

# The Southern Yarn

February/March 2019



NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

## downundercalendar

### FEBRUARY

**Sunday Breakfast/Brunch**  
**Sunday 24th February, from 9am**  
**Miss Browns Hot-pressed Sandwich and Coffee Co, 288 William Ave (between Princess and King), Winnipeg.**

The reservation has been confirmed for this casual social get-together, so come along and treat yourself to breakfast, brunch or lunch from the menu ... You will need to call Judy at 204 275 7083 if you're coming, so we can let Miss B know numbers.



DUCW members braved frigid weather to warm their hearts and fill their tummies with an array of eats and treats from our youngest members.

### MARCH

**Afternoon Tea**  
**Saturday 16th March, 2pm**  
**at the High Tea Bakery**  
**2103 Portage Ave, Winnipeg**

Another casual social get-together. It happens to be the day before St Patrick's Day, so you might decide to order Green tea. Upstairs, the Bakery has 17 seats and a few more downstairs. This proved to be a popular event last year, so give Judy a call at 204 275 7083 and plan to join us on this fun occasion.

### APRIL

**ANZAC Day**  
**Saturday 27th April 2019, 5 pm**  
**Scandinavian Cultural Centre**  
**764 Erin St, Winnipeg.**

Make a date to commemorate ANZAC Day with a memorial service, singing of our national anthems, followed by a delicious POTLUCK dinner. This is always a memorable event, so come and be a part of it, and the fun to follow. We may even have a game of Two-up! And don't forget – the Bar will be open.



## Kids' kitchen

Some of our younger members really got into the spirit of this year's "bake-off" for our Australia Day / Waitangi Day celebration. 'On ya, Aidan, Sam and Claire – well done! Thank you to everyone else, too, for rounding out the choices. As usual, it was an abundant and delicious feast.

Brains were tested with the two sets (Aussie and NZ) of trivia questions compiled by Judy Powell. Friendly rivalry saw a team of Kiwis slightly edging an Aussie team for top score on the respective answers. And the kids were in charge of the Two-up games – calling "Place your bets!" and tossing those pennies like pros. So, between the chefs, trivia, and two-up winners, lots of prizes were won.

We were happy to welcome a couple of new members – Oliver from NZ and Chris from OZ. What a small world – turns out Les Fitt and Oliver attended the same school at the same time! Too bad our President, Peter Munn, was under the weather and had to sit this one out.



### Join us at Miss Browns for breakfast/brunch:

Just the thing to brighten up the February blahs. Join Club members at this eclectic eatery on Sunday morning Feb. 24th – details in the Calendar column. But you need to let us know you plan to attend: RSVP using [social@downunderclub.mb.ca](mailto:social@downunderclub.mb.ca) or by calling 204 275 7083.

online



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## editorially yours

Charlie Powell



Thanks to Jenny Gates for typing up the Getting to Know feature for this issue – about “Two-Up” (p.6). Now, I think there needs to be some explanation for readers who have never attended one of our events here in Winnipeg. We play Two-Up at many of our gatherings – it is easy and fun for all ages, and results in a winner in just a few tosses. So, here’s the explanation: the way we “place our bets” is to stand up and place both hands on your head, or both hands on your butt, or one hand on your head and the other on your tail. Everyone who doesn’t match the result of the toss of the two pennies (yes, we use genuine pre-decimal Australian pennies) is out and they sit down. Those left standing place their bet again and there is another toss. It usually only takes three or four tosses to get a winner. So, we’re not really breaking any laws; and, in fact, we’re upholding a long-observed ANZAC Day tradition.

There is a charming 1937 book titled *The Lore of the Lyrebird* by Ambrose Pratt in which much of the credit for advancing the knowledge of lyrebirds is said to be due to an amazing friendship between a male lyrebird and a widowed lady named Mrs Edith Wilkinson, who, at that time, lived hermit fashion on one of the higher slopes of Mt Dandenong, Victoria, Australia. Since then these birds continue to fascinate and impress and have become superstars through YouTube and David Attenborough documentaries. They are also the subject in this issue’s Birds I view (P.8).

Thank you this month to Jude McCudden, Jenny Gates, Chris Brasher, Malcolm Whyte, Judy Powell, Peter Munn, Terry Delong, Murray Burt, our advertisers and you, our readers!

## president's ramblings

Peter Munn



137 (that’s right!), One hundred thirty seven Fahrenheit degrees. In late January, that was the difference in temperature between Winnipeg and Adelaide. And though that was a day for Adelaide with its highest ever recorded temperature, it was nowhere near a record cold temperature for Winnipeg. And I have an emailed query from a friend in Minnesota asking if it is true that simultaneously on

Australia’s east coast, Victoria is having bushfires, NSW is suffering drought, and Queensland has monstrous flooding especially around Townsville.

It seems that bad weather events are becoming even more commonplace, and it is a worldwide happening. Unfortunately, along with property destruction, there is loss of life. Even marine creatures have their problems with flooding, and there are some great images now of crocodiles climbing trees to escape raging flood waters.

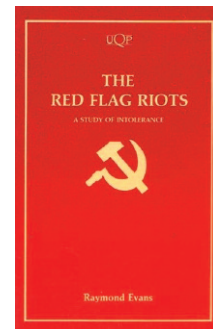
So keep warm, only about 60 days until the golf courses open.

– Peter

## 100 years ago

**Red Flag riots** were a series of violent demonstrations and attacks that occurred in Brisbane, Australia over the course of 1918–1919. The attacks were largely undertaken by returned soldiers from the First Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and were focused upon socialists and other elements of society that the ex-servicemen considered to be disloyal. The name was coined

because of the flags that a number of the demonstrators carried, which were associated with the trade union movement and were banned under the War Precautions Act. The most notable incident occurred on 24 March 1919, when a crowd of about 8,000 ex-servicemen clashed with police who were preventing



*Embracing Soviet style socialism had a lot of attraction all over the world following the First World War.*

them from attacking the Russian Hall in Merivale Street, South Brisbane. [Source: Wikipedia]

## Taiwan & Thailand

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\*Price above is per person, based on double occupancy, and on departures from Vancouver only. Other departure cities are available. Taxes, fees & fuel surcharges are included in above prices.

\*Fixed travel date only, departing 11 Oct and returning 04 Nov 2019. Contact one of our Destination Specialists for additional travel dates, departure cities and/or to customize the above vacation.

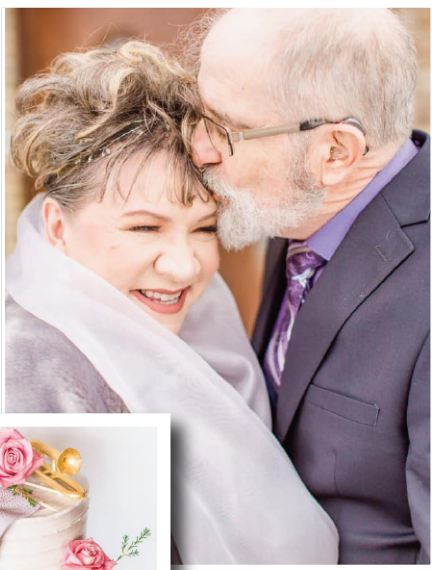
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## Congratulations



Congratulations to Jacqueline Cassel-Cramer and Arthur Cramer who tied the

knot on Saturday, January 5th, 2019. Photos by Andrea Ormiston Photography, cake from Stephanie Anne Cakes.

## 30 years ago



[Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Energy, Australian Antarctic Division]: A cricket bat has been found at the Casey research station in Antarctica with the signatures of the Sri Lankan and Australian team members from the Feb. 1988 test in Perth (Australia won by an innings and 108 runs).

Former expeditioners from the period say the bat almost certainly arrived in Antarctica with the late Tom Maggs, a much loved and respected dog handler and station leader at Casey. In a surprising twist, Tom later became the father-in-law of an Australian cricket captain, when his daughter Bonnie married Tim Paine in 2016. [Read more online].

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## Aussie Rules in Canada!?? ...

[Canstar Community News: Simon Fuller, 5<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2019; Photo by Rob Colburn] DUCW member Steve Setka (with the ball) is the only Manitoban selected in the 61-man training squad preparing to contest the AFL International Cup in Melbourne, Australia in

2020. The final cut of 44 players who will form the "Northwind" will be contesting the prestigious trophy for their 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive time. If Steve's passion for the game rubs off on the rest of the team, they are going to be hard to beat. [Read more online].

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## What seafood to eat

[*The Conversation*, 4th Dec, 2018] Many Australians are concerned with the sustainability of their seafood. While definitions of sustainability vary, according to government assessments, over 85% of seafood caught in Australia is sustainable. However, just because a fish is sustainably caught, it doesn't make it the most nutritious and healthy option – and vice versa. For the first time, research has investigated the seafood Australians eat in terms of what's best for us and the planet. [Read more online].



## The Blues just got bluer ...

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, Broede Carmody, 17<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2019] The Melbourne music community is mourning the death of the man dubbed “the gentleman of Australian blues”. Singer-songwriter Chris Wilson died earlier this week after being diagnosed with cancer. He was reportedly 62 years old. The singer-songwriter shared the stage with the likes of Bob Dylan, Johnny Diesel and Elvis Costello during a career that spanned four decades. He was well known among Melbourne's music scene, with Cherry Bar owner James Young once describing him as “Australian blues royalty”. [More online].



## Vegemite's influence and branding

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, Charlotte Grieve, 25<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2019]. Vegemite commercials of the 1990s pivoted to embracing middle-class suburbia, with ads showing kids playing in grassy backyards comparing heights against brick walls before Mum brings out the white bread triangles slathered with our national spread. Now, the biggest challenge for the brand is to retain relevance, and to attract new Australians on board. Dr Brent Coker, who studies consumer psychology at the University of Melbourne, says international visitors often mistook Vegemite for chocolate spread, and vowed to “never eat it again”. [Read more online]. And you can see it being 3D printed online [here].

# Advertising Rates Down Under Club of Winnipeg Inc.

The DUCW now offers advertising opportunities for annual advertisers and periodic advertisers. Please note that we can be flexible with respect to the print dimensions in order to accommodate the ads you provide. The following rates are determined as at January 2019:

PLEASE NOTE: Our newsletter is now published bimonthly – 6 times a year. Issues are published in February, April, June, August, October and December.

### ANNUAL ADVERTISERS –

Advertisements run throughout the year in print and online

approximate size	(h x w)	website	cost
Partner level	2¾" x 7½" OR 4½" x 5"	large ad	\$300
Sponsor level	2¼" x 7½" OR 3½" x 5"	small ad	\$200
Supporter level	1¾" x 7½" OR 2¾" x 5"	weblink	\$100

### PERIODIC ADVERTISERS –

Single-issue advertisements in newsletter (The Southern Yarn)

approximate size	(h x w)	Yarn PDF	cost
single column square	2¼" x 2¼"	web link	\$20
single column short	5" x 2¼"	web link	\$35
eighth page	2¼" x 3¾"	web link	\$35
2-column sixth page	2½" x 5"	web link	\$45
quarter page	5" x 3¾"	web link	\$50
single column tall	10" x 2¼"	web link	\$55
2-column half page	5" x 5"	web link	\$60
half page	5" x 7½"	web link	\$65
full page	10" x 7½"	web link	\$80

Closing date for submissions of single-issue advertisements is the first of the month you want the ad to run (i.e., February 1 for the February/March issue). To book ad space, contact us by the 15th of the month before you want the ad to run (i.e., January 15th for the February issue) to ensure there is space available.

For more information, contact:

Jenny Gates – Media, Communications and Advertising  
Down Under Club of Winnipeg, PO Box 1655 Stn Main,  
Winnipeg MB R3C 2Z6 Mobile: +1-204-228-9959,  
Email: info@downunderclub.mb.ca Website: www.downunderclub.mb.ca



## Waitangi Pub Crawl

[NZHerald, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2019]: Thousands of New Zealand ex-pats took to the streets of London to show off their Kiwi pride and celebrate the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The annual Waitangi Day Pub Crawl, which began at 10am Saturday London time, is described as an event to bring the New Zealander ex-pat community closer and reminisce about the homeland. Last year more than 6000 people turned out for the event, which has been running for more than three decades. The highlight every year is the Kiwiana costumes donned by revellers, and 2019 was no different. [Read more online].



## Heating up in wine country ...

[NZHerald, Aimee Shaw, 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb, 2019]: Marlborough, considered the engine of the wine industry, is now home to about 70 per cent of all vines and some 510 grape growers.

In total, New Zealand has about 700 wineries and more than 2000 individual vineyards. About 10 per cent of the wineries and 5-6 per cent of vineyards are certified organic. However, climate change now poses a significant threat to this country's wine industry, says NZ Winegrowers chief executive Philip Gegan. [Read more online].



## Honoured Maori

[NZHerald, Peter De Graaf, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2019]: Many hundreds of people gathered at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds to honour Sir Hekenukumai Puhipi, who was knighted for reviving the ancient Maori arts of ocean voyaging and celestial navigation. The 86 year old, who lives at Aurere in Doubtless Bay, received his knighthood in front of Te Whare Runanga, the carved meeting house, from Governor General Dame Patsy Reddy. Tapping him on each shoulder with a ceremonial sword, she proclaimed "Arise, Sir Hek" - prompting a series of powerful haka and waiata from kaihoe (waka paddlers) and schoolchildren who had travelled from around the Far North. People came from as far as Hawaii to see Sir Hek receive his knighthood, a sign of the esteem he is held in around the Pacific. [Read more online].



## Winnipeg Touch Rugby Tournament

You are invited to watch and/or participate in the 3rd Touch Rugby Tournament on **Sunday April 14** from 9:30 am – 3:30 pm at 770 Leila Ave. Hosted by Winnipeg Touch Rugby, both players and supporters are welcome. This year's tournament has a mixed women and men format. The canteen will serve hot and cold food all day, and the bar will be open. You are also welcome to bring your own food if you want. For more information, contact **Caleb Stick** at cpstick@gmail.com.

## Two-Up

### History of Two-Up

Two-up is a type of gambling as Australian as the wild colonial boys. This great Australian game is enshrined in the tradition and heritage of the nation. It is also known as swy (meaning two) or merely the school. It originated from the English "Pitch and Toss", but the Aussie convicts soon preferred not to pitch the coins against a wall.

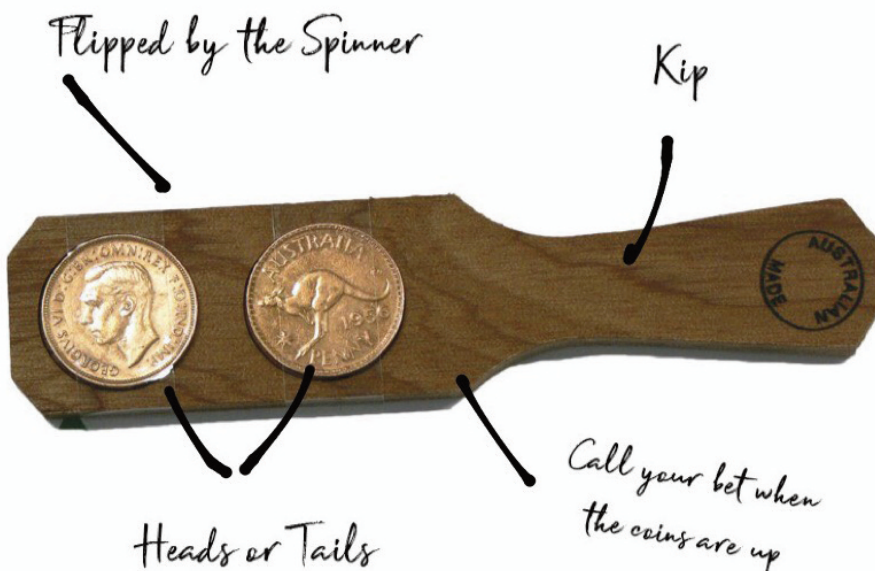
Judge Collins recorded in 1874 that gambling was rife among convicts. Some had been known to lose all their money, provisions, and even the clothes they wore. In December 1867, four men were prosecuted for conspiracy to defraud while playing two-up using a nob. In 1852, the Minister of Justice in Western Australia stated in Parliament that he felt the banning of two-up to be "a great injustice", since it was in his opinion a "traditional fair game", despite being outlawed in 1812.

In spite of the penalties attached to playing the game and police raids on two-up schools, the game continued to be played in the gold fields, shearing sheds, drovers' camps and back streets. Wherever Australian troops landed and fought, the two pennies rose from the kip, spun in the air, and landed to the accompaniment of loud excitement and colourful language.

After World War I, the police developed a tradition of "no two-up raids on Anzac Day" – a tradition that is still alive today – when it is common for Aussie pubs to have a "ring" on their doorstep on Anzac Day.

### Common Terms

*School* – a group of people playing two-up  
*Alley Clerk* – one who arranges bets for mugs  
*Mug* – an inexperienced player  
*Boxer* – person(s) who controls the game and is in charge of the spinning of the pennies and the centre and the amount get by the other players against the spinner. The



At the DUCW events, left, it goes like this: with your hands on your head, or 'tail', or one on each, you place your bets and await the verdict from the Spinner's coin toss from the Kip. Simple!

### How to Play – the original rules

The rules of two-up are a bit different to how we play the game at DUCW events, so it's very interesting to read how it worked in the old days.

The boxer controls the game. They are in charge of the spinning of the pennies and the centre, supervising the side-betting between punters, and collecting a rake-off.

Players stand in a ring, with the spinner at the top of the ring directly opposite the entry gate. The spinner must stand in the ring to toss the coins, which must land and come to rest within the ring.

The spinner bets that he will head 'em and other punters back tails. After the centre has been set, the other players can bet with each other, choosing either heads or tails.

The spinner starts by placing the pennies on the kip – one head up, the other tails up, with the heads polished and the tails blackened for easy identification. The pennies must be tossed off the flat side of the kip and land on a soft surface or pad. They must also rise to a good height and spin, or the boxer will declare the throw void.

The spinner must win heads three times before he can collect any winnings from the centre. He is then at liberty either to bet as he wishes or to retire, upon which the kip passes clockwise to the next person in the ring.

The boxer takes a percentage each time the spinner has dooked 'em. If the pennies show one head and one tail, it is classed as a no throw or odds. The spinner loses by throwing tails or by throwing odds five times in a row.

boxer also supervises the side-betting between punters and collects a rake-off from all winners

*Ringie* – another name for the boxer

*Ring* – area designated for the spinner to spin the coins

*Come In Spinner* – the cry that clears the way for the coins to be tossed, all bets having been placed

*Spinner* – person who spins or tosses the pennies

*Kip* – flat piece of wood used to toss the pennies

*Nob* – a double-headed penny

*Head 'em* – toss two heads

*Dooked 'em* – three straight heads

*Centre* – the money wagered by each person who takes a turn at the spinning of the coins plus the amount bet by the other players against the spinner

*Rake-off* – a percentage the boxer gets from all the winners

*Sleeper Catcher* – person who picks up the bets that have been left on the floor too long

*Cockatoo* – a lookout who signals if there is danger of a police raid



## Bad-news tourists make very negative NZ headlines

A family of unruly tourists from the UK dominated headlines in New Zealand last month and they've left a trail of controversial incidents on the road from North Island to South.

The large family group, reported to be around 12 people from three generations, including a grandmother, first attracted attention after several members were filmed leaving large amounts of rubbish on Takapuna beach.

The group was videoed by local Krista Curnow as they left when an eight-year-old boy was seen abusing the woman, with threats to "knock your brains out". They've also been accused of dining at restaurants and refusing to pay their bills, after claiming to find hairs and ants in their meals. The family has Kiwis so riled up that a petition was even launched to get the family kicked out of the country – and it seems signatories have been successful, as Immigration NZ confirms the group has been issued a deportation notice.

A 26-year-old woman in the group has since been charged with theft, alleged to have stolen energy drinks, rope and sunglasses from an Auckland service station.

While the behaviour of these troublesome tourists has captivated the nation, they're not the first to sully Kiwi shores.

Tourist drivers who are unfamiliar with New Zealand's roads often make headlines over the busy summer holiday period. In some cases, tourists have been left stranded on the side of the road after having their car keys confiscated by locals concerned about their driving.

In January last year, a tourist arrested for dangerous driving on the Gibbston Highway near Queenstown told police he was rushing to find a toilet after eating too many cherries in Cromwell.

Queenstown Sergeant Keith Newell said the 29-year-old foreign national overtook two cars in front of an oncoming vehicle, forcing the two cars to pull to the left to avoid a head-on collision. Motorists called for the introduction of visitor "V-plates" for tourist drivers, following a spate of incidents last year. According to the 2015 data from the New Zealand Transport Agency, foreign drivers contribute to about 6% of all crashes

resulting in injury or death – even though tourists are estimated to make up just 1 per cent of all road traffic in the country.

In 2014 drivers on an overseas licence were involved in 16 fatal traffic crashes, 100 serious injury crashes and 436 minor injury crashes. Of these crashes, the overseas driver was at fault in 15 of the fatal crashes, 78 of the serious injury crashes and 332 of the minor injury crashes, resulting in 22 deaths, 118 serious injuries and 551 minor injuries.

## NZ kiteboard star Justina Kitchen back in

Justina Kitchen trains alongside New Zealand's top two men's kiteboarders, Lukas Walton-Keim and Sam Bullock, who was 18th at last year's sailing world championships in Aarhus. The trio are a considerable distance ahead of their competition and would love to see more get involved in the sport.

All three light up when talking about what it's like to foil and a short clip of Bullock travelling recently at 24 knots in only six knots of breeze prompted plenty of chatter in kiting and sailing circles.

"The first time you foil is the most surreal experience, because you lift off and everything is quiet and there's no splashing," Kitchen says. "Just the speed you are going makes it so much more exciting." Kitchen has mapped out the next 12 months, which includes training in San Francisco and racing in Mexico before May's world championships at Lake Garda. She hasn't yet raced internationally in her return to the sport.

"Which makes it seem crazy I'm talking about world championships and Olympic campaigns," she says. "The numbers doing it at the moment are quite small and the upskill process to be a kiter is a long one. To be able get around a course and do all the manoeuvres takes about three years.

"I'm racing Sam and Lukas and have been assured by Sam that if I keep going as I am I would be top 10 at the worlds.

"The plan is to keep racing through to at least 2024. At the time I will be 35 and we assume foiling will be in for at least two Olympic cycles so, depending how that goes, it's not out of the question to keep racing until I'm 39" Kitchen's three-year-old already has a small trainer kite she takes to the beach and plays with while mum is out training. Chances are she'll be foiling before her 10th birthday and will then aim to beat mum. And that will be a whole new world for Kitchen again. –SOURCE: *NZ Yachting*

## Perth Boss's order: "Wear-tight-clothing-or-leave"

A nightclub chairman who told female staff to wear tight clothing or quit says it was a "throwaway comment" and the proposed changes to the uniform would not be enforced at Amplifier Capitol in Perth. The ladies at the Northbridge venue had been ordered by management to start wearing t-shirts with a scoop neck which revealed the cleavage of some employees.

In a note to staff, owner David Heaton wrote: "If you don't feel comfortable in the uniform then you are welcome to find employment elsewhere." The memo left staff furious and a backlash followed. In a long Facebook response Mr Heaton acknowledged he was wrong to say that "any staff uncomfortable with the changes should quit, a throwaway comment I very much regret," he said.

"I would like to make clear that no staff have been, or will be, fired in relation to the uniform issue.... I also respect the decisions of those who have departed the venue of their own volition in relation to this matter." Hundreds of people have responded to the post, with some continuing to criticise Mr Heaton. –SOURCE: *Sydney Morning Herald*

## Brit comedian not so funny

British comedian Jimmy Carr was slammed by Kiwis on Twitter for a quip on the platform suggesting that the 2011 Christchurch earthquake had improved the city's appearance and Dunedin could do with an earthquake next.

While Carr is known for his dark and often inappropriate humor, many social media users found he'd gone too far. –SOURCE: *The New Zealand Herald*

Read more most issues from Commonwealth Corner on page nine of the electronic version of *The Southern Yarn*.

Murray Burt is a retired editor and journalist who is concerned that lesser elements of the Commonwealth get poor media coverage. 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.

## Lyrebird

### Australia's avian aristocrat

There are two species - the superb lyrebird (*Menura novaehollandiae*), found from southern Victoria to south-eastern Queensland, and Albert's lyrebird (*M. alberti*) found between New South Wales and Queensland.

These iconic Australian natives are famous for their amazing ability to mimic - just Google "Lyrebird videos" and you are guaranteed to be entertained.

The name "lyrebird" stems from the resemblance of the male Superb Lyrebird's tail to a Greek lyre. The tail comprises 16 highly modified tail feathers; two lyrates, two medians and 12 filamentaries which are all thrown back over the head in a shimmering fan during courtship display. The tail of Albert's Lyrebird lacks lyrates and consists of 14 feathers. They are among the largest of all songbirds. They tend to roost in trees, planing down in a long glide in the morning. Lyrebirds rake the forest floor constantly for soil-dwelling invertebrates. (*"Field Guide to the Birds of Australia"* by Simpson and Day)

The following is a quote from the enchanting little book *"The Lore of the Lyrebird"* by Ambrose Pratt (1937):

"... he advanced towards us slowly and deliberately to the very edge of the window and once more favored us with his quick, intense glances, standing in a pose eloquent of preparedness for flight. Unexpectedly he opened wide his beak and emitted a low chuckle that speedily swelled in volume until the air resounded with the full-throated cachinnations of a kukuburra. As the last note died away, the *Menura* retired a step, assumed a squarer pose, and suddenly erected his wonderful tail fan-shape above his back and head. The magnificent spectacle held us spellbound. A second earlier his tail had seemed monotonously colored, but now it evinced many flashing tints of ebony and bronze and purple. Not only were the gorgeous lyre-shaped plumes displayed to their most exquisite advantage, but the light under-coloring of the finer wire-like accompanying feathers provided a matchless contrast with the more-sombre coloring above, as their tips drooped like a silver curtain over the bird's head, completely screening it from our view. Hiding behind this beautiful curtain, "James" gave us the most marvelous concert it had ever been our good fortune to hear. In swift succession he imitated precisely and perfectly the calls and songs of at least twenty of the most-famous songsters of the Australian forest:



### The magpie

A young magpie being fed by parent-bird

The whip-bird

The bell-bird

The complete laughing song of a kukuburra

Two kukuburras laughing in unison

The black cockatoo

The gang-gang

The rosella

The butcher-bird

The wattle-bird

The harmonious thrush

The scrub wren

The pardalote

The thornbill

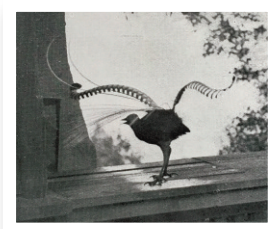
The starling

The yellow robin

The golden whistler

A flock of parrots whistling in flight

The crimson rosella



"James" performing -  
photo by Fred Lewis

In addition to the above he mimicked several other birds whose notes we were unable to identify, and he reproduced, also, the sounds made by a rock-crusher at work, a hydraulic ram, and the tooting of motor-horns.... To the writer, the most amazing item of his concert was his imitation of the honey-eaters, tiny birds with tiny voices ... In order to mimic their singing faithfully, "James" was obliged to subdue his powerful voice to the faintest *pianissimo*, but he contrived, nevertheless, to make each individual note of the soft chorus audibly distinct."

A truly amazing creation. Hopefully their habitats remain secure and they continue to thrive.

### Reader Feedback

We don't have a Pear Tree in our backyard, but we do have an apple tree. We believe it (see photo) is a **Gray Partridge** (*Perdix perdix*) as it has a rust colour under its beak on its chin and neck, but not its whole face, so possibly a female. In past years we have had a covey of 5 or so in our backyard. We called them "The Partridge Family". - Cheers!! - Terry DeLong



### 22nd Great Backyard Bird Count:

15 - 18th Feb, 2019, (in Australia, it is from 21 - 27th Oct.) during which you just count birds for at least 15 minutes and submit your results. You can create a free account: <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>



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## Fiji's new online safety law threatens to muzzle free speech

Article 19 watchdog the Pacific Freedom Forum is concerned Fiji's new online safety laws will muzzle rather than protect Fiji's citizens. The online safety bill was passed in 2018 by Fiji's Parliament and came into force on the first of January 2019, following a record timeline marking the introduction of the bill before it was passed in Parliament last year.

The process and concerns over the intended impact of the legislation on public conversations raised questions for USP academic Jope Tarai, who penned a chapter on the online safety bill in the latest New Zealand-based Pacific Journalism Review. "Any Pacific government working to make cyberspace safer for citizens, especially children, is to be commended," says PFF Chair Det Carreon Brooks, of Palau, "but an Online Safety Commissioner calling on citizens to say nothing if they can't say something nice is a red flag on free speech." –SOURCE: *Pacific Freedom Forum*

## Pacific states shame touring Australian PM on climate

Prime Minister Scott Morrison's visit to the Pacific last month has buttressed some crucial alliances, amid concerns about China's economic, military and political expansionism, in our region.

His three days in Vanuatu and Fiji were long overdue. Mr Morrison has candidly confessed Australia has taken the region for granted. This was the first time an Australian prime minister had visited the region, other than for a forum of regional leaders, since John Howard. Mr Morrison's visit, which follows a trip to Papua New Guinea last year where he announced a naval base on Manus Island, reflected a new awareness of the need to counterbalance China's growing influence in the region.

The visit was not only diplomatically and symbolically significant. Mr Morrison and his counterparts announced a range of cooperative projects, overwhelmingly funded by Australia, on infrastructure, migration, border protection, military capacity, sport, economics and more.

But while Mr Morrison's gesture in showing the flag was welcome, his trip was marred by a lack of leadership on the region's biggest issue, global warming – which poses an existential threat through rising sea levels and the increased frequency of catastrophic weather events.

Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama said: "We cannot imagine how the interests of any single industry can be placed above the welfare of Pacific peoples and vulnerable people in the world over." In a related article, Scott Morrison writes about what wasn't said on the Pacific trip. It spoke volumes, he said.

Mr Bainimarama is usually on the receiving end of lectures about human rights from Australia. His galling reproach is a sign that Australia's lack of action on climate change is hurting our standing in the region and allowing China to take the moral high ground, however unfairly.

China has been funding infrastructure in Pacific nations, in what many analysts see as a bid to use debt-entrapment to gain sway, as part of its global One Belt One Road trade and infrastructure program. Its illegal decision to build a military base on artificial islands in the South China Sea, threatening freedom of navigation in one of the most critical shipping routes, raises questions about its intentions in the Pacific, too.

From an Australian point of view, Mr Morrison's trip, which follows the establishment of a \$2- billion regional development fund by his government, a move supported by Labor, can but be seen in this Chinese context.

Australia should not treat China, its largest trading partner, as an enemy and it can look to partner with China where it can in development programs in the Pacific region. But Australia should ensure that China does not replace us as the crucial player in the region. For the Pacific nations whose low-lying islands could disappear beneath the waves, Australia is letting the region down through insufficiently robust policies to cut carbon emissions.

Mr Morrison assured Mr Bainimarama he was pursuing "sensible, achievable policies" to meet Australia's commitments under the Paris climate treaty and will, in the meantime, be funding projects to protect the island nations from the effects of global warming. Yet the Pacific nations understand only too well that Mr Morrison has abandoned any pretence of a national climate policy. His frequent claim that Australia can hit the emissions reductions required under the Paris treaty "at a canter" is dubious. Australia's carbon emissions are, in fact, growing and unless something is done it will be almost impossible to reach the Paris target of a 26-28 per cent reduction below 2005 levels by 2030. This they already know in the Pacific. –SOURCE: *Sydney Morning Herald*