

The Southern Yarn

June/July 2022

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

JULY

Pool Party **Sunday, July 17 (NEW DATE!)** **3 pm at 57 D'Arcy Drive**

Lynley and family have offered their pool and backyard for a return to this eagerly anticipated summer social occasion for the Club. In addition to swimming and socialising, there will be a backyard barbecue. The Club will provide the burgers, hotdogs and buns. Members attending are asked to bring drinks, and an accompanying dish to share – salads, pasta, or desserts. Remember! If you plan to attend, please call Lynley at 204-269-1510, or by email to social@downunderclub.mb.ca

AUGUST

Annual Golf Tournament **Saturday 27th August, 1 pm** **at The Players, 2695 Inkster Blvd.**

The game will again be "Best Ball", where you are part of a team of four, and you all hit your next shots from the best positioned ball in your group. It is a great format for social golf, and for those who just play occasionally, because if you don't hit a great shot yourself, you simply pick up your ball and play from your team's best position. We will be playing 9 holes. The course has a nice open-air area attached to the restaurant, overlooking their man-made lake, where we gather after the game for results, a beverage, and perhaps a burger. It is a casual event and guaranteed good time. Call Peter Munn at 204-237-1805 to let him know your attendance, look forward to seeing the regulars and many more.

Land Acknowledgement

The Down Under Club of Winnipeg meets on Treaty 1 territory in the Province of Manitoba and the homeland of the Métis Nation. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live and gather, and all the lands from whence we came, including Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and Canada. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging.



Celebrating Our Members

In the last two months, several of our members have created and achieved some fabulous things worth celebrating.

The Winnipeg Art Gallery's Flowers in Bloom exhibition back in April featured a magnificent floral arrangement by **Penny Hechter**. Her magnificent interpretation complemented "In the Orchard", one of the paintings on display. Congratulations, Penny!

Cheers to **Jenny Gates** for winning the Toastmasters District 64 International Speech Contest on April 30. Here's hoping the video of Jenny's speech makes it through the video round and into the semi-finals and beyond.



And congratulations to **Judy Powell** for her beautiful creation currently being featured in a new exhibit in Ontario. "Reflections of Ourselves" is a collaborative art project that celebrates the rich cultural heritage of Canadians."

Below is information about Judy's piece:

"My great-grandparents emigrated individually from England to Australia as young adults and several generations now have called Australia home. I was born in Adelaide and lived in Australia for 45 years and, now, for 30 years in Canada.

"For this leaf I chose to use a fabric called 'Dilkara Emu Goanna Snake', inspired by traditional Australian Aboriginal designs, as it identifies with the land, water and animals.

"There are birds – including the madly laughing kookaburra, the carolling magpie, the mimicking lyrebird, the bright cockatoos and finches – all unique to that wonderful country of blue skies, gum trees, and wide brown and green lands. I designed and hand painted the galah, representing one of the colourful cockatoos.

"The leaf itself, in common with all the other leaves submitted as part of the project, was made to a common pattern and shape of a stylized maple leaf. Apart from the fabric, which was ordered from Australia, I used felt batting, embroidery silks, hand sewing and quilting, and hand painted the galah."

For more information, visit tracely-lawko.com/maple-leaf-project/

online



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

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



Family issues dictated a hurried decision to visit Adelaide, Australia, for the first three weeks of May. With time to wander the streets in the Fullarton/Unley area, there was not only opportunity to think of content for this edition, but also inspiration for much of it. Being a bird nerd, the ever-vocal locals never disappoint: I settled on a couple of honeyeaters that were ever present for Birds I View, p8; about one in five fences in that particular neighbourhood are made of brushwood, so there's some info on that tradition in *Did you know*, p2; the granddaughter of cricket legend Donald Bradman, Greta Bradman, was in the news for headlining a music festival in outback Queensland – see Oz News, p4; a nearby community centre was hosting an exhibition of quilt art and two of the 29 pieces caught my eye as suitable for our NZ news, p5; and browsing books in op shops prompted some mentions also included here, p5.

Please don't be shy about contributing any suitable material that others might find interesting.

Thank you again to **Jenny, Judy, Brian and Peter** for valuable assistance. And thank you to our supportive advertisers.

Letter to (and from!) the Editor

Thank you, Downunder Travel

Jason at Downunder Travel – a long-time advertiser in *The Yarn* – pulled out all stops and not only put our tickets and itinerary together, but also walked us through the necessary paperwork. Many grateful thanks from Judy and Charlie for getting us out of Winnipeg on the way to Adelaide by 5 pm Friday, April 29 at just 7 hours' notice. A brilliant effort!

Downunder Travel has been a partner of our Club for many years, and continue to provide all manner of advice and deals and bookings and help. Many of us have travelled with Downunder Travel and we are proud to call them partners and friends.

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



Hi Everyone,
I am really looking forward to the Pool Party at Lynleys, to be held on the NEW DATE of **July 17**. After too long a time, we can meet all the friends we have in the club for a much-needed get together. Zoom has been good to us, but personal interaction is needed. Lynley has a lovely, big backyard, so we have lots of room to mingle, and even though there is a big pool, you don't have to swim, just enjoy the company. And the burgers are always good.



For family news, Margaret and I, and the rest of our family from Winnipeg are heading to Toronto in mid-June to celebrate our younger boy Tyler's wedding to his lovely fiancée, Hannah. It had to be postponed from two years ago due to Covid, so it should be one for the ages. We are looking forward to all of us getting together again at this happy time.

And don't forget, please set **July 17** in your calendar, I look forward to seeing you all in person again,
Peter

Did you know ...

Brush fences use the branches of the "brushwood" or "broombrush" plant – *Melaleuca uncinata*, an Australian native common in the Mallee areas and now also grown in plantations. Brush fences date back to the 1800s in South Australia, but are found in cities all around Australia now. They can be constructed by hand-packing the brush on-site or by using pre-made panels. In a drier environment they can last at least 30 years. [Link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melaleuca_uncinata]

Travel restarting!

We look forward to helping you plan your dream vacation again!
The following destinations have re-opened: Australia, New Zealand,
Fiji & Tahiti as well as some Central American countries and others
(as of the end of May and subject to change; entry requirements apply).
Contact us directly for up-to-date travel info.

*Want to modify this package?
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knowing our history

European honey bee (*Apis mellifera*)

European honey bees have been present in Australia since their introduction 200 years ago, but their distribution and abundance has increased dramatically over the last 80 years. The actual number of feral colonies is unknown, but they are patchily distributed being least abundant, if not absent, from alpine areas and inland areas away from water. European honey bees visit the flowers of at least 200 Australian plant genera and interact with a wide diversity of native flower-visiting animals.

Feral European honey bees can outcompete native fauna for floral resources, disrupt natural pollination processes and displace endemic wildlife from tree hollows. However, there is insufficient research about interactions between European honey bees and Australian biota to fully describe their impacts.

Managed hives of European honey bees form the basis of an industry that provides significant crop pollination services around Australia. Pollination services and the production of honey and associated bee products were estimated by the House of Representatives Inquiry into the Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee

Industry as between \$4 and \$6 billion in 2008. [link]



To mark the bicentenary of Australia's honey bee industry, the Australian Royal Mint has released a special edition \$2 coin 'commemorating both the remarkable creatures and their conscientious beekeepers.'

We Will Remember

It's never easy losing those we love, and especially now when it's so difficult to gather together and remember and reflect. Over the last few months, we lost a member and a past member of the DUCW, a friend of the Club, and family of two of our members.

Jean Wade passed away on February 23 at 98 years of age. She was a long-time member, as was her husband Malcolm, and well known and active in Club activities over the years. Jean was born in Langruth, MB, and met her Aussie 'mate' Malcolm on one of her travelling ventures. Malcolm moved to Canada where they married and enjoyed their life together with family and friends.

Sam Singer passed away on March 13 at age 94. Many will remember Sam from his association with the General Monash Branch of the Canadian Legion. He and his wife Betty were regular attendees at our ANZAC Day services, and a good friend to many in the Club.

Our sincere sympathies to Les, Katrina and Aidan Fitt on the loss of their dad and granddad. Sadly, **Kevin Fitt** passed away suddenly on April 9. Despite some initial delays thanks to our mid-April weather, Les was able to go home to spend time with his mum and family.

Max Sandilands passed away on May 14. He and Carol were members for many years, but not in the last while. Max suffered from Parkinson's, and recently had a bad fall and hit his head, resulting in an inoperable brain bleed. He passed away peacefully with his family at this side.



Judy and Charlie Powell were in Adelaide in May to farewell Judy's sister **Helen Quick**. Those of you who attended our Folkloramas back in the day will remember Helen's volunteering efforts to help make those events a success. Helen died suddenly, but Judy and Charlie were able to spend a month there with Ed and others who knew and loved her.

Our sincere condolences to you all and your families.

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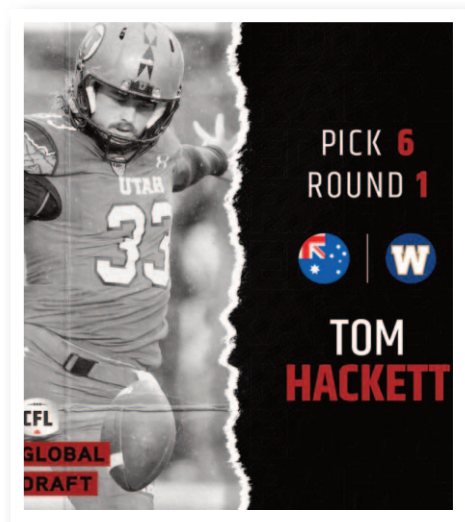
Call Terry 204-229-6642 or 204-663-6549

Australian Passports

We are hoping to arrange for the Australian High Commission (AHC) to make a stop in Winnipeg this year for passport renewals and applications. And to help with that, we've reached out to Aussie members and asked you to let us know if and when you need your passports renewed. If you haven't responded yet, please do so ASAP.

And if you are thinking of travelling to or needing to travel to Oz, be sure to contact Jason at **Downunder Travel** to get the low-down on the passport situation before you go.

As soon as we hear something back from the AHC, will let you know.



Welcome to Winnipeg, Tom

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers have signed Global punter Aussie Tom Hackett for the 2022/23 season and beyond.

General manager Kyle Walters selected the 29-year-old in the first round, sixth overall during the 2022 Global Draft.

Heralding from Melbourne, Tom was twice honoured with the Ray Guy Award (2014, 2015) as the top punter in the NCAA during his days at Utah.

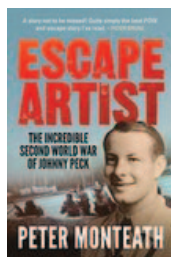
Looking forward to seeing you on the field, Tom.

AntipodeanBooks

good reads

1. "Escape Artist: the incredible Second World War of Johnny Peck" by Peter Monteath.

In August 1941, an eighteen-year-old Australian soldier made his first prison break - an audacious night-time escape from a German prisoner-of-war camp in Crete. Astoundingly,



this was only the first of many escapes. An infantryman in the 2/7 Battalion, Johnny Peck was first thrown into battle against Italian forces in the Western Desert. Campaigns against Hitler's Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe in Greece and Crete followed. When Crete fell to the Germans at the end of May 1941, Peck was trapped on the island with hundreds of other men. On the run, they depended on their wits, the kindness of strangers, and sheer good luck. When Peck's luck ran out, he was taken captive by the Germans, then the Italians. Later, after his release from a Piedmontese jail following the Italian Armistice of 1943, and at immense risk to his own life, Peck devoted himself to helping POWs cross the Alps to safety. Captured once more, Peck was sentenced to death and detained in Milan's notorious, Gestapo-run San Vittore prison - until escaping again, this time into Switzerland. Historian Peter Monteath reveals the action-packed tale of one young Australian soldier and his remarkable war. [Link]

2. "Anzac Biscuits: The Power and Spirit of an Everyday National Icon"

Have you ever wondered about the history of the much loved and iconic Anzac biscuit?

Culinary historian Allison Reynolds spent five years travelling through Australia, New Zealand and England examining war records, early Australian cookbooks, and digging up hand-written recipes handed down through generations to write the definite story of the iconic Australian staple.

Her book *Anzac Biscuits - The Power and Spirit of an Everyday National Icon*, includes a chapter that tackles the eternal question: Crispy versus chewy. There's an interview with the author here: [Link]



NZ yarn ...

G.E.J.: Can any "Kia Ora Co-ee-ite" dig up anything to beat this for the pure and unadulterated?

A certain New Zealand Regiment, camped on the Jordan flats, recently came under the eagle eye of brother "Jacko", who immediately went "butcher's hook" or "ram's horn" and launched forth much frightfulness by lugging a 5.9 up on to one of the spare hills and chucking ironmongery promiscuously about the landscape. When the Squadrons had beaten into the "long grass" of adjacent gullies and the Headquarters Sergt.

was busy getting his neddies off the lines, he suddenly got an earful of an oncoming shell and immediately camouflaged by trying to look like the side of a pack saddle - the only cover handy. The coal-box lobbed about 20 yards away and gently rolled against the other side of the saddle - a dud. P.S. Have often wondered if the Sergeant tip-toed away in case it woke up. [Source: The KIA ORA COO-EE: The Magazine for the ANZACS in the Middle East, 1918]

newsfromOz

various sources, see web links in online edition



Colouring the outback

Wherever you go in the wheat belt areas of Australia (mostly towards the south) you will see grain silos towering over the surrounding landscapes. While they have been a landmark, they haven't been particularly attractive. That's all changing though, as towns realise they are a huge blank canvas just waiting to become a magnet to the passing traffic on the highway. Now they are the backbone of the silo art trail in South Australia. There is even a website [link] where you can view many other eye-catching examples and plan a road-trip itinerary. This one was completed in April by Scott Nagy and Janne Birkner, and is at Bute in the upper Yorke Peninsular, South Australia.

Century of science

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation is an Australian Government agency responsible for scientific research. It

was established in 1916 by the Billy Hughes government as The Advisory Council of Science and Industry, then reinvigorated in 1926 as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The "O" was added in 1949. Some of the better-known developments by CSIRO include the invention of atomic absorption spectroscopy, essential components of Wi-Fi technology, development of the first commercially suc-



successful polymer banknote, the invention of the insect repellent in Aerogard, and the introduction of a series of biological controls into Australia, such as the introduction of myxomatosis and rabbit calicivirus for the control of rabbit populations. [Source: Wikipedia] ... but wait, read on!



George Bornemissza introduced dung beetles into Australia. The work controlled the bush fly nuisance and helped to improve soil fertility.

The “Australian Salute”, a flick of the hand by older generations of Australians to rid oneself of flies, is now a dwindling gesture, thanks largely to George Francis Bornemissza OAM. Born György Ferenc Bornemissza in Hungary in 1924, the entomologist and ecologist who is credited with major efforts in fly control died in 2014. After receiving his doctorate from the University of Innsbrück in Austria, Bornemissza fled central Europe to escape the post-World War II Soviet regimes and travelled to WA in 1950. Six months after arriving on Australian shores, while working with the Department of Zoology at the University of WA, he remarked upon the large number of old, dry cow dung pads that covered cattle grazing fields near Wooroloo, WA, and compared this to the relatively dung-free cattle fields of his native Hungary. In Hungary and elsewhere in the world, dung beetles have adapted to roll and bury large, moist cattle dung pads, but native Australian beetles, which co-evolved alongside the marsupials, were not able to utilise bovine dung, since cattle were only relatively recently introduced to Australia in the 1880s. Bornemissza joined CSIRO in 1955 and the Australian Dung Beetle Project commenced in 1965 with funding from the Australian Meat Research Committee. Funding ended in 1985, but in 2007, 23 of the 43 species of dung beetle introduced by Bornemissza and his team were still established and thriving all over Australia. The project reduced bush flies by 90%, and outside dining is no longer illegal, as it once was in the 1950s. Other benefits improved soil, water and pasture health that is “undoubtedly worth many millions of dollars a year”. [Source: Wikipedia]



The Don's granddaughter

Set in Queensland's iconic outback, the Festival of Outback Opera celebrated the wonder of opera under an endless sky. This year's festival in May was headlined by Greta Bradman (Sir Donald Bradman's 43-year-old granddaughter) and Kanen Breen with music direction by Dane Lam, leading the UQ Pulse Chamber Orchestra. Dazzling night skies, crystal clear air and glorious music ignited the senses in this once in a lifetime concert. The concert stage was perched 75m above the surrounding landscape at the spectacular Jump-Up in the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum. Featured music included Verdi, Tchaikovsky, Mozart, and Tosti. Dark Sky Serenade embraced the romance of the outback setting through some of the most beautiful love songs ever written. Presented in association with The University of Queensland in collaboration with the School of Music, Opera Queensland's Festival of Outback Opera is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. [Source: Opera Queensland]

newszealand

various sources, see web links in online edition



9 New Zealand inventions ...

- The eggbeater
- Commercial bungy jump
- The jetpack
- Referee's whistle
- Jogging
- Disposable syringes
- High speed amphibious vehicles
- Zorb – the giant orb made of plastic that spins its occupants downhill

[Link]

Quilt art ...

Following are a couple of the entries in a Studio Art Quilt Associates exhibition, titled “Distance & Diversity”, at the Hughes Gallery, Fullarton, SA, 6th – 29th May.



Te Matau a Pohe, by Sonya Prchal, Whangarei, NZ: *Walking the Hatea Loop in Whangarei is an endless source of inspiration, with the gorgeous flora and fauna and the local artworks featured on the way around. Native Tui can be heard singing around the loop walk and are often seen drinking the nectar from the Pohutukawa and flax flowers. Visible for most of the walk is Te Matau a Pohe, an innovative bridge, which represents prosperity and a safe journey over the water. The beautiful structure is a curved shape, which is an interpretation of a fishhook – a widely used motif in Māori culture. This international award-winning Bascule bridge (lifting-bridge) is named after the Māori Chief Pohe, who welcomed the first English settlers to Whangarei. Pohe was instrumental in building bridges between the two cultures.*

(Whole cloth painted on PFD cotton fabric with Headset colour for Textile Printing. Tui and Pohutukawa leaves are thread sketched in a hoop on the top layer with Madeira Polynon threads. The Pohutukawa flowers are ‘Ostrich’ wool, machine couched on the top layer. Free-motion quilted.)



Letters to Home, by Mary Transom, Ohope, NZ: *In 1919, my grandma Hilda left the grey streets of post-war London to travel as a war bride to the other side of the world, to marry my grandfather in Napier, New Zealand. She lived for over 65 years in the bungalow that my grandfather built, completed just before they married, with prize-winning roses in the garden and the seaside nearby. Her best friend Bell travelled on the same ship as a war bride, and they lived a few houses away from each other all their lives.* (Commercial fabrics, collaged background and raw edge appliqué. Paint. Machine embroidery and quilting. Cottons, cotton batting.) [Link]

A Walk on the Coat-hanger

Brian McCann

Edited to fit by Jenny Gates

Many people are familiar with the celebratory scenes of New Year's Eve from one of the world's most recognizable structures, the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Spectacular fire-works and colourful light shows draw our attention to its impressive arch and outline. So, when the opportunity presented itself to take a cruise around Australia and New Zealand on Princess' new Grand Class Sapphire Princess starting in Sydney, climbing the bridge became a "must" for me, and a cautious "maybe" for my "scared of heights" wife.

The bridge, or "the Coathanger" as it is sometimes affectionately referred to, was opened in 1932. At the north and south ends are two concrete and granite towers that serve no function other than aesthetics. However, in the southeast tower is the Pylon Lookout with a most interesting exhibition and history of the bridge. The lookout, which is the next best thing for the faint of heart who do not want to do "the climb", also offers an excellent photo opportunity of the harbour and the bridge climbers.

Since 1998 it has been possible to climb the bridge, and more than 1.4 million individuals have completed this feat, including a 100-year-old lady. After booking my own spot, I first had to inform my wife, and then slowly convince her that she could do it.

The journey to Australia was lengthy, but our first few days in Sydney and surrounds were exciting and absorbing. But with the first view of specks of people on the uppermost arch of steel, my wife's tummy started to churn, and for the first time I also had a little think about our upcoming adventure.

The morning of our venture dawned, and to our delight it was cool and overcast. One of my main fears was being exposed to Sydney's mid-day temperatures, without shade, for a couple of hours. We made our way to the climb office in the heart of The Rocks district, an intriguing mixture of old and new in this historic area of Sydney that is renowned as the original European settlement of Australia in 1788.

In quick succession, we checked in, joined our group, watched a short video, had a breathalyzer test, stored our valuables and



any loose items, and suited up. Unfortunately, in the interests of safety for all, no personal cameras and binoculars were permitted. After meeting our tour leader, Steve, we donned a waist harness, rain pants, hat, a wrist handkerchief – and "parachutes", which were actually two waist packs containing a rain jacket and fleece, neither of which I expected midsummer in Sydney!

As we navigated the climb simulator to practice hooking on the waist harness to the safety line and climbing and descending the ladders, Steve assessed each of us for nervousness and competence. Then we put on a radio headset, tested "1-2-3", and headed onto the street.

The climb began by passing through a short tunnel, then an elevated walkway over the road that runs adjacent to the water front. At that point, the safety line was connected to the guide wire and we were off! Very excited, albeit somewhat apprehensive.

Slowly, step by step, we reached the peak at 134 m, and were rewarded with the breathtaking 360-degree vista of Sydney Harbour. We had all earned a well-deserved pause to take it all in.

Steve snapped a souvenir group and individual photos before we crossed to the opposite side of the bridge and began our slow descent to the ground. After a stop in the souvenir shop to purchase a photo of our once-in-a-lifetime experience, we received our climb certificate – proof of our thrilling and successful accomplishment.

And how did my wife manage? As she said, "I was okay if I looked out to the horizon and not down below ... but it still hasn't cured me of heights."

Sincere thanks to all the climb staff who greeted us in the usual Aussie laidback style, with humour, friendliness, and concern for our safety and well-being.

Our final stop on this trip was Auckland, the "City of Sails" – which seemed appropriate to finish our cruise in another city with a magnificent harbour and another bridge ... with bungee jumping?

For more information, visit www.bridgeclimb.com.

NOTE: Brian is a friend of Peter Debenham. Thank you, Brian, for allowing us to include your article and edit for space. *Cruise News & Views*, Issue #20 April 2005

cricket yarn

pulling your leg-before-wicket



The injustice: Don Bradman liked to score off the first ball he received, a tuck or a flick to leg his favourite means at the start of any innings. In a radio interview on the eve of a Shield match in Melbourne, local express Ernie McCormick promised that if he was bowling when the Don came to the wicket the following morning, the Don would not score off his first ball. McCormick *was* bowling when Bradman came in and made quite a show of taking everyone away from the leg side and stacking the off-side with five slips and a gully, mid-off, cover and extra cover (see graphic, p7). Ernie delivered the ball at great pace – he was the fastest bowler in the world in the late thirties – and this one pitched it at least a foot outside the off stump and going away. At the last second, Bradman lightly skipped across the pitch and pulled the ball which came to rest just inside the square-leg fence and the batsmen ran 5! Ernie stood in the middle of the pitch, arms aloft, protesting to the Almighty on the injustice of it all. [Source: "Favourite Cricket Yarns", Ken Piesse, 2014]

[Source: <https://thecommonwealth.org/>]
Leaders of the Commonwealth countries meet every two years at the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)**, this year from June 20-26 in Kigali, Rwanda.
[Link]

The annual **Commonwealth Diplomats Induction Programme (CDIP)** is a master-class in the Commonwealth, organised for senior diplomats from member countries.

The Commonwealth Secretariat was delighted to welcome more than 50 diplomats for its 38th edition of the Commonwealth Diplomats Induction Programme (CDIP), which ran from 8-10 March 2022. This year marked the return of in-person training at Marlborough House, the Commonwealth's headquarters in London, after two years of COVID restrictions, and was also the first time the programme was run in a hybrid format allowing diplomats outside of the UK to take part virtually.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, welcomed the new cohort of diplomats with an opening address highlighting the importance of the induction and how it will better equip diplomats in their service to their countries and the Commonwealth.

“During this programme, you will hear about the challenges facing the Commonwealth and all the work being done to help our member states achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. You will hear about the Commonwealth’s wider family, our networks of partners and accredited organisations who can offer so much to each of our member states, and who enrich the Commonwealth with their knowledge, passion and commitment. By going the extra mile through this induction, you give yourselves the best chance to succeed. And your success will be our success.”

In a series of engaging and interactive sessions over three days designed to nurture critical thinking and in-depth, practical knowledge about the Commonwealth, participants of the programme had the opportunity to hear from a distinguished panel of speakers and experts from member states including the High Commissioners from St Kitts and Nevis, Australia, The Bahamas, and Nigeria, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Rwanda, the incoming CHOGM Chair, and Minister of Environment for the Maldives.

Other speakers included Senior Directors and Advisers from the Secretariat, Director Generals from Commonwealth



Foundation and Commonwealth of Learning, and other leading experts from around the Commonwealth covering topics such as climate change and the environment, health, education, trade, and governance.

Some of the diplomats noted that the orientation was important as it offered an insight into the Commonwealth's operations both within the Commonwealth and on the global stage, and also provided an opportunity to network with diplomats from other countries.

Each participant received a certificate recognising their contribution to the programme as well as a course pack. This year's intake included diplomats from 29 countries spanning all regions of the Commonwealth including Belize, Canada, Malawi, Maldives, New Zealand and Saint Lucia.

Since its inception in 1977, more than 900 diplomats including High Commissioners and Ambassadors have benefitted from the programme and have gone on to serve at senior posts in missions, public offices, and other international organisations. The exclusive programme is developed and run by the Commonwealth Secretariat in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation and Commonwealth of Learning. Participation is usually secured through government nomination.

Cricket is not really all that complicated

Hopefully this summer we'll get the chance to meet at Assiniboine Park and take in some cricket. Meanwhile, in case you were unfortunate enough to grow up without exposure to the game or you just find it too confusing, the following might help explain it before you join us:

You're in a field with a bat. You're standing in front of some sticks, which the opposition is trying to hit with a ball. There is another set of sticks 22 yards away, where one of your team mates stands. It's your job to use your bat to protect the sticks with the ball.

In order to assess how well you're protecting the sticks, you are awarded points in certain circumstances.

If you hit the ball clean out of the field, without it bouncing, you win six points.

If you hit the ball out of the field, but it either rolls out or bounces before it crosses the boundary (the edge of the field), you are awarded four points.

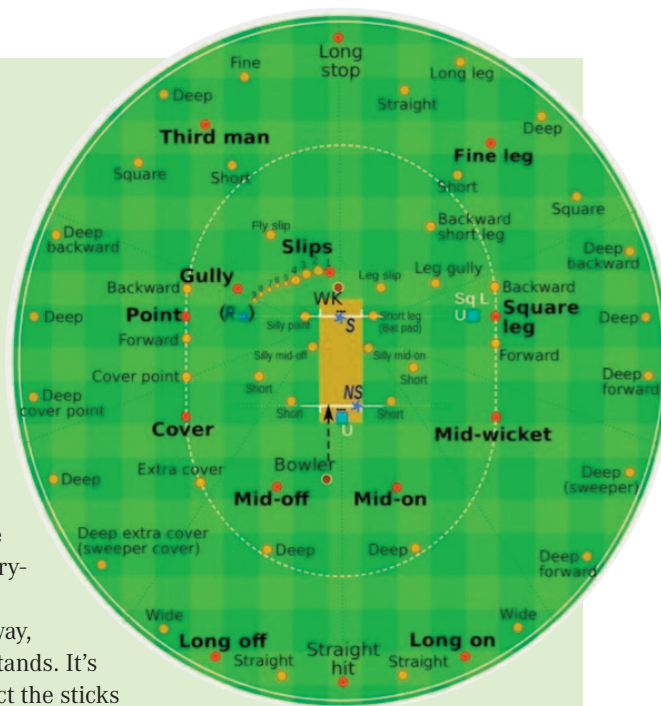
After you hit the ball, you run the length of the 22-yard pitch with sticks at either end as your team mate does the same.

Now, if you're running and not standing next to your sticks, the opposing team can attack your sticks with the ball by either throwing or nudging. They have to use the ball, however, and simply hitting your sticks is against the rules.

Every time you and your team mate successfully run the 22 yards between the sticks, you score one point; or “run”.

So you're using the bat to knock the ball away from the stumps so you can score 6s and 4s or more usually score runs by, well, running.

If the batter hits the ball, and a member of the opposing team catches it before it hits the ground, the batter is out. [Source: Facebook posts]



A couple of honeyeaters

The **red wattlebird** (*Anthochaera carunculata*) is native to southern Australia. At 33–37 cm (13–14.5 in) in length, it is the second largest species of Australian honeyeater (only the yellow wattlebird, in Tasmania, is larger). It has mainly grey-brown plumage, with red eyes, distinctive pinkish-red wattles on either side of the neck, white streaks on the chest and a large bright yellow patch on the lower belly. *Anthochaera* derives from the Ancient Greek *anthos* ‘flower, bloom’ and *khair* ‘enjoy’; and *carunculata* from *caruncula*, Latin for ‘a small piece of flesh’, referring to the red wattle. It has several common names, one of which is barkingbird – a good match for my experience of hearing them “yap” like a small dog. In common with other honeyeaters, the red wattlebird has a long, specialized tongue to extract nectar from flowers. The tongue can extend well beyond the tip of the bill, and is divided at the end to form a brush-like structure with over a hundred bristles that soak up nectar by capillary action. It is found south of Noosa and Cooloola, down the eastern regions and across the south all the way to Perth. New Zealand also claims it to be a native.

The **New Holland honeyeater** (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) is also found throughout southern Australia. It is around 18 cm (7.1 in) long and is mainly black, with a white iris, white facial tufts and yellow margins on its wing and tail feathers. It is a very active bird and rarely sits long enough to give an extended view. When danger approaches a New Holland honeyeater, such as a bird of prey, a group of honeyeaters will form together and give a warning call. While they obtain most of their carbs from nectar, they also need protein, so their diet includes spiders and insects.



Red Wattlebird (above) and New Holland Honeyeater (below). Photos by Charlie Powell.



From “A Fortunate Life”, A. B. Facey, 1981. This is an excerpt describing the first cattle drive Albert Facey took part in as a fourteen-year-old in 1909.

As well as the problem with the brumbies, we were now pestered by thousands of pink and grey cockatoos. The men called them galahs – they also called them many other things, of course. I'd never seen anything like them before in my life. They would bite holes in anything, even the leather saddles and straps. We would wash our clothes and hang them out to dry on a bush, and these birds would make big holes in the shirts or anything else. They got so cheeky and bold that one of the men had to get a rifle and shoot a few of them to frighten them away.



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