

MEDIA RELEASE

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Cloncurry celebrates the Spirit of the Outback

The next bard of the Australian Outback has been discovered! Cloncurry Shire Council congratulates, Mr David Campbell, winner of the very first 'Cloncurry Prize ~ Spirit of the Outback' poetry competition. All prize-winners were announced at an official event at Chinaman Creek Dam on Monday evening.

The National competition, launched in December 2020, has a first prize of \$10,000. The call was met with over 220 poems from writers all over Australia. Mr Campbell's, 'The Heart and Soul of Australia', impressed the judges by capturing the essence of the Outback. The deserving winner travelled to Cloncurry from the South Coast of Victoria for the official announcement.

Mr Campbell said he was delighted to take out the prestigious prize in its first year. He said, "This competition is a wonderful initiative by the Cloncurry Shire Council. In providing one of the richest poetry prizes in Australia, the Council is encouraging poets to use their skills to continue the great poetic traditions established a century ago by such well-known names as Dame Mary Gilmore, who is buried alongside her husband in the Cloncurry cemetery, Henry Lawson, 'Banjo' Paterson and CJ Dennis. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to be involved and congratulate those instrumental in creating the award...may it provide inspiration to poets in all styles of poetry for many years to come!"

Mayor Greg Campbell said, "The competition was launched to draw attention to the Outback and promote it to the rest of Australia. The concept of the prize was to highlight our wonderful country and ignite our sense of national pride during the COVID-19 lockdown. David's poem represents the spirit of the outback and pays tribute to services in the bush, which included a reference to the Royal Flying Doctor. The 'Cloncurry Prize' is an open competition, and all styles of poetry are encouraged. This year's winners included a ballad and contemporary poetry".

Other prize-winners were announced on the evening, which included runner up, 'Broken Down', by Jennifer Harison and meritorious mention, 'A portrait in the Theatre of Desire', by Brian Obiri-Asare.

Copies of the poems and future information on the competition is available on the Cloncurry Shire Council website. Start writing for the 2022 'Cloncurry Prize ~ Spirit of the Outback' for your chance to pocket \$10,000.

Visit the website - www.cloncurry.qld.gov.au/cloncurry-prize

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