

# The Southern Yarn

March 2013

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

## downundercalendar

### APRIL

#### ANZAC Day

Saturday, April 27th, 6:00 pm

Scandinavian Cultural Centre, 764 Erin

Make a date to commemorate ANZAC Day with a memorial service, singing of our national anthems, and a delicious POTLUCK dinner. This is always a memorable event, so come and be a part of it and the fun to follow. And don't forget – the Bar will be open.

## Rob Vernon

JULY 30, 1960 -

MARCH 1, 2013



Above: Rob Vernon at our 2012 Christmas party. Left: The funeral for Rob Vernon on Saturday, March 9th. Right: Brothers James and Peter.



### Did you know Wiki..?

"wiki" is a Hawaiian word meaning "fast" or "quick". I used to work with a Maori guy whose name was "Wiki". He wasn't particularly fast – thank goodness, because he "drove" the floor-scrubber – but he was an awesome caricature artist.

— Charlie.

**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).

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.

The E.J. Coutu & Co Funeral Chapel was packed and overflowing on Saturday March 9th as friends and relatives gathered to celebrate Rob's life.

Rob's brothers, Peter and James and sister-in-law Jan, were there from Australia to comfort Jacqueline, Pete and Southerly. The Reverend Karen Toole offered caring words, readings and prayers and Jenny Gates read the eulogy, which you can read online. The Bible reading was from 1 Corinthians 12: 22 – 26 and the two hymns, Amazing Grace and On Eagle's Wings were sung.

Peter and James added to the memories, and humour, of Rob and assured his Canadian family and friends of the deep gratitude, love and support expressed by all the relatives in Australia.

A tribute to Rob and Jacqueline's parenting was the way both Southerly and Pete were able to share their own memories of their Dad – in their own way, in their own words. Southerly contributed a further gift from her heart, singing her own special love song for Rob.

At Rev. Toole's invitation, Philip Munro-Smith gave us insight into Rob's passion for cricket and the camaraderie he enjoyed as a member of the Taverners team, many of whom were also present.

The reminiscing and consoling continued during the reception that followed.

While there were certainly tears, the general tone of the afternoon was truly in the spirit of Rob's life – fun-loving.

### get onboard [downunderclub.mb.ca](http://downunderclub.mb.ca)

Our totally redesigned club website has been launched and we invite everyone to explore the new and revised content and structure. At the heart of the new site is its ability to allow club members to contribute to the site and share with others. For a basic orientation, see page 4, or just head straight to [downunderclub.mb.ca](http://downunderclub.mb.ca)



online



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## editorially yours

Charlie Powell



G'day, As I write this, there is still a steady flow of tributes showing up on Facebook from friends of the Vernons. As Terry has expressed in his President's message, Rob will not be forgotten. Any Club members who knew him will have fond memories of Rob. My earliest ones go back to Rob volunteering for our Folklorama pavilions, from the 90s on. Then, at Rob's invitation, I played a season of cricket with him and the Taverners at Assiniboine Park. It was around that period in Club history when we could muster a team for indoor cricket – when the Downunders upset all opposing teams and won the trophy.

Now his innings is over,  
His score's on the board,  
And as he walks through the gate,  
We stand and applaud.  
"Good one mate!"

It is close to that time of year, also, when we particularly remember all who served their country in conflicts – especially those who gave their lives for our freedom. Our club will commemorate ANZAC Day on 27th April at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre. We hope that all who are able will join our remaining local Vets in solidarity, and enjoy each other's company at the social following.

Inspired by Tim's introduction to Hudson in the Feb. Yarn, Judy and I paid Winnipeg's newest celebrity a visit last month. He didn't disappoint. Initially we couldn't see him – just the plastic beach-ball he was tossing up in the air. Then when his trainer came and called, up he came out of the pit to the fence. He obeyed all her commands and was rewarded with his seafood lunch. The Journey to Churchill exhibit area is well under way and will be very impressive when completed.

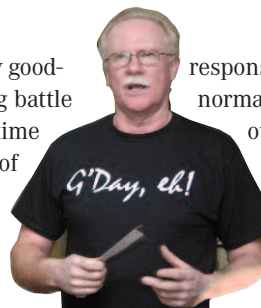
This month Gordon introduces Bev and Garry O'Connell to us (p. ). Some of us have met them already, but now we'll learn the rest of their story.

Thank you to this month's contributors – Judy Powell, Jenny Gates, and our regulars, Murray and Gordon.

Enjoy!  
Charlie

It is with sadness we must say goodbye to Rob Vernon after a long battle with illness. Rob was a long time member of the club whom many of you knew. Rob and Jacqueline have been involved with the club in different ways over the years including Folklorama events. He and his family came out to many Down Under Club events including the Christmas Party just a couple of months ago. Rob even got to sit on Santa's knee. Rob will not be forgotten by the members of the Down Under Club. All those on the Board and I am sure I can speak for the members of the club when I say 'God's speed Rob'.

On a happier note, Panda got to meet her sister last weekend. Her name is Polar and she is a real cutie. She has brownish colouring where Panda has white and is not quite as big. It was interesting to see their



## president's ramblings

Terry Roberts

response to each other. Polar who is not normally known to be interested in other dogs took a great deal of interest in Panda and she in her. I'm not sure but maybe they recognised something about each other, as they have not seen each other in 6 years when they were just a few months old. They along with their siblings and mother were rescued from a farmer's barn in December of 2006.

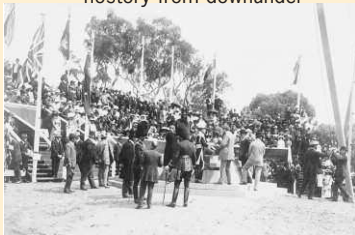
They were called the frozen five. Panda and Polar I know have not suffered in the intervening years. Both are princesses in their own minds.

I trust we will to see you all at the upcoming ANZAC evening on the 27th of April.

Terry

## 100yearsago

history from downunder



## Naming the Australian Federal Capital

12th March, 1913: The foundation stone for Canberra was laid by His Excellency The Right Honourable Sir Thomas Denman. See our web site for a link to images and details. There is also a link to a clip showing the governor-general Lord Thomas Denman arriving at the naming ceremony of Canberra. A royal salute is fired before Lord Denman lays a foundation stone. Lord Denman was the fifth governor-general of Australia and was in office from 1911 to 1914.

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## Iconic Australian brand available for purchase

[March 4, 2013, Sophie Langley.] Australian brand

Rosella will close down after nearly 120 years as an operational business. The company, which produces the iconic Rosella Tomato Sauce, will close its Sydney operations in the next few weeks and the company's 70 remaining staff will lose their jobs. However, a new opportunity exists for someone wanting to buy the brand rather than the factory business.

The Rosella brand is one of Australia's best-known brands for tomato sauce, as well as soups, chutneys and relishes.

Rosella's parent company, Gourmet Food Groups, was placed in receivership in November 2012. Ferrier Hodgson partners were appointed receivers of the company, following an estimated \$50 million debt with the National Australia Bank. Ferrier Hodgson said the closure of Rosella comes after efforts to sell the business have been unsuccessful.

## Veteran TV reporter Peter Harvey has died, aged 68

[March 2, 2013, Elder John] The death of Channel Nine news veteran Peter Harvey from pancreatic cancer prompted an immediate outpouring of grief and tributes by colleagues and rivals.

The newsman with the rich baritone voice was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in October last year and died today with his family by his side.

In timing that would have appealed to his journalistic sense, the news broke just in time for the 6pm TV bulletins.



Harvey was best known for his 37-year career with the Nine Network and enjoyed cult status for his sign-off with the famous pause: "Peter Harvey ... Canberra".

Ray Martin lamented the loss of a great character. "Journalism, like politics and life, is full of bland, colourless people," he said. "He is full of colour."

In a note to staff, Nine's CEO David Gynge wrote: "This is the saddest of days for the Nine Network. Peter Harvey - Harves as he is known to everyone - is and will remain an indelible part of Nine. Like Tony Greig who we also lost so sadly recently, Peter was a huge chunk of the DNA of this place."

Gynge paid tribute to Harvey's unflinching work ethic and humility: "It was the mark of the man that Peter insisted on coming to work and fronting the cameras right to the end - always grateful for ours and the literally thousands of well wishes from the public, but actually embarrassed about being the centre of so much 'fuss'. As usual thinking little of himself and much more of others, principally his beloved family."

Read more at our website.

## newszealand

source: NZ Herald, unless otherwise noted



## NZ shows off to 400 agents

[By Ben Chapman-Smith] More than 400 travel agents from all over the world are being brought to New Zealand shortly in an attempt to get the country's tourism market firing.

Tourism New Zealand will be running two of its biggest-ever trade events in May and is hosting a massive group of travel agents.

The Crown Entity hopes the visiting agents will return home feeling more "motivated and confident" about selling New Zealand as a holiday destination.

The 'famil' comes as government figures show international visitor spending dipped to its lowest level since 2001.

Spending for 2012 was \$5.42 billion, down 6 per on 2011 which was boosted by the Rugby World Cup. The high New Zealand dollar has been partly blamed for the sharp dip.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's quarterly international visitor survey also found visitor numbers fell 2 per cent last year.

[Read more]



## Best McDonald's in the world is...

[CourierMail] LOVE a burger and fries? This Macca's has been voted the best in the world. It's not your typical building that's for sure.

Taupo New Zealand took out top spot in the The Daily Meal's list of the world's top ten coolest McDonald's this week.

"Taupo, New Zealand, has the honour of being home to the only McDonald's location that includes a decommissioned DC3 plane as part of the store," The Daily Meal writes. "There are seats inside the plane for your dining enjoyment, and you can view the cockpit as well! Maybe they hand out wings to first-time customers."

Australia managed to get one McDonald's on the list. Sydney came in at number seven for the Macca's in The Strand on George Street.

[Read more online]

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## Garry and Bev O'Connell

I first met the O'Connells at our Australia Day and Waitangi Day function in February. We sat at the same table enjoying the great food and I was intrigued to learn how they came to be in Winnipeg. Hopefully you will as well.

Garry was born in Perth, WA on January 1st. His primary school was at Mary's Mount, and secondary to junior certificate at Trinity College. He started at University of WA in engineering, and in 1976 graduated as an Associate in Civil Engineering from Curtin University. Like many down under types, he then travelled around Europe for six months.

Back in Perth, Garry started working for the Concrete Division of Bell Group for several years as Technical Manger of Concrete Operations (WA). It was during this time that he met Beverly, and in 1979, they were married.

From 1980 to 1982, they were in London, England, where she studied at Lewisham Hospital. Then it was six months touring Europe in a Kombi Van, and in 1982 they were back in Perth.



Garry went back to Bell Group, (which was later purchased by Boral Resources), in Concrete and Quarries until 1994. He then joined Buckeridge Group, a large construction company and become General Manager of Concrete and Asphalt to 2000. His next move was to Geelong, Victoria, where he joined CSR Readymix as Area Manager until 2012.

Bev Mariano's parents were caught up in the Burma turmoil following World War II, and moved to India when it was a British colony where Bev was born. She started primary school there, and when the family moved to Perth, continued at St Joachim's Primary School and then did her high school at Mount Lawley Senior High. In 1974, she began her nursing training at Royal Perth

Hospital, earning her RN designation. She worked in hospitals and acute care institutions in Perth.

As mentioned above, they went to London, UK, where she took an accident and emergency course, on returning to Perth she was appointed as a Charge Nurse at Sir Charles Gardner Hospital Accident and Emergency Department until 1985.

Bev then took time out to start a family. Adam, now 27, is a CA in London, England, and Luke is finishing up his CA in Melbourne. (How spread out can they be?!)

Bev went back to university big time, completing a Bachelor of Nursing, Master of Science, and a PhD. In 1997, she was promoted to Senior Lecturer of Nursing Students and Director of Nursing Research at Curtin University. In 2000, she took up a position at Deakin University in Melbourne as Professor of Nursing until 2012.

Meanwhile, the University of Manitoba had set up an international search for a Dean of the Faculty of Nursing . Bev applied, was one of three finalists, and came to Winnipeg in February 2012 to be interviewed by a selection panel. She got the job, but only after a labour market opinion was rendered and a work permit granted from Australia. In October 2012, Bev and Garry moved here after an eight-week holiday in Europe.

And the DUCW connection? As some point, the University of Manitoba provided a limo for them to take a look around Winnipeg. The driver was Scandinavian, and picking up on their accent, mentioned there was a club here that meets at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre. They joined the DUCW straight away.

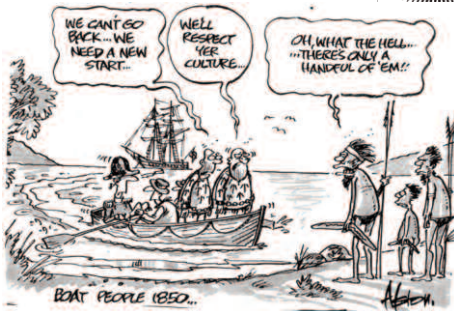
So, although Bev's term here is for only five years, maybe they will become enamoured of our crisp winters and stifling summers, and decide to stay. We certainly hope so.

*Gordon Keatch*

**downunderclub.mb.ca we have a new club website!**

- menu items** reveal sub-pages.
- Header photos** by club members – we look forward to yours.
- Welcome 'post'** remains at the top of the content area, with the newest content below.
- Partners, supporters** have links as advertisers. Your business can, too!
- Calendar** lists upcoming events, with more details a click away.
- 'Posts'** are new items that can be read in more detail, searched and collected in logical categories on other pages. Write them yourself, comment and share them.
- New feeds** live from Aus & NZ





cartoon: <http://www.tropicaldesignwiki.com>

## NZ and Australia in accord to curb the flow of boat folk

New Zealand wants to discourage boat people arriving unannounced to swell its immigration stream and is preparing regulations that would send them to controversial Australian detention centres in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

The move would be to dissuade potential asylum seekers from making the journey to New Zealand, Prime Minister John Key said. He said he had heard just before Christmas about a boatload planning to leave Indonesia with hundreds on board.

That departure was forestalled, but the Australian Government has said it would monitor any others trying to cross the Tasman.

In a complementary move, arrangement with Australian PM Julia Gillard, Mr Key announced NZ would take 150 asylum seekers from Australian detention centres each year. That would put the refugees intake via Australia at 750, the balance coming from the UN framework.

"I wanted to do this, I think it's the right thing to do... my view is that we are helping our mates," Mr Key said.

He saw it as involving no cost to New Zealand, but addressing a regional problem. The 150 NZ committed to were not queue jumpers and must meet the same criteria as other refugees, he said.

The deal would also allow New Zealand to send any boat people who arrived to be processed in Australian centres, including those in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

Earlier this year officials from the United Nations refugee agency were critical after visiting the centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. They described the living conditions as inadequate and said children should not be sent there.

Mr Key discussed the quality of the camps with Ms Gillard and she was

"extremely confident" that they met world standards. "They reject the proposition theirs are not up to international standard."

Mr Key said New Zealand's Mangere detention centre was being upgraded but would not be suitable for mass, long-term detention. The hope is Australia's offshore detention centres will serve as a deterrent to illegal arrivals.

## Opposition delivers Singapore a shocker by-election

Results in indomitable Singapore's by-elections, generally a sure-thing for the governing People's Action Party (PAP), turned out to be a bookie's nightmare.

PAP, which has ruled Singapore ever since self-government in 1959, came up short. In its worst-ever general election result in May 2011, it still won 60% of the votes and 81 out of 87 contested parliamentary seats. As a result then, party's leader and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong promised some "soul-searching" to ensure it wouldn't happen again.

It wasn't enough. The slippage is continuing.

The by-election in January suggested Singaporeans are yet to be convinced. The opposition Workers' Party, winner of the six seats in 2011, took the seat of Punggol East from the PAP. Its candidate, Lee Li Lian, won despite competition from two other opposition-party candidates, and emerged with a margin of 54.5% of the vote to the PAP's 43.7%. That's a swing to her party of 10.8%.

For stable, prosperous, run-by-the-book Singapore, where the only doubt at past polls has been the size of PAP's winning margin, government supporters were left unnerved.

If that pattern is replicated in the next general election, due by 2016, the PAP would be reduced to 42 of the 87-seat House. Horrors.

## International court to sit on cases involving Zimbabwe's mass rapes

Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's indefatigable 89-year-old president, is preparing his people for an election in the next few months but results may be a departure from the scandalous sleigh-rides to success he has enjoyed in the past.

One reason: court actions being launched in the courts of South Africa, his usually supportive neighbor. They address the hundreds of rapes and assaults perpetrated by his goons in previous polling exercises. Requested by Canada's Stephen Lewis, in his role as UN special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, the bid for trial received unusually

prompt affirmation from Pretoria last month. Much of the evidence and testimony comes from brutalized Zimbabwean victims of his cruel tenure of power.

It will be a finger in the eye for Mugabe particularly, because it comes at a time when he has just called for a pre-election referendum. This is his quest to win endorsement of a new constitution that has been agreed on by all the main parties.

Clearly it is a precursor to the general and presidential elections ahead. While Mugabe has pulled his country out of the Commonwealth, hope remains among much of the populous that Zimbabwe will return to the fold as the president passes from power.

Woman heads new political party formed in South Africa

South Africa has a new political party that could will put news faces and challenges before the old, powerful but riven African National Congress (ANC), which since 1994 has been a sure-thing at the polls.

The new body is headed by Mamphela Ramphele, a former senior World Bank official and anti-apartheid activist. It's called Agang, and she says it would compete in the next elections in 2014. Its chances of making an impression were not rated highly.

## Pakistan Moslem-on-Moslem blood-letting savagery continues

A bombing in the city of Quetta, in western Pakistan, left about 90 people killed and 160 injured.

It was just another episode in the rampage of the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, an extremist Sunni militant group, who claimed responsibility for the blast, in its efforts to create a one-faith nation.

The area targeted is populated by Shia Muslims.

For three days, the relatives of those killed refused to bury their dead, a protest against authorities they said were turning a blind eye towards anti-Shia violence.

Murray Burt writes this Commonwealth column to lift the curtain on our understanding of a third of the population of the world. Enjoy.

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 both the Royal Military Institute (Manitoba) and The Intrepid Society. He is retired from more than 50 years of journalism.

## Happy Australia Day from the High Commissioner

On behalf of all at the High Commission, I wish Australia's friends in Canada a very happy Australia Day. Despite the arctic temperatures, we celebrated Australia Day in Ottawa with Dinner at the Movies—a special screening of the hit Australian movie *The Sapphires*.



2012, my first year in Ottawa, was an excellent year for relations between Canada and Australia. We continue to work together as international partners, and I think the world is a better place for it. I look forward to another good year in 2013.

Louise Hand PSM

[Read more]

## Hello from Lucia...(on vacation in NZ)

Summer here is great ...and fortunately not like last year which was the pits. Still in Chch .... altho have been flitting around the South Island at times.... and have had beautiful sunny days for the most part ..... in the mid to high 20's - Love it.

Was in Picton visiting with a school friend last week and it is so lovely all around that whole area. Was in Kaiteriteri for a few days last year and with my friend who does these mini trips with me each year, we were going to do Nelson this year, but she is coming with me to Rarotonga in April, so maybe Nelson will be next year.

Take care and Greeting from sunny Chch :-)



See all the photos  
on our new web site

© Chris Tangey / SWNS.com

## Great whirls of fire! A rare event near Uluru

[thanks to Jenny Gates] An astonished film maker is coming to grips with the moment he witnessed one of nature's rarest phenomena – a tornado comprised entirely of fire – and lived to tell the tale. **Chris Tangey** had been out in Alice Springs, Australia, scouting locations for a new movie. After finishing the task, he went over to help workers at a cattle station when he was confronted by one of nature's most intimidating spectacles.

**Science behind the storm:** These fire tornadoes are a natural rarity, but when they occur they predictably cause significant damage. These fire whirls are known to last for around two minutes on the very rare occasions they take place. But Mr. Tangey found himself mesmerized by the tornado for more than 40 minutes. The 52-year-old said: "The weather was perfectly still, and it was about 25 degrees Celsius – it was an entirely uneventful day. Then the next thing a man is yelling, 'What the hell is that?', and I turned around and saw a 30 meter fire tornado. I was about 300-meters away and there was no wind but the tornado sounded like a fighter jet. My jaw just dropped." Mr Tangey, who runs Alice Springs Film and Television, in central Australia, described it as a 'once in ten lifetimes experience'.

**Rural:** Thankfully, the fire tornado occurred in the remote Australian outback, and no injuries were reported. He added: "I've been shooting in the outback for 23 years, and I have never seen anything like it. We've heard about them but they're never seen. If I had known what was about to happen, I would have happily paid \$1,000 to watch it. At any time there were three different tornadoes, it just kept going and going for 40 minutes. The whole experience was staggering, and the length and variety were astonishing. Predictably, these rare spectacles are extremely dangerous." In 1923, a fire tornado emerged during Japan's Great Kanto Earthquake, and killed 38,000 people in just 15 minutes



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