



The Newsletter that reaches across Australia

August 2014

Website: www.countrynetwork.com.au

Secretary: PO Box 105, PAKENHAM VIC 3810

Country Network

President's Message

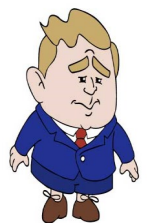
I'm currently at Day No. 55 of my travels around the countryside with Mal and others who have jumped on board for periods of the trip. Towing a dodgy pop-top with a dodgy car, we have certainly stood out in the caravan parks that are mostly filled with luxury on wheels.

Despite the hordes of grey nomads travelling with everything that opens and shuts via their laptop, there is one necessity they cannot convenienciate (I'm allowed to make up words); and that is, a good chat with a like-minded man. Travelling with their wives is something the husband assumingly enjoys (I can't make sense of it myself) but there is still a basic need not being met. These men will often and frequently gravitate to our "men only" van, not deterred being seen associating with a van of gay men which is apparent when they note the number of male occupants and the number of beds. They haven't come for sex. These caravan parks are far too public for anything like that. They visit because there is only so much chatting with the missus they can take before they've got to talk with the boys, about piston rings, score assists, bbqs and all other blokey things. Except they now also include discussions on the amazing colours of the Rainbow Bee Eater they saw.

Times have changed and men can show a little more vulnerability to total strangers. But not yet in Western Queensland; Katter won't be having any of that, especially around Isa Rodeo time.

It occurred to me that Country Network started from the exact same need, to be able to chat with like-minded men. As we continue to grow, we have been able to offer this opportunity to more and more men who otherwise would not have been able to experience such simple pleasures that many of us take for granted. More growth = more men being welcomed in from the social wilderness. Sometimes it's a little slow but we are making a difference.

Please help with this growth. Get a friend to join. Have a more active participation either by simply adding to the message board or contacting a new member and welcoming him to the organisation. From little things, big things grow. (that's what my previous partner used to tell me !)



A little love and affection in everything you do will make the world a better place, with or without you.

The Prez

Time is
running out!

**10th September is
the cut-off date for
BOOKINGS to the
October Perth - AGM**
(Don't miss this golden
opportunity to see the
golden west)

From the Assistant Editor



There are many in our Network who are very experienced in taking cruises. Well, there is David T, Frank J and Ted J to name but a few. I have recently returned from a 24-day cruise with the Holland-America Line called Magic of the Mediterranean and would like to share some of the experiences. This was my first cruise although I'd travelled by boat from New York to Naples in the 60's.

This shipping line has a great reputation for the quality of its meals and I agree entirely. There was no need to go to the speciality restaurants as the main dining rooms served 4-course meals with a wide choice and of excellent quality. We firstly chose the early shift with fixed seating. However, as our table partners belonged to a religious sect and regarded us as candidates for conversion, we soon changed to open seating! This gave us new dining partners each night and was a much better arrangement. Wine and beer were expensive, with the cheapest wine in a small carafe costing USD15!!

We chose an external cabin with balcony on deck 4. We selected this lower deck for greater stability but only had one day of rough weather when the swaying on the top deck 11 was considerable. As you inevitably eat more than at home, we mostly took the stairs rather than the lifts. There were LGBT gatherings in two bars on deck 11. We went the first night and saw many hetero couples but only one gay couple – much younger than us. The next night there were none – a couple of single men were sitting at the bar but my gaydar was not strong enough to tell if they were gay or just having a drink. There would have been no ambiguity in a non-bar venue.

Of the 24 days, only 5 were on the open sea. These days were useful in catching up with post-cards, having leisurely lunches and using the internet. The latter was excruciatingly slow as well as expensive. With us pulling into 19 ports, one of the main choices was whether to book shore excursions or whether to make our own way. In the latter case shuttle buses were often provided to take one from the cruise port to the centre of town (and back). Typically, the shore excursions associated with the shipping line were more expensive than equivalent tours with independent operators. However, for the 5 ports which were just accessible by tender, we booked tours by Holland America as you were first off the ship and were guaranteed to get back before the ship left.

(Cont'd on page 3...

Country Social Network Inc.
(Reg Y2063541)



Future Social Events Around Australia

- NSW **24th August** - Wine (or whine) with Prez. 12 noon, Central Coast Leagues Club. (Contact Michael 0419 405 520)
- NSW **29-31 August** - Sydney, Bingham Cup World Gay Rugby Comp. (Contact Peter on PJTallowood@aol.com)
- QLD **27th August**—11.00am, Nundah (see page 7)
- QLD **12th-14th September**—Seaside Escape, Brunswick Heads (see page 8)
- WA **24th-27th October**—AGM Perth—Mounts Bay Waters Apartment Hotel (Booking close 10th September).

In addition to the highlighted events above, there are also regular national social gatherings which can be viewed in the CN "Social Events" on the website., e.g.

- NSW **Bike Ride** each Tuesday at 8.30 am—Coffs Harbour Jetty.
- NSW **Lawn Bowls** each Wednesday morning—Coffs Harbour
- NSW **Dinner** each Wednesday 6.00 pm—Coffs Pub
- VIC **Geelong**—Dinner 1st Monday of every month (contact Bruce)
- VIC **Village Green Pub Lunch**—Last Tuesday of every month.
- VIC **Latrobe, West Gippsland**—1st Thursday each month (evening meal) - Darnum Pub
- WA **Perth Coffee Morning**—First Sunday of every month (6th July—see page 6)

(Please contact Roger, Events Co-ordinator, if you wish to advertise or inquire about any events on the website by e-mailing: events@countrynetwork.com.au—or phone 0400 308 687. For advertising events in the Newsletter, please contact me—Cliff on 0422 799 729 or cliff11@iinet.net.au and copy in Roger) .

Contributors to Newsletter

David T.	Neil W.	Cliff M.	Bob N.
Michael S.	Carl McK	Eric Von N.	Tony C.
Herb C.	Ian B.		

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From the Assistant Editor
(Cont'd from page 2)

For the other ports we chose a British group www.cruisingexcursions.com which was much cheaper. The best example was the excellent Istanbul tour, which was identical to that of the shipping line but cost half as much!

Having 19 different port stops, we were never bored. It was fantastic to explore 4 different Greek islands between which direct ferry

connections were non-existent. Turkey was clean and prosperous. One of the best tours was to Ephesus, with the Terrace Houses being the highlight. Except for spectacular Santorini, the effects of the GFC on Greece were clear, with a lot of the infrastructure being run down. One tip for Naples is to visit the National Archaeological Museum, which houses most of the best wall paintings skilfully extracted from Pompeii and Herculaneum during the past 150 years. The cruise finished in Barcelona, one of my favourite

cities. We lunched twice for E10.95 at the Cent Focs restaurant, Calle Balmes 16, which was great value, with the menu changing daily and including well-presented entrée, main course, dessert, mineral water and a small carafe of wine!! It also bordered the city's gay precinct.

This cruise has definitely whetted my appetite and we may be able to plan more cruises among CN members.

John R (Mallacoota)

At the Movies

Gabrielle (subtitled)

The story centres on Gabrielle who has Williams syndrome (characteristics can be "elfin" features, some suffer heart or other physical problems. Some have excellent language skills while others may suffer cognitive difficulties). She has a wonderful enjoyment of life. She lives in sheltered accommodation, with others who have similar problems, but yearns for self-independence. She and her boyfriend, Martin, are inseparable but their loved ones are concerned as to whether or not they could deal with the emotions of a sexual relationship. Gabrielle and Martin are also members of a choir who are preparing for an appearance at an important music festival.

Gabrielle is played by Gabrielle Marion-Rivard who actually has Williams Syndrome. The cast includes special needs actors and professionals. This is a wonderful movie. The story is moving, the acting is superb and the music is enchanting.

The Little Death

This is an Australian film starring, and directed by, Josh Lawson. It was screened in June at the Sydney Film Festival and will be on general release, I believe, in September. The movie is a look at the secret sex lives of ordinary people; set in a single suburban street. It reveals a range of desires held by the street's inhabitants and the steps they take to reach that moment of ecstasy. In some cases, things spin out of control with hilarious consequences.

This is a very funny film and I was frequently in a fit



By Michael S. of NSW

of laughter - SEE IT!

Easy Money (1) (subtitled)

Johan Westland (JW), an economics student, dreams of joining Stockholm's Trust-Fund elite. He is at a prestigious school where he mixes with a wealthy jet-setting circle. He lives in a dismal flat and has a dwindling bank account when he meets a beautiful rich society girl. His illusions become difficult to sustain.

Desperate to remain part of the elite, JW turns to crime and gets involved with a prison escapee (and drug runner) and subsequently gets caught in a conflict between Arab and Serb gangs, etc.

The movie is Part 1 of a trilogy and was top-grossing in Sweden in 2010. I was absorbed by the film and am looking forward to Parts 2 and 3 to be shown later in the Festival.

Eastern Boys (subtitled)

Eastern Boys begins with a 50's something Daniel soliciting a young man, Marek, at a Paris station. He is part of a gang of boys from eastern Europe who hang around the station. Daniel invites Marek to his home on the next day. What follows is a home invasion (by the gang) and then a tender romance and suspenseful attempt by Daniel to rescue Marek from the gang's clutches. In spite of a slow start, I became absorbed in the movie. The performances were excellent and there was also some very good cinematography.

The film won an award for best film at the Venice Film Festival.



(Cont'd over page...

At the Movies (cont'd)

By Michael S. of NSW

The Hundred Year-Old Man who climbed out of the Window and Disappeared

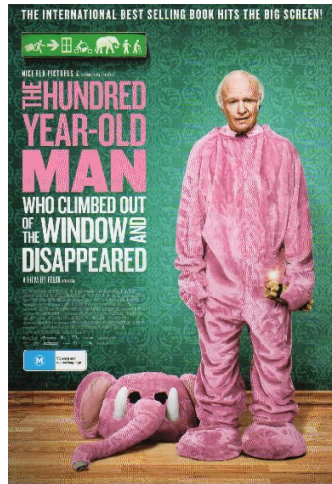
It is a highly entertaining movie. It's the story of Allan Karlsson who leaves his nursing home just as everyone is preparing to celebrate his 100th birthday. He climbs out of the window in his slippers and embarks on a journey involving a suitcase stuffed with cash.

Unpleasant criminals, an elephant and much more. This is not his first adventure. He has been involved in escapades all his life and, in the course of it, has met Franco, Stalin, Truman, Reagan, Gorbachev etc.

The film is hilarious; it was part of the Scandinavian Film Festival and will have a limited release in due course.

Still Life

For over 22 years, John May (a local council worker in South London) has been arranging the funerals of those who have died alone.

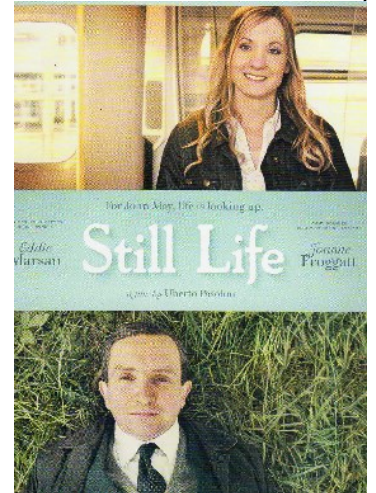


He also attempts to find next-of-kin and always attends the funerals; usually as the only mourner present. However, the Council decide that his care is no longer required and he is made redundant. He has only one remaining case, i.e. a search for the relatives of a neighbour, Billy Stoke.

As John investigates, he uncovers a life of mischief, misadventure, love and regret and, also, a daughter Kelly. A friendship develops between Kelly and John which augurs well for their future.

This is a gentle moving film, all the way through. There is no sex, no violence. The only anti-social act is that of John urinating on his unfeeling boss's car!

The movie got a 10 minute standing ovation in Venice and Eddie Marsan is superb as John. I highly recommend it.



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South Australian Area Co-ordinator's Report

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mick W. on 3/8; Phillip H. on 25/8; David M. on 31/8; Barry C. on 5/9.



Best wishes guys.

JUST A THOUGHT

When all is said and nothing done, the committee meeting is over!

CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES

On 12/8, myself along with Robert M. and two other guys are leaving the COLD behind and heading out into the Pacific to hopefully much warmer destinations in New Caledonia. It will be exactly 364 days from 11/8/13 when a young honey-

moon couple fell overboard on our ship the Carnival Spirit.

IAN THORPE

"The Journey" - I had the pleasure of picking up this very colourful 128 page production showing his achievements between 1997 and 2000. This may possibly be in your library or still available in the marketplace.

REMEMBERING BACK

On July 15th 1954 the US entered the era of jet passenger transport with the introduction of the 4-engine Boeing 707. It made its maiden flight from Seattle carrying 219 passengers at a top speed of 600mph.



SOCIAL EVENT

Although our dinner on 24/7 at Glenelg took place on a very cold and rainy night, a few members braved the elements and came along. All enjoyed each other's hospitality and the log fire proved a great hit.

INSIGHT

"I'm never lost. Someone always tells me where to go."

Cheers David T

Repointing Percy

(by Phillip Adams)

On May 21, 1972, Hungarian born Australian, Lazlo Toth walked into St. Peter's Basilica with a small sledge hammer and belted the *Christ* out of Michelangelo's *Pieta*. The masterpiece, which depicts a young Virgin Mary holding a lifeless body of Jesus in her lap, was seriously damaged. Was Toth, a geologist by trade, prospecting for minerals? Was he a religious nutter? Whatever his motive, he was never charged but spent the next few years in an Italian mental home. He died in Australia in 2012 in a Sydney nursing home. Let the record show, however, that Toth was a rank amateur in the ranks of Vatican vandals! Lots of statues had already been

attacked as inside jobs by lots of Lazlos on the papal staff. In the great massacre and mutilation of marble male members they prowled the corridors with sledgehammers, vigorously emasculating every naked sculpture of an ancient Greek or Roman. Hot on their heels came a team of nuns to collect the John Thomases and hide them in chests in the basement where they remain to this day. Their final act? To crudely conceal the wounds with little plaster fig leaves. As previously reported, there was only one survivor. A cherub who'd escaped the horrific harvest. Easy to miss his penis - t'was but the size of a jelly-bean.

Confirming the survival of the collection of percys with a Vatican historian, Pope Paul VI was

written to offering to buy the lot, planning to flog them to corporate CEOs as prestigious paperweights, but no reply was received. So tactics were changed. While wholeheartedly supporting the crusade for the Restitution of the Parthenon Marbles, a campaign conducted via Phillip Adams columns (Cont'd on page 9...

Michelangelo's *Pieta*.



NEWS FROM THE WEST

Don't forget the Sunday Coffee Mornings 10.30am at "BOCELLI'S ESPRESSO" Forrest Place held on the first Sunday of the month. The next one will be **Sunday 7th September at Bocelli's**. However, with cost in mind, members felt it may be useful to change our venue. Cliff and Chris have found a new venue which we will use for the October get together. Details will be advised later.

During June eleven of us spent an enjoyable two weeks in Bali. The weather was mild with little rain. It was a shock returning to a cold wet July in Perth! A warning to the innocent; beware if ordering pork you may end up with a whole pig complete with head and tail, at least it was cooked. See photo below.

The Bali Eleven - L to R: Richard, Gary, Trevor, Ted, Noel, Ted, John, Cliff, Brian, Viv, Carl



Gary and I are flying to Amsterdam on the 6th of August. We are staying in Amsterdam for three days then joining the Emerald Star for a 15 day cruise down the Rhine to Budapest. We are spending a few days in Budapest before heading home. I am looking forward to the cruise but not the long flights. At least we only have a short stop in Dubai.

There are about 30 guests taking the tour from Perth a few of them I know but not many. Colin & Michael from Harvey World Travel are organizing the trip and most of the group are gay, should be an interesting cruise.

Enter the following dates in your diary Melbourne Cup

Lunch 4th of November and the Christmas party on the 13th of



December. (Details later)

Birthday Greetings and Best Wishes to our WA members celebrating a Birthday in August & September.

- Ted S. 10/9 Col W. 15/9
- Michael G. 13/9 Franz P. 17/9
- Brian D. 14/9

Best Wishes Carl McK



REPORT FROM THE STATE OF HANDSOME MEN - (VICTORIA)

(by Tony C. VIC)

Frank is away yet again enjoying Summer weather in Northern climes. Scandinavia will not be the same!. So it is another pleasure to be invited to submit a report on his behalf.

Winter in Victoria has seen the usual fleeing crowds of CN members who wisely headed northwards on vacation. The rest of us staunchly weathered the miserable cold and windy days. The brave stalwarts kept attending the 4 regular events hoping the meals would warm the cockles of their hearts in the company of friends dining well and having a drink or two. Attendances are encouraging albeit depleted with the gathering at Darnum still attracting more than a dozen members and guests.

Keep warm this winter - hug a man!
(Photo courtesy Men of Max)



Slightly Twisted Refreshment Lounge



Another glamorous
Country Network S.E. Qld Event!
Lunch 27th August, 2014 at 11am
at

1/1180 Sandgate Road, Nundah.

Ph: (07) 3162 1013 :email: slightlytwisted@me.com

RSVP 20th Aug: Bob Nolan

email: dorothydownunda@optusnet.com.au : Mob 0412 118 016

Country Network S E Qld "Seaside Escape"
12th to 14th September, 2014.



Terrace Reserve Holiday Park, Brunswick Heads
Ph: 1300 726 072 / (02) 6685 1233
<http://www.terracereserve.com.au/>

The rates for the 3 nights are (linen incl):-
2 berth cabin are \$454.00 for 2 persons
4 berth cabin are \$633.00 for 4 persons
5 berth cabin are \$739.00 for 5 persons
BYO food & beverages.

Eric von Nida

email: eric.von@live.com / mob: 0438 388 005 / landline: (07) 3172 0352

Bob Nolan

email: dorothydownunda@optusnet.com.au / mob: 0412 118 016

**DON DUNSTAN: INTIMACY
AND LIBERTY, A POLITICAL
BIOGRAPHY** (by Dino Hodge)

Don Dunstan was born in Fiji in 1926. His enemies in the South Australian establishment liked to spread the rumour that he was an illegitimate half-caste orphan. But

his parents were white expatriates who could afford to send him to St. Peter's College. He talked like a member of the establishment while working to undermine it, and they hated him the more for it.

It must be difficult for young people today to imagine what life

was like for minorities in Australia only 50 years ago. Two men could be lying in bed in their own home expressing their love for each other and the police could look through the window and cart them off to jail. This may not have happened often but the law was on the books in **(Cont'd on p.10..**

Repainting Percy

(Cont'd from page 5)

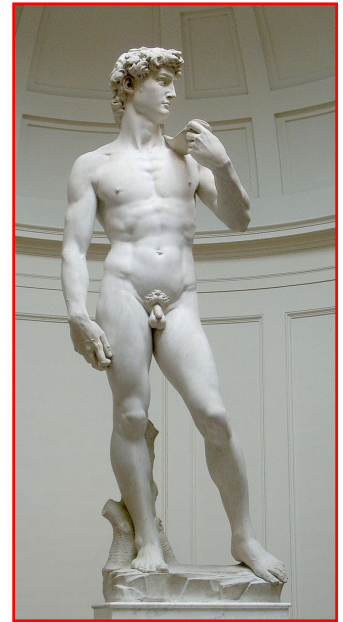
for decades, is equally worthy of your support. The Restitution of the Marble Dicks. Perhaps the new Pope, with his progressive views on human sexuality could order the fig leaves removed and the dicks restored – by the same order of nuns in a variation of “pin the tail on the donkey”. Mixing and matching would, of course, be a very fiddly (albeit educational and fascinating) job.

The whole issue demands to be raised again because of the painful symbolism of the sculptural castration described. No joking now – the brutal Toth-ing of the Vatican collection says so much about the Catholic Churches’ tragi-comic relationship with sex. Self mutilation as a metaphor for the confusions of Christian attitudes with all the Catholic codswallop about guilt, celibacy, virgin births, immaculate conceptions, contraceptions, condoms, etc. The problems of infantilising the sexuality of

your priests lead directly into the maelstrom of paedophilia. That the church remains affronted by the sight of the male member is a measure of the mess it’s in. Lazlo’s remodeling of the Pieta wasn’t the first time that the work of Michelangelo was assaulted and insulted. The great towering figure of Christ painted by one of the two greatest geniuses of the Renaissance for the Sistine – wherein the Messiah sorts things out on Judgment Day – was subjected to church censorship, with a sort of lap-lap painted over his naughty bits. This is why the Restitution of the Marble Dicks should take precedence over the return over those stolen marbles from the British Marbles to a hill outside Athens. We’ll know the Catholic Church is finally growing up in regard to sexuality when, one by one, the trouser snakes of the Vatican collection are returned to their original groins. Given that an Australia geologist was responsible for the sad and sorry event of 1972, it is opportune that another Austral-

ia, Cardinal Pell, is in a perfect place to push for these penile implants. So come on George! It’d be like laying a foundation stone – you and the new pope - to replace the first percy using araldite or Tarzan’s Grip – before handing over to the Holy Sisters.

[The above article is reprinted from a piece written by Phillip Adams in “The Australian” magazine.] Thanks to Neil W. for finding it.



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If you are planning to visit Bali and looking for accommodation, you may like to talk to Carl on (08) 9300 6014 or Cliff on 0422 799 729 about the above Villas.

AUGUST NEWSLETTER INPUT

Please note the next Newsletter is due to be issued on 22nd September so I would appreciate your input to me by **15th September**.

Subsequent Newsletters will be issued approximately every 6 weeks. The cut-off dates for **2014** will be:

<u>INPUT BY</u>	<u>NEWSLETTER ISSUED</u>
15th September	22nd September
1st November	8th November
15th December	22nd December

Camelot on Kinnoull, Warburton—Victoria

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Phone: 03 5966 2339—Ian Beasley

[First 2 nights free for CN members only]

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



We hope you will enjoy meeting some of our members. Please pick up the phone and contact another member from our Membership List: either in your area or anywhere in Australia.

For those who are already members, check the list and see who has joined so you can contact them to make them feel

WELCOME!

John E. - WA	Robert T. - TAS
Jeffrey B. - VIC	Brent M. - QLD
Chris P. - VIC	



Prime Timers WA

WA Country Network members occasionally combine with Prime Timers WA to enjoy a social get together. I have listed the PT's functions below

and any CN members (WA or CN members visiting WA) are most welcome to attend:

- 10.8.14 General Monthly Meeting 2.00 pm at Lotterywest House, 2 Delhi St., West Perth. (Bingo Afternoon)
- 20.8.14 Dinner at Billy Lee's Rest., Northbridge - 7.0 pm (contact details*).
- 24.8.14 Picnic Whiteman's Park 12 noon (contact details*)
- 30.8.14 Book Club (contact details*)

If you have any queries concerning the above or future functions, contact Chris Hart, the President of Prime Timers or Cliff Moores. * (Contact details—Chris Hart on 0418 499 328 or Cliff Moores 0422 799 729).

DON DUNSTAN: INTIMACY AND LIBERTY, A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY (Cont'd from p.8)

...every state. Fear and suspicion were widespread, police brutality and corruption flourished.

Don Dunstan took the first effective measure against this. He didn't like to call himself gay. He was in fact bisexual. His first wife was Jewish, a refugee from Hitler. They had 3 children but separated after 23 years. He later married a Chinese girl, who died of cancer 2 years later. He had at least one other woman lover. Simultaneously he had male lovers. Some were discreet but some caused trouble. If he had a fault, loyalty to friends was perhaps his worst. In his final years he lived with a young Chinese man and managed a restaurant with him, "Don's Table".

One of Australia's great unsolved

crimes is the drowning of gay lecturer, Dr George Duncan in the Torrens River in May 1972. It seems very likely that he was drowned by police officers patrolling a gay beat. This gave the impetus for the first law in Australia to decriminalize sex between consenting adult men, enacted in SA during 1975. But the Police Commissioner, Harold Salisbury, continued to maintain secret files on gays. Dunstan sacked him. He had remarkable success as a Labor Premier but the ensuing furore, largely stoked by the Murdoch press, broke his health and caused him to resign in 1979.

It is not only gay people who have reason to be grateful to Don Dunstan. He achieved a great deal in many fields, notably in the arts, in promoting women and Aboriginal people. From being the City of Churches, Adelaide became Florence on the Torrens.

Don has found a worthy biographer in

Dino Hodge. When I lived in Darwin, Dino used to park his car in my space. He was then working as Secretary for Warren Snowdon, our Federal MP, so he knew politics from the inside; how ruthless it can be but also how much it can help people, both individually and collectively. He writes with style and achieves a fair balance between the political and the personal.

The book is enhanced by a fine index and by 40 plates, mostly in colour, and many other illustrations. I recommend that you buy it, or ask your public library to buy it.

It is published by Wakefield Press, 1 The Parade West, Kent Town 5067, in 2014; its ISBN is 978-1-74305-296-9 (paperback). I couldn't see a recommended retail price.

Herb Compton
(Thanks to Herb for submitting this article)