

The Southern Yarn

Dec. 2018/Jan 2019



NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

JANUARY 2019

Australia Day and Waitangi Day
Saturday 26th January, 2019,
5 pm

Scandinavian Cultural Centre
764 Erin St, Winnipeg.

This year's bake-off theme is "Kids in the Kitchen" – any dish prepared by a teen or younger. Let 'em loose and see what they come up with ... Other potluck contributions will of course be welcome(/needed?)

MARCH 2019

High Tea Bakery
Saturday 16th March

2103 Portage Ave, Winnipeg

Join members and invite your friends to socialize over beverage and bikkies.

Some photos from our Formal dinner:



Merry Christmas



Santa showed up on schedule at our annual family potluck dinner this year. We were on the main floor of the Scandinavian Cultural Centre, removing any potential issues with the elevator (see page 4/5). Kids were excited to receive gifts, and potluck delicacies were enjoyed by all.

Photos: Brian Hydesmith



Annual formal dinner, AGM

It was a nice taste of class, figuratively and gastronomically, to be back at Bailey's Restaurant downtown for our **not-so-formal dinner** on 27th October. There was unanimous gratitude to Judy Powell for organizing this approximately 70th (give or take) annual club dinner. Thanks also to the Club for the complimentary glass of wine. Naturally, the rack of lamb was very popular, but each of the other offerings (filet mignon, veal

scaloppini, chicken poseidon and Mediterranean seafood) were equally enjoyed. Most importantly, all who were gathered there, including Catherine Bowering's guests, John and Edie Markmann, obviously enjoyed the total experience – food, fellowship and fun.

At the end of November, we had our **Annual General Meeting**. More on that, including a descent into some unforeseen drama, on pages 2, 4, and 5.

online



find us on facebook or the web
www.downunderclub.mb.ca
email: info@downunderclub.mb.ca

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



The month of November heralded several momentous events: the Melbourne Cup, the US mid-term elections and the DUCW's Annual Meeting, to name a few. More seriously, of course, it was the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day. Here in Canada, "Remembrance Day" is commemorated more like ANZAC Day is downunder – the 11th of November is a public holiday, there are dawn services as well as larger gatherings at 11:00 around cenotaphs in most towns, Veterans, active service personnel and cadet units parade while pipers and bands play and march, speeches are delivered and prayers are offered, the Fallen are remembered in the moment of silence between the Last Post and Reveille. A very informative site to visit regarding the Armistice is: <https://armistice-museum.com/understanding-the-history/the-armistice-of-1940/>

Thank you again to all who have contributed to this issue of the Yarn – we may even be running to 8 pages!

For insight into other historical events regarding the Armistice, visit [online link].

Charlie Powell

What's On

Looking for your Aussie or Kiwi small screen fix?

There are a plethora of Aussie programs on now or coming soon to Netflix:

- Wanted
- Deep Water
- Tideland
- Pine Gap

Haven't heard of any new Kiwi additions, but if you know of any – or if you know of any programs from down under now on TV or any of the streaming services – please email info@downunderclub.mb.ca and I will add them to future issues of The Yarn.

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



The Annual General Meeting has come and gone, and we had one of the larger attendances for some time. I would like to thank all of those who attended, it was appreciated by the Board. Steve Setka was there as a member for his first club event, and it was great to talk with him about his three years as a Canadian in Australia. We were delighted to have Penny Hechter put her hat in the ring,

offering to work on the Social side of operations with Judy. All in all, a positive meeting, and a good time was had by all in the social part of the evening. And as a first, we had to call emergency services after the event, as the elevator trapped 3 members between floors. First time we had the Fire Brigade at an event, and they performed skillfully.

Keep your time free for the Australia Day/Waitangi Day event, details are elsewhere in this issue. It is always one of the highlights of the year.

Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year with your families.

Peter

250 years ago

Founding treasure of the National Library of Australia (NLA)

James Cook's Endeavour journal gives Cook's personal account of his journey from England to Australia, which began 250 years ago. Officially, this journal was meant to document Cook's observation of the transit of Venus across the face of the Sun. Unofficially, it was to become a record for Cook's top-secret mission to sail south in search of the mythic 'Unknown Southern Land' and claim it for Britain – a mission he completed on 29 April 1770 when he landed at Kurnell, in Botany Bay. [Link]



Inside Captain Cook's journal.

Credit: National Library of Australia

[Australian Geographic: Elizabeth Arrigo, 17 Oct 2018]

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Armistice Day parade in Masterton (Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-5314-02)

100 years ago

Armistice Day, 11 Nov. 1918

[<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/armistice-day>]: The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month was the moment when hostilities ceased on the Western Front in 1918, following the signing of an armistice. In 2004 an Unknown New Zealand Warrior from the First World War was laid to rest at the National War Memorial.

The signing of the armistice between the Allies and Germany was celebrated in many cities and towns around New Zealand. Enthusiasm was dampened, though, by the ongoing impact of the influenza pandemic then ravaging the country. A premature report of an armistice published on 8 November added to the general sense of uncertainty about celebrating the official announcement.

Despite the difficult circumstances, thousands of New Zealanders took part in or watched armistice parades on 12 November, the day the official announcement was published here. Brass bands and elaborately decorated floats led the way as returned soldiers, schoolchildren and crazily costumed performers marched along main streets carrying banners and flags. Public officials gave earnest speeches and crowds gathered to celebrate the end of four long years of war.

Auckland was the exception. Here the acting Chief Health Officer, Dr Joseph Frengley, postponed all official armistice celebrations in a bid to stop the further spread of influenza. Frengley had been alarmed at the



On Saturday October 20, members of the DUCW welcomed Aussie author Michael Robotham to Winnipeg. Michael was launching his latest book – “The Other Wife” – at McNally Robinson Bookstore. Jenny was asked to introduce host Terry MacLeod, who then introduced Michael, who then entertained the crowd with stories about his career and his life in Australia. L-R: Terry MacLeod, Brad Tyler-West, Michael Robotham, Jenny Gates, Lucia Barron, and Peter and Margaret Munn.

large crowds which had gathered after the premature declaration on 8 November. Despite these precautions, 1128 Aucklanders died from the influenza pandemic. Auckland eventually celebrated the armistice in mid-1919.

The 1918 Melbourne Cup

[*The Argus*, Wednesday, November 6, 1918]: “Huge Crowd See Fine Race / Night Watch

Wins / New Time Record / Favourite Unplaced. ... There was no suggestion of doubt in anything but the garments. It was not a “dressy” Cup. In these days the fashion is not to be too “fashionable,” and a dull morning aided the convention of the times.”

Also from November 6, 2018:

America votes – Australia comes to a standstill.

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Intercepted

These two bullets were found after the Battle of Gallipoli which started in 1915 and ended in 1916 during WWI. The allies consisted of British, French, Australia and New Zealand against a fierce Turkish Army. In the end, the allied side lost 46,000 troops while the Turkish lost 65,000, with the Allies retreating from the battle. The Turks still consider their victory at Gallipoli to be a great, defining moment in the nation's modern history. Eight years later, the Turkish War of Independence broke out, led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Ataturk was a commander at the battle of Gallipoli. [Link]



The entertainers

Gerry Gordon on didgeridoo and Jenny Gates on guitar and vocals in the duo *Up From Down Under* entertained residents at the Niverville Heritage Centre on October 28 by playing a selection of songs from down under as part of Australia month.



Prince Harry had to say 'No' when asked to sign a pair of budgie smugglers. [ABC News photo]

Invictus Games ...

[SMH, 20 Oct 2018: Helen Pitt] "On this day in 1973 my grandmother opened this building. Forty five years later it is my honour to stand here in front of this iconic building to open the Invictus Games."

He said the Symbol of the Aussie Digger has received respect in battles from "Kokoda to Afghanistan." But it was an Australian responsibility to show the world "what game on Australia really means" in support of these athletes. [Link]



The Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef system, is under threat from climate change. (Supplied: Trevor Smith)]



Some broccoli with your coffee?

[Australian Food News] Bunches of broccoli deemed too imperfect looking to be stocked on shop shelves have been ground up and turned into a powder by science agency CSIRO and agriculture group Hort Innovation.

Every two tablespoons of powder contain about one serve of broccoli, vegetable health experts consider broccoli a superfood because it's packed with dozens of nutrients.

One Melbourne cafe has started experimenting with the powder by stirring it into coffees. [Link]

Your reef visit could help save it

[ABC Wide Bay: 27 Oct 2018, Katri Uibu] Tourists visiting the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) are encouraged to contribute to scientific research by recording coral bleaching upon entering the blue seas to dive or snorkel. In 2002, the University of Queensland (UQ) launched a CoralWatch citizen science project which hands out charts that help detect the health of the reef. [Link]

An interesting turn of events at the AGM

Friday evening started with a special meeting to bring our bylaws up to date. Then the AGM got underway, starting with officer reports and related discussion. Then right before members voted in next year's executive, Peter Munn extended thanks to the outgoing exec, as well as Brian Hyde-Smith (designer) and Jenny Gates (media/communications).

The incoming exec is President Peter Munn, VP Catherine Bowering, Treasurer Peter Debenham, Secretary Margaret Munn, Newsletter Editor Charlie Powell, Membership Terry Roberts, Social Coordinator Judy Powell, and social committee members Lucia Barron and Penny Hechter.



Huge thanks to outgoing social committee member Joanne Debenham, and a hearty welcome to first-time exec member, Penny.

It was a great turnout of 18 members, including Steve Setka who attended his first DUCW event – and an AGM, no less. Good one, mate!



Cute chick ...

The 12-hour-old chick is held by Robyn Webb from the Whāngarei Bird Recovery Centre. Photo / John Stone

A chick from the 12 kiwi released in the Pukenui Western Hills is in the pink after hatching in an incubator at the Whangārei Bird Recovery Centre.

The bristly little bundle with the long pink beak broke out of its egg around 2am yesterday.

Pukenui Western Hills Forest Trust ranger Bevan Cramp had taken the egg taken from under a male kiwi called Waimarie two weeks ago. Its removal to the bird centre's incubator followed concerns Waimarie needed a break after earlier sitting on one unviable egg. [Link]



Te Otukapuarangi

The fabled Pink and White Terraces, also known as Te Otukapuarangi, were once dubbed the eighth wonder of the world and were a thriving tourist destination, attracting people from overseas.

The terraces formed over thousands of years as silica-rich water emerging from springs and boiling geysers crystallised into giant tiered staircases. The White Terrace covered more than three hectares while the smaller Pink Terrace was used for bathing on the lower levels. There was also a smaller, lesser known feature called Tuhi's Spring, or the Black Terrace.

They disappeared after the Mt Tarawera eruption which was the largest and most destructive in New Zealand since the early 19th century. It devastated the surrounding countryside, destroyed several villages and was responsible for about 120 deaths. [Link]



Ruapehu towers in the background as the Northern Explorer crosses a viaduct through Tongariro National Park. Photo / KiwiRail

Kiwi Rail

The Northern Explorer is New Zealand's longest-running passenger service – and also the longest at 680 kilometres – taking a full day between downtown Auckland and Wellington. [Link]

bushyarns

outback humour, tall tales and bulldust

“Classic Bush Yarns” is a collection of “Australian outback humour, tall yarns and bulldust” by Warren Fahey (Harper Collins publishers, 2001). Here is a sample:

The heavens had finally opened after many months of drought. One of the station hands yelped with excitement and rushed outside, where he jumped about with joy.

‘Come in out of the rain, you bloody fool!’ roared the station boss.

‘But I’m not worried about getting wet, boss,’ the young hand protested.

‘I’m not worried about you,’ the boss spluttered, ‘but you’re keeping the rain off the flamin’ ground.’



Many of us stayed and socialised for a while, and then things got really interesting.

Gord, Leon and I were taking the elevator to the ground floor when something went ker-floey, and we were stuck inside for at least



half an hour. When all else failed, our president decided it was time to call 911. As the three of us joked our way

through the wait – “I hope we don’t have to resort to cannibalism” and “I’ve decided I don’t want to leave” (courtesy of Leon) – the firefighters and paramedic raced to our rescue. They managed to release the jammed doors and ensure safe exit.

Thanks to those guys, as well as members of the Club who stayed around and kept up our spirits while figuring out the best course of action to get us home before midnight. Well done, everyone.

We had a different type of excitement for the Christmas Party on Sunday Dec 9, but it was an excellent night, and we hope you enjoyed joining us there.

– Jenny Gates, with photos
by Brian Hydesmith

Debenhams on safari

UCW members may remember my friend, Blair Rioridan, who was the financial co-ordinator at our Pavilion in 1994. Well, Blair invited Joanne and I to join him and Diane along with 11 others to go on a safari in Tanzania.

With all the plane changes, it was a tougher travel schedule than going to Oz!

We flew into Kilimanjaro and on to Arusha to begin our safari. The holiday was amazing as we had a guided tour through the Serengeti and saw all the animals we came to see – lions, elephants, hippos, giraffes, zebras, wildebeests, cheetahs, leopards, ostriches, monkeys, and even a rhinoceros!

I can highly recommend our tour group, Overseas Adventure Travel, who specialize in small groups of around 16 people. The guides were great and we were introduced to families in small villages, schools and other groups.



We were made very comfortable as our bags were handled for us all the way and we ate gourmet meals in the Serengeti without electricity.

We finished up our holiday with a few days in Zanzibar, an island off the coast but is part of Tanzania.

Another item to scratch off the bucket list!

Peter Debenham

OAT makes donations to the various countries they visit and encourage the visitors to do likewise. We were able to purchase six water filters that take soiled water and produce clean drinking water, and then donate them to a Maasai family we met at a watering hole.





NZ right-to-die-bill proceeds

A bill legalizing voluntary euthanasia has passed its first hurdle after NZ Parliament voted to send it to a select committee by 76 to 44. The vote on David Seymour's End of Life Choice bill follows an emotive and highly charged debate, after NZ First raised the stakes by pegging its support to a binding public referendum. Parliament has twice previously voted down bills to legalize euthanasia.

The vote means the public will get to have a say. Proponents point to polls showing a high level of public support for euthanasia, but the debate has historically been polarizing. – SOURCE: Radio NZ

Australia, Indonesia, partner for democracy

Can democracy deliver? This is the question currently being asked in all corners of the globe. If we look at Indonesia's transformative democratic journey – today it is the world's third-largest democracy – the reply can only be resoundingly affirmative yes. More importantly, democracy must deliver.

Yet as democratization has unleashed promising reform in some countries, it has triggered conflict and convulsions in others, inflicting violence, carnage and suffering on the most vulnerable and forcing people in their millions to seek refuge across borders and continents.

Even where we might celebrate more lasting democratic transformation, we are reminded too that democracy is a process prone to ebbs and flows, progress and regress. A case can be made of recent signs of shifting dynamics – of democracy adrift, or even in retreat. – SOURCE: East Asia Forum; R M Marty Natalegawa

Aussie juvenile detention likened to Guantánamo Bay

Jake Roper, 14, was held in isolation at the Don Dale juvenile detention facility for 15 days. The length of time he spent there was just five days shy of the worst disciplinary punishment permitted in the solitary confinement unit for enemy combatants held in Guantánamo Bay.

After the ABC Four Corners graphic investigation into the juvenile detention facility in the Northern Territory, a royal

commission has been announced by Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, to investigate how events there were allowed to occur.

One pressing question will be how Don Dale permitted staff to isolate children for such lengthy periods of time and what policies it had in place to monitor some of the more extreme methods seen used in the vision obtained by Four Corners.

Much of that policy information currently remains secret, making Australia's juvenile detention centres in some respects less transparent than Australia's immigration detention system and the United States' Guantánamo Bay facility in Cuba.

Behavioral management, restrictive detention, isolation – these are the more polite phrases used, invariably, to describe solitary confinement. Don Dale's little rooms were called the behavioural management unit. It was in this wing we see footage of Roper, then a 14-year-old boy, getting out of his cell in the unit after spending a distressing two weeks in confinement. His frustration led him to escape the cell, which sparked a series of events that ended in six boys who were held in the unit being tear-gassed by guards.

The use of this form of confinement has been singled out internationally for strong criticism.

Fiji's PM stays with slim victory

Fiji's prime minister, Frank Bainimarama, has held on to power in a general election, with his party winning a narrow majority. The Pacific nation went to the polls last month for only the second time since Bainimarama seized control in a military coup in 2006.

A final count on Nov 18 put his Fiji First party on 50.02% of the total vote, with the Social Democratic Liberal party, led by former prime minister Sitiveni Rabuka, second on 39.85%. The National Federation party received 7.38%.

The outcome is expected to give Fiji First a narrow but outright majority in the country's 51-seat parliament and Bainimarama a second term. But his position is significantly tighter than the last election in 2014 when



the party won almost 60%.

"I'm proud to become your prime minister once again," Bainimarama told FBC News from New Zealand where he was attending his brother's funeral.

With a national history of military coups and two former military strongmen running – Rabuka himself led two coups in 1987 – police earlier talked down concerns about tension after the vote. The military – which holds significant power in the country's constitution and has given Bainimarama its backing – said during the run-up that it would respect the vote. –SOURCE: The Guardian

Vanuatu to sue fossil fuel firms for climate change impact

Cyclone Pam, which hit the Pacific Island nation of Vanuatu last March, destroyed about 80% of buildings in the country. Over the past 30 years one dollar out of every three spent on development has been lost as a result of climate risk.

As the small Pacific island state grapples with the threat of rising sea levels caused by global warming, major fossil fuel companies find themselves in deep water as the country plans to take them to court over their contributions to climate change. With most of its 82 islands sitting just less than one metre above sea level, the low-lying Pacific nation faces high risk of becoming inundated by the world's rising seas if drastic measures are not taken to limit global warming.

The island archipelago has therefore announced that it is considering suing fossil fuel companies for their role in driving climate change, as global courtrooms turn into new battlegrounds for climate action. –SOURCE: NZ Radio

MORE ONLINE this issue

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.



Osprey and fish (Photo C. Powell)

birds*i*view...

by Charlie Powell

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

The above two photos of a pair of ospreys were taken near Netley Marsh, Manitoba. The nest is obviously a disaster waiting to happen. Sure enough, a week after I took those shots, the nest caught fire. That's



Photo: Bruce Owen/
Manitoba Hydro
[Link]

tough for the birds, Manitoba Hydro and their customers. MB Hydro has come up with a solution – they have erected dozens of platforms adjacent to hydro poles in known osprey nesting areas, like the one shown here, at Albert Beach.

Also known as fish hawk, sea hawk and river hawk, ospreys feed almost exclusively on

fish and are found on every continent except Antarctica. Osprey are smart enough to orient the fish head-first to minimise the wind resistance as they fly. They also have some special adaptations that aid them in catching and hanging onto their fish – a reversible outer toe, nostrils that close and sharp little spines on the bottom of their feet. Here in Canada, none of that helps them with ice fishing, so they head off to South America in the fall.

The Osprey House Environmental Centre on the South Pine River, Brisbane, has an active nesting site atop a pole. Fitted with a web-cam feeding a monitor in the visitor centre as well as a telescope trained on the nest, there is a good chance of getting a close-up view of these raptors.



Osprey on nest (Photo C. Powell)

The Osprey - by Steve Hagget [Link]

In foreign land of towering pines
And hammocks, mangrove-torn
A dark-filled night reluctantly
Bequeaths a pale dawn

Upon one battered cypress perched,
Amidst the morning haze,
Bright eyes stare out from part-cocked head
With piscicultural gaze.

Intently focussed on the brook,
That glides beneath the tree
Alive to every shadow's sound
Yet never truly free.

For choicelessly these eyes are drawn,
As waters break below
And like a flash a head snaps back
And rippled muscles flow.

Within the slightest moment's breath,
Two mighty wings released,
Two claws full-stretched, two legs reach out
The sinews, strained, unleashed.

The beaten air the only sound,
As time itself stands still
And, tracer-like, on charted course
The osprey meets its kill.

With consummate and practiced ease
The painless end begins
The single deadly blow is dealt
As sharpened claws sink in.

Then up away into the dawn
And time resumes its course
Two final beats – then disappeared
Is this magnetic force.

The cypress perch and well-filled brook
As silent witness stay
And as they settle – calm again
The sun declares the day.

Reader feedback ...

We had a grape vine on the north side open veranda of our farm house which provided cool shade in the summer (no air conditioning). It produced an abundance of dark grapes, which the bees loved. With the hot sun beating down on the grapes, they too fermented, and we would watch drunk bees flying around and crashing into things. Observed no birds though.

— Dennis Woodford



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Will Singapore relax free speech, assembly laws?

The Singapore government's laws limiting critical speech and peaceful assembly are overly broad and make the country a repressive place severely restricting what can be said and published, Human Rights Watch said last week.

In its first wide-ranging report on Singapore in 12 years, the group called on the government to amend or repeal laws and rules that restrict speech and assembly and drop charges against individuals for peaceful speech and assembly.

Singapore's Ministry of Communications and Information did not immediately have a comment on the report. The government has held the position that Singapore's laws and regulations were needed to maintain social order and harmony.

The Singapore's attorney-general's office has started contempt of court proceedings against the prime minister's nephew and authorities are prosecuting a prominent human rights activist for organizing assemblies without permit.

"Beneath the slick surface of gleaming high-rises, however, it is a repressive place, where the government severely restricts what can be said, published, performed, read, or watched," the 133-page report said.

Human Rights Watch called on the Singapore government to amend or repeal in entirety laws that it said were too broadly worded and used to "arrest, harass, and prosecute critical voices," including the Sedition Act and the Public Order Act.—SOURCE: Reporting by Fathin Ungku; Editing by Jack Kim and Neil Fullick: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.

Samoa PM says gay marriage an 'abomination' for true Christian countries

Samoa's Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi is adamant there will be no same sex marriage in Samoa. Tuilaepa described same sex marriage as an abomination and a "Sodom and Gomorrah practice" at his weekly media conference on Friday. He said there is no true Christian country in the world which would allow it and it would not be allowed in Samoa as long as it remained a Christian country. Tuilaepa and his Human Rights Protection Party changed the country's constitution earlier this year to formally make Samoa a Christian state. SOURCE: radionz.co.

Cyclone Pam, which hit the Pacific Island nation of Vanuatu last March, destroyed about 80% of buildings in the country. Over the past 30 years one dollar out of every three spent on development has been lost as a result of climate risk.



Photos from the November 30 AGM meeting: Steve Setka (top), Charlie and Judy Powell, Peter Munn, Terry Roberts, Margaret Munn and Peter Debenham (group photo) and Peter, Lucia Barron, and Terry (L to R at bottom).

