part of Brisbane’s quirky history?

*Brisbane: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Nightmares* is the history of a wonderful or dreadful Brisbane that never eventuated – but could have. This well-illustrated book reveals all in a witty, sometimes disturbing way.

Copies are available from Boolarong Press or at [*BHGBooks2022@gmail.com*](mailto:BHGBooks2022@gmail.com) .