

A.B.P.A.

**Australian Bush
Poets Association**

Volume 20 No. 5

October/November 2014

*celebrating 20 Years
Of The A.B.P.A.*



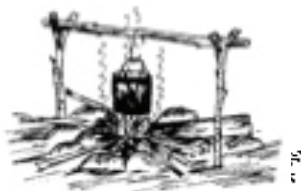
TO ALL THOSE WHO SERVED
LEST WE FORGET



POETRY READING Group

PO BOX 3001 WEST TAMWORTH 2340

Organisers of The Blackened Billy Verse Competition



Blackened Billy Verse Competition will be 25 years old in 2015!

How would you like to be the 25th winner in a list of highly credited poets who have gone before.

The Tamworth Poetry Reading Group, and sponsors ABPA, are looking for a record number of entries to celebrate this auspicious occasion, which will culminate in the publication of a book featuring all 25 winners.

First Prize is the famous Blackened Billy trophy plus \$600
Second prize \$300
Third Prize \$ 200

Opening Date September 1.

For an entry form, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Blackened Billy Verse Competition, PO Box 3001, West Tamworth NSW 2340 or email janmorris33@bigpond.com

Entry forms will also be available from the ABPA Website from September 1

MILTON SHOW SOCIETY NSW BUSH POETRY ADULT PERFORMANCE COMPETITION



TO BE HELD AT THE MILTON SHOW
SAT 21ST FEBUARY 2015
11AM START



TOTAL OF \$1000 PRIZE MONEY

1ST \$500 2ND \$300 3RD \$200

Maximum of 12 Performers accepted on First In/First Served basis

Poem can be Serious or Light Hearted and Classic, Contemporary or Original

Download Entry forms from ABPA Website www.abpa.org.au OR www.showdayonline.com

and follow the prompts

OR

Contact John Davis 37 George avenue Kings Point NSW 2539

Ph 02 44552013 email jda76436@bigpond.net.au

EDITORIAL



G'day and welcome to the October/November Edition of the ABPA Magazine. After sunning it up in Charters Towers for the Winter, it's a pleasant change to be home in Victoria. The weather may be a little cooler, but when that is where family and friends are, then the trade off is well worth it.

Currently I am performing at the Mildura Country Music Festival, where myself and a terrific group of regular walk-up poets have managed to take the Poets breakfasts from a small alleyway beside a Pizza Parlour, to one of the bigger venues in Mildura and now fill the venue each day for the 10 days of the Festival

Despite my calls for submissions for the magazine last issue, the number of submissions for this magazine has actually dropped. I had not one submission of Poetry for our Remembrance Day issue; The Anniversary of the beginning of World War One. I put it down initially to poems commemorating the bravery of our armed forces in the past as being perhaps a boring subject to a lot of modern day writers. But after putting out a call on our ABPA website, I did receive some wonderful poems. So is it a matter of laziness? An unwillingness to share? Or a decline in interest by our members in supporting their Association. I have had a couple of complaints over a couple of old (and so called 'irrelevant') pieces I have published over the past couple of issues. Sadly these armchair critics have never submitted anything to share with other readers, and therein could be the problem. Complacency. It's like Australia's Funniest Home Videos getting no submissions and having to go out and film their own. Or the judges on The Voice having to sing themselves, because nobody else got around to singing.

So please, PLEASE consider sharing your Poetry, Poetry Festival write ups, Poetry outings etc. I am looking forward to once again editing a magazine, and by that I mean to have to decide which submissions, from a huge influx, that I can fit in the Magazine. Or am I simply dreaming?

Our ABPA website is all good and well, but unfortunately does not offer us enough participating members to get a broad overview of Bush Poetry throughout Australia, and that is no disrespect to our Web masters over the years in Andy, Manfred and Greg. The Forums on our website offer ways to participate in Writing Exercises (Thanks to Maureen Clifford), a chance to have our poetry critiqued, published, shared etc. and chances to chat, share yarns, publish Audio, find results, etc. etc. and yet so few people participate. Despite pushing the value and the enjoyment of our forums in all previous editions, the numbers of those participating has only been seen to dwindle.

So, once again, to all our ABPA members, I just ask - Please don't let the hard work of so many over 20 years fall to the hands of so few or the future. Let's get the fun back into our craft and let's Resurrect the Art of Sharing so all can enjoy the quality of Bush Poetry being produced today.

Happy writing and performing to all and safe travels!

Neil McArthur

editor@abpa.org.au

NOTE:- Next Magazine Deadline for submissions is November 31st

Bush Poetry Events in Tamworth

To make poetry at Tamworth easier to find, the ABPA is preparing a one page summary of What's On in Bush Poetry (as outlined in the Aug/Sept edition). The summary is designed to complement the official guide, not replace it. Would co-ordinators please send details of their event to Robyn Sykes at robynsykespoet@gmail.com.

Thanking you in anticipation,
Robyn Sykes

The Snowy Mountains Muster regrets to advise that their event (which was to be held in Jindabyne in January 2015) has been postponed indefinitely. The Performance and Written Poetry competition has consequently been cancelled and all entries and fees will be refunded.

Any inconvenience is sincerely regretted.

Rathdowney Queensland event postponed

The organisers of the performance and written poetry event advertised for Rathdowney Qld on 4th October 2014 have postponed the event until Easter Sunday 2015. They write:

"The people in the Rathdowney area have been badly affected by the drought. Resorting to hand feeding their cattle so they are pretty exhausted. As a consequence a meeting recently decided to postpone all celebrations and fund raisers till next year."

President's Report

Again, welcome to you all and especially to those thirteen new members who have joined us in the last six weeks. We hope that you will each have a long and enjoyable association as part of the ABPA.



GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

In addition to the 'Thank You to Co-ordinators' feature on the Website and in the Magazine, we are continuing with the 'Meet a Poet' and including a 'Member Achievements' feature on the ABPA home page. The latter is to acknowledge the importance of members who specialize in specific areas which help to promote the cause of our organization and of Bush Poetry in general.

ABPA COMPETITION PACKAGE

The Competition Package on the website now includes a guide by Brian Langley, Steps for Organising a Major Competition, which we feel will prove useful to festival co-ordinators. Other ideas that may be incorporated at a later date are some basic guidelines re applying for a grant to run a competition, ways to run a meeting, preparing a budget and costing an event. We thank Brian for his interest and input.

Following the trial at the NSW Championships and constructive feedback from ABPA members, the Competition Package has been adjusted as found necessary and the package as it stands has been approved by the ABPA Committee on behalf of the membership. However, it will be further trialled at the WA Championships and the 2015 National Championships. As stated on the website, the package is still open to membership suggestions therefore ideas are welcome to be sent to the Committee for examination.

MAINTAINING OUR STANDARDS

Most poets have a flexible approach to Bush Poetry when it comes to performing for the general public or writing for social appeal. At club level it is desirable that many means of expression and aspects of socializing and non-competitive interchange should be enjoyed. It is good to see innovative ideas being tested throughout Australia and the ABPA aims to support clubs and members in their endeavours.

When it comes to competitions, it is pertinent to note that whilst the ABPA supports competitions and provides limited funding towards National and State Championships, it is the local clubs which organize their events and decide on what to incorporate or not. However, where clubs undertake to conduct their competitions at a championship level we need to maintain our high standards of rhymed and metered poetry with respect to both performance and writing. Outside the ABPA each member can be as expansive as their interests allow but within our organization, the standards not only preserve the aims of the ABPA but offer a challenge to all who wish to become better at what they do. For example, in performance, the guidelines allow reading in the Novice and Intermediate categories but not in the Open Category. Performers assure me that memorization requires time and effort but that the reward is the freedom that comes with non-reliance on that sheet of paper. Writers say that, once you get that rhyme and metre flowing without glitches, you can hear (within your own work) how the 'music' comes out and then gain the confidence to experiment with more complex rhyme and metre structures. It can be like adding a melody and rhythm to lyrics.

The definition of 'Bush Poetry' has been extended to allow subject matter that does not relate to iconic Australian aspects such as the Bush or Gallipoli but the term "must be distinctly Australian" remains as an essential aspect. Broadly, 'distinctly Australian' can be reflected in the casual way in which we interact with each other and in our unique sense of humour such as having a go at ourselves.

GREY NOMADS

As with other winter meccas around Queensland, NT and WA, the tourist season in Charters Towers from May through August again gave plenty of opportunity for Brenda to perform at caravan parks and tourism venues and for me to reach the travelling population with information about the ABPA. As Brenda was doing the Camooweal Drivers' Camp Festival in late August and the WA Championships in Toodyay in

October, the time in between was optimum for us to join the 'grey nomads' as 'travelling performer' and 'ABPA flag waver'. Not only are we having a wonderful time on the road but, like the other troubadours who roam our land, we are also generating a great deal of interest in Bush Poetry. So many on the road are discovering bush poetry for the first time. As a 'niche' group we won't be the largest poetry organisation in Australia but we can try to be the most representative of our genre. It is up to us all to show that we have something that is worth preserving.

In Poetry
Hal

G'Day Mate

by Fraser Swift

G'day Mate.

When one intelligent life form greets another intelligent life form the first two words that are used are "Hello" and "Breed".

Hello is used because it is a greeting that is a non-offensive acknowledgement of the other life form. Breed is used because it is an encouragement of the other life forms continuation and advancement.

In the Australian vernacular the word "G'day" is used in place of the word Hello. The "G" in "G'day", does away with the superior, righteous, judgemental and virtuous associations with the word "Good". The use of the abbreviated "G" in "G'day" gives the listener permission and logical reason to interpret the "G" as referring to the more informal meanings of the word "Good", such as happy, great, OK, courteous, and kind-hearted.

"Day" is intelligent because it recognises a common element of the Universe which is that life forms are surrounded by planets that have periods of night and day. "Day" does not exclusively describe a specified length of time; rather it is a word that describes that which is frequent, persistent, constant, regular, habitual and universally overt to intelligent life forms everywhere in our Universe.

Australians use "Mate" in place of the word Breed. Mate is a very intelligent and clever word because Mate encompasses all that is in the word Breed, and at the same time easily communicates the comforting affirmation that you are my friend.

G'day Mate is the most intelligent greeting that has ever been uttered by humanity.!

Dear Neil,

The following poem was originally printed in the Anzac Number of 'THE SYDNEY MAIL' on Wednesday 26th April, 1916. A photocopy from the actual newspaper is enclosed. My cousin who lives in Tallangatta Valley in Vic has the original newspaper. As it is 100 years this year since WW1 started and this poem talks about ancestors' 100 years prior to then, I thought this is rather apt at the moment especially as there are mutterings about Australia getting involved in another middle east conflict.

PennyBroun

" Australia Will Be There"

by Gabrielle Derrick

(Written at the Explorers' Tree, Mt. Victoria)

They sang in gleeful measure,
And made the hills resound
With the joyful, gladsome radiance
Of a harmony profound;
And the echoes joined the chorus
That summer day so fair
When the marching sons of southland
Sang "Australia will be there".

These are the sons of the sons of those
Who braved in days of old
Hunger and famine, drought and fire,
And a thousand things untold –
Brave hearted men who left the ways
Of the cities and the towns
And turned out into the sunset west
With its mingled ups and downs.

O Pioneers, you little dreamed
In those strenuous days of old
That I who saw you face the west
With heart so brave and bold
Should see thy children's children march,
A gleeful, gladsome band
On the self-same road in a hundred years,
In defence of their well-loved land.

When you blazed a trail thro' hill and dale
And toil'd while yet 'twas day
That the sons of thy sons should live at ease,
And pleasant made their way,
Across the foam the call has come,
And thy stalwart ones arise
And hie them forth to the din of war
For the sake of all they prize.

With a cooe call they turn away
From their homes in the sunset west,
With a tuneful strain and a martial swing,
Till they pause awhile to rest
Where I stand, who has stood these hundred years,
Since the fathers came this way;
Now they've passed again t'ward the rising sun,
Where it tells of new-born day.

They've passed away, and I stand forlorn,
And gaze into the west,
And dream and long for those who've gone
On their glorious, eager quest.
God give them might to defend the right,
They are ready to do and dare
For Country and King, you'll hear them sing,
"Australia will be there".

NINETEEN SIXTEEN

(c) Graham Fredriksen 1956 - 2010

*For Bombardier John Fredriksen—30086, 1st A.I.F.—
a tribute to my grandfather's war years: 1916 - 1919.*

THE LEAVING:

You sat in the shed with your saddler's clamp
held firm in the grip of your knees,
mending gear from your last mustering camp,
bridles and harness, by light of the lamp,
and you thought of a land overseas.

Stitching away with awl, needle and thread,
on leather for headstall and pack;
you'd finish the job before turning to bed:
a long road was waiting—who knew where it led,
or how long until you'd be back ?

The calves had been branded, the hay was all done,
the valley was emerald green,
and it slept in the peace of a south Queensland sun,
but Men were now wanted, a new job begun—
and the year was nineteen sixteen.

The Old Man said little, but ah! such are men;
then you said your goodbyes to Kate.
What were your words as you're holding her then ?—
what kind of promise could you make her when
you told her your love had to wait ?

You boarded your ship, to the oceans away,
to the opposite side of the world,
where Australian sons in a marshalled array
saw the winds of a war as they sweep and they sway
to the rifle and cannon smoke curled.

IN ENGLAND:

You sent home your photo from Salisbury Plain:
you in your bandolier, whip and spurs,
and that light in your eyes only youth can retain—
or was it the light that adventures sustain ?—
or were you just thinking of hers ?

You trained in the ranks of the 'Hundred and Five'
Field Artillery Co.,
then shipped out from Plymouth to France; you arrive,
and you live with the horses that you would soon drive
into battle, the big guns in tow.

THE WAR - 1917:

Into the big push of the Springtime campaign:
your induction to battle—Baupaume;
then the chaining of limbers—first blood on the rein—
and the clamouring, hammering, cannon refrain,
as Bullecourt stands to the storm.

There's the siege of Messines, decisive and large,
but Hell in one almighty sweep:
Artillery setting the pace in the charge—
two thousand guns laying down a barrage
of shell seven hundred yards deep.

There's a curtain of fire as Polygon Wood
is lain wasted: just ashes of pine
and smouldering ruin; redoubts steeped in blood—
and trenches where dark, ancient forest once stood
become stark demarcations of "line".

There's the guns coming in on the German advance
as Passchendaele faces the fray:
a name that had sounded to you of Romance,
where Courage and Daring were sided with Chance—
where Death and Despair hold the day.

Hark! the steel-booted thunder of galloping feet
as you ride through the face of the stunt;
hand to hand fighting through each village street;
and oh, what a terrible blow is "retreat"
as the back line's replaced by "the front".

The crimson of battle; the mud and the slime;
the strain of the leathers on chain;
grim, merciless slopes where the lead horses climb,
as the guns swing around for the third and last time—
and Passchendaele's taken . . . again.

INTERVAL AND REFLECTION:

You dug in, the Winter of nineteen eighteen,
and froze on the cold, bitter plain.
A duckboard morass where green meadows had been.
Did your dreams take you to places serene,
or did cannons still pound in your brain ?

O why did you leave your plough in the field
and the horses of quieter days ?
And what does it take for the heart to be steeled,
to ride into Hell as the gun horses wheeled ?—
those brave English chestnuts and bays.
Ah! those poor gallant prads that you pushed to the stunts,
through the shot and the shard and the shells,
was there in them the horses that you had worked once,
in the wagon tracks heading for homelier fronts—
did they take you at times somewhere else ?

NINETEEN SIXTEEN

(c) Graham Fredriksen 1956 - 2010

continued.....

O why did you leave the bushland to roam,
forsaking the heart and the plough ?
Were they never enough to have kept you at home,
these mountains of green and the valleys of loam
you knew then—the Home I know now ?

Did you see the foals play in their gay revelries,
as the Summer of Home comes around,
and the calves camped at noon by the sugar gum trees,
and the corn high in tassels that touch on the breeze ?—
Life sprung from the sacredest ground.

Did you dream of the musters and 'Lawlor Vale' days,
in the nights on the cold Menin Road—
and the girl at the homestead who silently prays—
as the rifles resound and machine-gunners blaze,
and the ambulance wagons reload ?

THE WAR——1918:

The New Year began with a savage retort—
again hear the cannons recoil;
but the Tide is a-changing and Time running short:
Villers Bretonneux—Hamel—Peronne—Dernancourt—
enshrined in the consecrate soil.

Enshrined in the mud, the intractable mire—
those placenames by cannonade ploughed:
christened by blood and ordained under fire;
interned by attrition, the terse occupier;
entombed in a tangible shroud.

THE ARMISTICE:

They are fast losing ground and, war-weary, supine,
the Germans' defeats now extend:
St. Quentin Canal to the Hindenberg Line,
the Allies push on with their "march to the Rhine",
and the War slowly grinds to an end.

The Armistice came and a wider world prayed
for eternal accord for Mankind;
and strange was the silence at each barricade,
while down through the valleys a lone bugle played
out a dirge to the souls left behind.

THE HOMECOMING:

They are mustering in through the 'Ten-mile' gates
with bullocks to send on the track;
there's a girl by the sliprail who patiently waits;
there's an innocence lost; there's the faces of mates
who'd never solicit for slack—
they went, but they never came back.

There's a sea of white crosses that quietly rise
in the shell-furrowed fields of the slain,
where Humanity's bitterest benefact lies;
there's a troopship a-sail under Southern blue skies,
with His grace bringing you home again—
there's a sad, silent prayer in the rain.

EIGHTY YEARS ON:

Now I sit in the shed with your saddler's clamp
held firm in the grip of my knee,
mending gear from my last mustering camp,
with the tools you once used, part of me—
and I wonder if Men are still made with the stamp
as the man Time affirmed you to be.

And so, from a third generation, I look
back on Time, in a young country, when
you went to a war; and the journey you took
took you far beyond reason and ken:
an induction of Country; grim History's book
speaks the War to end all wars — Amen.



WINTON JUNIOR POET'S FESTIVAL 2014

Winton, where Banjo Paterson wrote the famous verse in 1895, was host to the Waltzing Matilda Junior Bush Poetry Festival, the largest Festival of its kind in Australia.

This year there were just under 400 students reciting a range of material from our Australian classics to more modern authors. Students, and their supporters came from Boulia, Longreach, School of Distance Education (formally Radio School of the Air), Winton, Hughenden, Ilfracombe, Stonehenge and Cameron Downs. Stonehenge and Cameron Downs are described as "Small" Schools. By definition a Small School is a, one classroom - one teacher/principle school.

The Cameron Downs State School has three students and is located on an 80,000 hectare cattle station near Hughenden. They drove more than three hours to attend The festival. Principal Rhonda Hawthorne said poetry was an important part of bush culture, and it was vital to give children the opportunity to perform it in front of others. They are kids from the country — it is their life, their lifestyle, and that is what they live, breathe and eat. It's not just about reciting the poem, it is about performing it and telling the story - their story.

For the Festival, the students presented as individuals and as groups. Groups are allowed props and 'dress-ups' for their presentation piece, the chosen piece came from a set list. For those interested, the list included selections from, Daphne Lister, Jack Prelutsky, A. B. Paterson, Max Fatchen, Marco Giori, Veronica Weal and CJ Dennis.

It's easy to see that these kids live the stuff that's been written about so it's no surprise that they perform so well. For confidence and expression, we found the prep school and years one and two were a delight. The highlight for both Janine and myself was the CJ Dennis piece "Hist", presented by the years five and six from Boulia State School. The students are all First Nation kids and their tight presentation, harmonies and timing blew us away.

Janine Haig has been coming to Winton to judge the Juniors for over ten years now. Carmel Randle was a founding stalwart of this Junior Competition. She organised as well as judged for many years. Bobby Miller and Gary Fogarty have also been generous in their support of this festival.

Festival co-ordinator Louise Dean said the number of competitors was up this year because of support from local schools. "I think the teachers see the value of what these children are doing, it's the experience of performing, and learning a poem, that's the benefit" she said. Loise Dean, has been involved with the Junior Festival since Carmel Randle passed her the baton 16 years ago. Sadly, Loise feels that it's time to, "hang up her boots". So after being involved with the largest festival of its kind in Australia, Loise will be handing over to a new co-ordinator for 2015. Loise received a bouquet and thanks from Winton's Mayor Butch Lenton and Winton CEO Tom Upton.

Manfred Vijars.



Mayor Butch Lenton, Loise Dean and
Winton CEO Tom Upton.



Cameron Downs Students, (IL to R) Daniel Wearing ,
Amelia Wearing and Daniel McConachy.

Promise My Children

© David Campbell

Winner 2014 FreeXpresSion Traditional Poetry Competition, first published in FreeXpresSion, May 2014

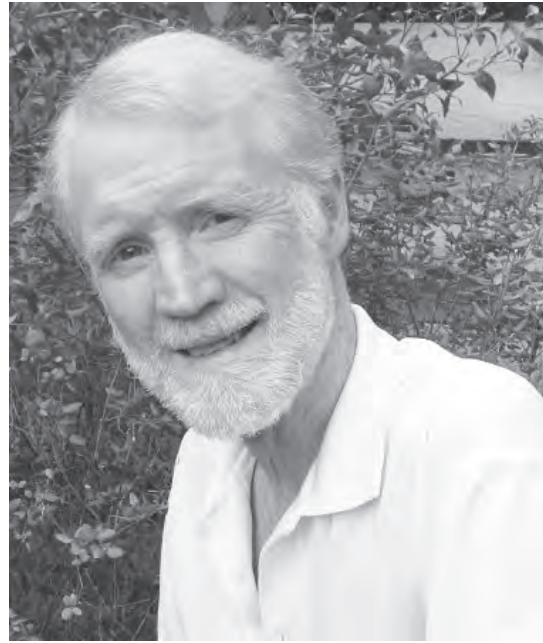
Promise, my children, you'll listen
to the sigh of that first morning breeze,
watching the early dew glisten
on the leaves of the paperbark trees.
Savour that moment on waking
as the dreams of the night fade away,
capture the dawn as it's breaking,
with the challenge that comes with each day.

Marvel at what you are seeing,
from the valleys to ridges on high,
welcome each moment of being,
all the beauty of earth, sea and sky.
Wonder at mankind's invention,
the remarkable things we have wrought,
miracles past comprehension,
that defy all the limits of thought.

Offer your love without seeking
to demand anything in return,
focus when others are speaking,
as you'll find there is much you can learn.
Celebrate all you're achieving
on the many new paths you may tread,
honour the past with your grieving,
but be mindful of what lies ahead.

Banish expressions of sorrow,
and abandon all thoughts of despair,
cherish the hope of tomorrow,
for the future now rests in your care.
Learn what you can from my story,
and remember just what these words mean:
courage has no need of glory...
and the truth about war is obscene.

Hell is the only perception
I can give to this nightmare of pain,
horror beyond your conception
that may send us completely insane.
Shelling has left us defenceless,
and our guns are all mired in the mud,
gas means that many are senseless,
and the trenches are running with blood.



Bodies are shattered asunder,
and the fallen are left where they died,
victims of GHQ's blunder,
and the curse of a field-marshal's pride.
Progress is out of the question,
the machine guns will tear us apart,
no-one dare make the suggestion
that we're more than mere lines on a chart.

Sleep will not come while we're waiting,
as we huddle on soaking wet ground,
rain shows no sign of abating,
with the scream of the shells all around.
Nothing can come of this madness,
and the spectre of death haunts us all,
weariness coupled with sadness
as we watch yet another man fall.

Promise, my children, to reason
with those madmen who argue for war,
pray that there might come a season
when the guns will be silent once more.
Morning will soon be arriving,
and this day I am sure we will fail.
Few have a chance of surviving,
so remember the name...Passchendaele.



MISSING FACES.

(For the Ghost Platoon.)

©MM Beveridge August 2012.

(additional verse added 26/10/12)

They march in solemn silence like stiff crosses down the road
for each is lost in memories where sacrifices flowed
and in the battered remnants of formations long undone
they see the missing faces of a father or a son.
Missing fathers, missing sons
and the ranks are growing thinner since the ceasing of the guns.

They tramp behind the colours and the standards proudly flown
of battlefields and honours and with mottoes boldly sewn
are testaments to each and all the comrades they have lost
and somewhere in the counting, they will count the awful cost.
Counting fathers, counting sons
and the ranks are growing thinner since the ceasing of the guns.

The march becomes a shuffle at the stretching of the years,
while trembling hands and faces are concealing grievous fears
and as the shortened column does its best to march with pride,
the numbers of the living are now less than those who died.
Dying fathers, dying sons
and the ranks are growing thinner since the ceasing of the guns.

At last, the final honours are the standards all alone,
the bugles softly calling in a fading plaintiff tone.
Last Post will not be answered by a sad Reveille's fall,
the soldiers are all fading and they cannot heed the call.
Fading fathers, fading sons
and the ranks are growing thinner since the ceasing of the guns.

Then place upon the coffins as we drape them with the cross
the blood red sacred poppies that are signal of the loss.
Another name is added to the growing human toll
and yet another soldier is marked absent on the roll.
Absent fathers, absent sons,
and the ranks are now concluding since the ceasing of the guns.

So stand in solemn silence like white crosses on the green
and keep alive the memories where sacrifice has been.
Mark well the battered features of old soldiers now undone
and see in them the faces of a father or a son.
Missing fathers, missing sons
in the long list of the missing since the ceasing of the guns.



1914-18. FIVE WAYS TO HAVE A WAR.

©Neville Briggs

I

Gavrilo Princip fired the gun;
like a starting pistol; war's begun.
Franz Ferdinand and Sophie lie
as first of millions doomed to die.
Gavrilo what is this you've done.

II

They're marching now;
the military massed machine,
to gas and slash and bomb and burn,
to strike down all those fit young men
in Europe's foulest filthiest fields.

III

Young men will come from far away
in answer to the coo-ee call.
They'll leave behind the shearing sheds
the wheat fields and the milking stall.
Why, in a nation newly born
should widows have to weep and mourn.

IV

Instead of shears, they'll cut with bayonets,
shoot men instead of siring sons.
Instead of planting wheat; dig trenches,
ride chargers, not the drover's horse.
Instead of sunning on the beach
they'll fall on some strange Turkish shore.
Instead of living out their dreams
they'll find the nightmare that is war.

V

In time, war lords will call a halt,
when Europe's corpse is pale
and drained of blood.
They'll praise their god omnipotent,
sing peace and victory;
while Corporal Hitler's learned of war
in the Kaiser's regiment.



GREAT AUSSIE READS

with Jack Drake



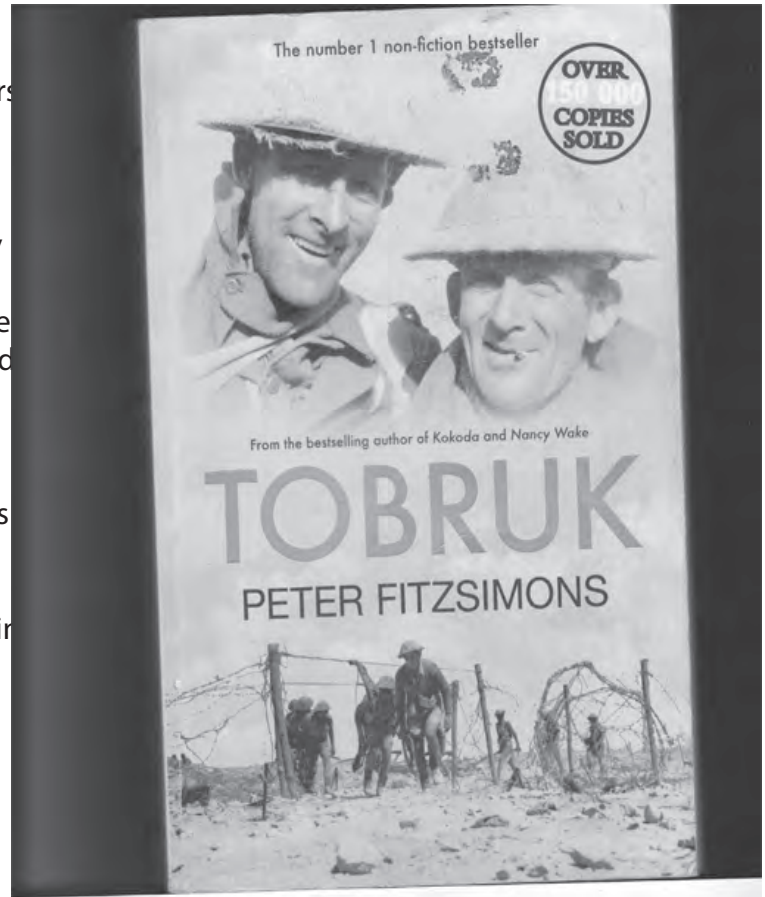
The feats and experiences of Australian soldiers serving overseas, have become more and more popular with Aussies of all ages and from all walks of life in recent years.

Our ANZAC heritage is celebrated here and in New Zealand, and more recently in the places abroad where Aussie soldiers fought and died.

Peter Fitzsimons' *Tobruk*, (Harper Collins Publishers 2006), is one of the finest treatments of Australian war time history I have ever read. The research, emotion and story craft Fitzsimons has incorporated in this work, makes it one of the most wonderful tributes to those doughty 'Rats' ever committed to paper.

Peter Fitzsimons has travelled extensively and spent many hours in research to craft this account interviewing survivors from both sides of this historic conflict. In fact, the book's foreword was written by Manfred Rommel, son of 'The Rats' of Tobruk's' arch enemy, 'The Desert Fox', Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.

Tobruk is simply a marvellous read. Engrossed in its pages, I could almost hear the guns and smell the dust as that desperate band of heroes, 'The Rats', somehow blocked the inexorable advance of Rommel's divisions.



Tobruk: Bravo Peter Fitzsimons and bravo to those heroic Australian fighting men who literally achieved the impossible.

Jack Drake

Time moves on, but Nimbin is still a 'cool' place!

Last week Jim Tonkin and I went to the Nimbin show. Jim wanted to put his horse through the ring events and in particular the jumping.

Nimbin is still an interesting place, 41 years on from the Aquarius Festival. The cafes are nicer now and the place definitely caters for the tourists, business owners suggesting that Nimbin is more 'authentic' than other tourist haunts that push the 'Alternative' lifestyle barrow.

The people may be more colourful but really they are just happy, friendly, country people. They may dress differently and dreadlocks may be part of their fashion statement but they are very warm and welcoming.

The show is interesting in that there are no rides as Nimbin is not on the circuit, but they manage to make their own fun with a bush dance and lots of other things that bring in the people like the dogs high jump. Dogs jump from the ground over a bar at the back of a ute the record at present is 2.03 metres, it's pretty spectacular to watch.

Lastly, they have a yearly talent quest and this year the bush poets gave them a run for their money with first prize going to Paddy O'Brien and second to Gerry King. We certainly added to the colour of the place! It was fun!



Gerry King

Deniliquin Grows Strong In Promoting Bush Poetry

Bush poetry is alive and well in Deniliquin, NSW, thanks to a band of enthusiastic local poets.

Bush Poets – Deniliquin was formed in March 2007. The formation of the club has rekindled a long hidden passion for poetry in the district. The club began with only 12 members and now boasts a membership of around 25. The Bush Poets – Deniliquin meets on the third Sunday of the month at 2:00pm

The members provide a service for not only Deniliquin, but to the outlying areas as well. Club President, Mr. Alex Allitt, contributes the success of the Bush Poets to the enthusiasm, and talents of its members. "We are considered a part of the service and entertainment of this town (Deniliquin). We perform at number of venues and we especially like performing at Navorina Nursing Home and senior citizens events as well as service clubs," says Mr Allitt

Two members have gone on to publish their own works. David Schoeffel, and Vin Schiller are both highly regarded in local poetry circles. Other members such as Edith Hall and Wendy Beck have had poems published. These are just a few examples of the talent that the club fosters.

Members continues to look at ways of involving young people. Next November the club is holding a breakfast for young people, what they hope will be an annual event. This breakfast is seen as a way to introduce bush poetry to a wider audience.

The club has been a proactive in spreading the word about bush poetry throughout the community through their representation at many local and interstate events. Over the past 3 years the club has worked closely with local schools to foster the enjoyment and develop the art of bush poetry – a component of the Australian Curriculum

Bush Poets – Deniliquin has successful run 'Bush Poets in Schools' programme.

The last three years we have made a strong effort to get our schoolchildren involved. Together with David Schoeffel I have travelled to the four primary schools in Deniliquin and another four within a radius of 40 kms from Deniliquin We demonstrated what we want from performance poets and helping them with their own performance. We were always well received by the teachers and the schoolchildren. Our efforts culminated in a performance by the combined schools in Deniliquin on the 11th August. Some 20 students delighted a crowd of about 140 people with their efforts. We purposely did not have a competition with the hope that the students would be more relaxed and learn to love bush poetry for the pure enjoyment and entertainment. Each student was presented with a hand crafted red gum ball point pen manufactured by David Kerslake who generously only charged us for the cost of material----and a certificate to acknowledge their participation. The first year of our efforts were strongly supported by Jim Haynes and the second year by David Campbell and we are very appreciative for their help.

You can appreciate that to travel and spend time at the eight schools was a very big effort and I thank David Schoeffel for making the time to help me. We visited some of the schools four times. Although I am 85 years old I get a great deal of satisfaction if I can help our young people become poet lovers.

Over the 8 years that this club has been operating it has provided entertainment and enjoyment to a great many people. Their services are now in demand which is an achievement that they are immensely proud of. They are a shining example of what the bush has to offer.



Alex Allitt and David Schoeffel with Christopher Moore, Bethany Jansen, Leah Madonald and Elizabeth Laverty.



Anzac Rosemary

© Maureen Clifford - The Scribbly Bark Poet

The shells burst all around he felt himself thrown to the ground
into a shallow hollow, face down, underneath a velvet sky.
In khaki soaked and dusty, wet with blood – metallic, rusty.
He was hanging on for grim death and he didn't want to die.

All around the battle raged and he quite expertly had gauged they
weren't making too much progress. Johnny Turk had pinned them down.
And in pain excruciating he lay bleeding, tired and waiting
for John Simpson and his donkey and his last ride out of town.

He woke as dawn was breaking with the cold and shock now shaking
his entire body, but his eyes could still see on the shore
bodies coloured red and khaki. All were still – then like the larks he
started singing in soprano. Eulogies for those no more.

He clutched a sprig of something, just a tiny twig of something
which he stuffed into his pocket though he couldn't tell you why.
Two medics with a stretcher said "Just hang on mate we'll getcha
out of here as quick as lightning - you'll be home soon, by and by"

On that bloody field of battle where the deadly bullets rattled
he had left a leg behind him that would be of use no more.
Though he brought back to Australia little of his old regalia
he still had that sprig of Rosemary plucked from that brutal shore.

Now old - back home in Sydney, near the bridge where as a kid he
played and larked about with other mates who'd died upon that beach
beneath those cliffs so fearsome. Now on stormy nights he hears them
as the thunder and the lightning bring them back within his reach.

There beside the front verandah in a spot that warms the sandstone,
is a bush whose brimming blossom mimics periwinkle skies.
He will forever hold them in his heart; mateship enfolds them
when he picks his Anzac Rosemary each morning with a sigh.

ANZAC

©Bob Pacey

I sit here staring at the ocean as it rolls upon the beach.
The waves they rumble slightly as onto the sand they reach.
My mind it drifts as here I sit to the shores of that bloodied bay.
Where Australia's finest young men lay slaughtered in the spray.

To those beaches of Gallipoli where through sweat and tears and blood.
They charged the Turks defences in an unrelenting flood.
Young men from every state and territory prepared to give their lives, their all.
To defend the right of freedom they responded to their nations call.

T'was there the legend first was born as they wallowed in the mire.
Mateships forged that would endure, outstanding courage under fire.
The landing there at ANZAC cove saw young bodies ripped and torn.
But out of that horrible carnage the ANZAC legend then was born.

Twenty thousand of Australia's sons charged through blood and fire and water.
But Johnny Turk was primed and ready as they gave and asked no quarter.
Their feats will never be forgotten as we honour them each year.
Thank them for their sacrifice as we quietly shed a tear.

There are those who would discard it, they say it glorifies all war.
But they gave their lives for freedom their sacrifice we can't ignore.
So to those who would not honour them and have us cast their feats aside.
You will not break our ANZAC spirit it is a badge we will always wear with pride.

'Lest We Forget'

Boat People

©"Pa" Kettle
November 2013

I was standing on the shore of my native born land,
I think the year was about two thousand and eight.
I saw all these boats arrive; they say they are refugees,
There are so many it's like someone opened a flood gate.

For over 200 years my family has called Australia home,
Of my heritage and culture I'm fiercely proud.
But all these foreign people of dubious intent,
I tell you mate it just shouldn't be allowed.

As an Ozzie I'm fairly tolerant, I'll help them to fit in,
It's the Ozzie way to give the underdog a go.
But if they wish to settle here, and make Australia home,
There are some fundamental things that they should know.

They should learn to speak our language, when in a public place,
Get a job so they can support their family,
Do not criticise our country that is giving them a fresh start,
Then the benefits of being in Australia they'll soon see.

Don't try to take us over, or convert us to your ways,
We don't mind your national dress; at cultural shows.
It was you, who choose to come here to start a better life,
So embrace our lifestyle mate, that's the way it goes.

We accept you have your religion, the same as we have ours
We celebrate Christmas and Easter with a lot of fuss
But ANZAC day is really special, the day we hold most dear
It's the reason why you can come here and live like us.

I was standing on the shore of my native born land
I'm told the year is Seventeen Eighty Eight
I see all these boats arrive from a far off foreign land
Will my people remember this as an envision date?

For over 4000 years my people called this land our home
Our heritage and our culture you didn't recognise
You didn't try to fit in, or accept us for who we were
To you we were black and therefore were uncivilised

You didn't learn to speak our language, or understand our laws
You fenced off the land and claimed you now owned the place
Since the dreamtime we have lived on that same place of land
But we were black, so you thumbed your nose up in our face

You tried to change our land to make it like your native home
With Deer and Rabbit and Fox to name but a few
The devastation to our wildlife from the competition that arose
At the time it didn't seem to matter or worry you.

Did you have a right to take us over and convert us to your ways?
Not caring for our religion, laws or taboos
You used our men as cheap labour, our women in your beds
You change whatever you want and however you choose.

Now as these dark people arrive in boats from across the sea
They bring different laws and culture to our shore
If they will not fit in, and thumb their noses at our ways
Will our people be forced to change, like they were before?

Thank You To Our Wonderful Co-ordinators

CONTINUING OUR TRIBUTES TO OUR WONDERFUL CO-ORDINATORS

Brian Langley - WEST AUSTRALIA



Having organised many major performance and written competitions including the West Australian Championships of 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2013, Brian emphasises the fact that planning way ahead is an essential part of preparing for any event.

"There are many steps to be taken when setting out to organise a major poetry competition.

My philosophy in life is "get it right the first time", so this means that all contingencies must be considered and all necessary organisation and paperwork be done BEFORE it is needed, This will go a long way to minimising hiccups on the day.

The ABPA have organised a standardised competition package in order to have similarity across Australia, I commend them for this, for it not only minimises discrepancies across our land but has simplified the work of competition managers in that many of the forms needed are now downloadable from the ABPA website."

The new organisers of the 2014 WA Championships to be held 24th – 26th October in Toodyay, will benefit from Brian's helpful advice and the ABPA thanks him for sharing his knowledge and experience with us all.

N.B. Brian's 'Steps for Organising a Major Competition' now form part of the current ABPA Competition Package and are available for download from the ABPA website.

This year Brian has turned the mantle over to Bill Gordon who is the Co-ordinator for the 2014 ABPA W.A. STATE CHAMPIONSHIP to be held in Toodyay, W.A. 24th – 26th October, 2014

New Group Formed: The Logan Performance Bush Poets

If you travel South from Brisbane, along Kingston Road, bypassing the metropolis now known as Logan City and continue on you'll eventually see blue hills and green pastures where dairy cattle graze waiting to be milked, and you'll cross a bridge high above the Logan River. Off to the left set back from the bank is a lovely estate aptly named 'My Home and the River' Nearby, you'll find a lovely little village, named after the notorious Captain Logan.

Captain Logan was in charge of the convict settlement in Moreton Bay and sadly his cruelty still lives on in songs and poem, written by those poor wretches that were sent to the settlement. Logan actually explored all this part of the river and for the last two years his discovery of this beautiful part of Logan has been commemorated, as part of a festival. This year the festival was called 'The Logan Village Music and Heritage Festival' and Bush Poetry was again welcomed into the festival.

Results will follow, but it needs to be noted that because of the money spent by the organisation, on advertising the festival, a new bush poetry group has been formed.

New Poets came from all over Logan, some with poems already down pat, so rather than let them all disappear into oblivion, a new group has been created called the 'LOGAN PERFORMANCE BUSH POETS' and they will be performing at the Jimboomba markets held at the Jimboomba State School, on the third Saturday of the month. It won't be long till Logan Poets will be giving poets from other established groups a run for their money in all the competitions.

Gerry King

Results of the Poetry at Logan Village held on September 14 2014.

Novice: 1st Mick Martin, 2nd Michael Craig, 3rd Don Macqueen
Open Traditional: 1st Paddy O'Brien; 2nd a tie between Pam Fox and Wally Finch
Open Original: 1st Wally Finch; 2nd a tie between Pam Fox and Paddy O'Brien.
The One Minute poem worth \$50 was won by Wayne Caldwell from Eagleby.
The Grand Champion for Logan Village was 'Wally Finch'.



2014 BRISBANE EKKA REPORT

The iconic 137th Brisbane Royal National Show is over again for another year - and what a great success it was. The weather (except for the second Saturday !!) was idyllic - sunny skies and thankfully the dreaded Westerly winds stayed away yet again.

On the first Saturday we held the Ekka Bush Poetry Competition - more about that in the Competition Report - but I do want to mention that we now have a very generous new Sponsor -and this has enabled us to present a much more generous Prize money package.

Our daily Bush Poetry performances for the following 10 days certainly kept us busy - we did 6 half-hour shows a day on three different stages - starting as usual each morning in the John Reid Pavilion where we began the performance with "The Man from Snowy", with the poet wearing an oilskin and carrying (and sometimes cracking) a stockwhip - then following with a selection of poems from the 'poets of the day'. We always finished our day with another half-hour show in the John Reid Pavilion.

Because this is the Banjo Paterson Anniversary Year we focussed on his poetry and many of the poets performed their favourite Banjo Paterson poems.

Our other two stages were a 'mixed blessing'! - the Sheep-shearing stage was great. A relaxed, intimate stage where we were able to interact with the audience and again, we did two shows daily there.

Our third stage was 'our challenge', designed to entertain the public in the slow-moving queues in the Animal Nursery. We had a "soap-box" as a stage and it was quite fun when it worked as planned, but quite a challenge when the queues began moving on and we were in the middle of a poem !! Many of the patrons stayed back to listen, while occasionally our poets went with the queue !! We shall try to fine-tune it all for next year.

We had 16 poets performing over the 10 days of the Ekka and on 3 days a great young Country singer Tim Drury, who added some music to our performances. I must also make mention of our other 'young talent' - Amy and Emily Bradfield from Warwick who generously performed for us between their Horse-riding and Competition commitments. Thankyou to you all. I am happy to say that if these young performers continue to entertain us then Australian Bush Poetry is in good hands.

Without naming all our fantastic poets, I would like to thank each and everyone of you - especially all the poets who came from interstate and out of Brisbane - your attendance is very much appreciated - without you our shows at the Ekka could not continue. You all gave your valuable time and experience (for such a small remittance) so the Patrons of the Ekka could enjoy and experience our great culture - I salute you all.

Our Councillor for the John Reid Pavilion - Catherine Sinclair - very kindly presented the trophies after the competition - our thanks go to her, and also to all the other people who contributed to this event, including my fellow judges - Carol Heuchan and Ron Liekefett, our Comperes Noel and Ann Stallard, our Collators Jim and Lin Kennedy, and our 'runner' Jenny Liekefett

Also our generous sponsors -The Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, The Royal National Association, The Consultancy Bureau, Peter Forster and Catherine Sinclair

Congratulations to all the Competitors and all the Placegettersand, most importantly, our thanks must go to our enthusiastic audience.

I hope to catch up again during the year at a Poetry Performance somewhere in this beautiful land of ours -

With many thanks,

Trisha Anderson.

Results of the 2014 Ekka Bush Poetry Competition

OPEN ESTABLISHED -

1. Amy Bradfield
2. Kevin Dean
3. Paddy O'Brien

OPEN ORIGINAL -

1. Geraldine King
2. Graeme Johnson
3. Kevin Dean

STUDENT PERFORMER (12 yrs and under)

1. Melissa Edwards
2. Harriet Wilson
3. Hayley Eaton

STUDENT PERFORMER (13yrs and under 18yrs)

1. Emily Bradfield



NORTH PINE CAMP OVEN FESTIVAL RESULTS 2014

CATEGORY(1a) – Junior Performance – Grades 2-5

Audrey Virgin Max Holmes Jemma Keefe

CATEGORY (1b) – Junior Performance – Grades 6 & 7

Melissa Edwards Melanie Adcock Harriet Wilson

CATEGORY 2 – Reading Original

1ST. MICK MARTIN

2ND JILL GOLD

3RD ANNE LEADBETTER

CATEGORY 3 – Novice Performance

1ST. IAN MCDONALD

2ND. DONALD MACQUEEN

3RD. -----

CATEGORY 4 – Intermediate Performance

1ST. TONY DALE

2ND. JOHN PAMPLING

3RD. KAY GORRINGE

CATEGORY 5 – Open Performance

MALE FEMALE

1ST. KEVIN DEAN

1ST CAY ELLEM

1ST PADDY O'BRIEN

2ND SUZANNE HONOUR

3RD JIM KENNEDY.

3RD PAM FOX

ONE MINUTE POEM

1ST. MICK MARTIN

The Graham Fredriksen Memorial Written Poetry Award

FIRST: David Campbell, "A PAIR OF LOVING EYES"

SECOND: Catherine Lee Clarke, "ESCAPE"

THIRD: Will Moody "AN ORDINARY LIFE"

Highly Commended: Brenda-Joy Pritchard, "IN A MANGROVE WORLD"

Highly Commended: Val Wallace, "MURDO MACKENZIE'S GHOST"

Commended: Shelly Hansen, "A LESSON IN LIFE"

Commended: Heather Knight, "THE LION'S VIEW"

Commended: Val Wallace, "NEWS FROM THE FRONT - 1918"

Congratulations to all who participated ...
Manfred.



CAMOOWEAL DROVERS' REPORT

Once again, Camooweal came alive for the 2014 Drovers' Camp Festival with the camp, the town and the river vibrant with authentic outback activities and flowing over with travellers happy to join with the locals to celebrate the droving tradition and to welcome the drovers who contributed to Australia's unique cultural heritage. This year there were 40 of these veterans of the land to spin yarns and weave stories of their adventures in the wide open spaces before the times of cattle truck transportation.

Special this year was the unveiling of the commemorative statue of the drover and his horse which now graces the Barkly Highway – the through road and the main street of this proud little border town. This principle route from Queensland to the Northern Territory is closed off for nearly 3 hours to allow the town to celebrate. Out here you get your priorities right.

Camp drafting, whip cracking, mail racing, street parade, a charity auction, craftsmen working in the memorabilia hall, art displays and stalls all intermingle with camp kitchen happy hours, pub music shows, the Saturday night outdoor concert and the talent quest of ballad, song, yarn spinning and of course bush poetry. It is a great place to be on the fourth weekend of August every year.

Brenda Joy

CAMOOWEAL DROVERS CAMP FESTIVAL COMPETITION RESULTS

WRITTEN COMPETITION – 'The Bronze Spur Award'

1st Donald Crane, Toowoomba Bush Mother

2nd Shelley Hansen, Maryborough The Legend of Tiny Tim

3rd Brenda Joy, Charters Towers Endurance

PERFORMANCE COMPETITION – "The Drovers' Camp Talent Award'

Bush Poetry Section

1st Max Pringle, Narrabri, NSW

2nd Keith Douglas Jnr, Cloncurry, Qld.

3rd Maureen Luke, Townsville, Qld.

Yarn Spinning Section

1st Keith Douglas Jnr.

2nd Richard Manning, Perth WA

3rd Max Pringle

Song/Ballad Section

1st Jarrod Slater, Mt. Isa

2nd Earl Kyle, Mt. Isa

3rd Gospel Band, Lake Nash

OVERALL DROVERS' CAMP TALENT AWARD

1st Keith Douglas Jnr.

2nd Max Pringle

3rd Maureen Luke



Co-ordinator Brenda Joy with John & Carmel Lloyd

Preamble: Cast in a 'women of the west' mould, the Bush Mother in this poem typifies the many thousands of those pioneering women who faced the hardships and privation of our bygone era.

BUSH MOTHER
© Donald Crane

Winner 2014 Bronze Spur Award Camooweal, Queensland.

She came to the altar a bashful bush maiden, to take the bold step that would change her whole life,
The vows and the promises made so intently, the ring and a kiss, then pronounced man and wife.
Thus started her new life, the first of three phases, as spouse, wedded partner, no longer a Miss,
Bright eyed and entranced by the joy of the moment, naively expecting a lifetime of bliss.
But fate has a habit of bursting our bubbles, life's pathway is strewn with the relics of schemes,
The best of intentions are oft left in tatters, the best of our plans can become shattered dreams.
A far outback block without homestead or comforts would be the first home
for this newly wed bride,
Together with husband all day in the paddock, at fencing or stock work they toiled side by side.
But this was a bush girl, at home in the saddle, as good as a man in the scrub or the yard,
With never a moment to grouch or to grumble, nor ever a day found too long or too hard.

Their first years of marriage were harsh beyond measure, each act of misfortune
was met with a curse,
The tougher life got found their bond growing stronger, for theirs was a pledge made for
'better or worse'.
The hard times and heartache, the worries and drought years, all tested their mettle,
their courage and yet
Despite frugal living and earnest endeavour, ten years found their bank book still drowning in debt.
The next milestone came when this wife became Mother; a family of four bringing
tantrums and tears,
But cherished and nurtured with good sense and wisdom and guided with love through
their formative years.
Success is not measured by fame or by fortune, ones worth is not counted by status or wealth,
How lucky her kids who good fortune did favour with manners and morals, bush skills and good
health.
Fast forward a decade; again the scene changes, now married, her offspring have kids of their own,
Again without favour all grandkids are special, again the same love and affection is shown.

Today as she sits in her role as a Grandma surveying her family with justified pride,
With fairness in mind then 'tis surely we must be no less in our praise for the man at her side.
It's fifty years now since they stood at the altar, five decades have passed since they both said 'I do'.
A model bush couple with old fashioned values, exemplary parents; now sadly too few.
Long days with her husband in stock yard or saddle, this multi skilled mother with talents diverse,
Fulfilling her role as a housewife and mother, the backbone of family, home tutor, bush nurse.
Let's honour those women of outback and station, the loneliness suffered, the hardships endured,
How stark is the contrast to 'urbanised mothers', with everyday comforts and lifestyle assured.
So cherish her dearly this 'pearl of the west', search in vain but you'll not find another,
They're not made today as they were in the past when they turned out this type of Bush Mother.



The Jumbuck Drama Club

© Shelley Hansen 2013

I travelled to my childhood home – the town of Jumbuck Creek – and wandered past the Corner Store once owned by “Jim the Greek”. It’s just about the only shop that has an open door – the rest are boarded up these days – they ply their trade no more. But then I spotted down the street a sight I thought was grand – the vast unpainted structure of old Davo’s “Second Hand”, where as a kid I poked about in blissful reverie ... exploring all his treasures always fascinated me.

I stuck my head around the door and softly called his name ... he dozed and waited for the customers who never came. His rheumy eyes were blurry as he blinked against the glare ... “It’s you, girl ... strike me lucky! Come inside – pull up a chair!” I wandered first around the shed, just touching little things as memories came flooding back on swiftly beating wings. An ancient treadle Singer struck a long-forgotten chord when Davo said, “Remember? That machine belonged to Maud.”

Dear Maud – she was the stalwart of the Jumbuck Drama Club that flourished in its heyday in the Hall behind the Pub. She turned out all our costumes with her deft, creative flair, and kept us motivated with her passion and her care. Undaunted by the challenges, we’d willingly aspire to stage the plays of Shakespeare ... or A Streetcar Named Desire ... and I discovered quickly this was teamwork at its best as learning lines and painting props put talent to the test.

Our little Hall would fill with those from near and far away who came to catch some “culcher” (as they called our yearly play), and when we took our curtain call they whistled as we bowed ... if we were at “Her Majesty’s” we couldn’t be more proud! Young Joe the plumber’s son became Young Romeo on set, while Mary from the Bakery was sweet as Juliet. But I lost touch with both of them somewhere along the track, then Joe was sent to Vietnam ... and never did come back.

I spent an hour with Davo and two cups of Billy Tea ... just chatting and remembering the way things used to be. We talked of “drought and flooding rains”, of friends long dead and gone, and how the town of Jumbuck Creek had died as folk moved on. The Bakery was first to go – they couldn’t make it pay. The Corner Shop sells bread now – but it isn’t fresh each day. The Hardware and the Draper couldn’t match the online stores who undercut their prices till they had to shut their doors.

The Drama Club had folded up as video took hold, for no-one came to see the plays of actors who’d grown old. Then Maud had died one summer at her house up on the hill – the whirring needle of her Singer finally stood still. I couldn’t bear the thought of it in someone else’s hands – a stranger – never knowing all the things for which it stands – or sentenced to decay in dust, forgotten and alone with no one to retell the tales of splendour it has sewn.

And so I bought the Singer, and it’s in my sewing room with pride of place beneath the window – saved from certain doom. I polish it and oil it, but it rests in peace these days ... a tribute to Maud’s legacy of costumes for our plays. I almost hear it humming with the memory of years, and as my thoughts trace times gone by, my vision mists with tears. But then I hear Maud’s merry laugh and give my eyes a rub ... and smile as I think back upon the Jumbuck Drama Club!

The Forgotten War

©Pa’ Kettle

Man has always glorified war, its victories and defeats,
They proudly hold their heads up high as they march on down the streets,
Their banners show the conflict, or the unit in which they served,
But hidden deep inside them, is the forgotten war;--- not deserved.

There’s no one left from World War 1, --- was their sacrifice in vain?
The blood stained waters of Anzac Cove, their bones on Flanders plain,
Those that survived the gas and the shell have gone forever more,
They won’t be troubled in their eternal sleep, by the beast of the forgotten war.

There’s not many left from World War 2, although we can still find some,
Their numbers get less each passing year; time has won out over the gun.
The bombs and disease they took their toll, prison camps saw many succumb,
But alas, when peace at last returned; the forgotten war had just begun.

After Korea and Borneo, after conflicts both large and small,
Came the war we all remember as the dirtiest war of all.
To Vietnam we sent our regulars, we sent our conscripts as well,
To that steamy, stinking, jungle, they marched proudly, into hell.

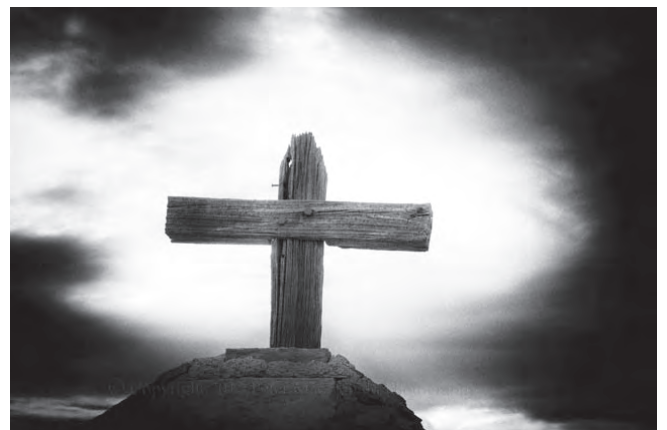
They didn’t return as heroes, they were ridiculed and abused,
For doing their job as soldiers. For political gain they were used.
The forgotten war gave out a cheer as it raised its ugly head,
Here were men it could feast on. --- The beast would again be fed.

No one cared to listen. There was no one to give a hand,
To overcome what they went through. ---Didn’t any one, understand?
Why some abused their wife and kids. Why some killed their fellow man.
Why some quietly took their own life. The forgotten war was making a stand.

After East Timor and Desert Storm, it will continue after Afghanistan,
Whenever men come home from war, it will attack whenever it can.
The forgotten war eats away at their guts; it eats them away inside,
Until they are so badly messed up, they are not left with any pride.

In their minds eye they see the horror, the hurt, the maimed, the dead.
They feel it deep inside themselves, and those memories, they always dread,
Some turned to the bottle, or other drugs to cope,
But the forgotten war they fight inside, doesn’t allow them very much hope.

The ex-soldier finds a lonely spot; he just can’t take it anymore;
He slips the rope around his neck;— another causality of the forgotten war.



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**Nominations open for 2015 Bush Laureate
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Click the following link to download the nomination form

bushlaureate.com.au/ABLANominationForm2015.pdf

Any queries relating to the Awards can be emailed to info@bushlaureate.com.au

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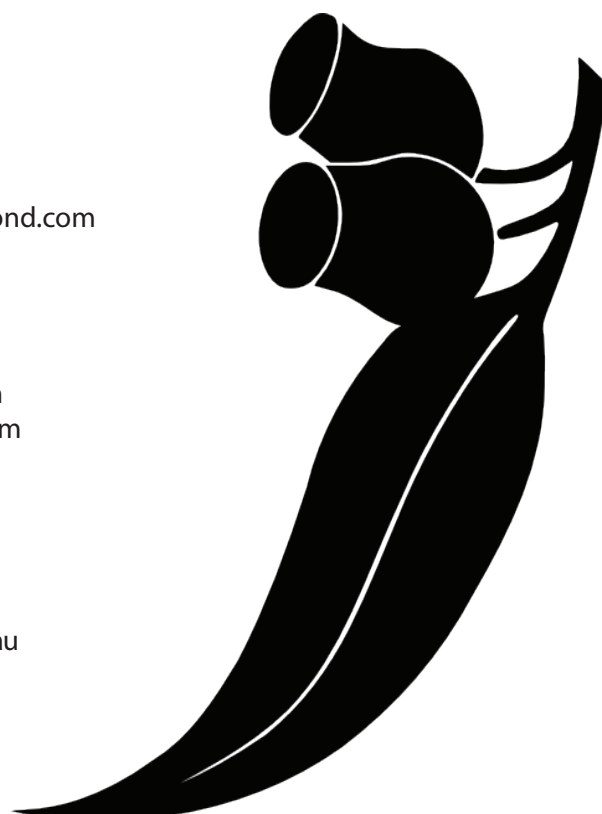
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The raw sienna, bleached expanse,
 the sea of sun-seared land,
 is punctuated by a tiny blotch.
 The road is just a line
 where markers tell the time
 and pullovers are used as trucking stops
 whose occupants do not enhance
 appearances of bland
 terrain where hungry birds keep constant watch
 for 'kill' on which to dine.
 Survival is their prime
 objective in a land devoid of crops.

Tell-tales of heart-break all around
 denote the long-term drought,
 where cattle gnaw at tufts to just survive.
 Dam walls are barren mounds
 and creeks are gouged-out troughs
 as cotton balls of Cumulus blow by.

Resilience and grit is found
 where life is all about
 the struggles faced to simply keep alive.
 Here fortitude abounds
 where fickle Nature scoffs:
 Man stays, though dreams and hopes are doomed to die.

Metallic dinosaurs make link
 to monsters from the past
 and emus roam where skeletons remain.
 A tower tops the view
 of dusty, empty streets –
 a whistle-stop upon a pass-through trail.

A town that hovers on the brink
 in country sparse and vast,
 (potential ghost to dot the parched terrain)
 as tourists pass on through
 and road-train noise competes
 with wind's unending melancholic wail.

THE BUSHMAN AND THE WARRIGAL

© T.E. Piggott

His campfire casts a golden glow below the craggy peak,
 highlighting the serenity that night at Cripple Creek.
 Long shadows seemed to dance in time as flames would rise and fall;
 the silence only broken by a Mopokes haunting call.

He thinks about a sweetheart, whom he hopes will be his wife,
 but knows he'll have to change his ways when starting married life.
 Despite his love of outback life there always is a cost;
 the time away from loved ones, will be precious moments lost.

His thoughts are interrupted as a ghostly shape appears,
 it's creeping through the shadows now as stealthily it nears.
 It pauses in the darkness just beyond the campfire's light;
 a silent stalking animal stood watching him that night.

At first a feeling of unease; was danger lurking near?
 just what was out there watching; was there anything to fear?
 And then as though it sensed his thoughts it crept out into view;
 a dingo stood there staring as he sipped his mug of brew.

It crouched there for an hour or so with eyes fixed on his chair
 and not a sound was heard by him as long as it stayed there.
 He turned away to stoke the fire and put the billy on,
 but when he looked back out again the dingo had now gone.

Two days passed by and not a sign; no doubt it's far away,
 yet still he hoped it would return and visit him one day.
 An eerie sense of being watched caused him to look around
 and standing just behind him there, a dingo stood its ground.

Ferocious eyes stared into his and caused a moments fright,
 again that feeling of unease he'd felt on that first night.
 But soon he sensed it was no threat, just curious again,
 a youngish dog just starting out; no fear as yet of men.

The random visits from then on enhanced his lonely days,
 affection quickly blossomed once he learnt its timid ways.
 He whispered softly to it and this seemed to help somehow,
 those yellow eyes though wary, were more trusting of him now.

And as the weeks passed slowly by the friendship seemed to grow,
 although there still were boundaries where neither dared to go.
 He knew it was imperative his mate stay wild and free,
 a dingo's life is under threat wherever it might be.

He never fed his new found friend if it should happen by,
 survival chances better served if it stayed wild and shy.
 For dingoes were a target and are often shot on sight,
 viewed as an enemy of man; such is the wild dogs plight.

By then he'd named it Rusty which had seemed a fitting name,
 but never tried to change its ways; no wish to make it tame.
 For work would soon be finished here out on his small gold show,
 a few more days at most he guessed and then he'd have to go.

Remoteness and the rough terrain could help this dingo thrive,
 few ever venture to this spot; with luck it might survive.
 For soon the summer would be here to drive away the strays;
 with many months for Rusty then to learn a wild dogs ways.

He dawdled on a few more days although his work was done,
 the last of those just marking time with little gold now won.
 He'd seen no sign of Rusty as the final days ticked by,
 it looked like he would have to leave without a last goodbye.

Reluctantly he tidied up and then began to pack
 and right on cue as though he knew young Rusty had come back.
 A feeling that he'd lost a friend was playing on his mind,
 as he began to drive away and leave his mate behind.

The young dog followed for awhile, then stopped and watched him go,
 as down the hill he slowly drove towards the mill below.
 A sense of sadness touched him as he paused out on the track;
 saw Rusty was still watching him, but knew he'd not be back.

Come join in the Writing Work-
 shop Challenges on our website

www.abpa.org.au

*Share or simply enjoy Bush Poetry
 with other Members*

"THE CHINKAPOOK ROCKET" ALMOST WINS THE CUP

©Neil McArthur 2002

To run just a place, in that Melbourne Cup race
To Laurie, would be the ant's pants
But to win the thing, he would feel like a king
He'd leap 'round, and do a tap dance

Now, needless to say, with this four year old Bay
He'd christened 'The Chinkapook Rocket
He may get a chance to do his tap dance
And leave with that cheque in his pocket

I saw the docket, that Chinkapook Rocket
Had only cost Laurie two grand
It had all the essence, the stamina, presence
And speed, to lead home past the stand

Four cups he'd bowled over, the Donald, Avoca
The Burrumbeet and Hanging Rock
By no less ten lengths scored, and each a track record
Yes, just like a stroll round the block

So this horse-wisened master, would walk him like Archer
From Chinkapook to Flemington
What was good back in that day, was good for that young Bay
And thus, the grand plan, she was on!

He'd booked an old hoop, by the name of Sam Booth
Who'd ridden for Smith, so he said
He'd carry his orders, to the letter, each quarter
And never had ridden one dead

He was no Aristotle, and loved the brown bottle
Which Laurie knew not, at the time
But as he walked the last step, of that Chinkapook trek
He found Sam Booth, totally primed!

"I may appear Haggard," he said as he staggered
"But let loose the reins in my palms
I'll ride like a demon, Your horse will be steamin'
And I'll put that cup in your arms

Eight times was the counting, that Sam tried to mount him
But drunken, he fell from it's back
He looked through his blurred eyes, and thought Laurie two guys
And asked them which way to the track

This jockey was loaded, and near on corroded
And would blow Laurie's life-long dream
No longer on courses, did they only swab horses
And God knew what was in this hoop's stream!

But too late to replace him, the eyes of the nation
Were waiting for cup starting time
He filled him with coffee, and prayed that no Toffy
Would notice him, there in the line

"Take care not to flog it, my Chinkapook Rocket
To the whip won't respond," Laurie said to Sam Booth
Sam looked at the two guys, and said, "Hey, where am I?"
As the Rocket set cantering down to the chute

The cup field was set, Laurie placed a small bet
And the light, then the bell, as the starter released
That twenty-four Cup field, With the whole nation's eyes peeled
And the Chinkapook Rocket, five lengths, first, at least



"Good!", Laurie thought, "a fine horse I have bought"
As it led past the post the first time
Then settled back third, as the cheering was heard
When passed by both sixteen and nine

The two mile scramble, for win of a gamble
Had come down to turning the straight
When Sam Booth dove fenceward, for a split 'long the whitewood
And shot through to meet Laurie's fate

Like a plug in a socket, the Chinkapook Rocket
Shot eight lengths in front of the field
One hundred more metres, Laurie cried "They won't beat us!"
That cup to take home with a victory sealed!

But talk about a pickle, this race game is fickle
For Laurie saw a sight that has haunted him hence
Five yards short of finishing, his jockey stood, pissing!
With the Chinkapook Rocket tied up to the fence!

Poor Laurie just squealed, as the rest of the field
Flashed past him, finishing first twenty-three
Sam Booth hadn't noticed, the numbers were posted
Oblivious, he stood there, having his pee!

Needless to say, well, he came back to scale
With a blistering, mad, poor Laurie to meet
When asked if he blew it, or whether he threw it
Sam Booth asked, "Did I get beat?"

"I led for the most, was first past the post
And then did my victory lap
The rest all came with me, to honour my victory
And salute this cup winning chap"

"You stupid drunk clown, you twice go around!"
Laurie said to a drunk Sam Booth
Who looked in his eyes, and said with surprise
A sorry-type, slurring, loud "Strewth!"

So with nought in his pocket, and the Chinkapook Rocket
The road to home, Laurie walked up
A leak sinks a boat, and a Budget of note
And a leak cost Laurie the Cup

Thus the Chinkapook Rocket, so brave and so dogged
Retired, and now is a ghost
And there's no mark in history, to salute his near victory
Except a dead patch of grass near the post!

2015 ESSENTIAL ENERGY AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETS ASSOCIATION BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

The “Golden Damper” Performance Awards

Golden Damper Winners say ‘G’day’

Ever wondered how winning a Major Bush Poetry Competition felt? Like to experience that feeling again? Well wonder no longer as in this article 4 previous Golden Damper Winners will share with you in their own words what winning this very prestigious award means to them. I found the words inspiring. I hope that you do too!

Carol Heuchan: “I had never even seen a Bush Poetry Competition before a friend hauled me up to Tamworth (in two thousand and something) and entered me in the Golden Damper. Needless to say, it was quite a shock to win an award first up. That was the beginning of what is now my full time profession and I am grateful that it has taken me on an amazing journey throughout Australia and around the world”.

Gregory North: “Winning a Golden Damper was a great thrill for me. I had watched other great performers achieve that accolade and even been in the placings myself, which made the win all the more attractive. It is such a well respected competition that attracts a very large enthusiastic audience and to be applauded as a winner before that crowd is a feeling that I wish for you all. Go for it!”

Noel Bull: “Winning the Golden Damper in 2011 is my biggest Bush Poetry achievement. It was my first trip to the Tamworth Country Music Festival and to compete against (and see first hand) the best bush poets at a competition like the Golden Damper was an amazing experience for me. This lead to me being invited to perform at “The Rhymer’s Roundup” series of concerts at the Tamworth Country Music Festival (2014) which was an exciting opportunity to perform in front of a large audience and showcase your own individual bush poetry style”.

Greg Scott: “In January 1996, my mate Tim Mcloughlin encouraged me to compete in the Golden Damper poetry competition at the Imperial Hotel in Tamworth. I was lucky enough to become a finalist and the following year, with much encouragement from the late Judith Hosier, I won the Original section and Tim took out the Traditional section at the same event. I can honestly say that win changed my life. Since then, Bush Poetry has enabled my wife Sue and I to visit numerous venues around the country and meet thousands of like-minded people. It’s a lot of fun and a great diversion from the vagaries of life on the land. I would encourage any young aspiring poet to get up and have a go. You never know where it may lead?”

So there we go folks, now’s the time to get your entries in to secure your position in the Daily Heat of your choice. Fame and fortune await you!

*NB: Due to circumstances beyond our control the Finals of our competition (being held in “**Blazes**” Auditorium, West’s Leagues, Tamworth on Sat 24th Jan 2015) will now begin at 7.00 am.

Sponsored By





Thursday 9th - Sunday 12th April 2015

Man From Snowy River Bush Festival, CORRYONG, www.bushfestival.com.au

MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER BUSH FESTIVAL - Where Legends perform!

- ❑ **Australian Bush Poetry & Music Association Championships.**
- ❑ Theme for the weekend '1914 – 1915'
- ❑ \$5,000 prize money and trophies
- ❑ Performance sections include Original and Non-Original Poems and Yarns Junior and of course Banjo's MFSR poem recital.
- ❑ If you can't attend – Written Serious and Humorous sections available.
- ❑ Guests - Geoffrey Graham, Graeme Johnson, Brenda Joy, John Lloyd, Carol Reffold, Carmel Lloyd, Chloe and Jason Roweth.
- ❑ Poets' Breakfasts, walkups and concerts and 'join in' campfire sessions
- ❑ Watch 'The Challenge' to find the modern 'Man from Snowy River'
- ❑ Festival activities including Street Parade, Bush Idol and Busking Comps
- ❑ The 'Re-enactment' (Banjo's 'Man From Snowy River' poem on hillside)
- ❑ Experience real bush friendliness and flavour.
- ❑ Legends abound in poetry and music in Corryong, NE Victoria
- ❑ Email info@bushfestival.com or phone Festival office 02 6076 1992
- ❑ www.bushfestival.com.au for all entry forms (closes 13th Feb)

See you there! – Jan Lewis, Poetry & Music events. info@vbpma.com.au

AUSSIE BUSH ENTERTAINMENT MUSTER 10 - 12th OCT

Benalla Bowls Club 25 Arundel Street, Benalla, Victoria 3672

Friday Extra Cost:

10.30am Christine Middleton's 'Scones, Lamingtons and Chocolate Roll'.

Afternoon: Two shows of 'Fun with Mulga Bill'

Muster events

(Informal, alternative and spontaneous sessions are also possible!)

Weekend Wristband: \$25 \$20 concession

(covers ALL events from Friday night or pay per session)

6pm Friday Meet 'n' Greet

7.30pm Aussie CONCERT incl Euroa Ukelele Band. Christine Middleton, Rhonda Tallnash, Maggie Murphy, (Jenny Markwell Poet, Mick Coventry, Yarnspinner of 2013 Muster), Basia & Phonse, Jeff Mifsud..

8.30 – 10.15am Sat **POETS BREAKFAST + NOVICE COMPETITION**

10.30am Sat WORKSHOP 'Creating family stories into songs and poems' Christine Middleton

Jeff Mifsud – using technology to assist with your poem/song/play (linking with Christine)

Lunch 12.30 – 1.30pm welcome old friends/ new friends!

1.45pm - 2.15pm Anzac tribute at 'Weary Dunlop' statue in Rose Garden including **Group photo.**

2.30 – 3.30pm Short Poems & Yarns

4pm VICT SONG CHAMPIONSHIPS (ask Jan for entry form)

7.30 pm Sat Variety CONCERT \$10 (or wristband)

Guests: LAZY HARRY 'HENRY LAWSON', GEOFFREY GRAHAM, CAROL REFFOLD and Song/music Championship **2014 winner/s**

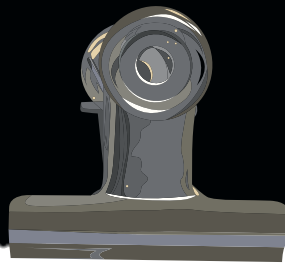
8.30 – 10am Sun POETS BREAKFAST - all welcome

10.15am Sun PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP/S with Carol Reffold and Geoffrey Graham

12.30 Lunch

1.15 – 1.45pm music session led by Jeff Mifsud

2 – 3.30pm HENRY LAWSON SHOW with 'Henry' (aka Jim Howard) and Geoffrey Graham



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

Kuripla 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.