

The Southern Yarn

August - Sept. 2018

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.



downundercalendar

AUGUST

Golf Tournament
Saturday 25th August
at The Players
2695 Inkster Blvd.
Tee time is 10:45 for 18 holes

(\$40 or \$35 for seniors);
or 1:00pm for 9 holes (\$25 or \$22 for seniors).
All ages and abilities are welcome.
Call Peter Munn at 204 237-1805
to book your entry.

OCTOBER

Formal (?) Dinner
Saturday 27th October
(venue to be announced)

More details will follow in the next Yarn, but
mark it in your calendar to set the evening aside
to join us for this annual nosh-up ...

If you'd like to suggest a new social event, we're
happy to help you plan it for the Club!



Pool party

What another enjoyable pool party the Downunder club had on Sunday, July 8! Lynley and Jason Davidson were excellent hosts to the many adults and children on a perfect warm and sunny day. Their swimming pool and back yard flower garden are ideal for this event: lots of sitting areas under the gazebo, or in the shade, and lots of pool

space for swimming, fun and games - complete with long-range super-soakers. The BBQ burgers, smokies and chicken kebabs were cooked to perfection, as usual, by Jason. Thanks to all club members who shared the other delicious dishes that made for quite the banquet.

weRecommend

Anything you want to recommend? Let us know and we'll share it.

To Read

Only Killers and Thieves –
Novel by Paul Howarth
that tells an epic tale of
revenge and survival. A
gripping and utterly
transporting debut,
Howarth bringing to vivid
life a colonial Australia that
bears a striking resemblance
to the American Wild West
in its formative years. Available
now at McNally Robinson.



Ali's Wedding – The charming and musically-talented son of a Muslim cleric, Ali struggles to make the right life choices despite the best of intentions. Australian movie now showing on Netflix (Hydesmith family)

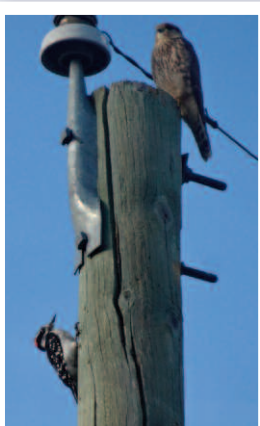
Kath and Kim – A cringe-worthy comedy of day-to-day Aussie suburban adult family life. Several seasons on Netflix (Jenny Gates)

To Do

Australian Walkabout at the **Assiniboine Park Zoo** – get up close with emus and kangaroos. Enjoy a barrier free encounter with two of Australia's iconic animal species.

To Enjoy

"Down Under" parfait – soft vanilla layered with Nutella, cappuccino crumble, Tim Tam biscuits, and chocolate hazelnut cream-filled wafer. Available now at Sub Zero Ice Cream, 298 Jamison Ave, Winnipeg.



A woodpecker
and Falcon
share a perch.
Read Peter's
fauna report
on page two.

online



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editorially yours

Charlie Powell



G'day. Welcome back. I have to admit that it was a challenge for me getting this issue together. I found that the change in frequency from monthly has thrown me off my stride. However, I am sure I/we will adjust. And, if you value this newsletter, please take the time to send in ideas (eg, for "Getting to know") and snippets for inclusion. I, and I am sure most readers, especially like to get info on personal encounters and anecdotes as well as news items that are less-out-there. Thank you again to those who are already contributing in this way.

Thanks to Jenny Gates for collecting the "We Recommend" section on page one. Your suggestions are always welcome, as we all come across such things to share.

As Peter Munn mentions in his President's Message, one of our summer pleasures is being able to observe the activity at our bird-feeder and the nearby bird-bath. However, this year things did not start out very promising. No birds, apart from the occasional crow, or chipmunks or squirrels were showing up! We soon realized the cause was our new neighbour's cat, which was being indulged with free range! This called for some careful diplomacy - balancing friendly neighbourliness with firm expectations and reminders of the City By-laws concerning restraining of pets. It seems that the message must have got through (it didn't hurt that another bird-loving neighbour threw diplomacy to the wind and trapped the offending feline so that it had to be claimed back from the City compound!) as all the usual wildlife have returned and "Frankie" is learning her place in our eco-system.

I hope that your summer/winter is also proving interesting and exciting.

Enjoy,
Charlie



"Bottom-feeders", Photo C. Powell

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



Summer has been here with a hot vengeance. As I write this, the calendar pops into August in 5 hours time, and the last 4 weeks have been the hottest I have encountered living in Winnipeg. So we have been enjoying going outside for evening meals in a shaded spot near our back door, and having a cool drink or two. The Barbie has been doing more work than ever. Even though we are in suburbia, we live about a quarter mile from

the Red river, and the same from the Seine river. So we get a bit of wildlife that wanders through our back yard, even when we are sitting outside. The rabbits don't mind who is around, they wander under our table to get to their favorite grass patch, a family of raccoons frequent our back yard, deer sometimes come around at night, and we have a few Peregrine falcons that we see from time to time, one feasting on a rabbit just 20 feet from us on one occasion. And like Charlie and Judy, we have a bird feeder, so lots of birds, and red and grey squirrels to clean up after them.

Enjoy the rest of the Summer,
Peter

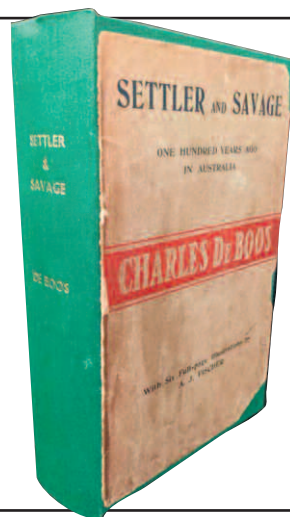
100 years ago ...

One Hundred Years Ago is a 1911 Australian silent film directed by Gaston Mervale. It features an early screen performance from Louise Lovely (billed as "Louise Carbasse") and is considered a lost film.

[Source: Wikipedia]

It is also a book ... *Settler and savage: one hundred years ago in Australia* by Charles de Boos; with 6 full page illustrations by A.J. Fischer. Fictional account of attack on settler's hut in Hunter River district, and subsequent revenge of the survivors of the Aborigines.

[More online]



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First Vegemite ad in six years ...

... and Senator Pauline Hanson heads the cast. The One Nation leader famous for her right-wing, anti-immigration politics has been chosen to lead the first Vegemite ad in six years. Ms Hanson heads a cast of other Australians, Australian attractions, references and historical events featuring in the 60-second video for the "Tastes Like Australia" campaign. "It's fun", says Vegemite's marketing manager Matt Gray, who hopes to pitch the spread to the more than a third of Australians now born overseas. [More online]



It's all about poo. Bird poo ... [pic in Dropbox]

[ABC Science] The black ship rat – *Rattus rattus* – wreaks havoc on island seabirds globally, including throughout the Great Barrier Reef where it has been a pest for more than 200 years. The animals eat the eggs of nesting birds and prey on the young, suppressing bird numbers on the islands they inhabit. A paper in *Nature* today demonstrates how this triggers a series of events

that not only damages surrounding coral reefs, but impacts fish and other marine life as well. [More online]



That's rubbish! ...

To the naked eye Rayfield Avenue looks like any other residential street in Craigieburn, a suburb in Melbourne's north. Few visitors would realize they are driving along a road that is quite literally rubbish. In May, Hume City became the first council in Australia to trial a new form of asphalt – known as Plastiphalt – that is made out of plastic bags and glass bottles diverted from landfill. [More online]



Ever heard of Whangamomona?

Once known for its rough and tough characters and defiant attitude, the town that calls itself a republic has grown into a nationally recognised tourist destination and the main attraction along the Forgotten World Highway. [More online]

Alice in underland

She's the 10th largest boring machine in the world and she helped dig the Waterview Tunnel, which connects Auckland's southwestern motorway to the northwestern motorway. [More online]

Flag fun – just the usual friendly rivalry or is he serious?

[CNN: Sheena McKenzie, 25th July, 2018] New Zealand's acting Prime Minister Winston Peters has accused Australia of copying his country's flag, telling its neighbor to get its own design. "We had a flag that we've had for a long time, copied by Australia," Peters told local network TVNZ. [More online]

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Looking back: Australia 100 years ago

A reflection on life in Australia 100 years ago. What was occupying the minds of Australians in 1918 as the Great War entered its fifth and final year?

The country was still dominated by participation in the War, both on the homefront and overseas, with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) serving on the Western Front in France and Belgium, and in the Middle East.

After heavy losses at Bullecourt, Messines and Ypres – 22,000 men in one year – Australians were questioning their country's involvement in the war. Voluntary enlistment declined and conscription was rejected twice at the ballot box.

The five infantry divisions of the AIF, nearly 110,000 men, were restructured as the Australian Corps and, for the first time came under the command of an Australian, Major General John Monash, who oversaw operations that recaptured Villers-Bretonneux and played an important part in the Allied victory.

On the home front, tensions were running high due to a number of factors.

Conscription – The bitter conscription debate had fractured the country along religious, political and socio-economic lines. Many were concerned the so-called 'test of nationhood' was leading to futile loss of life on the frontline and civil unrest at home.

Industrial unrest – A general strike of 100,000 workers throughout the nation, caused by changing workplace conditions and ongoing concern with the Government's enlistment policy.

Political upheaval – Hughes, expelled from the Labor Party and leading the new Nationalist Party, resigned on 8 January



1918, but was sworn in again in the absence of other candidates.

Many Australians were angry about the cost of living and this sparked activism among women of all classes and politics.

Food riots – Meat and wheat were being prioritised for Britain; and, since the start of the war, the price of groceries had risen by more than 28 per cent, while male wages by only 15.4 per cent. Unemployment was 10.6 per cent.

Protests had peaked on 19 September 1917 when 10,000 people marched on federal Parliament House in Melbourne and smashed property. The organiser, Adela Pankhurst, was jailed in Pentridge for two months and 400 extra constables were employed to keep the peace.

Amid this turbulence, Australians were getting on with daily life, yet feeling increasingly anxious about the greater purpose of their loved ones fighting overseas.

Those seeking comedic relief went to see the country's first major comedy film, *Our Friends, the Hayseeds*, and people of all ages enjoyed two patriotic books for children, *Snugglepoot and Cuddlepie* (May Gibbs) and *The Magic Pudding* (Norman Lindsay).

On the sporting field, the interstate Sheffield Shield cricket competition was not

contested, but both football codes and the Melbourne Cup continued.

War brought many technological 'firsts'.

The Trans-Australian Railway was completed, a national project connecting the eastern states with Western Australia. An electric train service began in suburban Melbourne and the first direct telephone call between Australia and England was made by Prime Minister Hughes.

Daily life was transformed by electric trams, cars, newspapers, gramophones and cameras; and on the land improvements came with new ploughs and harvesting implements.

Mechanisation was standardising food production and packaging, enabling women to preserve fruit and vegetables at home, but also creating consumer novelties such as Copha, ice-cream and chocolate boxes.

By the end of 1918, the First World War was finally over and there was a strong sense of national pride in what the Australian troops had accomplished. But, there was also great sadness at the terrible toll and recognition that as a nation we needed to take care of the survivors, the war widows and their children.

[Source: Sir John Monash Centre. More online]



Aussie Folk

This year's Winnipeg Folk Festival featured several artists from Australia, including (from left) Archie Roach, Mama Kin Spender, John Butler Trio+, and Courtney Barnett (not pictured). Photos by Brian Hyde-Smith.





Will Australia raise criminal age from 10 to 14

The Human Rights Law Centre has called on the ACT government to raise the age a child can be held criminally responsible from 10 years old to 14 years old.

The centre's legal advocacy director Ruth Barson said the reforms were commonsense for a jurisdiction ahead of the curve in human rights.

"The ACT is very much a community that respects human rights," Ms Barson said. Locking up children under the age of 14 is incongruent with that commitment...Australia is one of the few countries on Earth with such a low age for locking children up."

Ms Barson warned even a program like a "spent convictions scheme", which limits the disclosure of previous convictions, was still harmful.

The courts can ignore previous convictions when hearing for another charge but some convictions still need to be disclosed when it came to travel or employment.

"Children as young as 10 who we know aren't developmentally ready to be in the criminal justice system can be stained by that for their entire lives," Ms Barson said.

An example, she said, was if an employer asked if someone has ever been convicted of an offence, when that individual would still have to answer yes. Ms Barson pointed to New Zealand, where the criminal age of responsibility was 14 years old. "That's graded. For some very serious offences, that is lowered to 12," she said. The ACT government already has the infrastructure in place to support young people at risk, with a "great" youth justice blueprint in place.

Justice Directorate data showed the number of 10- to 14-year-old Canberrans held in detention, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, had increased by about 45% over three years.

—SOURCE: By Finbar O'Mallon; *Canberra Times*

Revolt over asylum-seeker policy

Labor is facing a grassroots revolt over refugee policy, with city and country branches calling for sweeping changes to the largely bipartisan border protection and offshore processing regime ahead of the NSW Labor annual conference.

The Australian has obtained more than a dozen motions submitted by Labor Party

branches to the annual conference on June 30 and July 1 at the Sydney Town Hall. Not one supports the party's current policy in full.

The motions show the party leadership is out of step with the views of members, who want a clear statement of support for the principles advocated by the Labor for Refugees internal lobby group and the restoration of "a fair and humane policy on refugees and people seeking asylum". SOURCE: *The Australian*

Australian inquiry into workplace sexual harassment

Australia has announced that it will hold a national inquiry into workplace sexual harassment. The investigation is in part a response to the global #MeToo movement against sexual misconduct, Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins said.

The government described the inquiry, to take 12 months, as the most comprehensive of its type globally. It will aim to implement sweeping standards, including potentially the introduction of new criminal laws. "MeToo has resulted in a lot of women and men speaking out about sexual harassment and we know workplaces want to do better," Ms Jenkins said.

Papuan domestic abuse survivors offered safe havens

Two out of three women in Papua New Guinea experience abuse at the hands of an intimate partner, according to aid groups and the World Health Organization.

Cathy Umba carries a camouflage-print backpack everywhere she goes. The mother of four can't read or write, but a stack of papers inside the backpack are her shield – they're proof that she has a court order protecting her from her ex-husband.

The journey to those documents was long. It took Umba almost 20 years to feel safe, and she couldn't have done it without a network of volunteers working with survivors of domestic abuse in Port Moresby, the capital. Two out of three women in Papua New Guinea experience abuse at the hands of an intimate partner, according to aid groups and the World Health Organization. It's one of the highest rates of domestic abuse in the world.

Questioning Cpt. Cook's role in NZ's history

NZ indigenous rights advocate Tina Ngata travelled to the United States to lay a complaint at the United Nations over the 250th anniversary commemorations of Captain Cook.

A complaint has been made at the United

Nations over the 250th anniversary commemorations of Cook, while the Government pushes ahead with plans to roll out a "First Encounters" program in schools next year. Received wisdom is that the English navigator sighted NZ on Oct 6 1769, and landed at Poverty Bay. He drew detailed and accurate maps of the country, and wrote about the Maori people.

Indigenous rights advocate Tina Ngata laid the complaint in April on the grounds that New Zealand's discovery narrative, through the Tuia Encounters 250 events, "underpinned the denial of indigenous rights". Ngata raised the funds to attend the UN's 17th Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues, in New York, through a Givealittle fundraiser.

Ngata, from Ruatoria near Gisborne, said NZ should address the rights abuse since Cook's arrival in 1769.

Fiji party leader probed

Fiji's Independent Commission Against Corruption has confirmed an investigation involving the Fiji Human Rights Commission is under way.

The enquiry was in its early stages and confirmed that a search of the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission offices was conducted some weeks ago. Earlier, corruption charges were brought against Sitiveni Rabuka, the leader of the main opposition party SODELPA, who said his high profile is making him a target.

Mr Rabuka now faces charges relating to alleged anomalies in his financial declarations for 2016 and 2017. If found guilty he may be ineligible to run in Fiji's general election due later this year.

Read more most issues from Commonwealth Corner on page seven 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.



Long-tailed shrike, China (C. Powell)



Northern shrike [By Marek Szczepanek - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, [Link]

birds*i*view...

by Charlie Powell

Shrikey, mate!

The black-faced cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina novaehollandiae*) is the most common of Australia's five species of shrike and is often seen on power lines. Adult birds have a prominent black face and throat, gray plumage, white underparts and a somewhat hooked bill. The size varies between 32 cm and 34 cm. They are slow-moving, with a shrill, screaming call, sounding like "creearck" [Wikipedia]. Like our feature bird last issue, the cuckoo, they feed on insects, larvae, caterpillars and small invertebrates. They have a habit of shuffling their wings after they alight, to reset their feathers. This explains one of their nicknames in New Zealand, "shufflewing", where they are also resident.

Truth is they are not really a cuckoo or a shrike – it's just their hooked beak that led early observers to regard them as similar to the Old World shrikes.

There are a couple of fair dinkum shrikes found across southern Canada – the northern shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) and the loggerhead shrike (*L. ludovicianus*).

Lanius excubitor translates to "sentinel butcher" and is an apt description of their *modus operandi* – impaling their animal prey on thorns to store them for later. Rodents form a large proportion of their diet.

While in China last year, I came across its member of the family, the long-tailed shrike, at several of our stops. You can see the resemblance. In this case, the Latin name is *Lanius schach*, where the schach refers to the shriek or shrill call.

Here is Lucia Perillo's grim but realistic shrike poem:

Shrike Tree

Most days back then I would walk by the shrike tree,
a dead hawthorn at the base of a hill.
The shrike had pinned smaller birds on the tree's black thorns
and the sun had stripped them of their feathers.

Some of the dead ones hung at eye level
while some burned holes in the sky overhead.
At least it is honest,
the body apparent
and not rotting in the dirt.

And I, having never seen the shrike at work,
can only imagine how the breasts were driven into the branches.
When I saw him he'd be watching from a different tree
with his mask like Zorro
and the gray cape of his wings.

At first glance he could have been a mockingbird or a jay
if you didn't take note of how his beak was hooked.
If you didn't know the ruthlessness of what he did—
ah, but that is a human judgment.

They are mute, of course, a silence at the center of a bigger silence,
these rawhide ornaments, their bald skulls showing.
And notice how I've slipped into the present tense
as if they were still with me.

Of course they are still with me.

They hang there, desiccating
by the trail where I walked, back when I could walk,
before life pinned me on its thorn.
It is ferocious, life, but it must eat,
then leaves us with the artifact.

Which is: these black silhouettes in the midday sun,
strict and jagged, like an Asian script.
A tragedy that is not without its glamour.
Not without the runes of the wizened meat.

Because imagine the luck!—to be plucked from the air,
to be drenched and dried in the sun's bright voltage—
well, hard luck is luck, nonetheless.
With a chunk of sky in each eye socket.
And the pierced heart strung up like a pearl.



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