

Celebrating 20 Years  
Of The A.B.P.A.

# A.B.P.A.



Australian Bush  
Poets Association  
Volume 20 No. 2  
April/May 2014



## ANZAC DAY 2014

Queensland Bush Poetry Performance Championship

In conjunction with

19<sup>TH</sup> BUNDYBUSH POETRY MUSTER

JULY  
4TH, 5TH & 6TH, 2014

JULY  
4TH, 5TH & 6TH, 2014

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Greg North

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Bob Magor

Noel Stallard

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Written Verse 2014  
Sunday, July 6th.

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trophies in each  
category.

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Bush Lantern Award 2014 - Written Competition for Bush Verse

ALSO

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Closing date: May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014

FREE Poetry Workshop

Greg North will be conducting a children's  
story-telling session on July 1<sup>st</sup> in the  
Bundaberg Library at 10.00 a.m. and a  
**FREE** poetry workshop in the Sails Function  
room at Across the Waves Sports Club  
on Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10.00 a.m. to noon.

All phone or email enquiries :-

Sandy Lees – 07 41514631 or leesjds1@yahoo.com.au  
Edna Harvey – 07 41597198 or edna\_harvey@hotmail.com  
Jayson Russell – 07 41550778 or blanata@bigpond.net.au

Entry Forms

SSAE to

Performance Poetry Cordinator or  
Bush Lantern Co-ordinator  
(whichever applicable)  
Bundaberg Poets' Society Inc.  
PO Box 4281  
BUNDABERG SOUTH. 4670

Entry forms also available from  
Bush Poets website - [www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)



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**Foreword by Ellis Campbell**

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# EDITORIAL



G'day and welcome to the April/May Edition of the ABPA Magazine.. For those who don't know, we were saddened by the passing of a great Poet, Friend and past Treasurer Kym Eitel. I have dedicated part of this magazine to her, as many did not really know that she was the backbone of the ABPA for quite a while, and the lady who made my transition as Editor a very smooth one due to her dedication to everything she did. She was also a lady with a great wit whom I exchanged emails with on almost a daily basis. The stirring and jokes worked in both directions!! We will miss her dearly. I hope I have done her poetic life some justice in this magazine.

We also lost another wonderful Poet in Geoffrey Elliott, as well as Dennis O'Keefe, a well known singer and expert on the history of Waltzing Matilda. You will find dedications to them also in this issue. We also sadly lost another wonderful woman in Joy Major, wife of John Major, after a long illness. Most of us know John, and offer our condolences to John and his family.

Members have flooded me with Anzac Day Poems and other submissions this month, which is absolutely wonderful! Keep it up. I apologise to anybody who's contributio could not be included in this issue. But you can be assured, it is on hold for future publication.

From this issue, we have introduced Colour Advertising which at present will be limited to the front and back inside covers, but depending on demand this can be increased. Naturally it is a little dearer to have printed, so will be dearer in cost to Advertisers, but compared to other Magazines, Still extremely cheap.

The New Rates can be found on [Page 5](#).

May your Anzac Day serve you well, and I hope you enjoy this month's offerings in the Magazine.

*Cheers and 'Lest We Forget.....'*

Neil McArthur

editor@abpa.org.au

**NOTE:- Next Magazine Deadline for submissions is May 31st**

## Letter To The Editor

Congratulations to our outgoing president for his report in the December Mag. His acknowledgement to us small time poets is long over due . Manfred's reference for the need to support the majority of members who do not seek financial reward is what I and others including the late John Norman have been canvassing for sometime. The suggestion that we need a further award for the top end at the last AGM had not sat well with yours truly. The Laureate award controversy two years ago should be enough proof that egos and developing cronyism and cliques resulting in disharmony to our association. Lets, instead look at helping the battlers up with some encouragement in OUR magazine.

The only difference between Amateur and professional is that we do not charge for our services. Actually I rather the term not 4 profit poets or community volunteers. The shows that many of us freely give are far from amaturistic. Its the love of our country through bush poetry that is the desire manifested by many of our members.

I would like to encourage my fellow bards who are not 4 profit to submit to the magazine their community and charity work to our magazine. Leading the way I report that I was thrilled to be asked and then to perform at the opening of the railway heritage park at Manilla NSW. Please refer to photo sent of me reciting from the historic hand operated crane that was used in Manilla to unload rural machinery.

The poem I wrote especially for the Manilla community to celebrate the unveiling of the plaque by our local member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson will be forwarded for inclusion in our Magazine.

Please receive in good faith,  
Bert Pullen.

## To the Editor A.B.P.A.

Dear Sir,

I've entered all the Bush Verse comps  
Wiv poems I have rit,  
An' I've never had a placing,  
Or a 'HIGH COMMENDED' bit.  
So I rote to all the Judges,  
An' I got a smart reply,  
They reckoned "I'm not good enuff",  
an' they rote an' told me why.  
They said I had no 'meter'  
Whatever that may be??  
I can't see wot that's got to do  
With' ritin' poetree?  
They said me spellin's not so hot,  
An' me 'sillybulls' don't rime,  
So wots the use o' ritin' stuff,  
It's just a waste o' time.  
An' then one cheeky bugger,  
He rote an' said I should  
Take up stamp collectin',  
Or somethin' just as good.  
So next time that I enter,  
That's if indeed I do.  
Tell them judges to go easy.  
From your old Bush Mate

----- "SKEW".



# President's Report



In the last three months the ABPA has lost three of its valued members. We extend our sympathies to all who have endured loss or illness and of course, through our ANZAC day tributes, we remember all Australians who have served our country in war and in peace. Fortunately most of our troops have now returned from Afghanistan, but we are currently sending magazines to the small remaining contingent. Copies of each issue of the magazine are also being sent to State Delegates for distribution through events and groups and each State will also have its own ABPA banner.

## COMMITTEE WORK TO DATE

Whilst our strategic plan states that an objective for the ABPA is "...to be the peak body for Bush Poetry in Australia...", before we can outreach to other organizations it is necessary for us to get our 'in-house' requirements standardized. The aim of us all is not only to encourage new members to join the ABPA but to keep current members happy. Many have expressed the desire to have more information available re the requirements and judging procedures for bush poetry competitions. Having uniformity in the way ABPA National and State competitions are conducted ensures that entrants are aware of the criterion on which they are being judged. Establishing this basis has been the Committee's first priority.

Following the distribution of an application form, an upgraded ABPA Accredited Judges list, and a list of ABPA Affiliated or Approved Competitions are available on the website. These are living documents. The Committee would welcome the inclusion in the performance judges' list of long-term professional performers who have been successfully judging ABPA performance competitions for many years. In such cases this would only require the poet's permission. If you wish to be included please let the Secretary know. Currently the upgraded ABPA Guidelines for Australian Bush Poetry Competitions and for Yarn Spinning, formulated by Graeme Johnson, Glenny Palmer and Gregory North, together with relevant assessment and rank order tally sheets are being examined by the Committee. As soon as they have been appraised and finalised they will be made available to all members via the website.

It is hoped that we can encourage non-ABPA-run festival co-ordinators to adopt ABPA standards. We may not be successful but at least we will have a firm basis from which to try.

## NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

We are very pleased to announce that Jan Lewis has consented to hold the ABPA National Performance and Written Championships in Corryong in 2015. After a three year lapse, we will again have a very appropriate venue where all the skills and facets of competition can be enjoyed and developed in the conducive atmosphere of The Man from Snowy River festival. We thank Jan for taking on this sizeable task and we sincerely hope that members will support her endeavours and help to make this a successful event and an on-going prospect.

## NETWORKING

The ABPA is utilizing electronic media to expand its communication network. The Committee has already conducted three meetings, two of these successfully via SKYPE. Further in this regard, we thank Maureen Clifford for the well-presented ABPA Facebook page and for the inclusion of Bush Poetry in her Australian Times on-line magazine. We also thank Committee Member Wally Finch for his supportive and informative monthly E-Muse newsletters.

## AWARD WINNING POETRY ON THE WEBSITE

So many members have responded positively to the collection of Award Winning Bush Poems now available on the ABPA website and these poems have already been read and enjoyed by many within Australia and in other parts of the world.

This collection has been compiled by Brenda Joy over the last three years and includes those first- prize-winning poems (where the poet's permission has been given to publish) in ABPA affiliated or approved competitions. To date there are 199 poems from 46 different poets for the years 2008 to 2013 inclusive. The collection is on-going. Last year Manfred Vijars put poems from 2008 onto the website and the new webmaster Greg North, with great speed and enthusiasm, has completed the transfer of all 199 poems to the Poetry section.

To have a collection of modern, adjudged prize winning poems from ABPA members so readily available, again links in with the ABPA's objective to be the principle body for upholding and expanding our unique Australian cultural heritage of storytelling through the rhyme and metre of the Bush Poetry genre. In addition to the more traditional bush subjects, poems in this collection include the environmental and social concerns of both country and city showing that our contemporary writers are dealing with the issues that are pertinent to Australian life today. Thanks go to Brenda, Greg and Manfred and to all the poets who have willingly shared their work for the promotion and benefit of the ABPA.

My personal thanks go to the Committee as a whole for their co-operative, democratic spirit and in particular to the Treasurer/Webmaster, the Editor and the Secretary for their tireless efforts in keeping the channels of communication flowing.

## PERFORMER'S AWARD

Planning has commenced to have an annual professional performing Bush Poet's (tribute) award. As a preliminary step, your ideas are welcome on what to call this Award. Please send your suggestions to the Secretary. My personal thanks go to the Committee as a whole for their co-operative, democratic spirit and in particular to the Treasurer/Webmaster, the Editor and the Secretary for their tireless efforts in keeping the channels of communication flowing.

Your valued input is always welcome.

In poetry

Hal

# ABPA Magazine Advertising Rates

## Black and White Ads

Full page \$80

Half Page \$40

Quarter Page or less \$20

## Full Colour Ads (Space limited)

Full Page \$200

Half Page \$100

Quarter Page or less \$60

## Poets Calendar and Regular Events free (one or two lines only)

*To help offset costs, articles regarding a festival or event would be appreciated if accompanied by a paid Ad.*

*Send all details in plain text or PDF Format to editor@abpa.org.au*

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or via Direct Debit to ABPA Account  
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ABPA Facebook Page.

Australian Bush Poets Association

Also find and join us on the World Wide Web

**www.abpa.org.au**

## New Information for ABPA

### Accredited Judges and Judging

After last issues Judges Form inserts, and the great response received, the Committee have asked me to let you know that all new forms and Judge's Lists are now available for your perusal at our website

**www.abpa.org.au**

## Proposed Performer of the Year Award

Planning is underway to have an ongoing ABPA Professional Bush Poet Performer of the Year Award with nominations and voting coming from the membership.

As a preliminary step, suggestions would be welcome on what to call this award. Please send your ideas to the

Secretary,

**secretary@abpa.org.au** or to

**ABPA Secretary, PO Box 1727, Charters Towers, Qld. 4820.**

# ABPA Committee Members 2014

## Executive:

President -- Hal Pritchard hal@abpa.org.au

Vice-President -- Graeme Johnson  
therhymerfromryde@bigpond.com

Secretary -- Brenda-Joy Pritchard secretary@abpa.org.au

Treasurer -- Gregory North treasurer@abpa.org.au

## Members on Committee:

...John Peel peel\_jg@hotmail.com

...Robyn Sykes robynsykespoet@gmail.com

...Carol Reffold patchworkpoet@hotmail.com

## ABPA State Delegates:

NSW -- Tom McIlveen portalarms@gmail.com

Queensland -- Wally Finch d.dropbears@gmail.com

South Australia -- to be confirmed

Tasmania -- Phillip Rush auspoems@bigpond.com

Victoria -- Jan Lewis lintonandjan@poetfarm.com.au

West Australia -- Irene Connor iconnor21@wn.com.au

ABPA Editor -- Neil McArthur editor@abpa.org.au

Web Administrator -- Greg North treasurer@abpa.org.au

## MAKING IN-ROADS

Outside Bush Poetry circles there is often a tendency amongst academics and writers to value 'free verse' over the melodic flow achieved through the skills of rhyme and metre.

Being asked to do a workshop on Bush Poetry for the Fellowship of Australian Writers, was a wonderful opportunity for Brenda Joy to present our genre both as a challenging written art form and as an enjoyable medium of 'cutting edge' (to quote one participant) modern entertainment.

Brenda is the 'FAWQ Member of the Month' for April featured in their newsletter and on Facebook. This has enabled her to promote the ABPA and to express her heartfelt belief that Bush Poetry, with all its creative dimensions and the scope that life as a modern day Bush Poet offers, is a wonderful way to help preserve and expand our unique Australian cultural and language traditions.

Who knows, we might even get some converts.

Hal Pritchard



*Australia Remembers. In 1995 Australians celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The following poem was written in memory of all who served and died for this great country. John Joseph Daniel was an uncle of the author.*

## NEWS FROM THE WAR

© Frank Daniel Canowindra 1995

Grandmother stood on the verandah,  
her eyes gazing out to the west.  
Somewhere out there in a faraway land  
were her sons with Australia's best.

Daring young men who answered the call,  
with their mates they rallied to war.  
Young boys ever keen, one just seventeen  
who had not left the old home before.

Daily she watched and she waited.  
She knew the days would be long,  
and her prayers were never failing;  
she prayed they both would be strong.

The road from town was a hard one  
where gravel and stone paved the way.  
Daily she trudged that mile for the mail  
to help fill in her long day.

Tragic news finally came in the figure  
of the Preacher who walked out from town.  
She saw him from her kitchen window  
and slowly on a chair she sat down.

Mrs. Lees saw him passing her cottage,  
she too read the sign oh so well.  
She hurried along to Grandmother's house  
to comfort Grandma for a spell.

The message he bore was bad news –  
he had no reason to call otherwise.  
'twas news of the death of John Joseph  
that brought heavy tears to her eyes.

Now the view from the old front verandah  
sees a grave in a far foreign land,  
and the grieving hearts in the family  
are proud of this great Aussie man.



## Voices In The Silence

© Ron Stevens

The silence isn't total, for my breathing frets the air  
beyond me to the others who are here today to share  
a tribute to the fallen from Australia's many wars.  
We're keenly concentrating on two minutes silent pause.

Now other sounds develop as the seconds tick away.  
From distant fields of battle they are seeking us today.  
I listen, really listen, to identify each one  
by diction and expressions as a dinkum Aussie son.

Or daughter: Bangka Island, where our nursing sisters slain  
with warrior precision, breathe their final words again.  
As blood exalts the shallows, they are uttering goodbyes  
to comrades, distant parents, as Geneva's promise dies.

Conventions hold no power over wartime Japanese,  
as other voices filter through dense jungle canopies.  
They're reassuring comrades on Sandakan's deadly trail  
and tending to their dying on the woeful Burma rail.

A captured song's still keening from the tortured Libyan dunes -  
'My Lilli of the lamplight' which is merged with other tunes -  
'So keep the home fires burning' and 'We were only nineteen',  
plus 'Waltzing Matilda' from every widespread battle scene.

From Poziers and Buna, from Afghanistan, Iraq,  
clear phrases meshed like cross-fire are now ricocheting back.  
'We are the Rats' rings proudly from a trench outside Tobruk,  
'the going's tough but, face it, things were crook in Tallarook!'

Though cyberspace is cluttered with the dross we spread today,  
you'll hear the diggers' voices if your heart's attuned that way.  
From flak-torn skies in Europe, from lost ships in Sunday Strait,  
from Vietnam, Korea, if you listen, you'll hear 'Mate'

You'll hear 'Up there Cazaly!', 'Where the hell is Uncle Sam?'  
'He's gamer than Ned Kelly', 'Shot through like a Bondi tram.'  
And 'Mate' comes through in triumph, in compassion, mortal pain.  
It's 'Mate' from Isurava and it's 'Mate' and 'Mate' again.

*(1st prize, 10th Nandewar poetry competition, Narrabri NSW, 2012)*



# WINNING POEM OF THE 2014 BLACKENED BILLY VERSE COMPETITION

## REMEMBER?

By Milton Taylor

"Remember our mother?" With gentle demand  
He fondled my fingers and squeezed on my hand.  
"Of course I do, sweetie." I smoothed back his hair.  
"Remember our mother? Remember her, Claire?"

Remember our mother? I couldn't you see,  
For William's past eighty and I'm thirty three.  
He's suffering dementia, life's horrible curse.  
He's frail and bedridden. And me? I'm a nurse.

Dear Willie's a favourite old patient of mine.  
He thinks I'm his sister and that suits me fine.  
When seeking assurance for 'some time, somewhere,'  
He ends with the question, "Remember that, Claire?"

My proper name's Kath and it's okay with me  
If our Bill thinks I'm Claire, - well, it's Claire I can be.  
I play out my part in this innocent game  
Where I'm Claire for the purpose. And what's in a name?

"You shouldn't have favourites," they said from the start.  
"Their passing will hurt you and weigh down your heart  
And wrench your emotions while leaving you scarred.  
Step back, keep your distance, it's not all that hard."

It's not all that hard? Oh, that's simple to say  
To someone who deals with them day after day  
And shares in the details of memories set free.  
You shouldn't have favourites! That's them telling me!

Let them sit with Willie and not be affected  
By flashbacks and stories and yarns recollected  
Of school friends and workmates, in hard times and fair.  
Let them turn their backs on, "Remember that, Claire?"

Remember? Remember? I don't - yet I do,  
For when Will reminisces, I travel back too,  
Where spaces and places of muddled recall  
Give comfort; and he and I don't mind at all.

"Remember our brother? Our big brother Jack?  
He went to the war, Claire, and never came back.  
Poor Mum was heartbroken long after he'd died,  
But hid it completely; our mum never cried.



"Remember the fishing hole, mucking around  
And ducking each other? We all should have drowned!  
And trapping them bunnies and shooting with dad?  
Oh, those were the days, sis. What great times we had."

And thus it continued, our daily routine  
Of William recalling the things that we'd seen  
With sister supportive in all that he said  
Whilst fondling his fingers and stroking his head.

And comments were made that his spirits would lift  
When I came in each day at the start of my shift.  
He'd spark up and softly, contentedly say  
"Oh, Claire love, I knew that you'd come back today."

Late yesterday evening I said my goodbye  
And he spoke with that faraway look in his eye.  
"I hear mother calling. I hear her! Don't you?  
I have to go, Claire, and you'd better come too."

"I'll see you tomorrow, my darlin', don't fret.  
Our mummy says she doesn't want us there yet.  
She'll let us know later just when we should come.  
Let's wait 'til she calls us, then run home to mum."

But I knew in my heart that he'd pass on that night  
To a mother's warm welcome and all would be right.  
So I squeezed on his hand and I smoothed back his hair  
As he whispered, "It's mother! Remember her, Claire?"

*As per Milton's request, Queensland Champion Poet, Kathie Priestly from the Townsville Bush Poets Mates, recited Milton's winning poem in exceptional fashion at the Awards!*

# First Dolphin in Space

© Stephen Whiteside 04.01.2014

The dolphins got together, and began to form a plan.  
They'd been watching very closely the activities of Man.  
"Let's put a dolphin up in space!" an eager dolphin cried.  
"Don't say it can't be done! We will not know until we've tried!"

"Animals in space?" said one. "There's nothing new in that.  
We've had both dogs and monkeys, and most probably a cat.  
We're just another animal. We prove that we can fly,  
And none will give a second thought. They will not bat an eye."

"No, no. You do not understand. All that was done by Man.  
We'll do it by ourselves, you see. I'm positive we can.  
We'll build a rocket secretly, upon the ocean floor.  
We'll prove that we are bright, and not be servants any more."

That got the dolphins thinking. There was certainly no doubt.  
If they could build a rocket, it would pack a lot of clout,  
But it wouldn't be an easy thing. They started taking stock,  
To see what could be fashioned out of seaweed, sand and rock.

It took them two whole summers, and the winter in between,  
But at last they built a rocket a delightful shade of green.  
They all drew seaweed straws to see which ones would form the crew,  
But those that were not going still had tons of work to do.

At last the day arrived when they might finish their disgrace.  
Man's equal - clever dolphins blasting dolphins into space.  
They lit the fuse, then swam well back, with flippers held to ears,  
And watched the rocket rise amidst a throng of squeaky cheers.

The rocket was a great success. It lifted with a roar,  
And headed for the heavens as Apollo'd done before,  
And at the rocket's tip, within a capsule dim and dank,  
Were three courageous dolphins in a tiny little tank.

They weren't content with that, of course. They wanted equal standing.  
They all donned special space suits for the fateful lunar landing.  
It took a gentle touch to place the tank on foreign soil,  
But they did it - well rewarded for their many hours of toil.

So then they headed homeward in triumphant frame of mind.  
What welcome mat awaited them, what greeting would they find?  
Alas, they met with silence, for it seemed Man hadn't seen  
The clever dolphin rocket, a delightful shade of green.

At first they felt quite angry, but they schemed and planned once more.  
"Man thinks he is so clever, but we'll even up the score!  
We'll put a dolphin up on Mars. Yes, we will win that race,  
And that will surely wipe the sickly smile from Man's smug face!"

So that is what they did, you see. They worked with might and main,  
While Man did very little, being arrogant, and vain.  
Then when, at last, Man laboured in a fast, belated burst  
To put a man on Mars, he found...the dolphins got there first!

## Children's Poetry with Stephen Whiteside



Go to Stephen's Bwebsite and read about his  
upcoming book for children as well as many other  
Poems and Articles aimed at Children

<http://www.stephenwhiteside.com.au>

### **Simpson and his Donkey**

© Stephen Whiteside 04.03.09

There was once a man named Simpson,  
And he fought in World War 1.  
He became a famous hero,  
Though he never fired a gun.

He had a trusty donkey  
Who was always by his side.  
They searched for wounded soldiers,  
And they offered them a ride.

For many days they walked the hills,  
Assisting Anzacs hurt,  
While all around the bullets whistled,  
Kicking up the dirt.

It seemed they were invincible.  
It seemed their lives were charmed,  
As back and forth they walked across  
The battlefields unharmed.

Simpson and his donkey, though,  
Their luck it could not last,  
And one day Simpson copped one  
And, alas, he breathed his last,

But man and beast, they'd saved so many  
At Gallipoli,  
That now their names will live forever  
Down through history.

And what, then, of the donkey?  
I'm very pleased to tell  
It survived the heat of battle,  
And was cared for very well!



# Vale Kym Eitel



February 2014, the day we lost a dear friend, a wonderfully talented Bush Poet and a lady who dedicated herself to the role of ABPA Treasurer for some years. Her loving husband Frank, and family lost a great deal more. We offer her family our most sincere condolences on their loss but at the same time thank them for letting us be a part of Kym's life also through her effervescent personality and the wonderful Poetry/Prose that she produced in her all too short a time with us. Her friend and fellow poet, Bob Pacey from nearby Yeppoon (Kym was a Rockhampton girl) represented her Bush Poetry family at her funeral in a manner that Kym would have been so proud of and we thank him sincerely on behalf of those poets around Australia who could not get there. We love you Kymmie and you will forever be in our hearts. Thanks for all you have done to enrich our lives. Kym was a masterful writer, and below is one of my favourite poems that she penned to remind everyone of what a talent we have lost.

Neil McArthur  
ABPA Editor

## TAFFY WAITS

© Kym Eitel

(Winner, 2011 'Silver Brumby Award', The Man from Snowy River Bush Festival, Corryong, Victoria, and 'Oracles of the Bush' - Serious Section, Tenterfield, NSW.)

By the gumtree in the paddock, Taffy stands.  
A handsome palomino, fifteen hands.  
He hears his owner calling  
so he canters to the gates.  
For his boy to take him riding, Taffy waits.

The Remount Section's looking. Taffy's sold.  
He's strong and fit with coat and heart of gold.  
He's led aboard a steam ship.  
Taffy's tense but braves the fates.  
Across the sea he travels. Taffy waits.

His rider's Corporal Edwards, Taffy's friend.  
They form a special bond no war can end.  
Each day brings blood and battle,  
lack of food emaciates,  
but at night he rests by starlight. Taffy waits.

Through explosions, bullets, shrapnel, Taffy strides,  
hears Edwards curse the Turkish as he rides.  
Then a scream, and Edwards falling  
as a bomb shell detonates.  
By his wounded rider's body, Taffy waits.

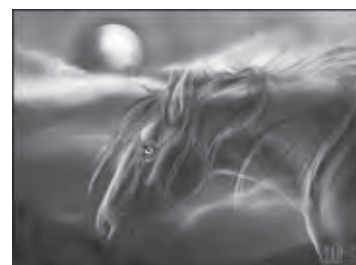
Edwards reaches out a hand and Taffy neighs.  
His instincts spur to flee this blood-filled blaze.  
Taffy's loyal to his partner;  
nearby fighting escalates  
but he won't desert his rider. Taffy waits.

His muscles twitch with fear then Taffy sees  
his master rising slowly to his knees.  
Despite the crack of gunfire,  
in the smoke-filled hell he hates,  
and despite grenades exploding, Taffy waits.

His eyes are ringed with white, poor Taffy's scared  
but thankful that his rider has been spared.  
Heroic hoof beats gallop  
through the enemy to mates.  
By the canvas tent with crosses, Taffy waits.

He hears the war has ended. Taffy sighs.  
But 'home' is not an option. Edwards cries.  
Each man must shoot his mount now,  
and in spite of mass debates,  
for a single, silver bullet, Taffy waits.

In the peaceful grass in Heaven, Taffy rests.  
Three hundred thousand horses, other guests.  
But he's waiting for two people  
as he stands by pearly gates.  
For his boy and Corporal Edwards, Taffy waits.



# Three Little Words

by Kym Eitel

Nine years ago, three little words changed my life. Twice. The first group of words brought my world tumbling down and the second group empowered me to begin rebuilding.

"You've got cancer," said my doctor across the desk. Three little words. Three horrible words.

"But I'm only 38! My daughters are only 12, 13 and 14. I don't have time for cancer." I started listing off all the things that kept me busy, as though that might convince him to change his diagnosis.

"You're going to have to slow down and deal with this," was his advice.

"Nope, I've got things to do. The cancer will just have to come with me. If it can't keep up, it can bugger off."

But as I lay in hospital after my mastectomy, it suddenly hit me. Cancer was a bigger, scarier opponent than I could take on. Cancer kills people.

A pretty, young nurse came in. "How are you today, Mrs Eitel?" she asked brightly. I guess the look on my face said it all. "Don't be sad," she chirped, "It's just cancer." Three little words. It's just cancer. It's JUST cancer? Doesn't she understand what 'cancer' means? Goodness me, what an insensitive nurse! But to my surprise, she explained it to me in a way I'd never thought of before.

"Don't you know what 'cancer' stands for?" she smiled as she spoke. "It's short for 'CAN CERTAINLY be fixed!'"

It was a light bulb moment. Suddenly, the big, scary monster became manageable. Those three little words "It's just cancer" flipped my entire mindset about life. Why was I wallowing in self-pity when this was something that could be fixed? It was just like a broken leg. It slows a person down for a while, but then they soon get on their feet again. I can beat this. I will beat this!

I allowed myself time to recover after operations, radiation and chemotherapy, kind of like a little caterpillar weaving a protective cocoon, and when I emerged, I had transformed into a stronger, more determined, more focused and more grounded person.

I realized that we don't have 'forever' to finish things, and we won't always have tomorrow. I started to understand this mind-boggling concept of 'mortality'. The simple fact is - we are all going to die. Breathing one day, not breathing the next. Deaddy-bones. Toes up. Carked it. Use by date - expired! Worm poo.

It was like a jab in the ribs reminding me that life is short. At least I have been given time to finish things. Look at Lady Di and Steve Irwin. They didn't get an extra month, week, day or even minute to say their goodbyes.

One lady had tears in her eyes as she asked me how I could be so happy when I had a terminal illness. I told her I don't regard cancer as terminal, it's just something I have to deal with and get over. Isn't life itself terminal?

So how has having cancer changed me (other than having to control a fake boob that has a mind of its own)?

Oh wow, where do I begin? In some ways it has made me speed things up, and in some ways, I have slowed down. I wrote out my bucket list (which is really just a list of goals with "before I die" written at the end of it). Hopefully, when I fall off my perch, I will have ticked off a few things, but I'm finding that as fast as I tick things off, I'm writing more things on!

I wanted to publish a book (doesn't everybody?). I am about to publish my fourth book of bush poetry. Tick, tick, tick, almost-tick.

I wanted to travel overseas, and I did. I competed in the International Dragon Boat Festival in Canada. Don't be impressed. The only qualification competitors needed was to be a breast cancer survivor. Age, fitness or ability had nothing to do with it. But we had fun and I get to brag that I was an international athlete. Tick.

I wanted to cuddle a baby orangutan, so I went to Thailand. Didn't find an orangutan, but I swam with an elephant in the River Kwai and bottle fed a baby tiger. Close enough for me - tick, tick.

I wanted (and needed) to lose weight cos I was looking like Chubby McFatfat. Oh dear, some goals are harder than others. But I lost 40+kgs. Big, fat tick!

I wanted to live long enough to meet my grandchildren. So far, I have three gorgeous grandies. Two blue ticks and a pink tick.

I don't let a minute of any day go by without having achieved something. Like I said above, in some ways I've slowed down. To achieve something doesn't mean you have to be flat-chat busy all the time. Sometimes just finding a few minutes in your day, that don't require thought or activity, is an achievement.

Sitting on the verandah on a swinging chair, milo in hand, dog by your feet, listening to the birds sing ... aaahhh, beautiful! Watching as the sunset's brilliant pinks and vibrant oranges, rimmed with a glimmering edge of gold, fade into warm crimsons and pastel pinks, then melt into soft blues and greys, before disappearing into the inky veil of night ... amazing! Listening to the delightful sounds of grandies giggle and laugh as they spill eleventy gazillion lego blocks (and not getting up tight about having to pick them up after the little darlings leave) ... fan-bloody-tastic! I learned to relax and enjoy the moment. Tick.

*Continued.....*



It's all about reprioritizing. Why use up valuable time doing unimportant things, when there are more fun things to do? You'll never read on my headstone, "Wishes she had spent more time vacuuming"! But I have also achieved things that weren't on my bucket list. I learned to say my own groups of three words. "Sorry, I can't." "No thank you." "Nope, not today." I used to be a push-over, feeling obliged to do everything people asked of me. Treasurer of this, Secretary of that, tuckshop lady, reading group organizer, book club co-ordinator, you name it, I did it. But not any more, it's time someone else stepped up and took on those jobs. I'm on a short fuse, so I've gotta worry about me now. Sorry!

So what am I really trying to say here? I'm saying that every down has an up. Every bad has a good. Every negative has a positive. Every problem offers a new opportunity. Maybe my attitude is a bit Pollyanna, but I chose to make the best of my situation. Some people chose to be a victim and whine on about it, even years later. Why chose to perpetuate misery? I don't get it. Have you read this poem before? I don't know who wrote it, but I think it's a beauty ...

As two men stared through prison bars,  
the first saw mud, but the other saw stars.

Same situation, but their attitude makes all the difference. Yes, I've been dealing with cancer on and off for nine years this August. Happy anniversary to me. Yes, having cancer sucks, but I don't let it control my life. I give it the time that it needs, then I get on with having fun. Perhaps I'm not on a short fuse, perhaps my fuse is a mile long. Who knows? But I'm still smiling, still laughing, still dancing. Three little words - tick, tick, tick!!!

*Kym's brave battle with cancer continued until she sadly passed away on the night of Mon 24th February in Hospital, according to her wishes. Kymmie had been spending the last few months with her loving family at home. Still smiling, still living and still 'ticking'. We will all miss you greatly Kymmie but what you have left behind with your family and your writings will forever remind us how fortunate we were to have known you and had you in our lives. And even after reaching heaven you still get to tell your story. And we are all the richer for it.*



*Left Top - Kym's love for horses was legendary and here last book was a tribute to the animal she loved through Poetry.*

*Left Bottom - The unique weather event captured a horseshoe and map of Australia formations the day after Kym's passing.*

*Top Right - An always smiling Kymmie as we all came to know and love her.*

# Meet Kevin Pye From Mudgee

Mudgee poet Kevin Pye was nominated for the 20th Australian Bush Laureate Awards. Kevin was nominated in Book of the Year category for his publication, *Lawson Country*.

Organisers said the 2014 Australian Bush Laureate Awards had one of the most competitive fields ever seen. Almost 100 poets and lyric writers from all over Australia submitted entries.

This is Kevin's second nomination for the award, which are regarded as one Australia's peak bush poetry events. He was also a finalist in the 2013 Australian Bush Laureate Awards in the Song Lyric category for *Rivermen*, which was recorded by Mick Fetch on his CD, 'Homecoming'.

## JIM

©Kevin Pye.

He went away to fight a war, like other soldiers did  
Because a marble with a date, filled birthdays on a grid.  
He wore his khaki uniform, so proud, with polished brass  
And all the town saluted him—in hope the war would pass.  
With other mates he marched away to serve his country's call —  
His family stood with glistening eyes—their boy had grown so tall.

In Paddy Fields of Vietnam they sheltered in the tents;  
They crawled through jungles on their knees—we wondered at the sense!

In time some sons came home to us, to sleep and take their leave,  
Farewelled by pomp and volley shots as mothers wept to grieve.

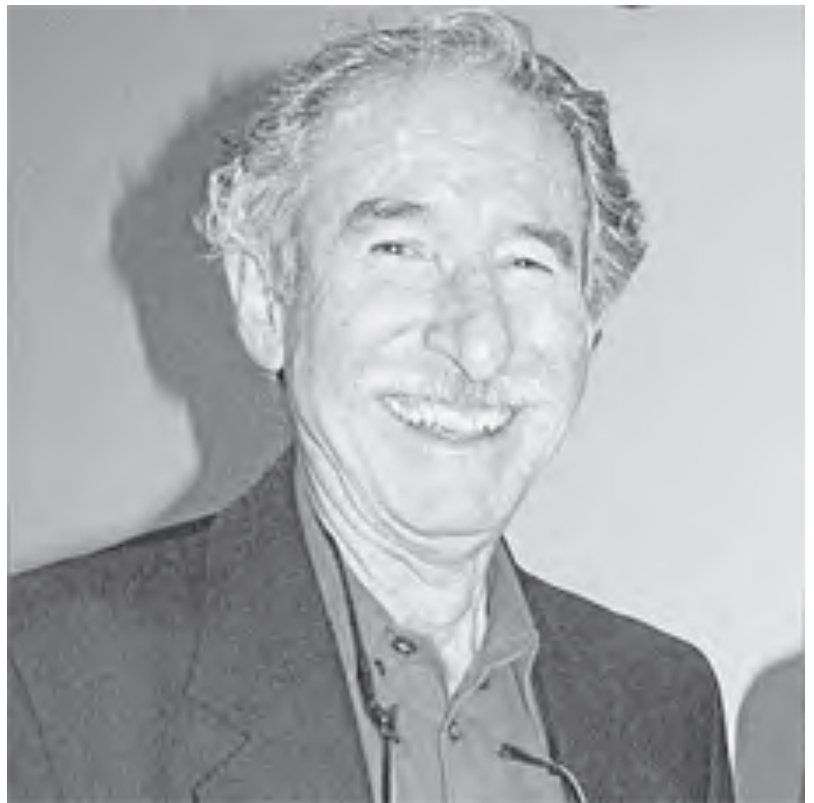
When he came back he'd served his time, a soldier home from war—  
A different man with moods that swing—a stranger, grim and raw.

So many husbands, brothers, sons, seem haunted just like him;  
The battlefields still scream to life in minds of boys like Jim.  
Today he sits to drink more beer—he'd rather be alone;  
His thoughts bring on a state of mind no doctor would condone.  
I'll take a chance and join him there, I'll try to change the scene—  
Perhaps for just an hour today, he'll forget where he has been.

## Dear Children,

©Kevin Pye.

I fought for you, children, saw horrors of war  
So you might run freely, in peace evermore.  
Treasure your freedom, your responsible rights  
And humbly say "thank you", when you fly your kites.  
Cherish such pleasures that I never knew,  
Be wise with your choices that you now pursue.  
Each Anzac oration will laud my brave deeds,  
Put aside differences that contempt surely breeds.  
Offer prayers for my soul at peace with the world,  
Give respect to your flag, a symbol unfurled.  
Be reverent this day, just once every year  
And show me your honour is patently clear.  
Children, give me this day, just once every year—  
It's Anzac Day children—my spirit is near.  
Yours faithfully,  
A soldier who served.



## HE'S COMING HOME.

©Kevin Pye.

Each day she held his photo and gazed upon his face,  
Her boy in khaki uniform was holding pride of place.  
As his father went before him, he joined the army ranks  
To serve his country overseas, with never thought of thanks.

He had never known his father who served in World War Two;  
He died somewhere in France they say, left a son he never knew.  
Perhaps adventure lured the boy for debt he might repay,  
The reason that he signed for Dad, to wear a brown beret.

Mother's anguish was reflected in the weekly notes she kept  
And he thought he noticed tear stains on pages where she wept.  
She so often asked the question, "How soon will you take leave?"  
But she never wrote the reason of why she sat to grieve.

She'd kept herself for her two men and daily she would pray  
That the second one might answer, "I'm coming home today."  
He read her letters opportune, unable to reply  
With the news that she was hoping but he couldn't tell her why.

In strange writing unexpected, one arrived yesterday,  
Penned to him by her neighbour friend who lived across the way.  
As he read it to his Major, it was then he realised  
He was needed by the bedside of the Mum he idolised.

"My Special Leave requested Sir, a failing heart can't wait."  
Although he took his leave that day, it was a day too late.  
The nurse spoke softly, hand in hand, the patient pale and grey—  
"Sleep peacefully—your soldier boy is coming home today."



# The Australian Bush Poets Association

A compilation of the history of the ABPA

gleaned from the pages of the associations magazines and meetings since 1994

fda70930@bigpond.net.au

by FRANK DANIEL



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## CAMPBELL IRVING 28 YEARS ON THE ROAD 1986-2014

Campbell Irving was born in New Zealand's Bay of Islands, first discovered a thousand years ago by the great Polynesian navigator Kupe, who named the islands Aotearoa, 'Land of the Long White Cloud'. Campbell Irving's first real taste of Australia came from a visit to his homeland by the 'Bushwackers' in 1973. Two years later he migrated and settled in Sydney where he continued working as a storeman for his former NZ employers Reckitt and Coleman.

Whilst gainfully employed, he studied Australian Folklore until, in time honoured capitalist tradition, he was retrenched and decided to hit the road with his swag in search of another art and another language, making Kapunda SA his first festival in 1986.

With no fixed place of abode Campbell made his headquarters at the home of a friend at Truro in South Australia for a number of years, returning to this address a couple of times annually to collect his mail and tend to other business matters. Currently his mailing address is in far north Queensland.

Campbell is a genuine, unforgettable and fascinating bush personality, a bush poet, busker, author, writer, larrikin and swag-



gie; is larger than life and continues an oral tradition stemming virtually from white settlement in Australia, telling stories and reciting.

Campbell is very serious when it comes to keeping our traditions of bush verse and performance alive. He keeps the works of the old masters (Paterson, Lawson, Dennis and Harrington to mention only a few) in the public eye with a repertoire approaching two-hundred poems, waxes lyrical about sleeping under the stars and writes his own verse in traditional style

When not performing in concert, at a festival or as a busker on the streets, Campbell can be found engrossed in books at a local library researching and building his stock of Australian cultural heritage, and meticu-

lously recording his travels.

Campbell's career highlights are far too numerous to mention. He is a much travelled keeping the tradition of 'Waltzing Matilda' and the character of the swagman alive with his blackened billy and his battered swag. He can be found at the likes of the 'Swagman's Festival at Milparinka, or Nymagee in the backblocks of NSW, Uluru and the Top End Festival in the Northern Territory, Winton and Gympie in Queensland, Innaminka and Wakefield in South Australia, Port Fairy or Maldon in Victoria, or the

National Folk Festival in Canberra as well as all the other capital cities. He is a familiar figure in Tamworth at the Country Music Festival where he won the Peel Street Buskers competition in 1988. Not all the appreciative coin thrown into his billy-can whilst busking has been for personal gain, his gestures towards charities are immeasurable with one big example being his donation of \$1,500.00 to the Royal Flying Doctor Service following the 140 miles trek from Longreach to Winton as part of the Commemorative Swagman's Walk in 1995.

About his own country, Campbell says it's 'too damn small for serious swagging', and that's why he migrated to Australia in 1975.

## CARMEL RANDLE

is a retired school teacher, an Eisteddfod Adjudicator, who now indulges her love of poetry by writing and publishing it, as well as visiting schools to help keep alive the great Australian tradition of speaking poetry aloud for fun! She lives on Queensland's Darling Downs, along with various horses, some retired, and some being trained by her daughter as endurance horses.

She has travelled widely throughout Australia, and has thrice performed at the Cowboy Poetry Festivals of the north-west USA. Carmel's poetry has won her many awards, including Winton's prestigious "Bronze Swagman" twice and the Tamworth "Blackened Billy" twice. She is also known for her Performance Competition successes.

Carmel was the editor of, and contributor to, the very successful series *The*

*Co-operative Books of Verse for Aussie Children*. She has published four anthologies of her own poetry. Her textbook, *Help! - A Handbook for Writers and Performers of Rhymed Poetry*, is used widely by schools and writers' groups in Australia.

She also organized the Poets at the Carnival in 1994, and again in 1995?

Carmel assisted the Queensland Events Corporation with the Bush Poetry component of Winton's 1995 Waltzing Matilda Centenary Celebrations where over eighty poets gathered for the two week long festival.

For the seventieth anniversary of the last run of Cobb and Co's coaches from Surat to Yulebah in August 1924. Carmel, with the help of ABPA secretary, Ron Selby, compiled a book 'Cobb and Co - through the Eyes of a Poet', brought about by the high number of entries in the



Battered Bugle written poetry awards at Surat. In 1995 Carmel travelled to Corryong in Victoria for the Centenary of 'The Man from Snowy River and other Verses' by A B 'Banjo' Paterson.

# OUR SPIRITUAL EARTH MOTHER

(This Ancient Land)

© Campbell Irving. 21.2.1989

I think of our mother, she's the rock, stone and earth –  
Our spiritual mother, who has raised us from birth.  
Our spiritual earth Mother, this great ancient land.  
She is the dreaming, she's the red dust and sand  
All clothed in rainforests, she's the rock, stone and earth:  
She's our spiritual earth mother who has raised us from birth.

In her valleys I see the red kangaroos in the dawn  
As the birds in the trees sing a new day is born,  
And too, the sun woman, as she crosses the sky  
With her blazing fire sticks as each night passes by.  
But I worship the dreaming, she's the rock, stone and earth:  
She's our spiritual earth mother who had raised us from birth.

I see the lightning from her mountains: I hear thunder, see rain  
Filling all of her rivers like the blood in our veins  
I see the greenery of her rain forests, from the caves up so high  
And the feasting of the animals where the waterholes lie  
In this land of our dreaming, she's the rock, stone and earth:  
She's our spiritual earth mother who had raised us from birth.

I cherish our earth mother – the mountains – the trees  
Both watching as we dance for her our corroborees  
Our spiritual earth mother – the brolga – the emu  
Who is dancing in the firelight to the didgeridu  
A sacred love to her children, she's the rock, stone and earth,  
She's our spiritual earth mother, who had raised us from birth.

In the night I see the moon and bright stars in the sky  
And the glowing of red embers, as the fires now die  
I hear the faraway call of curlew in the night  
For the dearly departed in the new dawning light  
Then I weeped for the children she raised and the children she  
bred,  
Who's blood stains the dust sand now all covered in red!

Still I cry for her children, the sorrow – the pain –  
And for their spiritual earth Mother who was broken for gain  
By the rape of the forests and big iron drill  
Of the mining corporations who are mining at will  
In this land of our dreaming, she's the rock, stone and earth:  
She's our spiritual earth mother who had raised us from birth.

In this land of our dreaming, she's the rock, stone and earth  
She's our spiritual earth mother who had raised us from birth.

## **THE LIARS** by Marco Giori

*Who are these great poets and what wisdom can they know  
They dwell beyond reality - no tangibles to show.  
They lust for pain - their purpose seldom ventures very far  
Such strange and restless creatures - I wonder who they are?*

*We poets are the divers delving deep beneath your skin  
Searching for the treasure chest of passion locked within.  
Declaring that mere mortal wealth is nothing to behold  
For they who tap the soul of man shall have their pot of gold.*

*We are they who tempt you as our spirits rise to speak  
Revealing through our humble veils the fame we surely seek.  
Leaving you the listener with a sparkle in your eyes  
And the knowledge - dare we doubt it - that a Poet never lies!*

# VETERAN

© Carmel Randle, PRESTON Q. 6.5.96

I met her on a property out Muttaborra way -  
A gentle little woman, and she bade me soft, "G'day!"  
We talked about the weather -- mourned the drought, the dust,  
the heat  
The price of wool, the price of hay --but I read signs of defeat;  
And her blue eyes scanned the paddock as we stopped the while  
to yarn,  
'Til I said, "I know you're still in drought, but how's life on the  
farm?"  
I thought she wouldn't answer 'cause her furrowed brow grew  
deep,  
But she made a simple statement -- "Well, we had to shoot the  
sheep."

"Shoot the sheep?" I echoed, and she sadly shook her head.  
"We had no grass to feed them. It was starve -- or shoot 'em  
dead.  
We'd set off every morning with guns and ammunition  
To put them from their misery. They were in no condition  
To truck off to the markets where the price that they would bring  
Wouldn't pay for trucking, so we couldn't do a thing  
But shoot them in the paddock -- still, it haunts me in my sleep!  
I curse this flamin'drought because we had to shoot the sheep!

Some of them I reared myself -- I'd fed three times a day,  
Then coaxed them through the dry times feeding grain, and meal  
and hay.  
And even in the paddocks, well, they'd run right up to me --  
I was their'long-lost mother ewe'as far as THEY could see!  
For three whole days I kept it up, but when it came to four  
I couldn't face their trusting eyes, or prime a gun once more.  
For I found that I was haunted by a gruesome grim refrain --  
'Load and shoot!' and 'Load and shoot!' beat through my battered  
brain.

My husband had no option but to carry on alone,  
But our sweet young teenage daughter, whom we'd had to bring  
back home  
Said, 'I'll help you, Daddy!' -- Now she's crying in her sleep.  
It's a dammed hard education when you have to shoot your  
sheep!  
We tried to save some young ewes that we knew would drop a  
lamb --  
When the chips are down you always try to do the best you can --  
But conditions only worsened, and we didn't get the rain,  
So we had to go out loading guns and shooting once again!

Y'know, one day the rains WILL come, and green will grow the  
grass.  
The terrors of the drought time --like these shootings -- will be  
passed.  
Now I understand the trauma of a soldier wracked by War

## **'Me 'n' U'**

Yes, ev'ryone is diffrent,  
we are, all of us, unique.  
Like, ev'ryone's an island,  
isolated, so to speak.  
Take cannibals, for instance,

they, like us, have special  
needs.  
One cannibal, a vegan,  
would eat nobody but  
Swedes!  
Tee hee, Saul Veriwell





## ELLIS CAMPBELL

Now in his 87th year, Ellis Campbell is extremely well known in bush poetry circles. His work is highly regarded and performed by many bush poets. This is effectively the ultimate tribute to any poet. Ellis compiled his tips on writing bush poetry and they were published in the pages of the ABPA magazine. This is the spirit of bush poetry in action where a successful writer gives something back by sharing their knowledge.

Here is the story of Ellis Campbell. Ellis Campbell walked five kilometres each way to attend the little bush primary

school of Tallawang, situated between Gulgong and Dunedoo, NSW, where one teacher tried to teach ten or twelve children in six different classes. Tallawang School closed when Ellis was 13 because an average daily attendance of nine pupils could not be maintained.

Ellis was the eldest of six in a very poor family and stayed in the bush to help his father cut railway sleepers while his mother shifted to Gulgong to get the younger members of the family a bit more education. He took up shearing at age 17 and followed this work for 33 years, working in shearing sheds in four states of Australia. In the off-season he did timber cutting, fencing, farm work, broke in horses and trapped rabbits.

Ellis always had an ambition to write but considered his lack of education too much handicap. He did write bits of funny poems to amuse the other shearers around the sheds but threw these away again. In 1981, when he was 54 years of age, he finally began writing seriously and entering literary competitions around Australia. He has now won over 500 awards in literary competitions in all states of Australia, including 110 first prizes and 81 second.

His poem Wanda Jill is one of only five Australian poems (including Banjo Paterson's Clancy Of The Overflow & Will Ogilvie's The Pearl Of Them All) to be included in Cowboy Poetry - The Reunion published in Salt Lake City, USA, in 2004.

He was admitted to Degree of Writing Fellow by NSW Branch of Fellowship of Australian Writers in 1995 and was the first Australian poet to be offered Honorary Life Membership of Metverse Muse, worldwide poetry journal published in India, in 2000.

Some other highlights have been. Winning the written poetry (Silver Brumby) competition at Corryong, Vic. three years from four contested. Winning The Bronze Spur competition at Camooweal Qld, three years from six contested. Winning Henry Lawson Soc at Gulgong in 1985 from a field of 302 entries. Winning \$1,000 first prize in the O'Mara's High Country Original performance poetry competition at Stanthorpe, Qld, in 2002. He contested this competition four times for one first, two second & a third. Winning The Blackened Billy competition at Tamworth once, four times second, once third and twelve highly commended over fifteen years. Winning Robert Burns—Bush Poet? section in Sutton Forest competition with The Memory Burns—(\$1,000 “poem of the festival”)

Ellis has performed his poetry live on Australia All Over three times and his poem Beach House Honeymoon is track 7 on the ABC CD Macca's Sunday Best. His poems have been included in 88 anthologies, including USA, India and Guernsey, Channel Islands.

Ellis has self-published five books of verse.

When seven years old Beau Burcher-Kemp took the 'Man from Snowy River' poem to the Man from Snowy River Bush Festival at Corryong in April 2007 he took the vast audience by storm. He was a real hit with the assembled poets and impressed the judges so much that he took out the Junior Bush Poetry Award for 2007.

Like his idol, Beau is no stranger to the wild bush country, traversing a dangerous mountain road twice daily on his journey to and from school with his mother Helena at the wheel whilst he listens to bush poetry on the CD player.

Beau and his family, live at Speewah which is in the tropical rain forest near Kuranda, Cairns in far north Queensland.

Beaus is a master of retention for his age, and it didn't occur to his parents that whilst he was listening he was putting all the poem together in his mind until such time as they began to hear it in its entirety, their jaws just dropped!

Beau enjoys his new found skill and seeks perfection in practice, so much so that when his school put on an Arts Extraganza inviting kids to perform on stage after gaining approval from the Principal, the Drama and music teachers, he wanted to be part of it.

He made his debut as a performance poet on the night glued to his saddle which he used as a prop whilst dressed appropriately complete with an Akubra Hat.

He received an overwhelming response and a well deserved standing ovation. After that it was Corryong.

Beau has very strong auditory skills and prefers to learn poetry from listening only at this stage. He has started writing his own poetry and loves playing around with rhyme. His other interests include playing the piano (he has weekly lessons).

One of his best mates at home is his miniature horse 'Moses'.

Climbing trees and helping on the prop-

erty takes up a lot of his time too! He does very well at school and is in Grade 3. He got the Dux of Grade 1, and academic excellence certificates in Grade 2 for English, Mathematics, Science and Japanese.

'He is a very polite wee man!' according to proud mother, Helena.



**Beau Burcher Kemp**



## SUNNY MUTTON

Sunny Mutton is a September child who first made her voice heard on the 26th day of that month in 1986.

Since that time she has continued to be heard, and for several years has been one of the best known voices in Winton through her involvement in public speaking and entertainment. She has implemented the skills obtained through her involvement in

bush poetry over a period of eight years to enhance her presentation and has been recognized as one of the upper echelon of performance poets in the Western area.

Sunny first performed in the inaugural Clover Nolan Bush Poetry competition for schools in 1996 and has been a finalist in her age group in every subsequent year. Her experience in competing against polished reciters such as Carmel Dunn and Jennifer Haig during this time has been invaluable experience for her as she was able to benefit from the expertise of these girls.

In 1997, Sunny, with Julie Rayment, Angela Kavanagh, Sam Green and Katie McBride competed in the Outback Oscars, a team event at the Waltzing Matilda poetry festival at Winton. To the surprise of most people, this team, "Spatkids" from the local Catholic primary school, cleaned up, winning the title against opposition which included many of Australia's best bush poets.

This effort is one of her proudest achievements. She has been involved in further teams events at Waltzing Matilda contests in subsequent years and has been in successful teams on many occasions.

In addition to her multiple suc-

cesses at a local level Sunny won the Australian Junior Bush Poetry championship at Yarrowonga/Mulwala in 1999 and has competed in open competition at various venues.

In 2002 she spread her wings and performed as guest artist at Local Government conventions in the North West where she received very favourable comment for her entertaining presentations. She is regularly called on to provide her recitations for visiting car rallies and charity functions.

In addition to her poetic skills Sunny is a talented artist, having won statewide prizes for her work and has performed as a player with the local theatre group as well as carrying out modelling duties at fashion parades.

In 2004 she made her Tamworth debut as a performer at the Longyard Hotel where she was very enthusiastically received, while in the competition at the Imperial Hotel she was placed third in the Traditional section against the strongest field of poets available, a remarkable feat for her first attempt.

Bush poetry will continue to thrive while ever Sunny Mutton maintains her devotion to, and promotion of this Australian heritage.



## MARCO GLIORI

Marco Gliori has been a full-time Performance Poet since 1991, supporting his wife Julie, three daughters Amy, Sophie

and Grace, and for the past 2 and half years their foster daughter Margie. He lives on his 32 hectare picturesque property east of Warwick on the Darling Downs.

In 2002, Marco stopped his major touring for the Queensland and Victorian Arts Councils, having performed in the vicinity of 3000 shows over the previous decade.

Since 2002 Marco has continued to conduct Writer In Residency programs at schools, as well as appearing at major Literary Festivals at the Whitsunday's, The Gold Coast and Toowoomba, sharing the bill with some of Australia's most popular children's authors like Paul Jennings, Morris Gleitzman, Andy Griffiths and Matt Reilly. When at Schools, Marco performs for children from Pre-School Age through to Year 12. In November 2006 Marco toured through western schools as part of a domestic violence initiative.

Marco has completed over 2000 shows for young Australians courtesy of both the Queensland and Victorian Arts Councils Artists in Education Program.

He regularly travels to isolated communities writing poetry with school children and then performing adult comedy shows

at night. How's that for diversity!

As well as co-ordinating the Poets Breakfasts at the National Country Music Muster for many years now, Marco continued to perform with The Naked Poets troupe whose CD *The Naked Poets ...lie...v!* may well be the biggest selling Contemporary Poetry Album in Australia, as well as winning two album of the year Awards at Tamworth Bush Laureate Awards. As well as being nominated for several other awards, Marco himself has won the 2001 Single Recorded Performance Of The Year Award and two Book of The Year Awards for 'Bobby Miller's Book' which was edited and published through his company Saddlesaw Productions co-run with his wife Julie.

More and more these days Marco is appearing as guest speaker at private and corporate events, as well as Education Conferences such as the Junior Schools National Principal's Conference and at various festivals.

As well as a number of books of his own work, CD's and Naked Poets albums he also found time to publish a collection of children's poems called 'Rise n Rhyme' 130 poems for those of us forever young.



# Vale... Geoffrey James Elliott

We had mustered from far, wide and deep, a complex chemistry of man, testing the internals and the extremities of the Brisbane chapel to celebrate the powerful life of a true craftsman of noble proportions. Geoffrey James Elliott, 69, bushman, balladeer, was a master in the understanding of man and his moods, the human condition.

Working with flame she oak, mulga bloodwood and ironbark, Geoff hand built a trove of living treasures. The framed mirror, hat rack and jewel box he gave me, I cherish, almost as much as I cherished him. Whilst Geoff worked wonderfully with wood, he worked gloriously with words. From the simple ones he built great couplets into epic narratives that could only come from a truly great heart. When Henry Lawson died, his baton was handed down to very few. I believe Geoffrey James Elliott was one of them.

Geoff was uncomfortable with crowds. His beautiful works were rarely aired, reckoned there were taipans in stages and lecterns. Just before his death from lung cancer, six only of Geoff's books entitled "Places and Friends" were printed, one destined for the archives in Canberra for the decoration and nourishment of our nation.

Geoff's son Gene asked me to perform two of Geoff's works at the funeral service. One entitled "Lights in the Valley" talks with a monumental message on Geoff's return journey home in his old truck, a melancholy journey down a mountainside.

Robert Raftery

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## *Lights in the Valley* by Geoffrey James Elliott

He crested the mountain at midnight,  
And the lights in the valley below  
Were spread like the Milky Way starlight,  
So vast was their welcoming show.  
As tired as he was from the driving  
And still with some distance to go,  
He was thankful he'd soon be arriving,  
At the lights in the valley below.

The diesel was working full throttle,  
As up through the cutting he crept.  
And slow through the patch of black wattle,  
Then onto the jump-up he swept.  
Down through the lowest gear changes,  
We saw, in the distance, the glow.  
Then he glimpsed, from the top of the ranges,  
The lights in the valley below.

The moon at his back, through the branches,  
Made ghosts and their shadows appear,  
As they showed him the risks and the chances,  
That they took in a long, by-gone year.  
Where stepping across memory bridges,  
The teams of the great Cobb and Co.,  
Spied ahead, down the ironbark ridges,  
The lights in the valley below.



Then he surged round the bend from the summit,  
With the silver beans lighting the tops  
Of the trees where the steep gullies plummet,  
From the road, where the deep ravine drops.  
And the hiss of the brakes kept him steady,  
As he followed the cliff to and fro,  
But his heart and his mind were already  
With the lights in the valley below.

While the rest of the country was sleeping,  
He ferried the freight through the night,  
And the vision he has for the keeping  
Was the glimpse of that welcoming sight.  
Ahead, were the loved ones begotten,  
Wrapped in the dreams that will flow,  
When they sleep, knowing they're not forgotten,  
At the lights in the valley below.

As each journey comes to its ending,  
And each chapter acts as a guide,  
We can set a new course without bending,  
By taking the world in our stride.  
If our time on this earth is well measured,  
At the end of each trip is to know,  
That we all have a dream that is treasured,  
Like the lights in the valley below.

# ANZAC DAY REFLECTION

© Kathleen Vallance

Anzac Day. Time to reflect  
on courage, commitment,  
Lest We Forget  
the freedom we share  
had a terrible price.  
Thousands of lives,  
a huge sacrifice.

The last of the ANZACS  
this past year have gone.  
But here in my memory  
they're still marching on.  
Through each town and city  
they'll join the parade,  
their spirit endures,  
their memory won't fade.

There are others we owe,  
a debt to be paid.  
They too will march in the Anzac Parade;  
They're veterans now,  
their bravery recorded.  
This is their day,  
they should be rewarded.

When the Last Post is played  
and the Ode is recited,  
the past and the present  
become reunited.  
From the tragedy, horror  
and hardship of war,  
"peace" brings them together,  
it was worth fighting for.

Round the war monument  
homage is paid  
to our fallen heroes;  
Wreaths will be laid.  
To a new generation  
the baton is handed,  
they bought us our freedom,  
don't take it for granted.

April 23rd 2006

# THE SADDEST DAY

© Olive Dorey

On this cold and frosty night, when stars are shining bright,  
Mum rouses us from sleep and we stumble out of bed,  
Quickly dress in warmest clothes, run to kitchen light  
While Dad hitches up the mare to sulky, by the shed.  
Kettle boils, tea is brewed, bread is toasted brown.  
"Hurry all, 'tis time to go; it's a long way into town."

We huddle close together, no breeze blows, no sound is heard  
Bar hoof beats of the mare, and wheels in icy ruts.  
The sulky slows, and stops. "Whoa!" is the only word  
That's been spoken since we left; open the gate, the gate shuts.  
One more gate to pass through, then we're on the open road,  
Some hills and rocks ahead, flat ground, a lighter load.

Greeting people walking toward the meeting place,  
Anzac Park, upon a hill, high above our town.  
Clothing of dark colour, solemnness of face,  
Crowding all together, sadly looking down.  
The sombre service starts; misty eyes look ahead,  
Remembering valour, and loved ones now dead.

Brothers, fathers, uncles, some left on foreign land.  
Others lie in caskets, buried in local soil.  
Sisters, mothers, aunties, their future not as planned,  
Left to grieve as years go by; alone and sad they toil.  
The bugler plays; then silence. Reveille sounds once more.  
Thus ends the Dawn Service of nineteen forty-four.

# Anzac Day

© Jim Cosgrove

Anzac Day – A nation's pride  
Remembering our sons who died  
Acknowledging their sacrifice  
That helped to pay our freedom's price  
Our Nations' history tells the tale  
Of those whose courage didn't fail  
Who gave their lives for you and me  
To free our world from tyranny.

Anzac Day, remembered sorrows  
The ones who gave us their tomorrows  
Who fell with faces to the foe  
To buy the peace their children know  
In troubled times they fought the wars  
And gave their lives for freedom's cause  
They fought until the job was done  
The only way that peace is won.

Anzac Day, the Anzac Spirit  
A minute's silence – listen – hear it  
Whispered words from those who gave  
their lives, and now rest in the grave  
Their softest sigh within the silence  
"Live the Peace – and shun the violence"  
Let not our lives be lost in vain  
Think twice before you war again.

Anzac Day - Lest We Forget  
The fighting isn't finished yet  
Our Nation's sons and daughters still  
With resolute determined skill  
Take up the fight, take up the cause  
Till one day there's an end to wars  
God bless our troops with strength we pray  
On this and every Anzac Day



# A VICTIM OF WAR

by Tom McIlveen



Just what do see when you're looking at me, in that portrait that hangs on your wall?  
A blind amputee with a broken old ski or a soldier who answered the call?  
Or someone who saw all the horrors of war, from Korea to South Vietnam;  
immersed in the gore of the infantry core, when we followed our dear Uncle Sam?

So why be afraid of an image portrayed by a cripple who walks with a brace,  
who seemingly strayed from a passing parade with a dumbfounded look on his face?  
Perhaps you're annoyed that our troops were deployed to a war inevitably doomed,  
by leaving a void in a country destroyed by a power that seized and consumed.

Recruits who were used had been plagued and confused by a doctrine they couldn't explain,  
then wrongly abused and unjustly accused of atrocities deemed inhumane.  
I kneel down and pray at the start of each day for the brothers who never came home;  
whose bodies now lay under metres of clay and a blood spattered blanket of loam.



I used to be whole, until war took its toll on a spirit that shrivelled and died,  
then ravaged my soul for a life on the dole with a labrador dog as my guide.  
My beautiful wife had a man in her life, when I wheeled in to show her my chair,  
but heartache and strife had cut deep like a knife, as we parted in dismal despair.

I lingered awhile and then sporting a smile, I thumbed down a passing sedan,  
and travelled in style as I counted each mile, till I sighted old Cooma again.  
Remembering days when the snow was the craze, as we drove down each weekend of June,  
to frolic and gaze at the lingering phase of a luminous shimmering moon.

The Vietnamese had no knowledge of skis, as they peddled through puddles and ruts,  
contracting disease from mosquitoes and fleas, that infested their hovels and huts.  
And how would they know of the comforting glow of the Southern Cross stars up above;  
surrounded by snow, in a warm bungalow, sharing friendship, devotion and love?



If only they knew of the splendid view from the summit of Mount Crackenback,  
they may misconstrue that a Cow coloured Blue, is a mountain below Sascha's Track.  
And Lake Jindabyne would be hard to define to the brethren of Bolshevik slums,  
who grovel like swine on the Communist vine, for a portion of miserly crumbs.

Corruption and vice had sustained paradise until Ho Chi Minh's troops had appeared,  
and strove to entice all the peasants like mice, to a piper they plainly revered.  
Like moths to a flame, by the thousands they came from the villages, paddies and fields;  
exalting his name and applauding his fame, as he taxed all their profits and yields.

An army of red had assembled and spread, and then surged like an incoming tide,  
as soldiers had bled and the vermin had fed on the corpses of those who had died.  
The East coalesced with the hordes from the west who had come from the land of the bold,  
and slowly repressed their despicable guest, who refused to relinquish his hold.



I recently heard an encouraging word from a well-meaning neighbour and friend,  
who thought it absurd, that the carnage incurred, was considered a means to an end.  
He firmly believed that their cause was aggrieved by the communist doctrines and schemes,  
as they were deceived by a creed that relieved them of property, freedom and dreams.

So how would you feel to be kept down at heel and then treated like somebody's dog;  
to beg for a meal with no right of appeal and be dubbed as a Noggie or Wog?  
So next time you see an old soldier like me, who has suffered the trauma of war,  
remember the plea of a poor refugee – who has suffered a thousand times more!



# Banjo Paterson 150th Birthday Festival

by Jacqui Warnock

"Mulga Bill's Bicycle", "The Man from Ironbark", "Clancy of the Overflow" and "The Man from Snowy River" featured prominently in the many performances to honour the life of 'Our Banjo', celebrated in Orange in the Central West of NSW over ten days in February, 2014. Amongst the many and varied entertainments were poet's breakfasts in the park, an art exhibition, a competition for music or poetry with a Banjo theme, poetry writing, a Poetry Slam (hosted by Miles Merrill) and much more as the city of Orange basked in the glory of being the birthplace of arguably Australia's most loved poet. Geoffrey Graham, dressed as Banjo himself, made welcome appearances. He performed at the primary schools, the park, the pub and even in the street! Robyn Sykes took her poetry to the High School students as well as wowing the crowds at the many and varied venues. Jack Thomson's concert of 'Australia's Most Loved Poems' was a sold out attraction. Over the closing weekend, two events were of major significance:

On Sunday morning, in welcome rain, the small cottage of "Emmaville" was officially opened. Rescued from vandalism, relocated and restored at its new site near the city's Botanic Gardens, the cottage is a permanent tribute to the pioneering families of the district. It may be the actual birthplace of baby Barty Paterson, as it stood at the time on the property "Narrambla", in the homestead of which he is known to have been born on 17th February 1864. His mother Rose Isabella (nee Barton) was 19 years old and his father, Andrew Bogle Paterson, 30 at the time of his birth. The Holy Trinity Anglican church records the baptism of Andrew Barton Paterson, on 11th March of that year. The family lived at the property "Buckinbah" at Yeoval at the time and continued to do so until their first born son turned seven.

The tiny village of Yeoval, 81 kms north-west of Orange, is now the home of the "Banjo Paterson, More than a Poet" Museum. To coincide with Banjo's 150th birthday, there was a ceremony, with attending dignitaries, poetry and much fanfare (including a whip cracking rider on a stately horse) before Tim Fischer, former Deputy Prime Minister and bush poetry enthusiast, declared the museum open. Happy Birthday and Waltzing Matilda were sung, of course! Inside, the many and varied exhibits relating to Banjo Paterson's poetry, his life and times were viewed for the first time by the large attending crowd. It is to be hoped that, into the future, many Banjo Paterson fans will be able to travel to Yeoval to view this wonderful collection of memorabilia.

Jacqui Warnock



Banjo Paterson, More than a Poet Museum in Yeoval

The Banjo, Poet and Author in Banjo Park, Ophir Road, Orange



Plaque at the museum

Robyn Sykes, winner of the Poetry Slam with Jacqui Warnock



Emmaville in its restored state.

## Victorian Bush Poetry Championships at Man from Snowy River Festival 3 – 6th April.

Corryong's community quilt will have pride of place during celebrations of 150 years since Banjo Paterson's birth at their annual Bush Festival. The quilt was sewn by a team of women from an idea by Carol Reffold 'Patchwork Poette' as stage decor for poets during the Man from Snowy River Festival. Kicking off on Thursday evening with a birthday concert, 'Henry Lawson' aka James Howard and 'Banjo' will meet 'Two Short Sheilas' Melanie Hall and Susie Carcary, followed by the MFSR movie outdoors.

The spirit of 'Banjo' is present every year as MC Geoffrey Graham from Eaglehawk 'becomes' the Banjo, popping up in various other places over the weekend. Joining the five guests above, at the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships, other judges and guest performers at Banjo's Block will be Graeme Johnson (head judge), and Trevor Best and a merry band of poetry entrants, friends and devotees.

Entries have been received from 52 competitors from around Australia for both Written and Performance sections including Tradition, Modern, Original Humorous and Serious poems and a Yarn section. Nine women and nine men will vie for overall male and female champion trophies and tickets to the National Folk Festival 2015. In the 'Man from Snowy River' Recital competition, recordings were judged pre-festival. The three finalists Robyn Christmas, Neil the Drover and Judy Boyd will recite at Banjo's Block in front of the crowd at 6 pm on Friday.

This Festival has something for everyone – the Challenge (a prestige horse event to find the Modern Man from Snowy River). The Re-enactment (of Banjo's famous poem out on the hillside) Ute Muster, Bush Idol, Art & Photography, Street Parade, Anzac Concert, ridgey didge concerts, market stalls camp tucker by Camp Cooking Club. Thanks to our loyal Poetry sponsors and trophy makers and also to, to provide us all with great camp tucker. There's a campfire for yarning and singing day and night, so don't forget your chair, hat and coat!

Most poets, yarnspillers and musicians have the MFSR Bush Festival on their 'gotta do it at least once' list - maybe this is the year to do it! So put 6 – 6 April in your diary.... there is limited indoor accommodation, but plenty of room for camping. Contact: Jan Lewis 0260774332 or info@vbpm.com.au for poets' enquiries or [www.bushfestival.com.au](http://www.bushfestival.com.au) for general festival info.

# DANNY BOY

SUE PEARCE © 2014

A cherished old harmonica lies resting in its case  
the tarnished piece of tin and bone now holding pride of place  
upon a simple box of wood  
a homeless man beneath its hood  
as mourners from the "neighborhood" farewell the music ace.

An only child and orphaned at the early age of three  
his talent spurred by early days upon his father's knee  
he'd nestle to a soulful sound  
a simple tune that often found  
a tear as "Danny Boy" rewound a place he longed to be.

The long dark days of orphaned life-a pillow stained with tears  
the simple mouthpiece silencing the loneliness and fears  
and when at last the doors flung wide  
he faced the world, with every stride  
he fought to fill the void inside, that deepened with the years.

His music took him far and wide, no destination planned  
he'd play the gigs, most times alone-sometimes within a band  
and every time he took the floor  
the crowd would cheer and shout for more  
and "Danny Boy", his favored score, would bring them to a stand.

For years he wandered -aimlessly,-a long and restless road  
he'd played at love but still somehow had found no fixed abode  
by day he worked the clubs and bars  
at night, alone beneath the stars  
as dreams reopened childhood scars, he crumbled 'neath the load.

Soon alcohol replaced a life where music once had been  
it numbed his brain and soon became a crutch on which to lean  
as darkness filled his troubled mind  
the search for solace came behind  
he closed the door and drew the blind, then vanished from the scene.

The backblocks of the city's street on any given day  
where homeless men would often meet and while their time away  
they'd speak of hunger and defeat  
the perils living on the street  
neglected, feeling obsolete, they'd listen to him play.

Like rolling stones they gathered, drifters shadowing the night  
their pungent, silhouetted forms a sad and sorry sight  
but one with deep and sullen eyes  
whose music offered compromise  
who'd lost in life, now in demise, had found his guiding light.

A silence falls upon the few who gather in his name  
a man who once the music world had lauded with acclaim  
but then where crowds had gathered wide  
so few today would stand beside  
the grave of one who was denied the love from which he came.

The casket lowers slowly now, the mouthpiece placed away  
beside the soul who brought to life the tune he loved to play  
as voices by the graveside claim  
the tune for which he'd gathered fame  
the song that held his given name, so fitting on this day.

*Oh Danny boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling  
From glen to glen, and down the mountain side  
though summer's gone, and all the roses falling  
'Tis you, 'tis you must go and I must bide.*



## VALE JOY MAJOR

For many years John Major has been well known as a Bush Poet and cattleman from Baralaba, Queensland. Joy was an integral part of all his endeavours.

It seems like only yesterday, John and Joy settled into a well earned retirement at Mapleton on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland. It was actually ten years. In that time Joy quickly endeared herself to the people in her new community and was very much a hands on part of it just like she was at Baralaba.

Joy's skill with a needle was always well known and some fine examples of her work were displayed at her Memorial service at Mapleton. John wore one of her vests, "It was one of Joy's favourites..." he said.

The memorial was at Mapleton Bowling Club which was packed with friends saying their last goodbyes and showing their respect to Joy who was clearly an inspiration to all who knew and loved her.

Joy's funeral was at Rockhampton Crematorium on 8th February and it too was well attended by many friends and family there.

Our heartfelt sympathies to John and family.

Wally Finch  
ABPA Queensland State Delegate

# **WHERE THE RED CORN POPPIES DANCE**

SUE PEARCE (c) 2014

"Would you like to buy a poppy?" came the kindly, gentle voice of an old Australian Digger, who then offered me a choice from a tray of pins and badges held by tendered, gentle hands as I wondered of our soldiers buried deep on foreign lands.

So I asked the old time digger, who seemed taken by surprise for he stopped a while..then pondered.. and as moisture filled his eyes he recalled the loss and bloodshed on the battle fields of France in a Province known as Flanders, where the red corn poppies dance.

He recalled our gallant heroes as they gathered by the quay cherished loved ones thoughts embedded as they boarded ships to sea far away across the ocean to a land on foreign shores where they joined the bloody battle in a war to end all wars.

Men for weeks instilled in trenches where the air was filled with dread men who fought the battle bravely, there beside the dying, dead. men we welcomed home as heroes from that wretched battle ground men who told of fallen comrades, many who remain...unfound.

He recalled a mother's heartache when a telegram arrived and a faith that ceased on hearing that her only son had died and his grave among the thousands represented by a cross row on row they stand, reminders of the carnage and the loss.

Then his thoughts turned to the poppy and the symbolism there and I felt the pride and mate-ship of a soldier left to bare as he gestured to the emblem that he wore in his lapel a symbol of the fallen and a league named RSL

As the big hand strikes eleven on a mild November day I'm reminded of the digger and the words he had to say and my mind begins to wander to a field in Southern France to a Province known as Flanders, where the red corn poppies dance.

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## ***THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE***

*by Rhyl Graham*

As the evening sun sets low in the western sky I watch, as shadows form over the water. Here I stand in your honour, my fallen mates, since you fell victim to this war and its slaughter.

My steel body is strong, it's well structured and hard, set firm, to endure the changes in weather. With solid rock beneath, and blue sky above, I will stand guardian to your memories forever.

We were mates together, and I'll always be proud of the great courage you all showed in your field. Your masters, they gave you their trust and their love, believing fully that you never would yield.

Now your names, etched in black, are attached to my flank, in true friendship, I'll always carry each mate. The load is light, but the burden's made heavy by the bold letters of "K.I.A.", and a date.

My friends, Merlin, Razz, Andy, Nova and Herbie, you all have now met the ultimate test. Immortal I'll stand and keep watch every day as shadows fall soft on this place where you rest.

## **Unspoken Words**

©David Campbell

Winner: 2014 Boyup Brook Country Music Festival Written Competition

I drift through empty days, then fall through endless nights, and try to find the ways to put it all to rights. But time, though healing's friend, can never be undone, and, though one wound might mend, another finds the sun.

For I have come to see, as months go slipping by, just what you meant to me...I learn the reason why your absence is an ache that echoes in my heart; the moment that I wake it tears my world apart.

The house still holds you near, and right across our land I sense that you are here and reach to take your hand. I hear your step, your voice, but there's just empty space; for seconds I rejoice...a stranger has your face.

Illusion mocks my dreams and undermines my trust, for nothing's as it seems when hope is turned to dust. I wander by the creek, and walk the homestead track, but all appears so bleak, and there's no going back.

The irony burns deep, for now the words are born, and I can only weep at truth's belated dawn. Why do we leave too late those things we need to say? For when we hesitate there is a price to pay.

Friends tiptoe round your name, so gentle in their grief, as if, by shielding blame, they might give some relief. Compassion is a blade that cuts both deep and clean, when guilt that's slow to fade provokes what might have been.

The firestorm came so fast it caught us by surprise... we thought it might go past, and did not realise until it was too late what hell on earth might mean, when tragedy so great is nothing but obscene.

I fought the smoke and flame with other volunteers, and when that wind-shift came you should have heard our cheers. But then our vision cleared to show us what we'd lost; our town had disappeared, and with an awful cost.

I found, on my return, a searing, private hell... a lesson I still learn, a story I must tell. For nothing can compare, no matter what we say, to those with whom we share our lives from day to day.

Each moment is like gold, so precious, rich and rare; it's something we should hold, to cherish and to care. Our days are all too swift, and each one that we live 'I love you' is a gift that we should freely give.

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### ***THE 43rd BRONZE SWAGMAN AWARD 2014***



Closing date: **30 APRIL 2014**

(post marked no later than).

Entry Forms and conditions available at

**[www.bronzeswagman.info](http://www.bronzeswagman.info) or [www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)**





# RESULTS PAGE

( Please send all Comp Results to editor@abpa.org.au and not to Carol Raffold as previously advised by the Committee. )

## **BOYUP BROOK – Country Music Festival Written Bush Poetry Competition**

### **ADULT OPEN**

**First Place ... Unspoken Words – David Campbell, Beaumaris. Vic**  
Very Highly Commended ... A soldier Brave – Brenda Joy, Charters Towers. Qld  
Highly Commended ... Jimmy – Tom McIlveen, Port Macquarie. NSW  
Highly Commended ... Baldy – Michael Lloyd, Bayonet Head, Albany. WA  
Highly Commended ... Where Life Has Led – Brenda Joy, Charters Towers. Qld  
Commended ... Secrets Of the Desert – Brenda Joy, Charters Towers. Qld

**Winner – Emerging Poet...Baldy – Michael Lloyd, Bayonet Head. WA**

**Winner – WA Poet...Baldy – Michael Lloyd, Bayonet Head. WA**

*Many thanks to all that entered the competition, and congratulations to the ones who received the awards. If any poets are travelling in WA mid February, the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival is a great weekend to attend - 4 opportunities to get up and present your work, along with a poets brawl on the Saturday morning. And the guest poets for the weekend - this year was Marco and Muzza - host a workshop in writing and performing bush poetry on the Saturday afternoon. And the biggest bush poets breakfast in WA is held Sunday morning at the music park - approx 1100 - 1200 this year, but have been known to have 1800+ attend!*

*Oh, and some good country music in between!!!*

*We would love to see you there - put it in your diary for next year!!*

*Thanks again*

*Irene*

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### **JOHN O'BRIEN FESTIVAL**

Bush Poetry Performance Competition

1st Caroline Tuohey

2nd Tom O'Connor

3rd Wayne Moteby

Jim Angel Award for the best performance of an original poem --

Caroline

Tuohey with 'The List'

Open Written

Will Moody -- 'Outlines of the Past'

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### **CAMOOWEAL – Drover's Camp Festival**

22nd – 24th August, 2014

Announcing that The Drover's Camp Talent Award (Performance) and the Bronze Spur Award (Written) competitions are on again.

Details to follow next issue.

Contact Brenda Joy -

halenda@live.com.au

PO Box 1727 Charters Towers 4820.

### **Cervantes Written Competition**

Hi Everyone

My apologies for being a little late getting these results up. We had a different judge this year as our usual judge was tied up with other commitments.

Many thanks to all those who entered the competition

Irene Conner.

#### **Junior**

Commended

'Travel' – Wade Cuthbert

#### **Open**

First Place

'On The Goatee Mountain Track' – Tom McIlveen

Highly Commended

'Closure' – Brenda Joy

'The Carnage At Stringybark Creek' – Tom McIlveen

Commended

'Voices In The Darkness' – David Campbell

'The Breathalyser' – Tom McIlveen

'Jimmy' – Tom McIlveen

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## **Yass Show Results**

The sounds of shearing were replaced by rhyme, rhythm and a dash of music in the Shearing Pavilion at Yass Show on Sunday morning March 16.

A mix of juniors and adults, bush and contemporary poets gathered for an energetic and exciting morning of poetry. People from Sydney, Canberra, Junee, Canowindra, Tumut and more joined local poets for the performance poetry competition, presentation of the written awards and more.

On a chilly morning, local poets Leigh Brown and Robyn Sykes warmed the audience up with a couple of poems before the competition and awards began. At times the cattle being judged outside contributed their own poetry, which all added to the ambience of the event! The Bowling Club ladies also warmed up the audience with their bacon and egg rolls and tea and coffee.

Sue Pearce from Tumut won a very tightly contested performance section with her original poem 'Danny Boy'. A strong contingent from Young made the trip to the Yass Show. Ted Webber took home second prize in the adult section and Jim Lamb put in a strong performance to confirm his rapid rise up the bush poetry ladder. At just 12 years of age, Reid Noyes took the crowd's breath away with his rendition of 'The Anzac on the Wall', by Jim Brown, and pocketed the junior winner's cash for his trouble.

In evidence of the popularity of bush poetry and the dedication of bush poets, the bush poetry written awards will be posted all over Australia, destined for Arthur Green from Queensland, David Campbell from Victoria and Terry Piggott from Western Australia. Luckily Roger Buckman was on hand to receive the local poet's encouragement award.

Harmonica-player-extraordinaire Jeff Brown treated the crowd to a few tunes to round off an exceptional morning.

## Service For Kym Eitel

Oh, the irony, Kymmie hated attention and here she was at the centre of it all, a full house and everyone was there for her. Kymmie asked for a happy occasion - a life's celebration. Her favourite colours were pink and purple. As requested, pink and purple filled the chapel.

Sister Maria gave the welcome and introduction then symbols of Kym's life were placed on the coffin by family, and friends were invited to spread rose-petals.

In his Eulogy, Frank likened life with Kymmie as dipping into a box of chocolates, with every piece being special and delicious. But with Kym's passing, he found the box was now empty.

Grandson Noah, a frisky four-year-old came bouncing into Frank one morning at around 5am - as kids do, and announced, "Morning Grand-dad, it's a beautiful day! C'mon let's go!" And suddenly, a chocolate popped into the box. On looking around at his kids, he found the box filling again with all the joy and accomplishments they shared. The centre-place in that box will always be Kym's.

Kym and Frank's daughters, Renee, Kristy and Alysha recited, "Angel in My Heart", "Himmelen Uden Skyer" and "Wild Brumby Heaven" respectively. This was followed by a photo montage of Kymmie's life. Many of the photos brought chuckles from those gathered. Of course horses figured prominently throughout.

Bob Pacey spoke on behalf of the ABPA members and recounted his own first meeting with her, shyness and her razor-sharp humour. Bob mentioned an occasion where Kym was scheduled to present her writings, and was extremely nervous. She called Bob, very apologetic and apologised for being unable to attend. Unbeknown to Kym, Bob was running late and had pulled up behind her while she was sitting in her car outside the venue. Kym sat there for a while before starting the car and headed for home, calling Bob to apologise. Yes, Kymmie was THAT nervous.

After the committal, family and friends joined Frank and the Girls at Customs House in Rocky.

### **Manfred Vijars**

If anyone is so inclined, the family have asked, in lieu of sending flowers, donations in memoriam be made to The McGrath Foundation; a card will be forwarded to the family on your behalf.

Please direct to:

The Eitel Family  
24 Sneddon Road,  
Limestone Creek,  
Qld. 4701



*Kymmie, smiling to the end*



*ABPA Representative, Bob Pacey*

## Vale Dennis O'Keefe

March 9th saw the death of Aussie Folk Music legend and author, Dennis O'Keefe after a long battle with cancer. Dennis was well known to many Bush Poets through Folk Festivals and his amazing research and subsequent book on the history of 'Waltzing Matilda'.

Dennis O'Keefe's status as one of Australia's most respected music researchers, singers and writers was acknowledged when Port Fairy Folk Festival crowds stood to sing Waltzing Matilda when told of his death on Sunday.

The 57-year-old Warrnambool resident lost a battle with cancer and died in St John of God Hospital surrounded by his wife Anne and sons Joel and Ryan, who have also carved a career in music with their successful rock band Airbourne.

Dennis had conducted extensive research into the origins of the iconic Waltzing Matilda and performed it for years at the Warrnambool May Racing Carnival where the tune was first heard in 1894 by Christina Macpherson, who later passed it on to poet Banjo Paterson, who wrote the lyrics.

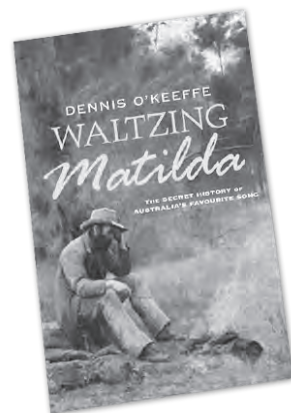
In 2012 Dennis launched his book about "the secret story of Australia's favourite song". His research was regarded as ground breaking in delving into the real history behind what is often regarded as Australia's unofficial national anthem. It was later incorporated into a musical, *The Man They Call The Banjo*, by Mr O'Keefe's brother-in-law Felix Meagher and filmed by the ABC during a performance at Camperdown last year.

"He's been singing and writing songs for most of his life," Mr Meagher told *The Standard* yesterday. "For years he was a songwriting tutor at the Lake School of Celtic Music in Koroit and was highly regarded. The bond between him and his students will live on.

He also ran the Australian music section at the national folk festival in Canberra and we'll have music sessions in his honour at the Lake School. Dennis was loved by many people."

Dennis O'Keefe was raised in the Killarney district in a large family that traced its history in the area back to the 1850s. He graduated from Monash University in 1999 with a graduate diploma of arts in Australian folklife studies, but gained most of his experience in writing and performing at least 40 songs based on Aussie stories. Mary of the Cross (honouring the life of former nun, now Catholic saint, Mary MacKillop) and Billy McLean (about a union shearer shot during the 1894 strike) are some of his pieces. His performances included a 12-month stint with son Joel as Father and Son after Mr O'Keefe underwent major surgery for a benign brain tumour. "He was so proud of his son's achievements with Airbourne," Mr Meagher said. "Dennis supported them and loved them."

He will be sadly missed in the Folk Fraternity and by all Australians.



# THE KEMBLA FLAME®

FOR WRITTEN AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETRY

2014

PRESENTED BY

**ILLAWARRA BREAKFAST POETS &  
THE SOUTH COAST COUNTRY MUSIC ASSN**

1st - Kembla Flame Trophy, \$60 and Certificate  
2nd - \$40, Trophy and Certificate 3rd - \$20, Trophy and Certificate  
3 'Commended' Certificates will also be awarded.  
For full conditions and entry form see Events page of ABPA assn  
abpa.org.au or email [zondraeking@gmail.com](mailto:zondraeking@gmail.com)  
closing date 11th June 2014  
Presented at Poets Breakfast 20th July 2014  
Dapto Leagues Club - Country Music Festival.



## **Marco and Muz Popular in Boyup Brook**

Bush poets again made a major contribution to the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival, performing at five different venues during the festival. Overall crowds were well down on recent years, with many grey nomads opting to stay away this year. However, the bush poets still attracted one third of all patrons to what is primarily a music event.

Feature poets this year, Marco Gliori and Murray Hartin were extremely popular with audience and local poets alike. The workshops were very well received, and Marco's style of involving the participants in activities and in writing limericks and short poems proved very helpful to new and experienced writers alike. The same comments apply to their visit to St Mary's School. The students thoroughly enjoyed a much longer session than normal and would have gone longer but for the need to catch buses home.

The WA poets gain huge benefit from seeing professional poets in action and from being able to perform beside them on the big stage. It is not all work and no play. All the poets stay at my farm, and that allows for much social interaction, starting with a BBQ on the Wednesday night before the festival starts, and continuing through until they slowly make their way home after the weekend. It is a real pleasure to be able to host the bush poets at the festival, and Meg and I would like to thank all involved in making this the highlight of the WA bush poetry calendar, and especially to Marco and Muz.

Bill Gordon

Bush Poetry Coordinator & WABPYS President



Muz, Harvey Dickson & Marco



A tiny part of Harvey's Country Music Museum





# North Pine



## Bush Poetry Festival

22nd, 23rd & 24th August 2014

*A NEW format for a NEW Festival*

*Workshops, Concert, Competition Walk-ups, Breakfasts and BBQs  
Learn New Skills - Hone Existing Skills - Practice New Skills*

### **Performance Workshops:**

The techniques of Performance. Preambles, Clarity, Volume, Pace and Variations; Intonation, Pitch, Emphasis, Inflection, Gestures, Audience Contact, Memorisation and Choice of Poem

### **Writing Workshops:**

The techniques of Writing. Selecting a Genre, Getting started, Metre, Rhyme, Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Structure, Language, Storyline and Critiquing.

### **Lyric Writing Workshops:**

Turning Bush Poems into Bush Ballads.  
The story - The Crux - Defining the Verses - Extracting the Chorus

## **GALA CONCERT SATURDAY NIGHT**

with

**GLENNY PALMER & GREG NORTH**

*Norths Leagues Club 1347 Anzac Avenue Kallangur*

WEEKEND PASS (Access all areas)      \$40

Workshops only - \$30, Concert only - \$20, Competition only - \$10

Application form and more particulars off the ABPA Web-site <http://www.abpa.org.au>

Festival Contacts, Noel Stallard, 07 3351 3221 or

John Best, 07 3886 2660

Emails: [noel@noelstallard.com](mailto:noel@noelstallard.com) [longjohnbest@bigpond.com](mailto:longjohnbest@bigpond.com)

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### **Graham Fredriksen Memorial Written Bush Poetry Competition.**

Closing Date: Friday 4th July 2014

First Prize: \$200, Second: \$100 & Third: \$50

Application form and particulars are available off the ABPA Web-site <http://www.abpa.org.au>



Poetry remains a feature of the a Henry Lawson Festival which is held annually over the June long weekend. The festival has a long tradition of Verse and Short Story competitions, While the Billy Boils and the walk-up *Poetry on the Boards*

In 2014 The Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts enters its 57<sup>th</sup> year. It gives us great pride to announce that the festival committee will unveil a bronze interactive statue of Henry Lawson in time for 2014 festival which was created by Australian artists Gille and Marc Schattner.

The festival features a wide array of exhibitions, a colourful street procession, children's rides, market stalls, street entertainment including busking and live music, guinea pig races, car show and much MUCH more

If you've never been to the Henry Lawson Festival, or if you're looking for something different to do over the 2014 June long weekend in NSW, then head to Grenfell.

For further information on the 2014 Grenfell Henry Lawson festival of Arts please go to [www.henrylawsonfestival.com.au](http://www.henrylawsonfestival.com.au) or call 02 6343 2855.

## Poetry on The Boards,

**Saturday 7th June 2014**

**NOW TAKING**

**EARLY SIGN UPS**

Hosted by

Performance Poet

**Geoffrey W Graham** of

Eaglehawk Victoria.



The perfect way to kick off the biggest day of the festival weekend.

This is a walk-up event; you can read or recite your favourite poem or just sit back and enjoy the morning's poetry feast. Read or recite your favourite poem or just sit back and enjoy the morning's poetry feast. This event lends itself towards Bush Poetry, Humorous Verse and Performance Poetry. A trophy is awarded for the Best Poet on the Day. To get on the card for the Poetry on the Boards please contact the Coordinator Carly Brown by emailing [poetry@henrylawsonfestival.com.au](mailto:poetry@henrylawsonfestival.com.au) or calling her on 02 6343 1248.





## Regular Monthly Events

### **NSW**

Illawarra Breakfast Poets meet every Wednesday at 7am at Coniston Community Hall, next to Coniston Railway Station. Ample parking, no steps, everyone welcome.

"Bush Poetry In The Upper Lachlan." The Laggan Pub, Laggan NSW. The 1st Wednesday of every month, starting at 7.30pm. For further details contact Mike or Elaine on (02) 4837 3397

Gosford Bush Poets meet at 7pm the last Wednesday of every month at the Gosford Hotel, crn. Mann and Erina Streets Gosford. All welcome. Contact Vic Jefferies 0425252212 or Peter Mace (02)-4369356

Port Macquarie (Hastings-Macleay) Poetry Group now meets 2nd Sunday afternoon 1pm to 4pm, Port Macquarie Senior Citizens Club (Pioneer Room), south end of Munster St, Port Macquarie. Contact Rod, Janice, Ian, Tom or Bessie 6584 5425

Milton Ulladulla Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Group First Sunday Every Month at Ex Servos Club Ulladulla 2pm start visitors welcome contact John Davis 02 44552013

Binalong - A Brush with Poetry @ Black Swan Wine Bar and Gallery. last Sunday of every odd month (except January), 2-4pm Open mic. Contact Robyn Sykes 02 6227 4377

The Queanbeyan Bush Poets meet at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Casuarina Room at the RB Smith Community Centre, Crawford Street, (opposite the Council Chambers). Contact Laurie McDonald on 02 6253 9856

Port Macquarie Minstrels, Poets and Balladeers meet fortnightly; 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 1pm in the Pioneer Room, Senior Citizens Hall south end of Munster St, Port Macquarie. Contact Tom Mcilveen 0417 251287

### **QUEENSLAND**

North Pine Bush Poet Group meet from 9am on 1st and 3rd Sunday of every month at The Distillery - North Pine Hotel, Old Petrie Town, Dayboro Rd. Petrie Contact :- John 07 38862660 or Noel 07 33513221

Kuripia Poets - last Sunday of the month 2pm to 4.30pm, Croquet Hall, 91 Codelia St. Sth Brisbane. Contact Marilyn 0458 598 683

Geebung Writers - 9.30 am every 2nd Wednesday of the month at Geebung RSL. Contact Jean (07)32654349

Bundaberg Poets Society Inc. 2nd Saturday of the month. Rum City Silver Band Hall, Targo Street. Contact Edna (07) 41597198; Jayson (07) 41550778 or Sandy (07) 41514631.

Beaudesert Bush Bards meet on the 3rd Friday of each month from 9.30am at the Beaudesert Arts & information Centre, Mt. Lindesay H'way, Beaudesert. Phone 07 5541 2662 or 3272 4535.

Redcliffe Peninsular Poets - 1st Tuesday of the month, 7pm to 9pm. Winton Room, Redcliffe Cultural Centre, Downs Street, Redcliffe. Contact Trish (07) 38847790 or Trish1942@gmail.com

Russell Island Writers Circle - 2nd Thursday of the month at 9.30 am. St. Peters Church Hall (Next to IGA). \$2 donation. Contact Trish (07)34091542

Shorncliffe Cafe On The Park - 3rd Monday of the month from 6pm, 6 Park Pde, Shorncliffe. Contact Kevin Dean (07) 38810986

Townsville Bush Poetry Mates for adults is 7.00pm on the first Tuesday of the month and 3:45 for children at the Aitkenvale Library, Aitkenvale Townsville.

### **Victoria**

Kyabram Bush Verse Group- First Monday, every second month, namely Feb, April, June, Aug, Oct, Dec. at the Kyabram Baptist Church meeting room, crn Fenaughty Street and Lake Road Kyabram 7.30pm. Contact Mick Coventry 0427-522097

Gippsland Bush Poets meet Monthly, 7.30pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the RSL Hall in Hood St. Rosedale

Top of the Murray Poets and Bush Storytellers (TOMPABS) meet Monthly (mostly Tuesdays in Corryong) for writing workshops, Monthly on 3rd Sunday for Music and Poetry at Maurie Foun's 'Poets' Paradise'. Contact Jan Lewis (02) 60774332

Bendigo Goldfields Bush Poets - Third Sunday even numbered months, except December when second Sunday. Newmarket Hotel, cnr Nolan St & Strickland Rd, Bendigo 1.30pm to 4.30pm. Contacts: Geoffrey Graham 03 5446 3739 or Ken Jones 03 5441 5121

### **WA**

Albany Bush Poets Group 4th Tuesday of each month. Contact Peter 98446606

Perth monthly muster, 1st Friday of each month 7pm - 9.30pm at The Auditorium, 26 Plantation Drive Bentley Park 6102 Contact Dave 0438341256 or Terry 0894588887.

