

The Southern Yarn

September-October 2025

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

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. 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 to confirm your attendance if you have not already done so.

OCTOBER

Annual Not-So-Formal Dinner Saturday October 18, 6:00 pm Bailey's Restaurant

You are invited to our ever-popular less-than-formal dinner. If you are definitely or even possibly interested in attending, please email us at info@downunderclub.mb.ca by Tuesday Sept 30.

NOVEMBER

Annual General Meeting Friday November 28, 7:00 pm Munn's Residence 86 Clonard St, Winnipeg

A homely venue to entice you out to our AGM. Join us at the home of Peter and Margaret Munn for a comfy meeting where we'll look back at the year that was and see what's in store for the year ahead. We will be electing our executive for 2026, and invite you to consider standing for a role. We welcome your ideas and suggestions, so come along, make a difference, and enjoy snacks and drinks.

DECEMBER

Family Christmas Party Sunday December 7, 4:00 pm Scandinavian Cultural Centre

A wonderful event for families and friends! More info in the next issue of the Yarn, but kids of all ages are encouraged to attend.



July in the Pool

The pool party at Lynley's home turned out way better than it could have.

The weather cleared just in time, we were joined by Pat McGrath and sons Zane and Matt who were in for a visit from NZ, most of the 12 attendees took to the pool, Ryan expertly managed the barbequing for us, potluck was delicious, and as always, Lynley and family were excellent hosts.

The conversation never stopped, and it was a delight to see everyone. We definitely missed several of the regulars, but it was a fabulous event in every possible way.

August on the Links

This year's six intrepid golfers braved the elements and called the weather's bluff. We drove our Tee-shots into it and it retreated. There was even a brief burst of blue sky.

The two teams played best ball and there were bragging rights for longest drive and closest to the pin. If you catch Peter Debenham bragging, it's because he achieved the double! Together with Peter Munn and Ricky, Peter D managed fewer strokes than the Andrew C., Terry D. and Charlie P. team.

All enjoyed the comradery and celebrated after with a lunch in the clubhouse restaurant.

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.



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editorially yours

Charlie Powell



We recently had a road trip to Cleveland, Ohio, and enjoyed some great sights, sites and scenery going and coming. But in all seven states through which we passed, smoky skies reminded us of the northern Manitoba bushfires.

Over 2 million hectares are affected, making them the worst on record. Which is why it was heartening to learn of the assistance from Kiwi and Aussie firefighting teams [July 13, 2025]:

“Fire and Emergency New Zealand deployed an additional 43-person taskforce to Manitoba, Canada, to bolster the local response to more than 500 actives wildfires currently burning in the region.

“This deployment is in addition to the seven firefighters who left New Zealand on Wednesday. As wildfires continue to burn across Canada it is important that New Zealand supports the firefighting efforts by Canadian crews,” said Minister of Internal Affairs, Brooke van Velden. [Link].

“An initial contingent of 96 Australian personnel from NSW, WA and Victoria are supporting Canada’s fire suppression operations in Alberta. They have arrived in Edmonton for briefings and will travel to the fires on 12 June, commencing a 35-day deployment.

“The personnel will fill Incident Management Team, arduous crew, and deployment manager roles. The deployment continues a strong resource sharing relationship between AFAC NRSC and CIFFC, and international support and collaboration between the two countries.” [Link]

Thanks to Katrina Epp for sending her travel news (p.3). Her mention of Kea sightings during her family visit in NZ brought to mind my encounter with one back in ’74 and prompted this issue’s Birds I view subject (p.8).

Enjoy the write up about Her Excellency Kate Logan’s visit to Winnipeg (p.6), Michael’s AFL column (p.7), and welcome to the Tundra (p.5).

Thanks also to Jenny for her many contributions in this issue and, as always, our advertisers and readers.

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



While writing this, I am sitting in Vancouver Airport for a few hours with Margaret awaiting a flight down under. We will be in OZ for September, visiting family and different friends we had met on our travels many years ago. There is a small chance I may have a real pie or two. And as we will be in Melbourne when AFL finals are on, hopefully I can get to the “G” for a game. Being in that stadium with 90,000 plus of your nearest friends probably beats the emotion of lions vs gladiators at the Coliseum.

Everyone who has travelled has stories of things that went wrong. Our preboarding indicated our seats in row 62. So, I looked at a seat plan of a Boeing 777ER, our usual

plane on this journey. Hmm. Seat rows ended at row 60. Perhaps we were in the single seats indicated at the very back? Nope, that’s the washrooms, and that would explain the cheap fares!

Then I looked up the airline’s fleet details, and they did fly an extended version of the 777ER, with many extra rows, including row 62. So all is well, and it’s almost time to board.

We had a great time meeting with the new Australian High Commissioner, “just call me Kate”, and there will be more info about that elsewhere in the Yarn.

Regards,
Peter

Did you know ...

Uluru (Ayers Rock) is not the biggest rock in the world. Mount Augustus in Western Australia is two and a half times bigger. Also known as **Burringurrah**, it rises 858 metres (2,815 feet) and is longer than 8 km. It is also a true monolith – a single piece of rock. [Source: The Book of General Ignorance, John Lloyd and John Mitchinson, 2006]



How about a stopover?

Downunder Travel has some great Airfares to NZ and Australia.

Stop over options like Fiji (pictured here), Tahiti or South East Asia, or even stop within Aust or NZ.

A Stop like this can make for a more rounded trip next time you visit your family back home.

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NEW ZEALAND 2025

by Katrina Epp

Our trip started in Queenstown with a side trip through the stunning Fiordland National Park and Milford Sound. Jetlag aside, the five-hour bus ride (each way) was well worth the trip and we even saw several Kea!

We got fairly lucky with the Queenstown winter weather and missed most of the rain. After putting on a few layers, we enjoyed the waterfront and quaint shops. A favourite restaurant was Devil Burger where we avoided long lines at other joints and enjoyed juicy burgers and curry fries two nights in a row. A highlight for Aidan was a few hours skiing with his friend at Coronet Peak.

A short flight then took us up to Wellington, where we spent much needed time with Les' mum. We also took in many sights and a lot of walking. Wellington always delights with seals (in winter), *Lord of the Rings* sights, beautiful coastal views, and endless cafés. A standard phrase is "You can't beat Wellington on a good day" and this is definitely true. It wasn't all sun, however, and the cold, rainy days led us to museums, shopping, and even a movie at Peter Jackson's Roxy Theatre. We all loved a day trip to Castlepoint where a beautiful, sunny day gave way to more stunning views of the ocean and a lighthouse. Of course, we could not forget to mention our friends, and we enjoyed many visits, including with DUCW member, Penny Hooper!

Next on the list was the Volcanic Loop Highway through Tongariro National Park with Mount Ngauruhoe (a.k.a. Mount Doom) in our sights, and a stop at Tawhai Falls to see Gollum's Pool. This brought us to Taupo with a relaxing spa at Wairakei Terraces before night's end. The next day we saw dams, waterfalls and geothermal sights en route to Rotorua, which provided more entertainment with the gondola, luge, and night tree walk.

From there we made our way to sub-tropical Northland, where more winter weather seemed to follow us and we wondered, "Why the rain and where are the tropics?" Unfortunately, we were disappointed when bus trips to Cape Reinga and Ninety Mile Beach were cancelled, which also meant Aidan and his friend were unable to go boogie-boarding down the sand dunes. Sometimes, though, you make lemonade out of lemons and we changed tack and headed to the amazing



Top: Katrina, Aidan and Les at Remutaka Summit Lookout, overlooking the Remutaka Range in lower North Island. Left: Aidan walking down the track overlooking Breaker Bay, Wellington. Right: Les, Katrina and Penny in Wellington.

Kawiti Glowworm Caves. We were also able to take in the All Blacks vs Argentina at the local pub.

Finally the weather cleared and we hit two days of sunshine with a balmy high of 17 degrees. Bring on the T-shirts! We visited some nearby towns, and hoped to see dol-

phins on a boat tour, but it was not to be. We spent one night in Auckland before catching our flight home.

One thing about New Zealand is that every turn, you think it can't get more beautiful ... and then it does. We, especially Les, are always sad to leave. See you next time, NZ!

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Howzat?!

1. **Fastest to 150 ODI wickets** – Mitchell Starc reached 150 wickets in just 77 ODIs during the 2019 World Cup, the quickest ever.
2. **Highest T20I score in an innings** – Aaron Finch scored a record 172 runs off 76 balls vs Zimbabwe in 2018, the highest individual T20I score.
3. **Only team with 10 ICC trophies** – Australia have won 10 ICC titles, including 6 World Cups, making them the only team with a double-digit tally.
4. **Most consecutive matches as Test captain** – Allan Border led Australia in 93 consecutive Tests (1984–1994), a captaincy streak still unbeaten.
5. **Most double-centuries in a calendar year** – Michael Clarke smashed 4 double-centuries in 2012, averaging 106.33. No player has matched his tally till date.



NZ store in Polo Park [Photo: Jenny Gates]

NEW ARRIVAL

In July of this year, New Zealand's iconic

Drop bears

The Drop Bear legend tells of a large, arboreal, predatory marsupial related to the Koala that 'drops' on its prey.

Identification

Around the size of a leopard or very large dog with coarse orange fur and some darker mottled patterning (as seen in most Koalas). The creature is told as a heavily built animal with powerful forearms for climbing and holding on to



prey. It lacks canines, using broad powerful premolars as biting tools instead.

Habitat

Closed canopy forest as well as open woodland on

the margins of dense forest. Never encountered near roads or human habitation.

Distribution

Drop Bears can be found in the densely forested regions of the Great Dividing Range in south-eastern Australia. However, there are also some reports of them from south-east South Australia, Mount Lofty Ranges and Kangaroo Island.



menswear brand Rodd & Gunn landed in Winnipeg at the Polo Park Shopping Mall. Founded in 1946, the manufacturer of clothing, footwear and accessories has a reputation for crafting timeless garments that are made to last. For more info, check them out in Shop 0257 on the 2nd floor of the mall.

WHO KNEW!?

Pamela Stephenson, a.k.a. Lady Connolly, is a New Zealand-born Australian and British psychologist, writer, actress and comedian.

In 1953, Pamela moved with her family from Takapuna, Auckland, to Sydney, Australia, where she studied at the National Institute of Dramatic Art. After playing several stage and television roles, Stephenson emigrated to the UK in 1976. Following a successful career in acting and comedy, she switched to a career in psychology, penned *Billy* – the biography of her husband Billy Connolly – as well as several other books, and in 2005, she took a year-long sailing voyage that followed the route of Robert Louis Stevenson. The journey was documented in a 4-part series as well as a book.

Pamela and Billy now live in Florida.

Quite an auspicious life journey that began in the Auckland suburb of Takapuna.

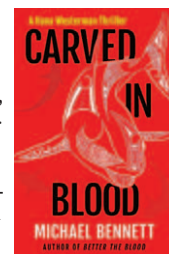


WATCH THIS!

Currently available on Netflix, Australian smash hit "Fisk" cleaned up at the 2025 Logie Awards – Best Scripted Comedy Program, Best Lead Actress in a Comedy for Kitty Flanagan, Best Lead Actor in a Comedy for Aaron Chen, Best Supporting Actress for Julia Zemiro, and Best Supporting Actor for Glenn Butcher. Seasons 1 to 3 are now on Netflix.

READ THIS!

Reviewed by the inimitable Nick Martin in the August 30, 2025 edition of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, "Carved in Blood" is the third superb Hana Westerman police procedural by New Zealand author Michael Bennett who, like Westerman, is Māori. It's a whodunit, and indeed a terrific one, [and] there are subplots galore. Michael Bennett books aren't easy. But oh my, they are good."



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Happy 100th birthday, dear Tess!

On Tuesday September 2nd, our friend and fellow DUCW member Tess Shelton celebrated her 100th birthday with her beloved family in Vancouver, BC. The DUCW sent Tess flowers and a card on behalf of our members, which by all accounts made her day. We were very happy to celebrate your special day all the way from Winnipeg, Tess, and we loved seeing you with flowers and family as you celebrated your 100th birthday. Love and hugs from us all.



Tess with flowers sent by the DUCW. Tess with Jordan, her grandson (top). Tess with Raffaele, another grandson. Tess with birthday greetings from King Charles and Queen Camilla.

Staying in touch with daily life for 3 months, 15 hours apart

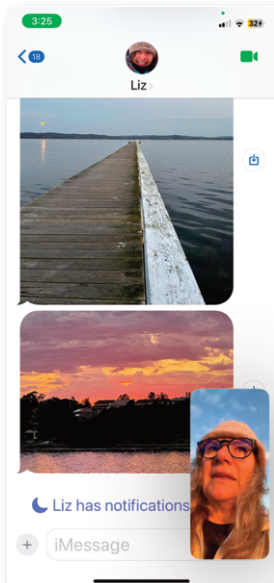
Maintaining connections between our lives here in Canada and our Australian / New Zealand lives will always have its challenges, but in many ways, it has never been easier.

Liz and I Hydesmith have been reminded of this since June, as Liz has been in Australia for an extended stay, visiting and helping with some family matters. Back in Winnipeg, Eliza, Tannis and I have found the small overlapping waking hours can engage modern but common technology to enrich this connection time. Whether from home or going about our respective activities, we send images and text messages to be looked at when convenient, and increasingly use livestream digital audio or video, mostly through our mobile phones to catch up and visit.

Liz might call back to Canada while she is out on a Thursday walk in the Australian winter rain, 15 hours ahead of me, when I am paddling along the LaSalle River on a summer Wednesday evening.

And kudos to DownUnder Travel

Liz and I went through Jason at DUT this time for her flights, and he was helpful organising the connections to Newcastle, NSW, via Bris-



Liz Hydesmith has been with her mum Gloria since the middle of June at Long Jetty on NSW's Central Coast. She captured the recent lunar eclipse over the jetty that coincided with a lovely sunrise, livestreaming it with family back in Canada from her mobile!

bane, wrangling the unforeseen Air Canada strike issues, extending her stay, and even changing the destination to Toronto.

It was comforting to know that we did not have to navigate all those issues ourselves, leaving it instead to a professional who is committed to solving any problems, and even getting us the best price possible.

Buying travel online seems easy enough these days, but with airlines competing with one another on price by limiting their serv-

es into a minefield of tricks, and then leaving you high and dry if you didn't choose the right options... Not the way for anyone to travel.

Dealing with airlines and all those websites, systems, offers, points, and various arrangements can be stressful enough on its own. It's nice to know you've got an agent to cut through all that stuff for you. Definitely worth it.

— Brian and Liz Hydesmith



75years
&counting

Welcoming Australian High Commissioner Kate Logan

On Thursday August 28, members of the DUCW joined several MLAs and other invited guests to welcome to Manitoba Her Excellency Kate Logan, High Commissioner of Australia to Canada.

Manitoba Chief of Protocol Brad Robertson organised the event, complete with Vegemite and Tim Tams, sandwiches and beverages, and we gathered in the magnificent Rotunda at the Manitoba Legislative Building.

Introductions and conversations saw us connect with members and friends of the DUCW, as well as Honourable Renée Cable, Minister of Advanced Education, and MLA Rachelle Schott, Member for Kildonan-River East, who read out our members statement in the House back in May [see page 3 in the document linked to the QR code]. Several members of the Manitoba Consular Corps were also in attendance, including Fernando Aguilar, Consul General of El Salvador in Winnipeg, and UK Honorary Consul Dwight MacAulay.

It was an excellent opportunity to get to know the High Commissioner, especially on the occasion of her visit to Manitoba in this our 75th year.



L-R:
Renée Cable,
Rachelle
Schott, Kate
Logan, Peter
Munn and
Jenny Gates.



L-R:
Dwight
Macaulay,
Brad Robert-
son and
Fernando
Aguilar.



L-R:
Brian Hyde-
smith, Kate
Logan and
Peter Munn.



AFLreport

G'day Footy Fanatics,

After 207 home and away matches, September is here, which means we are entering the pointy end of the year — FINALS FOOTY!! And it took until match 207 to decide who would compete for this year's premiership, with Gold Coast emphatically belting Essendon in the last game of the season to claim 7th spot.

The Suns also made history by securing their first ever September appearance since entering the competition in 2011. Original Sun David Swallow waited 247 games to make his finals debut against Fremantle, and what a debut it was. Swallow managed to kick the winning point in an excruciatingly close match to break a 79-a-piece scoreline to see the Suns through to the second round.

As sweet as this was for the Suns champion, it was devastating for Freo champion Nat Fyfe who was chaired off after playing his final game for the Dockers. Fyfe is a certain Hall of Famer with two Brownlow

Medals and numerous All Australians and club best and fairest on his 248-game footy CV.

The other teams to qualify for September action in order from 1 to 8 were Adelaide, Geelong, Brisbane, Collingwood, Greater Western Sydney and Hawthorn. Along with the Suns moving on to round 2, the Hawks scuttled the Giants' season by going up to Sydney and taking care of GWS by 19 points. Geelong easily saw off last year's premieres Brisbane by 38 points.

In the upset of week 1, the Magpies went to Adelaide and defeated the Crows by 24 points, relegating this year's minor premiers to a cut-throat final versus Hawthorn in week 2. With their victories, the Pies and Cats secured a spot in week 3's preliminary final round, with the winner booking a spot in the Grand Final.

One last note that stung the competition as a whole in Round 23 was the use of a homophobic slur by Adelaide's Izaak Rankine against a Collingwood player. The AFL has been strict with its policy on verbal abuse of this nature and handed Rankine a 4-game sus-

pension. It was the 5th such suspension for using language not acceptable toward another player, with the previous four offenders suspended for three to five games respectively.

Along with verbal racial abuse, the AFL have stood firm on its zero tolerance of verbal abuse of any kind. Due to the Crows week 1 finals loss, Rankine would be available to play in the grand final should Adelaide make it that far. For his part, Rankine has shown remorse and unreservedly apologised for his comments.

That said, the fact that he used a homophobic slur as a go-to sledge against another player is troubling, and this misstep will follow him for the rest of his career. My hope is that this is the last of this kind of verbal jousting as it has no place in footy or in society as a whole. This footy fan would be okay with returning to the days of "your mother wears army boots" as a preferred sledge. While it might not be woke, at least it's funny and could be viewed as a compliment if a player's mom was a current servicewoman.

— Michael J. Workman



Welcome to the Tundra!

A few months ago, I spied a cartoon featuring a familiar Aussie icon in the renowned Tundra comic strip series currently running in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. And that led to an email communique with cartoonist Chad Carpenter.

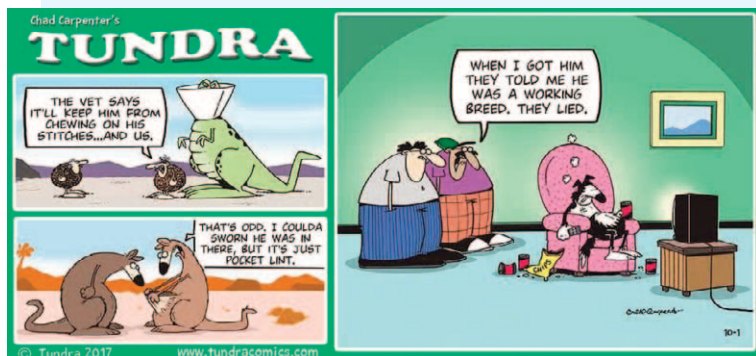
I was hoping we might be able to run that cartoon and any other down-under themed strips in our newsletter, and to my surprise and delight, Chad said yes. He even extended that offer to use any of their cartoons in our newsletter – with all due credit, of course.

So, next month, we'll include the initial cartoon I saw, and one in every issue after that. Not all will be down-under themed, but all will be funny. And in this issue, we've included a teaser, used with permission from the cartoonist.

If you're not familiar with Tundra, a quick look at the Facebook pages and YouTube channel (links in the QR codes) reveals a number of interesting facts and figures:

- Tundra runs in almost 650 newspapers throughout the US, Canada, Europe, and even Jamaica and Trinidad.
- In May 2008, Chad was presented with the Reuben Award for "Best Newspaper Panel" by the National Cartoonist Society.
- Tundra has become the most successful self-syndicated newspaper comic in history. Proof that moose jokes travel.
- It's one of the fastest growing newspaper comic strips in the galaxy!
- And the Tundra Empire has grown to include 28 different books, many years of calendars, dozens of shirt designs, many different note cards, mouse pads, bumper stickers, and a whole lot of other TUNDRA paraphernalia.

Enjoy!
jenny





Female kea feeding chick.

Credit: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/birds/birds-a-z/kea/>

birds*i*view

by Charlie Powell

This native parrot is a taonga for Ngāi Tahu and Ngā iwi o Te Taihū (northern South Island iwi) and valued by New Zealanders as an icon of the outdoors.

According to the (NZ) Department of Conservation / Te Papa Atawhai, the endangered kea is one of the most intelligent birds in the world. This unique problem-solving parrot was crowned Bird of the Year in 2017. The population is estimated to be only 1,000–5,000 and they are found mostly in alpine and forested environments of the South Island.

Predation, human impacts including lead poisoning, deliberate killing, and accidents with man-made items such as cars are their major threats. Kea are particularly vulnerable because they nest in cavities on the ground that are easy to find and get into. They also spend lots of time on the ground exploring and foraging for food, which puts them at risk.

Stoats are the primary predators of kea,

and feral cats are also a major threat, particularly in eastern South Island areas where cat populations make incursions into kea habitat. Possums are known to prey on kea and disturb nests, and rats have also occasionally been observed preying on kea eggs.

The kea is capable of turning on water taps, locking people inside toilets, using tools to set off stoat traps to get the eggs, and having a tug-of-war with a cat over a rabbit carcass.

The bird's inquisitive and explorative behaviour can cause conflict with people, and damage to property especially around campsites and carparks. My only encounter with kea was while on a road trip in '74. I was stopped with other traffic waiting for our turn to drive across a single lane bridge. Ahead of me was an older bus that still had wooden window framework, and several kea were ripping into it in a very destructive way – Woody Woodpeckerish! When I find the photo, I'll share it.

Despite being illegal to do so, kea are still being shot – and I can understand why!



Getting out into nature

Brian Hydesmith takes Chester his Australian shepherd Chester on weekly paddle excursions up the La Salle River from La Barriere Park south of Winnipeg. It is remarkable how easily we can access a peaceful bit of nature. Lots of bird watching opportunities en route, too!



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