

The Southern Yarn

November–December 2023

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

NOVEMBER 2023

Annual General Meeting
Friday, November 24th, 7pm
Scandinavian Cultural Centre,
764 Erin Street, Winnipeg

You are invited to attend the other not-so-formal highlight of the year. This is when we get to review our raison d'être, our continuous improvement strategy, and elect the Board of Directors for the coming year. Any and all input is welcome. Come along and make a difference, and enjoy snacks and drinks – the bar will be open.

DECEMBER 2023

Family Christmas Party
Sunday, December 3rd, 4pm
Scandinavian Cultural Centre

Yes, Santa still remembers where to visit us for this highly anticipated event! This is a family fun time, together with a potluck supper. Please bring to share either a main dish, or veggie dish, salad or dessert. The bar will be open as well. Santa, with the help of the Club donation, will provide a gift for the attending children aged 12 and under. **Please call Margaret Munn, 204-237-1805, and advise the name, age of child, and whether boy or girl by November 22.**

FEBRUARY 2024

Australia Day & Waitangi Day
Saturday, Feb 3rd, 2024, 5 pm
Scandinavian Cultural Centre

Mid-winter, a perfect time to warm up and get together with familiar faces – and, who knows, some new Aussies and Kiwis might just drop by as well. Come for the food – and stay for the fun. There will be a "Cook Off", so dig out your favourite CHILI recipe, or try a new one and bring it along to share. If you are not taking part in the Cook Off, please bring a plate for the potluck supper, either a main dish, or veggie dish, salad or dessert. The social time will include two-up, and the bar will be open.



Our annual not-so-formal dinner was well-attended and delicious as usual.

Fine dining, excellent company

Bailey's did not disappoint when 27 of our club members and guests enjoyed a delicious dinner on the evening of October 20. The setting was the elegant Governor's Dining Room, giving us some privacy and allowing for social mixing after the meal, which ended with individual choice of dessert – or sharing of desserts. We learned a few surprising things about some Club members when, during the meal, we played the social mixer game "Tell two truths and one fib" about yourself; and we all were invited to guess which statement was the "fib". Thanks again to John Kovacs and Bailey's staff for looking after us so well.

Brunch update: Club brunches are currently "off the menu", but if you have any suggestions for us to gather for a brunch at a favourite place, new or old, just let us know.

RSVP for all events:

Call Judy Powell at **204 275 7083** or email social@downunderclub.mb.ca to let us know you're coming, and for more information.

Our Friend at The Leaf

In case you missed it the last time you visited **The Leaf** in Assiniboine Park (or in the May-June Yarn), or if you are planning a first-time visit soon, be sure to keep an eye out for the Manuka banner bearing **Lynley Davidson's** photo.

After you walk through the tropical biome, the display house, and the butterfly garden, take some time to explore the Mediterranean biome where, on one of the pathways, the banner proudly stands.

Lynley told us about this before **The Leaf** even opened, but on my first visit there earlier this year with friends from Australia, it was a real thrill to see it first hand.

And if you haven't already seen it, be sure to check it out for yourself.



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.

online

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

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



On 20 September, 1939, Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced to Parliament that Australia was offering the British Government an expeditionary force to bolster the Royal Air Force as it expanded for World War II.

Apart from a force headquarters, the offer comprised 1 Fighter Wing Headquarters with Nos 7 and 15 Squadrons; 2 Bomber Wing Headquarters with Nos 1 and 8 Squadrons; 3 Bomber Wing Headquarters with Nos 16 and 17 Squadrons; and an Air Stores Park, a Medical Receiving Station, a Base Area Headquarters and a Base Depot. The number of personnel required to service this force totalled 3,200 officers and personnel, including a reinforcement pool of 225.

Although the offer was accepted and recruitment commenced on 9 October, Australia's subsequent commitment to the Empire Air Training Scheme saw the expeditionary plan put on hold on 20 October, then cancelled altogether 11 days later. [Link] (That explains why our DUCW foundational members came to Canada - under the Commonwealth Air Training Plan - instead of training on home turf.) Nevertheless, an air base was established at Darwin in June the next year - See *Getting to know* (p.6). It played a pivotal role in the defence of Australia, despite the damage and losses sustained in the '42 Japanese raid. The US 380th Bomb Group arrived in April 1943 and was placed under the control of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). The 380th Group's B-24s made the longest bombing missions of WWII, multiple times, to the oil refineries at Balikpapan, Borneo (320 kilometres further than the Ploesti mission in Europe) and to those at Surabaya, Java. Unfortunately, one of its B24 Liberators crashed during a training exercise with the loss of all six crew.

I visited that crash-site with a group of friends in the early '70s. The Northern Territory Government declared the site a heritage area in 2002. [Link] Baz Luhrmann's movie *"Australia"* brought home some of the realities of the war years in the Top End and that experience can be revisited with the upcoming *"Faraway Downs"* (see p.3).

Thank you to Judy, Peter, Jenny, Margaret, Chris, Brian and our advertisers for their contributions for this issue.

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



At our annual "Not so Formal dinner" last month, Margaret and I had invited 2 guests, Terry and Marie, who were visiting us from Sydney. They thoroughly enjoyed the dinner (which was another great event, and thanks once again to Judy Powell for making it all such a great success) and meeting up with different club members.

The four of us have known each other for a long time, having met Terry in London through a mutual friend, who we in turn had met when he came in from out of the jungle to board the small tramp steamer we were using to go from the south end to the north end of Lake Malawi. So Terry, his friend Steve, and Margaret and I would go to a Jazz club every Sunday night in London. Soon the two lads had met two BFF's, and the girls soon joined us on those Sun-

day nights at the club. Both couples were hit by Cupid's arrow, and we attended their two weddings in England. We kept in touch, by letter, the old-fashioned way well before Steve Jobs was out of short pants. After Terry and Marie left us to continue on to the east coast, Margaret and I were talking about how you make and keep good friends over the years. Even after an extended interval, you get together and chat as if you saw each other just a few days ago. And, of course, it is great to catch up on all the news of each other's families, and mutual friends. We had a good 5 days, doing some sight-seeing around Winnipeg, polar bears at the zoo's massive interactive pool was a highlight, and seeing the geese winging around the Oak Hammock Marsh another. So, the time went quickly, but it was a delightful time spent with longstanding (not old) friends.

— Peter

Reader feedback:

"I also support what was said about Downunder Travel, Calgary. I had never used their services before, but Jason Webb got me such a great deal from Dec 2022 through to Feb 2023, and he was so patient with my money transfer. I will definitely use them again."

— Jude McCudden

**More than
40 years'
South Pacific
experience**

THANK YOU, DUCW!

Downunder Travel Ltd has been honoured with a long and strong relationship with the DUCW. We are celebrating 20 great years in 2024, and all of you have been a very big part of our journey. All bookings made from DUCW members in 2024 will result in a donation of \$50 to the Down Under Club of Winnipeg. Our thanks to you all for your wonderful support and friendships over the last 20 years!

— Sincerely, Jason Webb

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Aussie Jingle Bells (sung to that tune, of course!)

Dashing through the bush, in a rusty Holden ute,
Kicking up the dust, Esky in the boot.
Kelpie by my side, Singing Christmas songs,
It's summer time and I am in my singlet, shorts and thongs!!!
Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day. Hey!!
Jingle bells, jingle bells. Christmas time is beaut
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden ute!!
Engine's getting hot, we dodge the kangaroos,
The swaggie climbs aboard, he is welcome too.
All the family's there, sitting by the pool,
Christmas day the Aussie way, by the Bar-b-q!!!
Come the afternoon, Grandpa has a doze,
The kids and Uncle Bruce are swimming in their clothes.
The time comes round to go, we take a family snap,
Pack the car and all shoot through before the washing up :-)

Accredited to: Colin Buchanon

Aussie Jingle Bells, by Colin Buchanon, shared by Margaret Munn.

100yearsAgo...

Historical gems worthy of sharing



[Source: *Australian Geographic*, by Esme Mathis, July 26, 2023] On 28 July 1923, the first sod was turned at a ceremony heralding the official start of construction on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

The beloved landmark would become one of Australia's biggest employment projects during the Great Depression, hiring boilermakers, draughtsmen, engineers and more. Granite for the piers and pylons was quarried at Moruya on the New South Wales south coast, but only 20 per cent of the steel was produced in Australia. Most was manufactured in England.

By 1928 giant "creeper cranes" were built on opposite sides of the bridge and work on the arches began.

The project employed more than 2,000 people, 16 of whom died on the site. It displaced more than 800 tenant families living on the bridge's path. Their homes were demolished without compensation. The bridge was opened to the public on 19 March 1932.

Welcome to Baz Luhrmann's 'Faraway Downs' – the TV series

[Hollywood Reporter, *The Guardian*; article suggestion Chris Brasher]

If you don't yet have Disney+, Star+ or Hulu, now might be the perfect time to sign up. Or find a friend who already subscribes and check this out!

Baz Luhrmann's "Faraway Downs" – a six-part four-hour series that extends his 2008 epic "Australia" – premiered to great acclaim at the inaugural SXSW Sydney Screen Festival, and will launch internationally on November 26 this year.

The series will expand on "Australia" using original footage, a new ending, and an updated soundtrack. And while the theatrical cut of the movie has a running time of 2 hours, 45 minutes, the six-episode series clocks in at 4 hours.

Not everyone was a fan of the movie – some critics described it a critical flop – but those of us in the DUCW who saw "Australia" – some of us several times! – relished the opportunity to enjoy a home-spun tale starring familiar actors in a fresh take on a time in our history set against the spectacular outback in the land from whence we came.

To recap, both the movie and the reimagined limited series tells the story of an English aristocrat, Lady Sarah Ashley (Nicole Kidman), who inherits a large cattle ranch in Australia after her husband dies. When Australian cattle barons plot to take her land, she joins forces with a cattle drover (Hugh Jackman) to protect her ranch.

The story is explored through the eyes of young Nullah (Brandon Walters), a bi-racial Indigenous Australian child caught up in the government's draconian racial policy now referred to as the "Stolen Generations". The trio experience four life-altering years, a love affair between Sarah and the drover, and the



unavoidable impact of World War II on northern Australia.

The original 2008 movie received mixed or average reviews, and currently holds a 55% approval rating on Rotten Tomatoes. It was nominated for and won many awards, including costume design, art direction, production design, visual effects, and cinematography, as well as acting nominations for Jackman and Kidman, and acting wins for Walters.

Luhrmann "... was inspired to re-approach my film 'Australia' to create 'Faraway Downs' because of the way episodic storytelling has been reinvigorated by the streaming world. With over 2 million feet of film from the original piece, my team and I were able to revisit anew the central themes of the work."

On a side note, a week before the Sydney premiere of "Faraway Downs", Luhrmann's team travelled to the east Kimberley in Western Australia, where much of the original film was shot. They bought an 80-inch TV from Retravision in Kununurra and screened all six episodes to a local First Nations community. There, Luhrmann said, it was the astonishing scenery that garnered the biggest audience reaction. "A very special piece of land would come up, and even the little kids, there would be this heartfelt applause. That's probably the most important screening this show will ever have."

Thank you, Baz. Some of us will definitely be watching – and probably several times.
– Jenny Gates

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Winnipeg Touch Rugby – Get in the game

WTR's annual indoor season is underway, and will run every Friday until March 1, 2024.

Axworthy Health & RecPlex,
University of Winnipeg
350 Spence St

Games start at 7 PM sharp to 8 PM

We are actively seeking six to eight teams, each consisting of 10 players, with a maximum roster size of 12 players per team. Teams can be either co-ed or exclusively men or women.

This presents an exceptional opportunity for club teams to introduce newcomers to the sport within a safe and controlled environment. Additionally, we extend a warm invitation to everyone to join our inclusive and enjoyable competitive winter league.

WTR is well-equipped with two fields to accommodate the league, ensuring that each team will have a minimum of two games per night. Individual registration is an option, and there are drop-in options if you are unable to join consistently.

Six Team League:

10 players p/side: \$140.00
12 players p/side \$120.00

Eight Team League:

10 players p/side: \$105.00
12 players p/side: \$90.00

Interested? Got questions? Contact Caleb Stick at winnipegtouch@gmail.com or 204-990-7053.

Winnipeg Touch Rugby

www.facebook.com/winnipegtouch

didyouknow...

well, now you do!

The name **hockey** – as the organized game came to be known – has been attributed to the French word *hoquet* (shepherd's stick).



newsfromOz

various sources, see links



Linked has already built electric vehicle charging stations like this on the Bruce Highway at Coochin Creek on the Sunshine Coast.

Clean energy for fast charging

[Source: ABC News, by Emilia Terzon] Far away from big cities, people living in remote Australia can sometimes struggle with basic energy security, let alone installing a fast charger for an electric car. But even simply getting this technology to them is a major challenge, according to the National Roads and Motorists Association (NRMA).

The NRMA's energy subsidiary and the federal government are jointly funding a \$90 million rollout of 137 fast chargers in rural and regional Australia. A former mining services company that wants to help lead the renewable energy revolution has been working on charging prototypes for the outback.

At a glance, Linked Group Service's prototype looks like a giant steel canopy. The canopy could technically be installed anywhere, and not be connected to existing power networks. "It will provide fast charging facilities in regional or very remote locations where there are constraints on the grid, or no grid at all," co-founder Jason Sharam said. "What we're trying to do is implement a much faster charger that's running off as much clean energy as possible. "So a couple of cars can charge at once in the middle of nowhere and go on their merry way again."

The Mackay-based company will install its prototype in a tiny Northern Territory town called Erldunda, along the Stuart Highway – one of the country's longest roads – this month (October).

It is doing this in tandem with the NRMA to see if its prototype could be one solution to the organisation's remote highway plan. It has solar panels, a battery to store the renewable energy it generates, a backup diesel generator, and outlets for several cars to plug in.



2023 Cobber Challenge winner Alex Johns and his family watch his Kelpie Earl eat from the trophy.

Man's best friend

[Source: *NZ Herald*] The winner of the 2023 Cobber Challenge has been crowned after a gruelling 21-day competition that saw working dogs battle it out on farms across Australia and New Zealand.

Taking out the coveted title was Tasmanian farmer Alex Johns and his 3-year-old Kelpie Earl who covered a total distance of 1,343km in 21 days, reclaiming the title for the Island state.

Second place went to Dan McInnes and his Kelpie Jack, from Victoria, who covered a total distance of 1,263.4km. Jackson Clifford and his Kelpie Rose from the Northern Territory came third, covering 822km.

There were three New Zealand competitors in this year's competition. The Cobber Challenge is a celebration of the unique partnership that keeps farms running across Australia and New Zealand – farmers and their working dogs.

"Since 2016, the Cobber Challenge has shared the true stories of the lives of working dogs. We use GPS collars to track the distance, duration and speed that Aussie and Kiwi dogs clock over a three-week period. We've seen sprints as fast as Usain Bolt, and dogs covering 1,000km in just three weeks. Along the way, we've seen how hard our farmers work. But not without their best mates by their sides. Cobber is proud to provide the food that fuels working dogs across Australia and the Tasman."

Read more and watch the action online.





Drone vs Rook

[Source: *Waikato Herald*] Waikato Regional Council is calling in the big guns in the fight against the pest bird species rook – drone technology.

Rooks were introduced to New Zealand in the 1860s to control insect pests, but turned out to be a pest themselves as they feed on newly sown crops or cereal crops. The birds can also damage pasture by tearing it up during their search for grubs, exposing bare soil to erosion, and encouraging weed germination. Rooks breed from early September until mid-December and, if left uncontrolled, can form large breeding colonies, called rookeries, of several hundred birds. The largest colony found in New Zealand had nearly 1,000 nests.

Waikato Regional Council biosecurity officer for pest animals, Imre Reuter-Rosewood, said the council was using drone technology to locate rook nests in the Waikato so targeted control could be carried out. "Views from the drone camera allow [us] to confirm nesting activity, or that subsequent control has been successful," he said. "For a rookery identified outside of Tirau this spring, we got a really good look at the nests from the drone, and after control didn't find any further sign of rook activity."

Read more online.



Lifelong love of flying

[Source: *NZ Herald*] It all started in 1928 when, as a 5-year-old, Malcolm Gunton saw a plane over Ōtamarākau, near Tauranga. The experience set Gunton, known as Mal, on a life of flying in which he has piloted more than 50 different types of aircraft, amassed over 7,000 hours of flying time and enjoyed a career in the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Air Commodore (Retired) Malcolm Gunton, OBE, is 100 today. He was brought up on the family's dairy farm and attended Ōtamarākau School. On May 5, 1942, he joined the army. "It was after Pearl Harbour and all the fit 18-year-olds were called up for the army," he says. But his desire was to be a pilot, and at the end of November 1942, he joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Once he got his wings, after training in New Zealand and Canada, he was intent on serving in Europe. "A mate of mine, Len Crotty, he and I decided the only way we could get to England was to join the Fleet Air Arm, [the Royal Navy's aviation component], so we applied to do that. We were hauled up in front of an Air Force group captain and had a big strip torn off us for wanting to go to 'an inferior service'. He said we were definitely going to the Pacific, which is what happened."

Gunton joined No 23 Flight Squadron, flying a Corsair. He flew air-to-air and air-to-ground missions against the Japanese.

Read more of his life online.



A 1974 Volkswagen Kombi Westfalia camper, part of the massive collection at Bill Richardson Transport World.

Road Trip delight

[Source: *NZ Herald*] Shayne Currie is travelling the country on the Herald's Great New Zealand Road Trip. Sound the 1923 bulb horn! We've uncovered an early contender for best attraction on The Great New Zealand Road Trip. It's also, perhaps, one of New Zealand's best-kept secrets. Admittedly, family and friends had told me Bill Richardson Transport World, spread out in an expansive Art Deco building stretching across a massive block in Invercargill, was a world-class showcase. I hesitate to call it a museum; in some places, it's like you're back strolling through the streets of 1930, so authentic is the experience. Until the sliding doors opened and I walked into the main hall, I had little clue. Until you're on-site and greeted by a fleet of lovingly restored VWs and Fords – only the Model B is missing from a long line of "letter" Fords – and a host of other vintage and classic vehicles, the scale of the operation can't be truly appreciated. World-class is an understatement. The place is mind-blowing. Bill Richardson's dream, sparked by a ride as a 6-year-old in a 1949 Ford five-tonner, has morphed into the biggest private automotive collection of its kind in the world. Richardson died in 2005, but his dream of maintaining, building and presenting his collection was picked up by his daughter Jocelyn (Joc) O'Donnell, a massive VW fan. Read more online.



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GettingtoKnow...

Establishment of RAAF Base Darwin - 01 JUN 1940

[Source: Royal Australian Air Force] Formed in June 1940, RAAF Base Darwin was very rapidly at the front line of Australia's defences at the outbreak of war in the Pacific. Darwin and its satellite fields housed a multitude of Australian and US units, operating throughout the South-West Pacific.

During World War II, RAAF Base Darwin served as a first refuge for retreating US Air Force units from the Philippines in 1941. The US Air Force Far East Air Force and its subordinate commands, V Fighter and V Bomber established headquarters at Darwin in late December 1941.

Darwin's darkest day occurred on 19 February 1942, when mainland Australia came under attack when Japanese forces mounted two air raids on Darwin. The first raid, which began at 0958hrs, targeted shipping, infrastructure and the town. The second raid, at approx. 1145hrs, involved high altitude bombing of RAAF Station Darwin. 12 Squadron lost two of its Wirraways during the bombing raid. The Squadron and the base in general sustained significant damage.

From 9 August 1944 to 20 February 1945, the USAAF 380th Bombardment Group based four squadrons of long-range B-24 Liberator bombers at the base.

Runway 09/27 was the first operational strip on Base designed for fighter aircraft. Threshold was located east of Billaroy Rd, but has now been disbanded. Runway 18/36 still exists today, but was the 'heavy strip' in



1940, and runway 14/32 was constructed initially for fighter ops, but when sealed became the main operating runway.

Initial construction of buildings included the Officers Mess, Officers Accommodation, Officers Laundry, Main Hangar, Airman's Recreation Room and Cinema, HQ Building, Airman's Mess (which was partly destroyed in the bombing and never rebuilt), 9 x Airman's accommodation blocks, Sergeants Mess, Sergeant accommodation blocks, Admin Building, 2nd Maintenance, Air Traffic Control/Water Tower, Workshop, and other buildings that were not rebuilt after the bombing. Also, construction of what is now the Horseshoe of Heritage Married Quarters were features of the base during its infancy.

During the mid-1950s work commenced on Runway 11/29 and current taxiways and facilities. This work was completed around

1958 at which time the Air Traffic Control tower was located to the south of Taxiway ALPHA.

Today there is a diverse range of units permanently stationed on RAAF Base Darwin, including 13 Squadron, 114 mobile Control and Reporting Unit, Headquarters 452 Squadron, 452 Squadron detachment Darwin, 2 Security Force, 2 Expeditionary Health Squadron, and Estate and Infrastructure Group. RAAF Base Darwin also hosts an extended deployment of United States Marine Corps personnel and their aircraft under the United States Force Posture Initiative.

RAAF Darwin is a busy operational base, hosting many exercises each year, including Exercise Pitch Black, a multi-national exercise that attracts a large number of visiting aircraft and a spectacular for Darwin residents. Read more online.



BOOK REVIEW: *The True Story of the Man Who Invented an Australian Icon* by Jamie Callister (with Ron Howard)



As the dedication page of this "amazing yarn" states, "Whether you love it or hate it or you're a new kid on the block, this is a story for all Australians."

Of course, the same could be said for the product in question, but in many ways, this book is really about the personal and professional journey of Cyril Callister. Not only did he invent Vegemite, but he steadfastly believed that people would grow to love the salty black paste. Most of us, at least.

First published in 2012 and told by his grandson, Jamie, the book was reprinted to coincide with Vegemite's 100th anniversary.

It is a delightful, intriguing, surprising, moving, funny and quirky read that parallels the invention of Vegemite with the history of Australia itself. It portrays the lives of families in that time, shares stories of difficulty and loss, mentions a few famous folk, cele-

brates Vegemite's "nutritional credentials", and paints a picture of a man clearly ahead of his time. But most of all, it confirms that Cyril was a man fascinated by food technology, microbiology and cheesemaking, and perhaps one of Australia's greatest food scientists of the early 20th century.

As one reviewer recommended, "Read this book with a smile and a Vegemite sandwich," to which I would add, while humming the tune of "Happy Little Vegemites".

As a side note, the Cyril Callister Museum in Beaufort, Victoria, where Cyril was born, welcomes visitors from around the world. It celebrates all things Vegemite and hosts tours, speakers and events with a portion of the proceeds returned to the Cyril Callister Foundation scholarship program. Definitely worth a visit.

— Jenny Gates

Commonwealth Corner



CHOGM 2024

Samoa, a proud member of the Commonwealth, is honoured to announce that it will host the 2024 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in October 2024 on the theme “One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth”.

Samoa, the first Small Island Developing State from the Blue Pacific to host CHOGM, will bring a unique perspective to the table. CHOGM 2024 promises to be a landmark event, uniting Commonwealth nations in their pursuit of resilience, sustainability, and a shared future.

The fa’asamoa, or Samoan way of life, exemplifies collective responsibility, encapsulating values such as respect, dignity, love, protection, and service. This ethos aligns with the principles of the Commonwealth Charter, uniting the Commonwealth Aiga (family) of 56 nations, representing one-third of the global population. These nations, diverse in size and development status, share common beliefs and values, where every member’s contribution is significant.

Announcing the theme during the 23rd Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting, Prime Minister, Afioga Fiaame Naomi Mataaafa said: “In the spirit of our Commonwealth ‘Aiga’ and guided by the fa’asamoa, the Government and people of Samoa eagerly anticipate welcoming the Commonwealth family to our island home, the Blue Pacific in October 2024. We look forward to sharing our unique Samoan communal culture and traditions as we come together to transform our one resilient family into a Common Wealth.”

Speaking about the importance of CHOGM 2024, Commonwealth Secretary-General Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC said:

“The global community, including our Commonwealth ‘Aiga,’ confronts a multi-dimensional polycrisis, demanding collec-



tive solutions for sustainable development, democracy, and peace. As we stand together, the 2024 Samoa CHOGM calls for unity and enhanced resilience as vital for our survival.

Resilience is the unifying approach that transcends the pillars of humanitarian, development, human rights, peace and security work. It encompasses the ability to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond, and recover positively from external shocks. Resilience safeguards sustainable development and well-being for all, preventing economic, environmental, and human losses during crises.”

Transforming Our Commonwealth into a Common Wealth

We must harness our strengths by building resilience, unlocking potential, leveraging our ‘Commonwealth Advantage,’ and fostering a connected, digital Commonwealth. This transformation is vital to ensure a resilient common future where no one is left behind.

The theme looks at the core pillars of the Commonwealth through a resilience lens. CHOGM 2024 aims to strengthen:

- Resilient democratic institutions upholding human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.
- A resilient environment to combat climate change.
- Resilient economies that support recovery and prosperity.
- Resilient societies to empower individuals for a peaceful and productive life.

A Landmark Pacific CHOGM

Celebrating more than 60 years of Independence and political stability, Samoa’s vision for CHOGM 2024 promises to deliver concrete solutions to global challenges through the principle of talanoa, fostering inclusivity, transparency, and dialogue. Read more online.



BushYarn

Old Bertie watched as the Flying Doctor flew over the property.

‘When I was a young stockman, we didn’t have any need of such fancy medicine and flying doctors. Once I was thrown from my horse and landed on a big tree, breaking about ten of my ribs. I was in a terrible state, but the old Chinese cook fixed me up proper and good. He made me eat a couple of handfuls of rice and then drink two pints of bore water. The rice started to swell up in no time and eventually pushed my ribs back into place. I was back at work the next day.’



150yearsAgo...

Historical gems worthy of sharing

WINNIPEG was incorporated as a city on 8th November, 1873. The City of Winnipeg is located at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, almost at the geographic centre of North America. With an ethnically diverse population, Winnipeg is characterized by slow but steady growth. It is the eighth largest city in Canada and dominates the Manitoba economy.

Though there have been fur trading posts on the site since 1738, the first permanent settlement of the area occurred in 1812 when a group of Scottish crofters arrived. When Winnipeg was incorporated as a city, it boasted a population of 1,869 people. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 brought a 30-year period of growth and prosperity unequalled in Canadian urban development. A flood of immigrants, high wheat prices, plentiful capital, and improved farming techniques contributed to making Winnipeg the wholesale, administrative, and financial centre of western Canada. Following World War I, economic stagnation due to low wheat prices and the Depression lasted well into the 1940s. Since 1945, Winnipeg has grown steadily, based on its position as a major grain, financial, manufacturing, and transportation centre.



Photographer Jack Zhi's dramatic picture of a female peregrine falcon protecting her young has won this year's Bird Photographer of the Year award. The picture was taken in California and beat more than 20,000 entries to claim the prize.

birds*i*view

by Charlie Powell

Peregrine falcon

The Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) is an endangered bird of prey that breeds from Alaska and northern Canada to southern South America. A crow-sized bird, it has a hooked beak, powerful claws, keen eyes and long, pointed wings that enable it to fly at great speed. It has a broad black moustache or sideburn stripe that extends below its eyes, bluish-grey wings, back and shoulders and a light buff-white underside marked with horizontal brownish bars. Young Peregrine falcons have brown upper bodies and buff-coloured undersides streaked with black vertical barring. In flight, all falcons can be distinguished from hawks by their long, pointed wings and quick wingbeats.

Peregrine falcons arrive in Manitoba in March and are incubating their eggs by mid-April or May. Several nest sites are usually selected within their territory, with the female ultimately choosing which nest will be used. The nest is usually a well-drained scrape or depression on a cliff ledge. Pairs nesting in downtown Winnipeg and Brandon regularly choose ledges or wooden nest-boxes near the top of tall buildings. Pairs may use the same nest site for years, occasionally switching to alternate nests in their territory especially if their previous year's nest failed. Two to five eggs are laid and incubated by the female for 28 to 34 days. The male occasionally shares incubation duties. Young remain in the nest for 35 to 40 days

after hatching and are dependent on the adult birds for five more weeks after learning to fly. In many parts of southern Manitoba, peregrines are only seen during migration in spring (April to May) or fall (August to October). Most birds migrate to the southern United States and often into South America.

Other falcons found in Manitoba are the Prairie falcon, American kestrel, Merlin and Gyrfalcon.

Australia has six species: Black Falcon, Peregrine Falcon, Australian Hobby, Brown Falcon, Nankeen Kestrel and the Grey Falcon.

The New Zealand falcon (Māori: kārearea or kāiaia; *Falco novaeseelandiae*) is New Zealand's only falcon. Other common names for the bird are bush hawk and sparrow hawk. It is frequently mistaken for the larger and more common swamp harrier. It is the country's most threatened bird of prey, with only around 3,000–5,000 breeding pairs remaining. It is mainly found in heavy bush and the steep high country in the South Island, and is rarely seen north of a line through the central area of the North Island. A small population also breeds on the Auckland Islands. (Wikipedia).



A Haiku by Krish Radhakrishna, 2020
*a bullet from sky
 peregrine falcon's blitz dive -
 snatching dove for meal*



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