

The Southern Yarn

February 2015



NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

MARCH

Social Evening

Saturday March 14th, 7 PM

Scandinavian Cultural Centre, 764 Erin

Come and enjoy a games night, each other's company and get updated on ANZAC Day plans and opportunities to be involved in this historic Club and Winnipeg event.

APRIL

*Formal recognition of the 100th anniversary of ANZAC Day
Thursday 23rd April*

Manitoba Legislative Building

More details to come.

*Our special DUCW ANZAC commemoration
Saturday 25th April*

**Western Canada Aviation Museum
958 Ferry Road, Winnipeg**

More details to come.

RSVP

If you let us know you are coming, we can be ready for you! RSVP to 204-228-9959 or social@downunderclub.mb.ca.

FINAL NOTICE to renew for 2015

Individual \$20 ... Couple/family \$30 ... This is the last chance to renew your membership! If you haven't paid your dues yet for 2015, please go to the website link below and make it happen. It is super easy now with Pay Pal, or you can mail a cheque Or just bring the cash to the next event. Please call **Norm Griffiths** at 204-661-3873 to indicate your intentions. Phone Peter Debenham at 204-955-0393 for assistance, or email peter@pdact.ca .



Australia Day and Waitangi Day Celebration

25 members came out on a back-to-normal cold January evening at the SCC on Saturday 31st to sing our national anthems, eat drink and be merry.

Five meat pies were entered in the bake-off competition and all scored well on the creative checklist of favourite pie attributes offered by new Club Social Convener, Liz Hydesmith. Some were "just like Mum's", others were "good for a cricket or footy match", and others just plain "Yummy!" etc, etc.. There were a variety of salads; Brian attended his Cappuccino maker; Charlie attended the bar; there was an appropriately decorated cake by Debbie Griffiths, and other contributed dishes and desserts. Packets of Tim Tams were handed out to all who contributed pies while others won prizes for the OZ and NZ trivia quiz as well as the 2-up games.

Thanks to all who helped to make it another successful event.



Liz tallies the pie scores before cake; creative cup crafts by Tannis, Eliza and Jakob; and rousing rounds of two-up with prizes for the winners.



online



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www.downunderclub.mb.ca
email: info@downunderclub.mb.ca

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



G'day - 2015 is off to a great start with some bonus balmy weather in January and also with the great fun and engagement at the Club's first event - the celebration of Australia Day and Waitangi Day. It promises to only get better during this important year for our countries and the Club. The executive is excited and all members can be proud to be a part of the special and significant plans underway for the centenary commemoration on ANZAC Day here in Winnipeg.

Just as Gemma, up from downunder and on contract at the Assiniboine Park Zoo, found us on the web and joined in our Australia Day and Waitangi Day celebration, so will many others respond and pay tribute in April. Social activities certainly help to keep us going, but the more important raison d'être of the DUCW will be well and truly obvious to all members and the public at that time.

Meanwhile *The Southern Yarn* continues to inform, enlighten and entertain - thanks to the contributions of many.

Enjoy!



Check out Willie Wagtail and his local friend on page 6.

Hi there, I trust you are enjoying the warmer January weather we have been experiencing. While it is nice to go out in short sleeves and not freeze halfway to the gate, it seems to have come with a general lack of winter sunshine as well. It would make for an interesting poll question: "Would you prefer a relatively warmer winter with gloomy skies, or colder days with bright sunshine?"

president's ramblings

Peter Munn

Our new social coordinator Liz Hyde-Smith is a welcome addition to the Board of Directors. Liz has jumped in feet first to the position, and as a result of the Board's

decision to use the Western Canada Aviation Museum as our venue for the 100th Anzac Day commemoration service this April, there will be a lot of work to make this important anniversary a special event for the club. Liz is leading the sub-committee tasked with bringing the event together, and has a lot of great ideas for this special time. So if Liz asks for your help, please be ready to assist us. The event will be well publicised, we will be inviting military and other guests, and plan on having an event that we can all be proud of.

Peter

Laurie Morris' NZ trip

I went Down Under before Christmas. The weather was almost perfect. I walked the Rakiura Track on Stewart Island covering 40km in three days. We arrived on Stewart Island by ferry travelling from Bluff arriving in Oban. www.stewartisland.co.nz

Whilst crossing Foveaux Strait we saw blue penguins and Albatross including Molly-

Mocks and later the Royal Albatross from the water taxi to Ulva Island an open sanctuary since 1899 where Tui's, Kaka, rifleman, fantail, wood pigeon are found. www.ulvaisland.org

In the waters off Stewart Island lies a breeding ground for the Great White Shark where 90 have been tagged. There are possibilities of viewing them from a cage with www.sharkdivenz.com which doesn't come without controversy and a newsworthy story. I haven't seen any

sharks or kiwi's even after walking 40 km in the bush.

I found the Invercargil Southland Museum interesting having seen the displays for Antarctic exploration. shipwrecks, famous kiwi's including Sir Edmund Hillary; local character Burt Munro (World's Fastest Indian), and original settlers etc. I saw Henry who is the 111 year old Tuatara and how he got his mojo back making babies with

continued on page 3

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Aussie look canned

[Jan., 2015] Australian vegetable canning business Edgell has launched limited edition packaging for some of its most popular products, which features an Australian flag.

Edgell, which is a subsidiary of food manufacturer Simplot Australia, said the packaging was designed to “celebrate summer and all things Australian”. The Australian flag cans will be used on Edgell’s four most popular canned vegetable varieties – Beetroot, Corn, Peas and Chick Peas – and will be available in time for Australia Day. [Link]

Brisbane inventor turns food factory waste into free fuel

[Jan. 19, 2015 Sophie Langley] A Brisbane inventor has developed an ‘environmentally friendly’, modular system of turning food factory waste such as fruit, vegetables, bakery and fat into free energy that can be used for heating, electricity or as an engine fuel.

Ron Lakin has developed the BioBowser,

a small scale, affordable and practical bio digester that produces methane gas. After the gas is extracted the leftover material can be used as a nutrient-rich fertiliser – although Mr Lakin said oils and fats should be mixed with other material.

Mr Lakin said the BioBowser, which he has been developing for eight years, not only results in energy cost savings, but it also has “significant environmental benefits” as methane is a highly destructive greenhouse gas that is rated as twenty seven times more destructive than CO2. [Link]

newszealand

source: NZ Herald, unless otherwise noted

Christchurch Sister cities.

Did you know that Christchurch has formal relationships with:

- Adelaide in Australia
- Christchurch in England
- Gansu Province in China
- Kurashiki in Japan
- Seattle in the USA
- Songpa-Gu in South Korea
- Wuhan in China

Saving native fauna

A group called “Predator Free New Zealand Trust” has formed with hopes of eradicating all rats, possums, stoats and other predators, so that native wildlife, especially many reptiles, frogs, bats and birds, can flourish. According to the Trust’s website some of the threatened birds include: the kakapo (or night parrot), the takahe, the yellow-eyed penguin and the North Island brown kiwi. The group’s plan is to dramatically reduce NZ’s predator populations by 2040, the bi-centenary of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. [Link]



Christchurch NZ

Laurie Morris’ trip, continued from page 2

80 year old Matilda. A Tuatara is referred to the last of the living dinosaur found only in New Zealand. www.southlandmuseum.com

We headed to Oamaru over the Crown Range.; Tarras and through the Lindis Pass . We turned off towards Duntroon, The lost world and Elephant Rocks. www.vanished-world.co.nz

At Oamaru we explored the Victorian Precinct; Steampunk HQ museum and the many Antique and collectible shops. There is a blue penguin colony locally.

We kept to the ocean theme before stopping in Dunedin and

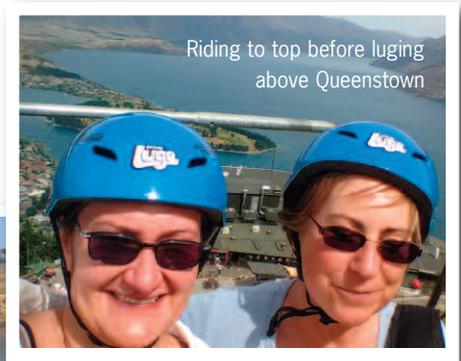
heading back to Queenstown via Lawrence where reminders of the 1860’s gold rush are preserved for those interested in learning about the early pioneering era and the heritage trail.

I like to promote New Zealand because it sure is one special place on this earth.

Laurie (DUCW member)



Beach view from cliff at Moeraki



Riding to top before lugging above Queenstown

We’ll post more of Laurie’s photos from her trip on our website, www.downunderclub.mb.ca

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Voluntary Aid Detachments

The primary role of a Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) member was that of nursing orderly in hospitals, carrying out menial but essential tasks - scrubbing floors, sweeping, dusting and cleaning bathrooms and other areas, dealing with bedpans, and washing patients. They were not employed in military hospitals, except as ward and pantry maids; rather, they worked in Red Cross convalescent and rest homes, canteens, and on troop trains.



A group of Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) nurses marching along George Street after attending a Christmas service in the Cathedral

At the start of the First World War, Australian VADs were restricted from traveling overseas by the Defence Council. As a result, many chose to travel on their own initiative and join British detachments, often in Australian Hospitals. It is reported that the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital included in their nursing staff some 120 VADs, chiefly Australians in the British service, employed through the Australian Red Cross Society. This policy was changed in 1916 after a request from Great Britain, and the first detachment of thirty official Australian VADs to serve overseas left Australia in September 1916.

The role of VADs did not significantly evolve between the wars. VADs in the Second World War were given more medical training, but they were not fully qualified nurses. They worked in convalescent hospitals, on hospital ships and the blood bank as well as on the home front. In 1943, the government created the Australian Women's Auxiliary Service (AWAS) to control the large numbers of VADs employed by the military.

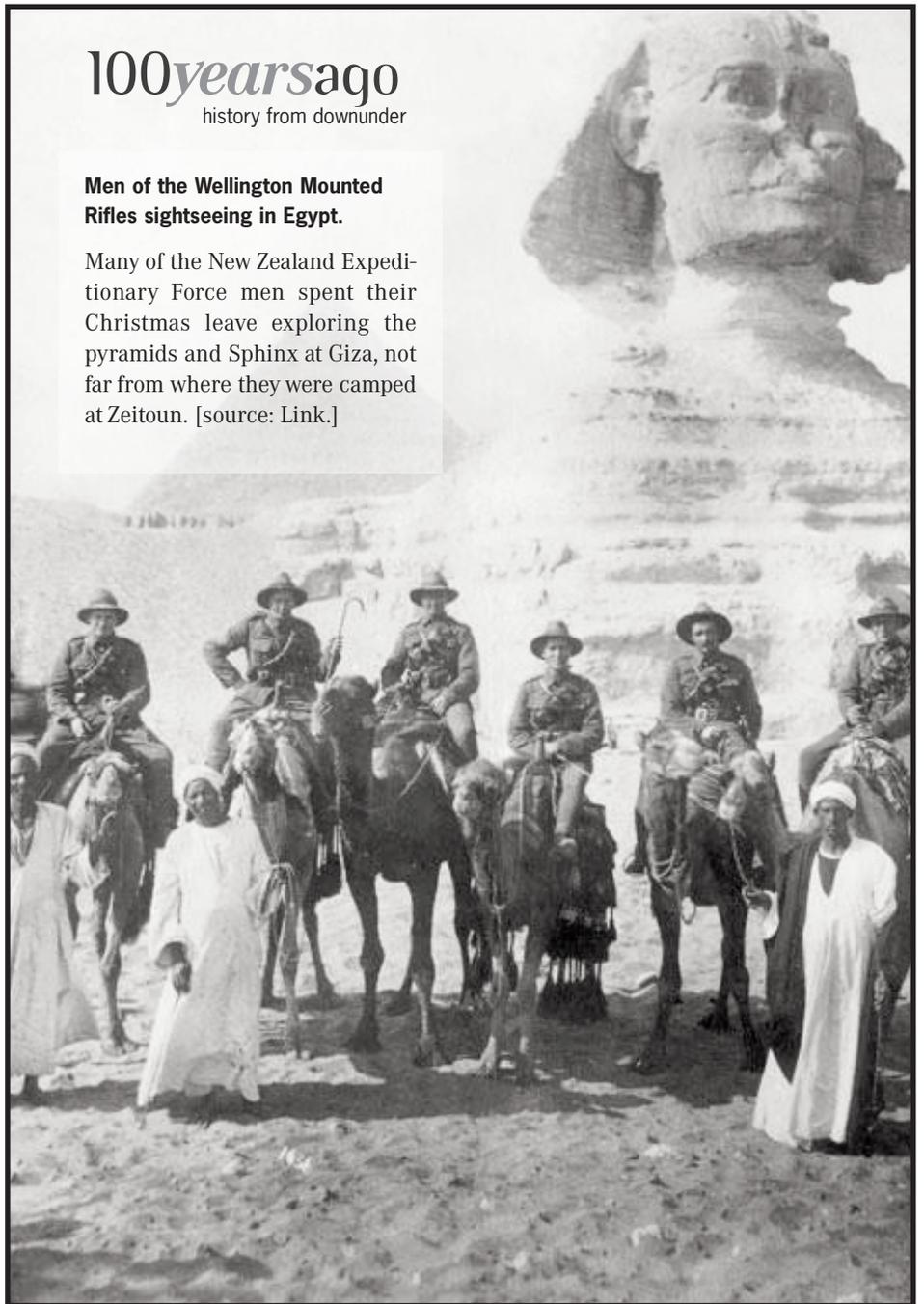
VADs are now known as the Voluntary Aid Service Corps (VASC). [Link]

100yearsago

history from downunder

Men of the Wellington Mounted Rifles sightseeing in Egypt.

Many of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force men spent their Christmas leave exploring the pyramids and Sphinx at Giza, not far from where they were camped at Zeitoun. [source: Link.]



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India pulls off space coup with brilliant satellite orbit of Mars

India triumphed in its first interplanetary mission, placing a satellite into orbit around Mars on Wednesday and catapulting the country into an elite club of deep-space explorers.

In scenes broadcast live on Indian TV, scientists broke into wild cheers as the orbiter's engines completed 24 minutes of burn time to manoeuvre the spacecraft into its designated place around the red planet.

"We have gone beyond the boundaries of human enterprise and innovation," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a live broadcast from the Indian Space and Research Organization's command centre in the southern tech hub of Bangalore.

"We have navigated our craft through a route known to very few," Modi said, congratulating the scientists and "all my fellow Indians on this historic occasion." Scientists described the final stages of the Mars Orbiter Mission, affectionately nicknamed MOM, as flawless. [Sources: AP, Tof I]

Wrath of Imran Khan changes mood in Pakistan – perhaps towards a crisis

The hope that followed a closely-monitored election and the decorous installation of new government in Islamabad last year, seems to be disintegrating – with huge implications for Pakistan and its troubled terrorist-riven region, and the world.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif supporters, opposition demonstrators, police riot squads military and terrorists have clashed on the streets of Islamabad. No one is happy.

The action has, for the most part, been led by cleric Mohammed Tahir-ul-Qadri and his ally, cricketer-turned-politician, Imran Khan, who is a No. 3 party leader who has turned angry.

Whomsoever initiated the move to military mediation and how the military has played into the development of the crisis itself are questions that are at this stage difficult to determine. But senior politicians and constitutional experts have denounced it as a national disgrace that reflects badly on the commitment to genuine democracy across the political spectrum.

Sources: IFJ, Dawn

Pakistani troops face protestors in streets, tangle with Indians in Kashmir

The outfit Crisis Watch wrote that continued mass anti-government protests in Pakistan have the potential to undermine the nation's fragile democratic transition.

Crisis Watch also saw the mood early last month as having the potential to raised fears of a military intervention and more. Protests leaders want Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's resignation, dissolution of parliament and new elections. After a mid-August assault on several key government buildings, the army joined the fray ostensibly to become mediator. Army chief General Raheel Sharif saw the job of a mediator and guarantor of any negotiated settlement to be his.

Meanwhile, India-Pakistan relations took a hard hit when forces of the two states tangled again over the Kashmir line of control. Civilian casualties were claimed by both sides and high-level talks were cancelled.

Commonwealth theme next year will focus on the young

They've made a choice. The theme next year for Commonwealth Day will target the younger set. Its title will be A Young Commonwealth.

This annual name selection decision is to establish a focus for activities undertaken during the ensuing year led by Governments of Commonwealth member states and by Commonwealth organizations.

Themes are agreed on about this time each year in a group think-consultation with reps of Commonwealth civil society. Their suggestion is then presented for approval by Her Majesty The Queen, as head of the Commonwealth.

Those aged 25 or under account for the most of the Commonwealth's population (about 2.328 billion, nearly a third of the world's people) and play a vital role at the heart of sustainable development and democracy.

Notice from the Commonwealth Secretariat in London says;

"A Young Commonwealth recognizes the capacity, contribution and potential of young people, particularly in 2015 when the world will define a new global development framework."

It is important that the profile of the Commonwealth should be raised, and for understanding of the impact of its work and values to be advanced.

"Our hope is that all members of the Commonwealth family will find appropriate ways of marking Commonwealth Day and of drawing attention to the new theme for 2015," Secretary General Kamallesh Sharma said.

Approved Fiji election returns coup leader to head of government

Frank Bainimarama, the previous Prime Minister of Fiji, was re-elected last month, in the first universally accepted national election since a military coup in 2006.

Prior to the election Bainimarama, formerly a naval commodore, was an Independent but stood for the FijiFirst Party in 2014. The Social Democratic Liberal Party and the National Federation Party both got over 5%, the threshold for a party or independent to have seats in the parliament. Seven parties registered to contest the elections, with a total of 248 candidates nominated, of which two were independents

FijiFirst Party took 59.20% of the vote. The Social Democratic Liberal Party, with 28.20% of the vote will form the official opposition in the 50-member Fijian parliament.

Monitored and approved by a Commonwealth Secretariat team of scrutineers, the election restores Fiji to diplomatic grace among its south Pacific neighbors. But it returns with a big new friend: China.

In New York last month, the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) formally reinstated Fiji to full membership status. Sources AP, CS, NZHT

A diplomatically awful oops moment in New Delhi broadcast

An Indian newsreader's blunder identifying visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping, on his high-profile first state visit to India last month, cost the newsreader his job and many blushes for the hosts. The TV anchor saw the president's first name, Xi, as the Roman numeral for eleven, XI, and called the visitor "Eleven Jinping" on air, in a report by India's public broadcaster Doordarshan. Coping with foreign leaders' names is a headache for newsreaders worldwide, but the status of this blooper hit harder than most.

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.

birds*i*view...

by Charlie Powell

It is the middle of winter here in Winnipeg, but that doesn't mean all the birds have flown south.

In fact one of the birds that toughs it out here all year, like many of us, is the black-capped chickadee. That alone sort of endears it to you, eh? It is a passerine bird in the tit family Paridae. "Passerine" means that it perches - aided by the toe arrangement of 3 forward and one back.

The local chickadees are taking advantage of this current unseasonal warm spell (0C in late January!) and spending more time at our feeder. The feeder was a gift at Christmas and is a metal mesh ball that I have half filled with black oil sunflower seeds. With a little patience they will feed from your hand - especially in the winter when other options are scarce. They also eat other seeds, berries, insects and grubs. They will store their food in caches and have a great memory for their various locations - I wonder if they learnt that from squirrels? One year a pair made their nest in the rotted stump of an old plum tree in our backyard.

If I was to pair the chickadee with an Australian bird, I'd probably go with the willie wagtail (apparently not found in NZ). This is because they both have a bit of a cheeky manner about them and aren't too intimidated by our presence. In fact wagtails will even harass kookaburras and wedge-tailed eagles! Also a passerine, the wagtail is a member of the fantail genus Rhipidura and gets its name from the way it wags its tail horizontally while foraging. Unlike the chickadee, it feeds almost exclusively on insects, including butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, dragonflies, bugs, spiders, centipedes, and



millipedes. Both birds have their own distinctive calls and initially it took me quite some time to figure out it was a Chickadee that I was hearing from our backyard. I like trying to answer the chickadees' call with my own attempt at an imitation.

I'll give the final comment to Abba, who of course had someone else in mind in their popular song, but I can easily imagine Chiquitita (Spanish for "little one") referring to our little feathered friend:

Chiquitita, you and I cry

But the sun is still in the sky and shining above you

Let me hear you sing once more like you did before

Sing a new song, Chiquitita

Try once more like you did before

Sing a new song, Chiquitita

Try once more like you did before

Sing a new song, Chiquitita.

editorially yours ...



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