

A.B.P.A.



Australian Bush Poets Association

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I had been to the Melbourne Olympics Games in 1956, but Joy and I decided we would not go to the Sydney Olympics. However I was in Winton in 1999 doing a poetry Gig and I did a poem Robert Rafferty wrote for me called GOING FOR GOLD. After I finished a man came and offered to buy me a beer and wanted to talk about the Melbourne Olympics, he then introduced himself and it was Norman May the sports commentator, while we were seated and talking a big man came up to me and asked if he could get the words of "Going For Gold" I said yes and he said now you are going to Sydney aren't you, and I said no, well he bent down and picked me up by the shoulders and shook me and said "Mate You have got to go, do you realize that very few people ever see 2 Olympics in their own country." Norman May said to me "Do you know this man" I said no, he said well meet Dean Lukin the weight lifter. When Dean got back to South Australia he wrote to me and sent me some free tickets, so we went and saw Cathy Freeman win her race. While Cathy was warming up I had a phone call from Marco Gliori and Murray Hartin, they wanted to hear the tension in the crowd. This gave me the idea to ring my 4th Daughter who couldn't come with us, and let her feel the tension and she wrote a poem about the phone call called "Memories of Gold".

John Major

Memories of Gold

© Lesley Major

I didn't get to Sydney, didn't see our flag on high.
The Olympics in 2000, well they nearly passed me by.
Oh, I watched like all the others, on my tiny little set,
so excited, so delighted... all my expectations met.

From the sounds of Snowy River, a simple 'Sorry' on a sleeve,
oh this country, my country, and the magic we can weave!
Still, I wouldn't really see it, wouldn't really know the thrill
to see the strength and power of athletes, and the beauty of their skill.

I wouldn't be there in the crowd, to raise that mighty roar,
to share with all the passion, and to watch as one in awe,
so I stayed at home and watched it – cried a little – laughed a lot
and I thought about my Mum and Dad, in Sydney – on the spot!!

My Dad's a proud Australian, and Mum, well, she is too,
and to miss the Sydney Olympics, well, that simply wouldn't do.
Dad had been to Melbourne in the spring of '56,
and of sportsman, 'Pa' and poet, you could find no better mix.

And although they'd booked their tickets nearly two years in advance,
to Cathy Freeman's final, they had not a single chance.
But never one to give up quick (they say more arse than class)
he found a bloke (who knew a bloke) with giveaways – first class!

So there they were in Sydney town, seeing all in bloom and flower,
and me, well, I'm in Brisbane, watching telly by the hour.
Then came that day – that watershed day, when Australian's all over were one,
our Cathy – Queensland's Cathy! – in a race that just had to be won.

I was glued to my seat as rain teemed down – "Go Cathy! Win this for us all!"
And a city of silence, holding its breath, awaited the starter's call...
then the phone rang – can you believe it? Who on earth isn't watching this?
Downright un-Australian I thought – "They're off my Christmas list!"

But I picked it up, and all I could hear was the roaring of a crowd,
a wave of pure emotion, and a nation standing proud.
"G'day Lel", a soft voice said, "She's just about to start...
Can you hear the crowd? Can you feel the thrill? Oh, my hand is on my heart.

"I do wish you could be here, Lel, to stand up proud with me,
but wait! Hang on! She's at the blocks – let's cheer this victory!"
And for fifty glorious seconds, my Dad let me listen in,
and I was there – I swear it – I saw that golden win.

It's a moment that I'll not forget, nor the words that were to follow...
"There's a silver in the pole vault Lel – I'll talk with you tomorrow!"

EDITORIAL



Well, another busy period of Bush Poetry over the last couple of months and lots more on the horizon over the next couple of months. A big congratulations to all those involved in the various festivals and competitions.

The ABPA has advanced it's promotions with a brand new Facebook page as well as an update to our website, all in the hope of bringing in new members and supplying current members with more information and content. Congratulations to all those involved.

I have been spending the Winter in Charters Towers, putting on shows for the tourists and promoting Bush Poetry as a whole, as has Greg North in Winton, Susie and Mal in Lightning Ridge, Bob Pacey at Yagoon as well as other poets around the Northern climates. It's wonderful to see the tourists enjoying it so much and the feedback we are getting.

Our Committee has been doing a wonderful job under pressure, many of them taking on the jobs due to lack of hands raised to do the difficult job of keeping our Association running for the progress of our craft. Their input is greatly appreciated and most do not see the hard work put in by them in the background. It's often a thankless job but one which is both vital and again, much appreciated.

Once tourist season is over it will be on to the Gympie Muster, Nanango and then the Mildura Country Music Festival for me, so the travelling never stops and the job of entertaining new and old Bush Poetry fans continues on.

Good luck to all those involved in upcoming Festivals and Competitions and I hope to catch a lot of you around the traps these coming months.

Happy writing and performing to all and safe travels!

Neil McArthur

editor@abpa.org.au

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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

All payments to be made within 14 days to

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or via Direct Debit to ABPA Account

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Please put your name/club/invoice as reference so Treasurer can identify who the deposit is from.

NOTE:- Next Magazine Deadline for submissions is Sept 25th

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AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETS ASSOCIATION

**Proudly Supporting The Cerebral Palsy League
Through Magazine Printing**

President's Report



It has certainly been a busy few months for the ABPA executive and committee members. The year is absolutely flying by...it seems like only yesterday that we were in Tamworth planning the year ahead, and now here we are, once again moving into the second phase of the poets' calendar... with Corryong, Dunedoo, Gulgong, Grenfell and Bundaberg behind us, and Binalong and Tamworth rapidly approaching.

In case you haven't heard already, the ABPA now has a new Facebook page that is to be used as a support to the main website as both an informative network about poetry and poets between members and a promotional outlet to reach out to the wider public. As such, it is hoped that it will be a valuable part of the ABPA's communication network to encourage membership and to attract sponsors to enable us to work together to achieve the goals of our organisation -- to maintain and expand the love and appreciation of our genre. The Facebook page is not meant to be a replacement for the wide scope of informative and interesting facets offered by the main website and the ABPA magazine. There are many within the membership who do not wish to participate through the social media and their needs must be considered. Therefore it is hoped that the Facebook page may be used to expand these two primary communication outlets.

Your contributions to and interest in our new page will be welcome and appreciated and we hope that you, as key members of the organisation, will spread the word in your state or region and through your friends and associates.

Whilst each of you may post direct through the Visitors section, contributions that would best go out under the banner of the ABPA may be sent to promotions@abpa.org.au (Brenda Joy) to president@abpa.org.au (Tom McIlveen) or to treasurer@abpa.org.au (Shelley Hansen)

It is very pleasing to see the ABPA is currently comprised of 378 single memberships and 37 dual memberships – making a total of 452 people. The recent addition of a number of new members makes this the highest total that we have had for several years. Every member is highly valued by ABPA and we welcome your efforts in keeping the craft of bush poetry alive. If we can help in any way, or if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your State Rep or any member of the ABPA Executive.

As many members would no doubt be aware, there have been changes made to the website forum since the last edition of this magazine, due mainly to the possibility of legal liability. Firstly, I must stress that the risk of ABPA legal liability is not one to be dismissed. Just because nothing has occurred in the past, doesn't mean it won't happen in the future – unfortunately for all of us – times have changed with regard to legal matters. Our Forum, like all other Association forums, is for the benefit of the ABPA Membership, people who have all their details officially registered with the Association and who have paid membership fees which also enable costs such as the running of the Forum, to be covered. Our Webhost does not provide it for free.

Every effort was made over a number of weeks to contact each registered forum user who was not an ABPA member, and the changed situation was explained to them. Because of the unique circumstances, they were offered the remaining six months of this year free if they undertook to join ABPA. Some did join, and thanked us for this generous offer. Those who elected not to join are still able to read the Forum – but do not have access to post. Almost all of these are not regular contributors.

Several members have reported problems with accessing the forum. Like all websites, this could be a temporary issue with a user's browser or an intermittent glitch on the Webhost's server. The Webhost is, and has always been iPower, which like many of its kind, is located in USA. Apparently it was initially chosen and subsequently used due to the relatively low cost and there have been no changes to this arrangement since the forum's inception, however this will need to be addressed early in 2017. As stated on the Public Noticeboard back in May, due to the age of the system it is relatively obsolete and the version the Forum now has will not be supported by the company phpBB who owns it after early next year. The Executive, through the Forum Administrator, is currently considering viable Australian options. Please – let's put this temporary disruption behind us and get back to what we do best – bush poetry!

I urge all of you to support the hardworking Executive and wider Committee, all of whom are committed to the preservation of the ABPA and its endeavours. Necessary decisions are not always easy – but I can assure you they are never taken hastily or lightly – and are always made with the welfare of ABPA members in mind. It is worth noting that, particularly due to the hard work of the Executive and wider Committee, forty new members have joined the ABPA this year.

It has been brought to our attention that prospective members and existing members, (who are not on line with access to website) wishing to renew membership, have had difficulty locating membership application procedures in the magazine. We are endeavouring to have an application form included in every edition to overcome this problem. I would like to thank fellow executive committee members Hal Pritchard, Rhonda Tallnash and Shelley Hansen for their tireless contribution and endless support over the past few months. They unselfishly give many hours of their own time towards the administration of maintaining stability within the ABPA and direction for its future.

Thank you also, to extended committee members and state delegates for your contribution, Brenda Joy as our enterprising Promotions Officer, and Janine Keating for sponsorship support. I would also like to thank Graeme Johnson, on behalf of all members, for his massive contribution in coordinating the Tamworth Golden Damper competition. As Jan Lewis, Robyn Sykes and Sandy and John Lees would know...a mammoth amount of work goes into organising these events, behind the scenes.

In Poetry, Tom McIlveen.



BUNDABERG POETS' SOCIETY INC.

2016

21st Bundy Bush Poetry Muster

On the week-end of July 1st, 2nd & 3rd the Bundaberg Poets' Society Inc. hosted another successful week-end of performance poetry competitions as well as the much anticipated Friday and Saturday night concerts in the Sails Function Room at Across the Waves Sports Club. Poets and visitors came from as far as Townsville in the north to several towns and cities in New South Wales and Victoria as well as from Boyupbrook and Albany in Western Australia.

Fifty-one (51) poets had registered to take part in the Junior, Novice, Intermediate and Open categories plus the Duo competition, Yarn Spinning and One Minute Cup. The children's performances were something to marvel at and most comments were - "the children are great; such a delight; very talented and oh so confident".

On the Thursday prior to the week-end Jack Drake conducted a FREE poetry workshop in the Sails Function Room at Across the Waves Sports Club for twenty-four (24) very interested poets.

In conjunction with the performance competitions the club also ran the 2016 Bush Lantern Award for Bush Verse with categories for Opens, Primary School students and Secondary School students.

The winner in the Open category of the Bush Lantern Award was Terry Piggott from Perth, WA.. The winner in the Primary School category was Isabella Wallace from Kilmore, Vic. and the winner in the Secondary School category was Marina Bishop from Kureelipa, Qld.

The 2016 Male poetry performance winner on the week-end after three days of competition was Dean Trevaskis from Ocean Shores, Vic. and the 2016 Female poetry performance winner was Rhonda Tallnash from Violet Town, Victoria.. Performers who competed in all three categories (traditional, modern and original) in the Open Section were the only ones eligible to win the overall trophy. At the completion of all three categories these scores were tallied to determine who had gained the most points to be named Overall Champions for the week-end.

The Friday and Saturday night concerts once again proved very popular with featured poets Jack Drake, Noel Stallard and Glenny Palmer. The Saturday evening concert was attended by two hundred (200) with very few tickets available on the week-end. People were walking out after the concert saying "great night; haven't been before but I'm hooked now; wait all year for this night".

A big thank-you to the competitors for their co-operation over the week-end which enabled the Bundy Bush Poetry Muster to run smoothly. A slight hiccup on Saturday with our sound equipment letting us down but thanks to Mick Martin of the North Pine Poets who saved the day temporarily until a member of the Bundaberg Country Music club brought in some of his equipment for us to use for the remainder of the week-end. One of the advantages of not living in big cities.

At the conclusion of the presentation of trophies Club President, Edna Harvey, thanked all who attended to make the 2016 Bundy Bush Poetry Muster a wonderful success and hoped all enjoyed themselves and look forward to catching up somewhere down the track at other festivals.

To finish off a fabulous week-end of poetry and friendship over 40 poets, family members and friends made their way back to John & Sandy Lees' place for a sausage sizzle and chat.

Until we meet again - happy poetry days.

Sandy Lees
Secretary/Muster Co-ordinator

BUNDABERG POETS' SOCIETY INC.

2016 BUSH POETRY PERFORMANCE COMPETITION AT THE BUNDY BUSH POETRY MUSTER

Under 7 years

- 1st - Toby Walker .. *Mary's Frog*
2nd - Matilda Olsen .. *The Teacher Took My Tennis Ball*
3rd - Bridget Taylor .. *Daddy's Diet*

7 years to 12 years

- 1st - Molly Trevaskis .. *My Ute*
2nd - Shelby Walker .. *My Dad Is A Rock 'n Roller*
3rd - Reece Buckholz .. *Winton Water*

13 years to 17 years

- 1st - Freya Cathcart .. *A Bush Christening*
2nd - Alex Buckholz .. *Gordon The Goat*
3rd - n/a

Col Shiels Memorial Encouragement Award: Emma Godber

Novice Traditional

- 1st - Colin List .. *The Show*
2nd - Frances Smallwood .. *The Flying Doctor*
3rd - Ross Vallance .. *The Shearer's Dream*

Novice Modern

- 1st - Frances Smallwood .. *Aussie Airline*
2nd - Jayson Russell .. *Mr. Whippy Rip-off*
3rd - Ross Vallance .. *The Chinese Cook*

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Open Traditional – Women

- 1st - Sue Pearce .. *Ownerless*
2nd - Rhonda Tallnash .. *The Old Whim Horse*
3rd - Jan Facey .. *A Letter To The Front*

Open Modern – Men

- 1st - Barry Tiffen .. *The Man Who Wasn't There*
2nd - Paddy O'Brien .. *Fencing In The Dark*
3rd - Lynden Baxter .. *The Magpie Creek Air Disaster*

Open Modern – Women

- 1st - Sue Pearce .. *Remember*
2nd - Kathie Priestley .. *Whip On The Wall*
3rd - Rhonda Tallnash .. *Frackin' Fricker*

Open Original – Men

- 1st - Mal Beveridge .. *Taxi*
2nd - Dean Trevaskis .. *The Power of Kokoda*
3rd - Barry Tiffen .. *The Call*

Open Original - Women

- 1st - Rhonda Tallnash .. *The Shirt*
2nd - Kathie Priestley .. *Love Will Bring Him Home*
3rd - Shelley Hansen .. *According To Rose*

Duo Performance

Lyn Tarring & Kathie Priestley

Novice Original

- 1st - Colin List .. *Bart's Hair*
2nd - Ross Vallance .. *Home Brew*
3rd - Steve Minett .. *Absalom's Outback*

Intermediate Traditional

- 1st - Ian McDonald .. *The Glass In The Bar*
2nd - Janine Keating .. *The Silent Member*
3rd - Shirley Shepherd .. *Lost*

Intermediate Modern

- 1st - Janine Keating .. *Aunt Martha*
2nd - Ian McDonald .. *Redundant*
3rd - Maureen Luke .. *The Flea*

Intermediate Original

- 1st - Janine Keating .. *Blue Big M*
2nd - Maureen Luke .. *The Great Departure*
3rd - n/a

Open Traditional – Men

- 1st - Jim Lamb .. *The Bush Fire*
2nd - Paddy O'Brien .. *Me and Bill*
3rd - Dean Trevaskis .. *In The Stable*

Yarn Spinning

Dean Trevaskis

One Minute Cup

Margy McArdle

2016 Champion Male Poet: Dean Trevaskis

2016 Champion Female Poet: Rhonda Tallnash

2016 BUSH LANTERN AWARD FOR BUSH VERSE

- 1st.. Terry Piggott .. *"One Man's Prison"*
2nd.. Shelley Hansen .. *"Sun Goddess"*
3rd.. Will Moody .. *"The Old Farm Ute"*
HC.. Shelley Hansen .. *"Weapon of Words"*
HC.. Kay Gorrington .. *"The Harder Road"*
HC.. Brenda Joy .. *"Thy Will Be Done"*

2016 BUSH LANTERN AWARD FOR BUSH VERSE - SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

- 1st.. Marina Bishop .. *"The Storm"*
2nd.. Alex Buckholz .. *"The Vandal"*
3rd.. Kirsten Buckholz .. *"The Learner Driver"*

2016 BUSH LANTERN AWARD FOR BUSH VERSE - PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

- 1st.. Isabella Wallace .. *"Sounds of Australia"*
2nd.. Carmen Oxenford .. *"Emus"*
3rd.. Isabella Wallace .. *"My Gran Is A Drover"*
HC.. Elizabeth Lawrence .. *"I Want A Pony"*
HC.. Cassidy Lawrence .. *"I Want A Pet Frog"*
HC.. Murelle Botha .. *"Australian Spiders"*

Too Quick to Blame

© David Campbell

Winner, Traditional Verse, 2016 Grenfell Henry Lawson Society Literary Awards

“You’re just a city-slicker, lad,”
is what he said to me,
“and things right now are pretty bad,
as bad as they could be.

The banks are breathing down our necks...
don’t ever trust ‘em, son...
your Gran and I are total wrecks
because of what they’ve done!

They have no mercy, just contempt
for people on the land,
and they won’t make the least attempt
to try to understand.

They turn up in their tailored suits
and think a bit of dust
that’s sprinkled on their shiny boots
will help to gain our trust.

But they don’t know the life out here,
the anguish and the pain,
the hope that slowly turns to fear,
the daily prayer for rain.

They haven’t sweated in the sun
to keeps their dreams alive,
and fought to see the battle won,
the family survive.

They haven’t struggled through each day,
worked hard to make ends meet,
to try to keep the wolves at bay
and not concede defeat.

They haven’t risen with the dawn,
that first faint flush of light,
and toiled till shades of dusk are drawn
to welcome in the night.

They haven’t fired a single shot
to kill a starving beast,
and see the chance they’d lose the lot
remorselessly increased.

They haven’t found a neighbour dead,
a rifle by his side,
then sat beside his widow’s bed
and watched as she, too, died.

I know it’s hard to see it, lad,
when you are city-bred,
but bless the life that you have had,
and learn from what I’ve said.”

I saw the depth of his despair,
and hung my head in shame,
for like so many, unaware,
I’d been too quick to blame.

NORTH PINE BUSH POETS' CHARITY CONCERT

*There is movement in Kallangur, it's accompanied by sound,
For a Concert of Bush Poets, they're the best that can be found,
They will surely entertain you, should you love The Spoken Word,
They'll present both all time favourites and, some new ones you've not heard.*

A SUNDAY ARVO TO REMEMBER! Check this out!

The North Pine Bush Poets have their home at Petrie where they love to meet and perform and read Australian bush poetry for themselves and anyone else who likes to come along and join them. Once a year they have a special charity concert to raise money for a worthy cause .

This year we have 7 year old Elizabeth who suffers from spina bifida and is in need of a specialised wheel chair. Due to complications following surgery, Elizabeth is unable to walk for more than ten minutes at a time. This wheelchair will give her independence outside the home and allow her to manoeuvre herself at home, at school and on outings with her family. It will also alleviate medical complications that occur when she walks around.

We have already contributed \$1000 towards a MOTomed wheelchair for a young lady with an undiagnosed neurological condition with symptoms similar to multiple sclerosis.

Excitement is growing and rehearsals are in full swing for this year's concert with poetry that will bring much laughter, a few tears and memories of yesteryear. Our poets perform modern, original and traditional poems to entertain you.

This group is made up of dedicated poets, many of whom have won prestigious performance competitions. Australian champions. Queensland champions, champions in Bundaberg, Tamworth, Tenterfield and many more will be there.

So, for an afternoon of fun and laughter come along on

21st August at the Kallangur Community Hall at 1.30. This is an air conditioned venue with heaps of parking and wheel chair access at 1480 Anzac Avenue, Kallangur.

\$15 admission includes a tasty afternoon tea. Pay at the door.

We would appreciate bookings for catering purposes. Phone Cay on 34083219

In Tamworth, I run the Speech and Drama section of the Eisteddfod. A few years ago, I introduced bush poetry to the syllabus. It has turned out to be one of the most popular segments in the program and it is wonderful to hear young voices performing the works of our wonderful traditional poets.

But, this year, I noticed something new. There has always been a smattering of modern bush poets, Marco Gliori and Bob Miller being the most popular. This year, we had performances from poems by Veronica Weal, Don Adams, Leonie Parker, Max Merckenschlager, Valerie Reed, David Campbell, and Bob Miller, all regular and successful Blackened Billy entrants over many years. It is wonderful that these writers are being recognised as poets of excellence and whose works are being introduced by teachers as poems that young people should experience.

Of course, I am aware that it is a recognised mark of respect to authors that performers in bush poetry competitions seek permission before performing their works. However, in the wide world of Eisteddfods this probably won't happen. Poets will just have to accept that their works are out there in the world and, hopefully, rejoice that young voices are learning to experience and love works from the great body of poetry known as modern Australian Bush Poetry.

I also run a section called "Mature Performers". This is a section for over 40s and they can sing, recite or play an instrument, individually or in groups. We have an overall winner on the night and this year the winner was Rob Christmas, who outperformed everyone with a brilliant rendition of "The Bush Christening".

Jan Morris



One of the greatly underrated Australian poets is **Thomas Edward Spencer.**

He was born in London on 30th December 1845 and became a stone mason. He was vice-president of the Stonemasons' Society of London at age 24 and helped its president to settle industrial disputes.

In 1875 Spencer came to live in Sydney and set himself up as a building contractor. He won government contracts for work on Goulburn gaol, the University of Sydney's physics laboratory, the sewerage system in Sydney and railway stations between Molong and Parkes.

After an unsuccessful attempt to be elected to parliament, he was appointed to the Court of Arbitration and presided over around thirty wages boards. He was said to have an "ever-wakeful instinct for fair play".

He was a Freemason, belonging to the Leinster Marine Lodge, serving five years as its deputy grand master as well as three times President of the Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge. He assisted to form Lodge Tuscan in Goulburn in 1882 and became its Worshipful Master in 1883-4.

After publication in the Bulletin in the 1890s, Spencer published two books of poetry, *How McDougall Topped the Score* (1906) and *Budgerie Ballads* (1908): the ballads were reprinted in 1910 as *Why Doherty Died* because people "associated the word 'Budgerie' with a swear word". He also wrote humorous stories about Irish-Australian Mrs Bridget McSweeney and had a novel *Bindawalla* published after his death.

Spencer died on 6 May 1911 of heart disease and chronic bronchitis at his home in Glebe Point, Sydney. He was buried with full Masonic rites in the Anglican section of Rookwood cemetery.

Inspired by this last sentence, I recently made the trip to Rookwood cemetery (or Necropolis, as it is officially known) in Sydney. Rookwood Necropolis ("City of the Dead") is huge! In fact, it is one of the world's largest burial grounds and some sources say the largest in the southern hemisphere. Around one million people have been buried in the 283 hectare grounds and people are still being buried there today.

Established by an act of parliament in 1868, Rookwood has catered for Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists (now Uniting Church), Lutherans, Presbyterians, Quakers, independents, Jews, Chinese, Muslims, Ukrainians, Armenians, Greeks, Russians, war dead and any other faith or nationality that have made up the cultural tapestry of Sydney and surrounds. I was astounded by the diversity.

Rookwood is not only a burial ground with everything from plots marked by wooden crosses up to elaborate granite headstones. There are family vaults, mausoleums, thirteen chapels, temples, memorials, shrines, offices, three florist shops, two cafes, two crematoria and several historical sites. In the past, it had its own plant nursery and even railway platforms.

Which brings me back to Thomas E Spencer. I found a digitised newspaper article from *The West Australian* from Saturday 27 May 1911 (page 12) which quotes an account of his funeral, taken from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*. "Business and professional men and representatives of large firms of employers had followed the hearse from Glebe Point to the railway station in carriages and cabs, and a body of men, representing labour and wage-earners, had preceded it on foot."

The railway station mentioned was Mortuary station on Regent Street adjacent to Sydney's Central station. Trains ran at 9:30 am and 3 pm and would stop at prearranged stations to collect mourners and coffins on the way out to the cemetery, in what was then considered the outskirts of Sydney.

Hearse carriages were placed at the end of the train. They carried up to either 10 or 30 coffins on shelves that could open out onto the platform. Rookwood had four stations where coffins could be unloaded near the various denominational sections of the cemetery. What a great way to organise a funeral – mourning passengers up the front, bodies in coffins down the back and everyone arrives at once!

In 1948 the railway spur line into Rookwood was closed. It was superseded by motor vehicles. The Cemetery station No. 1 was purchased for 100 pounds and became All Saints Church in Canberra.

Tours of Rookwood are held on the first Sundays in March through November, or you can visit any time between sunrise and sunset. I'd recommend it as a fascinating outing.

Thomas Edward Spencer and wife Sarah Ann's graves is in section 5, row 23 of the Anglican area and are number 2513 and 2514. The inscription on the grave reads:

In loving memory of Thomas Edward Spencer PGM [Past Grand Master] died 6 May 1911 aged 65 years.

Erected by the Members of Lodge Leinster Marine No. 2, as a tribute of their regard and esteem

[the Masonic symbol is inset in the obelisk atop the grave].

Also Sarah Ann Spencer wife of above died 25th Sept 1938 aged 86 years.

T E Spencer

Poet Kenneth Slessor and Louisa Lawson, mother of Henry are buried at Rookwood, along with John Fairfax, Abe Saffron, James Toohey (of brewing fame) and the David Jones. Call in some time.



ONE MAN'S PRISON

©Terry Piggot
Winner of the Bundy Bush Lantern Award 2016

Must I waste my life here dreaming marking time again this way,
when the desert county's waiting, calling me back home each day?
Help me somehow find the strength to beat the ills afflicting me
and the good Lord in his mercy set this aging sinner free.

Let me cast aside the shackles and the troubles that one meets,
in this claustrophobic city with its suffocating streets.
Where I see the old blokes resting on the benches by the wall,
waiting patiently for someone shopping somewhere in the mall.

Then I feel a tinge of sadness, for those men are just like me,
waiting - always waiting somewhere is the way it seems to be.
So we sit there almost deafened as the noisy crowds compete,
with the rattle of the trolleys and the constant tramp of feet.

Each new day is like the last one, and of all those days before,
with the boredom I've endured here and I know that there'll be more.
Is there no escape I ask myself, but pray this isn't true?
Then I question if these doctors even have the faintest clue.

So my mind sometimes meanders to a camp way off the track
and I wonder in my heart now will I ever make it back.
See the grandeur of the outback with its beauty all around,
or to wake on chilly mornings when there's frost upon the ground.

Will I lie there in my swag again beneath the twinkling stars;
hear the murmur of the bush, instead of noisy planes and cars?
Free once more to move my camp again to anywhere I wish
and to search the creeks and gullies; look for colour with my dish.

But such dreams are only fleeting as reality returns
and the truth is hard to swallow for it's painful and it burns.
So I try to then convince myself there isn't any pain
and there's nothing really wrong with me that can't be fixed again.

Then I look into the mirror and the truth stares back at me,
for that face is old and haggard and I'm shocked by what I see.
So I know I must accept things, with at least a show of grace,
as the answer's clearly written in the lines upon my face.

So perhaps it's time I realized that the future's looking grim
and the chance of going bush again increasingly seems slim.
Though the thought of being trapped here, I refuse to contemplate,
for there must be some escape route from this place I've learned to hate.

Yet the city folk I meet here say they couldn't wish for more,
with its miles of golden beaches stretched along a sunny shore -
and although those folk may argue that there isn't any stress;
to a lost and lonely bushman, it's a prison none the less.

"I live on a farm in Giru, North Queensland, and I love writing, especially poetry. I write ballads, lyrical poems, satires, lyrical ballads, parodies, free verse and humorous poems that don't fit in any of the previously mentioned sections. Someday I will publish a poetry book and my works are circulated in the local newsletter of our town. My favourite Australian poem is 'Where the dead Men Lie' by Barcroft Henry Boake while my favourite poem is 'The Raven' by Edgar Allan Poe. I have also written a philosophy book, which is at the later stages of publication. If you want to know one thing about me, it is that I hate clichés. I also detest it when someone writes 'from whence'; since 'whence' means 'from where', 'from whence' means 'from from where'. My other passions include chess (I tied 1st at the Australian Under 12 Championships) and Mathematics (which I plan to study at university)."

A Ballad of Sunflowers

© Brendan Pierlotti



It's a recognised fact – and it's stubbornly backed
By the folks to whom this fact applies –
That the best place to stay and get up every day
Is the country – with mozzies and flies.
The towns you'll find here aren't 'coquettish' and 'dear'
Stirring memories of 'green shaded lanes';
They're generous and stable and buoyantly able
To handle their hardships and pains.

Though mostly ignored by the citified horde,
There comes every once in a while:
A hopeful romance through the stirrings of chance
That's dictated by what's the 'in style'.
For there's always some rover through places passed over
Who conjures the crowds with a call:
"Giru hasn't much – it's a bit out of touch –
But the sunflowers compensate all..."

They swarmed through the door of our town's corner store
And chatted with Michael and Rita.
They'd fill up with gas and then promptly amass
In their jazzy and new seven-seater.
It's been good for Giru that the business came through
And it's great that the beauty's been treasured,
But some took a walk and then chopped off a stalk;
The trespassing couldn't be measured.

"Since they've got so much land it would not hurt to stand
In the paddock – "I do beg your pardon!
Now how would you mind if you came home to find
That we'd set up a shoot in your garden?"
"They've put up no fence round the paddock and hence
We will trample right in for a party;
He hasn't got power to withhold this flower –
The whinging old farmer's no smarty."

This was the last straw – on our way to the store
We saw this at the end of our gravel:
Two cars full of town folk who'd come from the big smoke
Were taking some pics for their travel.
They waltzed through the yard – our poor chooks were off guard
For the kids made a racket and roar;
My Mum promptly sent them and so they all went
But we still hung around to make sure.

We found it bizarre as to get to their car
They required a ten-minute tango;
They packed up the boot and the kids followed suit
While helping themselves to some mango.
If only we'd fathered some radishes rather
Than flowers we'd have had more peace.
But 'twas well worth the raptured expressions they captured;
The joyous remarks did not cease.

Those Instagram hooters, professional shooters
Were charging a buck to their clients.
Although we had told them to get out and fold
They kept sending up storms of defiance.
A particular pro came five days in a row
And she set up a marquee with lighting.
She'd posted a log called 'The Sunflower Blog'
And updated with photos and writing.

Some slick cockatoos had stopped off on a cruise
And decided they wanted some feeding
They nibbled the seed that the sunflowers breed
And shortly there was a stampeding:
The sky was a shock of the white-feathered flock
Which had gathered from every dominion
To witness this find and devour in kind
While giving a squawk of opinion.

When the stalks all are brown and their heads drooping down,
The 'sunnies' aren't looking so pretty.
For the folks driving past them the memories will last
But there's no-one around from the city.
As the harvest draws nigh now my Mum oft will sigh how
She wishes they all still were blooming,
But sisters and I are quite glad to decry
Of the times that they'd had us all fuming.

The stories of gold rushes have ere been told
But those 'gold' towns are never the last.
The remnants of vanity cling to their sanity
Fated to brood on their past.
The township's old ways will slip into our days
And to routine, excitement will yield.
In humble Giru we must find life anew
As each dawn hatches fresh on the field.

It's happened before now and I think you saw how
The interest in place never stays.
Small towns that were hosts of excitement are ghosts
Of their aspect in those by-gone days.
As I think of our fate it may well be too late
For the rural backbone of our nation:
When the young ones move on and the old ones are gone
It's a shifting of life; of our station.

Our Poetry Kids

Poems from our Young Bards



Our talented young poet this time is **Kirsten Buckholz** who is a Year 11 student at Bundaberg State High School.

Kirsten has been writing since she was in Year 3 and she has already had a lot of success being the recipient of the Writers' Group Award at her primary school and the winner of the Bundaberg 'Bush Lantern Award' for secondary students. Kirsten has had her writing published in conjunction with the Australia-wide 'Write for Fun' competition, in the Free XpresSion literary magazine and now in the ABPA Magazine.

Congratulations Kirsten!

Brenda Joy

Under the Stars

by Kirsten Buckholz

Have you ever slept gazing, under the stars
away from the city, away from the cars
surrounded by nature, tranquil and silent
away from the city, so dark and so violent?

Cosy and snug by the big open fire
there's no other place I would more admire.

Have you ever slept in the open spaces
away from grim, busy city people's faces
beneath a blanket of blazing stars,
extending forever?

A sight, several city folks will never see,
to some only city lights to admire.
Under the stars is everyone's desire.

Have you ever slept beside a warm fire
that gives a flow of warmth
but you still don't perspire?
Its warmth a prescription to send you to sleep
it's faster than many and like counting sheep.
A lullaby is the fire crackling noise,
a noise like this that many-a-one enjoys

Have you ever slept soundless on soil and earth?
Not a single person would question its worth.
As pretty as a picture, is sky above.
It's a sight to behold and make the most of.
From the industrial smells of the city
it's those city people's lives I most pity.

Have you ever slept under the stars?
I one day will sleep gazing up at the stars
away from the city, away from the cars.
There's no stars above me when I go to sleep
but hope and desire, this secret I keep.

© 2013 Kirsten Buckholz (at age 13)

Eyes of Grey

by Kirsten Buckholz

Misery enveloped her eyes of grey,
a disdainful scene from a rainy day.
Like a veil her hands had masked her face
for she knew no one cared
in the first place.

Her faded rags so nimble and tattered
around her body now old and shattered.
Her long years of fighting
showed in her bones
always reminding her
with creaks and groans.

The wind's icy grasp
wracked through her frame
making her spine stoop
through chill and shame.
With hunger like a devouring flame
she ravenously prowled for a meal to claim.

Patiently she bided her precious time
forever requiring food or a dime.
As if someone had heard her, footsteps
neared
and out from the ally a man appeared.

Hands held out to the stranger arriving
for food that would keep her
fed and thriving.
Shaking his head with disgust he passed
leaving her but shaking her head aghast.

She felt for the man with health and treasures
knowing his vain would bring him no
pleasures.
She had seen such result before from a fake
for she knew herself – she'd made that
mistake.

© 2015 Kirsten Buckholz (at age 15)

Sun Goddess

© Shelley Hansen

Runner Up in the 2016 Bundy Bush Lantern Awards

She was second to none in her love of the sun,
and the holiday season would find her
spending time at the coast, where she'd soak up the most
till the heat of the day was behind her.

With a sad knowledge gap about slip, slop and slap
she derided the very suggestion
that her surface would boil using coconut oil;
and to cover up? Out of the question!

We had come to the close of the sweet English rose
that was fashionable for complexion.
As a new age began, the great catch-cry was tan –
and we caught the sunbathing infection.

But I had to agree it was no good for me
to be basking in semi-clad glory.
She had dark eyes and hair – but my colour was fair
and the sun told a different story.

I would sizzle and burn like a spit on the turn,
looking hot, but much less than delicious!
I'd emerge like a clown – pink and red (never brown)
and then peel like a spud. It was vicious!

So I stayed in the shade while she sunbaked and laid
herself out as a gift to Apollo.
She was bronze, lithe and svelte – and I wished that I felt
less reluctant and sun-shy to follow.

Then she lazily smiled, "You are such a white child,
and those legs are like fluros that blind me!"
She was teasing, I know – but it hurt, even so –
and I wished that she wouldn't remind me.

"Now you've put on a hat – and it makes you look fat,"
she declared with a mischievous giggle.
Still I didn't retort; tried to be a good sport
and ignore the annoyance and niggle.

I just watched, somewhat sad, as the glance of each lad
was propelled in her scenic direction.
We were too young to know what the decades would show ...
that my pale skin would be my protection.

It was such a small mark, but its warning was stark.
She just laughed in a nonchalant fashion,
shrugging off the Big C. "It won't happen to me,"
she declared with defiance and passion.

But the sun god is strong, and he leads you along
with the promise of warmth and caressing.
But his terrible price is complete sacrifice
for a goddess to merit his blessing.

She's a memory now, and I contemplate how
I escaped the same end that befell her.
So I'm trying to reach out to children, to teach
words of wisdom that no one could tell her.

We are born in a land where the sun and the sand
have embedded themselves in our culture.
It's a lifestyle we love, but a shadow above
waits in silence to strike like a vulture.

There is one thing for sure – if we choose to ignore
and drift on – let complacency blind us,
then we'll cry out too late when the years seal our fate
and results of our sun worship find us.

GREAT AUSSIE READS

with Jack Drake



By entitling this column Great Aussie Reads I have left no doubt that it deals exclusively with Australian literature. Having said this, I feel justified under the spirit of ANZAC, in slipping a New Zealand work into this issue.

I recently saw a movie trailer starring Sam Neil on TV. I think the film was named 'The Wilding People' or something like that. I immediately recognised it as being inspired by the book *Wild Pork and Watercress* by Barry Crump (Beckett Publishing 1986).

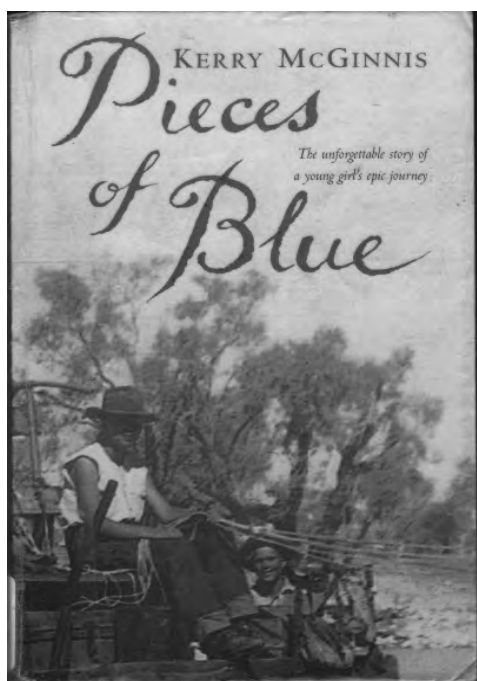
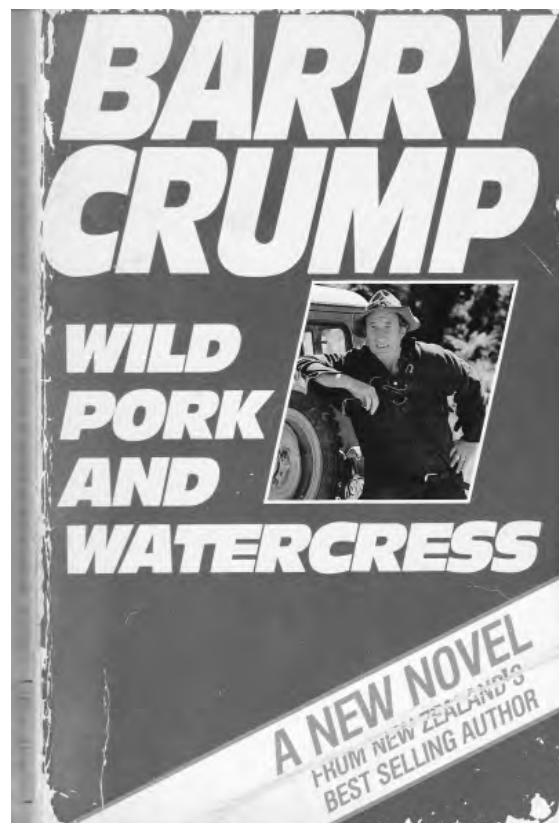
Barry Crump exploded onto the New Zealand literary scene in 1960 when his first book about his experiences as a Government Deer Culler, *A Good Keen Man*, was published. Over a million sales later, Crump is firmly established as one of the Shaky Isles principal authors.

Unfortunately Barry or 'Crumpy' as he came to be universally known, fell off the perch a few years ago but his words, humour and pathos remain. I would regard *Wild Pork and Watercress* as one of his very best works.

The book tells the story of Ricky Baker, a young part Maori lad who flees into the vast bushland of the North Island's Urewera country in company with his irascible uncle Hec, to escape being placed under the Social Welfare System.

Ricky passes from delinquency to manhood in this formidable, mountainous bushland. He and his at first unwilling guardian, Hec, live off the land and through total dependence on each other, they form an ironclad bond of mateship.

I look forward to seeing Sam Neil's movie and if it is half as good as the book, it will be worth watching. Please excuse me for straying outside Oz with this review but *Wild Pork and Watercress* is a great read regardless of its country of origin.



More great Aussie reads at
www.outbackbooks.info

Many young people have lived lives vastly different to what is regarded as a normal upbringing. Kerry McGinnis is one of the different ones and she tells her story in lyrical and sensitive style in *Pieces of Blue*. (Viking Press 1999).

Kerry's mother died in childbirth when the author was six years old. Her father 'Mac', was a superb bushman but a hard uncompromising man. She and her sister and two brothers grew to maturity travelling with their father's droving plant.

McGinnis writes in a poetical style vividly describing the life, colour and beauty of the Outback but does not spare her readers the harsh realities of life out there. Anyone working with stock in the country further out, has to deal with lingering or sudden death in all its forms.

Pieces of Blue is a very worthwhile read giving an accurate account of Outback life by someone who has lived it. It also has the refreshing aspect of being a woman's account of growing up in the hurly burly of stock camps and droving trips, very much a male preserve in the 1950s and '60s when she experienced it.

Jack Drake

My Bloody Life!

“Croc and The Steer” © 2010 Glenny Palmer.

Croc is on a zillion acre property fixing flood damaged fences, so there are no humans within coo-ee to argue with. His Nirvana....(and blessed respite for the 'argumentees'.) But it had to happen. He couldn't stay argumentless for long.

Salvation arrived in the form of a particular Brahman steer that has taken umbride to croc's four wheel drive. Naturally croc took umbrage at this. And so the power struggle began. First up the steer ('the smart little f*#er') tried chasing the ute...attacking from the rear. So challenged, croc slammed on the brakes. 'That'll teach the smart little f*#er'. The somewhat bewildered, yet clever steer, rethinks his approach overnight, and charges front on in the morning. Croc gives no quarter...picks up speed, slams on the headlights, blows the horn and whoops out of the window. 'That'll teach the smart little f*#er'. Another thoughtful night for the somewhat bemused steer.

Now, croc is already battling assorted reptilian assassins, domiciled in flood trash glued together with silt, over the barbed wire. He began hauling it off with his (gloved) hands, but when a 5 foot unidentified but surely lethal snake charged out of one pile he was grabbing at, he adapted...very quickly...to using a pitchfork. ('That's a good idea Missus'...der!) Of course this job requires solid concentration...re taipans, blacks, browns etc lurking literally in the fences. So...he's totally focused on the job at hand when he hears da dump da dump da dumpity dumpity behind him. He knows what it is, but that curious human tendency towards denial & 'getting the bloody job done!' impairs his reaction time a tad. Finally, a slow turn of the head reveals 'the smart little f*#er' galloping at a rate of knots towards croc, and in full view of his harem of heifers...!bloody showoff! Quick thinking comes to croc's aid, but where a rational person would get going...sharpish...croc stares him down a while (thinks he's bloody Dundee?) & then ducks behind a tree...sideways....so to all intents and purposes, to the steer, he's disappeared! The steer props and looks around, and would doubtless scratch his head... if he was able. Not being content with having totally humiliated 'the smart little f*#er' in front of his entire harem, croc leaps out from behind the tree and scares the beejeezus outta the steer with his whooping and hollering and arm waving. Total disgrace pursues the quickly retreating steer. Total satisfaction envelopes croc....for now.

This is only day 3. That steer has a very thoughtful night ahead. He's a pretty determined steer, and he does NOT like croc.....(??)

Dear All,

The **Bronze Swagman Committee** proudly announces the results of the 2016 Bronze Swagman Award. Congratulations to everyone, and thank you all, once again, for supporting the 45th Bronze Swagman Award.

WINNER:

Bob Magor, Myponga. SA.
“The Bank’s Bottom Line”

RUNNER UP:

Leonie Parker, Ipswich. Qld.
“The Day That Mum Cooked Elvis”

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Helen Harvey, Coonamble. NSW.
“The Refugee”
“Our Forgotten Heroes”

Catherine Lee, Mona Vale. NSW.
“Fire at Dawson’s Run”

Irene Timpone, Atherton. Qld.
“The Station Owner’s Wife”

Regards,
Louise

New ABPA Badges Now Available

The ABPA Committee has just obtained a supply of new ABPA Badges. which are die-cast metal in an attractive bronze colour, featuring our name and logo, and is secured with a stick pin. They are now available from the Treasurer for \$10- each, including postage.



Competition Results

We are pleased to announce the following winners of the 2016 Peak Festival Broken Ski poetry awards. There were 62 entrants from all over Australia making the judges (Carol Heuchan, Zondrae King and Russell Hannah) task difficult! Thanks to all entrants. The 2017 competition will start in February next year.

Here's the winners. 1st, 2nd and 3rd will be receiving certificates in the mail!

JUNIOR SCHOOL SECTION

1st - Sam Simmons, from Carindale QLD
Poem: Kangaroo
2nd - Jasmine O'Brien, from Lorne NSW
Poem: My Morning
3rd - Kayla Morgan, from Bentleigh East VIC
Poem: Super Spaghetti

Highly commended

Anishka Acharya from Carseldine QLD
Michelle Shin from Runcorn QLD
Aila Louise Beggs from Macgregor QLD
Perry Latter from Marayong NSW

SECONDARY SCHOOL SECTION

1st - Jessica Brown, from St Ives NSW
Poem: Ballet of the River
2nd - Ben Fisher, from Melbourne VIC
Poem: The Gaol
3rd - Clinton Walsh, from Maroubra NSW
Poem: First Day of School in England

Highly Commended

Macey Deefholts from Toolangi VIC
Jai Szabo from Cheltenham VIC

OPEN SECTION

1st - Leonie Parker, from Ipswich QLD
Poem: Nature Has Its Reasons
2nd - Tom McIlveen, from Port Macquarie NSW
Poem: A Snowy River Tale
3rd - Bill Gordon, from Boyup Brook WA
Poem: Riding in the Mountains

Highly Commended

Maureen Clifford from Basin Pocket QLD
Bev Stewart from Tomerong NSW

Thank you!

David & Russell

More Results Can be found on our Website www.abpa.org.au

Merriwa Festival Of The Fleeces

Bush Poetry and other woolley entertainment
The red socks have been taken off 200 sheep (and washed) in readiness for the June long weekend in 2017.

The Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces 2016 was a great success and particularly a newer event that is held on the Sunday – the Bush Poets breakfast. This has great potential to be a big event and is already attracting big names in bush poetry. Don't miss out next year!

This was only the Festival's third bush poets breakfast, sponsored by the CWA and held at their rooms. Over 100 attended, so we packed the place, and the egg rolls proved a popular choice for breakfast.

The poets breakfast is an opportunity for poets, of local and international acclaim, to entertain and gain experience in their performance with first time entrants receiving the traditional standing ovation.

A real highlight was having accomplished performer Robyn Sykes in attendance emceeing and judging at the breakfast (she also performed at the opening night Fashion of the Fleeces event on the Friday which had 130 people in attendance).

Robyn added life to the occasion with her energetic and demonstrative way of bringing alive her poems and comments.

Robyn is the national female bush poetry champion, winner of many awards, including the coveted Golden Damper award, two state championships and the reciter of the year at the Turning of the Wave Festival.

Of the 14 entrants, Rhonda Tallnash from Violet Town in Victoria won the \$200 for Best Presented Original Poem with her poem The Shirt. Incidentally, Rhonda is the current Australian Women's Bush Poetry Performance Champion, so you can see the standard was high.

Kevin Adams' rendition of Life Gets Tedious won him the Local Poet Award. Another highlight was local Identity Arthur Wright donning a Jockeys silk and cap for his rendition of The Horse from Snowy River.

John Adams won the \$100 for Best Presentation of a Poem written by someone other than the presenter. The audience loved his presentation of Warm Spot in Bed, by Ray Essery.

The Best Junior (\$50) was Bill Parry. Other encouragement awards went to Tina Taylor, Tammy Roberts, Rick Wright, Barbara Cowley, Neil Jones and Jim Lamb.

Upper Hunter Shire Councillor Ron Campbell



PROMOTING YOUR ABPA

As advised in the June/July President's Report, I have taken on the role of ABPA Promotions Officer. This involves several internal cross-information aspects but the main aim is to make people outside the ABPA more aware of bush poetry and the important role the ABPA plays towards ensuring the preservation and growth of our genre.

In consultation with the ABPA Committee, we have come up with many ways in which each of us can be 'promotions officers'. This could include passing on ABPA contact details, information, membership brochures and/or old issue magazines:-

- . at all poetry club events
- . at community, country music, folk festival, etc. events where you are involved in organising, performing, comparing or just attending
- . through a link to the ABPA website in any individual publications, newsletters, blogs
- . through reference in any articles where you are featured, interviews, etc. that you give
- . to local groups such as aged care complexes, Probus groups etc. that could have members who would be interested.
- . to schools where you do workshops or visit
- . to your local library
- . to your local Visitors' Information Centre

Wherever permissible, photos and reports from events could be posted to the ABPA Facebook page (post direct or send via promotions@abpa.org.au, treasurer@abpa.org.au, president@abpa.org.au or blackduk62@gmail.com). These articles could also be sent to your local press to gain wider coverage.

If you would like to participate in this increased awareness drive and need material to support your promotions, please contact Shelley Hansen, treasurer@abpa.org.au

Many of you are already doing this type of service and the Committee thanks each one of you for playing your part.

Brenda Joy

N.B. As stated in Tom McIlveen's President's Report, it is not intended to intrude into "...the promotions done by organisers for their individual events...". If you are attending an event, it is imperative, before displaying ABPA material, that you contact the event co-ordinator for approval to do so.

From Geraldine King

Rathdowney 2016

Arriving at Rathdowney it was raining and our hopes for a nice day were somewhat shattered. Then, as quickly as it started the rain stopped and out popped the sun with a really happy face! We had a great roll up of poets, 14 altogether which made for a good competition and made a really fun day. The standard of poetry was so very high that a big thanks needs to go to Ron Leekifiet and Pam Fox for doing such a difficult job so well!

Results were as follows:

Novice: Graham (SPIN) Hampson Runner-up: John Flanagan

Traditional: Mick Martin; Runner-Up: Bob (PA) Kettle

Original: Wayne Caldwell; Runner- Up: Wally Finch

Rathdowney Idle: Wayne Caldwell

Multi media: Mick Martin

Logan Village 2016

This year, September 11 will be a date to remember for all the right reasons, for the Logan Village competition will be bigger and better than ever!

The poets will start the festival with a Bush Poets Breakfast from 7.30 am. The competition will start at 10am.

Lots of events this year including a Novice, a Traditional, an Original, the "Village Idiot" comedy event (original song or poem) and of course the one minute poem (THIS WILL BE HELD ON THE MAIN STAGE DURING THE BUSH POETS BREAKFAST).

If you can't attend you can still enter a DVD or USB STICK of yourself reciting your favourite original poem. Ring Gerry for more information on 0755478342 or 0413672218 or email:

geraldineking@virginbroadband.com.au

COOKTOWN 2016

Captain Cook hit the reef on June 11 1770, and the commemoration is celebrated every year in Cooktown North Queensland. This year Jim Tonkin and I were part of the celebration, firstly with our bush poetry, we were curtain-raiser for Shane Howard of Goanna Band, then in full costume, Jim as Captain Cook and myself as his first mate we acted out a short play that looked at why Cook hit the reef. It was a comedy of errors that we both wrote and it went over really well and got lots of laughs. It was a great weekend and Cooktown residents are really lovely people!

SUCCESSFUL FIRST OUTBACK WRITERS FESTIVAL

The inaugural Outback Writers Festival was recently held in Winton, and attracted participants from as far away as Orange, Sydney and Batemans Bay in New South Wales and Ayr, Brisbane and Toowoomba in Queensland. Many took the opportunity to sign up as members.

Over 40 people attended the literary dinner which featured a 3 course meal, and included camp oven cooking. An interested group joined in the tour of the historic Winton Club, including standing on the very site where the first QANTAS board meeting was held.

Sue Williams, a writer of such books as *Fred Brophy* and *Women of the Outback*, was flown up from Sydney for the event. Helene Young attended from Brisbane and passed on many tips at the Master Classes held. Helene sells tens of thousands of her books in the USA. Norah Kersh, famous for her children's series that includes *Outback School* and *Outback Alphabet*, hosted the session on writing children's books. Don Douglas has written a series of books based on a Queensland bushranger and ran a very popular workshop. Ross Davies talked about his new book *Middle Aged Men in Lycra*. Dan Kelly from Boolarong Press, one of the sponsors, was the moderator of all sessions.

Mayor of Winton Butch Lenton opened the Festival and launched a new book *Winton to Middleton* via historic Middleton and author Jeff Close is donating all profits from the sale of the book to the rebuild of the Waltzing Matilda Centre. The Festival chose the RFDS as the charity to support and 100% of raffle sales were donated – a tidy sum of \$380. Catering was a feature of the Festival. Bente Moller, Treasurer of the Festival Committee, said that the writers also visited the two local schools and conducted workshops.

Some of the participants were published authors. John Morrison, Paul Currin and Kaye Kuhn from Longreach, Ian Waples, Tim Borthwick, Helen Malone, and Pam Arthur all had their books on display and for sale. As Winton is the Home of the Bronze Swagman Award for Bush Verse, a poets' breakfast was held and featured Winton identity Ron Pearce.

An integral part of the Outback Writers Festival was the short story competition. Don Douglas from Ayr won first prize, and Sophie Hooper, D'arcy Kersh and Jessica Jones shared the \$500 prize money for juniors donated by the State Library of Queensland. The book quickly sold out and more copies have been secured.

Major sponsors of the first Festival were GBA Consulting Engineers of Barcardine, the State Library of Queensland, Boolarong Press and www.outbackbooks.info

The 2017 Outback Writers Festival will be held in Winton from the 20th June until the 22nd of June. More information from www.outbackwritersfestival.com.au

MURRAY MOON

© 2015 Brenda Joy

Winner, 2016 ABPA Overall Written Victorian Championship and Silver Brumby Award, Corryong, Victoria

As our planet casts its shadow on the white-gold lunar sphere
turning beam to rustic shimmer at this holy time of year,
so the Murray's flowing waters glow with campfire's orange light
as the reverie of humans infiltrates the Easter night.

While I sing my song of worship I can feel my heart attune
to the rhythm of the river and eclipse of rising moon,
for the wind weaves winsome whispers of the ghosts of ages past
and the weathered gums remember where the dreams of men were cast.

And as Moon's meniscus mesmerises, slowly giving way
to a shield of total cover, all my heart must do is pray,
as I'm linked to Dreamtime legends of the black-skinned Man of old
who expressed in story language how the miracles unfold.

I can hear the rhythmic chanting lilt beside the Murray's banks,
joining primal, tribal leaders in their rituals of thanks,
so I drift in awe-filled wonder under lumen lights of stars
in attune with potent resonance of ancient avatars.

Then I sense the cosmic energies that penetrated Earth
leading men of inner vision to the stable of 'The Birth',
till the Eucharist of sacrifice, endemic to our need,
is connected by the sharing to the symbols of each creed.

And I'm filled with faith and reverence like early pioneers
who, in harmony with Nature, weathered through survival years
with respect for cyclic seasons and with gratitude of heart
for the blessings of salvation and the sights of Heaven's art.

Though the simple ways have vanished with the cities' urban sprawl,
still the solar system spectacle casts spells to reach us all,
while, immersed in mystic magic, Murray murmurs on her course
as the Moon confirms the glory of Creation's mighty force.

WORKIN' FOR THE DOLE.

©Tom McIlveen

WINNER OF VICTORIAN MFSR BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS HUMOROUS SECTION 2016

"Wakey wakey, eggs an' bakey's on! An' here's your toast and 'alf a buttered scone.
Get up and shake a leg you lazy lug! You're layin' there like some reposing slug.
Rise n' shine, you good for nothing louse! I ain't your flamin' concubine or spouse.
"I'm sick an' tired of pickin' up your clothes, an' waitin' for your socks to decompose."

"You've missed the mornin' an' the midday news...an' av'a guess who's gonna coach the Blues?
The Wallabies 'av got'a bit of spark, an' keen to 'av'a go at Eden Park.
It seems as though the Saints have found some form, and Bellamy is stickin' with the Storm!
The Pollys want to plug the budget hole, by cuttin' back on benefits 'an dole."

"The mongrels want to blame us unemployed for causing this 'ere economic void.
I ain't no mathematics prodigy, an' I ain't got no algebra degree...
but 'ow the 'ell can treasury be bust, when they're the ones who own the bloomin' Trust?
'An now they've started passin' round the hat, because their stocks and dividends are flat!"

"Although I'm just a stupid sofa spud...I've done the maths, and it's as clear as mud.
It ain't no magic mystery or trick but good old simplified arithmetic!
This working for the dole is just a sham, and nothing but a politician's scam!
The Pollys want to blame us I suppose, for causing all their economic woes."

"The whole economy is just a joke, so how the hell can Treasury be broke?
They own the mint which prints the foldin' stuff. Just make some more if things are gettin' tough!
It's nothing but a bureaucratic lurk, the way these bludgers send us out to work.
I reckon one or two are on the take...an' get a bit of everthin' we make."

They get a cut from every dollar saved... an' bonuses when benefits are waived.
They split us into segregated mobs an' give us all the low degrading jobs.
We get to drive around in Council vans to sweep the streets an' empty garbage cans.
It's 'umblin to be wallowin' in sludge, when I've been taught to supervise an' bludge.

A fella's got to 'av some sort of pride...especially when over qualified.
I've got a reputation to protect, an' should be shown a little more respect.
I'm losing influence amongst my mates...although they're mostly fools 'an reprobates.
When Centrelink is leavin' me alone, I've got a little business of my own.

Its true, I'm well connected with my peers...they come to me for cigarettes an' beers.
I call it, 'Tailor mades and taxis week,' when prices for commodities are peak.
But when their benefits 'ave all been spent, they count on me for sustenance an' rent.
I charge 'em with my other lurks an' perks, then pass it on to Housin' Public Works.

I get a cut from Tradie contractees, an' add it to my consulatation fees.
This goverment is out to send me bust...so 'ow's a bloke supposed to make a crust?
My notoriety has copped a blow, 'an business has been gettin' kind of slow.
If slavery is s'posed to be a crime, then why ain't I refunded for my time?

"Wakey wakey, eggs 'an bakey's gone! An' so's your toast an' half your buttered scone.
There's nothing in the fridge but crust an' booze...an' now you've gone and missed the evening news!
Get up and shake a leg you lazy louse; you'll never find a concubine or spouse .
If Centrelink comes knocking on your door just tell them I don't live here anymore!"

The Bank's Bottom Line

© Bob Magor

Winner 2016, Bronze Swagman Award for Bush Verse, Winton, Queensland.
(This is Bob's Third win in the Bronze Swagman!)

The executive opened the letter
addressed simply, 'To whom it concerns.'
At a bank which was one of the many
self-obsessed by the profit it earns.
It began saying, 'Sir, I'm a client
and I farm with this husband of mine,
Though to you, Sir, we're both merely numbers
causing grief on your bank's bottom line.

You were helpful extending more credit
throughout years when the clouds wouldn't rain,
Though you lassoed our land with a mortgage
and encircled our necks in a chain.
But a farmer can't conjure a cash flow
when the seasons and prices decline.
And there's no human faces on spreadsheets —
just a smudge on your bank's bottom line.

Please instruct all your bean-counting cronies
to protect people working the land.
For despite highbrow qualifications,
farming problems you don't understand.
You might find, if you lived in the real world,
rural income and drought don't align,
With your greed always courting disaster
for us camped on your bank's bottom line.

Would you have more compassion for farmers
if like them throughout droughts you weren't paid?
Could you crawl cap in hand to a banker
to explain why no profits were made?
When he treated your pleas with indifference
would you think him a merciless swine
As he sneaked in his sly fees and charges
adding cream to his bank's bottom line?

If the stench of death lay like a blanket
on the turf of your manicured lawn
Of your starving stock haunting your nightmares
which awake you in cold sweats at dawn.
Then you mightn't complain about traffic
and the stress shuffling papers by nine.
Where a farmer's despair never features
on the graph of your bank's bottom line.

Have your kids had to witness you sobbing
with your face in the palm of your hand?
Having read an impersonal letter
from a bank repossessing your land?
Have you come home from work to your fam'ly
to discover a vile AUCTION sign
Which condemns your life's work to foreclosure
just to fatten a bank's bottom line?



If you suit-and-tie vultures would venture
up the dirt to your client's front gate,
You'd discover the hands you're evicting
are the ones putting food on your plate.
In your crystal ball, gaze to the future
sitting up at bare tables to dine
While complaining your dinner is tasteless
as you chew on your bank's bottom line.

If your balance sheets showed whims of weather
with a column devoted to toil,
You might mark them as debit and income
for the hardworking sons of the soil.
But you boffins in finance all thwart us
from your ivory towers that shine,
Where no rain on the roof is a bonus
in the glow of your bank's bottom line.

With your bank profit flaunting ten zeros,
please explain why each year you crave more —
Why the heartless demands from your boardroom
make you saddle more pain on the poor.
For you sacrifice those who are needy
from the depths of your insular shrine
Where the axe that you wield has no conscience,
splashing blood on your bank's bottom line.

And so, Sir, as I finish this letter,
there is only one fact I must add.
From today I'm a new farming widow
and my children sleep minus their dad.
For I found my man locked in his workshop —
a statistic of rural decline,
Life cut short by a noose of your making
from a length of your bank's bottom line.'

Golden Damper Awards

"Yeeehhaa!!!"folks it's on again, the ABPA 'Golden Damper Awards 2017' and already eager Bush Poets from around the land are forming their wagons into a circle and starting the annual stampede towards the campgrounds of Tamworth City, New South Wales for the Annual Country Music Festival and the 'gold' to be found 'in them there hills' next year. Yes my friends riches beyond compare await the enterprising and the bold willing to 'risk it all' in search of those fabled 'Golden Damper' trophies, for only 2 of these rare gems are produced in any given calendar year.

Much sought after by apprentice and professional 'fossickers' alike these treasures are vaulted away behind locked doors until the beginning of the Competitions Heats in middle to late January every year and are held under the watchful eye of Sheriffs' Jan Morris & Graeme Johnson in their secret Tamworth location.

As well as this glittering bounty other gems are also to be discovered in the form of glowing amulets (to be worn round the neck) for those whose tribulations lead them to first, second or third place in said bush poetry competition. (See photo above).

Rumour has it that winners of these medallions are imbued with strange and mystical powers of recitation far beyond that of other mere mortals. Legend also tells of the tradition of winners refusing to remove their necklaces for fear of loss of empowerment over the 'spoken word'. (Campfire yarns actually reveal that the winner's swollen heads are indeed the real reason they cannot be removed but I do not place much stock in such scurrilous tales).

Potential contestants are advised that many more clues to the location of these fabled icons will be divulged in the pages of this very tabloid in the coming months as will the treasure map leading you to the venue in Tamworth where the 'digging can begin in earnest'.

Yes fellow versifiers it's time to stock up on your provisions and fortify yourself for the 'long haul' to Tamworth town to be 'in the race' for next year's 'Goldrush' at the 'ABPA Golden Damper Awards 2017'.

For further enquires call Sheriff Johnson c/- the West Ryde Corral on 0419415137.



The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

Inaugurated 1994 ARBN: 104 032 126 ABN:17 145 367 949

www.abpa.org.au

Treasurer: Shelley Hansen, 99 Iindah Road West MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650

Email: treasurer@abpa.org.au Phone: 0409 665 843

Membership Application Form 2016

You may pay online at www.abpa.org.au (credit card or PayPal)

Renewing membership

New member

Membership is for a calendar year from 1st January to 31st December.

Annual membership includes all magazines (including back issues) for the current calendar year.

Members joining after October will receive the year's remaining issue as well as all magazines for the following calendar year.

Name:

Postal address:

..... Postcode:

Phone:..... Mobile:.....

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Signature: Date:.....

ABPA Membership Fees: (AUD)

Single membership \$33

Dual membership supplement \$10

Junior membership \$20

International member supplement \$25

Public Liability Insurance cover..... \$100

Membership badge \$7

(for second family member – no magazine)

(under 18 years – receives magazines)

(to cover international postage costs)

(cover is to 31/01/17)

(includes postage)

Total: \$ _____

I Do require a receipt

I Do NOT require a receipt (your magazine

address label will show your receipt number and membership expiry.)

Payable to:

**The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.
99 Iindah Road West MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650**

Or pay by direct deposit to:

Please note NEW BANK details since 2015

Bank: Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000

Account Number: 154842108

Account Name: Australian Bush Poets Association Inc

Reference: Your NAME

If paying by direct deposit please include **your NAME** as the reference and send confirmation **with this form** to treasurer@abpa.org.au or 99 Iindah Road West MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650.

The Street Where I Grew Up

© Shelley Hansen 2015

Winner 2015 FNQ Walkamin Written Bush Poetry Competition.

I see it through nostalgia's eyes – the street where I grew up.
Like many country towns, its girth was wide –
the only avenue of stately jacaranda trees
with timber houses queueing side by side.

My parents formed a friendship with the folk who lived next door –
the seeds of trust were sown across the fence.
Mum served a daily diet that was rich in homemade fare
and liberally spiced with common sense.

We kids played backyard cricket, ran our go-carts down the hill –
our Saturdays were packed with joyous play.
The only time we went "online" was pegging out the clothes
while giving Mum a hand on washing day!

The baker came on Tuesdays with his steaming hi-top loaves,
the fruiterer on Thursdays reigned supreme.
The rattle of the milkman's crate declared the early dawn,
delivering pint bottles topped with cream.

Our "fast food" came on Saturdays. We'd hear the cry, "Hot Pies!"
The neighbourhood would all turn out in force
for pies in paper packets – and a weekly chance for chat
well-doused with gossip and tomato sauce!

We shared our backyard playground with the singing butcher birds,
our home-grown eggs were yellow as the sun!
The bees buzzed through the wattle, and the kookaburra's call
resounded in the air when day was done.

Once more I've come to walk this street, to capture if I can
the majesty of yesterday's sweet song.
My mind's eye builds a landscape I expect to be the same
when suddenly I notice something's wrong.

The trees are gone – replaced with fences over six feet high.
No sound of children's laughter fills the air.
I long for cheery greetings but each door is bolted fast
and no one even knows that I am there.

The sun has risen twenty thousand times since I stood here
and fifty years have washed away my youth.
I feel bereft and sad – so much has changed, not least myself –
until I realise a simple truth ...

Though time may take us far away from places in the heart,
though years may yield their share of storms and strife,
we're never really destitute while memories of gold
weave thread-like through the tapestry of life.





B I N A L O N G
**BUSH
POETRY
PRIZE**

Hosting the 2016 ABPA NSW Bush Poetry Championships

The program is designed for maximum enjoyment and to include poets at all ages and stages.

The festival opens on Friday 9 September at 7pm, and kicks off with novice and intermediate poetry competitions, and 'walk-ups'—for non-competitive poets and yarn-spinners.

The Saturday and Sunday programs include: Binalong Bush Poetry Prize competitions, which are weighted toward humour.

The program also includes, non-competitive activities such as music, time to relax and an opportunity to explore the township of Binalong.

Saturday night will feature our *'Celebrate Australia Concert'*.

The event has four competitive sections

- Written
- Open Performance: Classical, Modern, Original
- Intermediate and Novice Performance
- Junior Written and Performance

OVER \$5,500 IN PRIZE MONEY

Entry forms available at:

www.abpa.org.au or www.binalongartsgroup.org.au

E: robynsykespoet@gmail.com or P: 02 6227 4377

**CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES MON 1 AUGUST, 2016.
POST TO: THE COMPETITION CO-ORDINATOR,
PO BOX 100 BINALONG NSW 2584.**

(No late entries will be accepted).

9-11 SEPTEMBER



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.

"Laggan Bush Poets." 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

2nd Sunday - 2:00 pm Poetry at the Pub Katoomba Blackburn's Family Hotel. All forms poetry, free entry. Contact Denis Rice 02 4782 6623 tdrice3@southernphone.com.au

SINGLETON BUSH POETS. Meet at the Albion Hotel, John Street Singleton. 7pm on the first Tuesday of each month. Contact Neville Briggs 02 65711398.

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 :- Manfred - 0411 160510 or Cay - 07 34083219.

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 0428 574 651; 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 Janice Ebrington 0421941494

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 Inc meet every first Tuesday of the month at Aitkenvale Library Meeting Room at 7:00pm. They also meet at Bellevue Hotel, Allen Street, South Townsville, every third Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm for 'Pub Grub' and 7:00pm for 'Walk-Up' poetry. Loads of fun. All welcome.

Bribie Island Bush Poets meet at 6.30 pm on the 4th Monday of each month in the Conference Room of the Blue Pacific Hotel, Woorim on Bribie Island. Contact Cay - 07 34083219.

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 7104 or Ken Jones 03 5441 5121

Henry Lawson Memorial & Literary Society Inc. - Meet third Saturday each month/except January. Monastery Hall St. rear St. Francis Church. Lonsdale street. Melbourne. All Welcome. From 1-30pm till 4-00 pm. Contact: Maree Stapledon: 0408 100 896

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.

AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETS

If you wish to find out more about the Australian Bush Poets Association, or if you are not already a member of the ABPA and wish to become one, please go to our Website www.abpa.org.au to download a membership form, or contact the Secretary secretary@abpa.org.au