

The Southern Yarn

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

April/May 2020

downundercalendar

APRIL

ANZAC Day

Saturday April 25, 2020

A link to a recorded service will be emailed to members of the DUCW.

FUTURE EVENTS

All our planned events have, of course, been cancelled, and for the foreseeable future, we will keep in contact by email, on Facebook, through our website, and with *The Southern Yarn*. Stay well and stay safe, everyone.

Special Thank You to:

- The other members of the Bushfire Fundraiser Committee – **Peter Munn, Margaret Munn, Peter Debenham, Judy Powell, Charlie Powell, Terry Roberts** and **Jaimee Adams** – for dedicating countless volunteer hours to plan and organise the event, seek out monetary and prize donations, and organise every facet of the event, as well as a variety of other tasks too numerous to mention
- Members and friends of the **DUCW** who volunteered on the night
- Everyone who **donated a prize or a basket**, from books, artwork, food, gift cards and certificates to household items, clothing, quilts, jewellery, and a really big television
- Those who **donated money** in support of the event
- **Downunder Travel, Australia Tourism, and Murray Lowe Photography** – our out-of-province and out-of-country donors
- Co-emcee **Beau Fritzsche** who stepped up and spoke out and helped create quite the buzz on the night
- The Winnipeg media who promoted the event on television (**CTV** and **Global**) and radio (**99.9 BOB FM** and **CBC**) and in print (**Winnipeg Free Press**)
- **Phoebie Peters** and **Kat Fuchs** from Rising Phoenix Tattoo in Winnipeg who raised more than \$13,000 from Aussie animal tattoos, with monies going to WIREs (NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service Inc.)
- Grade 1 and 2 students and teacher **Neil Kolton** at **Wellington School** who raised \$800 from bake sales, with monies going to the Australian Red Cross in tandem with our event
- **Brian Rougeau** and **Corinne Napper** who videoed and photographed the event, and are still working with us to produce a documentary for our website.

—Jenny Gates

Winnipeg Fundraiser for the Australian Bushfires



Jenny Gates and Gerry Gordon entertained the crowd. Photo: Brian Hydesmith.

The DUCW's Fundraiser for the Australian Bushfires on Saturday February 22 raised \$19,169 for those impacted by the devastating fires.

That money has now been sent to where it can help the most. The Australian Red Cross has received \$10,169, and the families of three firefighters who lost their lives while volunteering have each received \$3,000. Geoffrey Keaton and Andrew O'Dwyer had young children, and Samuel McPaul was about to become a father for the first time.

It is heartwarming to know that with your support and that of so many other people in our community, we have been able to help others directly affected by the bushfires.

The Fundraiser was incredible, with more than 440 tickets sold, a packed house, and a combined local and Australian flavour to the event. Emcees



Peter Debenham and Peter Munn practising social distancing at the CRC, handing over our \$10,169 donation. Photo: Jenny Gates.



Co-emcees Beau Fritzsche and Jenny Gates. Photo: Corinne Napper.

were Beau Fritzsche from 99.9 BOB FM and Jenny Gates. Entertainment was by "Two 4 The Show" (Gerald Dyck and Tannis Tyler) and "Up From Down Under" (Gerry Gordon and Jenny Gates). At the end of the evening, everyone sang along to "The Aussie Firefighters", with lyrics by Charlie Powell to the tune of "Lili Marlene".

... continued on page 7

online



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editorially yours

Charlie Powell



How quickly things change! The Australian bushfires came and have left a permanent "scar". Now, Australia and the world are having to battle a more insidious adversary – COVID 19.

The media, especially the social variety, have and continue to offer up every conceivable take on the situation – from the serious reporting and academic analysis to the lighter and more entertaining humour, inspired by the myriad human responses to the pandemic. So, you won't find any more on the subject here, except: "Stay well".

Oh, and one more thing: the obvious and inevitable suggestions/predictions are out there that there will likely be a spike in the birth rate, starting towards the end of the year ... That thought inspired my choice for the **Birds I View** this month – see p.8.

The only Holden I ever owned during my 40 years in Australia was a Camira, in the '80s. It clocked up some kms – two big road trips were to Tasmania and to Perth. It is hard to believe there will be no more Holdens (p. 4). This month we have another Kiwi heroine to get to know – read the story of Jean Batten on p. 6.

Thank you to **Jenny Gates** for not only penning the report on our Bushfire Fundraiser, but also all the thought and effort in helping to make it the success it turned out to be!

A big Thank You to our advertizers, our contributors and you, the readers!

The photo below was taken during the 1918–1920 worldwide influenza pandemic, which infected 25% of the world's population.



president's ramblings

Peter Munn



It has been a busy/tumultuous time for everyone since our last newsletter. The club held a great fundraiser, to help in some small manner victims of the recent horrendous Australian bushfires. There is more in this issue about the fundraiser, and the amount raised, but I would like to thank all the members who helped in every way to

make the event the success it was.

And now, we are all coping with the worst pandemic for over a century. The ease of human movement around the globe has allowed this virus to travel quickly and far, and over 190 countries are dealing with active cases. Hopefully, the extreme social distancing now in place can reduce the rate of transmission of the virus, and sometime soon we can count down to a more normal life. Sincerely, please take care, and I trust you and your families stay safe.

Peter

150, 100 years ago, and again...

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.

And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.

Written in 1869 by Kathleen O'Meara, and reprinted during the worldwide influenza pandemic in 1919

More than
40 years'
South Pacific
experience

Message from DU Travel

First and foremost, our hearts go out to all affected by this quickly developing national health crisis. We take the health and well-being of our travellers, community, and staff very seriously and so we are available to e-meet to discuss any future travel plans by phone, e-mail or via virtual meetings.

Dreaming about your next getaway is still possible and very much encouraged; browse our vacation packages online 24/7 and visit us on our social channels. We will all get through this together and we look forward to bringing our travellers to their dream destinations once again. Many thanks to the Down Under Club of Winnipeg for your continued support.

For more info:
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L-R: Judy Powell, Margaret Munn, Jenny Gates and Her Honour Janice Filmon. Photo: Charlie Powell.

Commonwealth Day Celebrations in Winnipeg 2020

Commonwealth Day is annually held on the second Monday of March. It commemorates the Commonwealth of Nations, a voluntary association of 54 countries that were part of the British Empire and with the focus of working together towards shared common goals of democracy and development.

Queen Elizabeth II has been Head of the Commonwealth since she acceded to the throne in 1952.

This year, two events were held in Winnipeg on March 9, firstly an afternoon reception at Government House hosted by the Lieutenant Governor, The Honourable Janice

Filmon. Attending were members of the Royal Commonwealth Society, several Down Under Club members, and other invited guests. The Queen's Message to the Commonwealth was read and comments also provided by Murray Burt (President of the RCS Winnipeg branch). An afternoon tea/social time followed.

Later that day, at 7 pm, a celebratory evening church service was held in the Anglican Cathedral of St. John, conducted by the Dean of the Cathedral, The Very Reverend Paul Johnson, and including an address by the Bishop, Rev. Geoff Woodcroft. A short reception followed.

Judy Powell

150 years ago

May 12, 2020 will mark 150 years since the Manitoba Act received royal assent, paving the way for Manitoba to become Canada's fifth province. The land that we now call Manitoba has been home to Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. In fact, the very name of our province, Manitoba, is believed to come from several Indigenous languages, including the Cree word *manitou-wapow*, the Ojibwe word *manidoobaa*, or the Assiniboine word *minnetoba*. Manitoba is the birthplace of the Métis, a people whose leader, Louis Riel, was responsible for negotiating the terms under which Manitoba joined confederation as Canada's fifth province. Riel was instrumental in launching the Red River resistance and forming a provisional government to represent the rights of the Métis as well as all of the other people calling Manitoba home at the time. Under Riel's leadership, negotiations began between the Canadian Parliament and the Red River Métis, resulting in the passing of the Manitoba Act in 1870. Manitoba remains the only province to join Canada under Indigenous leadership. [Link]



Did you know ...

Bilbies are important in the restoration of soil and rejuvenation of vegetation in arid Australia.

They use their strong front paws to dig deep holes in soil that enables plant material to fall in and decompose. ... That's nature's perfectly balanced ecosystem at work, but it's threatened by the decline of bilbies." [link] That's why there's a push for the Easter bilby to replace the Easter bunny (bunnies in Australia are an introduced pest).



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End of the Holden

[Source: SMH, Joshua Dowling, 17Feb2020]
"Like all major disasters, the demise of Holden after 72 years in Australia is the result of a vast number of factors – some of which were out of its control.

The problems go way beyond the use of the Commodore name on the imported model after local manufacturing ended in October 2017, or the series of misguided advertisements which tried to change Holden's image to appeal to a more cosmopolitan audience. While a strong Australian dollar made Holden exports unprofitable before 2017, the tide ironically turned after the factory closure.

Holden has since been paying the price for a weak Australian dollar and a lack of investment in new models by its parent company General Motors (GM) in the wake of the global financial crisis." You can view some old models online [link].

In 1852, James Alexander Holden emigrated to South Australia from Walsall England, and in 1856 established J.A. Holden & Co., a saddlery business in Adelaide. In 1879 J.A. Holden's eldest son Henry James (HJ) Holden, became a partner and effectively managed the company. Read more history here online [link].



In memory ...

[CNN: 26 Jan 2020] Australian authorities have recovered the bodies of three American firefighters who were killed in a plane crash while helping battle wildfires in the country, New South Wales Police said in a statement.

Investigators on Saturday also retrieved the plane's cockpit voice recorder and are analyzing data to determine what caused the crash, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau said.

The firefighters were killed when their Canadian-owned C-130 plane collided with terrain near the town of Cooma, Australia, on Thursday, the bureau said.

The water-bombing tanker had been chartered by the NSW Rural Fire Service, state Premier Gladys Berejiklian said in a news conference last week. It was called in to fight a bushfire near Cooma.

The three victims were identified by their employer, Oregon-based Coulson Aviation, as Capt. Ian McBeth, 44, of Great Falls, Montana, who was piloting the plane; First Officer Paul Clyde Hudson, 42, of Buckeye, Arizona; and Flight Engineer Rick DeMorgan Jr., 43, who lived in Navarre, Florida.



Irish village in SA

[The Conversation, Susan Arthure, 2 Mar 2020] Archaeological research has uncovered the remains of a 19th-century Irish community beneath an otherwise ordinary paddock in rural South Australia. Fitting the clustered form of settlement known as a "clachan", it's the first to be identified in Australia. Even more remarkably, this communi-

ty thrived many years after this traditional way of living died out in Ireland. The story of this discovery began in November 2012 when I walked for the first time on Baker's Flat near Kapunda, about an hour's drive north of Adelaide. I was an Irish-Australian archaeologist in search of an Irish colonial settlement. In 1842, the discovery of copper at Kapunda led to the development of Australia's first successful metal mine. The Irish arrived in 1854, seeking work as mine workers. They settled on an unused section of land close to the mine known as Baker's Flat. [link]

newszealand

various sources, see web links in online edition

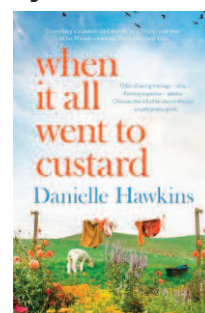
Most news is COVID-19-related, so here are some book suggestions to entertain and educate while you self-isolate:

The Resilient Farmer by Doug Avery



The South Island farmer suffered terribly during eight years of drought. His farm was depleted and so was he, to the point of severe depression. The Resilient Farmer is Doug's powerful example of how to get life back on track.

When It All Went to Custard by Danielle Hawkins



This is the story of the year after Jenny's old life falls apart; of family and farming, pet lambs and geriatric dogs, choko-bearing tenants and Springsteen-esque neighbours. And of just perhaps a second chance at happiness.

Great Tales from Rural New Zealand by Gordon McLauchlan



A great collection of untold or forgotten tales which reveal many aspects of rural life in New Zealand, from well-known master of storytelling Gordon McLauchlan.



(From top) New Regent Street. My sister is a driver of the Tourist Trams that circle the city. Keith and Susanna La Rue have lunch with me.

News from Our 'Kiwi correspondent' – Lucia Barron ...

How great to have lunch with Susanna and Keith La Rue, DUCW members for many years, and now living in Christchurch. We met in New Regent Street, which was one of the first streets to reopen after the 2011 earthquake. Architecture is Spanish Mission style and there are many cafes, restaurants, bars, and small shops in which to spend a few very enjoyable hours. This is a very popular area which attracts many tourists.

April – May 2020

Reader feedback ...

Gordon and Kerry Whyte shared the 2019 report of their Woodend Bird Observers Group Bird Blitz "... Significantly, the bird surveys recorded 2,769 new observations and a total of 97 different species. Five of the bird species are listed as threatened including White-bellied Sea Eagle, Pied Cormorant, Hardhead Duck, Brown Treecreeper and Black-chinned Honeyeaters."



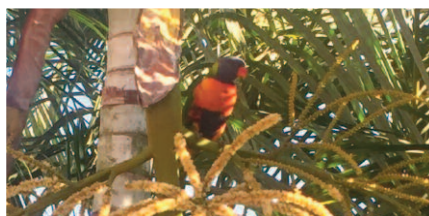
Terry and Nancy DeLong had a visit from a member of the Partridge Family.



Jan and Graham Reid indulged my love of loons with a look at their framed Loon on a feather...



... and their backyard bushland alarm clock.



Lily Abel wanted us to see this colourful lorikeet visiting their backyard.



Bron Abel snapped this rare pheasant coucal in Brisbane.



Australian Kelpie photo: Wikipedia

BushYarn

Ted the Queensland drover was visiting town and doing his best to sink a few coldies when, as usual, the pub talk turned to dogs.

'See that there kelpie of mine, he's the ugliest, scrawniest mongrel in the entire bloody state and I'll bet there's not a dog that'll come anywhere near him.'

The crowd of hard-nosed bushies had heard this sort of exaggerated claim before and doubt was written all over their assembled faces.

The drover looked at them and added: *'Soon as a dog spots him, they put their tails between their legs and they're off.'*

'Must be one hell of a fighter,' said one of the doubtful.

'No, he's no fighter,' said the drover, *'but he's got the coldest bloody nose in the Southern Hemisphere.'*

[Source: "Classic Bush Yarns, by Warren Fahey, 2001]

Jean Batten, New Zealand aviator

By Imelda Bargas

Jean Batten was New Zealand's greatest aviator, celebrated around the world for her heroic solo flights during the 1930s. Following her success she moved in and out of public view before dying in obscurity in Majorca, Spain, in 1982.

Jane Gardner Batten was born on 15 September 1909 in Rotorua. She soon became known as Jean. In 1913 she moved to Auckland with her parents and two older brothers. In 1917 her father, Frederick, a dentist, volunteered to join the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and was sent to the Western Front. The loss of his earnings caused financial hardship for the family; during this period Batten moved from Melmerley Ladies School in Parnell to a state school. Following Frederick's return in 1919, Batten's parents quarrelled and around 1920 they separated. Her mother, Ellen, initially took her to live in Howick, where she attended a local convent school. They returned to the city in 1922 and Batten's father paid for her to board at Ladies College in Remuera.

Batten's ambition to learn to fly developed in the late 1920s as the first flights of 'an era of hugely publicised long-distance record-breaking flights' began. Her mother, with whom she maintained a close relationship throughout her life, encouraged this new ambition. In 1929 she took Batten on a holiday to Sydney and arranged for her to fly with Australian aviator Charles Kingsford Smith.

A year later Batten sailed to England with her mother, and began to learn to fly at the London Aeroplane Club. By December she had gained her 'A' licence and had her eye on breaking the women's record for a flight from England to Australia. To fund her commercial pilot's licence, and obtain the commercial sponsorship she would need to break the record, Batten borrowed money from a young New Zealand pilot, Fred Truman, who wanted to marry her. After completing her 'B' licence in December 1932 she



had nothing more to do with him. Raising money by taking advantage of her relationships with men was a theme that continued throughout her flying career.

The mid 1930s were the heyday of Batten's flying career. After two failed attempts to fly from England to Australia in 1933 she successfully completed a return journey in May 1934. Although the route had been flown in one direction or the other more than 30 times, Batten's gender and her beauty captured huge media attention. In keeping with the direction of her 'patron saint', oil magnate Lord Wakefield (of Castrol Oil), she carefully kept herself in front of the public eye, embarking on extensive tours of Australia and New Zealand. During both tours Batten was accompanied by a mascot, a black kitten she had named Buddy.

Her attention-grabbing flights continued. In November 1935 she became the first woman to fly herself across the South Atlantic. In October 1936 she went one step further and made the first ever direct flight from England to New Zealand. But she was physically and mentally exhausted by the journey. Her tour of New Zealand was eventually called off in Christchurch and she spent much of November resting at Franz Josef Gla-

cier at the government's expense. In February 1937 she returned to Australia. A few months later she completed her last long distance flight, from Australia to England.

For the rest of her life Batten moved in and out of public view. Despite rumoured love affairs she never married, continuing to live and travel with her mother until the latter's death on the island of Tenerife, Spain, in 1966.

Batten re-emerged in public life three years later, and then embarked upon a decade of world travel with her apartment in Tenerife as a base. She decided to leave the island in early 1982 and, after travelling and staying with her publisher and his wife in England, flew to Majorca where she intended to buy an apartment.

In a letter dated 8 November 1982 Batten advised her publisher of her new address. This was the last anyone heard from her. Her whereabouts remained unknown until September 1987, when it was revealed that she had died in Majorca on 22 November 1982. She had been bitten by a dog, and after refusing treatment had died needlessly from a pulmonary abscess. On 22 January 1983 she was buried in a paupers' mass grave. [Source: NZ History]



Percival Vega Gull aircraft, similar to one Jean Batten flew on one of her famous flights (photo: Wikipedia).



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG BUSHFIRE FUNDRAISER

It speaks volumes about the goodness and decency at the heart of our expat community that you have gathered today to raise funds for those affected by the bushfires back home in Australia.

This black summer has been a terrible fire season. Across Australia, we saw homes and livelihoods destroyed, wildlife devastated and the tragic loss of precious lives.

Despite all this, Australians have stuck by each other and resolved to help those most in need – as has our global community, and for that we are incredibly grateful.

We saw unparalleled fire-fighting and relief efforts this summer, with offers of support and assistance from across our nation and around the world.

This recent bushfire tragedy reminds us of the strong and faithful friendship Australia and Canada share, as Canadian firefighters travelled to our shores to stand with their Australian counterparts.

I express my deep gratitude to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre and I honour and thank all the Canadian firefighters for the support they gave to our Australian brigades.

I also want to acknowledge the Down Under Club of Winnipeg who have organised this fundraiser, and to everyone who has come today in support of the Australians suffering back home.

As we face the long journey ahead of recovery and reconstruction every bit counts, and it's these acts of generosity that will go a long way to helping our fire affected communities rebuild from the ruins and the ashes of this devastating bushfire season.

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia

22 February 2020



Down Under Fire Fundraiser

It is with great pleasure that I offer my heartfelt best wishes to the Winnipeg community, including Australian and New Zealand expats, attending the Down Under Fire Fundraiser.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre for their support during our state's largest natural disaster in living memory.

The assistance provided by Manitobans who gave so willingly of their time and expertise in our time of need has been invaluable and stands as a testament to our states' friendship and the mateship among firefighters around the globe.

NSW is particularly thankful to Manitoba's brave men and women who left their homes and worked to save lives and property in our state over the Christmas period.

Thank you to the Down Under Club of Winnipeg for organising this event. I wish you all an enjoyable evening and the very best with tonight's fundraising efforts.

Gladys Berejiklian MP
Premier

GPO Box 5341 Sydney NSW 2001



Some of the monies raised have been sent to the families of three firefighters who died while volunteering in NSW. Photo: Matt Roberts, Australian Broadcasting Commission.



People lined up at the Silent Auction Tables.
Photo: Brian Hydesmith.



Bill Pelton, one-time volunteer firefighter in Australia. Photo: Corinne Napper.



Our prize donors were extremely generous.
Photo: Corinne Napper.

continued from page 1

A PowerPoint presentation that played on large screens throughout the night featured photos of the bushfires (courtesy of Fairfax Media, the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and others), information from various sources, excerpts of letters from the Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, stories from those affected by the fires, and comments and messages of thanks from Australia and Winnipeg.

The prize offerings were fantastic, and there was quite the buzz over the number, variety and calibre of items up for grabs in the silent

auction. While most items came from Winnipeg, others were sent from Calgary and Australia. All up, there were 24 huge silent auction baskets, 7 grand prizes, 6 door prizes, and many spot prizes.

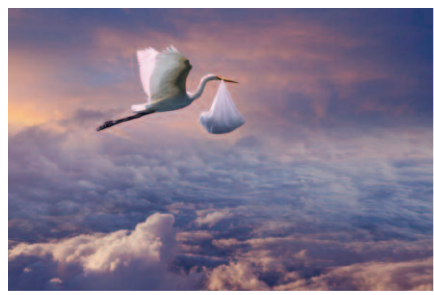
We have sent letters to each of the firefighters' families so they know how everyone came together to help them and so many others affected by the bushfires.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Jenny Gates, Bushfire Fundraiser Committee



Adult female black-necked stork in flight at the McArthur River in the Northern Territory of Australia. [image with baby: © John Lund/Getty Images].



birds*i*view...

by Charlie Powell

Storks

The black-necked stork is the only stork found in Australia, and then only in the north. With black and white body plumage, glossy dark green and purple neck and massive black bill, it is easily identified from all other Australian birds. The legs are long and coral-red in colour. The female is distinguished by its yellow eye. Immature birds resemble adults, but the black plumage is replaced by brown and the white plumage is dusky. [link]

When I lived in Darwin, in the early '70s, they were commonly referred to as "jabiru", which one would assume to be an aboriginal name. Wrong on both counts – the jabiru is a completely different stork, native to Mexico and South America. The name comes from a Tupi-Guaraní (South American) language and means "swollen neck".

Canadians' best hope of seeing storks would be to visit Florida where the wood stork is still plentiful. Three of them did thrill twitchers back in 2001 when they flew as far north as Pelee Island in Southwestern Ontario – Canada's southernmost inhabited area.

The way stork catch their prey is known as grope-feeding – they open their beak under water and when they feel the touch of a fish, mollusc or frog, they snap it shut.

They are experts at soaring and can be seen in flocks, or "musters", high in the sky with necks and legs extended.

New Zealand is devoid of storks – not even a visit.

A common explanation for their association with babies is the timing of their migration in "northern Europe, particularly Germany and Norway. During the Pagan era, which can be traced back at least to medieval times more than 600 years ago, it was common for couples to wed during the annual

summer solstice, because summer was associated with fertility. At the same time, storks would commence their annual migration, flying all the way from Europe to Africa. The birds would then return the following spring – exactly nine months later." [link]

Poverty and Wealth

by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

The stork flew over a town one day,
And back of each wing an infant lay;
One to a rich man's home he brought,
And one he left at a labourer's cot.

The rich man said, 'My son shall be
A lordly ruler o'er land and sea.'

The labourer sighed, 'Tis the good God's will
That I have another mouth to fill.'

The rich man's son grew strong and fair,
And proud with the pride of a millionaire.

His motto in life was, 'Live while you may',
And he crowded years in a single day.

He bought position and name and place,
And he bought him a wife with a handsome face.

He journeyed over the whole wide world,
But discontent his heart lay curled
Like a serpent hidden in leaves and moss,
And life seemed hollow and gold was dross.

He scoffed at woman, and doubted God,
And died like a beast and went back to the sod.

The son of the labourer tilled the soil,
And thanked God daily for health and toil.

He wedded for love in his youthful prime,
And two lives chorded in tune and time.

His wants were simple, and simple his creed,
To trust God fully: it served his need,
And lightened his labour, and helped him to die
With a smile on his lips and a hope in his eye.

When all is over and all is done,
Now which of these men was the richer one?

[link]



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This newsletter can be downloaded in PDF format from the website. Thank you to all of our contributors within the club, from overseas and information services. Layout by design@hydesmith.com

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