

2019 ABPA BLACKENED BILLY WRITTEN COMPETITION RESULTS AND JUDGES' REPORT

1 st	My Father's Voice	David Campbell
2 nd	A Precious Chance	Shelley Hansen
3 rd	Dear Henry	Shelley Hansen
4 th Highly Commended	The Stockman's Choice	Kay Gorring
5 th Highly Commended	Gentlemen Heroes	Catherine Lee
6 th Highly Commended	Among my Souvenirs	Shelley Hansen
7 th Highly Commended	The Darkest Side of Hell	Tom McIlveen
8 th Commended	Pappinbarra Dreamtime	Tom McIlveen
9 th Commended	Kelly's Corner	Heather Knight
10 th Commended	Honour their Spirit	Helen Harvey

JUDGES' COMMENTS RE THE 2019 BLACKENED BILLY WRITTEN COMPETITION

As usual, subjects in the 2019 Blackened Billy were wide ranging from War to Outback with evocative and lyrical poems bringing to life the characters and situations of our past with poets being the preservers of our cultural heritage. This year, however, it was also gratifying to see so many poems expressing the concerns of modern-day Australians who are faced with 'universal' issues such as climate change, cyber bullying, teenage suicide, refugees, pollution, degradation of the Earth, organ transplant, child and women abuse... These showed our poets being the social commentators of our times.

Some poems portrayed beauty, some horror, some were humorous but all entries portrayed an aspect of Australia, Australians and the Australian way of life.

It was particularly heartening to learn that there were so many poets new to the competition circuit entering the Blackened Billy this year. If you have not been successful in this very high standard arena, please do not be dissuaded from entering your poems elsewhere particularly where there are novice sections for those who have not previously won a competition.

Particularly with respect to one of the twin pillars of our craft, i.e. Metre, a minor 'glitch' in technique, if detected and rectified early, can mean the difference between success and disappointment. Many newcomers sought critiques and this, and seeking the advice of successful poets through workshops or approach, is recommended as all the current major award-winning poets have been guided in some way by those further along the developmental scale.

Thank you to the ABPA for supporting this year's Blackened Billy and thank you to everyone who entered and to fellow judges Brian Langley and John Peel and to the co-ordinators Max Pringle and Hal Pritchard who volunteered their time and expertise to enable this most iconic and prestigious Australian Bush Poetry competition to continue.

Brenda Joy, Brian Langley, John Peel
2019 ABPA Blackened Billy Judges

JUDGES' COMMENTS RE WINNING POEMS

1st

**My Father's Voice
by David Campbell**

A cleverly written poem with inventive rhyme and metre and a consistent metric pattern.

The account of the hardships and suffering endured is both vivid and stark. The poet then takes us to the issues of the present day and expresses the desperate hope that what has been suffered will not have been in vain.

Told from the perspective of a father's reminiscences through his son's viewpoint, this is a very provocative poem.

A worthy winner of the 2019 ABPA Blackened Billy Verse Competition

2nd

**A Precious Chance
by Shelley Hansen**

This poem uses faultless rhyme and metre to raise a poignant and pertinent issue of modern living and the need to rectify behavior that can have a devastating effect, especially on our youth. A lesson well told.

3rd

**Dear Henry
by Shelley Hansen**

An extremely well-written poem with a distinctive and consistent rhyming pattern. In utilising an epistle to Henry Lawson as a technique, the poet effectively conveys the dilemmas of modern living.

4th Highly Commended

**The Stockman's Choice
by Kay Gorring**

This poem has a mixed rising rhythmic pattern that emulates a horse's gait. Told from an equine point of view, it portrays first the spirit of freedom of living with nature and then the terrible contrast of being entrapped in the strange, alien, war world. A beautiful and heart wrenching story that effectively captures the bond of love and loyalty between Man and Horse.

5th Highly Commended

**Gentlemen Heroes
Catherine Lee**

Cricket, has a way of arousing the passions of a nation and even more so in time of turmoil. A novel and effective approach to the futility of war, poignantly using sporting heroes to demonstrate the tragic sacrifice of the cream of a country's youth.

6th Highly Commended

**Among my Souvenirs
Shelley Hansen**

A well-written, personal and nostalgic poem that demonstrates the importance of 'real' values in life. The seasonal imagery of the closing stanza is lovely and adds a more 'universal' depth.

7th Highly Commended The Darkest Side of Hell
Tom McIlveen

An excellent, well-written protest poem that reflects the current mood of many – charity begins at home – and also shows compassion for those who suffer the hardships of rural enterprise. This poem deals with an age old issue but adds the dimension of a modern day dilemma.

8th Commended Pappinbarra Dreamtime
Tom McIlveen

A very well written poem that evokes both the feeling of joy for Nature and the sadness re Man's devastation of the natural environment. A lovely piece that compares Aboriginal dreamtime respect with White Man's lack of same. A mystic piece of writing.

9th Commended Kelly's Corner
Heather Knight

A well written poem on an excellent subject, effectively bringing an important aspect of the past to life.

10th Commended Honour their Spirit
Helen Harvey

Consistent rhyme and metre allows for easy flow and the employment of an additional line in each stanza provides a nice variance. Approaching the subject of war from the aspect of the many reasons why people enlisted, is particularly effective.