

# The Southern Yarn

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.



January 2014

## downundercalendar

### FEBRUARY

#### Waitangi & Australia Day Annual bake-off

Saturday February 1st, 2014

#### Scandinavian Cultural Centre, 764 Erin

This is a fun social event where we celebrate our roots and enjoy great food prepared by some of the finest chefs in Winnipeg – YOU! So accept the challenge: Bake up your best PAVLOVA and compete for 1st Prize, Grand Champion, Best in Show and/or bring a complementary main dish, salad or veggie dish. There might also be a fun trivia quiz on Australia and New Zealand knowledge – and more prizes! And don't forget – the Bar will be open.

### RSVP

If you let us know you are coming, we can be ready for you! RSVP to 204-228-9959 or email [social@downunderclub.mb.ca](mailto:social@downunderclub.mb.ca).



### New Member!

We are pleased to announce the arrival of our son Owen. He came into the world at 11:10 pm on Tuesday, December 3, Owen weighed in at 7lbs 1 oz. and measured 20".

Both Lynley and Owen are doing great. Thanks,  
Lynley, Jason and Ryan Davidson

### Are your Membership dues paid for 2014?

Individual \$20 ... Couple/family \$30 ... Mail your cheques to the Club, pay at the next event, or online through the website. Any questions, contact Peter Debenham at [peter@pdactg.ca](mailto:peter@pdactg.ca) or 204-955-0393.

**Advertise** in The Southern Yarn. Contact Jenny (228-9959, [info@downunderclub.mb.ca](mailto:info@downunderclub.mb.ca)) for all the rates. Send your submission by email to [info@downunderclub.mb.ca](mailto:info@downunderclub.mb.ca) or mail to PO Box 1655, Stn Main, Winnipeg MB R3C 2Z6.



## December Christmas Party

**N**ot even - 27'C. was too cold for 5 day old Owen Davidson and big brother Ryan to bundle up and come out to see Father Christmas at the Down Under children's Christmas party on Sunday, December 8th. In fact, 9 other children, along with older brothers and sisters, came out to see the jolly old fellow. All in all, about 45 people attended the pot luck dinner. It always amazes me what delicious food is brought and how we always seem to have enough of

everything. Thank you to all those who helped in the kitchen, washed dishes, and cleaned up afterwards.

Don't forget to look up your best pav recipe and enter the taste testing competition as part of our Australia/Waitangi Day celebration. Saturday, February 1st at the Scandinavia Cultural Centre. Or just come along and enjoy the friendship. This event is also a pot-luck. We do like to eat!

Margaret



# editorially yours

Charlie Powell



**G**'day! Well we've had some record cold temperatures here in Manitoba, but we're used to that, eh? And Christmas Day was actually quite pleasant. Too bad for our neighbours to the east – many contending with severe ice-storms and more than a week without power! Our "Three Cheers!" go to the Manitoba Hydro workers who have given their time to assist over there. This month Gordon introduces us to Dennis and Janet Woodford (p.4). Dennis worked for MB Hydro for 15 years.

Meanwhile downunder, it's the middle of summer; and adding to the Christmas cheer, at least in Australia, is their team's comprehensive return to cricket dominance - with England shut out in the Ashes series; and a record one-day attendance at the MCG - 90,831 - another "Three Cheers!" A related bit of news was sent in from our correspondent in Adelaide, Ed Powell: the announcement by Kerry O'Keefe of his retirement from ABC Radio cricket commentary (p.3). Since I've been upover for more than 20 years, I only remember him as a test spin bowler.

I do have nostalgic memories of Alan McGilvray and Lindsay Hassett, who for me, since I was a kid, made radio (anyone remember crystal radio sets?) more like television with their uniquely detailed and insightful ball-by-ball descriptions of many games over the years.

Thanks again to Murray, Gordon, Ed, Peter and Margaret for their contributions this month; and Betsy Burt for her Beef Stroganoff recipe (p.6). Hope to see you all on Feb. 1 for our fun celebration of Waitangi Day and Australia Day; AND our exciting Pavlova bake-off competition – Les Fitt is the reigning champion pav-maker to beat!

Judy and I wish you a happy 2014 that brings exciting new discoveries and adventures.

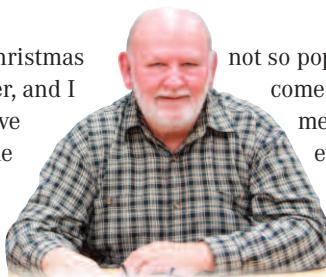
Enjoy!

Charlie (signature in Dropbox)

**A**s I write this, the Christmas season is nearly over, and I hope that you all have had a chance to spend some time with your family and friends, enjoying conviviality and the tastes of the season. Our family enjoys this time of year, and with our younger son coming in from Toronto, and the addition of a second granddaughter in August, and our elder daughter's fiancé, we needed a second table to place everyone on Christmas day.

The club held its annual meeting in late November, and a new board of directors was elected, in front of a small gathering of members. Our long standing President Terry Roberts had earlier indicated he would not be standing for re-election. The new board is shown elsewhere in the *Yarn*, with most positions filled by existing appointees. A welcome addition as a new board member is Catherine Bowering as vice-president.

As the new president, I will extend an ongoing invitation to everyone for feedback on the operation of the club. As a member of the board, I have seen less and less participation and loss of membership numbers over the past years. We have several well attended events through the year, and some



## president's ramblings

Peter Munn

not so popular, so your feedback is welcome. We want the club to be of real meaning for its members. Our next event is the Waitangi Day/Australia Day celebration at the Scandinavian Club, always a popular event, and we look forward to seeing you there.

So that's it for me, as the new president. I did say to Margaret that she could call me "El Presidente", but I think the expression on her face probably said no.

Regards,  
Peter



Catherine Bowering  
is a new face on the  
DUCW board as  
Vice president

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**More than 40 years' South Pacific experience**



Rip currents kill more Australians per year than natural disasters and sharks combined, says a new study.

## Ripper, mates

THEY MAY NOT OFTEN make the headlines, but a recent study has shown that rip currents kill more people on average in Australia than bushfires, floods, cyclones and sharks combined.

Rip currents are strong channels of water that flow away from the shore, into the open water at surf beaches and large lakes. Rips can flow at speeds of up to 2.5m per second, which is faster than a human can swim.

Led by Dr Rob Brander, a coastal geologist at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, the research team analysed deaths from natural disasters and shark attacks based on records dating as far back as 1852

[More online: Australian Geographic]



## Roof gardens set to grow in Sydney

Green thumbs across Sydney are being encouraged to reach for the sky under the City of Sydney's new green roofs and walls policy. The draft policy calls on residents

and businesses to green their roofs and walls as a way of improving air quality, supporting biodiversity and creating new spaces in the heart of the city for food production and relaxation. Lord Mayor Clover Moore said there was currently at least 96,000 square metres of green rooftops and walls across the city - roughly equal to 230 basketball courts. [more online]

## The Ninth Watch

The Pitch Drop is the world's longest running lab experiment. In 86 years, no one has seen a drop fall from this solid that behaves like a liquid. But now, the 9th drop is set to go and if you're logged in when it falls, we'll add your name to the history books. [Join the Watch online]



## Kerry O'Keeffe retires from ABC Grandstand commentary team

One of Australian cricket's most colourful characters, Kerry O'Keeffe, has called stumps on his commentary career. O'Keeffe has announced that the Sydney New Year's Ashes Test will be his last in the ABC Grandstand commentary box after 13 summers of entertaining Australian radio audiences. He made the announcement during the final session of day two of the Boxing Day Test at the MCG. [Listen to his announcement online]

## newszealand

source: NZ Herald, unless otherwise noted

## 'Extinct' New Zealand bird may still be alive

NINE POSSIBLE SIGHTINGS since 1990 have convinced some New Zealand authorities there's a chance the (Callaeas cinereus)

Sightings of the orange-wattled South Island kokako have been accepted as genuine says NZ conservation body.



may not be extinct.

This orange-wattled kokako - a separate species from the endangered blue-wattled (Callaeas wilsoni) - was declared extinct in 2007 as there had been no accepted sightings since 1967

[More: Australian Geographic]

## Fairtrade chocolate a hit in Wellington

The Cocoa Press fair trade chocolate is going so well that owners Rochelle Harrison and Gabriel Davidson are setting up their own chocolate factory in central Wellington, which will be known as the Wellington Chocolate Factory. This will come as absolutely no surprise to anyone who has tasted Wellington's very own fair trade chocolate - dark, smooth and quite delicious!

Rochelle is the first chocolatier in New Zealand to choose 100% certified organic and fair trade ingredients. Her organic beans and sugar allow her to make a product which is safe and naturally flavoursome, and their fair trade origins are aligned with her principles as a person and as a producer.

"Fair trade is a win-win for producers and consumers. It gives consumers an opportunity to purchase with their values".

She is proud to support the work done with the farmers of her Trade Aid-imported beans and loves to see the results of Trade Aid's partnership with the growers, including the building of new water systems, churches and schools. Source:

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# getting to know...

members of our club

## Dennis and Janet Woodford

I have said it before, but it bears repeating, that I am often struck by the careers of many of our members who have come from rather humble beginnings. Dennis Woodford is no exception.

He was born in Melbourne, Australia. His father, a WWII veteran, worked for the Wool Commission and qualified for a soldier's settlement at Bobinawarraah East, a speck on the map southeast of Wangaratta in the Great Dividing Range area. This was Ned Kelly country and several of his artifacts have been found there at Bobinawarraah, not far from Glenrowan, Kelly's last stand.

Dennis attended a one-room, one-teacher, 12-student school from ages five to 12. Most of the kids rode horses to school; Dennis a bike. He then went to Wangaratta Tech for six years that included two years in electrical engineering. He moved to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and completed a diploma in electrical engineering. He transferred to the University of Melbourne, and earned a Bachelor's degree in the same discipline. It was here he met Janet Williams, an American who was also studying there. More on that later.

In 1966, Dennis joined an international engineering company and after one year transferred to the UK, working there for 2½ years. Janet came over for a while in 1969 and in 1970 they were married in Oakland, CA.

Dennis accepted graduate work at University of Manitoba for two years. He was next with Manitoba Hydro for 15 years. In 1986, he was appointed Executive Director of Manitoba HVDC Research Centre until 2001. Without getting too technical, hydro power is generated in alternating current (AC), converted to direct current (DC) for transmission purposes (less line loss), and reconverted back to AC near Winnipeg. And don't get Dennis started on the latest Bipole III controversy!

Dennis has now started his own consulting company, Electranix Corp., working with major electrical engineering equipment suppliers of wind farm development and wind turbine and DC manufacturers around the



world. They do specialised power transmission studies in Malaysia, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, UK, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Spain and Italy.

Janet was born in Twin Cities, MN. Her father was doing his doctorate in agricultural chemistry and moved to Berkeley, CA, where she went to school. (Remember the Vietnam War protests there?) The family then moved to Melbourne for a sabbatical year in 1965 where Janet attended university there and met Dennis. She completed an Arts Bachelor degree in Russian and Biology at the University of California in Berkeley. She also did one year of teacher training.

The Woodfords have three children - Scott is in Austin, TX, Becky in Seattle, WA, each with three children, and Roger in Toronto, ON.

Janet looks after Dennis' company as Executive Assistant.

They travel a great deal and were in Oz last February and August. They found out about the DUCW through Norm Griffiths, who has known them for many years.

Dennis is kept busy with his business interests, but goes to the Refit Centre four or five times a week.

Another impressive career for a kid from Bobinawarraah!



### Her purpose: cut Jamaican debt, jump jobs and ease poverty

The Jamaican government, like so many small Commonwealth states, has serious concerns about national debt, and the island nation's first female Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller is doing something about it.

'We have taken hard and bold decisions to severely cut our level of indebtedness,' she said in a year-end interview. With that came attendant increase in taxation, shrinking government spending, better investment policies and job creation.

She added that in the early stages of Jamaica's Economic Reform Program, job losses, cost of living increases and slow economic growth were inevitable.

"We have also been doing everything possible to protect the poor and the most vulnerable. But we have to keep our attention focused on the medium- and long-term goals and maintain our resolve to do what it takes to return our country to economic buoyancy and social equity."

She sees a desperate need, too, to cater more liberally to the most vulnerable people in society.

The Prime Minister initially took office in 2006, but after just one year her People's National Party narrowly lost a general election. But after five years on opposition benches she was re-elected in 2012 vote having run a successful campaign pushing an agenda of republicanism and gay rights.

Prime Minister Simpson-Miller is a graduate of America's Harvard University and the Institute of Management and Production in Jamaica.

- Murray Burt

#### Home Visits

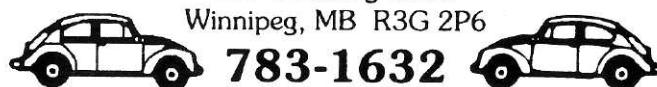
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The Queen and Douglas Hague, the subject of her summons to Buckingham Palace.

## Her Majesty calls in foreign minister for “a little talk” about things

The Queen may have deferred to her son and heir Prince Charles, to fill in for her as Head of the Commonwealth in Sri Lanka for the Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) meeting in November.

But make no mistake, she still retains a strong grip on the reins of Commonwealth headship. For example, she was not at all shy about calling in William Hague, the U.K. Foreign Secretary, for a private meeting at Buckingham Palace to hear him out on the public criticism that he has been ignoring Britain’s Commonwealth allies.

Officially, Buckingham Palace does not comment on the Queen’s private meetings, but a courtier response to queries about the meeting: “Well...Her Majesty remains as interested in foreign affairs as ever, and is particularly enthusiastic to keep abreast of developments with the Commonwealth.”

According to The London Telegraph which broke the story, Lord Howell of Guildford, a Conservative peer who was sacked as a Foreign Office minister last year, claimed that the Foreign Office “kowtows” to America and “cringes” within the European Union, while ignoring the rest of the world including the Commonwealth.

The outcome: Hague promised to renew UK’s focus on the 53-strong group.

## Surprise earthquake shakes southern NZ

That most stable southern extreme of New Zealand – the part of the country furthest from the north’s quakes and volcanoes – has

had a troublesome pre-dawn wake-up experience: a 6.2 magnitude earthquake. It shattered the early morning calm of Dec. 17 but was distant enough from civilization and deep enough to spare Southland damage or loss of life.

It was registered as being located 125km west of Tuatapere at a depth of 25km. The disasters that leveled large parts of Christchurch in 2010 came in at magnitude of about 7.5-plus.

Duty Seismologist Caroline Little said the quake “will be related to the subduction zone down there, so the Australian Plate is being pushed under the Pacific Plate.”

The Southland Times in Invercargill reported that “there would definitely be aftershocks peaking at magnitude five... and heightened quake activity for a month or so.”

## Oz and Kiwi party on Soviet ship trapped in Antarctic ice

About 50 passengers, mostly scientists from Australia, and a Russian crew of 20, got an extended stay in Antarctica, aboard their ship, MV Akademik Shokalski.

It was jammed in the crushing ice of Commonwealth Bay. Chinese and Australian ice breakers were called in to free it.

Ornithologist Kerry-Jane Wilson, one of four Kiwis in the mainly Australian scientific party of 50, said the heavy winds were pressing “huge chunks of ice” against the ship and it is drifting with the pack. She said all were comfortable aboard and there is no report of danger, just delay. They expected to get clear in a few days and return to The Bluff in New Zealand.

## Oz top court strikes down new gay marriage law

The capital territory brief adventure into the same-marriage issue which took effect on Dec 7 has been invalidated by the nation’s top court.

The Federal Government challenged the Canberra court’s decision and that challenge prevailed.

Rodney Croome, national director of the advocacy group Australian Marriage Equality, said his group knows of about 30 same-sex couples who have married since Saturday, though the actual number may be slightly higher. The ruling means their marriages are now nullified.

Outside the court in Canberra, a tearful Croome, flanked by several same-sex couples who were married in the past week, said the ruling was a defeat for marriage equality but there had been a greater victory this week.

“And that victory was the nation saw for the first time, I believe, what is really at the core of this issue – they’ve seen that marriage equality is not about protest or politics or even about laws in the constitution, ultimately. Marriage equality is about love, commitment, family and fairness,” Croome said.

Lyle Shelton, managing director of Australian Christian Lobby, which opposes same-sex marriage, praised the court ruling and said common sense had prevailed.

Wire reports say the ruling comes just a day after . That dealt a severe blow to gay activists who have fought for years for the chance to live openly in India’s deeply conservative society.

Gay marriage has legal recognition in 18 countries including 16 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

## NZ labor making stronger republican noises at its conference

It is happening again. Disdain for a royal tradition-based administration. Perhaps not surprisingly, the noise is coming from Labour Party delegates who seem to want to slip out of the successful representative monarchy NZ has and to inch administration closer to republicanism.

Delegates at the Labor Party annual conference in Christchurch gave the green light to a proposal to hold a binding referendum on whether to ditch the monarchy on the death of the Queen.

The move comes as a recent Republican Movement poll, conducted by pollsters Curia, shows a small NZ majority (47% for, versus 44% against and 9% uncertain) are in favor of such a referendum.

An earlier June poll on the issue found 40% support versus 53% against.

“It seems republicanism is so unpopular at the moment that the only way republicans can get any traction at all is if they completely remove the current Queen from the equation.

Murray Burt is president of the Manitoba branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society; past president of the Commonwealth Journalists Association; a member of the Advisory Board of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative; Hon LCol of the 78th Fraser Highlanders; and a director of the Royal Military Institute (Manitoba) and The Intrepid Society. He is retired from more than 50 years of journalism . Murray Burt writes this Commonwealth column to raise sensitivities to its value and lift the curtain on our understanding of a third of the population of the world.



The Bridge Hotel (previously the Hotel Reverina) in Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia. Photo: Brett Matthews, Flickr. [more]



DUCW potlucks are always excellent because of delicious recipes like Betsy's Stroganoff.



## membermoves

what we're up to here and there

### Phil Williams writes...

Hey Gordon, 5 Dec '13

After a lot of thought I have decided not to renew my membership of the Down Under Club this year. I remember the first meeting that I attended back in January 1965 at Don Nixon's apartment, which was when I first met you. Peter Thomas drove me home that night, which began a decades-long weekly beer-drinking saga! Since then many happy memories, and a host of good guys.

I also remember my six years in Wagga with fondness, and I have been back several times since I left. Life in small towns in the 50s was quite a lot different than it is these last few years.

We have been out here in BC for over ten years now, and apart from yourself and Norm Griffiths, and of course Ruth Thomas, whom I usually take out to dinner when I am in town, I don't know of any of the original group that are still in Winnipeg. We won't be coming back to live in Winnipeg, and although I am back there from time to time, it never seems to coincide with a Down-under event. So, I thought that I would save the Club the trouble of sending me the newsletter.

I'll give you a call next time that I am in town, likely about next March.

By the way I have always read the *Southern Yarn* from front to back whenever I received it.

Greetings, and best wishes for the Festive season,

Phil Williams

### Message from Tassie ..

Hope everyone in DUCW had a great Christmas and lots of luck in 2014.

Peter, Lisa and Kali Gilberd

### Betsy Burt's Beef Stroganoff

Betsy is kindly sharing her delicious recipe that some of us enjoyed at the Christmas Party.

1 lb lean hamburger  
1 can mushrooms, stems and pieces with liquid  
1 can mushroom soup & ½ - 1 can water (you decide)  
1 onion diced finely  
salt/pepper  
garlic powder  
dash of nutmeg  
If needed, 1 Tbsp beef cup-of-soup powder

#### Method:

Form small little balls of hamburger. Tiny meatballs are best.

Brown the meatballs in batches in a fry pan and put browned meatballs into Dutch Oven. Drain excess fat off. Add salt, pepper, and garlic powder for flavour.

Using the frypan, sauté finely diced onions until golden and wilted. Add to Dutch Oven. You want them to disappear into the gravy.

In frypan, add the can of mushroom stems and pieces including liquid to gather the bits and pieces from fry pan. If not "beefy" enough just add 1 TBsp of Beef cup-of-soup powder. Add to Dutch Oven.

Stir in can of mushroom soup. (I like Campbell's best. Creamier.)

Add the dash of nutmeg. Heat on stove to bring all flavours together and meat is well done.

Adjust liquid amount. You want a creamy gravy.

Serve with broad noodles.

Some variations: I have used thinly sliced steak in place of the hamburger, for a more expensive dish. And you can always add thinly sliced fresh mushrooms. Additional sour cream just before serving adds to the creaminess.

### Board of Directors

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Vice President: **Catherine Bowering**  
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