

A.B.P.A.

## ***Australian Bush Poets Association***

**Volume 25 No. 4      August/September 2019**



# 2019





Logan City Council

## Logan Performance Poets Present

Designed by  
Wally Finch

# The Queensland Bush Poetry Championship in Beenleigh on the 6th, 7th, 8th September

BEENLEIGH Tavern -6th Sept 6 pm- a 'Meet and Greet' - walk-up's, One Minute poem-fun!  
BEENLEIGH SHOWGROUND HALL-7th Sept – Competition Day -3 'main events'- 8.30-4.30  
BEENLEIGH HISTORICAL VILLAGE-8th Sept- 'Wind Down'- Sausage sizzle-walk-ups 9-11am

Information and entry  
forms see events on ABPA website or  
Ring Jim 0403871325 or  
Gerry: 0499942922

JUDGES  
Jack Drake Robyn Sykes Tom MacIlveen

Sponsors: Logan City Council; Australian Bush Poets assoc; AJ Bush and sons  
Linus Power M.P; Melissa MacMahon M.P; Cameron Dick M.P; Bill and Pat Heck  
Beenleigh Rum , Woolworths Jimboomba, Bunning's Bethania.



# Next Magazine Deadline is September 27th

## ABPA Committee Members 2019

### Executive:

President	-- Tim Sheed	president@abpa.org.au
Vice-President	-- Ray Essery	essery56m@bigpond.com
Secretary	-- Meg Gordon	meggordon4@bigpond.com
Treasurer	-- Janine Keating	treasurer@abpa.org.au

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### Non Committee Positions

Webmaster	Gregory North	web@abpa.org.au
Magazine Editor	Neil McArthur	editor@abpa.org.au
Facebook Editor	Jan Lewis	janlewis1@hotmail.com

### ABPA Magazine Advertising Rates

ABN 17 145 367 949 ARBN: 104 032 126

#### Black and White Ads

Full page \$95

Half Page \$55

Quarter Page or less \$35

#### Full Colour Ads (Space limited)

Full Page \$240

Half Page \$140

Quarter Page not available

#### **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, Word or PDF Format to [editor@abpa.org.au](mailto:editor@abpa.org.au)

All payments to be made within 14 days to

**The Treasurer - Janine Keating**

**P O Box 644**

**GLADSTONE QLD 4680**

**or via Direct Debit to ABPA Account**

**Bendigo Bank**

**BSB: 633000**

**Account: 154842108**

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

# Editorial



## **Member's Written Competition \$100 Prize Each Edition**

Last Month's Competition drew some quality entries about the Australian Holden Car. Members came at it from all angles which was wonderful to see. I even noticed a couple of entries from non-members! Nice try, but this is strictly for Members! Remember this is judged independantly and purely on entertainment value. We are looking for something that is the 'most publishable'!. (I think I made that word up!)

And the winner of our first competition?

***Congratulations To Carol Heuchan  
wih her entry 'The 48-215'***

Congratulations to all entrants on some great writing and other worthy poems will be published randomly in future editions of our Magazine.

Each Magazine, one member will recieve a \$100 prize and have their Rhyming Australian Poem published here and on our website.

There will be a given topic and the Poem which is decided to have taken the most original approach to the topic will be announced the winner in the following Issue.

The entries will be judged anonously and the decision will be final.

So get to it. You do not have to be the most accomplished poet in the country to win this!

This Month's Topic - **THE ASHES**

Entries close **September 16th**

Send to [editor@abpa.org.au](mailto:editor@abpa.org.au)

*(Please don't send by post)*



# President's Report

Hello fellow bush poetry lovers. This will be a brief report as we are travelling in western Queensland and I am presently writing this belated report in the Winton Library.

It is very heartening to see how much the grey nomads love performed poetry and storytelling, as do children when they get the chance to see it. The topic that repeatedly comes up among members of our association is our concern at the lack of formal school programs for poetry and music teaching. Our current tour illustrates how enthusiastically children engage with music and storytelling when they get it.

On an administrative note the ABPA committee are communicating using the platform Zoom and that enables communication with our far flung and mobile executive.

Tim Sheed  
ABPA President



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## Call Out for Submissions

I have asked, on many, many occasions for submissions from Members for the Magazine. I receive a sporadic influx of offerings, which is much appreciated by all other members, but the supply runs dry very quickly.

If you have a poem or item of interest then PLEASE pass it on to us to share amongst all Bush Poetry enthusiasts.

It saddens me to see Bush Poets performing at events all across Australia and yet I only receive one or two reports to share with other Members. Either I am imagining these events taking place or else people are not proud of Bush Poetry making an impact at these festivals? Or else is it just that people can't be bothered sharing the wonderful audience reaction and feedback with others?

Anyway, once more I ask, in what are becoming desperate times, for people to submit articles of interest and poems to your, the Member's, ABPA Magazine.

Thanks  
Neil McArthur -Editor

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**Our ABPA Website** is also struggling at present with our Forums section being utilised by less than a handful of Members. Since we made it ABPA Members only allowed to participate there, the involvement rate is next to Zero.

Greg North does a wonderful job of trying to keep the News and Committee details up to date and we appreciate that, but participation rates seem to point to an inevitable death of our Website in an era where one should be a vital tool in keeping our art form alive.

# abpa.org.au

Neil McArthur - Editor



# The 48-215

© Carol Heuchan 2019

Winner of last month's ABPA Magazine Comp.

It's standing right outside my house. Just like it's yesterday.  
And all the years and all the tears have faded clean away,  
and I am young and bullet-proof and this is not a dream.  
She's standing there – a vision – wrapped in shiny Gawler Cream.

Four door sedan, front engine and three speed column shift.  
Six seater. Couldn't beat 'er – drawin' chicks. You get my drift?  
Bench seats and round the corners, your girl'd slide right over  
and your heart was running faster than a bloody Hawthorne rover.

No heating or demisting – well, what are windows for?  
Extras – spats and rubber mats; a dipper on the floor.  
Red leather seats and door trim and a rear venetian blind.  
No side mirrors (and no seat belts) just one tail light, right behind.

We had good ways, back in those days. That car was really neat.  
It didn't say to 'Buckle up!' the carton on the seat.  
You would drive with one arm hanging out and one arm 'round your sheila.  
You knew you had 'er in that car. No-one'd ever steal 'er.

Now, first gear had no synchro, so if signs said stop, you'd STOP  
to avoid a chance encounter with a sneaky bloody cop.  
No lights to flash, no blinkers – your arm would show 'em how.  
Straight meant right and bent meant stop and a finger? Same as now.

The horn was half a chrome ring. You could beep with just your thumb.  
Designed to have you looking cool. That Holden mob weren't dumb.  
The window winders really worked. No modern ones for me –  
you press and press and cannot guess where it will be.

The air scoop was adjustable. She'd a wind off petrol cap  
and a gathered leather pocket where you always kept your map.  
The little flipper windows were as practical as hell.  
The cool air came in quickly and they saved you juice as well.

When you opened up the boot, the spare was standing up saluting  
in the wheel well over on the side. How's that for high falutin'?  
Mum's tartan picnic blanket went wherever I would go.  
I always kept it in the boot. Well, you know, you never know....

She had lever-action shockies and from the front suspension.  
Six cylinder, sixty horse power and real leather, did I mention?  
She was sleek and cool and sexy and oh boy, did she have power!?  
Down the Bulli Pass once, we made sixty miles an hour!!

The windscreen was divided. Wipers slowed down up a hill.  
Handbrake pulled out from the dash. Oh heck, I see her still.  
On the shelf behind the back seat, the nodding doggy sat  
and flyin' from the aerial, half a Davy Crockett hat.

Elbow out the window, Hank Williams on the air,  
pedal to metal and the world just wasn't there.  
So raise your glasses, drink a toast, the best car you could drive –  
the Aussie bloody Holden, the Four Eight Two One Five.





# A Tribute to Carol Reffold

Victorian "poette" Carol Reffold succumbed to lung cancer in Kyneton Hospital on Wednesday 29th May 2019. Known as the Patchwork Poet, Carol was renowned for her poem Gran's Quilt.

A stalwart of the Man From Snowy River Bush Festival, Carol travelled much of country performing poetry, judging competitions, conducting workshops and generally promoting bush poetry and its performance.

Our thoughts are with Carol's family.

A unique spoken-word artist and multi-award winning performer, Carol was one of Australia's most highly regarded poets and story tellers. She also hosted workshops on writing and reciting bush poetry, and wrote poems on request.

Carol wrote, performed and combined her original verse, anecdotes and comedy routines which took you on mind journeys not easily forgotten; both outrageously funny and deeply moving. Carol also dipped into the works of the great Australian poets.

She inspired poets and audiences across Australia at some of the major spoken word festivals and recently in Great Britain. Carol recently started a new career as enrichment speaker on cruise ships and prepared a number of audio visual presentations to enhance her reciting.

At Corryong Man from Snowy River Bush Festivals, and Benalla Musters, Carol has been a favourite poetry performer, judge and right hand woman to me for the last 15 years or so. Her special talents in stagecraft, design, media, judging and MC skills were invaluable.

Please post tributes either on Carol's Facebook page or on Victorian Bush Poets and Friends.

A celebration of Carol's life was held at Wooling Hill Garden Estate in New Gisborne on Friday the 7th June.

Jan Lewis

"It is with a sad heart that I let you all know that Carol Reffold passed away on Tuesday afternoon after her battle with lung cancer. Carol's niece, Lisette, phoned me last night and asked that I pass on this news to those who knew Carol. Carol was 72. I have expressed our deep sadness about this news and passed on our condolences to the family. A sympathy card will be sent to Carol's husband, Jack, and family members.

Carol was one of the founding members of the Bundaberg Poets' Society and even when she moved to acreage outside of Childers she still commuted to Bundaberg for club and committee meetings. Some of you might remember she called in last July with her 95 year old Mum and had us in fits doing a Cockroach poem. Talking to Carol a few month ago she had every intention of coming to Queensland again this winter to escape the cold weather in Victoria and was looking forward to coming to our club meetings.

Of course Carol achieved a lot in poetry and was on judging panels as well as the ABPA Victorian member. Before she got sick she was actually going on a cruise as a motivation speaker with her niece."

Sandy Lees  
Bundy Bush Poets



## Vale' Kevin Dean.

G" bye Kev, we often fought like Kilkenny Cats, over not very important things. Don't ask me why we just did. Pig headed I suppose, fixed in our ways. I always tried to look at the big picture while you would be driven by detail, still that's where the Devil lives. The only thing we ever agreed on, was I think, we weren't into religion and you stuck to that to the end, even when you were really crook, good on you. Mate we're going to miss you, and your insistence that poetry doesn't have to be funny to be entertaining. We know that! But people would much rather laugh than cry, if given the choice.

See I'm still arguing with you, but it's healthy to not be surrounded by like-minded people. You were good for our Club's health. You starred in many, many commercials, the odd movie, a frustrated leading man, if ever we saw one.

The fact that you and Billy McClure alone built the Snowy Mountain Scheme, has never been properly recognised and that is a pity. You performed your serious poetry with great passion, but when you did wander into the world of fun, you were tentative and that made it all the funnier. You brought entertainment to many, and this is a good thing. Those who knew you, admired the work and effort you gave to our genre.

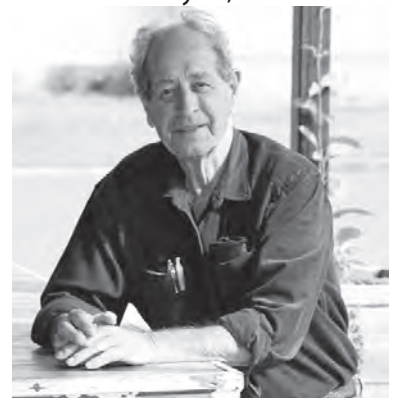
Goodbye and thank you Kevin, our thoughts and love go out to Rita, David and Katrina for the times we shared.

The Bush Poetry World is the poorer for your passing.

You will be missed Kevin, and we can't ask for much more than that.

Long John Best

On behalf of The North Pine Bush Poets Group.





# STOP PRESS!

A new written competition will be run in 2020 as part of the King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge & Bush Festival at Murrurundi, NSW. The already popular Poets' Breakfast awards best walk-up poetry performance, judged by Carol Heuchan. Next year, \$500 prize money has been ear-marked for the inaugural Written Competition, with sections for Serious and Humorous poetry and overall Champion.

Carol has regularly been the featured performer at King of the Ranges Festival and just loves the whole event, saying it is, without a doubt, her favourite Aussie Festival.

Keep an eye out on the ABPA website for the entry forms soon and start planning for this exciting, dinky-di Aussie event. Enjoy the poetry and see - first hand - our own Stockman and women become legends. Whip-cracking, packhorse, cross-country, trick riding, bareback, saddle bronc. riding and brumby catching are all just part of the action. The kids are country kids – bullet proof and keen as mustard to have a go at things like wild goat racing! Yep, fair dinkum feral goats are harnessed to carts and kids hop in and take their chances! Spills and thrills and heaps of fun. Book your camping or accom. (limited) now for 27-29 Feb. 2020 see [www.kingoftheranges.com.au](http://www.kingoftheranges.com.au)



## KING OF THE RANGES STOCKMAN'S CHALLENGE & BUSH FESTIVAL

### The 2020 Inaugural WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

\$500 Prize money!

Original Serious 1st \$100 2nd \$30 3rd \$20

Original Humorous 1st \$100 2nd \$30 3rd \$20

**Best Poem overall will receive an additional \$200**

ENTRY FORM available from [www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)

\$10 per poem or for two poems

Critique (if required) additional \$10

Entries to:

The Secretary, Kay Seath (KOTR)  
17/28 Deaves Road, Cooranbong. 2265  
Enq: 0416 262399

Email (enquiries only): [kaysie2@hotmail.com](mailto:kaysie2@hotmail.com)

## Beauesert Bush Bards 4th Annual Picnic

On Friday, 14th June the Beauy Bush Bards took their friends and poetry to the bush, the original home of bush verse. The picnic was held in perfect weather, beside picturesque Canungra Creek, just outside the little town of Canungra. The bush bards were delighted with the roll-up which included poets who travelled quite a distance to attend including Wally and Mary Finch, Don Macqueen, Anita Reed, Dennis Scanlon and Denleigh Stenzel.

Suzanne Honour entertained with a re-enactment of "The Man From Ironbark" while Mary Finch delighted with her beautiful singing voice. Many new and old poems were performed and Geraldine King took the opportunity to promote the Queensland Titles (6/7 Sept). Glenny Palmer was welcomed back into the district after a long absence.

One special feature of the picnic was the improvised, collapsible, ingenious toilet conceived and built by the B.B.B's own Ian Gasking. Ian was the organizer of the day and was ably assisted by Barry Kenny, Ian Moss and Spin Hampson. The BBBs thank everyone who made this a great day of fellowship and fun.



Pamela Fox



Ian Gasking

Pamela Fox



# Canine Chronicles

© Ron Boughton. May 2019

For many lucky people their life story can be told,  
As in, chapters of a book filled with pages of gold  
Showing biographical contentment, over the years honed,  
With each chapter portrayed ...by the dogs they have owned!  
Though only a portion of ours being a dog's life span,  
But such fulfillment bring to the overall plan  
That the grief of their passing can be painful to endure  
But the knowledge, of a good life does time help cure!

Sad for those who have never had a canine connection  
(Never relished the value of a dog's affection),  
As there is nothing that cements in the memory log  
Like witnessing the bond of a child and their dog,  
The first chapter in their book of a kindred journey  
That no classroom or tutor, could possibly 'learn thee'  
A grounding of sorts transitioning to the inner self  
More stable than ideals such as ego or pelf.

As a kid when in strife and maybe, even had the strap!  
You think the worlds against you, then feel in your lap  
The muzzle, of one that doesn't judge, but understands you,  
And with faith then restored you can put out your hand to  
The friend, ah yes! the one who is the true friend indeed  
Helping those troubles and woes of your life recede,  
And proportions a sense of values, that plainly you learn  
For it's not really much, that is asked in return.

No matter what the breed, and they are varied and many  
And some dogs being like their owners 'tis uncanny!  
But most being loyal, possess, a faithfulness syndrome  
Exemplified in, the overexcited welcomes home!  
They can guard and guide and sniff out things unlawful  
Some are preened and spoilt while others smell bloody awful!  
And when they chew or dig holes from boredom or distress  
The fault's not with the dog, but, master or mistress.

And damned be the cur who, of animal cruelty partakes  
May karma educate their ignorant mistakes!  
As just a little time and commitment advances towards,  
Loyal behavior that creates its own rewards,  
And some dogs to their masters, an immense value command,  
Being; the steadfast and tireless working dogs of the land,  
Who perform with such stamina and engrossment unmatched,  
That is triggered from instinct ...with no strings attached!

But there is nothing that mellows to the depths of your soul  
Than seeing a faithful old dog start to lose control,  
With the mind still willing, but sadly the body not so,  
And dimming eyes, that once shimmered a healthy glow,  
Stare unseeing into a distance of somewhere unknown,  
But for us, it is a seed of humbleness sown,  
As sadly time has come for another chapter to pass,  
And we, then reflect of the sand through the hourglass.

Those individual chapters, having rolled down through the years,  
Even with some overlapping, create what appears,  
Like a passing of the baton, or, more likely a bone  
As a message buried, with a text of its own!  
Telegraphing your character, a real 'duty of care',  
An element, of your journeys experience to share,  
Where images in the minds eye, looking back as one ages,  
Bring a smile, when reminiscing those ...dog-eared pages!





# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA

## ITS ALL HAPPENING IN DERBY

Derby

Bush Poet's Breakfast was started in 1998 by Cheryle Holmes who was a resident at the time. She was a member of the Country Music Club which ran this event for about 3 years. She heard a South Australian poet, Bob Magor, while listening to Macca one Sunday morning and the gem of an idea to have poet's breakfast was formed. He was the first poet that Cheryle contacted, then the late Rusty Christensen and eventually Cobber Lethbridge. With these eminent poets participating, Derby Bush Poet's Breakfast was born. The Country Music Club folded and Cheryle moved on. Robyn Bowcock and Elsie Archer ran this event with the aid of a willing band of helpers for the next 18 years. Cobber (who is the current Australian Bush Poetry Male Champion) has continued to come up to Derby each year (only missing once) and will no doubt be back again next year.

## W.A. Bush Poets



Local sponsors very generously supported this event and the community was rewarded each year by travelers who made their way up to this remote area of Australia and consequently boosted the local economy.

Derby has a rich history and was very important to the pastoral industry, as a way of providing a port for the export of wool and livestock to feed the southern part of the state.

Today it is a very friendly, welcoming community with tourism the main industry and well worth the effort to visit as it is a staging point for trips to Horizontal Falls, Gibb River Road and all its attractions including Windjana and Emma Gorges.

Derby Bush Poets is now entering a new phase with another one of WA's best poets, James Fitzpatrick, who is a pediatrician in Perth and has an office in Broome. James has been a performer for some years at Derby and it is great that he feels that this event is important to the Community. James won both the Original Serious and the Original Humorous sections at the Australian and WA Championships in 2017. He is inspired by the people and places of the outback and the wild reaches of the open sea. He was coaxed back to the Derby stage in 2018 and now it's hard to keep him away.

Indigenous artists, Sam Lovell AM and Ivan Bridge are much appreciated by the locals and visitors alike. Sam is a great singer and a very popular busker in Tamworth for the last 21 years. He was born in Calwynada (between Fitzroy Crossing and Derby) in 1933 and known affectionately as "Mr Kimberley" and recently has been acknowledged for his commitment to Indigenous Tourism.

Ivan is a great yarnspinner and is a regular attendee at DBPB thanks to his good mate Cobber. Ivan learnt how to spin yarns from his father and is often seen entertaining visitors and locals in the main street of Halls Creek.

Ron Evans from Boyup Brook (SW WA) has been a regular for over 15 years and he was very much a part of the Derby community when he arrived in 1961 where he worked at the local hotel and also looked after Rusty Birch's butcher's shop.

Another regular performer at Derby, was Joss Dunster who came to town while working for the RFDS, married a local and had a daughter Isobel, who accompanied her as she performed her poetry at any opportunity. Isobel must have picked up on the happy atmosphere surrounding Bush Poetry events as she now performs without any anxiety in front of an audience. Her recitation of "The Tram Man" and "The Postman" by CJ Dennis and "Puddin" from The Magic Pudding by Norman Lindsay, was flawless and she is eager to continue performing.

Linda Parrant from New Zealand performed her own work as well as did Robin Maher another local she and gave a great rendition of "The Play" by CJ Dennis. A challenging feat for a female but it was very well performed and much applauded.

Bill Gordon from Boyup Brook made the journey again this year (it is going to be hard to keep him away in the future also!) and his wife, Meg, was asked to be MC.

Being able to critique while sitting in many audiences over the years while Meg has been travelling around the poetry scene, she is aware of what audiences like from MC's and what they don't want to hear. Nevertheless she was a bit daunted but received much appreciation for her effort.

**The poetry world has been greatly blessed to have had the organizational skills of Robyn Bowcock and her support crew and we wish her well in retirement.**



Back row - left to right—Cobber Lethbridge, Sam Lovell AM, Joss Dunstan, Ivan Bridge, Ron Evans  
Front Row—Robin Maher, Isobel Dunstan, Meg Gordon, Robyn Bowcock, James Fitzpatrick (holding daughter Milla), Bill Gordon



# BREAKER MORANT

by Tony Hammill

Henry (Harry) Harbord Morant was a complex, talented, dashing, likeable rogue, a heavy drinker, hell-raiser and impostor. Fred Cutlack revived his story in 'Breaker Morant- A Horseman Who Made History' (1962). He was born, as recent evidence proves, Edwin Henry Murrant on December 9, 1864, at the Union Workhouse in Bridgwater, Somerset, England. I have Morant's signature under December 9 in a lady's birthday book. He was the son of Edwin Murrant and Catherine Murrant (nee Riely), master and matron of the workhouse. He never knew his father who died in August 1864. He was well-educated and later claimed to be the Son of Admiral Sir George Digby Morant, and to have attended Wellington School and the Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth, leaving the latter over a gambling debt.

On 1 April 1883, aged 18, Ed boarded the 2500 ton Q.R.M.S. Waroonga ( the same ship some of my ancestors arrived on in 1887) at Plymouth bound for Townsville. His passage was free, sponsored by the Queensland government which was recruiting all classes of workers to assist the labour- starved colony. The ship docked at Cooktown on 5 June 1883, then proceeded to Townsville, where Ed disembarked along with 122 others.

Employed as a stockman on Fanning Downs Station he met and married Daisy May O'Dwyer, later Daisy Bates, protector of the Aborigines and author of 'The Passing of the Aborigines' (1938). They quickly broke up due to Ed's lies and illegal activities, but it is here on deposition sheets and dud cheques that he is first recorded as 'E.H.Morant', and he left behind a bible inscribed 'Catherine Murrant 1860'.

A droving trip took him to Melbourne and back in 1885-6, and I have the photo taken of him as the dandy stockman in Melbourne (above), given to me by a member of the West family of Parkes. In October 1886 Edwin Henry Morant, drover, was staying at the Oxford Hotel in Sydney as registers of the Queensland National Bank, Sydney, show.

The Breaker wandered Queensland and was convicted at Muttaborra in February 1889 of selling stolen horses, and served 3 months in Rockhampton jail. The Queensland Police Gazette of October 1888 described 'Harry Morant' as '.. about 26 years of age, 5 feet 8 inches high, stout build, brown hair and moustache, slight stammer in speech, boasts of his aristocratic friends in England'.

Morant earned the title 'The Breaker' for his horse breaking skills in the Warrego area around Cunnamulla, and I have shaken the hand of Gordon 'Pop' Williams who knew him there. Around 1890 he was at Ducabrook Station west of Rockhampton, which was later to become 'Brigalow Vale' in his best poem 'Who's Riding Old Harlequin Now?' Reg Williams selected this poem for his book 'This Beloved Land' after consulting me by phone in 1992 as he said he knew none of Morant's poems. I also recommend 'A Note To Nell' for its beautiful imagery, and I have the longer version of it. His poems largely needed polishing.

The Breaker began writing for The Bulletin in 1891. He spent time in Sydney, being well-received in high circles. He met Banjo Paterson and joined the Sydney Hunt Club, and had a lady friend at Rose Bay. He left Sydney abruptly, theft of a pony being one issue. He met Will Ogilvie at Nelungaloo Station near Parkes in April 1896, and they took part in the 'international' polo match at Bogan Gate in December 1896 spun into verse by Will and related in 'Breaker's Mate' by John Meredith (1996). I have the players' photo but it is quite faded.

The Breaker was executed in South Africa in 1902 during the Boer War for shooting Boer prisoners, but space does not permit me to go further. Harry Morant was one of Australia's larger than life characters.



*Morant and his co-accused  
Lieutenants Harry 'Breaker' Morant, Peter Handcock and George  
Witton circa 1902.*



# WHO'S RIDING OLD HARLEQUIN NOW?

Harry (Breaker) Morany

They are mustering cattle on Brigalow Vale  
Where the stock-horses whinny and stamp,  
And where long Andy Ferguson, you may go bail,  
Is yet boss on a cutting-out camp.  
Half the duffers I met would not know a fat steer  
From a blessed old Alderney cow.  
Whilst they're mustering there I am wondering here -  
Who is riding brown Harlequin now?

Are the pikers as wild and the scrubs just as dense  
In the brigalow country as when  
There was never a homestead and never a fence  
Between Brigalow Vale and The Glen?  
Do they yard the big micks 'neath the light of the moon?  
Do the yard-wings re-echo the row  
Of stockwhips and hoof-beats? And what sort of coon  
Is there riding old Harlequin now?

There was buckjumping blood in the brown gelding's veins,  
But, lean-headed, with iron-like pins,  
Of Pyrrhus and Panic he'd plentiful strains,  
All their virtues, and some of their sins.  
'Twas the pity, some said, that so shapely a colt  
Fate should with such temper endow;  
He would kick and would strike, he would buck and would bolt -  
Ah! who's riding brown Harlequin now?

A demon to handle! a devil to ride!  
Small wonder the surcingle burst;  
You'd have thought that he'd buck himself out of his hide  
On the morning we saddled him first.  
I can mind how he cow-kicked the spur on my boot,  
And though that's long ago, still I vow  
If they're wheeling a piker no new-chum galoot  
Is a-riding old Harlequin now!

I remember the boss - how he chuckled and laughed  
When they yarded the brown colt for me:  
"He'll be steady enough when we finish the graft  
And have cleaned up the scrubs of Glen Leigh!"  
I am wondering today if the brown horse yet live,  
For the fellow who broke him, I trow,  
A long lease of soul-ease would willingly give  
To be riding brown Harlequin now!

'Do you think you can hold him?' old Ferguson said -  
He was mounted on Homet, the grey;  
I think Harlequin heard him - he shook his lean head,  
And he needed no holding that day.  
Not a prick from a spur, nor a sting from a whip  
As he raced among deadwood and bough  
While I sat fairly quiet and just let him rip -  
But who's riding old Harlequin now?

I could hear 'em a-crashing the gidgee in front  
As the Bryan colt streaked to the lead  
Whilst the boss and the niggers were out of the hunt.  
For their horses lacked Harlequin's speed;  
The pikers were yarded and skies growing dim  
When old Fergie was fain to allow:  
'The colt's track through the scrub was a knocker' to him -  
But who's riding brown Harlequin now?

From starlight to starlight - all day in between  
The foam-flakes might fly from his bit,  
But whatever the pace of the day's work had been,  
The brown gelding was eager and fit.  
On the packhorse's back they are fixing a load  
Where the path climbs the hill's gloomy brow;  
They are mustering bullocks to send on the road,  
But - who's riding old Harlequin now?

## IN PRISON CELL I SADLY SIT

©Harry (Breaker) Morant

In prison cell I sadly sit,  
A damned crest-fallen chappie!  
And own to you I feel a bit-  
A little bit - unhappy!

It really ain't the place nor time  
To reel off rhyming diction -  
But yet we'll write a final rhyme  
Whilst waiting cru-ci-fixion!

No matter what "end" they decide -  
Quick-lime or "b'iling ile," sir?  
We'll do our best when crucified  
To finish off in style, sir!

But we bequeath a parting tip  
For sound advice of such men,  
Who come across in transport ship  
To polish off the Dutchmen!

If you encounter any Boers  
You really must not loot 'em!  
And if you wish to leave these shores,  
For pity's sake, DON'T SHOOT 'EM!!

And if you'd earn a D.S.O.,  
Why every British sinner  
Should know the proper way to go  
Is: "ASK THE BOER TO DINNER!"

Let's toss a bumper down our throat, -  
Before we pass to Heaven,  
And toast: "The trim-set petticoat  
We leave behind in Devon."





# OUR POETRY KIDS

with Brenda Joy



## KANGAROO

by Sam Simmons

Living in the outback, there is a furry creature.  
that hops on two legs. A strong tail is a feature.  
This animal is a big one. It could be red or grey.

Its tail used for balance,  
they'll jump around all day.

They travel together; at times they will stop  
to decide who's the leader. Yet all day they hop.

You might be wondering if  
this animal's really true?

This remarkable animal, picture it - a kangaroo!

© Sam Simmons (at age 10)

## THE STARS BEYOND

by Sam Huntington

Under an inky canopy freckled by gleaming stars,  
gazed three men

at the teaming constellations afar.

Each man saw a different story  
in the stars that girthed the night,  
their interpretations so different in hindsight.

The first man, a holy pilgrim,  
was dazed by what he saw,  
and in his stupor, he cried out in awe.  
*"Clearly these celestial lights are our guide,  
crafted by the Almighty in whom we abide."*



The second man, a revered scholar  
was intrigued by the stars up high,  
he pondered to himself and wondered why,  
*"Of what are they made  
and how long have they stayed?"*



The third was an artist besotted by their grace,  
mesmerised by their beauty  
and patterns in space.

*"Look at their colours as they glow,  
See the glorious light that they bestow!"*



Of which are these three --right or wrong?

The mystery of the stars is lifelong.

Celestial, intricate and beautiful,  
Their worth is forever irrefutable.

© Sam Huntington (at age 10)

## MINING IN THE GOLD FIELDS

by Justin Lu

On the fields where everyone is  
and where most people are broke,  
where those who have no money,  
have their joy gone up in smoke.

At the place where no one is kind –  
well, not kind enough to loan,  
have left some poorly people  
to just sit there and moan.

Then one day comes Eureka,  
and many lives are lost,  
The police may have succeeded  
but the licence keeps its cost.

After the battle was a mighty cheer  
since the miners had the right to vote,  
they built a great big stage  
and sang around in happy note.

The new governor was elected,  
and a good one he was indeed  
with all the miners happy,  
that they had another lead.

But just a few years later,  
when the population had descended,  
and all the gold became scarce  
is when the gold rush ended.

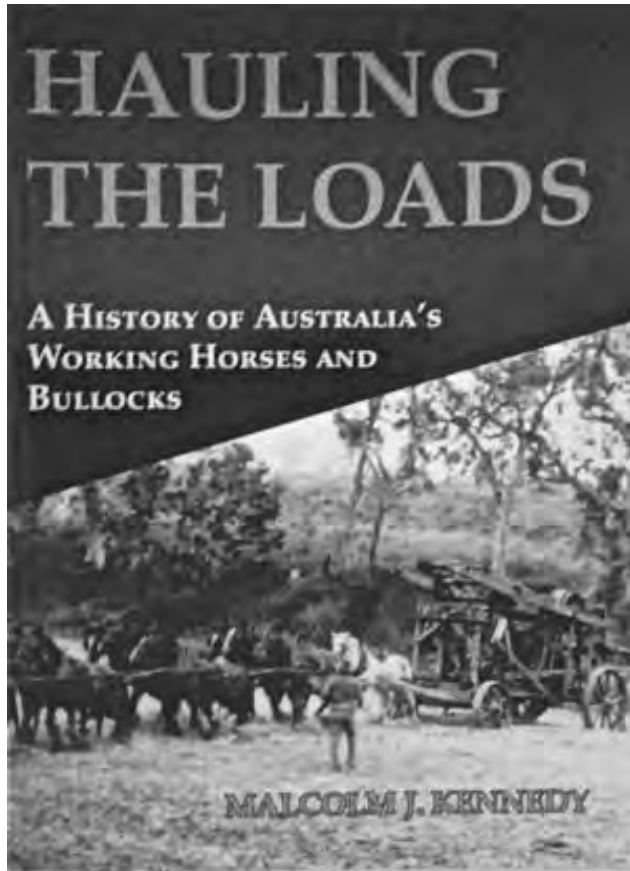
© Justin Lu (at age 10)

Guided by their teacher, Mrs Zita Horton,  
pupils from the *ASPIRE* program at  
*Citipointe Christian College, Queensland*  
continue to write their delightful poems.



# Great Aussie Reads

with Jack Drake



Hauling the Loads – A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks by Malcolm J. Kennedy (Melbourne Uni Press 1992 and later C.Q.U. Press 2005) is the most complete account available of the arrival and subsequent progress of horses and cattle in this country.

The book explores in great detail, how horses and bullocks provided transport and motive power from the first fleet until the complete takeover of motor power in the last half of the 20th Century.

Kennedy has explored all facets of the part played by beasts of burden in the exploration and development of Australia from European settlement to the advent of motorised transport. The book is masterfully researched and is a 'must read' for anyone interested in horses, transport and Australian history.

If I have a criticism of Hauling the Loads, it would be that the author is an academic who obviously has little or no practical working knowledge of his subject. However, he has made no claims in this direction and it is only an old bushie like myself who would pick up the occasional deviation from Australian terminology and practical knowledge of bush horsemanship.

As a work of research, Hauling the Loads is certainly the most complete treatise written about a fascinating and romantic era in this land's history.

This is the second book with this title I have reviewed in these pages. The first one dealt with the life of the late Harry Dulhunty, but Fred Brophy's autobiography The Last Showman (Penguin Books Australia 2014) has every bit as much right as Larry to the Title.

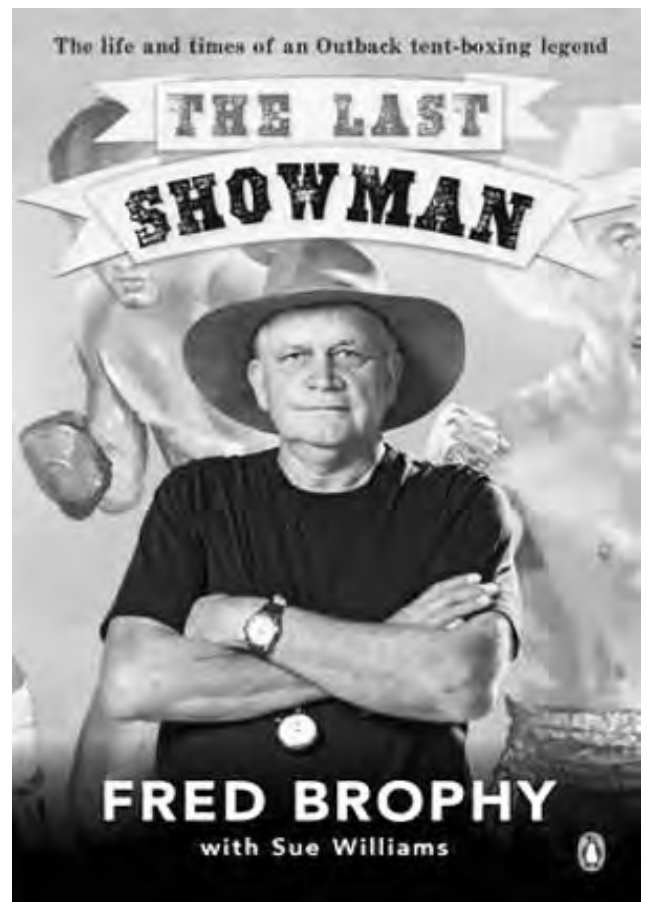
Anyone who has attended iconic events like the Mt. Isa Rodeo or the Birdsville Races, will know of Fred Brophy, the man who continues to run Australia's last boxing tent.

Brophy, after a bit of a rocky start in life, has successfully followed in the steps of the old time boxing showmen who made boxing tents a uniquely Australian institution. With assistance from writer, Sue Williams, he tells his always entertaining and sometimes turbulent history in the straight forward manner of a knockabout Aussie bloke.

It is interesting to note that a poet many of us knew and loved, the late Col Newsome, was a fighter who travelled with Fred Brophy's predecessor, the great Jimmy Sharman. Surely the tent shows both boxing and buckjumping, of Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Australia, are a mine of inspiration for bush poets.

Fred Brophy's story is an entertaining rambunctious journey that will probably never be taken again when Fred quits the road. Brophy is a relic of a time when Aussies stood on their own feet and took responsibility for their actions rather than crying to the legal system after getting knocked on their bums. It imparts the very basic rule 'If you put your hand up for anything, don't whinge if you get beaten.'

Good on ya Fred for putting your story on paper and I'm glad there's a copy on my bookshelf.



Jack Drake

More great Aussie reads at [www.outbackbooks.info](http://www.outbackbooks.info)



## ***The House Where We Were Wed***

© Colin Driscoll 2019

I've been to the old farm house, good wife  
Where you and I were wed  
Where the love was born of our two hearts  
That now lies cold and dead  
Where a long-kept secret to you I told  
In the yellow beams of the moon  
And we forged our vows out of love's own gold  
To be broken so soon, so soon

I passed through all the old rooms, good wife  
I wandered on and on  
I followed the steps of a flitting ghost  
The ghost of a love that is gone  
And he led me out to the harbour, wife  
Where with myrtles I twined your hair  
And he seated me down on the old stone steps  
And he left me musing there

The sun went down as it used to do  
And sunk in the sea of night  
The two bright stars that we called our own  
Came slowly into my sight  
But the one that was mine went under a cloud  
Went under a cloud alone  
And a tear that I wouldn't have shed for the world  
Fell down on the old grey stone

But there be words can ne'er be unsaid  
And deeds can ne'er be undone  
Except perhaps in another world  
Where life's once more begun  
And maybe some time in the time to come  
When a few more years are sped  
We'll love again as we used to love  
In the house where we were wed.



## ***GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN***

© Jeff Thorpe 20 December 2018

A tantalising tale with more allure than a belly dancer  
'bout a ship which came to grief along the Queensland coast,  
several times it's made the headlines, like a potential cure for cancer  
and still arouses interest as a sociable ghost.

Built in Gothenburg, Sweden in the late years of the War  
by Lindholmens Varv, a famed Scandinavian ship builder,  
a 1600 ton freighter christened Scania, the first name of four,  
keeping track of vessels' names, a task which does bewilder.

Slott was the second name in its sailing history  
then as Timor Venture, the ship was known as well,  
finally, name change to Cherry Venture may solve the mystery  
for Cherry Venture to Queenslanders surely rings a bell.

July 6, 1973, sailing from Auckland to Brisbane  
Cherry Venture was caught in a ferocious storm off Teewah Beach  
the ship was unladen, sat high in the water, no cargo to underpin,  
wind and twelve metre swells grounded it beyond water's reach.

Fortunately, Captain Seluenu and twenty-four crew survived  
but the ship was stuck fast, no prospect of refloat.  
Gladstone tug William R Goulding next morning arrived  
though conditions still too dangerous for recovery to promote.

As the seas abated, Goulding attempted tow without success  
efforts by larger tugs over several weeks were with failure fraught,  
Cherry Venture refused to budge, sand extending its caress,  
all recovery exercises eventually came to naught.

Later that year, entrepreneur Peter Vaggelas bought the Cherry Venture  
hoping to refloat and convert it to a casino on the Barrier Reef,  
over six years nine salvage attempts were made, all misadventure,  
the ship would not move from the sandy grave beneath.

Meanwhile, Cherry Venture had become a popular tourist attraction  
for thousands of four wheel drivers en route to Fraser Island,  
one enterprising soul sold ice creams and drinks in retail interaction,  
the stranded vessel had appeal, an unusual sight on dryland.

In 1985 the propeller was removed to Rainbow Beach and put on display  
however, over time the elements took toll on the rusting wreck,  
despite warnings of danger, sightseers could not be kept away  
so government intervention held possible tragedy in check.

In early 2007 the Cherry Venture was demolished,  
engine room asbestos being exposed in prolonged deterioration,  
an epic piece of nautical history in one fell swoop abolished,  
the grand old lady's inevitable capitulation.

And yet, though "dead and buried", the ship will not be banned,  
as late as 2018, rough seas and high tides have scoured Teewah  
with parts of Cherry Venture emerging from the sand,  
suggestive of Nellie Melba, just another au revoir.





# REPORT ON JUNIOR BUSH POETRY CAPELLA SHOW

Capella is a small town of about 1000 residents approximately 50 km north of Emerald in Queensland and at their annual show a recited junior bush poetry competition was held. This show commenced on 24 May this year and 11 children performed in this competition and children and the school are to be commended on the number of performers and the quality of the performances that the children presented to the audience.

Poems by authors Banjo Paterson, Carol Richards, Ray Essery, Marco Glorie, Henry Lawson. Some anonymous writers, and one original poem.

The results as follows.

1st Dustin Finger with The Stew by Ray Essery

2nd Tasmin Finger with Lost by Banjo Paterson

3rd Heidi Davis with The spider from the Gwyder by Anon

4th Nate Schultz who performed his own original poem - title unknown.



Tamara Finger



Dustin Finger



Heidi Davis



Nate Schultz



Group Photo L- R Alexya Yarrow, Tom Robinson, Nate Shultz, Riley Shultz, Dustin Finger, Tamsin Finger, Layne Milner, Heidi Davis, Ainsley Tasker  
Unfortunately two of the kids left before the photo was taken.

**Frederick Charles Urquhart** was born in Sussex, England in 1858 and migrated to Australia at age seventeen, presumably with his parents. They settled in Queensland and the young Frederick went north, finding work in the sugar cane industry for a while and then in the cattle country. By 1878 he was working as a telegraph linesman around Normanton. While in northern Queensland he made charts of Albatross Bay and the Embley and Hay Rivers (site of the present site of Weipa). These findings were later published in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

He joined the Mounted Police in Northern Queensland and later transferred to the general police. In 1891 he published a volume of twenty bush poems, *Camp Cazonettes*. Ill health forced Urquhart to transfer to Brisbane in 1896. After his recovery he was promoted to Inspector Second Class. His belligerent temperament soon found him the subject of a Royal Commission. Surviving this he became involved in the police actions during the 1912 general strike. He was promoted to Police Commissioner in 1917 and in 1919 had a close involvement with the 'Red Flag' riots in Brisbane, so close in fact that he was injured, as were twenty other policemen. His final career position was as Administrator of the Northern Territory, from 1921 to 1926. He returned to Brisbane, where he died in 1935. He was buried in Toowong cemetery.

No matter what sort of work you do in the bush the spirit of the Outback seeps into your bones, and sometimes it seeps out again as bush poetry. I can relate to that.

Hugh Allan

## The Call of the Never-Never.

By Frederick Charles Urquhart.

(Transcribed from *A Book of Queensland Verse*, Editors J.J. Stable and A.E.M. Kirwood, Published by the Queensland Book Depot, Brisbane, 1924.)

It comes in sighing murmurs through the watches of the night,  
When the sky is clear and starlit and the Cross is high and bright,  
And the bushman's heart thrills answer to the stealthy undertone  
As it whispers "Are you coming? I am waiting for my own."

And the dweller in the city who has known that land of yore,  
Where the blue-bush stretches boundless as a sea without a shore,  
Knows he may no longer tarry with the fleshpots and the wine,  
But has got his marching orders by the straight-out western line.

So he must pack his billy, roll his swag, and mount the "crock,"  
And discard the garb of cities, whether swallow-tail or frock,  
He must smoke black plug tobacco instead of cut gold leaf,  
And for lamb and peas and pudding take to damper and salt beef.

He must scale the coastal ranges, leave the forest belts behind,  
Till the billowy downs before him roll like waves beneath a wind,  
But still westward is the blue-bush and he pushes on again  
To the land of Never-Never, to the everlasting plain.

There the sun is fiercely glaring, as it glared in days gone by,  
There the creeks are rarely running, and the waterholes are dry;  
And dead comrades there are lying, but their fate deters in vain,  
For the Never-Never's calling—he must see it once again.

Source:

W. Ross Johnston, *Urquhart, Frederick Charles (1858-1935, Australian Dictionary of Biography. Australian National University.*

*Camp Cazonettes* is on display in the Brisbane Police Museum.



# A Lantern in the Window

© David Campbell

Winner, 2019 Laura Literary Awards (Open Bush Poetry section)

There's a lantern in the window, shining brightly through the night  
as a symbol of a refuge that can offer warmth and light,  
bringing comfort, food, and friendship, all the things that we love best,  
so a traveller who's weary might enjoy a good night's rest.

It's an ancient kero lantern, stained with rust that shows its age,  
a reminder of an era torn from some historic page  
when the bullock teams hauled timber from the mountains to the plain,  
or were gathered at the railhead loaded up with wool and grain.

She appears, your smiling hostess, and she asks about your day,  
making cheerful conversation: "Have you come from far away?  
Did the weather treat you kindly? Was the traffic not too bad?  
Would you like to have some supper, as it's quite a trip you've had?"

When you've satisfied your hunger you might stay and chat a while,  
for you wonder at the story that is hidden by her smile,  
and the hand-sawn timber cabin — what's it doing way out here,  
where there seems no other dwelling, or at least not one that's near?

If you're lucky she'll make certain that there's nothing you require,  
then she'll settle very slowly in the armchair by the fire  
and convey you on a journey to one hundred years ago,  
to the day her mother's father marched away to fight the foe.

"It was he who built this cabin as a home for his young bride,  
where they spent six years together, with my mother by their side,  
but the war then cast its shadow, taking toll upon them all,  
for although he hated bloodshed, he responded to the call."

"I recall my mother weeping when I asked her what she saw  
at the station on that morning when her father went to war,  
and she talked of crowds of people, of the sound of hissing steam,  
of him waving from a carriage, of it seeming like a dream."

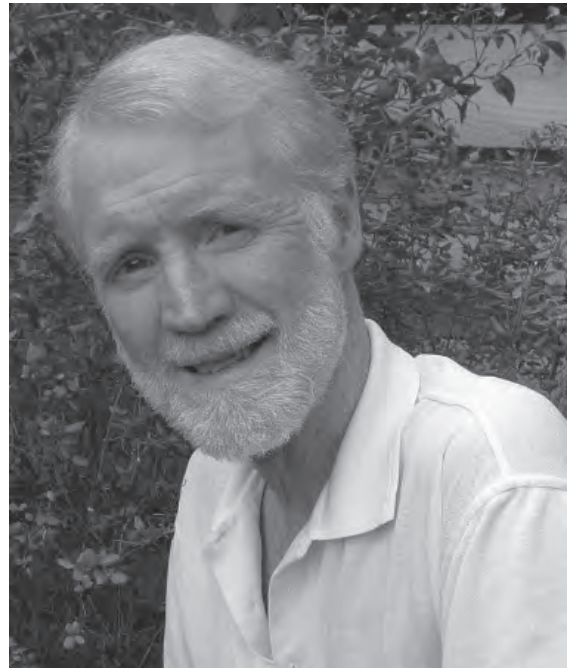
"She remembered someone singing, and his kiss upon her cheek,  
as he held her very tightly and she struggled hard to speak.  
Then his voice became a whisper as he said I tell you true,  
keep a lantern in the window and I'll come back home to you."

"As the weeks and months were passing they were desperate to learn  
what had happened. Was he wounded? Was there hope for his return?  
But there'd be no happy ending, for he vanished in that hell,  
just one more among the thousands lying buried where they fell."

"Try to picture it, the waiting, as the months slip into years,  
as the doubt becomes conviction, and the hope is lost in tears,  
but the lantern is kept burning by my mother, for that flame  
is a beacon in the darkness, so he's more than just a name."

"If it burns then he's still living, in her memory at least,  
and her faith grew even stronger, a belief that never ceased,  
for she used imagination to create the life they had,  
a whole world of joy and laughter so she didn't feel too sad."

"Then I promised I'd continue with the practice she'd begun,  
and I'd keep the lantern burning, just as she had always done,  
so no matter where you've travelled, you're my soldier in the night,  
and my battered old bush lantern bids you welcome with its light."





# OP SHOPPING

© Maureen Stahl

I like to go to the op shop and have a good rummage about.  
I always find things I don't need but can't possibly live without.

See those two cushions over there; they would look good on my settee  
and that coat with the fur collar seems to be the right size for me.  
That small ornament reminds me of one that my mother once had  
I hated it when I was young but now I don't think it's too bad.

I really like this little clock it's got a melodious chime  
I've clocks in every room now but you can never have too much time  
That big white platter is like the one I bought at Christmas for Sue  
I paid twenty dollars for hers and I could get this one for two.

My sister might like that big vase; she likes ones that are tall and sleek  
if she says she doesn't want it then I'll donate it back next week.  
I once bought a jumper, brand new. I knew it was new for a fact.  
I could tell it hadn't been worn and the price tag was still intact.

I said to my next door neighbour, "Do you like this vest it's just new?"  
She said, "Why yes it's very nice and the colour really suits you."  
"Guess where I got it, the Op Shop, and I didn't have much to pay."  
She said, "I knew where you got it I dropped it in there yesterday."

"I'm home" I call to my husband. He comes out to greet me and then  
he sees all my bags and he groans, "Oh no! Not op shopping again."  
I thought you were going to Coles to buy us some meat and some bread."  
I said, "I'll do that tomorrow I got some great bargains instead."

Yes, I have more fun in the op shop having a rummage about.  
I find things I didn't need but can't possibly live without.



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## BUSH POETRY DYING ???

I am hearing this far too often of late. If this is in deed the case, and I don't believe that it is, than it is no ones fault but our own. Are we all too busy doing paid gigs for the same audiences time after time? We need to reach those people that don't go to Country Music festivals for whatever reason, and there are a large number like this out there.  
Just to give an example :-

I recently did a European river cruise. The greatest proportion of passengers on board were Australian with some New Zealanders. All the crew, including the entertainment supervisor, were European. As we were to be on board for ANZAC day, it was requested that an ANZAC dawn service be conducted. The entertainment supervisor agreed as long as he got some help as he didn't know much about that day. An ex Army captain said he would deliver an address, and I volunteered to do an appropriate ANZAC poem as well as deliver the Ode.

The poem I chose was Jack Drakes "The Waters of the Well". For those that don't know this poem is about the Australian Light Horse Brigade charge and capture of the wells at Beersheba. After the service I had at least 20 people come to me to thank me for doing that poem. Two even said that it was the most moving ANZAC service they had ever been to.

What surprised me the most was the number that remarked that they had never heard Bush Poetry before. The next night we were having Karoke and a concert. I was asked if I would do some more poetry, which I did. After the concert, a chap from the Sunshine Coast Rotary club asked to hire me for Australia Day next year.

The thing that came out of this for me was the number of people who had never heard Bush Poetry before, loved it and were asking for more. I also live in a Life Style Village where the residences had never heard it before we moved in. Now I am asked to deliver some Poetry at every event we have which is several times a year.

So get out there, push our art form when ever and where ever you can. It's up to us not to let it die.

Bob "Pa" Kettle



# *The Darkest Side of Hell*

© Tom McLveen

*Winning Poem Narrandera John Obrien Bush Festival 2019*

We are privileged to live in such extraordinary times -  
or at least that's what our politicians say!  
We're protected from atrocities and terrorising crimes,  
with the Middle East a million miles away!

Yes, but what about our farmers? I can hear you asking me...  
are they living in this paradise as well?  
Or has God somehow forsaken them, despite their silent plea,  
and condemned them to the darkest side of hell?

Where the demons gorge on carcasses of wasted, rotting sheep,  
and the angels seek forgiveness for their sins.  
As across the barren wasteland shrinking shadows freely creep,  
and the fickle wheel of fortune slowly spins.

Out beyond the Great Dividing Range, you'll find the beating heart  
and the lifeblood of this country's inner core.  
Where our farmers battle Old Man Drought, who's tearing them apart -  
as they bleed like they have never bled before!

They're a proud and independent breed, conceived in dust and toil,  
and accustomed to this country's vast extremes.  
They were spawned from pioneering stock and weaned on diesel oil,  
and then raised on broken promises and dreams.

There's a bloke I knew in Tamworth who was feeding hungry stock  
from a trailer that he towed behind his ute.  
He was down and out and busted, with his property in hock  
to the banks who really couldn't give a hoot.

To protect his anonymity, we'll call this fellow Joe-  
(he was married to my dearest Little Sis.)  
Though his family had been there for a hundred years or so -  
he had never seen it quite as bad as this!

What was truly bugging Joe, was knowing this could be the last  
and the final straw to break the camel's back.  
All the local farms and businesses were disappearing fast,  
with a hardy few still taking up the slack.

When I asked how he was faring, he replied ... 'I've had enough  
of pretending things are gonna be all right.  
I am absolutely bugged mate, and running out of puff -  
but at least I won't have gone without a fight!

I am tired of broken promises and trying to explain  
our predicament to bureaucratic fools.  
They've been chasing rates and taxes and are driving me insane,  
with their stupid bloody legislative rules.'

'Yeah, but what about your cattle Joe?' I asked the other day,  
'are you keeping any breeding stock at all?'  
'I have had a flamin' gutful mate, of buying grain and hay,  
when the yarding prices only ever fall!

When I heard that Joe had died, I placed a candle on the shelf  
and then toasted him with billy tea and rum.  
He had been out shooting sheep and turned the rifle on himself,  
as he waited for the rain that wouldn't come.

We are losing many more like Joe, as listed numbers soar,  
and the wives and children suffer grief and shame.  
Are they merely a statistic or fatalities of war-  
or are we the overprivileged to blame?

We can pass the hat or spend a quid on outback holidays  
to support the farms and businesses that bleed.  
We can buy a bale and help them in a thousand other ways...  
to sustain them through their darkest hour of need.

Yes, but what about our farmers? I can hear you asking still.  
Are we more concerned with foreign refugees?  
When we pass that hat around, it's you and me who foot the bill,  
when we're sending our donations overseas!

It's a wake up call Australia! Come and gather round with me,  
from whichever state or city you may roam.  
Let us feed the hand that feeds us, and I'm sure you'll all agree...  
that Australian charity begins at home!





# What Would Their Mother's Say

© Bob Kettle

The old man glared across the Court Room. He looked at me with hate in his eyes,  
Old – no, not really he wasn't. Just the pain and the grief – not disguised.  
He was thinking about his sweet daughter, and the night she went out to play,  
Oh why didn't she take his advice! It was her birthday the very next day.

"I'm 18 Dad, and fully grown. I'll be careful with what I do.  
I know your just thinking of me, and yes Dad-- I love you too.  
He couldn't police where she went, or who she was going to see.  
All the guidance and love he had given her, in the end she had to be free.

He remembered when she lost her mother. She was 5 when that car killed her.  
How do you explain that to a child? A car driven by a drunken cur.  
She was naive like her mother, and the dangers she didn't know,  
About people and places to be avoided. Places that ladies just shouldn't go.

Why was she in that part to town? People still whisper about it today.  
"It's not the place a nice girl should be". Oh! What would her mother say?

I see the young man in the dock, my only son; my only child.  
What he has done appals me, no wonder her father is wild.  
He was 11 when he lost his mum. He was never the same from that day.  
He was the apple of her eye, but Breast Cancer stole her away.

He couldn't cope with her loss. He just never seemed to adjust.  
What more could I have done to protect him?  
There's a fine balance between discipline and trust.  
Maybe I spoilt him a bit too much, I tried to compensate for his loss.  
Is it my fault he got into bad company? If it is, I'll have to bear that cross.

He had started to smoke and drink. In his room I found a "Bong"  
He would stay out half the night; he knew that all this was wrong.  
I've been told he was doing hard drugs; he was on Ice on that fateful day.  
Oh why couldn't I see it coming? And what would his mother say?

Two teenagers with parallel lives, not knowing each other at all,  
Both bearing scars of a lost mother, not knowing it would end in a fall.  
Who knows how they met each other. Was it fate that had its sway?  
He abused her; Then he used her; But why take her life away?

Doesn't he know how this affects me? How he has broken my heart in two.  
One half wants to kill the bastard. The other half still loves him too.  
Two fathers in grief --- different reasons, as the Bailiff takes my son away.  
Two fathers partly blaming themselves, Oh! What would their mother's say?

Hi,  
My name is Laura and I am the lifestyle coordinator at Holland Park Aged Care in Brisbane. We have had our little poetry group for a few months now and it is quite successful, we recite and discuss poetry from numerous poets. I was hoping if possible you could put us in contact with someone that would be available to come read our residents some bush poetry next month?

Thank you very much.

Laura Atkins  
Dip. Leisure and Health  
Leisure and Lifestyle Co-ordinator  
PH: 07 3421 4000  
lifestylehpac@cpsmcare.com.au





*In Australia on the 4th March 1899 Cyclone Mahina hit Bathurst Bay and the surrounding area with a massive storm surge which killed over 400 people – most of them Aborigines . The storm surge was reported to be 48 foot high and swept inland for 5 kilometres. The settlement was abandoned after this and today there is a memorial at Cape Melville individually naming the 11 Europeans who were lost but only citing over 300 coloured men.*

## BLACK VELVET AND PRECIOUS PEARLS ...

© Maureen Clifford  
The #ScribblyBark Poet

There's a history of silence full of secrets and of lies  
and there's few left now to tell it and long gone the alibis.  
No need to keep the secret now, time's negated the surprise.  
It's an ancient story- one that's burned by flames.  
There were many who were stolen and who spent their lives as slaves  
forced to work the pearling luggers, forced to dive beneath the waves  
in the search of the wild oysters. Many found a watery grave.  
Simple innocent young black girls who died shamed.

There were none who knew who took them, they were spirited away  
from the beaches where young children came to fish and hunt and play  
and their families mourned for them, tore their hair as was their way.  
For they knew those stolen had been easy prey.  
There was market for black velvet back in those old pearling days  
and the girls were soon indoctrinated into white man's ways-  
cowed by cruelty and vice and dying from a slow malaise .  
Forced to pander to men's lusts at work and play.

There was retribution called for. Tropical Cyclone Mahina  
came ashore to cleanse bad spirits and make the black taint cleaner.  
Helped to abrogate the pain and negate the misdemeanour  
as her surge swept clean the sands of Bathurst Beach.  
There are still a billion lights above in the indigo sky  
and the sight will leave you breathless as its beauty you espy  
but the history will touch your heart. Listen you'll hear their cry  
on the breeze, as if they still try to impeach.

Their hopes and dreams have faded like the wattle blossoms bloom.  
and the shores of Bathurst Bay rest somnolent beneath the moon,  
scarce acknowledging the ones who rest deep in their watery tomb.  
And this innocence is part of the mystique.  
There are still those silvery sands that bracelet turquoise Bathurst Bay;  
beaches clear of any footprints, save of gulls, now flown away.  
The sand dunes wait, quiet and pristine, Spinifex grass dip and sway  
pushed aside by wraiths, who still their clansmen seek.





# IS THIS THE OUTBACK?

© Neil McArthur 2019

What's happened to the outback, has it really gone to hell?  
When Hip Hop Music thrashes from the Winton R.S.L.  
And some fella beats his sheila up outside the Birdsville Pub  
And the young blokes near Windorah call their local Pub a 'Club'

When you call at Cameron's Corner, or pull in at old Maree  
Where the petrol price is hidden, just like the G.S.T.  
And the Shearers out near Longreach, have balked their own hotel  
For it's now been infiltrated by the 'Sav. Blanc' clientel

And the races out at Birdsville, on the Simpson Desert's fringe  
Have now capitulated to a drunken, brawling binge  
Is it really any wonder what the outback diehards say?  
That we sold out to the devil, and his name is U.S.A.

That country that takes oil as an aphrodisiac  
And make our pockets bleed out on the Oodandatta Track  
We should take those clowns from Canberra, drag 'em out of parliament  
And remind them of our Aussie ways in Brophie's boxing Tent

And get it through their thickened skulls what sets our worlds apart  
You can hear the city breathing but you cannot hear it's heart  
You set blockades for Equine Flu and Fluit Fly infestation  
Yet you won't protect the Outback from Americanization

Do our Grandkids have to see the day where they can't hear a singer  
Or some Poet spinning yarns about the Bullocky or Ringer?  
Will it all be fairy tales how the Murray once ran dry  
And how a man could touch the Southern Cross beneath a desert sky?

We must win back our country, not through fist-fights or through spite  
And teach these New Age Aussies what is wrong and what is right  
We might bang our heads against the wall, but never yield to failure  
I'd be proud to die preserving our unique Outback Australia

So that future generations can drive across this nation  
And feast their eyes on more than dying Towns and old ghost Stations  
Hear the land sing out it's ancient song, from Arnum to St. Kilda  
And the Outback once again can Waltz it's Heartbeat to Matilda.



# Spectator sport

© J.P. Coyne, 2019

Spectator sport's a diversion,  
at venues and a screen.  
Watching brings on an immersion  
into a world of gleam.

Away goes the world of trouble—  
of conflict and of stress.  
It places us in a bubble.  
I like it, I confess.

There's drama and there's skill galore—  
much to appreciate.  
The teams or players are at war—  
the battle can be great.

But, it's also a distraction  
from the things that matter  
and the glittering attraction  
can, common sense, shatter.

Those people are spending their time  
chasing and kicking balls.  
The waste of effort is a crime,  
their payment really galls.

How did the world come to this place?  
While nonsense rules supreme,  
inequality's in our face  
and fixing it's a dream.

The stresses of our way of life  
make us seek diversion.  
Conflict and worry causing strife  
lead to sport immersion.

The keeping up with Mister Jones  
can take a lot of work  
and set our mood to darker tones  
where discontent will lurk.

Competition can, of itself,  
cause a lot of stress.  
It's hard to put back on the shelf  
and, with our calm, can mess.

Spectator sport contributes to  
our society's ills.  
Some tension held attributes to  
watching the clash of wills.

A society of sharing  
with caring as a goal  
stops the tension of stress tearing  
at pieces of the soul.

Thus lessening the comforting  
some seek by watching sport  
and so not perpetuating  
the things they wish to thwart.



# "CROOKWELL AP&H MARY GILMORE FESTIVAL 25-27 OCTOBER 2019

Come to Crookwell, in the scenic Southern Tablelands of NSW - for a fun-packed weekend with Concerts, Music, Poetry, Balladeer and Performing Youth Competitions, Plus MORE!

Opening Night, Friday, 25th - 5.30-7.30pm - Drinks by the Rose Garden, Dome Pavilion, Crookwell Showground (Enter via East Street). Fully Catered \$5

7.30pm on - Crookwell Mary Gilmore Blackboard Concert - FREE Entry  
- Criterion Hotel, Goulburn Street, Crookwell

Saturday Morning, 26th - Morning at Leisure with places of interest to visit.

10am - Unstructured Jam Session at Dome Pavilion, Crookwell Showground

1.30pm on - Performing Youth Showcase Competition up to Age 21 - Dome Pavilion, Crookwell Showground. Awards for Music, Singing, Poetry and Band.

7.30pm - Southern Lights Vocal Academy 5-Star Variety Concert, Dome Pavilion, Crookwell Showground. \$20 includes Champagne Supper

Sunday Morning 10am - Musicians, Balladeers and Poets Competition, Dome Pavilion, Crookwell Showground. Awards for Musicians, Vocal and Poetry.

Judges Panel plus People's Choice Awards.

Camping Available at Crookwell Showground - Contact Paul Anderson

0417985686

Contact Crookwell Visitor Information Centre on 02 48321988 or  
info@visitupperlachlan.com.au for alternative accommodation"



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# BENALLA BUSH MUSTER

## 11 – 13 OCTOBER



**Variety concerts on Friday (includes Euroa Ukelele Group) & Saturday night**

**Poets Breakfasts - Musos welcome – Saturday and Sunday**

**Victorian Song/Music Championships    Novice Poetry Competition**

**In comfort of the Benalla Bowls Club – Only Anzac Tribute at Weary Dunlop statue outside**

**Fun and laughter assured – ample opportunities for performance**

**Wristband \$35 or \$30 for Seniors/Concession & Poetry Club members or pay be session**

**Program at [www.vbpma.com.au](http://www.vbpma.com.au)    Info: Jan Lewis 0422 848 707    E: [info@vbpma.com.au](mailto:info@vbpma.com.au)**

### **Benalla Muster is on again**

Such has been the success of the Benalla Bush Entertainment Muster since its inception in 2012, the 8th Annual Muster will be held over the second weekend of October, 11th – 13th. The Muster was initiated to ensure there was an annual event at Benalla, where Victorian Bush Poetry Championships had been held for many years prior to them being conducted in conjunction with the Man from Snowy River Festival at Corryong.

Over the years the program has been fine tuned to ensure there is maximum performance time available for both poets and musicians. Also that the audience receive a wide range of quality variety entertainment. The Muster begins with a Variety Concert at 7.30pm on Friday evening. Acts include the ever popular Euroa Ukelele Group providing great music and sing-a-long opportunities, with other song and bush poetry performances.

Saturday and Sunday mornings have Poet's Breakfasts, where musicians/singers may also perform. A Novice poetry competition follows, providing an opportunity for eligible performers to 'break through' for their first success.

The Bendigo Goldfields Bush Poets group will entertain during a one hour segment.

After lunch the always popular Anzac Tribute at the magnificent Weary Dunlop statue in the Rose Gardens is held. It is the only 'outside segment'. Again, this is an opportunity for both musos and poets to perform.

A new section, 'Poems by the bell' will ensure the maximum number of short poems will be performed. If a performer goes over the allowed time, they will 'get the gong'.

The Victorian Song/Music Championships, comprising Original and Non-Original sections are expected to have the largest number of entrants since inception, with many new performers now entering the fray. The overall champion must have entered both sections. Trophies, prize money and passes to other Festivals are up for grabs.

The Saturday evening concert begins at 7pm. In addition to judges and selected performers of all genres, the winners of the Song/Music Championships will also entertain. The concert will finish no later than 10.30pm.

For several years there has been a theme for various Sunday segments. This year will be 'rivers'. People are encouraged to dress up, or bring some relevant items for a photo booth. As usual a one minute poem comp will be held.

In addition to a wide range of 'street art' large paintings on sides of many buildings in Benalla, there is now a 'silo trail' with many outstanding paintings, close to Benalla.

For the retired, grey nomads, or those arranging holidays, come early or stay late and enjoy all that Benalla and district has to offer. Tourist info [www.enjoybenalla.com.au](http://www.enjoybenalla.com.au) Click on Maps and Touring, for Silo Art Trail.

See advertisement elsewhere in this newsletter.

For information or entry forms for Song/Music and Novice Competition contact Secretary Jan Lewis on 0422 848 707 or [info@vbpma.com.au](mailto:info@vbpma.com.au)



*Jill Meehan plays in front of the Weary Dunlop statue.*



## **Regular Monthly Events**

### **NSW**

**Illawarra Breakfast Poets** meet every Wednesday at 7am at Marco Polo facility at Woonona. Ample parking, 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 Bush Poetry Group** meets fortnightly 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 1pm in the Pioneer Room, Senior Citizens centre south end of Gunster St, Port Macquarie. Contact Bill Yates 6583 3360, Barbara 6584 0208 or Bessie 6583 5255.

**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 @ Cafe on Queen, 15 Queen St. In the studio by the Balgalal Creek. 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 Old School House at Christ Church, 39 Rutledge St, Queanbeyan. Enter via Church Lane. 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.

**Wombat Bush Poets** meet at 1.30 pm at the Young Hotel for poetry, music and open mic. Last Sunday of even months except December. Contact Ted Webber 0459 707 728

**The Queanbeyan Bush Poets** meet at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Old School House at Christ Church, 39 Rutledge St, Queanbeyan. Enter via Church Lane. Contact Laurie McDonald on 02 6253 9856

### **QUEENSLAND**

**North Pine Bush Poets Group** meet at the rear of Coutts Cottage, Old Petrie Town, Dayboro Road Kurwongbah, on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month from nine a.m. to twelve noon. Contact the President Ian on 0427212461 or the Secretary Mal on 0417765226.

**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 Jayson (07) 41550778 Edna 0428 574 651 or Sandy (07) 41514631.

**Beaudesert Bush Bards** meet on the **Second** 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.

**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

**Shorncliff "Poets of the Park"** "Poets of the Park" meet at St Margaret's Church Hall in Sandgate, beside the primary. every 3rd Tuesday from 5-45 pm contact 042 15 14 555

**Townsville Bush Poetry Mates Inc** meet every first Tuesday of the month at Aitkenvale Library Meeting Room at 7:00pm. 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

**Logan Performance Bush Poets** - meet 2nd Sunday of every month, 9 to 11 am at the Beenleigh Historical Village. 205 Mains Road Beenleigh. All Welcome. Breakfast available Ring Gerry 0499942922..

### **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