

The Southern Yarn

October/November 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

Members will be notified by email when the next Zoom chat is scheduled.

OCTOBER

Annual not-so-Formal Dinner
Saturday, October 30th, 5:30 pm.

Back to Bailey's, 185 Lombard Ave, Winnipeg
See details opposite.

The Adventures of Alvin Sputnik: Deep Sea Explorer

Manitoba Theatre for Young People is digitally staging a performance of this award-winning Australian production from **October 12 to 24**. *The seas have risen, billions have died and those who are left live on farms atop skyscrapers, atop mountains. The scientists have tried everything. Floating islands sank, space probes found nothing, and the giant sponges, visible from the moon, are now rotting icons of failure. A play about exploration of the unknown and the magic that exists deep in the oceans.* Watch the trailer, get more info and book a stream of this performance at mty.ca. Tickets \$15 or call **204-942-8898**.



NOVEMBER

Remembrance Day
Thursday, November 11th, 2021

Annual General Meeting
7 pm Friday, November 26th, 2021

This year, again, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the AGM will be conducted via Zoom.

Provision will also be made for phone-in participation, for those without a computer. Details will be communicated to members closer to the date.

DECEMBER

The Family Christmas Party

Details to be announced. Stay tuned, ho ho ho.



Remember Bailey's? It's been a few years, but we've had great success here, like this event in 2013. Join us again!

Back to Bailey's for the NSF dinner!

Good day and Kia ora everyone! At last, we can plan a not-so-formal dinner and, this time, we are heading back to Bailey's, where the atmosphere is quietly elegant, the service is splendid, and the company (us) will be great.

Of course, we must not forget that we need to comply with provincial COVID-19 regulations and, hopefully, there will be no changes in the next few weeks. Currently, to attend, everyone eligible must be double vaccinated and able to show proof, plus ID, and be masked unless seated and eating and drinking.

We will be in the Board of Governors room which seats a maximum of 40 guests, so we will not be crowded.

The menu chosen has enough variety to tempt the most fastidious tastebuds and, of course, there is a rack of lamb option.

Each entrée includes a salad of Manitoba field greens with a creamy cucumber and dill dressing, fresh rolls, oven roasted lemon potatoes, chef's selected vegetables, and coffee or tea.

Cost per person for the **New Zealand rack of lamb** option is \$43.00. *7-point rack, roasted and glazed with a delicate herb reduction sauce).*

Cost per person for each of the other five options is \$37.00

10 oz New York striploin; charbroiled to your specification

Chicken "Manitoba"; tender breast filled with wild rice, mushrooms and 3-cheese blend

Rib-eye steak and garlic prawns; 7 oz rib-eye served with 4 jumbo prawns sauteed in Bailey's own garlic butter

Pork medallions; tenderloin medallions sauteed with portabello, button mushrooms and shallots in a red wine demi-glace

Filet of Salmon; grilled salmon filet served with a creamy basil sauce.

Dessert will be available as an extra on the night. There is no need to pre-order and the prices quoted are subject to PST, GST and 15% gratuity to be added.

BUT we do need to know the numbers attending and you will need to **RSVP by October 25** to Judy Powell, judy_charliep@hotmail.com, or social@downunderclub.mb.ca or phone **204-275-7083** or **204-218-1448**. We hope to see you there!

online



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editorially yours

Charlie Powell



In Flanders Fields

In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

– Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

Thank you to Jenny and Brian for their assistance again with this issue, and to Peter and Judy for contributions. Please take note of our advertiser sponsors and support them where possible. – Enjoy.



The DUCW Golf "Tournament"

At 10:30 on Saturday 4th September, at The Players Golf Course, members and friends teed off for 9 holes. Skies were a mix of sun and cloud with a stiff breeze and temperatures in the mid-twenties. The best-ball format meant that final scores were somewhat better than some individual performances would have indicated. The Team of Peter and Tim D and Vishad B were the winners with their EVEN score. The Peter M, Andrew C and Ricky B Team tied with Team David R, Terry D and Charlie P as runners up at 1 OVER. Peter M was "Closest-to-the-Pin", and Ricky B had the "Longest Drive". Those who stayed enjoyed lunch in the clubhouse and recounted their memorable moments. An enjoyable day all 'round!

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



Like everyone else, I have been enjoying the recent warm summer days we have had, following the month or so of overheated weather that kept me inside with the air conditioned coolness. Now in the afternoons, I will set up a lawn chair in the back yard, have a cold refreshment, and read a good book. (Mostly gritty, Scottish-based detective stuff).

There has been one large problem however, from a small, flying alpha predator. We have a big apple tree, which develops then drops its medium size apples in our yard and the neighbours. We pick up these apples, the neighbours do not. This year was a bumper crop.

Of wasps.

They don't bother me, and I don't bother them, though last year I had a pair attack me from our composting bin. The stings tickled a bit, but no problem. This year, we had literally hundreds of wasps feeding on dropped apples, and as fast as we picked them up, the bumper crop was dropping again. One Friday afternoon, while reading a book, a wasp decided to sting me, but not

a problem at the time. The next afternoon, my right arm was as big as Popeye's, and hard as a rock in places, so I thought it wise to seek attention at Victoria hospital urgent care. Hours later I was transfused to treat the infection, and off I went. All good.

Next weekend was déjà vu all over again. Not a wasp problem, but I was back at Victoria as I could not walk on a brutally sore foot. More transfused steroids, and the (don't chuckle) gout was relieved.

Next weekend was déjà vu, all over again. Victoria again, middle of the night, badly infected sinus, more stuff transfused, receipt of a Frequent Occupier card for an urgent care chair at Victoria, then back home.

So we can do something about the wasps, as we are playing lumberjack in two weeks time and chopping down the apple tree. At about 30' high, spread across two rooftops, it will be an interesting exercise, though all the wasps will be gone by then. We had 6 traps set up for wasps, and the first clean out had over 800 of them. We will miss the tree with its white blossoms in the Spring, but plan to replace it with something less wasp-attractive.



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Remembering Damian Mills



Judy Powell, Peter Munn, Charlie Powell, Dr Barry Mills, Cressida Mills, Jenny Gates, Leon Badali. Photo: Margaret Munn



It was a warm and sunny afternoon on Tuesday August 31 when several members of the DUCW joined Dr Barry Mills and daughter Cressida to dedicate a new plaque in honour of their son and brother, Damian.

Located on a memorial bench outside the clubhouse of the Manitoba Cricket Association in Assiniboine Park, the original plaque was showing signs of wear. And because the Mills family have been members of the Club for many years, the DUCW executive offered to replace it on their behalf.

A top batsman and inspiration to many, Damian is remembered for his commitment to excellence in the sport of cricket, as well as his involvement in and dedication to the community.

Throughout his short career, Damian played for Canada, was in the U-23s and U-19s for both Canada and Manitoba, and in the Winnipeg Juniors Cricket Club. He was Best Batsman in the MCA League in 1999, 2001 and 2003, scored the most individual runs in that league from 1997-1999 and 2001-2003, was the most outstanding junior

cricketer in Manitoba in 1996 and 1997, and most outstanding junior cricketer in Canada in 1998. He also played in 10 major tours, including New Zealand in 1999.

Damian won many batting awards in the Western Canada Provincial U-25 Championships and MCA Indoor League, and shares a Canadian Junior Record for highest opening partnership of 143 runs during the 1996 IYT in Bermuda.

When Damian died unexpectedly in November 2003, the Damian Mills Junior Cricket Award was established. It has been awarded to one outstanding candidate each year since "in recognition of having demonstrated the highest ideals and qualities of sportsmanship, volunteerism and commitment while in pursuit of excellence in the sport of cricket."

The Damian Mills Memorial Cricket Match is held every year in Assiniboine Park. See Judy and Charlie's article (following).

– Jenny Gates

Damian Mills Memorial Cricket Match

In hopes of learning when the 2021 Damian Mills Memorial Cricket Match was scheduled to be played, we paid a visit to the Assiniboine Park cricket pitches on a hot Sunday in August. Games were in progress on all 3 pitches, despite the 30°C heat. Our first inquiry immediately resulted in an introduction to exactly the right person – Ray Ramrattan, founding member of the memorial benefit and President of the Cosmos Cricket Club (the most winning club in the history of Manitoba cricket). Ray informed us that the match date had not yet been decided. It was

subsequently played on Sunday 28th August, but was rained out without a final result. Ray and a team of top local cricketers also missed it owing to their trip to

Toronto for the national team trials.

Next year we hope to organize a DUCW picnic in the park to coincide with the match, so stay tuned for information about that.

Check out Cricket Manitoba Association (cricket.mb.ca) and their facebook post on the memorial match.



Two recipients of the Damian Mills Scholarship with Ray Ramrattan (centre), August 2021.

Photo: Charlie Powell.

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History of Remembrance Day Australia

On November 11, 1918, after four years of nonstop warfare, the conflict on the Western Front came to a standstill and complete silence. Germany, the last remaining opponent of the allies, signed the armistice that ended World War I.

The Allies' victory would not have been possible without the five divisions of the Australian Corps, who were at the forefront. With their spectacular victory at the Battle of Hamel in the summer of 1918, turning the tables of the war at Amiens, capturing Mont Saint-Quentin and Péronne, and overcoming German defenses at the Hindenburg Line, the Australian troops displayed true valor. By the time the exhausted soldiers had withdrawn by early October, they had achieved a reputation as a force to be reckoned with. Their sweet success came at a heavy cost, however. Almost 48,000 Australian casualties were reported during 1918, including 12,000 deaths.

In the four years of the Great War, more than 330,000 Australians had served, and 60,000 of them were killed. The loss has cast a shadow over the social sphere, even in post-war times.

Remembrance Day was observed for the first time in 1919 by the British Commonwealth. The day was originally named Armistice Day in commemoration of the armistice agreement signed by Germany on Monday, November 11, 1918 – the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Until 1930, the observance of Armistice Day took place on the Monday of the week in which November 11 fell. This changed in 1931 when a Member of Parliament for Comox-Alberni, Alan Neill, forwarded a bill to observe the holiday on November 11 every year. The bill also proposed changing the name to Remembrance Day, which was approved, making the first observance of Remembrance Day on November 11, 1931. [link]

Did you know? ...

Red poppies - In the battlefields that were drenched in blood, the Flanders poppy was the first plant to bloom.

A sprig of **rosemary** - Rosemary symbolizes loyalty and has more significance for Australians than any other plant as it grows on the Gallipoli peninsula, commemorating the Anzac troops lost to battle there.

A flag at **half-mast** - There are several rules to hoisting the Australian flag at half-mast – it can never be flown at night and, in a cluster of flags, Australia's flag should be raised first and lowered last.

The **Unknown Soldier** - Australia laid an Unknown Soldier to rest on Remembrance Day 1993, at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

So many untold stories - Over 60,000 Australians died at war, with many of them having no known graves. [link]

newsfromOz

various sources, see web links in online edition



So, do we still call it a payphone?

[August 3, 2021] Future generations may never know the thrill of making a reverse-charges call to their parents after Telstra made its 15,000 payphones free. Telstra CEO and Managing Director, Andrew Penn, explains why ...

I wanted to share the news that local and national calls to standard fixed line numbers and calls to standard Australian mobiles on Telstra's public payphones are now free.

This means any Australian can now use all of our 15,000 payphones on street corners and in the tiny towns, truck stops and airports in every corner of the country to make calls for free.

It's an important moment, and I wanted to explain why we've done it.

Payphones have been part of Australia's landscape since they were first used in the 1880s and at one point – just before the arrival of mobiles – there were more than double the number that we have today.

Since mobiles became nearly universal, a lot of Australians might not give them much thought. Until there's a natural disaster. Until you're in vulnerable circum-

stances, homeless or fleeing domestic violence.

That's why I decided it's time to make payphones free. Because even in the age of the smartphone they play such a critical role in our community, particularly in times of need, and particularly for those in need.

I've seen myself how much payphones are part of the fabric of Australia and how important they are in good times, and bad. I've seen queues of people waiting in line, coins at the ready, to use a payphone to call home and tell their family and friends they're safe after a bushfire, a cyclone or some other natural disaster has taken the mobile network down.

I know payphones are also a lifeline for thousands of vulnerable Australians – the homeless, the isolated, those escaping domestic violence – and often provide their only link to critical support services and those that care about them.

Last year alone Australians made 11 million calls on payphones, including more than 230,000 calls to vital services like Triple Zero, so there's no doubt payphones are already often the lifeline that's there when it's needed most.

Telstra's purpose is to build a connected future so everyone can thrive. To deliver on this ambition we want to contribute to a better, more caring and more inclusive Australia, an Australia where people can reach out for help if and when they need to, or just connect if they feel like it.

The payphone network that we've been maintaining since the 1880s is a key part of that, and I'm delighted it's now free for everyone to make calls anywhere in Australia.

[link] and [link]

newszealand

various sources, see web links in online edition



Caption: Ed Hillary at a community festival in the Mt Everest area, 1963.

When Ed Helped Vaccinate The Khumbu...

[Source: edmundhillary.com] It's a comforting thought to know that the challenges we

face today, have in fact been overcome by generations before us. Many people will be pleasantly surprised to learn that Ed Hillary and his expedition team also dabbled in a mass vaccination and contact tracing program. On this occasion, it was a Smallpox outbreak in the Himalayas.

In 1963, after building Khumjung school two years prior, Ed returned to Nepal to continue his promise of bringing educational infrastructure and a network of teachers to the Himalayas. Accompanied by a strong team of New Zealanders, Americans, Indians and Nepalese, Ed had also built into the itinerary some time to attempt two spectacular, unclimbed peaks: Taweche and Kangtega. After all, if you've travelled all the way to Nepal, it would be irresponsible not to put the tools down momentarily and head off into the mountains to tackle two formidable peaks standing over 21,000 feet (~6,500m).

On this particular 1963 expedition, schools were built and mountains were climbed (Kantega was summited, and Taweche was attempted), but another unexpected problem was encountered. During the expedition, a Smallpox outbreak begun spreading through Himalayan communities. In a display of early contact tracing, patient zero was identified as a man who had travelled to Kathmandu and later returned to the Khumbu region. Upon falling ill, and with his family unable to go without the income from his work as a porter, the man's family helped carry his sixty pound load. This led to an unfortunate super spreader event. Ed, along with a number of expedition members, had been vaccinated for Smallpox, so they were able to take on the initial health care response.

Social distancing was encouraged, appropriate burials introduced, and a Swiss Red Cross aeroplane dropped off a package of Swiss and Russian Smallpox vaccines. Very soon, Ed and his team were travelling around the Himalayas on a completely unplanned, but vitally important, vaccination drive. Phil Houghton, a fellow New Zealander and expedition doctor, trained up members of the expedition team to administer the vaccines. It wasn't long before Phil was supervising his new recruits in a major vaccine program. Ed recalls that within only 24 hours on the job, "a group of us had become very competent vaccinators". During the 1963 expedition, 7,000 people were vaccinated across the Khumbu region of the Himalayas. In his book *Schoolhouse in the Clouds*, Ed recalls that of "all the programs carried out on the expedition - schools, waterworks, medical clinics, and the like -

the one most widely appreciated was undoubtedly the vaccination program, and this hadn't been part of my original plans". Read more: [link]



New Zealand entrepreneur Jovian Cummins takes a break from shearing in Western Australia.

Could Woolies Jeans be the next Allbirds? ...

[Source: Sally Rae, Otago Daily Times, 30 Sep 2021] Jovian Cummins certainly hopes so. The young New Zealand entrepreneur, at present shearing in Western Australia, launched an equity crowdfunding campaign on the platform PledgeMe. He hopes to raise up to \$500,000 to help him patent the designs for the merino-lined jeans for workwear and help build a supply chain. The genesis for the business came in a woolshed in 2018 when the then 22-year-old decided he was "fed up" with the hot and sweaty jeans he was wearing, he said. He enlisted his mother to help and the pair took apart a pair of his jeans to get the outline and resewed a merino lining in. Since then, he had been making the jeans for mates "in exchange for some beers" and he now wanted to hire some "smart hardworking Kiwis to help really get this thing going and start shipping worldwide". Woolies Jeans was seeking to raise between \$50,000 and \$500,000. Shares were priced at \$1 each with a minimum investment of \$250. Read more here: [link]



A North Otago teacher is giving retired working dogs a second chance at life.

Working dogs take retirement

[Source: *Otago Daily Times*, 28 Sep 2021] Waitaki Boys' High School agriculture teacher Elizabeth Prentice adopted her dog, Meg, after seeing her listed on the website of Retired Working Dogs.

Before retiring, the pig dog worked in pest control around the world, including Bali and Canada.

Her former owner lives in Ashhurst, near Palmerston North, and loved Meg, she said. But when Meg slowed down and could no longer do the work required, she sulked after the other dogs went out to work, struggling to understand why she had to stay home.

Meg also took exception to the young bitch that had taken her position, forcing the decision to adopt her out.

"He was in tears when Meg left."

Meg took to retired life in Herbert and was allowed to sleep inside for the first time.

"She loves her cuddles and has got a little bit stout."

The first dog Prentice adopted from the charity was then 9-year-old whippet-cross pig dog Whippy. [link]

A New Zealand Joke

A Maori Doctor can't find a job in a hospital, so he opens a clinic and puts a sign outside: 'GET TREATMENT FOR \$20 - IF NOT CURED GET BACK \$100.'

A lawyer thinks this is a great opportunity to earn \$100 and goes to the clinic.

Lawyer: "I have lost my sense of taste."

Doc: "Nurse, bring medicine from box No. 22 and put 3 drops in patient's mouth."

Lawyer: "Ugh. this is kerosene."

Doc: "Chur, your sense of taste is restored. Give me \$20."

The annoyed lawyer goes back after a few days to recover his money.

Lawyer: "I have lost my memory. I cannot remember anything."

Doc: "Nurse, bring medicine from box no. 22 and put 3 drops in his mouth."

Lawyer (annoyed): "This is kerosene. You gave this to me last time for restoring my taste."

Doc: "Chuur. You got your memory back. Give me \$20."

The fuming lawyer pays him, and then comes back a week later determined to get back \$100.

Lawyer: "My eyesight has become very weak I can't see at all."

Doc: "Oh well, I don't have any medicine for that, so take this \$100."

Lawyer (staring at the note): "But this is \$20, not \$100!!"

Doc: "Chuuuur, your eyesight is restored. Give me \$20"

~ Billy T James [link]

Compulsory Voting in Australia

Given the recent federal election in Canada, where voting is voluntary, an article on compulsory voting seemed timely and appropriate. This article is condensed from a recent opinion piece on the ABC website. See links below.

When the federal parliament passed several government bills reforming Australia's electoral system in August 2021, they didn't touch compulsory voting (CV).

Described as "the cornerstone of Australian democracy", CV has a century-long history in this nation. Not only is it a durable feature of Australian democracy, but it is universally applied.

CV was introduced in 1924, and since 1987, its popularity among Australians has averaged 70 per cent. And though there has been a slight downturn in voter turnout at the past three national elections, it has never fallen below 90 per cent since its introduction.

Unlike many other CV countries, Australia does not pay lip service to its operation. It is enforced by electoral authorities and has been strongly upheld by the courts. Citizens who fail to vote can be fined \$20 to \$50, or even gaoled for failure to comply.

Opposition to CV in Australia has almost always relied on rather abstract arguments that fail to have a broad appeal among citizens, especially in view of CV's tangible benefits – not least, high voter turnout. These arguments include the view that:

- it represents an undue encroachment on individual liberty,
- it is not necessary to guarantee high electoral turnout,
- it is undemocratic,
- it infringes upon people's "right not to vote",
- it has a negative effect upon the conduct and organisation of Australia's political parties, and
- by mobilising many disengaged voters, it can potentially harm Australian democracy.

Not only has none of these arguments managed to gain traction within the Australian electorate, but each also fails to withstand careful scrutiny and to provide good reasons for repealing CV in Australia.

Contrary to what is often assumed, CV does not result in any electoral advantage for any specific political party, nor does it encourage citizens to engage more with, and acquire a better understanding of, the political system. Indeed, it appears that young Australian voters do not seem to be particularly more knowledgeable about political matters than their counterparts in voluntary-



voting systems, partly due to disinterest, inadequate educational resources, and misinformation.

CV can help realise political legitimacy better than voluntary-voting systems, thanks to:

- its easy use and accessibility,
- its ability to produce high and socially even turnout, and
- its propensity to often (though not always) encourage greater levels of information, attention, and critical engagement among the public.

In a parliamentary democracy like Australia, CV can contribute to public reasoning and political legitimacy by compelling public officials to pay great attention to a broad range of world views, interests, and demands, thereby providing reasons for laws and policies that appeal to the common good rather than to any specific sectarian interests.

It is often argued that democracies are in crisis. Declining voter turnout, growing insti-

tutional distrust, the breakdown of traditional party systems, and the emergence of populist leaders and policies have led some scholars, commentators and politicians to suggest that CV may be one of the remedies to this malaise.

However, because there is also evidence that Australian citizens are less trusting of their country's political and democratic processes, it is uncertain whether CV will be sufficient to shield Australia from the crisis of democracy in the long term, and, therefore, whether other countries should follow Australia in embracing this practice.

For more information, read "A Century of Compulsory Voting in Australia: Genesis, Impact and Future", 2021, Matteo Bonotti and Paul Strangio.

[link: www.abc.net.au/religion/bonottistrangio-australian-experience-of-compulsory-voting/13531720]

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The Commonwealth is an association of 54 countries working towards shared goals of prosperity, democracy and peace. The Commonwealth Secretariat is the intergovernmental organisation which co-ordinates and carries out much of the Commonwealth's work, supported by a network of more than 80 organisations.

The Secretariat works all over the Commonwealth to:

- protect the environment and encourage sustainable use of natural resources on land and sea
- boost trade and the economy
- support democracy, government and the rule of law
- develop society and young people, including gender equality, education, health and sport
- support small states, helping them tackle the particular challenges they face.

The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) is the main way that the Commonwealth Secretariat provides technical help to Commonwealth countries. We make sure the help we offer is driven by what countries tell us they need.



Powerful satellites orbiting hundreds of miles above Earth are helping some Commonwealth countries save and restore vital mangrove ecosystems while combatting climate change.

How space tech is aiding mangrove conservation in the Commonwealth

Officials from Trinidad and Tobago and Sri Lanka recently shared how they are using sophisticated earth-imaging technology to gather valuable data on the coverage, health and changes in the features of mangroves along their coastlines and rivers.

The information is critical to stemming the rapid disappearance of mangroves worldwide, with 30 to 50 per cent of these marine ecosystems lost mainly to deforestation over

the last 50 years. The data is also key to understanding mangroves' capacity to capture and store away carbon from the atmosphere – the main driver of climate change.

About Commonwealth Blue Charter Training opportunities - The Commonwealth Blue Charter during 2020, pivoted from in-country training events to the virtual and self-paced programmes. Since mid-2020 the Commonwealth Blue Charter has trained over 300 government officials and scientists across eight topics, including Mangrove Mapping for Managers and Technicians. These courses are free and aim to help Action Group members gain new skills or enhance existing ones. Over the coming months further modules will become available, relating to coral reef mapping, blue carbon, blue economy and sustainable coastal fisheries. To keep up-to-date with online training opportunities and events subscribe to the Commonwealth Blue Charter newsletter.



Partnership with Arizona State University will help track climate impact on coral reefs

A new agreement between the Commonwealth Secretariat and Arizona State University (ASU) will leverage cutting-edge coral-mapping technology to protect and restore coral reefs in the Commonwealth.

The partnership aims to support governments in using the Allen Coral Atlas, a powerful web-based tool, to monitor and manage coral reef ecosystems for enhanced ocean policies.

Named for the late Paul G. Allen, Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist, the Allen Coral Atlas was conceived and funded by his company, Vulcan Inc., and is now managed by the ASU Center for Global Discovery and Conservation Science.

Monitoring 'coral bleaching'

This year, a ground-breaking new feature was added to the platform, using satellite images to monitor 'coral bleaching' – a phenomenon driven mainly by climate change.

Bleaching occurs when extra warm ocean waters cause corals to expel the colourful algae living in their tissues. As the

algae also serve as an important food source, extended periods of bleaching will cause corals to starve and die.

Increasingly within the last decade, wide-scale coral bleaching events have been seen across the world, linked to warmer waters and more frequent marine heatwaves. Source: thecommonwealth.org

Did you know? ...

About 60% of New Zealanders who served in the First World War became casualties (i.e., were unable to fight, temporarily or permanently), compared to about 25% of those who served in the Second World War

Though Gallipoli came to be more prominent in popular memory, the bulk of New Zealand First World War casualties were incurred on the Western Front; 1917 and 1918 saw the highest annual numbers of New Zealand deaths

In the Second World War airmen, followed by seamen, were the personnel most likely to die if they became casualties – when in action they were more vulnerable than most soldiers, most of the time

About 500 New Zealanders became prisoners of war during the First World War, compared to more than 9,000 during the Second World War. The contrast reflects the static nature of the trench warfare of 1915–1918 and the mobility of much of the fighting during the Second World War, especially in Greece and North Africa (1941–1943).

BushYarn

The Pope had died and a new pontiff had to be elected.

'Who do you think should be the next pope?' asked a shearer of his mates in the hut.

'Cardinal Spellman of New York,' shouted a Yank.

'T'would be about time we had an Irishman,' suggested Paddy O'Doyle.

'I reckon it should be Cardinal "Bluey" Gilmore from St Mary's in Sydney,' said Mick Ryan.

A shearer up the back looked up from his book and shouted: 'Bob Menzies, of course!'

A silence fell over the group until the original questioner piped up, saying: 'But Menzies isn't even a Catholic.'

'Oh well,' said the worm, sinking back into his book, 'if you're going to bring religion into it.'

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

Richard
Barnes;
Audubon
magazine,
March-April
2009 [link]



Staggering numbers

The tragic story of the passenger pigeon is well documented – declining from migrating flocks of millions which took hours to pass to the last survivor finally dying at the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914 – hunted to extinction.

These days, birds face other serious threats. According to Environment Canada, “Window collisions are a significant threat to migratory birds. In Canada, window collisions kill 16 to 42 million birds a year. In the United States, collisions kill 365 to 988 million birds per year. It is one of the top sources of human-caused bird mortality, despite being easily preventable. Most birds die on impact, but even birds who survive the initial impact will often be left with life threatening injuries. Collisions may result in concussions, shock, internal bleeding, broken bones or brain damage. Injured birds can have a harder time feeding, and also make for easier prey.” [link]

See also *Winnipeg Free Press* 2021-09-09, B1, “City eyes bird-friendly buildings” by Gabrielle Piché.

In a 2013 study*, it was estimated that cats kill between 100 and 350 million birds per year in Canada.

*Blancher, P. 2013. Estimated number of birds killed by house cats (*Felis catus*) in Canada. *Avian Conservation and Ecology* 8(2) [link]

Fortunately, our planet offers some less hazardous flyways and environments where

birds only have to contend with their natural predators – usually, other birds. In this regard, I recently read a very enlightening little book: “An Aviary on the Plains” by Henry Lamond (Angus and Robertson, 1949). The author reports his avian observations while part of a cattle drive on the Barkly Tableland (he references his “aviary” as being bounded on the east and west by the 139th and 137th degrees of longitude, and north and south by the 20th and 22nd parallels – putting the town of Georgina, Queensland, somewhere near its centre). After describing a flock of corellas (*Kakatoe sanguine*) performing their intricate aerial acrobatics, he makes an estimate of how many there are in the mob, and comes up, conservatively, with 10,000. Then reckons there would be at least another 500 such mobs in his “aviary”. And if you want to do the math, he suggests that each corella eats about 2 ounces (56 gms) of seed each day ... Added to that, you can count on at least three other seed-eating birds for each corella. Staggering numbers!

It was refreshing to see news reports of bar-tailed godwits’ arrival in New Zealand being heralded by the ringing of cathedral bells [*The Guardian*: Eva Corlett, 22 Sep 2021]. They deserve public recognition for their marathon migration – 11,000 kms, from the Arctic. Their number is estimated at 80,000 – another staggering, but declining number.

Reader feedback

Malcolm in Canberra sent this link about another shore bird marathoner, Latham’s Snipe. [link]



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