

A.B.P.A.

Australian Bush Poets Association
Volume 26 No. 4 August/September 2020



All Stick Together, And She'll Be Right, Mate!.....



Illawarra Breakfast Poets

present

'The Kembla Flame' 2021

Written Bush Poetry Competition

First \$300 - Second \$200
and Two equal awards of
\$100 \$100

Also a Novice \$100 Award for Novice writer of Bush Poetry.

Total Prize Money is \$900

Competition is for poetry with good rhyme and
metre - about Australia or our way of life.

Junior Section (new for this year) under 18 years at
closing date of Competition. \$100 and Certificate.

.Results of Competition announced at
Illawarra BreakfastPoet's

Friday session, of Illawarra Folk Festival, 15th January 2021.

Closing date for entries, 24th Dec. 2020.

\$6 per poem or 3 for \$10.

please send 3 copies ... for entry form

www.abpa.org.au - events page or

email zondraeking@gmail.com 0401160137



The Logan Performance Bush Poets Competition in September

The members would like to invite all poets to join them (if all restrictions are lifted) on the 11th 12th and 13th of September this year 2020 in Beenleigh Queensland.

Friday 11th will be a 'Meet and Greet' starting at 6pm

Saturday 12th will be the competition between 9 and 3 pm, this event will be part of the Beenleigh agricultural show so all competitors will get a free ticket into the show.

Sunday 13th will be Heritage Day at Beenleigh Historical Village with a full morning of walk up entertainment as one of the events.

Our full program and entry forms are on the ABPA website.

We also have written competition which is on the website.

For more information ring or text Gerry 0499942922 or Jim 0403871325



Next Magazine Deadline is September 27th

ABPA Committee Members 2020

Executive:

President	-- Tim Sheed	president@abpa.org.au
Vice-President	-- Ray Essery	essery56rm@bigpond.com
Secretary	-- Meg Gordon	meggordon4@bigpond.com
Treasurer	-- Christine Middleton	treasurer@abpa.org.au

Members on Committee:

Manfred Vijars	manfred@rocketfrog.com.au
Tom McLveen	thepoetofoz@gmail.com

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

Editorial

Send Submissions to editor@abpa.org.au



2020 hasn't exactly gone to plan for the Bush Poetry Community, but let's just hope that we can get past all the Covid nightmares and get things up and going again very soon.

I am in my first Ballarat Winter in 14 years and it certainly is an 'experience'.

A big apology to all who received the printed magazine last edition for the printing mistake that put most photos in Negatives. The printer rectified the problem and everyone should have received a reprinted copy in the mail. Steps have been taken to assure that this will not occur again.

We have several written competitions coming up as you will see throughout the Magazine and we would encourage as many members as possible to take part in these and support those who are still managing to run these competitions in these hard times.

At this time of writing, we send out our heartfelt wishes to our Victorian and NSW friends and members and pray that your State gets things under control. Other States have not been as badly effected and we hope that situation remains as such.

We are one great Country and despite the Media's attempts to divide us into warring states, we will stand firm with good old Aussie Spirit and fight for our Country to return to the great Culture it previously was.

It's up to us. Stay safe. Stay well and keep on writing.

Our hearts go out to everyone effected by these difficult times

Neil McArthur - Editor

For Magazine Submissions can you all please note.

Articles, Poems, Stories, etc. need to be submitted in either Word (.doc or .docx) format or PDF (.pdf) format. Old Publisher files and .odt and .windat files can not be used due to being outdated.

For Photos, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE send Pics that are of a high quality and most importantly IN FOCUS! A lot of readers tell me 'That photo was a bit blurry!'. But when receiving one photo from an event which has not been captured well, it does not matter what programs, filters etc. you put it through, it cannot miraculously be put in focus.

I appreciate all efforts of those members submitting to the magazine, so they are just a couple of important hints to help me publish your articles and poems with the respect that they deserve.

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

All payments to be made within 14 days to

The Treasurer - Christine Middleton

P.O. Box 357 Portarlington

Victoria 3223

treasurer@abpa.org.au

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.

President's Report

It is a strange feeling writing this report. A sense of déjà vu as we are still under the cloud of the pandemic with no real solution yet in sight.

Planning is going ahead for the Golden Dampers in Tamworth in 2021 as well as The National Bush Poetry Championships in Orange, as part of the Australian Poetry Festival in Orange in February 2021.

The funding for the Nationals Competition is pending at this time but we are hopeful that the decision will be made in early August.

The current border closures have meant that we have not been able to travel north this year for the first time in six years, just like everyone else. The positive to come out of all of this is that we have smartened up the place and sorted out and gotten rid of so much clutter and I am sure that many of you can identify with that. Nature strips and gardens generally look the best maintained I have seen them to date.

My better half has been working on a recipe book, podcast and live broadcast of the story of Sheila Sheed, my mother.

Many people have said this slowdown has given them time to reflect and catch up.

That is not a bad thing.

Stay active and safe and I will report further in the spring.

Tim Sheed



Hi Tim

Mick Martin spearheaded the North Pines (Poets in The Park) events. Jim Cosgrove is the MC for their zoom musters. They meet monthly and have had quite pleasing numbers, mainly from Queensland. Everyone welcome

Jim Lamb (Young NSW) started the Wombats Poetry via Zoom and is assisted by Greg Broderick. His group has expanded a bit further with Victorian and WA members tuning in. They also meet monthly. Everyone welcome. Jason and Chloe Rowarth have been part of the entertainment which was much appreciated. Len Banks regularly joins in.

Robyn Sykes has just informed me of the Binalong Arts Group zoom muster happening this Sunday. This group welcomes Contemporary as well as Bush Poets to join and they also include musicians in their lineup. Everyone welcome also.

It is just a case of sending an email to the one in charge (Mick, Jim or Robyn) and they will include you in the link when invitations go out. I would contact these people and see if they are happy to have their contact details printed in the magazine. The ones Bill and I have attended have been entertaining and fun and everyone feels that keeping in touch is so important. It is an opportunity to promote events (those that we may be able to have!) and written comps should be full to overflowing! Although not sure if this is the case.

However hope this is enough info for your article. I have mentioned in the WA Page that our poets are supporting these musters. We had a very successful AGM via zoom in June and will continue this way while we cannot meet face to face at our usual venue. Kalgoorlie have gone back to face to face because they can and combine with a local music group at the hotel in Kalgoorlie.

Regards
Meg



Letters To The Editor

Hi Neil,

I have read with interest, Gerry King's letter regarding the disparity of scoring in poetry competitions and I can appreciate the concerns that many competitors have.

I seek clarification of solution No.2. requiring the dropping off the lowest score when it is 20-25 points lower than the middle score and averaging the two highest scores.

This method can only be applied with fairness if it is applied to every competitor in the competition for if it applies only to those sets of scores where the lowest is in excess of ,say, 20 points lower than the middle score, and does not apply to those where the lowest score is less than 20 points lower than the middle score, the persons with the lowest scores discarded gains an advantage over those whose lowest scores are not discarded and thus becomes part of the aggregate score.

It would mean that you would have a competition where some of the competitors would be judged on aggregate score while others would be judged according to suggestion No.2. This can have the effect of reversing the final results.

I realise that this explanation seems complicated but try it for yourself. Set out three sets of scores, two of which have the lowest scores in excess of 20 points less than the middle score and one set where the lowest score is within 20 points of the lowest score and add them up by both methods. The scores I used gave a result of 1, 2 & 3 by one method and 3, 2 & 1 by the other method. I feel more work needs to be done before adopting this.

The ideal situation would be to always have 3 judges who are on the same general page with regard to scoring but alas this does not always happen. The final result can be obtained by rank order scoring, but this does not get rid of the score sheets with extremely low scores even though they are in accord with rank order.

From a judge's point of view, I always feel under pressure to balance between giving a considered assessment and comment to the competitor, and keeping the competition moving with regard to the audience, the M.C., and the other competitors. I would love to spend at least 10 minutes to give some well thought out comments and encouragement to each competitor, but I fear the competition would suffer as a result.

Regards,
Bill Kearns.

Dear Editor,

I recently received a copy of Zillah Williams excellent book, "The Bush Balladeer and Other Poems" (2019). I wanted to say that I really enjoyed the work within. The poems were fresh and written in a lively style. I particularly enjoyed 'On Alison Bridge', 'The Goyder Line' and the title poem, 'The Bush Balladeer.' There were many others that I also thought captured an excellent bush poetry style. I had the pleasure of hearing Zillah read some of her poems a few times at the Murrumbateman pub and was delighted to find she had a large collection of lovely, lively and entertaining poems to offer in the book. I can heartily recommend it to members of the ABPA and wish Zillah well with the book's distribution and sales.

Kind regards
David Stanley

The Editor,
ABPA.

Dear Neil,

Here are a few lines to add to Gerry King's thoughts, published in the last issue.

I too, have been punctured by one judge's low marks, without comment, when two others awarded mid 90's with supportive comments for the same piece. Does that mean a poor entry or poor judgement?

When three or more judges are involved, I like the suggestion that the lowest score should be dropped before overall rankings are calculated. This will find a better consensus of the combined assessments.

Australia wide, we are blessed with some brilliant poets and performers who seem to generally dominate results of competitions, no doubt deservedly. As admirable as that is, it poses a problem for the less talented contestants who are the ones receiving lower marks. No judge surely wishes to shred the confidence of someone who is trying to compete so I suggest that contestants, both written and performance, should be graded as Novice, Intermediate or Open.

As in other endeavours, we improve with experience and support of mentors.

With ONE win in any Novice division, a competitor should be promoted to Intermediate where TWO wins are allowed before progressing to Open class.

More work would be necessary for Comp Convenors and judges but there would be incentive for contestants, knowing they are on a relatively equal level with others. A competition could cater for all three levels or be open to any one of them.

With a clear knowledge and understanding of the criteria to be used, a competitor should not be surprised or disappointed by the weight allocated to any one of them in judges' assessments. Then, where judgements are available, all marks must be supported by credible comments, both positive and negative. With self evaluation, enhanced confidence and encouragement to improve will result.

The more we practise the luckier we become and competitions will prosper.

Yours,
Kevin Pye.

DOWN THE TRACK

© Irene Timpone

Winner Bette Ollie Award 2019

*Oh, Danny Boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling
From glen to glen and down the mountain side...*

No instrument accompanied the singers in the sun, their voices clear and most sincere, Tom's progeny, each one. They'd found no hymn more fitting than that well-loved Irish song to honour Tom, a hero, who had been unsung too long. A migrant in a harsh, new land, far from his place of birth, for more than ninety years, he'd lain beneath the sun-baked earth, his grave unmarked, but story told, by those who bore his name and stood, with pride, in outback heat, their forebear to acclaim.

To follow Tom's brave footsteps and his resting place to seek, they'd travelled north from all the States to meet at Torrens Creek. The graveyard that confronted them was desolate and bare, with scarce a sign of any sort to mark the sleepers there. The sun beat down relentlessly on rock-hard, barren sod, identities and histories known only unto God; but, there, beneath that bone-dry land, the Irish settler slept, while, near at hand, his kindred stood, increasingly bereft.

They felt the grief of knowing that, in death, he'd been denied a fitting grave inscribed to tell the tragic way he died. Five generations followed Tom and, sadly, most had passed – then eager genealogists researched Tom's life, at last. One wrote a detailed history that proved long-held belief: another had a plaque inscribed to tell Tom's tale, in brief. Grave-site unknown, the epitaph was laid-down near the gate, a precis of his life and fame – though many years too late.

The words revealed the story of a man and his young wife who'd left their home in Ireland to seek a better life. Their daughters, too, set sail with them in eighteen-eighty-three: All disembarked at Townsville after eighty days at sea. The only work that Tom could find was building railway lines designed to open up the West and service thriving mines. Exhausting work, conditions rough, Tom took them in his stride – felt nothing was too tough for him with Annie by his side.

In nineteen-thirteen, winds and rain swept Queensland, far and wide, with down-pours quite torrential all along the Great Divide. A deluge at the Torrens source caused fear in folk who knew the creek had suffered major floods more than a time or two. With more than twenty feeder-streams and rugged, swift descent, it hurtled from White Mountains, gouging deeply as it went. That's what occurred the dreadful night Tom sacrificed his life and left behind nine children and his deeply grieving wife.

The creek had risen constantly throughout that fateful day, with past events suggesting a disaster on the way. The bridge was prone to flooding and two trains were shortly due, so panic soon became the mood among the fettling crew. Tom volunteered to take flood-watch; the ganger went as well: they soon were stationed with their lamps to gauge the water-swell. Ten-thirty, very wet and dark, no longer was there doubt: the railway-bridge would be submerged before the night was out.

The ganger sprinted back to camp to telegraph the news and do his best to stop the trains and save the engine crews. At midnight, back beside the creek, he faced the dreadful sight of fourteen dangling sleepers, but no gleam of Tom's lamp-light. A massive wall of water surging from White Mountain ridge had swept Tom from his watching-place and taken half the bridge. The deadly rush of water had completely wrecked the line, the ganger felt quite helpless to ensure the trains were fine.

Unknown to him, a witness standing on the other side had seen Tom's lantern falling, being swallowed by the tide. He knew that it was up to him to save the coming train and cursed the darkness, howling winds and icy, driving rain. Above the raging, roaring storm, he heard train whistles shriek – in horror, heard a freight-train roaring down-hill to the creek towards the swirling torrent that was once a docile flow, towards a sunken railway bridge... The driver didn't know!

With saving lives his only aim, the witness hurried back and waved his bleary lantern from the middle of the track. With feet to spare, the brakes took hold – the train slowed with a grind and help was there to stop the engine travelling close behind. But what of Tom? Search parties worked for days without relief, while Annie scoured the banks for months, demented in her grief. At last, poor Tom was found beneath eight feet or more of sand by gangs of railway workers who were sent to lend a hand.

In graveyards all around this land, lie heroes still unnamed, with worthy exploits and good deeds forever unacclaimed. Courageous Aussies do come forth in times of war and strife; but some, in silence, make their mark in every walk of life. Like Tom's wife, many women rearing children on their own relate the tales of loved ones who should not be left unknown. Tom's life of toil and honour had been, sadly, much too short; yet, now, his life was recognised in bronze so finely wrought.

No instrument accompanied the singers in the sun, their voices strong and crystal clear, Tom's progeny, each one. They'd found no hymn more fitting than that well-loved Irish song to honour Tom, a hero, who had been unsung too long. The years had passed, so many years; too few were left to care that heritage and history were deeply buried there, that, generations down the track, an act of love occurred for heartfelt lyrics stir the soul wherever they be heard...

*You'll come and find the place where I am lying,
And kneel and say an 'Ave' there for me.*



DUSTY SWAG AWARDS 2020

by Christine Middleton

The "Dusty Swag Awards" were established in 2000 by Paul Bannan of Yea, a highly respected poet and presenter of bush poems and yarns. The name of the awards comes from a poem by Paul titled "The Dusty Swag". Paul has carried a swag and says it was more comfortable than a suitcase, better than a pack and best for camping when on the track.

My father Rex Tate, whom many of you over the years would have met and got to know at the MFSR Festival, Benalla Bush Muster, "When Bush Comes to Town Festival", Yea Carnivale and other local events, has been the driving force behind "The Dusty Swag Awards" for the past 20 years. Every year, Tim and I would drive to the Yarck Hotel and along with Rex, spend a marvellous evening with local poets and storytellers, young and old, to celebrate the stories of Australia, its unique landscape, its unsung heroes and to announce the "Dusty Swag Awards".

Rex was brought up on a farm by his aunt and uncle in Tenterfield. He attended a one teacher school and it was here that he developed his love of Australian bush poetry and yarnspinning. Rex would often tell the story of how he and his fellow school mates were required to recite "The Man From Snowy River" perfectly in order to pass their literature exam. Rex was a pilot during WW11 and met my mother Sylvia in Scotland. After the war, mum sailed out to Australia as a War Bride and after marrying, they both settled in Alexandra where Sylvia ran a womens clothing shop and Rex practised as a chartered Accountant. Although never having written his own poetry, Rex was a keen poetry reciter and washboard player.

Tim and I promised Rex that we would carry on the "Dusty Swag Awards" into the future and upon his death in 2018, Rex left a small legacy to this end. I know that dad would be so pleased to know that the "Dusty Swag Awards" are continuing and that the winners will be announced and awards presented at the National ABPA Championships to be held at the Banjo Paterson Festival in Orange during February 2021.

Entry Forms can be downloaded on the ABPA Website

<https://www.abpa.org.au/events.html>



DUSTY SWAG AWARDS 2020

INFORMATION SHEET

The "Dusty Swag" Awards were established in 2000 by Patron Rex Tate to encourage poets and storytellers to record the stories of Australia, its unique landscape and its unsung heroes.

Entries are invited from Poets and Storytellers of all ages.

2020 Competition Theme "AUSTRALIAN BUSH"

Opening Date: 1/6/2020

Closing Date: 30/11/2020

JUNIORS (Primary) Poem 20 lines max: Short Story – up to 200 words
SENIORS (Secondary) Poem 40 lines max: Short Story – up to 750 words
ADULTS (Over 18 yrs) Poem 60 lines max: Short Story – up to 1000 words

Entry Fee per entry \$10 (adults) Children (free)

Prizes will be awarded for 1st place (\$100) & 2nd Place (\$50) – Adults

1st place (\$50) & 2nd Place (\$25) – Juniors/Seniors
(**plus a years subscription to the ABPA)

****Winners will be announced on Australia Day 26th January 2021 and winners will be invited to present their Poem/Story at the ABPA National Championships to be held in Orange at the Banjo Paterson Festival in February 2021. With the author's permission, winning Poems/Stories are eligible to be published in the ABPA Magazine and on the ABPA Website (see entry form)**

ENQUIRIES – Christine Middleton 0419526550



BRONZE SWAGMAN TURNING 50 YEARS OLD

The Winton Tourist Promotion Association (now the WBTA) was formed in October of 1967. Because of the connection to Banjo Paterson's 1895 visit to Winton, (his fiancée Sarah Riley lived on a local station, Vindex) and the writing of Waltzing Matilda in the area, it was a natural step to look at ways of encouraging the writing of traditional Australian verse that was made so popular by Banjo Paterson and Henry Lawson.

At that time Winton had a number of residents writing bush verse, and even more residents interested in bush verse. In 1970, led by Bruce Simpson and his Secretary Clover Nolan, herself a poet, these local poets wrote and produced Matilda Matilda – "a swagful of local verse". This was released to coincide with

the 75th anniversary of the writing of Waltzing Matilda. This booklet proved so popular that the Association decided to run an annual national competition for written bush verse, with the prize a silver swaggie. Miss Daphne Mayo, a famous Australian sculptor, was approached to create the statuette to be used as a trophy. The high cost of silver led to it being cast in Bronze.

Each year since 1972 an anthology has been printed with the winning poem and a selection of other verses has been included. 2021 will see not only the 50th edition of poems published, but also a special 50th Anniversary book which will include a list of all poems ever printed in the Bronze Swagman, and the authors. Bronze Swagman long time supporters have also been approached for a story and photo. A camp fire get together has been arranged for Monday evening, 20th September 2021, and you are very welcome to come. The venue will be perfect – Windemere Station just 10km out of town. You are also very welcome to submit a poem or three into the 2021 competition – now open for entries. See www.bronzeswagman.info for more details. Entry and past book order forms are also on the website

If you would like further information do not hesitate to contact me.

Jeff Close, Hon Co-ordinator closeandmoller@gmail.com

50th BRONZE SWAGMAN AWARD FOR BUSH VERSE 2021

ENTRY NOW OPEN

Be part of history. Pen a verse or two or three
and enter the 2021 competition.



Entries close 30th April 2021

See www.bronzeswagman.info
or contact

Jeff Close, Hon Co-ordinator
closeandmoller@gmail.com

2021 INVITATION

You are cordially invited to attend the
celebrations for the
50th Bronze Swagman Award For Bush Verse

to be held in Winton on
Monday 20th September 2021
at Windemere Station, just out of town.

You may be interested in also taking in:

- **Thursday 16th September 2021** – children's Bush Poetry Performance Festival at Winton Shire Hall. Free entry
- **Saturday 18th September 2021** – proposed North Gregory Race Club meeting
- **Monday 20th September 2021** – 50th Bronze Swagman Event which will also be our Welcome to the Outback Festival
- **Tuesday 21st September to Saturday 25th September** – Winton's Outback Festival.

Plan early to be part of the fun and celebrations.

Contact: Jeff Close, Hon Bronze Swagman
co-ordinator at closeandmoller@gmail.com

Website: bronzeswagman.info

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA

W.A. Bush Poets

BROOME .

WA Poets are still zooming in to poetry Musters that are being conducted around the country. WA is fortunate to be relatively CO-Vid free and we can freely move around the state. However getting back to our face to face meetings in Perth cannot happen as our function is held in a retirement village. So zooming is the way to go!



Some poets have travelled north and others are about to leave for warmer areas. Did you know Broome has become the new Bali!!!

Our **State Championships** are still being planned for **November**, although it will be totally local this year and it will include more music.

Entries are still invited for our **SILVER QUILL COMPETITION**. Please see **ABPA website** or **wabushpoets@asn.au** for entry form and conditions. Trophy and cash prizes.

Roger Cracknell, our current Performance State Champion, has been busy with his pen during lockdown.



REFLECTIONS

As I sit with thoughts I can't erase,
My mind goes back to earlier days,
When we were young and knew no fear
And never thought to shed a tear.
We knew little then of pain or sorrow,
No thought for present or tomorrow.
The carefree life too quick did fly
Then all too soon we learned to cry.

The growing up, the retribution,
Problems to which we'd no solution.
Times when we would stand and stare
And wonder did we really care.
The wars, the pestilence and plague,
Our politicians looking vague.
No answer to our tales of woe
Just block it out, just let it go.

The poor, the homeless, destitute,
Do we really give a hoot?
Do we care who lives, who dies?
Deaf ears turned to pleading cries.
People dwell in abject squalor,
"Hey Mister can you spare a dollar?"
With quickened pace we walk on by
We don't see the tears in a child's eye.

We see that child in abject pain
And wonder will it eat again.
No one looks, no one cares;
More interested in stocks and shares.
While talking loud and living free,
We don't share life's equality.

But then one day we wake to find
Chaos of a different kind.
A plague about to sweep the world
In horrific majesty unfurled.
A plague to ravage east and west;
A plague from which there'll be no rest.
And now the world will rise as one
To vanquish and to overcome.

The world order now completely changed;
Our way of life is rearranged.
There's nothing 'tween rich and poor;
The plague will knock on any door.
Doctors, nurses give their all;
Brave men and women rise and fall.
Heroes who lead; don't wilt or bend
And prayers are said it soon will end.

From fear we hope we soon are free
And our world returned to normality.
We grieve for all the dead and dying,
And pray the world will soon stop crying.
Hope that broken hearts can mend
And hope that we can shortly send
A message full of love and cheer
Around the world for all to hear.

But might I say just in conclusion
That this old world in its confusion,
Should all stand and cheer as one
And laud the deeds that man has done.
Extend a hand to one another
And treat each other as a brother.
It's been said before, but this I know
It's about giving respect and love a go.

© Roger Cracknell May 2020

Our Poetry Kids

with Brenda Joy

Penelope (Penny) Duran



Penny Duran is a global citizen. As a child in a diplomatic family, she has lived extensively overseas in Egypt, Germany, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Poland. She currently attends Willy Brandt Schule, a small, private German language school in Poland.

At age 13, she achieved her first writing success with a personal memoir titled, *Happily Ever After Germany*. Her works have received recognition in Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

In addition to creative writing, Penny embraces the art form of dance and has performed in ballet productions of *Giselle*, *the Nutcracker*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *the Wayward Daughter*.



At the 2018 Ipswich Poetry Feast, Penelope gained Highly Commended in the *Queensland Times Award Age*

13-15 years with her very thought-provoking poem. Congratulations Penny on all your success.

Previously published

www.ipswichpoetryfeast.com.au

THE SECOND

WHEN NOTHING HAPPENED

by Penelope Duran

Four babies born every second,
nearly two people to death beckoned,
humming bird flaps its wings seventy-fold,
as flowers wilt and the Gouda moulds.
What if for a second that were not the case,
and the world nothingness must face?

If for a second the bees wouldn't buzz,
if a child's kite wouldn't fly, as it usually does,
if the seas became calmer and barely waved,
if winds didn't steal hats and briefly behaved,
if not a single boat bobbed on the open ocean,
if for a second there was little commotion...

As if time had stopped, yet still moves on,
as if no one aged and yet a second was gone,
as no woodland creature sounded in the glade,
as nothing was broken, and nothing was made,
as Earth pauses, nothing cast into dark or light,
as day remains day and night remains night...

Not a single person dies, nor is one born,
not a reason to rejoice, nor one to mourn,
not a thing is wasted, except maybe time,
not one good deed, not one single crime,
not one accident, not one miracle to cherish
not a bud to bloom, nor fawn to nourish.

Countdown of milliseconds comes to an end,
so that what was paused can resume again,
births, deaths, movements, nature all at once,
as if not a second had frozen but months.
If all were for naught in the length of a second,
what time would we lose, if longer we reckoned?

© Penelope Duran, 2018 (at age 13)

In addition to her success with rhymed and metered poetry, Penny has taken out many awards for her Free Verse including a 1st, 2nd and further highly commended at the 2019 Ipswich Poetry Feast. Thank you to Carol Moore, Ipswich Library and Information Services, for helping to facilitate the sharing of poems from the IPF.

The Wake

© Catherine Lee, 2019

We had found him in a clearing underneath a blackbutt tree,
by a campfire choked with ashes cold and grey;
it was quite a creepy feeling watching open, sightless eyes
fixed on emptiness - yet something far away.
With his hair the only movement in the hot but gentle breeze
and his body in apparent calm repose,
there was nothing else around, and yet we felt an eerie chill
due to silence only pierced by cawing crows.

It was afternoon already, so we made another camp,
too exhausted from the search to race the light;
there was nothing we could do right then, for time had swiftly passed,
so not one of us was putting up a fight.
Then we drank his health all day until the rising of the moon,
reminiscing on our old mate now at rest—
kept on drinking till our whole supply of booze at last ran out,
and the crimson sun was sinking in the west.

We had covered him, prepared him for his final journey home—
now encroaching shadows swelled to hasten night,
so we one by one surrendered to the welcome call of sleep,
as some screeching cockatoos launched into flight.
In the morning, aching heads and harsh reality was faced,
leaving little time to readjust and mourn;
for a kookaburra noisily, impertinently mocked,
while a parliament of magpies greeted dawn.

We presented such a sorry bunch - were tempted to remain
just to let effects of alcohol subside;
yet we managed to arrange ourselves and tidy up the scene,
making ready for our long and taxing ride.
We believed we'd done him proud with our extended private wake
and procession for this bushman born and bred;
as respectfully we bore him out in silent solemn grief,
hidden curlews ceased their wailing for the dead.



SILVER SALVATION

Dick Moody 8/6/20

It's a tough time in 2020 for all of us,
with Covid causing boundless fuss.
Climate change has doomed our reef.
China wants to put a ban on Aussie beef,
and sky-high tariffs on our barley grain.
Tweeter Trump is calling senseless shots again.
Hong Kong is turning China sour,
and Assad is killing his own to hold to power.

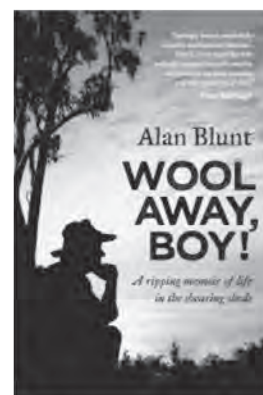
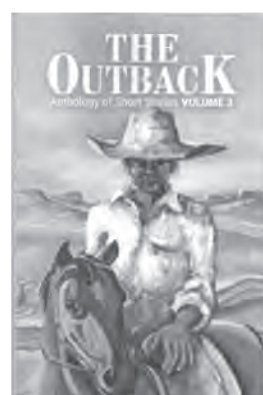
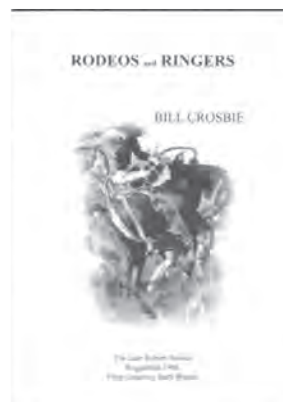
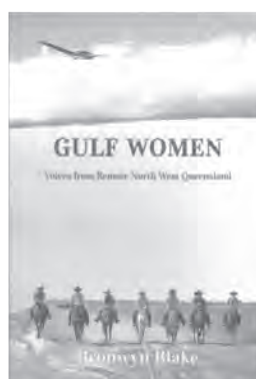
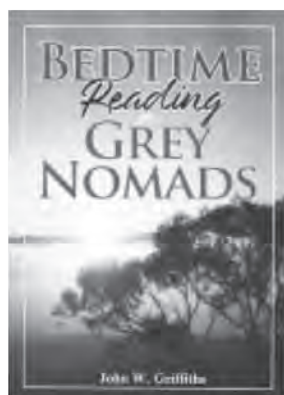
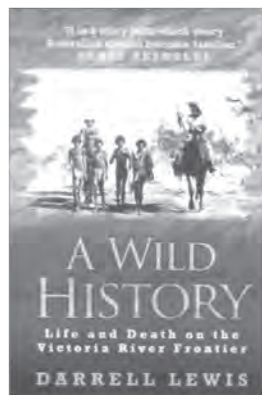
But I take solace in a cosmic view,
mightier than Trump, Assad or me, or even you.
Ever changing, ever new, but ever constant too.
The sun will set to west, but in the east will rise anew.
The stars of Southern Cross are always there.
We only need the rain to stop and clouds to clear.
And best of all, a silver moon will surely glow,
to shine on us, mere mortals, down below.

COOEE !!!

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Great Aussie Reads

With Jack Drake

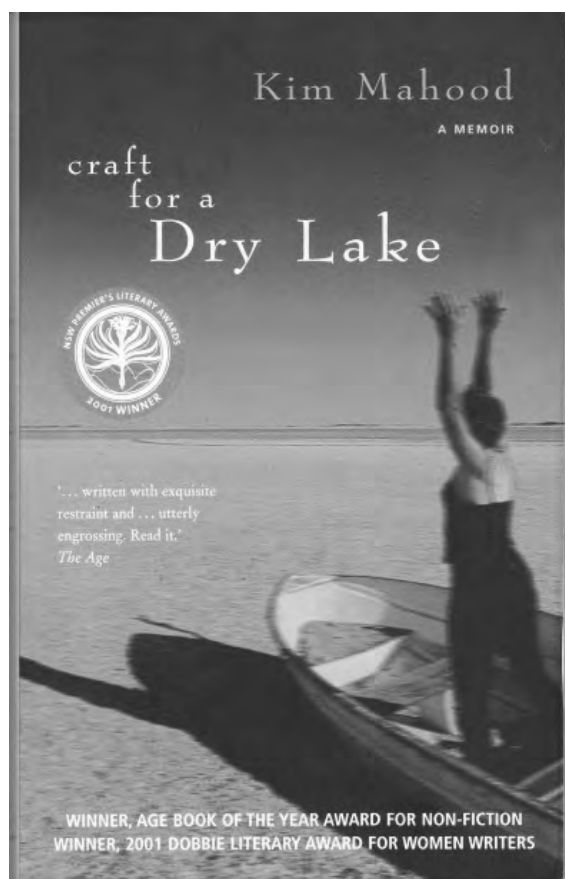
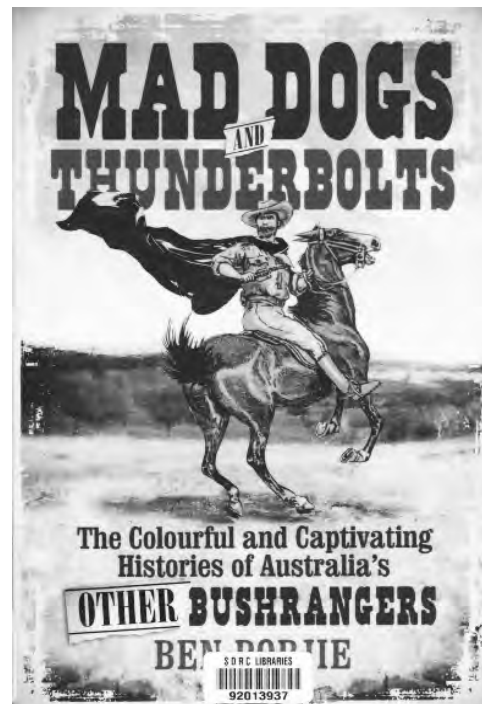


It is refreshing to see a history of some Australian Bushrangers written with the author's tongue planted firmly against the inside of his cheek.

Mad Dogs and Thunderbolts, the Colourful and Captivating Histories of Australia's "other" Bushrangers by Ben Pobjie (Affirm Press 2019) takes a slightly cynical swipe at our colonial bad boys and in one case, a girl.

Most histories are written by historians who attempt with varying degrees of success, to present the facts, but seldom in a very entertaining style. Ben Pobjie is an author and also a comedian. As such, he knows the feeling of having only minutes to capture an audience's attention.

The research is well done and accurate. The account of the various situations are priceless. One of the victims of "Mad Dan Morgan", Evan Evans, cops the profile of winner of the "All Colony Stupid Name Medal" eight years running, so it is easy to see why Ben Pobjie has presented something accurate and entertaining. I laughed my way through *Mad Dogs and Thunderbolts* and I would certainly urge others to do the same.



I am usually not greatly impressed by introspective self-examining narratives. Most of the ones that I have read, I suffered through thoroughly irritated by their egotistical "lookatmeedness".

There are exceptions however, and memoirs appear that have the ability to make the reader stop and take notice. Rachael Treasure achieved this in *Down the Dirt Roads*. The same way Robyn Davidson did some years ago in *Tracks*, her account of a solo journey with camels from Alice Springs to the West Australian coast.

Now a third player has displayed a masterful ability to convey her inner feelings while never appearing to be wallowing in self pity.

It is perhaps telling of our society that all the books mentioned are written by women, but *Craft for a Dry Lake* by Kim Mahood (Doubleday 2000) is an extremely provocative read.

Kim is the daughter of Marie Mahood, author of *Icing on the Damper* and other books about the Outback, but Kim hardly mentions her mother in this work.

Her almost total focus is on her father Joe, with whom she seems to have had a love / hate relationship that borders on infatuation.

Following her Dad's death in a helicopter mustering accident, she returns to the scenes of her childhood at 'Mongrel Downs' in the Tanami Desert, the most remote cattle station in Australia.

Craft for a Dry Lake is the result of a soul searching pilgrimage from a woman who stepped away from her roots then tried to recapture them in her own mind with varying degrees of success.

Mahood's take on relationships with Aborigines, the widening gap between coastal Australians and the inland, and the changing of the Outback demographic, is a thought provoking read. Give it a go.

AN INVITATION - by Christine Middleton

Diary of an Australian Outback Woman"

("Scones, Lamingtons & Chocolate Roll")

Just before COVID19 took over our lives, Tim & I had signed a contract with the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, to perform nine shows of my multimedia family story theatre production - "Diary of an Australian Outback Woman".

All is not lost however, as The Edinburgh Fringe Festival for 2020 will now be telecast live on Monday 31st August at 5am (AUS) and Sunday 30th August at 8pm (UK). We have also been invited back to Scotland for the 2021 Edinburgh Fringe Festival....that is if the airlines are back in action by then!

There are 49 tickets available, the show takes place on ZOOM and is 60 mins in length. Cost is Free or by Donation and tickets can be obtained by clicking on the link below and selecting your donation level. The show link for connecting to Zoom, after booking a ticket, will be emailed to you prior to the event.

<https://www.freefestival.co.uk/edinburghfest/show.aspx?ShowID=6949>

You can also listen to a Podcast produced recently by The Victorian Seniors Festival Reimagined Program 2020 via this link below.

You need to click on RADIO PLAYS – "Scones, Lamingtons & Chocolate Roll".

<https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/festivalsandawards/listen-now>

ABOUT THE SHOW

This multimedia play is about Tim's mother Sheila Sheed which has been brought to life through storytelling, song, bush verse, photographs, videos and mouth watering recipes. I take on the persona of Sheila complete with a ruby coloured velvet coat, hat, white gloves and handbag with Tim reciting some of Sheila's favourite poetry throughout the play- "Mulga Bill's Bicycle", "Around the Boree Log" and "Women of the West".

Over many pots of tea and the occasional glass of sherry, Sheila and I shared the many stories throughout the ninety years of her life. Sheila's story is a classic tale of the resilience of our Australian bush pioneering women, many of whom rode horses to school, lived through wars, hardship, droughts, floods, raised families, cooked for shearers, struggled with isolation and the harsh outback. In the future, our children are going to say "did they really ride a horse and sulky to school, did they really make their own butter?".

Sheila was an Australian country girl who married an outback Australian farmer in the early 1940's. After 40 years of cooking for shearers, coping with the harsh outback heat, flies, droughts and floods, Sheila, at the age of 60yrs, opened a successful home-stead restaurant in the Riverina district of Jerilderie, NSW.

Sheila's dessert trolley, laden with pavlova, creme caramel, mocha chocolate roll, mulberry pie, bowls of chocolate mousse and long stemmed glasses filled with strawberry Romanoff, was famous throughout the region. All the recipes from her a la carte menu and dessert trolley have been compiled into a Souvenir "Pittfour" Homestead Restaurant Cookbook.



THE IMPORTANCE OF STORYTELLING

A few years ago, when my parents celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, a light globe went off in my head....literally! I realised, with a sense of urgency, that my parents stories and their faded photographs, handed down from generation to generation, needed to be recorded and documented. Before that moment, I would roll my eyes and think "Oh no, not that old story again that I've heard a hundred times!!"....Suddenly those old stories became important historical and social documents for future generations.

Thus began a journey of recording family members which developed into bringing these historical journeys of ordinary people live onto the stage.

I always begin and end my shows by encouraging members of the audience to record their own and their family stories and I always say "you need to tell your stories because these stories are important historical and social documents and that once we go, these stories are gone forever". I am always heartened to hear back from audience members who have been inspired to begin recording their own stories.

I am a musician, storyteller, performer and playwright. In 2014, two of my family story productions "Memoirs of a Scottish War Bride" and "The Story of Ellen Kelly" were selected for their Regional Arts Victoria Showcase Program.

Since that time, I have been touring with these family living stories, including "Diary of an Australian Outback Woman" throughout Australia at Regional Seniors Festivals, Country & Regional Theatres, National Celtic Festival, Arts Festivals and other special events.

This production appeals to a wide audience, stirring their memories and inspiring them to get their own stories written. Make a pot of tea, pour a glass of sherry, sit back in the comfort of your living room and enjoy journeying through Sheila's life through the live performance or podcast.....or both!

WWW.Christinemiddleton.com.au Email: Christine.mi@bigpond.com 0419526550

WOMEN'S BUSINESS –

Jill McKinley, Buxton Vic 2003
Winner Dusty Swag Awards 2003



They were hoping to see Tuneful by the middle of the week
If the water had subsided around Burrawonga Creek.
For folk had passed the message on he'd left Terang already
His horse was looking good and strong and pulling nice and steady.
The women saw his visit as the highlight of the year,
But the men just didn't like it and made that pretty clear.
From the time of its arrival 'til the time had come to part,
The women hung like magnets around Tuneful and his cart.

Not only did he bring them all the usual pots and pans
But petticoats and magazines and dainty little fans.
They'd shuffle through his button box in search of something shiny
Then find the perfect ribbon or pearl earrings neat and tiny.
He'd bonnets swathed in flowers and bonnets trimmed with lace,
And cream that always guaranteed a smooth and ageless face.
Stiff whalebone corsets promised they would make your tummy flat,
Or feathers from exotic birds to revive a tired hat.

The menfolk were unsettled when old Tuneful came to call,
The Missus didn't seem to be her usual self at all.
She got all independent like and simply wouldn't say
Just what she'd bought from Tuneful or how much she'd had to pay.
She'd say she'd saved her money from the butter and the chooks
And if he tried to argue she would give him dirty looks.
A bloke could feel forgiven if he felt a little stressed
But side by side with Tuneful he was always second best!

That his wife liked spending money Fred Perkins found disturbing
And so this reckless habit he decided needed curbing.
He told his wife one evening that although she'd done her best
He would mind the chickens now, so that she could have a rest.
His wife just sweetly smiled, "Why how thoughtful of you Dear,
There are however certain things that must be made quite clear.
Of course you can take over, but there is a catch you see,
If I don't have my chooks my Dear, you won't be having me!"

While some men felt these visits had the agro running rife
Quite clearly this did not include Jed Parsons second wife.
Who seeking for excitement by way of the Bahamas
Instead gave Tuneful money for some purple silk pyjamas.
Jed thought the silk a fair exchange for scarlet flannelette
And next time Tuneful visited they bought a bassinette.
And though some thought his tactics a little over zealous
Most came to the conclusion 'twas just that they were jealous.

Tuneful always gave the ladies time, he never made them hurry
And should it get to lunch time they'd sit and share his curry.
He'd have all the latest fashions – well maybe twelve months old,
Describe for country ladies what the shops in Sydney sold.
His book exchange was popular with tales of great romance,
Where heroines all fell in love with heroes who could dance.
Then he'd show them satin slippers that matched their gown a treat
And even made old Granny Brown feel she had dainty feet.

Tuneful carried pills and potions that often did the trick
In preventing bush mothers from getting really sick.
His fragrant smelling incense saw the mozzies on their way
And his Anti-Bush-Fly lotion is still the best today.
When Tuneful heard Dan Johnson played his wife up pretty rough
He made for her a bottle of his "Very Special Stuff".
A spoonful in his cuppa gave just a hint of honey
And guaranteed Dan Johnson spent the night out on the dunny.

Sometimes he'd bring new recipes containing lots of spice
Or share his latest handy hints on cooking perfect rice.
He'd have the latest catalogues that specialised in seeds,
And something in brown bottles that would take care of the weeds.
One time he brought a fishing rod and once some wooden skis,
And many still remember Tuneful's Gorgonzola cheese.
And never once in all his years when Christmas came around
Did Tuneful fail to bring as many cards as could be found.

The bush folk called him Tuneful 'cos his name was Mr Singh
And giving people nicknames is a real Aussie thing.
And as he was a thoughtful man with not too much to say
He took it as a privilege and let them have their way.
In Burrawonga now they've built a big department store
With all the latest merchandise displayed on every floor.
But though the women all agree and say it's very smart
They'd gladly swap it any day for Tuneful and his cart!

"WOMENS BUSINESS" – Jill McKinley

*Winner, 2003 Dusty Swag Award Written Competition – Open
Section*

Foreword written by Christine Middleton

The poem "Women's Business" by Jill McKinley, Buxton, Victoria, recounts a family story, handed down from her great grandmother, of the excitement of the arrival of Indian Hawkers with their carts who supplied a large range of items used in everyday life for people in towns throughout Australia.

In searching for a photo to accompany Jill's poem, I came across the Australian Indian Historical Society and subsequently spoke with Len Kenna and Crystal Jordan. Len and Crystal are both historians and have been researching Australian Indian History for over 30 years and were featured recently on Landline ABC March 2020 talking about the history of Indian Hawkers in Australia.

Crystal kindly provided this photo (Courtesy National Library of Australia) of Pollah Singh and his uncle Iser who were Indian Hawkers through the Upper Murray Region, particularly within the Wodonga and Corryong areas. Further interesting information around Australian Indian History, including Indian hawkers, can be obtained at www.australianindianhistory.com

Watch the fascinating documentary below – (copy/paste link below into web)

<https://www.abc.net.au/landline/holy-path:-a-unique-t-r-a-v-e-l-ling-merchant-and-his/12101222?fbclid=IwAR3fHKoht7GjElbOestqV-i5i11jDWwrZTMxdFgELmCF07E2A3kLu7OM3mGyQ>

BENALLA MUSTER – CANCELLED

Due to the COVID-19 Virus situation the Committee of the Victorian Bush Poetry and Music Association Inc. advise that the Benalla Bush Entertainment Muster that was to be held over 9 – 11 October 2020, has been cancelled.

Hopefully the Muster will return in 2021, over 8 – 10 October.
Colin Carrington - VBPMA President. Jan Lewis - VBPMA Secretary

Dear Australian Bush Poets Association,

My name is Lana and I'm with QueryLetter.com. We're holding a writing competition for talented and original writers. Here are the contest details including the cash award: <https://www.queryletter.com/contest>

Because we think it'll really benefit Australian Bush Poets Association members, we hope you'll choose to add it to your website.

Would that be possible?

Thank you!
All the best,
Lana

Good morning.

Although the 2020 Outback Writers Festival, usually held in Winton during June, was cancelled due to Corona, the short story competition went ahead.

The 2020 winner has been announced as Jill Staunton with her story O'Grady's Girl. Congratulations to Jill.

Jill's story and others by Beverley Young, Megan Hippler, Dannielle Viera, Ian Waples, Rachel Armstrong, Derek Bland, Hu Spooner, Steve Hawe, Cherelle Murphy, Barry Blunt, Kelsey Neilsen, Bridget Chambers, Michael Albrecht, Drewe Freeburn, Helen Harvey, James A Kent, Heather Waites, Helen Darvall, Tracy Liotis, Don Douglas, Leanne Green and John Gerritsen are now printed in book form - The Outback Volume 5.

As far as we are aware, the Outback Writers Festival is the only festival of its type that publishes a book of the best entries on a regular basis. Sales of the book are a fundraiser for the Festival, and past copies are also available. .

Books can be obtained from www.bootarongpress.com.au or at outbackbooks.info and go to short stories.
Further info: closeandmoller@gmail.com

Thanks to all for your support
Jeff Close
President
Outback Writers Festival Inc

The Logan Performance Bush poets – Competition in September

The members would like to invite all poets to join them (if all restrictions are lifted) on the 11th 12th and 13th of September this year 2020 in Beenleigh Queensland.

Friday 11th will be a 'Meet and Greet' starting at 6pm

Saturday 12th will be the competition between 9 and 3 pm, this event will be part of the Beenleigh agricultural show so all competitors will get a free ticket into the show.

Sunday 13th will be Heritage Day at Beenleigh Historical Village with a full morning of walk up entertainment as one of the events.

Our full program and entry forms are on the ABPA website.

We also have written competition which is on the website.

For more information ring or text Gerry 0499942922 or Jim 0403871325

"CORONAS I Have Known."

© Peter White, Eagleby, 2020.

When young I saw a CORONA when I viewed an eclipse of the Sun.
The halo of light which seems to surround the black shape of the Moon.
The Moon continues its orbit and this natural wonder is done.
It occurs for just a little while. An eclipse is over soon.

The Statue of Liberty has a CORONA, the crown upon her head.
Very distinctive is that circle with lots of pointy spikes.
It looks just like the spiky collar S & M fans wear to bed.
It's certainly not to my taste and something not everyone likes.

Have you seen, in church, a chandelier with a circular shape?
Found in Gothic cathedrals, it's called a CORONA too.
When next you find yourself in church the 'rat race' to escape,
Look above your head to see if a CORONA you might view.

Brisbane's Macarthur Chambers has a CORONA above the ground.
It's terminology familiar to an architect.
It's part of the cornice skirting the top of the building's roof surround.
This decorated projection designed, the wall's face, to protect.

When next you see a daffodil inspect its floral form.
The daffodil's CORONA is its central, trumpet cup.
The beauty of the daffodil gives feelings, fuzzy and warm.
Just like the feelings that you get when cuddling a little pup.

At High School I took an elective class hoping to learn to type.
I used a CORONA Typewriter, and I discovered, by heck,
My fingers had a mind of their own. That's why I have this gripe,
That after a year of lessons, I can still only "hunt and peck."

A CORONA is a Cuban cigar I have before going to bed.
Lovingly rolled on a woman's thigh. Dinky-di No joke!
I'm reminded of a famous quote. It was Rudyard Kipling who said,
"A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke."

I had a '67 CORONA in British Racing Green,
Beige upholstery, front bench seat and gears 'three-on-the-tree'.
But we needed a station wagon when kids came on the scene.
I traded in the Toyota. It was a very sad day for me.

A CORONA is a Mexican beer with a wedge of lemon or lime.
It seems quite strange to drink a beer with a piece of fruit.
But then when I gave it a try I had a really good time.
All of my drinking mates took my lead and followed suit.

But now there is a new CORONA, a virus from the East,
From Wuhan in central China, the damn thing's spreading fast.
The most extensive of all pandemics for a century at least,
I hope of all CORONAS I've known this one is the last.

Living in a gated community I normally feel secure.
At any one time, many of us take trips or take a cruise.
Since this CORONA's arrival, there are new rules to endure.
Introduced for our protection these new rules we must use.

Cancelled are our weekly dinners and all our social plans.
The village resembles a ghost town, our streets are all deserted.
Keeping our distance from residents is one of the imposed bans.
But we are such a social lot. No wonder we're disconcerted.

If you have sniffle or cough you're requested to stay indoors.
Not a huge imposition for some, our natural introverts.
But the thought of going 'stir-crazy', to some may give them pause.
Especially all those out-going types, our natural extroverts.

The latest 'fashion statement' is to cover your face with a mask.
Different styles, colours and shapes, we look like a bunch of 'crims'.
"Why should I cover this handsome face?" is the question that I ask.
"Handsome?" You query. I reply, "Old age your eyesight dims!"

Supermarket shelves are bare of toilet rolls and rice.
With all the public's panic buying I've had some 'dummy-spits'.
Buying up all toilet rolls is really bad advice,
As it's not been said CORONA gives you the diarrhoea.

Sports matches cancelled, quarantined cruise ships, it's beyond a joke!
Of all CORONAS I have known this one is the worst.
If the Market keeps its downward trend, I'll be stoney-broke.
Then on the pension I'll have to survive. Unless it kills me first!

THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD

© Maureen Stahl Elliminyt

Travel on the Great Ocean Road
for a wonderful scenic display.
The variety and beauty
will surely take your breath away.

Sometimes you travel through pasture
and sometimes you travel through bush.
In parts the landscape looks barren;
in others it's fertile and lush.

In places the land is quite flat
with scarcely a bush or a tree
then it's back to hilly country
where mountains sweep down to the sea.

There are wetlands, swamps and marshes
where the reeds grow spiky and thin,
creeks spilling into the ocean
inlets where the ocean comes in.

There are tree ferns taller than men,
gullies where the glow worms are found,
places of damp green rainforest,
with lichen and moss on the ground.

There's towns all busy and bustling,
where tourism business is strong
and there's quiet sleepy hamlets
where life just goes drifting along,

lighthouses guarding the coastline,
a beacon for ships sailing by,
steep cliffs where slips would be fatal
where waves thunder making foam fly.

At some beaches waves lap gently
as though they're caressing the shore,
at others they toss and tumble
and crash on the sand with a roar.

Some stretches of sand are golden,
with tourists in swimwear so brief,
but beware of rips and currents
bringing those who're careless to grief.

You'll see surfers catching a wave;
anglers catching a fish maybe,
you might see a fishing boat
coming from a stint out at sea.

Now venture inland a short way
there are fabulous waterfalls;
sit and absorb your surroundings
and you'll hear a host of bird calls.

The scenery's spectacular
you won't better it anywhere,
search the whole world for its equal
you won't find it, it isn't there.

I love the Great Ocean Road!

BILLY MATEER: THE MAN WHO RACED THE FLOOD

By Tony Hammill.

An almost - forgotten hero, but one who made arguably the greatest ride in recorded history, was Billy Mateer. In February 1893 three floods came down the Brisbane River, the first and third of which displaced a third of the Brisbane population. Henry Somerset of Caboonbah Station in the Upper Brisbane Valley sent riders to telegraph the Postmaster-General in Brisbane of the imminent floods during the first and third. Harry Winwood rode across flooded Gallinani Creek to send the telegraph during the first flood. It got through, and the Brisbane Courier reported Henry's warning the following morning.

During the third, the telegraph being down because of the first flood, Henry sent a young stockman, Billy Mateer, across the D'Aguilar Range (the Great Dividing Range) to send the warning from the railway station at North Pine (Petrie) on the coastal side. He succeeded and the message was sent, but because the message originated from North Pine, the P-G thought the warning related to flooding in the Pine River, which has no connection with Brisbane and the Brisbane River, so he did nothing with the telegram and the flood devastated Brisbane. The P-G subsequently sent a letter of apology to Henry.

Billy rode over 40 miles on rough bush tracks across a mountain range in the teeth of a cyclone to deliver his message, but because the message wasn't reported, he was doomed to obscurity, and some of us are today striving to have his feat recognised. I have written about him in a newspaper and in History Queensland magazine, and in 2009 commissioned Pam Hopkins, a brilliant North Coast artist who specialises in painting horses (google 'Pam Hopkins gallery') to paint the scene. That painting is now becoming an icon in the Brisbane Valley. Around 10 poems have been written on the ride.

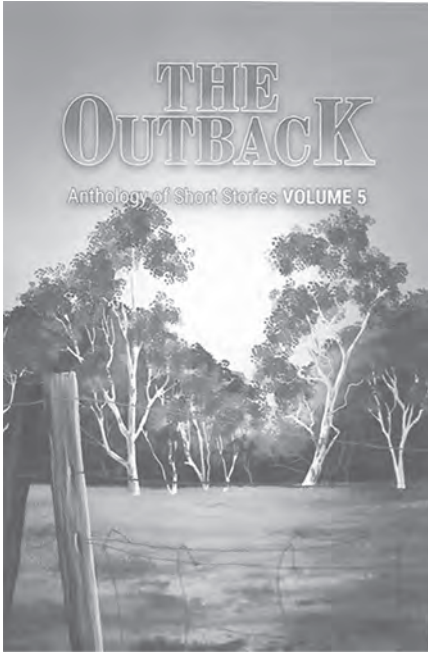
Why was Billy's ride probably the greatest ride in recorded history? Let's test his ride against other great rides. Paul Revere rode only about 11 miles down moonlit well-established roads from Boston to Lexington to warn of advancing redcoats. Historians agree that Dick Turpin's ride from London to York (200 miles) was fiction. And Banjo Paterson wrote of The Man From Snowy River, "...I had to create a character, to imagine a man who would ride better than anybody else, and where would he come from except the Snowy?"

Henry campaigned for the building of Somerset Dam for flood mitigation and water supply, and it was completed in 1953. He and his family are buried in the little cemetery at the Caboonbah Undenominational Church in this beautiful valley which I have been associated with since 1959. Caboonbah Station was destroyed by fire in undoubtedly an arson attack during Heritage Week 2009.

If you would like the full PDF of the story free as published elsewhere, please contact me at tonyhammill@hotmail.com.



Outback Writers' Short Story competition



The fifth annual Outback Writers' Short Story competition has been judged and the winner is Jill Staunton with O'Grady's Girl. This is the second win for Jill, and she will now join 22 other Australian Short Story writers being published in The Outback - Volume 5.

Unfortunately the annual get together in Winton in June was cancelled due to Corona Virus, but the organisers felt it really important to continue with the written competition and publication of the book. Jeff Close, President of the Outback Writers Festival Inc., said that not only was it becoming an important event in itself, the competition also gave a creative outlet to short story writers Australia Wide. "We received entries from Melbourne to North Queensland this year – the geographical spread is increasing," Jeff Close said. "It was a great way for short story writers to use some lock-down time".

"Our judges noted that the standard of entry was very good, and on the rise. Our Western Queensland based competition is the only one I know of that publishes a volume each year – the first 4 volumes are still in print and available," Mr Close commented,

A very pleasing side to the competition is the encouragement given to new writers. About half of the stories in the book are from new competitors.

Entries for the 2021 competition are now open and further details are available from www.outbackwritersfestival.com.au

All funds from the sale of the book go to the Outback Writers' Festival. The 2021 Outback Writers Festival will be held in Winton from the 22nd to the 24th of June.

PS you can contact Jill direct, on 044 777 5631 or staunton.pj@gmail.com

I have Jill's permission to pass this on.

Jeff Close

JACK MOSES

by Tony Hammill.

John (Jack) Moses (1860-1945) was a true-blue Aussie who loved his country to the core of his being. He was an Australian equivalent of the American Woody Guthrie ('This Land is Your Land' etc). He claimed to be 'the last of the bush troubadours', travelling widely, reciting verse by Paterson, Lawson, Ogilvie and others as well as his own, and spinning yarns to audiences wherever he went. As a commercial traveller in wine he followed the agricultural show circuit in NSW and other colonies. He was a man of nuggety build and unfailing good humour, and was a close friend of Henry Lawson.

Born in George St Sydney, at a time when he could drive the family cow up the street to graze in Hyde Park, he contributed verse and sketches to The Bulletin and other publications, and eventually published two books, Beyond the City Gates (1923) which contained his poem 'Nine Miles from Gundagai', and a book of verse by that name in 1938. In his books he celebrates bush life as 'the matrix of our Australian nation' and performed his signature poem innumerable times for appreciative audiences. In 1900 he married Lucy Nightingale.

At the shows he would offer tastings of his wine (Caldwell's) during the day, and perform at the show society's 'smoke social' in the evening. He was sometimes found standing in front of the produce stands and when greeted, would say with a smile and tears in his eyes, "Boy, what a country!"

The original profane poem about the dog on the tuckerbox was written around 1859, probably by a bullocky by the name of Charlie 'Bowyang' Yorke. He wrote it to entertain his teamster mates stranded by rain at the Coolac Inn near the Muttama Creek crossing, nine miles from Gundagai. Lyn Scarff has provided indisputable evidence as to the location in her book The Dog on the Tuckerbox (Kangaroo Press 1994). The five mile site was chosen for the monument site in 1932 only because of its closer proximity to Gundagai.

Jack Moses had encountered the dog poem in Gundagai around 1880 and had written his clean, expanded version many years prior to 1923; he also marketed postcards in Gundagai containing the poem. When in 1932 he was asked to change the nine to a five by the organisers of the Back to Gundagai Week in 1932, he refused, as he knew the facts only too well.

Jack was a well-loved figure in retirement in Sydney up to his death in 1945. He was buried in South Head Cemetery.

Today genuine copies of Yorke's profane bush verse (I refuse to call it doggerel as its metre and rhyme are sound) cannot be located. If anyone has a copy of sound provenance and original language I'd love to hear from them. (tonyhammill@hotmail.com).



KIMBERLEY SADDLE TRAMP

Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge

His father lay buried at Ivanhoe station,
His mother was ancient and grey,
His life was a turmoil of work and temptation
To follow the ancestors' way.
I met him one year when we mustered together,
From the Ord to the boab camp.
He dressed like a cowboy whatever the weather,
A Kimberley saddle tramp.

He was hardened and wiry, all sinew and gristle,
Adapted to work in the heat.
He kept a black mongrel that came to his whistle,
And slept through the night at his feet.
He strummed a guitar that was battered and rusty,
Beside the old kerosene lamp,
And he sang like a tortured, asthmatic Slim Dusty,
That Kimberley saddle tramp.

He earned a few bob but he saved not a penny,
His wages sank down like a stone.
His heart was too big, his relations too many,
To carry that burden alone.
He often declared that his only ambition
Was leading a basketball team,
But he wasn't cut out for stiff competition,
And nobody shared his dream.

Now the wind blows in through the shutters,
And the nights are cold and damp.
I dream and then I'm riding again,
With that Kimberley saddle tramp.

He ran with a gal you'd be happy to throttle.
She blustered and cheated and lied.
In bitter frustration he took to the bottle,
To cover his wounded pride.
The scuttlebutt reckoned he'd never recover,
But after a year away,
He rolled up again with that same sweet lover,
Determined to earn his pay.

So where is he now, that reckless young ringer?
Still travelling safe and sound?
Still carving his name as a camp-fire singer,
Or six foot under the ground?
It's a long way back to Ivanhoe station,
Where Kimberley cattle graze,
But a man can't stop his imagination
Reliving those daring days.

Where the tracks are rough and the dampers gritty,
And Rafferty's rules apply,
A thousand miles from the nearest city,
Caressed by a northern sky,
And now, as I roll out my swag to retire,
My weary old eyes grow damp,
To think of those yarns round a flickering fire,
With that Kimberley saddle tramp.

Now the wind blows in through the shutters,
And the nights are cold and damp.
I dream and then I'm riding again,
In the far East Kimberley, way back when,
Tailing the mob with the best of men:
That Kimberley saddle tramp.



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

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) 4155 1007 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, Woorm on Bribie Island. Contact Cay - 07 34083219

Logan Performance Bush Poets - meet 2nd Sunday of every month, 9 to 11am 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. Bendigo Club, 22 Park St, Strathdale (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

Perth 1st Friday monthly 7-9.30pm The Auditorium, 26 Plantation Drive, Bentley Park. Contact Rodger 0419 666 168 or Sue 0418 941 016

Albany 4th Tuesday monthly. Contact Peter 08 9844 6606

Bunbury 1st Monday even months 7pm. Rose Hotel. Contact Alan 0400 249 243 or Ian 0408 212 636

Geraldton 2nd Tuesday monthly. Beliar Caravan Park. Contact Roger 0427 625 181

Kalgoorlie 1st Wednesday monthly. Kalgoorlie Country Club. Contact Paul Browning 0416 171 809

THE DYING

© M. Pattie 2013

Winner 2013, ABPA West Australian Championship, Toodyay.

He cannot stop his crying. His hands caress his head.
Nobody counts the dying - they only count the dead.
A life that's not forsaken; one thing he can't condone.
Whilst others had theirs taken, he cannot take his own.

He's drip-fed by his pension, and whilst he aches for nought,
with things he dare not mention, his dreams are dark and fraught.
The Oruzgan 'elective' and six months in a hole.
The draw not so selective, as others made 'the toll'.

It reeked of the unpleasant, that hole; it laid him bare,
but where he is at present - that hole; it don't compare.
Its woken things inside him, as whisky gets him pissed,
with half a joint beside him, and form-guide in his fist.

Sub-consciously he's floating, awake at 2am.
A cold, hard sweat the coating, the mantra's 'us and them'.
He's fighting the resistance; he's back in Oruzgan,
just clinging to existence; just doing what he can.

There's demons as he stumbles, that no one else can tell,
and incoherent mumbles, in silence he'll just yell.
There's no indemnifying on TV, by his bed.
Forgotten are the dying - they only count the dead.

Of sleeping and of waking; there's pills to numb the pain.
To dull the point of breaking, there's always novocaine.
The toll it keeps on mounting; the focus - like a score.
Whilst counters stop their counting, he'll always be at war.

A sortie slaps the silence when somebody gets close.
Involuntary violence; a cruel unmeasured dose.
That calm unquiet query inside his silence hemmed;
for age that's left him weary and years that have condemned.

A clean, fresh gaze fixated: the ANZAC on the wall.
Always commemorated; forever standing tall.
His epitaph to follow, his death so held in awe.
In hindsight words so hollow; "we fought to fight no more"

When men still make their master and all the stats are read,
he'll wish he'd died much faster, but won't make up 'the dead'.
Mark time; it's what the day's for, as longer grow the nights;
the women that he pays for. The cigarettes he lights.

His incremental trying; so long ago it stopped.
But he who's slowly dying, the dead will not adopt.
Much worse than dog's diseases, he shivers and he sweats.
To rectify uneases? No ruse - and no regrets.

Whilst clutching fast, yet knowing, he's free. . and free he'll fall.
And blood. Just blood a'flowing; he's sentenced to recall.
Each lifeless body broken, each shrapnel-riddled scream
of which he's never spoken, from each tormented dream.

Locked in amidst the prying, so harshly cauterised.
The dead within the dying; not ever to be prised.
To what his life amounted, if he dropped dead today?
Not with the fallen counted, just with those passed away.

His passing signifying he'll draw his final breath.
Whilst no one mourned his dying, still fewer mourned his death.
He's sapped . . and can't stop crying, his hands caress his head.
Nobody counts the dying. They only count the dead.



WHAT A GREAT STORY AND SHOULD BE SPREAD AROUND AND YES IT WOULD MAKE A GREAT MOVIE.

From Jack Drake

Having passed Australian History long long ago, up to Uni level, thought I knew it all. But never ever ever ever, have I heard of Lennie Gwyther & Ginger Mick!!

Surely a movie has to come out of this TRUE story Thumbs up Rolling on the floor laughing.

It's 1932 and Australia is in the grip of the Great Depression.

One in three workers are unemployed.

Decrepit shanty towns hug the outskirts of the big cities.

A scrawny rabbit caught in a trap will feed a family for a week.

Country roads are filled with broken men walking from one farmhouse to another seeking menial jobs and food.

On the outskirts of the South Gippsland town of Leongatha, an injured farmer lies in bed unable to walk – or work.

World War I hero Captain Leo Tennyson Gwyther is in hospital with a broken leg and the family farm is in danger of falling into ruins.

Up steps his son, nine-year-old Lennie.

With the help of his pony Ginger Mick, Lennie ploughs the farm's 24 paddocks and keeps the place running until his father can get back on his feet.

How to reward him?

Lennie has been obsessively following one of the biggest engineering feats of the era – the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

He wants to attend its opening.

With great reluctance, his parents agree he can go.

So Lennie saddles up Ginger Mick, packs a toothbrush, pyjamas, spare clothes and a water bottle into a sack, and begins the 1000+ kilometre trek to Sydney.

Alone.

That's right.

A nine-year-old boy riding a pony from the deep south of Victoria to the biggest and roughest city in the nation.

Told you it was a different era.

No social media.

No mobile phones.

But even then it doesn't take long before word begins to spread about a boy, his horse and their epic trek.

The entire population of small country towns gather on their outskirts to welcome his arrival.

He survives bushfires, is attacked by a "vagabond" and endures rain and cold, biting winds.

When he reaches Canberra he is welcomed by Prime Minister Joseph Lyons, who invites him into Parliament House for tea.

When he finally arrives in Sydney, more than 10,000 people line the streets to greet him.

He is besieged by autograph hunters.

He becomes a key part of the official parade at the bridge's opening.

He and Ginger Mick are invited to make a starring appearance at the Royal Show.

Even Donald Bradman, the biggest celebrity of the Depression era,

requests a meeting and gives him a signed cricket bat.

A letter writer to The Sydney Morning Herald at the time gushes that "just such an example as provided by a child of nine summers, Lennie Gwyther was, and is, needed to raise the spirit of our people and to fire our youth and others to do things – not to talk only.

"The sturdy pioneer spirit is not dead ... let it be remembered that this little lad, when his father was in hospital, cultivated the farm – a mere child."

When Lennie leaves Sydney for home a month later, he has become one of the most famous figures in a country craving uplifting news.

Large crowds wave handkerchiefs.

Women weep and shout "goodbye".

According to The Sun newspaper, "Lennie, being a casual Australian, swung into the saddle and called 'Toodlee-loo!'".

He finally arrives home to a tumultuous reaction in Leongatha.

He returns to school and soon life for Lennie – and the country – returns to normal.

These days you can find a bronze statue in Leongatha commemorating Lennie and Ginger Mick.

But Australia has largely forgotten his remarkable feat – and how he inspired a struggling nation.

Never taught about him in school?

Never heard of him before?

Spread the word.

We need to remember – and celebrate – Lennie Gwyther and his courageous journey.

It's a great story.

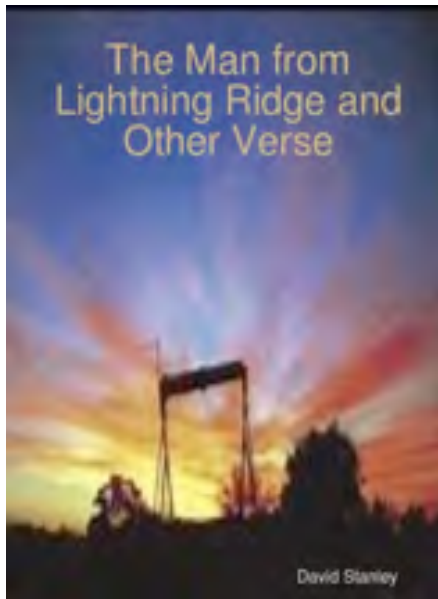
God knows we need these stories now, more than ever.

(Stolen from Garry Linnell's article in The New Daily)



The Man from Lightening Ridge and Other Verse

By David Stanley



This collection of original poems starts with three about a miner who lives in Lightning Ridge and who travels widely across Australia. Other poems in the book relate to a range of topics including; dog fighting, a bank robbery, the conflict between the New South Wales and Queensland rugby teams, a flash flood, the Australian kangaroo and emu. Issues such as domestic violence, child abduction, romance, shearing, climate change, refugees and a host of other themes beside. Some are meant to be funny, many offer a political or social view, and some reminisce about lost love and the cost of war. The 'bush' and 'bush' people are never far from the themes at the core of the verse in this book.

An Amazon review from Dianne: May 18, 2020

A collection of 70 rhyming poems that pays homage to Australian poets of the past with a collection of larrikin, often humorous verse that has to be read out loud to be truly appreciated. And really, that's the only thing missing in this book - the live in person experience. I have been lucky enough to see David Stanley do his excellent poetry live to a very appreciative audience which laughed at every joke and groaned at every pun and that was a really special experience. If only David could package a hologram of himself to accompany every book - it could add the zing that his live performances have - or maybe a CD or audio download would also capture some of the fire. But however you choose to read this book, aloud to your family or silently to yourself, you will find yourself laughing aloud at some of the funny bits, groaning at some of the truly remarkable puns (currently An Evil Plot holds the record for pun-groaning for me), and just enjoying the wit, humour and inventiveness that David Stanley has captured so well in this collection.

Purchase from:

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Man-Lightning-Ridge-Other-Verse/dp/0244560137>
or

Lulu: <https://www.lulu.com/shop/david-stanley/the-man-from-lightning-ridge-and-other-verse/paperback/product-24422184.html>
\$15.00

THE 'BETTY OLLE' POETRY AWARD

"WRITTEN COMPETITION"



- For traditional Australian rhyming poetry with an Australian theme.
- Open and Junior (12 years and under) sections.
- Open section - First Prize \$500 plus trophy.
Runner-up \$200 plus certificate.
- Junior section - First Prize \$100 plus trophy.
Runner-up \$50 plus certificate.
- Entry fee - Open \$10 per entry form (2 poems)
- Entry fee - Junior section - free.
- Closing date - 31st August 2020.
- Entry forms and conditions of entry available from the ABPA website - events and results page.
- Conducted by the Kyabram Bush Verse Group in memory of foundation member Betty Olle.

The aim of the Betty Olle Poetry Award is to provide an opportunity for poets to share their work, to encourage the writing of new work, to acknowledge the skills of our junior poets, and to keep the spirit of Bush Poetry alive.