

The Southern Yarn

September – October 2026

NEWSLETTER OF THE DOWN UNDER CLUB OF WINNIPEG INC.

downundercalendar

OCTOBER 2026

Annual Not-So-Formal Dinner
Saturday October 24, 6:00 pm
Bailey's Restaurant
185 Lombard Ave

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 **Wednesday Sept 30**. Be sure to invite a friend, or two.

NOVEMBER 2026

Annual General Meeting
Friday November 27, 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 2027 and invite you to consider standing for a role. These days, roles and responsibilities are shared, making them much less onerous. We welcome your ideas and suggestions, so come along, help make a difference, and enjoy snacks and drinks.

DECEMBER 2026

Family Christmas Party
Sunday December 6, 4:00 pm
Scandinavian Cultural Centre
764 Erin Street, Winnipeg

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.

2027

Australia Day and Waitangi Day
Saturday January 30
Scandinavian Cultural Centre
764 Erin Street, Winnipeg

More info in the next issue of the *Yarn*.



Pool Party & Golf Tournament

Pool party: Thanks again to Lynley, Ryan and Owen for hosting the pool party and BBQ on July 26th. The weather made the pool inviting and most took advantage of it. Plenty of burgers, hot dogs, salads, pasta, cakes and beverages ensured an all-round bonza afternoon.

Golf Tournament: Couldn't have asked for a better day for it! A great day was enjoyed by the 15 members and guests who came out to The Players Course in late August to participate in the Down Under Club's annual Golf Tournament. Now that we play a best ball for-

mat as teams, it is an enjoyable way for the casual golfers in the group to spend 2 hours on the course.

At the end of the day, it was Team Debenham, consisting of Peter and Tim Debenham, and friends Arnie and Dorothy Kleiber, who took first place. At the other end of the rankings was the three generations of Team Munn/Somers, Peter, Jodi and 10-year-old long driver Graham. Prizes to all players were presented at Chrissea's Restaurant over the water after the game.

Consider joining us next year. We are aiming for 20 golfers, and you are invited.

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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email: info@downunderclub.mb.ca

editorially yours

Charlie Powell



Like it or loathe it, AI is here to stay. I've had occasion to dabble with it recently and I have to say I've been impressed! So, I thought I would share an example with you *Yarn* readers and let you be the judge – comments, cautions and kudos are welcome.

I simply asked Copilot to “create a funny Australian ‘bush yarn’ involving a swagman (swaggie) and his dog, named ‘bluey’, and a salesman from the city (big smoke)”. Within 5 seconds it gave me what you see on p.4! Then, seemingly proud of itself, it offered me the following: “If you want, I can spin you another yarn — maybe with a rogue emu, a dodgy pub, or a mysterious esky that never runs out of beer.” Stay tuned ...

The rest of the content in this issue is just the result of hard-slog-journalism by yours truly and those others who have kindly contributed – or is it ...??? Learn about the Gimli Glider, Māori royalty, kindred clubs, Dusty Mick and Bluey and lots more to inform and entertain. Thanks to Peter, Jenny, Brian, Judy, Terry and our advertisers.

president's ramblings

Peter Munn



It has been sunny and warm for most of the past month – perfect weather to read a book in the backyard anytime between 3:00pm and dusk. A cool frostie also adds to the ambience.

On many days, I have company, with a younger territorial squirrel chirping at me to get lost, while 2 rabbits, with 00/00 eyesight, totally ignore me while chomping away on grass, and birdseed pecked out of the feeder by discriminating sparrows.

A month or more ago, these rabbits almost became rabbits well done with an accompanying white sauce. They decided to

nibble at my emerging carrot tops in a small vegetable bed. So I decided to build my version of the Rabbit Proof Fence. Just 1,999.99 kilometres shorter than the original in WA. Didn't work too well, though. It kept the rabbits out, as well me, and so the weeds took over. Oh well, next year's crop will be better.

Have a great Autumn. Only Humpty Dumpty has a Great Fall.

Peter



Royal recognition

On September 3rd, 2026, the Bank of Canada unveiled its design for the new \$20 bill. It has been more than 70 years since a new monarch appeared on a Canadian bank note. And this is Canada's first bank note to feature the portrait of His Majesty King Charles III, following his succession to the throne after the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. As the future Queen, eight-year-old Princess Elizabeth was depicted on a Canadian bank note for the first time in 1935 on the Bank's inaugural \$20 note. You can check out all the design elements, including enhanced security, online.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting** of members of the Down Under Club of Winnipeg, Inc. will be held on **Friday November 27, 7:00 pm**, at 86 Clonard (Munn's residence) in Winnipeg.

Election: All Club members in good standing are eligible to put their names forward for any position on the Board: President — Vice President — Treasurer — Secretary — Social Coordinator — Membership — Newsletter Editor.

For more information on board positions, if you would like your name to stand for one of the board positions, or have any other questions, please contact Peter Munn at **204-237-1805**.

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Poppins QLD?

Did you that the story of Mary Poppins began in Queensland?

Author P.L. Travers was born in Maryborough, making this charming heritage town the birthplace of one of the world's most beloved literary characters. The annual Mary Poppins Festival returned to Maryborough on 5 July 2026.

This free family-friendly event celebrated the legacy of P.L. Travers, the author of the Mary Poppins books, and features a wide range of activities, including nanny races, the grand parade, chimney sweeping challenges, live entertainment, street food, market stalls, rides, and pavement art.

Festival-goers are encouraged to dress in Mary Poppins-themed costumes and participate in events such as the costume competition and the Australian Book of Records attempt for the largest gathering of people dressed as Mary Poppins characters.



The pink flannel flower *Actinotus forsythii* blooming following bushfires. (iNaturalist, waterworks90, CC BY-NC 4.0)

Wildly amazing ... [pic in Dropbox]

Out of a group of 10 native flowering plants, the **flannel flower** has been crowned Australia's most amazing wildflower for National Science Week 2026. The devastating bushfires of the 2020 Black Summer resulted in them blooming in places where they hadn't been seen in years. Check out the photos here:

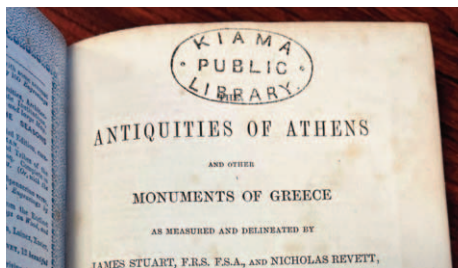


Fanny Cochrane Smith

(Fanny Cochrane Smith, née **Cochrane**; December 1834 – 24 February 1905) was an Aboriginal Tasmanian (Palawa) woman considered to be the last fluent speaker of an Aboriginal Tasmanian language. Born at the Wybalenna Aboriginal Establishment in 1834, she married in 1854 and spent much of her life in Port Cygnet. She attracted fame due to claims that she was the last surviving “full-blooded” Aboriginal Tasmanian, and was subjected to studies and public debate over her Aboriginal identity. She also became known for her public performances of Aboriginal songs.

In 1899 and 1903 Smith recorded songs on wax cylinders, producing the only known recordings by a fluent speaker of an Aboriginal Tasmanian language. These recordings are held by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and were added to the Australian Memory of the World Register in 2017. Many members of Tasmania's present-day Aboriginal community are descended from Smith.

[Source: Wikipedia] Read more:



A page of the book *Antiquities of Athens*, stamped by a library, is shown on Thursday after its return in Kiama, Australia, an estimated 150 years late. (Catherine Taylor/The Associated Press)

Late return

[Source: CBC news & Associated Press, 30Jul2026] An Australian public library has had a book returned an estimated 150 years late and has no way of tracking down the errant borrower, a librarian said on Thursday.

The book *Antiquities of Athens*, published in 1858, was returned to the library in the seaside town of Kiama last week by a man who had found it during recent home renovations inside a tea crate bricked into a sealed fireplace, Kiama Library manager Michelle Hudson said.

“We’ve never had anything that old come back to us,” Hudson said.

The late return fine would be around 28,000 Australian dollars (\$27,450 Cdn), allowing for inflation, Hudson said. That was calculated on the British three pence-a-week overdue fee that was printed on the inside cover of the book, along with a list of rules that applied when the library opened in 1872.

But Hudson said there was no way of tracing the final borrower who had accrued the debt. The library journal from the 1870s that recorded who borrowed a book and when had been lost.



NZNews

Kiwi Updates

Paddling across Canada ... it's the people, eh?

Tom Hudson is a New Zealander who for a couple of years now has been canoeing across Canada. You can watch a Youtube interview here, called *Journeying across Canada by Canoe* and you will get a better idea of his surprising discovery than can be explained here.



Māori royalty in New Zealand centres on the *Kīngitanga*, a Māori monarchy established in 1858 to unify iwi and protect land. Today, it remains a **symbolic, non-constitutional institution** with cultural and political influence but **no legal governmental power**. The movement's current sovereign is **Kuini Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō**, crowned in **September 2024**, becoming the eighth monarch and just the second Queen.

The Māori monarch continues to serve as a **paramount chief for several iwi**, especially within Tainui, and plays a significant role in Māori cultural events, unity efforts, and advocacy. While not all iwi participate in the *Kīngitanga*, it remains one of the **longest-standing Māori political institutions** and a respected symbol of identity and leadership. See more here: New Zealand: Māori queen crowned as her father is buried.



The Swaggie, Bluey, and the Bloke from the Big Smoke

So there's this old swaggie named *Dusty Mick*, been wandering the backroads longer than most folks have been alive. His best mate is Bluey — a scruffy red heeler who's convinced he's the smartest creature in the Southern Hemisphere. Bluey's the sort of dog who'll chase a kangaroo, a cloud, or his own tail with equal enthusiasm.

One blistering arvo, Dusty Mick and Bluey are camped under a gum tree, billy on, Mick having a yarn with Bluey like the dog's the local mayor. Out of nowhere, a shiny white SUV rolls up — the kind that's never seen a dirt road in its life. Out steps a bloke from the big smoke, wearing a suit so sharp it could slice a tomato.

"G'day!" the salesman says, brushing dust off his shiny shoes like it's toxic. "I'm Trevor from CityTech Solutions. I'm here to demonstrate our new state-of-the-art portable hydration system."

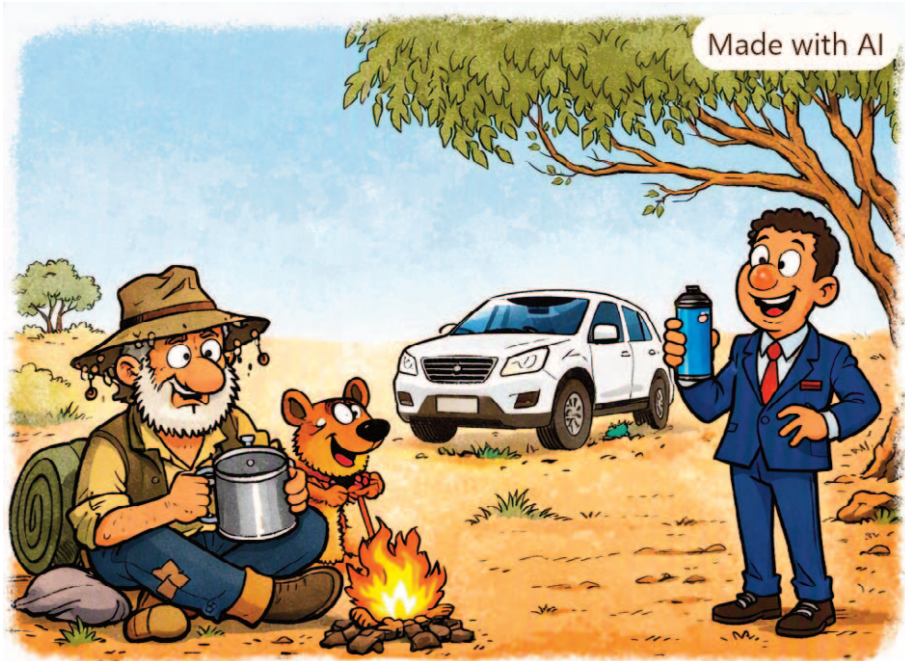
Dusty Mick squints. "You mean... a water bottle?"

Trevor beams. "Not just a water bottle! This one has *smart sensors, hydration analytics, and a Bluetooth-enabled lid.*"

Bluey growls. He doesn't trust anything with Bluetooth. Last time he saw a drone, he tried to herd it.

Trevor continues, "It's only \$299.99, and it'll revolutionize your outdoor lifestyle."

Dusty Mick scratches his beard. "Mate, I've already got a hydration system." He lifts



his battered tin billy. "Cost me five quid in 1978. Still works."

Trevor laughs nervously. "Well, does it track your daily water intake?"

Mick shrugs. "Yeah. I drink it. Then it's gone. That's the tracking."

Bluey barks once, like he's saying *checkmate*.

Trevor, desperate now, tries another angle. "This bottle also syncs with your phone."

Mick looks at Bluey. "You hear that? Syncs with me phone."

Bluey tilts his head.

Mick leans in. "Mate... I haven't had phone reception since Dubbo."

Trevor's confidence is melting faster than an ice block in January. He tries one last pitch. "It also has a self-cleaning mode!"

Mick grins. "So does Bluey. He rolls in the creek."

Bluey, proud of himself, immediately rolls in the dust.

Trevor gives up, trudges back to his SUV, and drives off — leaving a cloud of dust and a faint smell of city disappointment.

Dusty Mick pours himself a cuppa and pats Bluey. "Well, Bluey, reckon we just saved ourselves three hundred quid."

Bluey barks twice — which Mick interprets as "*Too right.*"

And they settle back under the gum tree, the billy boiling, the bush quiet again... except for Bluey chasing a leaf he's convinced is up to no good.

— Created by Microsoft Copilot (AI) using prompts from the *Yarn* Editor

40yearsAgo

Casting a few decades back



Air Canada Flight 143 was a scheduled domestic passenger flight between Montreal

and Edmonton. On July 23, 1983, the Boeing 767 servicing the route ran out of fuel mid-

way through the flight. The fuel gauge was not operating, and the plane's tanks had been underfilled because of an incorrect calculation. The flight crew successfully glided the aircraft from an altitude of 41,000 feet (12,500 m) to an emergency landing at a former Royal Canadian Air Force base in Gimli, Manitoba, which had been converted to a racetrack, Gimli Motorsports Park. The landing caused no serious injuries to passengers or persons on the ground, and only

minor damage to the aircraft. The aircraft was repaired and remained in service until its retirement in 2008. This unusual aviation accident earned the aircraft the nickname "Gimli Glider". The photo is of a mural, painted by Dave McNabb in 2008, on the Gimli seawall. Read more details of why there was a fuel shortage and how the pilot was just the right person to pull off such a safe landing, here.



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Famous New Zealanders

In the early 2000's the weekly television program, *New Zealand's Top 100 History Makers*, had a panel rank 430 famous New Zealanders. The top three were: Ernest Rutherford (1871–1937) – physicist; Kate Sheppard (1848–1934) – suffragist; and Sir Edmund Hillary (1919–2008) – mountaineer and explorer.

Sir Keith Park (1892–1975) – air chief marshal – came in at No. 32. Link: New Zealand's Top 100 History Makers - Wikipedia

Air Chief Marshal **Sir Keith Rodney Park**, GCB, KBE, MC & Bar, DFC (15 June 1892 – 6 February 1975) was a New Zealand-born officer of the Royal Air Force (RAF). During the Second World War, his leadership of the RAF's No. 11 Group was pivotal to the defeat of the *Luftwaffe* in the Battle of Britain.

Born in the town of Thames in New Zealand's North Island, Park was a mariner when he enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force for service in the First World War. Posted to the artillery, he fought in the Gallipoli campaign, during which he transferred to the British Army. On the Western Front, he was present for the Battle of the Somme and was wounded. On recovery, he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps. After flight training, he served as an instructor before being posted to No. 48 Squadron on the Western Front. He became a flying ace, achieving several aerial victories and eventually commanding the squadron.

In the interwar period, Park served with the RAF in a series of command and staff postings, including a period as [air attaché](#) in South America. By the late 1930s, he was serving in Fighter Command, as Air Marshal Hugh Dowding's senior air staff officer. The two worked to devise tactics and management strategies for the air defence of the United Kingdom. Soon after the outbreak of the Second World War, Park was given command of No. 11 Group, responsible for the defence of South East England and London. Owing to its strategic significance and geographic location in relation to the *Luftwaffe*, No. 11 Group bore the brunt of the German aerial assault during the Battle of Britain. Park's management of his fighter aircraft and pilots helped ensure that Britain retained air superiority along the English Channel.

After the Battle of Britain, Park served in a training role before being posted in late 1941 to the Middle East as Air Officer Commanding, Egypt. In mid-1942, he took charge of the aerial defences of Malta, then under



Air Chief Marshal Sir **Keith Rodney Park**, GCB, KBE, MC & Bar, DFC (1892 – 1975)

heavy attack from the *Luftwaffe* and the Regia Aeronautica (Italian Air Force). When the siege was lifted Park transitioned Malta's RAF forces from a defensive role into an offensive footing in preparation for the Allied invasion of Sicily. From 1944, he held senior roles in the Middle East and in British India. He retired from the RAF in 1946 as an air

chief marshal. Returning to New Zealand, he worked in the aviation industry for a British aircraft manufacturer and then became involved in local body politics in Auckland. He died from heart problems in February 1975 at the age of 82. [Source: Wikipedia] [Read more here.](#)



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Kindred clubs



In New Zealand

Established in 1982, the Canadian Club's goal is to provide opportunities for Canadians and their families to meet and socialise with other Canadians in New Zealand.

The Canadian Club holds a number of events through the year, which create opportunities for us to get together. Some of these are centred around Canadian holidays such as July 1st and Thanksgiving. Other events are just any old excuse for a party, and we also enjoy involvement by people from anywhere else, especially Kiwis. Check out the upcoming events here: The Canadian Club of New Zealand



In Australia

Canadian clubs and associations in Australia, help Canadians living in Australia stay connected through social, cultural, networking, and community events.

Common Activities

Most Canadian clubs in Australia:

- Celebrate Canada Day and Canadian Thanksgiving
 - Provide networking opportunities for new arrivals
 - Organise family-friendly social events
 - Support Canadian culture, traditions, and sports
 - Help Canadians maintain connections with fellow expatriates and local Australian communities.
- [ocanada.com.au],
[canadaclub...vic.org.au]



National and Multi-State Organisations

Network Canada (Canadian Australian Network of Young Professionals) focuses on professional networking and career development for Canadians and Australians with Canadian connections.

Quebec Oz Club serves French-speaking Canadians, particularly those from Quebec, and promotes Francophone cultural connections.

By State

Victoria

Canada Club of Victoria (CCV), established in 1940, is one of Australia's oldest Canadian community organisations. Based in Melbourne, it organises Canada Day celebrations, Thanksgiving events, family gatherings, and networking opportunities for Canadians and friends of Canada.

New South Wales

Canadian Australian Club (Sydney) is a non-profit social organisation that promotes Canadian culture and supports Canadians living in Sydney through social, sporting, cultural, and business-related events.

Queensland

Queensland Canadian Club (Brisbane Chapter) hosts social gatherings and meetups for Canadians in Brisbane.

Canadian Club Québécois (Brisbane) provides a community for Quebecois and French-speaking Canadians.

Canadian Australian Club, Gold Coast Chapter connects Canadians residing on the Gold Coast through local events and community activities.

South Australia

Australia Canada Association (SA) supports Canadians in South Australia through social events, information sharing, and links to Canadian government and expatriate resources.

Western Australia

Canadian Club of Western Australia (WA) organises social, cultural, and community events for Canadians living in Western Australia.

Commonwealth Info

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Non-Commemoration Programme had a clear mandate to ensure all those who died in the world wars, no matter where they were, where they died or how they died, are remembered equally. Our historians work with global and state archive materials to direct their research. This allows us to yield important information – we can identify missing names, understand casualty numbers, and identify likely burial locations, as well as reinstate abandoned graves. We work with architects and heritage experts, who enable us to create new memorials for what is our largest piece of work since the Second World War. Every name we recover is a person no longer forgotten, every community and stakeholder engaged with goes some way to righting a historical wrong, and combined these important programmes ensure all those who lost their lives serving the Commonwealth in the First and Second World War are equally remembered. Read more online.



readerfeedback

thanks for writing back...

Terry and Nancy sent in this pic of the Partridge family with this explanation: "Please find attached photo of 2 adults and some of the 10 babies our neighbour's lush backyard is harbouring. I guess the partridges prefer our neighbour's long grass, weeds and pile of brush to our backyard. I am thinking they may have hatched there because I am not sure the babies can fly over the fences yet. However, we haven't seen the adults all summer until this morning, so not sure."

Wines

FROM THE VINES DOWN UNDER

Welcome to a new column in our newsletter, courtesy of Ben Sigurdson (WFP literary editor and drinks writer) and the Winnipeg Free Press, who have allowed us to include Ben's recommendations for wines from Australia and New Zealand. Enjoy!

NEW ZEALAND

The Marisco 2025 The Ned Rosé (Marlborough, New Zealand — \$22.99, The Winehouse) is presumably made from the Pinot Noir grape as well; it's medium pink in appearance, offering bright cherry, strawberry and raspberry aromas, with a hint of ripe orange in there as well.

It's dry, light-plus-bodied and slightly viscous, and is brimming with red berry and cherry flavours as well as secondary orange and watermelon notes.

The splash of acidity and subtle hints of tannin add some nice texture here as well. A lovely late-summer pink wine. 3.5/5



AUSTRALIA

From Western Australia comes the **Howard Park 2023 Miamup Cabernet Sauvignon** (Margaret River, Australia — \$24.99, Liquor Marts and beyond), which spends 18 months in French oak before bottling; it's inky purple in appearance and aromatically offers deep blackcurrant, cassis, black cherry, white pepper and leafy notes on the nose.

On the palate it's full-bodied and dry, driven by ripe, dense black fruit flavours and accompanied by leafy and herbal notes, as well as hints of vanilla, baking spice and cocoa from the wood; it's all wrapped in modestly grippy tannins and, at 14 per cent alcohol, brings a long (but not overly hot) finish.

A decently elegant Aussie Cab that's drinking well now. 4/5

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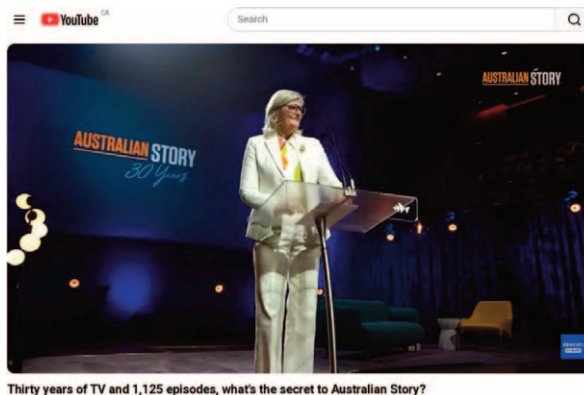


watchthis

cultural connections

From New Zealand ...

Now showing on CBC Gem, *Bust Up* is a new drama series about ex-lovers Mihi and Deb who are unexpectedly reunited after a decade apart and forced to work side by side as police officers in the small town of Waitote, New Zealand.



From Australia ...

For the past 30 years, ABC News has presented the widely successful program, *Australian Story*. Each of the 1,125 episodes features first-person, intimate profiles of everyday and extraordinary Australians, and many of the episodes are available to those of us expats living abroad on YouTube, under the mantle of ABC News In-depth. The most recent episode – “Thirty years of TV and 1,125 episodes, what's the secret to *Australian Story*” – is a remarkable telling of how it all got started

and what the future holds for the program. So, to celebrate its 30 years, this 70-minute special at the Sydney Opera House features past guests and musical acts, including Claudia Karvan, Michael Klim, Alex Lloyd and Tim Minchin. So, if you're looking for a way in to this outstanding programme, this would be a great place to start.



STORIES FROM THE SPEEWAH

When DUCW member Dennis Woodford heard Victorian author Alan Marshall give a talk from the Speewah at the University of Melbourne in 1966, this was one of the stores Alan told.

“The soil on the Speewah is extremely fertile. Gentle Annie was a cook on the Speewah and she had a wooden peg leg. The sunsets there were magnificent, and one evening, Gentle Annie went outside to view a sunset. She was so transfixed by its beauty that she watched until it was nearly dark. But when she turned around to go inside, she couldn't move. Her peg leg had rooted to the spot.”

Alan Marshall is well known for his book *I Can Jump Puddles* about growing up as a boy with polio more than 100 years ago. Later in life he collected stories of the Speewah.

- Dennis Woodford

Red-eyed vireo

This time I have to admit that I have not yet seen a red-eyed vireo – only a fledgling in a nest (see photo). But I have heard them – several times – high up in the canopy. It is very frustrating!

The first time I heard one, I thought it was an American robin. If it was a robin, I would have spotted it because they don't hide! The other difference was that it just kept up its call – constantly. In fact it has been reported that a red-eyed vireo holds the record for the most songs in a day: 22,197! (*Lone Pine Field Guide – Manitoba Birds*, by Andy Bezener and Ken De Smet, 2000)

My iPhone app (Merlin Bird ID) was also confused for a while, but eventually settled on the red-eyed vireo. References confirm that their song is somewhat robin-like.

I found the nestling easily because it too was calling incessantly – “cheep, cheep, cheep, ...” and the nest was only about



Vireo chick. Photo by Charlie Powell

2 metres from the ground. After taking the shot, I withdrew a safe distance and waited for mum to return but, again, no luck! I had to post the photo on the Manitoba Birding Facebook page to get a consensus on the ID. I'm impressed by the construction of the nest – like a hanging basket made of grass, shredded bark, rootlets and lichen.

Chad Carpenter's Tundra

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