

# PERTAS LATVIEŠU ZIŅAS



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Nr. 223

The Perth Latvian Newsletter

2025.g. January/February

## CALENDAR

### January

12 Film FLOW (Straume) 10:30am  
LunaSX, Fremantle

17

19 Church service 10:30 am

### February

2 Church service 10:30 am

9 DV Annual general meeting  
1:00pm

16 Church service 10:30 am

### March

2 Church service 10:30 am

5 Church service 6:00 pm

9 Pulkv. O. Kalpaka, Latviešu  
leģionu un Kurzemes  
cietoksšņa remembrance  
1:00pm

16 Church service 10:30 am

### PERKONĪTIS DANCE REHEARSALS

Every Tuesday evening at 6:30pm

## REDAKCIJA

Please send items for publication to the editor by the 15th of February.

### Donations

O. Michailovs \$50

M&H Litvins \$50

Thank you to everybody who donated to the publications of the Perth Latvian Newsletter. If you wish to donate, please make out your cheque to:

### LATVIAN SPECIAL FUND

because Pertas Latvian Newsletter does not have a separate bank account.

# Latvija 100



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Date	5. marts 18.00 (Zoom Dievkalpojums no Yirkalas)
Day	<b>PELNU DIENA</b>
Colour	Violeta
Readings	Joela 2:12-19 2 Kor. 5:20b-6:10 Mat. Ev. 6:1-21
Hymns	73, 78, 81, 80
Reader	Mācītājs
Dežurants	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	-

Date	16. marts 10:30 (Zoom Dievkalpojums no Yirkalas)
Day	<b>2 Gavēnis</b>
Colour	Violeta
Readings	Jer 26:8-15 Filip. 3:17 - 4:1
Hymns	331, 369, 390, 261, 159
Reader	Ieva Vlahov
Dežurants	Jānis Vucēns
Flowers	-

**Prayers:**

Juris Liepa	Ruta Liepa
Zane Lewis	Ben Lewis
Silvija Lūks	Alan Lūks

**JUSTIFICATION**

“For we hold that one is justified by faith, apart from works of the Law.” (Rom.3:28)

St Paul summarises this most important of all Biblical teachings in the quoted text.

It is rightly seen by most churches as the most important point in all Christian faith. “It is a part of Christian teaching on which the Church stands or falls.” (Luther)

To understand what the Scriptures say about justification (being right with God), you first need to know what the word “justification” means. We might imagine that means making a fair, turning an unjust

person into a just one. But in the Bible, the word has a different meaning altogether.

In the biblical sense, it means to “declare righteous.” Or declare one not guilty. It is a legal concept that speaks of a court decision declaring someone innocent.

Take the thief on the cross for example. He had nothing to offer God, nothing He could do to earn his salvation. In fact he deserved what he was suffering. Death by crucifixion. But for some reason he turns to Jesus and asks him forgiveness in his own words. Jesus turns to him and says “Today you will be with me in paradise”. He forgave the man.

Or in other words, he made him right before God (justified him) through His own crucifixion.

To use another example. Before the judge stands a person who has committed burglary. The judge recognises this person as someone with whom he had gone to school and faces a dilemma. On one hand, as judge, the person must be punished under the law. On the other hand He wants to see his friend let off free.

So he fines his friend \$10,000 dollars which he knows that he cannot pay. As his friend is leaving he rushes to change his robes to greet him at the door. He not only greets him, but places in his hands a cheque for \$10,000 dollars to cover his fine. The man is guilty but gets off with no penalty.

That is how it is with everyone who believes in Jesus. We are guilty of sin before God and deserve eternal punishment. But God pays our punishment by dying in our place. God’s wrath against our sin is borne by Jesus and we are declared “not guilty”. That is what justification means.

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**PERKONĪTIS**

Everybody is invited to come and dance!  
Lets learn to polka, skip, hop, new folk dances etc

Every Tuesday evening at 6:30 pm

Contact Daina Jefimovs, for latest information.  
[d.jefimovs@hotmail.com](mailto:d.jefimovs@hotmail.com)



# DV PERTAS BRANCH

## PERTH'S DAUGAVAS

### VANAGI UNDER THE OAK

20 October, 2024



Lately, Perth's Daugavas Vanagi events have become smaller. Age takes over from the once-bright stately men, left with gray, sparse hair, once the help of a cane. There are also all sorts of ailments, here and there, and yet, our Perth chapter is carrying out all its tasks and needs. It is only a pity that the group of participants has shrunk, which was once carried out by nine men, the same work is now carried out by four, and each has been left with a very heavy load.

This is a bundle of Perth DV members. In good old times, when we were young and there was a lack of time for everyone, because there were no pensioners among us yet: everybody worked, made their daily bread, and many, still busy at weekends, building their houses or tending to their new garden. Or even we were building our Perth Latvian Palace: the Latvian Centre. So, at least once a year, we only met for a meeting with friends and in the Latvian Community at large. Then we gathered in the woods, in the fresh air, away from the city's noises. Later, such journeys remained difficult, and we no longer travelled that far in the woods, but used the city's own parks.

And as we began to feel age and fatigue on our shoulders, we drove to suburban restaurants where we could even get European dishes: potato pancakes, sour cabbage, etc. Now, we're sitting in our own clubrooms, under our oak tree, which has now grown so tall, even though we are sitting in the club, we're still under his branches. No rain here, no

hot sun can affect us: we regulate our own climate through tech, and we can feast and have a nice weekend day time in a group of our friends.

So we came together, even though our numbers are shrinking, this year too, in a group of members of our club, though with all the members, friends and other parties, we welcomed our dozen visitors. A platter with Ilmar's famous fried sausages, a coarse

bun and a variety of salads made by our vanadzēs and ladies, and a feast that was a feast. More cakes and muffins, tea or coffee followed, and a glass of wine to drink.

By the time we had eaten and drunk, and when we had had a nice chat, the time had come to go home. Thank you to everyone who had

worked and done to make it happen, and special thanks to Ilmars and Anita Rudaks, for today, if anything happens in the Perth Latvian community, their hands have been there. Thank you and everyone who helped us to come together and hang out with friends and everyone who came and enriched our group, and next year we'll go back under the oak to sit and hang out in a Latvian environment.

*Jānis Purvinskis*



*Photos: Anita Rudaks*



## DV PERTH BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Sunday 9 February,  
1.00 pm in the DV clubrooms**

### Agenda

1. Meeting opening and acceptance of agenda.
2. Elections of meeting chair, secretary and vote counters.
3. Reading and acceptance of minutes of previous AGM.
4. Reports
5. Questions of reports and acceptance of previous year's activities.
6. Treasurer's report and 2025 budget proposal.
7. Election of officebearers for 2025.
8. DV conference in Melbourne in March 2025.
9. Perth Latvian Centre.
10. Suggestions for the branch's activity in 2025.
11. Assistance to Latvija.
12. General business.

## COL. OSKARA KALPAKA, LATVIAN LEGION AND KURZEMES CIETOKŠŅA REMEMBRANCE

**Sunday 9 March, 2025,  
1.00pm in the DV clubrooms**



## SANDRA KALNIETE – 18. NOVEMBRA RUNA PERTĀ. 2024. g.10. novembris.

LAAJ vice-pierced in Perth with Janis Vucens opening today, Latvia 106. The state proclamation day celebrations, welcomed the Perth Latvian household and first introduced us to the new Latvian Honorary Consul in Perth, Mr. Imantu Kins. We welcome Mr. Kins to his new post and wish him many good successes, which he will do for Latvia: good luck. Then the Honorary Consul introduced us to the speaker of our festival speech, a guest from Latvia: Sandra Kalniete: Members of the European Parliament, a well-known Politician and diplomat, a public servant and writer whose speeches have always been worth listening to and are later triggered by good exchanges.



*Sandra Kalniete – photo S.V.*

We were very glad when we found out that Sandra Kalniete, the Latvian speaker of the honour of the national Festival, provided by the LAAJ, had already heard her in Perth years earlier. This time Sandra Kalniete came to us in Perth from Brisbane and gave a State Festival speech to us, over twenty of our audience, on Sunday, November 10, in Perth's Latvian Centre, the Daugava hawks Club.

By the way, Sandra told us that this year we are entering our country's 107 th year of independence, but that half of that time the country has been the stump of a new state after the destruction of three more powerful States: after World Wars one and two and after 50 years of occupation. After every time we've had to start building and building our country again. But we are a tough nation, and if you take it too. Through all our nation's history, we have wanted to be the determinants of our own lives, we

have wanted our freedom, a hope that the Latvian people have never lost, but always aspired to. She told us that she was born during the exile of her parents in Siberia, but she has always known that she belongs to Latvia, that she is Latvian. To the question of a country we want after leaving the Soviet Union in 1990, it is understandable that we want a democratic country where the people themselves, no strangers, determine their future, but, we first had to get our full freedom and that was an issue that had to be addressed first because our country was still full of Russian troops, all of which had to be got out, which we finally only managed in 1993, g,

We are well aware of how, after twenty years of belonging to the European Union and twenty years later being part of NATO, our country is safer now than it has ever been. We allocate 3.2% a year to the realisation of our military, who, along with NATO forces, helps to keep us safe. 14 NATO soldiers from different countries currently live on our soil.

Sandra Kalniete further told us that Latvia's current toughest solution is how best to help Ukraine, because what is happening in Ukraine affects us very hard also in Latvia and we know very well what is happening in Ukraine. We also understand the horror that threatens us every day. Of its annual gross product%, Latvia gives Ukraine more than anyone else, even from the big countries, because this fight is not just a Ukrainian fight, but a fight by dictator Putin to destroy democracy in general and introduce dictatorships everywhere. He wants to be Russia's new "cars" Sandra emphasized in his State Festival of Latvia speech that Russia's attack was not just against Ukraine, but a challenge to all World Democrats: dictatorial Russia leads the fight against all democracies and wants to connect with all dictatorships so that not law and honesty and democracy, but strength and power rule the world. It is therefore absolutely necessary that Ukraine

wins this war because it is not *kaŗš* against Ukraine, but against the entire democratic world at all.

When Latvia began its quest for freedom and away from the Russian Union in the 1980 s, Sandra was one of the first members of the national front and was one of its leaders. She was also a voter for leaving Latvia from the Russian Union on May 1990.4. She has defended Latvia and Latvian independence, both in the European parliamenta and at the NATO organisation, in the European Union and in the press.

This is Sandra Kalniete's warning to us today: it is all the more necessary for us to stay awake about our regained freedom, because we can also lose it so quickly what, Putin threatens us often. Let us be



*Sandras Kalnietes Svētku runas klausītāji DV klubā, Pertā. Foto: Sarmīte Vucēns.*

grateful for the democracies of the world that protect us from authoritarian powers today. The anniversary of the 106 th anniversary of Sandra Kalniete Latvia was comprehensive and insightful and gives much to think about and understand with the current state of the world, which also affects us here and in our homeland. Thank you Mrs Kalniete for her thoughtful speech. We hope to see and hear you again in Perth sometime.

*Jānis Purvinskis*

## **WA MUSEUM BOOLA BARDIP**

On Monday 11 November 2024, during Sandra Kalniete visit to Perth the Honorary Consul of Latvia for Western Australia Imants Kins took Sandra Kalniete MEP to the WA Museum to visit the aborigine exhibition *Ngalang Koort Boodja Wirn*. Sandra wanted to understand more about the Australian aborigines and their culture. Imants had organised with the Director of the Museum for an experienced aborigine guide to show and explain

the exhibition and other aborigine cultural collections. Her name was Patricia and she was excellent. The over 2 hour tour was a moving and profound experience. Sandra was impressed with the tour, the WA Museum and Perth. Sandra was staying with Ieva Vlahov and visited Perth 19 years ago. It's hoped Sandra will visit Perth again.

Aboriginal peoples have lived on this Country since the Dreaming, the time of the creators. The exhibition celebrates their continuing connection to ancient knowledge, cultures, and values. We invite you to enjoy achievements in sport, culture, politics, music, literature and the arts, while viewing ancient and contemporary objects from around the state.

There is no shying away from an uncomfortable past, acknowledged through stories of the fight for human rights, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and legacy of the Stolen Generations.

A highlight is the story of First Contact told through Laurel Nannup's maquette of her sculpture that proudly welcomes people to Elizabeth Quay.

This is also a place to reflect and appreciate Aboriginal peoples' deep knowledge of healing, the night sky, and spiritual connection to Country.

*Imants Kīns*

## LATVIAN NATIONAL DAY IN PERTH

The week of celebrations of Latvia's national day began with a speech by Sandra Kalniete titled "*Mūsu Latvija - dziļāka, drošāka un daudzveidīgāka*" ("*Our Latvia – resilient, secure and inclusive*"). Sandra, born in Siberia when her parents were deported by the Soviets, is a Latvian member of the European Parliament and is visiting Latvian communities in Australia and New Zealand as a part of 18th of November celebrations. Her visit was organized by the Latvian Association of Australia and New Zealand (LAAJ). For those who missed the occasion, there is an English translation of Sandra's speech available. Please email [redakcija@pertaszinas.net](mailto:redakcija@pertaszinas.net) if you would like a copy.

On the 18th of November, celebrations began with the traditional raising of the Latvian flag at 7:00am at the Latvian Centre. Over the years the numbers attending this early morning event have dwindled, but one special participant this morning was young George who was celebrating his second birthday. George also brought his mum along. Happy

birthday George! It was uplifting to hear a conversation in Latvian between a young mother and her two year old son.

In Perth, the celebrations normally continue with the lowering of the flags at 6:00pm and then the official ceremony.

At 6:00 pm the clouds opened and the rain meant that the tradition of everybody watching the flags being lowered and then singing a hymn had to be changed. Instead, Ilmārs Rudaks and Indulis Bernšteins braved the rain and lowered the flags alone.

Back in the hall, the Latvian and the Australian flags were brought in with flagbearers Ilmārs and Ian Churchward and the girls from *Pērkonītis* as honour guards.

Once the flags were placed, the hymn "*Dievs kungs ir mūsu stiprā pils*" was sung and the traditional ceremony could proceed.

Ieva Vlahovs began the formal ceremony with a hymn, a homily, prayers and another hymn. Ina Robinson provided the organ accompaniment for the hymns.

Now the thunder returned to the Latvian Centre. The Latvian Folk Dancing Group *Pērkonītis* performed "*Šešdancis*", a tradition folkdance rearranged by Daina.

After welcoming everybody, Jānis Vucēns emphasised that, not only were we celebrating the declaration of the Republic of Latvia in 1918, but that we should also remember that in the previous week on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, when the world was remembering Armistice Day as the day the day that World War 1 ended and peace was declared in Europe, Latvia was still not a free country. It was not until the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1919 that the Latvian army triumphed over the Russian-German army of Pavel Bermond. Latvians observe the 11<sup>th</sup> of November as "*Lāčplešu diena*" to honour those who fought for Latvia's freedom. A brief video clip showed the citizens placing candles at the wall of Rīga Castle.

The 16<sup>th</sup> of November was also a day of celebration for the Latvian Centre. Sir Charles Court, the Premier of Western Australia, officially opened the Centre on that date in 1974. The Centre turned 50 this year.

Sadly, the Latvian folk dancing group *Pērkonītis* had become inactive in the late 1990s. *Pērkonītis'* thunder had not been heard since then until June this



year. Daina Jefimovs, who came to us from Melbourne, had convinced a group, some of whom had never danced before, to come together and revive the tradition of Latvian folk dancing in the Perth.



To honour her effort, patience and persistence, Daina was presented with a Certificate of Recognition from Perth's Latvian organisations. Thank you Daina. *Perkonītis* has been invited to participate in the Latvian Youth Festival in Sydney in December 2024.

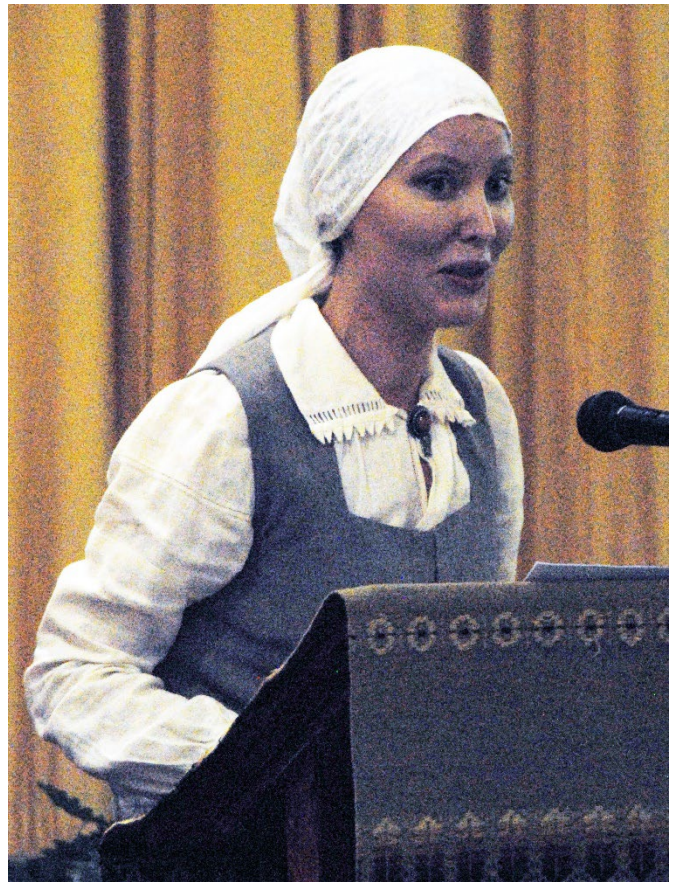
The new Honorary Consul of the Republic of Latvia in Perth, Imants Kīns, then spoke to introduce the evening's keynote speaker, Dr Alysa Daroy. Imants also set the background for Alysa's speech by reminding everyone of the richness of Latvian culture over many centuries and the importance of the work of Krišjāns Barons in collecting the *Dainas*, the first written collection of an oral tradition which forms the basis of many traditional folk songs.

Imants also explained that the Trīs Zvaigžņu ordens he was wearing had been presented to his father who had joined the Cēsu Student Corps as a 17 year old and was, therefore one of those being honoured by the candles on Lāčplēšu diena.

In introducing Alysa, Imants cited her many academic achievements and works with theatre companies in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Dr Alysa Daroy's speech, titled "*Together Strength: Resistance, Resilience and Renewal in the Latvian Song Celebration*", highlighted how the Latvian singing tradition had been a uniting force in the creation and continuous existence of the Latvian nation. Singing had been the continuous thread through the foundation of Latvia, years of

occupation by foreign powers, Latvians in exile, resistance to the authoritarian Soviet rule and then in the rebirth of the Republic of Latvia.



Alysa began her speech by inviting one of her students at Murdoch University, Janie Davidson to read a poem she had written about her mother's emotions on leaving Latvia to escape the Soviet army and a new life in a foreign land. Alysa had only found out that Janie's mother was Latvian a few days before! Thank you Janie.

Alysa's speech ended with a video of the massed choir of the closing concert of the 2023 Latvian Song and Dance festival singing "*Saule, Perkons, Daugava*". The Sun, Thunder and the river Daugava, three important elements of Latvian culture mentioned by Imants in his introduction.

As is customary, we then watched a greeting from the President of Latvia, Mr Edgars Rinkēvičs, followed by the Latvian National anthem.

Once again *Pērkonītis* took the floor with a dance choreographed by Daina, "*Skafandrs*".

The formal part of the evening ended with the song festival choir singing "*Pūt vējiņi*", a song with special significance as it was often sung during the years of Soviet occupation in defiance of the laws preventing the singing of the Latvian national anthem. This song is sung by the massed choir



together with the audience at the end of every Latvian Song and Dance Festival.

Everybody then adjourned to the DV clubrooms for light refreshments prepared by Ilmārs and Anita Rudaks.

Happy Latvian National Day!

*JV*

## PĒRKONĪTIS IN SYDNEY

Our newly revived folk dancing group Pērkonītis was invited to participate in the 38th Latvian Youth Festival in Sydney from the 27th to 31st of December, 2024. The last time Pērkonītis went to a Youth Festival was in the 1970s or 1980s (does anybody remember which year?).

Seven members of Pērkonītis travelled to Sydney. The weather in Sydney was very humid and made rehearsals difficult, but after two long rehearsals Pērkonītis was able to join in to three of the group dances (*Palēciens, Vainagu deja un Zemenīte*) and performed a solo dance *Skafandra* choreographed by Daina Jefimovs. Pērkonītis return to JDs was very well received. For many it was their first such event and a chance to meet young Latvians from all over Australia (and Latvia).



*Pērkonītis Sydnejā – foto Mitchell McMullen*

The concert was filmed and we will be showing the video when it becomes available.

The festival was opened with a humorous theatrical performance looking at the meaning and history of Jaunatnes Dienas. Other events included a scavenger hunt in the city centre showcasing Sydney's beautiful spots with a Latvian twist, a boat cruise on Sydney Harbour, a musical concert with singers and instrumentalists (so many talented young people), and of course, the New Years Eve Ball.

Pērkonītis dancers are now inspired to go to KDs in December 2025 (look out Adelaide!).

*JV*

## STRAUME IN PERTH!

The Latvian animated movie *Straume* (*Flow* in english) has just won the Golden Globe award for the best animated movie.



The film will be shown on Sunday, 12th January at 10:30am in the LunSX cinema in Fremantle and Friday, 17th of January at 10:30 in the Windsor theatre.

The film has been nominated for an Oscar!

## PERTAS LATVIAN NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Preparing and posting the Perth Latvian Newsletter has become more and more expensive. The costs of the newsletter are borne by Perth's Latvian organisations (Daugavas Vanagi Pertas Nodaļa, Latviešu Biedrība Rietumāstrālijā un Sv. Pāvila Luterāņu Draudze).

If you would prefer to receive your copy of the newsletter electronically, please send your email address to:

[redakcija@pertaszinas.net](mailto:redakcija@pertaszinas.net)

Thanks to everybody who has already written.

*JV (editor)*



### PERTAS LATVIEŠU CENTRS

Pertas Latviešu Centrs  
opened 16th november  
1974.

*The Centre is 50!*

The Perth Latvian Centre was officially opened by then Premier Sir Charles Court on the 11th of November, 1974.

After a brief while, the Centre committee published a review documenting the collective effort by Perth's Latvian community to build the Centre.

In an effort to collect as much information about the Centre as possible, we request anybody who has a copy of the report, and photographs, videos or films about the Centre and its construction to make them available on loan to be copied.

*Jānis Vucēns*  
[redakcija@pertaszinas.net](mailto:redakcija@pertaszinas.net)

## IRON MAN 2024



On Sunday, 7 December, 2024, Zane Balodis competed in the Ironman competition in Busselton, Western Australia.

Zane finished the 3.8 km swim, 180km bike ride and the marathon 42kms in 15 hours, 44 minutes and 5 seconds.

Well done Zane!

By the way Zane, folk dancing rehearsals are not quite as hard, and they are much shorter. Rehearsals are every Tuesday evening at 6:30pm and will be resuming soon.