

The Southern Yarn

July–August 2025

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

JULY

Pool Party

Sunday 27th July – 3:30 pm
57 D'Arcy Drive, south Wpg

Lynley and family have offered their pool and backyard again for this summer social occasion for members and families. Swim, socialise and enjoy the BBQ. The Club will provide the burgers, hotdogs and buns. Members bring their own drinks, and a dish to share – salad, pasta or desserts. Let Lynley know ages of children attending. **Remember to RSVP! Please call Lynley at 204-269-1510**, leave a voicemail, or by email to social@downunderclub.mb.ca

AUGUST

Annual DUCW Golf Tournament
Saturday 23rd August – noon
The Players, 2695 Inkster Blvd.

This 9-hole game will again be "Best Ball" where you are part of a team of four, and you hit your next shots from the best positioned ball in your group. We gather after the game for results, a beverage, and perhaps a burger. To reserve a spot and get on a team, **call Peter Munn at 204 237-1805**. Players of all skill levels are welcome! INVITE A FRIEND!

SEPTEMBER

DUCW 75th Anniversary BBQ
Sunday 21st Sept. – 11am to 3pm
#3 picnic site, Assiniboine Park

Join us for a BBQ and social event to mark the conclusion of our 75th year. The site reserved for us is huge, so bring games and activities (i.e., cricket stumps, frisbees), and there is a large covered area for inclement weather. Additional details will be emailed over the next few weeks, but the Club will provide burgers, sausages, buns and condiments, and members are asked to bring salads and desserts. There are lots of benches for us to use, but feel free to bring your own chairs, etc. PLEASE RSVP to info@downunderclub.mb.ca with your intent to attend OR to confirm your attendance so we can plan for an excellent day out. For questions and more info, email us at the address above.

OCTOBER – Not-so-Formal Dinner



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



Clockwise: Emma Wakeling, Judy Powell, Les Fitt, Aidan Fitt, Margaret Munn, Peter Munn, Henry Lemanski, Leon Badali, Jenny Gates, Katrina Epp, Charlie Powell, and Sam Dawson.

Breakfast in the Downtown

Laughter, good company, and delicious food — the perfect start to the weekend as the DUCW descended like a pack of hungry galahs piling into OEB Breakfast Co. for the most important meal of the day. This packed brunch spot offered familiar breakfast classics, from French Toast to several hearty Eggs Benny options, providing an extensive menu to cater to our hungry crew. Fortunately, we're not as messy as a flock of frenzied galahs! Crepes were devoured, coffee was consumed, and stories, some tall, some true,



were shared freely. It's amazing how a shared love of a good breakfast can bridge continents and cultures. There's warmth in the shared experiences and in the bonds formed far from home. Our Club continues to prove that the best things in life are simple: good food, good company, and a healthy dose of self-deprecating humour. — Sam Dawson

Land Acknowledgement

The Down Under Club of Winnipeg meets on Treaty 1 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.

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



If I had a bucket list, it would now be one item shorter: I got to witness the “Toast to the Haggis”!

This rare excitement came about while volunteering (mostly flipping pancakes) at the 57th Manitoba Highland Gathering last month in East Selkirk. Selkirk is an apt choice for hosting this event as it was named for Lord Selkirk, who sponsored the Scottish settlers to the area in the early 1800s. [read more: www.lordselkirk.ca/the-settlers].

Congratulations to Margaret Walker and her team for pulling all the bits together that make the Gathering such a culturally significant event.

It was fun and also an opportunity for Judy and me to make good use of our little Boler camper for its first outing this year.

In fact, the Selkirk camp-

ground was the perfect spot. One of the birding trails brought me within good range of a couple of good specimens – a great blue heron and a bald eagle (see p. 8).

Thanks again to those who contributed other articles of significance in this issue – Sam Dawson for the Club gathering at OEB (p. 1), Jenny Gates for our proud moment in the Legislature (p. 3), Michael Workman for the AFL report (p. 7), and everyone for our Club’s memories and reflections (p. 6).

Our advertisers are always appreciated and we hope you take advantage of their services whenever possible.

Link to our moment in the Legislature

(see page 3 for full-write-up)

www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2025/0133/9.0/LMS1031999.html

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



Wildlife in the suburbs

We live between the Red and the Seine rivers, less than ½ kilometre from either one. So, we are sometimes visited by some of the creatures that live in those sanctuaries.

We have the occasional deer eating at our bird feeders and drinking at our bird baths, and different aquatic species from time to time will come up from the rivers and show their faces. But now we have the return of the raccoons.

I was reading a book some weeks ago, late at night, in the backyard. Yes, it was dark, but a quiet warm night. I have the library app Libby on my phone, and the lighted screen makes this an easy way for me to enjoy books at any time.

I could hear some scrabbling going on, and about 20 feet away, a young raccoon was bellying up to the bird bath, taking in water.

We were visited years ago by another family of raccoons, and had some bad experiences cleaning up after them. Now, the only missile I had handy was an empty

10-gallon Home Depot orange bucket. I did not want to maim the animal, just send him next door with the memory of a bad experience at #86.

So, I tossed the bucket, and the noise did send the masked bandit scurrying. However, the family is obviously back in force, but now they wait until later at night to come visiting. And the mess continues.

I hope you have a great summer, and don't forget the Club has some terrific events coming up. They are all described elsewhere in this issue, and include the golf tournament on August 23rd. It is 9 holes, and everyone is on a team of 4 players. Only the best shot counts, and if you don't do so well with a shot, you simply pick up your ball and hit again from the best selected shot of the group. Easy peasy – and zero stress to excel. You do not have to be a good golf player to enjoy the round and the course, and the company. So, I hope to see you there, 12 noon tee off, and the more the merrier.

Cheers, Peter



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Manitoba Legislature members' statement

It was a stunning, memorable and well-earned moment in the Manitoba Legislature on Tuesday May 20, 2025.

In the early afternoon, sixteen members of the DUCW – Peter and Margaret Munn, Charlie Powell, Sam Dawson, Brian and Liz Hydesmith, Jenny Gates and Leon Badali, Henry Lemanski, Pam Sabourin, Jacqueline and Arthur Cassel-Cramer, Keith and Patricia Vidal, and Dennis and Janet Woodford – were met by fellow DUCW member and Manitoba Protocol Officer Brad Robertson in the arrival space inside the front of the Legislative Building.

After being cleared by security, we toured several parts of the building as Brad shared an endless array of stories and assorted information about the history and features of what is clearly one of this province's most beautiful and intriguing buildings.

We were then joined by the MLA for Kildonan-River East Rachelle Schott, who later read the statement on our behalf in the House. Mrs Schott offered her own congratulations on our 75th year, and then joined us for a photo shoot in the Rotunda.

One of many other highlights was standing in the Pool of the Black Star behind the Grand Staircase and reciting poetry and singing songs as our singular and collective echoes bounced back and made us all sound like superstars.

Then we took our seats in the public gallery as the Speaker of the House and members of Parliament began the Second Session of the Forty-Third Legislature of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

Prior to the reading of Members' Statements, the Speaker read out the names of our executive and members who were present in the gallery, and we were recognised by applause from those in attendance.

Shortly after, MLA Schott formally recognised the DUCW's 75th year in this province by sharing our history, accomplishments, and various contributions as summarised in the statement (prepared by Jenny Gates), which was acknowledged by a standing ovation and heartfelt applause from members of the House.

Afterward, a few members stayed to hear the start of question period, which got off to quite a lively start, while others visited the gift store or moved on to the next part of their day.



MLA Rachelle Schott (centre right) beside DUCW President Peter Munn, MB Protocol Officer and DUCW member Brad Robertson (far left) and attending members and executive of the DUCW.
[Photo provided]

Suffice to say that all of us were quite chuffed by the acknowledgement, some of us moved to tears, and conversations outside the Building concurred this was more than just a milestone in our history.

It was also a recognition of our founders who believed a Club like ours had a place and a purpose in Winnipeg and Manitoba, and who gifted us all the opportunity to continue our valued traditions, celebrate our cultures, and support each other through the sharing of information and recommendations, kindness and generosity, and friendship, camaraderie and mateship.

The DUCW has achieved more than our

founders likely envisaged when the Club was formed back in 1949, but on May 20th, everyone who was present in the House understood that we will continue to promote our Club and celebrate who we are for many years to come.

Thanks to Jacqueline for sending us the link to the entire session now up on YouTube. You can also just watch the introductions of Club exec and members [22:21] and MLA Schott's member statement [28:52]. And you can read the official Hansard record online.

— Jenny Gates



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An 'uncle's' Māori-driven rugby camp taking the world by storm

[Emma Andrews, *Henare te Ua Māori Journalism Intern*, May 26, 2025, originally published on Radio New Zealand, excerpted with permission by email response from Andrews on May 27]

From Aotearoa to Ireland to Japan to Mozambique, Troy Nathan has been touring the world for the past 10 years taking haka and rugby to young, aspiring tamariki of all different backgrounds and cultures.

"They want to be future All Blacks regardless of if they're Kiwi or not," Nathan said. "As much as what we're doing overseas promoting our culture and sharing our kaupapa, it's also important for our Māori to understand what we're doing and know how much our culture is appreciated around the world."

Haka Rugby Global is a programme with more than 30 'born-and-bred Kiwi' coaches, balancing rugby with tikanga Māori, for children aged 8-16 years old. Each camp is kicked off with a pōwhiri, whaikōrero, waiata, and a hongi, and throughout the camp they learn a haka that is specific to the kaupapa. A poroporoaki (farewell) is led by the children at the very end.

The reviews on Facebook show appreciation for a "a unique experience immersed in Māori culture for three days". Another review stated their sons hadn't stopped talking about their experience and practised the haka everywhere they could.

"Yeah, it is a rugby camp, but there's more alignment with Māori culture," Nathan said.

This year, Haka Rugby Global will hit its 100th camp with the biggest one yet to happen in London on 8 August with around 160 kids registered, coincidentally two weeks shy of the Women's Rugby World Cup in England.

Nathan (Ngāpuhi) grew up in West-Auckland and was an academy rugby player who ventured to professional rugby in Ireland, Italy, and Scotland, respectively. He thought he'd be playing rugby forever.



"I went through a transition period where I thought, well, if I finish rugby, I'll be in a rut." [But] when he hung up his boots, he created Haka Rugby Global.

"Everywhere I go I represent who I am and my people. It's not just for myself, we're

not just representing our family, but we're representing everyone back home."

Haka Rugby Global – Utilizing Māori culture and Rugby as a tool to help create future world leaders.

Did you know ...

Long before Lieutenant James Cook (he wasn't a Captain on the *Endeavour's* first voyage, 1768-1771) there were Chinese visitors to Australia – possibly admiral Zheng He (1371-1435) during the Ming Dynasty. Then there were the Dutch around 1620, and the Englishman William Dampier in 1697. But, of course, the Aboriginal peoples have been there for more than 2,000 generations. [Source: *The Book of General Ignorance*, John Lloyd and John Mitchinson, 2006]

Marway Militaria

Incorporated since 1987, Marway Militaria Inc is a leader in the vintage militaria and police collectibles business worldwide. Retail sales, trade shows, online sales and auctions were the focal aspects to the business. 2012 saw the opening of a new division of the company, Winnipeg Army Surplus, selling new and used military surplus and tactical gear sourced from around the world. — Jaime and Jim

#30-1865 Sargent Ave, Winnipeg MB Canada R3H0E4

Phone: (204) 775-7159, Email: marway@marway-militaria.com

Store Hours: Sun & Mon: CLOSED, Tue - Friday: 10 am – 6 pm; Sat: 10 am – 3 pm

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Clever Zincing

Edward de Bono, the inventor of lateral thinking, advised a (UK) Foreign Office committee in 2,000 that the whole sorry business (of the Arab-Israeli conflict) might be due, in part, to low levels of zinc found in people who eat unleavened bread, a known side-effect of which is aggression. He suggested shipping out jars of Marmite to compensate. [Source: *The Book of General Ignorance*, John Lloyd and John Mitchinson, 2006]

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HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

When Manitoba declared an unprecedented “state of emergency” in response to the severe wildfires burning in our province, the DUCW made a donation to the Scottish Gentlemen’s Club (SGC) that was matched by the SGC Endowment Fund at The Winnipeg Foundation.

All funds raised were forwarded to the Canadian Red Cross to provide immediate and on-going relief, including financial assistance, support to evacuees and the communities hosting them, as well as recovery and resilience efforts in response to the wildfires. Charitable tax receipts were issued.

Our contribution of \$500 — **boosted to \$2,000 through matching funds** — was spearheaded by Peter Debenham who, along with fellow DUCW member Rob Bruce-Barron, are members of the SGC. The suggestion was enthusiastically approved by the DUCW board.

Below is the letter of acknowledgement.

June 9, 2025

The Down Under Club
c/o Mr. Peter Debenham
584 Wallace Avenue
East St. Paul, Manitoba
Canada R2E 0B2

Dear Peter,

Thank you very much to The Down Under Club for supporting SGC’s “Member Challenge” to raise funds for The Manitoba Red Cross’ Manitoba Wildfires Response 2025. Your \$500 gift has put us over our \$20,000 goal which demonstrates the amazing generosity of you and your fellow Down Under Club members.

The response has been remarkable and your contribution is deeply appreciated. We are currently \$31,800 and counting.

Peter, please extend our thanks to The Down Under Club’s members for their participation in this drive to raise support for those affected by this unprecedented emergency. We will be in touch to share the final results of this effort.

Sincerely,

Rick Frost, SGC Charitable Giving Chair

Working on a new Name for “The Drunken Aussie”

We recently reached out to **Nuburger** in Winnipeg to ask what happened to their fabulous burger known as “The Drunken Aussie”.

That burger featured grilled pineapple, bacon, egg, cheddar cheese, beets, lettuce, and mayo. (Other restaurant versions include a beer-spiked beef patty and fried onion rings.)

According to a spokesperson, “That burger was on the very first menu ever! I miss it! Unfortunately there were some people who found the name offensive ... and on top of that the volume to keep it on the menu just wasn’t there anymore.”

They also added, “We are always excited to try new things, and bring back old things. I promise you we will keep this in mind in our next burger testing session and give it serious consideration. I do think we’d have to change the name though if we re-launch it. Lol!”

Which is why I thought we could take the initiative and come up with a new name to really inspire them – perhaps one that represents both Australia and New Zealand?

So, I invite you to put on your thinking caps, see what you can come up with, and let me know what you would like to order from the Nuburger menu that reminds you of both our home countries.

Email all suggestions to info@downunderclub.mb.ca and we’ll pass them along to the deciders that be at Nuburger.

And in the meantime, if you want to create your own Drunken Aussie burger, try this recipe from Cafe Delites

— Jenny Gates



Fringe alert

Be sure to check out the Winnipeg Fringe Festival (July 16 to 27) for any shows from, by or featuring writers and performers from New Zealand and Australia. While we weren’t able to get a list of shows from down under in time for printing this newsletter, if you know of any, email us to let us know so we can promote them on Facebook and our website.





75years & counting

MEMBER REFLECTIONS AND MEMORIES

During our 75th anniversary dinner back in October 2024, many who attended shared their reflections on and memories about the DUCW. Over the next few issues, we'll share some of those messages — and we also encourage the rest of you to send along your own thoughts to info@downunderclub.mb.ca

About 25+ years ago, I suggested that *The Southern Yarn* could get a bit of a refreshed design, and well, I've been doing it ever since. Our kids have now grown up and started their careers, and our time with the DUCW keeps us connected with fellow Aussies and Kiwis! - **Brian Hydesmith**

I knew Norm Griffiths, and he worked hard at getting me to join the DUCW. While on a bus in downtown Winnipeg, a lady sitting behind me asked if I was Australian. I said, "Yes." She told me that I should join the DUCW. Janet and I eventually did, and we are still here. - **Dennis Woodford**

G'day! My wife and I consider ourselves to be honorary members of the DUCW. Our good friends and House Church members Charles and Judy Powell have been inviting us to your functions for many years now. I've attended quite a few golf tournaments, high teas, chili cook-offs, Christmas parties, pool parties, etc. My wife Nancy and I visited Australia in 2018, and Nancy was there with her Northern Lights Impala Club prior to that. Cheers! - **Terry DeLong**

I have been in Winnipeg 30 years. I found the DUCW from going to Folklorama, and we have been involved ever since. From being the first female President, Membership, and now Vice President, I also started the annual DUCW golf tournament that still runs today. I really enjoyed the early hours rugby game where many members would show up at my home, and also the 24-hour relay run at The Forks, the Dragon Boat race, and the bingo bowl. Many laughs and good times. - **Lynley Davidson**

The late and wonderful Gordon Keatch introduced me to the Club when he and I were attending a curling event in Brandon in the early 1990s. It has been a lovely time, and the DUCW has been like family for us. Our daughters have experienced the warmth of Australian and New Zealand celebrations with you all. Thank you. - **Liz Hydesmith**

I have very fond memories of Robert Vernon and I working on the first Down Under pavilion, with Rob and Lucia Barron as our ambassadors. It was a whirlwind few months, and

we were stunned by the audience response — line-ups around the block the entire week. I still love Rob's Akubra hat that he wore every night. Another favourite memory is celebrating Gordon Keatch's 90th birthday. Since he was a communications expert during WWII, the Club got him a birthday cake with morse code. He took one look and pronounced, "Ah, you're got it upside down, you idiots!" Always made me laugh. - **Jacqueline Cassel-Cramer**

I had so much fun in the Club and meeting great people. And by the way, I'm coming back. - **Dennis Holmes**

Congratulations to you and the three generations of club members! Thanks for all of your work to keep the club vibrant. - **Greg Link**

I have been a member my whole life. I really enjoy the Christmas party and ANZAC Day. I am proud to have been a flag bearer the last two years. - **Owen Davidson**

We have wonderful memories of celebrating Australia at the family Christmas parties. And of course, the amazing support of The Billa-bong. Thank you to you all for your hard work. - **Erin and Pete Keating**

Joined the Club in 1993 due to Folklorama. Met a wonderful group of Kiwis and Aussies, and it was a great connection with home. Many great Club events over the years. All the Folklorama pavilions and two 24-hr relays, and fund-raising events. - **Lucia Barron**

Fond memories of "Folklorama", and now golf tournaments. Great food, great company. 30 years and counting for me. - **Andrew Cobb**

My dad's a Kiwi and I get good food from the Club. - **Aidan Fitt**

One of our very first events was the Paddle-wheel Queen when Aidan was just a baby — 17 years ago. As always, everyone was so friendly!! - **Katrina Epp**

My first Club meeting memory is playing the piano as a little kid and playing with all the plastic toys during the Christmas potluck. - **Tiernan Elson**

After a while in Winnipeg, I found out about the Club online. I'm pretty sure the first night out was a pavlova bake-off, and had a great night meeting everyone. I've been a regular since. - **Toby Elson**

My memories of DUCW events was our first Folklorama pavilion in 1993. The festival was fantastic and topped off by dancing on the table with Lucia. - **Peter Debenham**

Ian and I were introduced to the DUCW by the late Elizabeth Schirmer who invited us to an annual dinner. That's when we met the Munns — the start of a beautiful friendship leading to their visits to us in Melbourne. We have always enjoyed all the activities and we cherish the wonderful friendships. - **Catherine Bowering**

First meeting I had with the DUCW was on a backyard deck in 1976. Gord Keatch, Al Hansen, another whose name I've forgotten, and myself. So, 49 years ago. - **Peter Munn**

I came to Winnipeg in 1965 and am still here meeting lots of great people. - **Pamela Sabourin**

I first got involved when Richard Stockman asked me to help with volunteers for the 1997 Folklorama. Then I was Volunteer Coordinator for the 2000, 2001 and 2004 events. Too bad we can't still do a pavilion — a great way to showcase our unique cultures. - **Charlie Powell**

What a time to being! My first outing with the DUCW is to celebrate your 75th anniversary. Thank you for the warm welcome and the chance to meet you all! - **Pam Rayner Moore**

My fond memory of the Club is when we asked Jenny to sing at a fundraising event for a friend of mine who had cancer. Her entertainment will be forever remembered. Another fond memory is from 2004 when I was the food coordinator for the Australia/New Zealand Folklorama pavilion. It opened my eyes to the culture of Australia. And I made many lasting friendships. - **Joanne Debenham**



- **Violet Vernon**

I would be remiss if I didn't mention one of the people who helped establish the modern DUCW. Sue Gel was an Aussie who moved to Canada around 1990-1991, and prompted the old guard to sponsor a social for the DUCW to attract new members. She has since moved back to Australia, but I think of her fondly and wish her all the best. - **Jacqueline Cassel-Cramer**

What I remember most about my early days in the DUCW is the people — Dennis and Pat Holmes told me about the Club and invited me to a BBQ at their home, Ed and Elaine Clairmont took me under their collective wings, and Gordon Keatch initially led me to Jacqueline Cassel-Cramer (soon-to-be outgoing editor of the Club's newsletter), then to Brian Hydesmith (soon-to-be newsletter designer), and the wider Club membership as we prepared for the 1997 Folklorama Pavilion. It was quite the introduction to what would become a big part of my first 30 years in Winnipeg. - **Jenny Gates**

We joined the DUCW so we could meet people that understand our accent. - **unsigned**

AFLreport

G'day footy fanatics,

As we approach the pointy end of the season, teams are making their claim on a top 8 spot. Nine of the 18 teams are in contention, with five of those clubs locked together on 44 points.

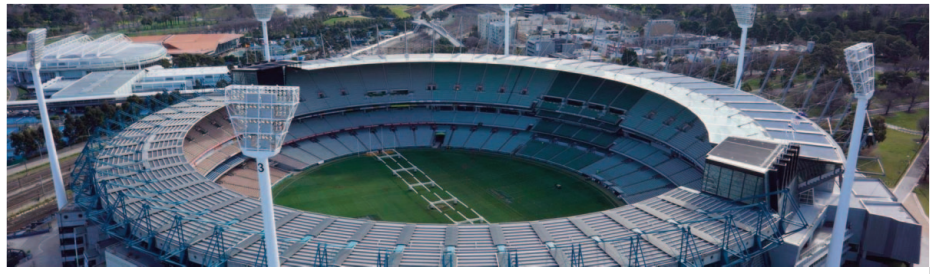
The top two spots are occupied by the past two Premiers, Collingwood and Brisbane. Even though the Magpies sit 6 points clear of the Lions, they let slip a chance to go 10 points up by losing a thriller to Gold Coast by 6 points, ending a nine-game winning streak in round 18. The Suns have been 0-15 when attempting to figure in September action, but by claiming their biggest win of the season, it would take an absolute capitulation in the final six rounds to see them not enter their maiden finals campaign.

Noteworthy among the non-finals aspirers are the once proud and dominant clubs of Carlton, Essendon, and Richmond. While supporter pride still has a pulse at the Bombers and the Tigers, the former due to a season decimated by injury and the latter still basking in the glory of three flags in 2017, 2019 and 2020, it is Carlton who have not given their fans anything to crow about since their 1995 flag. Considering these teams have combined for 45 premierships and have produced countless champion footballers, it is indicative of the changing of the AFL landscape since the millennium began.

The growth of the sport in non-Victorian states has produced an evenness across the competition. This has allowed the sport to thrive in non-traditional markets, with Tasmania set to play in what will truly be a national competition. The AFL will be the only professional Australian sporting code to field at least one team in each of the seven states.

Last on the docket is the increased incidents of umpire contact by certain players not willing to change the manner in which they go about their footy. In particular is Gold Coast star Matt Rowell who has been fined four times this season for making contact with an official. The nominal fines, likely picked up by the Suns, have not been enough of a deterrent to Rowell to change his playing style. Further, Rowell uses the umpire as a screen – or pick in basketball lingo – in order to break free of his immediate opponent.

The League stepped in with rule changes when Hawthorn employed rushed behinds to steal the 2008 flag from the Cats. The AFL also quickly inserted a rule when Collingwood



The Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). Photo provided.

took advantage of unlimited interchanges to maximize Dane Swan's ability to play in bursts of brilliance and claim the 2010 flag.

Since there are only a handful of repeat offenders consistently contacting umpires, the time has come to start suspending players using the "3 strike rule", with their third offence resulting in a one game suspension. I would go further and make it a cumulative career long tally, with subsequent infringements after their third strike costing them a game each time contact occurs.

Umpire contact, especially since it occurs most of the time during a stoppage ball up, is almost 100% avoidable. Players are able to somehow miraculously avoid each other in an attempt to not be tackled. And they can

avoid runners delivering water and coach's instructions. Therefore, avoiding any of the four field umpires should not cause undo upset in how most players approach the game.

The AFL has done an excellent job in the area of protecting players from unnecessary harm in a sport full of contact and upwards of 150 tackles laid per game. It is time to protect the umpires accordingly and acknowledge their importance when doing an extremely difficult job for no glory or recognition. Without them, there is no footy. FULL STOP!

- Michael J. Workman

American Redstart, and others

We saw fewer songbirds come through this past spring and early summer. Something must be going on, somewhere, as it is quite unusual!

One bright little rare visitor that did show up was the **American Redstart** – flitting around the yard, bug collecting. Reminded me of the Willy Wagtail.

Happily, a pair of **American Goldfinch** is nesting nearby and visit our feeder daily.

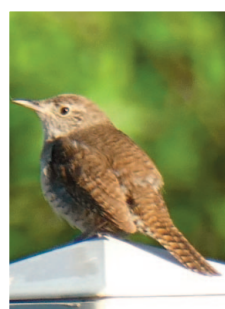
Also, I learned something new about the **Purple Finch**. The resident pair were feeding in the lawn, and I saw the female nibbling at the dandelion white seed-head buds (the way they are before they completely open out to the spherical wind-launcher). I assume that it is either part of their diet, or she was collecting it for nest enhancement.

And speaking of nests, it was gratifying to discover that our annual **House Wren** returnee is, this year, making use of a nesting site I made using a tin-can and installed under the garden shed eave. This after it was doubtful there would be need of a nest! He was calling constantly for a couple of weeks before apparently a willing female arrived.

Lastly, on a recent camping stay at Selkirk, a walk along one of the birding trails, by the Selkirk Slough, resulted in a good look at a **Great Blue Heron** and a **Bald Eagle**, both taking advantage of the seclusion of that area.

Photos, from top:
American Redstart,
purple finches,
wren net and house wren,
great blue heron,
bald eagle.

Photos by Charlie Powell.



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THE DOWN UNDER
CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

Station Main, PO Box 1655,
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