

The Southern Yarn

December 2016

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

JANUARY 2017

Australia Day and Waitangi Day and Annual "Bakeoff"
Saturday 28th, 2017, 6 pm
Scandinavian Cultural Centre,
764 Erin St.

This is a FREE fun social event where we celebrate our respective national days and enjoy great food prepared by some of the finest chefs in Winnipeg – YOU! This year your mission is, should you choose to accept, to compete for 1st Prize, Grand Champion, Best in Show with a SALAD. There are endless possibilities with salads – so be creative. Other dishes will of course also be welcome to balance the fare, eg, meat, veggies and desserts. There might also be a fun trivia quiz on New Zealand and Australia – and more prizes! And don't forget – the bar will be open.... RSVP to Judy 204-275-7083 or social@downunderclub.mb.ca

APRIL 2017

Calling all Australians
April 27-28

Representatives of the **Australian High Commission** will be in Winnipeg on Friday April 27, 2017, to renew passports, approve new passports, and address any notarial issues or questions. There will also be an **Alumni networking reception** for Australian alumni in the evening of Thursday April 28. Alumni are graduates of an Australian university, vocational or training institution, and exchange teachers. All the details, including how to book online, will be available with the January Yarn. Questions? Contact Jenny at 204-228-9959.

RSVP

Let us know you are coming, RSVP to (Liz) social@downunderclub.mb.ca or 204-487-0067 or look for the new **RSVP page** under EVENTS on our website.

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

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Tis the season

The end of the year in our club concludes with the annual general meeting and our Christmas party.

Family Christmas Party

On Sunday 4th December, Santa arrived to the delight of MOST of the kids (one youngster was a bit concerned about the bearded stranger, and let his parent know in no uncertain terms). All received fine gifts that proved appropriate as they immediately became engrossed with them – assembling or playing with others or with parents.

The potluck meal proved to be a feast – a fitting farewell to the Hinrichsen family. Thanks for the many delicious contributions, including a first for the event - samosas!, and TWO scrumptious pavlovas!! The bar did good business and all enjoyed the fun evening.

Renew your membership!

Individual \$20 ... Couple/family \$30 ...
Mail your cheques to the Club, pay in person at the next event, or use the PayPal link on the website for fast, secure payment. Questions? Contact Peter Debenham at peter@pdlactg.ca or 204-955-0393.



AGM

The Annual General Meeting of members of the Down Under Club of Winnipeg, Inc., was held on Friday, November 27th at 7:00 pm, at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre at 764 Erin Street, Winnipeg.

The faithful few who attended heard and voted to accept the various annual reports from the Secretary, President, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Social Convenor and Membership Chair.

Gordon Keatch chaired the election for executive positions; the only change from the previous team being Judy Powell stepping up to accept the vacant Program Chair. Members thanked Liz Hydesmith for her term in that position. The full new executive list appears on p.6. A relaxed time of social interaction followed the formal business agenda.

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



G'day!

I usually don't comment on the weather – it's what it is and there ain't nothing you can do about it! But today we woke to about 6 inches of the white stuff outside. So after some light warm-up exercises, I put another layer on and went out and shoveled out a trench to the back gate, then fired up the blower for the first time this season and cleared the footpath and driveway. Now, at midday, it is still falling heavily, so the process will be repeated this evening. Anyway, except for the workout, it has given me the opportunity to stay indoors and get this Yarn assembled.



Getting to know column this month on p.4 is a song composed by kiwi Peter Cape around 1968 giving the nativity story an early New Zealand flavor. It was announced last month that the grey jay is to be proclaimed Canada's national bird (didn't have one til now), so that cheery little cousin of the blue jay is the subject of Birds I view (p.6). All that and more, as Rick Mercer says, in this edition.

Thanks again to other contributors this month – Murray Burt, Peter Munn, Jenny Gates and our sponsors.

Peace to you this Christmas,

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



I thoroughly enjoyed our DUCW Christmas party held at the Scandinavian club. Santa made a splashy entrance, and had gifts for all the young children. The pot luck dinner was a tasty success, and Bashir's contribution of samosa was a winner for a lot of people. I became a fan of samosa when Margaret and I travelled around India by third class train and bus in the early 70's. Buying food from the street and train vendors was always going to be a gamble, but I worked out that between the boiling oil they were cooked in, and the fiery heat of the ingredients, there wasn't even a superbug

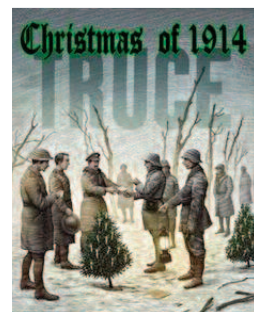
that could survive those conditions. It is a feature of a potluck meal that you always get a wide selection, and this meal was no exception. We even had two pav's to go along with the great selection of meat dishes.

Grant and Alanna were able to attend the event with their children Kaitlyn and Luke, even though they are in the midst of their final preparations before flying off to Australia and settling in Orange, and we wish them all the best.

As I write this, the forecast for the next few days is 20 – 30 cm of snow, and high winds. Now we can say winter is here. Keep warm, see you soon, and...

Merry Christmas to all

Regards,
Peter



100 years ago

How English and German soldiers bonded during WWI Christmas Day Truce

In his letter to his mother, Lance Corporal Loasby, 25, of the 2nd Northamptonshire Regiment, tells how he and a comrade met two Germans between their trenches, which were just 40 yards apart.

Lance Corporal Loasby tells how his meeting with the officer came after an earlier encounter with another German in no man's land on Christmas Eve. He asked if the British would stop firing on Christmas Day and Boxing Day so the Germans could bury their dead. Read more, including a full copy of his hand-written letter home [link].

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More than 40 years' South Pacific experience

Hi-tech hope for the Great Barrier Reef

It's the moment the Great Barrier Reef's been waiting for – confirmation QUT's autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) can help stop the reef's most prolific pest, the devastating crown-of-thorns starfish (COTS).

QUT researchers Dr Matthew Dunbabin and Dr Feras Dayoub have successfully completed field trials of their COTSbot robot, which they've proved can navigate difficult reefs, detect COTS and deliver a fatal dose of bile salts – all autonomously and precisely.

It's the first robot in the world proven to control marine pests and the first ever built with an injection system. [link].



Costly little pest

Time flies light an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana. So the CSIRO have a project on the go to combat the little pest, known as Qfly (Queensland fruit fly). Using sterile insect technology (SIT), a research and development facility in Port Augusta, South Australia, will be gearing up for the eventual release of sterile male fruit flies into Qfly affected areas with the purpose of disrupting mating and allowing for reduced pesticide use by growers. Read more online: [link].

newszealand

source: NZ Herald, unless otherwise noted

Not all Aussies will be drinking beer this Christmas

Australian Food News reports: The Australian Christmas celebration stereotype may be beers on the beach with a BBQ. However, according to the latest Roy Morgan Research, fewer Aussies will be indulging in beer this festive season.

The latest study into Australia's drinking habits has found nearly half of all adult Australians drink wine at least once a month, whilst only 38.5 per cent drink beer monthly.

Spirits are Australia's third favourite alcoholic beverage, with 26.2 per cent of adults drinking spirits at least once a month. Read more here: [link].



New Zealand Prime Minister John Key had a brief cameo as a pilot in StepUp Taranaki's dance video. Photo: Edward Aish

Boosting morale in Taranaki

Hannah Craft of the Sydney Morning Herald reports: "New Zealand Prime Minister John Key's sudden resignation on Monday (Dec. 5th) may have shocked the Pacific region, yet it was perfectly timed to give a boost to one small community.

On Monday morning charity group StepUp Taranaki released an elaborate dance video they had filmed over 18 months,

in which Mr Key makes a guest appearance, to lift up a community battered by job losses." The video is a MUST WATCH! More online: [link].



Silver lining in Christchurch?

In 2011 80% of the Christchurch CBD was devastated. Since then much of the available empty ground has been re-imagined with art installations. The Greening the Rubble project has created dozens of gardens in small unused spaces like the giant chairs and couches shown here on Gloucester Street.

See more examples online: [link].



Next time you're in Wellington

The Wellington Cable Car is a funicular railway in Wellington, New Zealand, between Lambton Quay, the main shopping street, and Kelburn, a suburb in the hills overlooking the central city, rising 120 m (394 ft) over a length of 612 m (2,008 ft). The one way trip takes approximately five minutes. The Wellington Cable Car is widely recognised as a symbol of Wellington (Wikipedia). Read more online: [link].

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Peter Irwin Cape

Peter Irwin Cape (1926-1979) grew up seeing the country from many sides. His family sold fabric around the upper North Island, living out of caravans and travelling rural byways. "I had little time to stop, make deep friendships," Cape later recalled. "I could indulge a leaning toward speculation and fantasy. And ... with a canoe, a dog, and an airgun, and a wide variety of country around me, I could explore worlds of fact as well as fantasy."

So, as a nod to the Christmas story this month, here is a poem – originally written as a hymn – by Peter Cape:

Nativity (originally titled Epiphany)

They were set for home, but the horse went lame
And the rain came belting out of the sky
Joe saw the hut and he went to look
And he said, "She's old, but she'll keep you dry"

So her kid was born in that roadman's shack
By the light of a lamp that'd hardly burn
She wrapped him up in her hubby's coat
And put him down on a bed of fern

Then they came riding out of the night
And this is the thing that she'll always swear
As they took off their coats and came into the light
They knew they were going to find her there

Three old jokers in oilskin coats
Stood by the bunk in that leaking shack
One had a beard like a billygoat's
One was frail, and one was black

She sat on the foot of the fernstalk bed
And she watched, but she didn't understand
When they put those bundles at the baby's head
And this river nugget into his hand

Gold is the power of a man with a man
And incense the power of man with God
But myrrh is the bitter taste of death
And the sour-sweet smell of the upturned sod

Then they went, while she watched through the
open door
Weary as men who had ridden too far
And the rain eased off and the low cloud broke
And through a gap shone a single star.



Cape's hymn tune and other New Zealand Christmas songs can be found online: [\[link\]](#). and a biography here: [\[link\]](#).

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The Down Under Club of Winnipeg Inc.

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Invite me to join the DUCW website for regular updates and notices: ☐ yes ☐ no
The Southern Yarn newsletter preference: ☐ postal ☐ download from web site (PDF)

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NZ earthquake will transform the region forever

The massive earthquake in New Zealand – with a hefty 7.9 magnitude rating – caught world headlines for a day or so last month. But weird elements like those of no other quake were the real eyebrow raisers. Examples include:

Cows on a turf patch surrounded by deep caverns: Imagine three cows standing in a hillside pasture which suddenly splits all around them leaving them just 10 or 12 feet from the edge of a surrounding of new “cliff” crevasses 15 or 30 feet deep. They were rescued by their farmer owner after about 24 hours. Many of his other cattle were lost.

Stranded seafood: The seabed edging Kaikoura, normally a delightful seaside playground, was lifted three feet or so, exposing reefs that had been in place for millennia. That exposed the wildlife that lived and swam among them – crayfish, octopus, mussels, pauas (saucer-sized shellfish which cling to the rocks and popular fare among many). The waterfront community immediately initiated local rescue efforts to save as much wildlife as possible by shifting them several yards back down to the sea. (an exercise that also left many citizens with a good supply of frozen seafood).

Roads and railway lines to nowhere: The main north-south highways and railway lines along the coast and serving Kaikoura, ran straight into cliffs of debris or in the case of rail lines were left dripping over the ocean. Some of the lines ran straight into hillsides formed from which millions of tons of fallen rock and earth.

The quake hit New Zealand's South Island around 12:02am local time and was followed by devastating aftershocks and tsunamis, with more to follow.

A warning was issued in advance of the shake and citizens were urged to seek high ground and take the necessary precautions. Many of those living along the region's 322km of coastline were evacuated. Despite damage to highways, most people were able to reach safety.

The mid-South Island travel was virtually severed to smithereens, parts of the Wellington harbor foreshore freight terminal sank five feet.

Daily, since the quake, more buildings in Wellington are being red carded.

– Sources: Wire services and friends

Singapore marijuana execution

The death penalty claimed another victim in Singapore when Chijioke Stephen Obioha, who is from Nigeria, was hanged at dawn on Nov. 18. The Court of Appeals rejected a last minute appeal, clearing the way for the execution to go forward.

The Singaporean government aims for total secrecy when it comes to managing the executions it carries out, and this has particularly been the situation in Obioha's case, which has lasted for nine years.

Long time anti-death penalty lawyer M. Ravi told the Online Citizen news site that this is “possibly the longest delay between sentencing and execution” that he's seen. Human Rights Watch opposes the death penalty in all circumstances as an inherently cruel punishment.

In April 2007, Singapore authorities caught Obioha, an aspiring football player, with over two kilograms of marijuana. Under local laws in effect at the time of his arrest, the amount of drugs triggered the automatic legal presumption that he is a drug trafficker. At the time, the death penalty was mandatory for drug traffickers.

– Source: HRW' Mickey Spiegel

Fiji assays Indonesia's methods of mitigating radical ideologies

Indonesia's reputation in preventing and mitigating radical ideologies and terrorism has received a boost from the Fiji government after a visit to the National Counterterrorism Agency, or BNPT, office in Sentul, West Java, last month.

Fiji's National Security and Defense Minister Ratu Inoke Kabuabola visited the agency to inspect preventative and mitigation tactics, BNPT chief Comr. Gen. Suhardi Alius said.

Suhardi, a former police criminal investigation chief, said Fiji aims to replicate the facilities and measures deployed by the BNPT to counter terror.

“The response from Fiji's Defense Minister to BNPT was overwhelming. Terrorism has become a global issue, they feel the need to learn from us,” Suhardi said, adding that Fiji will conduct partnership in training partnerships. Meanwhile, BNPT deputy I of international partnerships, Insp. Gen. Petrus R. Golose said counterterrorism moves must take human rights into account and denied any current anti-terror campaigns have violated rights.

“These issues have been highlighted by the public and we are cautious when applying counter

– Source: Jakarta Globe

Resettlement deal for Nauru and Papua refugees

Australia has reached a resettlement deal with the United States for refugees being held in Papua New Guinea and Nauru after attempting to reach Australia by boat, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said on Sunday.

Under Australia's tough border security laws, asylum seekers intercepted trying to reach the country by boat are sent for processing at detention camps on Papua New Guinea's Manus island and the tiny South Pacific island nation of Nauru.

Some 1,200 people are in detention, with many held for more than three years. The United Nations and human rights groups have criticised the detentions.

“I can now confirm that the government has reached a further third country resettlement arrangement for refugees presently in the regional processing centres. The agreement is with the United States,” Turnbull told a press conference in Canberra.

Amnesty International said it was extremely concerned about the lack of information around the timeline and the number of refugees to be processed. No timeline was given for the process.

– Source: Middle East Monitor

Police address women's issues

Thirty police officers from 11 Pacific nations, all Commonwealth members, returned to their posts looking at violence against women through new lenses.

This was after they successfully completed an intensive two-week course in Nandi, Fiji. Represented during the training were Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The officers graduated last month from the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre's Police Regional Training Program at the Hexagon Hotel in Nandi.

– Source: Fiji Times

Murray Burt writes this column to raise sensitivities to the Commonwealth's value and to lift the curtain on our understanding of a third of the population of the world. The Commonwealth name and significance is rarely mentioned in daily news, he says. It should be.

Burt is president of the Manitoba branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society; past president of the Commonwealth Journalists Association; secretary of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada advisory board; Hon LCol of the 78th Fraser Highlanders; a senator of the 166th Battery RCA (Kenora) and a director of The Intrepid Society. He is retired from more than 50 years of journalism.



Grey jay

After inviting the public to vote for their choice, the Royal Canadian Geographic Society, through its magazine Canadian Geographic, last month announced that the gray jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) is now the national bird of Canada. (Actually it won't officially be until ratified by Parliament.)

It came down to a contest between the common loon (got my vote), the Canada goose, the snowy owl, the gray jay and the chickadee. Despite being a loon-atic, I can appreciate their choice. The gray jay does not bother to migrate south for the winter. Instead, it fluffs up against the cold and feeds from the caches stored during the warmer months, having memorized their whereabouts! They even rear their chicks in the bleak mid-winter.

They are also affectionately known as whisky jacks, through their association with the benevolent Algonquian and Dene mythological figure Wisakedjak, and are readily encountered when hiking or camping in the boreal forests. Like chickadees and nuthatches, they are not afraid to feed from your outstretched hand.

Hopefully now the powers that be will revert to calling these birds by their former official name: Canada jay. Read more online: [link].

In case you were wondering, Australia's is the Emu (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) and New Zealand's is, of course, the Kiwi (*Apteryx australis*) – see Birds I view 2016-08

I couldn't find a poem about grey jays, so instead, here is:

HOW WESAKECHAK GOT HIS NAME - A Cree Wesakechak Tale”

There are many, many different stories about Wesakechak and he has many different names. In the language of the Cree, he is known as Wesakechak, the Blackfoot people call him Napi and the Ojibway call him Nanabush.

Throughout North America, many tribes tell legends of this being. His name is different, but the lessons are the same. Story Synopsis:

Wesakechak disliked his name. He wanted a name that was more important and impressive. He complained to the Creator who agreed to hold a naming ceremony for all the creatures, including Wesakechak, who wanted new names. In those days, Wesakechak had special powers. He could talk to all the other creatures and he could change his shape. In this way he was able to live with Apikosis, (Mouse) who took care of him like a wife.

Apikosis did not want Wesakechak to get a better name because she was afraid that he would think he was too important to stay with her. The Creator picked the morning after midsummer, the longest day of the year, for the naming ceremony. Wesakechak was determined to be the first there so he tried to stay awake all night, but he fell asleep and Apikosis deliberately didn't wake him up. When Wesakechak finally got to the naming ceremony he discovered all the good names like Wolf, Bear and Eagle were already taken. The only name that was left was Wesakechak because no one else had wanted it.

The Creator told Wesakechak that it isn't the name that is important but what he does, and that instead of a new name, there was a new job for him. The Creator was introducing new creatures, called The First People. It would be Wesakechak's job to teach them so they could survive. This made Wesakechak feel much better so he forgot about his name and began to plan how he would teach the first human beings on Turtle Island.

Source: [link].



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