

ANOTHER SUCCESS FOR DUNEDOO

Thanks to the splendid organisation by festival co-ordinator Eric Beer and his team, the support of the Dunedoo and District Development Group and the very generous monetary contributions from Personal Wealth Management and the many supporting sponsors from the town and district, the 17th Dunedoo Bush Poetry Competition was a great success.

With the 20 participating poets performing a wonderful selection of both heart-rending and humorous poetry and with M.C. Brenda Joy keeping the show lively and moving along from start to finish, the festival was not only full of laughter but it also provided a lot of healing for those who had endured the loss of loved ones in 2014 and in recent years.

Eric Beer was particularly happy with the Thursday night meet and greet where the local singing group 'Sing Australia' joined with 95 poets and friends to open up the festival with impromptu performances and to share camaraderie.

He was also pleased that many took advantage of the informative bus trip to Mendoran on the Friday and that the Parkes Caravan Group were in town to attend the Intermediate Class competition on the Friday afternoon and the Yarn Spinning competition on the Friday night.

Lloyd Graham, the President of the DDDD group was particularly pleased with the workshop given by Brenda Joy to years 5-8 of Central and St. Michael's schools and he was elated when he took out the Yarn Spinning Award with his tale of dog trials in Merriwa. Needless to say, his win was very popular with the local community.

Saturday saw a full day of competition in the Open Class and each category was very closely contested. Judges Des Kelly, Sandra Nicholson and Hal Pritchard had their work cut out to determine the winners.

In the evening, following the Official Welcome and the Mayoral address, the 130 people from all over the state and beyond filled the hall with laughter as the poets contested the male and female humorous categories. All also enjoyed sharing supper and converse.

Following the recitation of Ron Steven's winning poem *A Reasonable Approach* the award presentations continued culminating in the announcement of the Overall Male and Overall Female winners of the Open performance competition. Terry Regan took out the male award and Rhonda Tallnash was the female winner.

As an ANZAC tribute Brenda Joy performed her *Blackened Billy* winning poem, *Where Poppies Bloom* and then Des Kelly led the crowd in a ceiling-raising-singalong of war songs.

Despite the full-on nature of the Saturday show, many poets and friends turned up for the Sunday morning walk up session and the 'Breakfast with the Poets' Brawl' which had an interesting twist introduced by Eric Beer in that the one minute poems had to be about the poet that each contestant had 'drawn out of a hat' during the festival. This really got everyone researching and learning more about poets and poetry.

Cay Ellem was the eventual winner decided by the audience after a 3-way tie had to be recontested.

Eric Beer reported that "Speaking with the visitors and poets, they expressed their admiration for the week-end of Bush Poetry. A lot of work by a small devoted group of volunteers, certainly made this week-end a great success and cemented the future for many more festivals. We all look forward to support for our 18th Festival on week-end of the first Saturday in March 2016."

A huge thank you to all concerned and to Dunedoo for their continued provision of such a delightful outlet for bush poetry.