

# ABPA



**Australian Bush Poets Association**  
**Volume 26 No. 6      Dec/Jan 2020/21**



***Merry Christmas!***  
**2020**



# 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*

### 50<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021

See [www.bronzeswagman.info](http://www.bronzeswagman.info)  
or contact

Jeff Close, Hon Co-ordinator  
[closeandmoller@gmail.com](mailto:closeandmoller@gmail.com)

### 2021 INVITATION

You are cordially invited to attend the celebrations for the

**50- Bronze Swagman Award For Bush Verse**

to be held in Winton on

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

at Windemere Station, just out of town.

You may be interested in also taking in:

- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – children's Bush Poetry Performance Festival at Winton Shire Hall.

Free entry

- Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – proposed North Gregory Race Club meeting

- Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – 50<sup>th</sup> Bronze Swagman Event which will also be our Welcome to the Outback Festival

- Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September to Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:closeandmoller@gmail.com)

Website: [bronzeswagman.info](http://bronzeswagman.info)

# Next Magazine Deadline is November 27th

## ABPA Committee Members 2020

### Executive:

President	-- Tim Sheed	president@abpa.org.au
Vice-President	-- Ray Essery	essery56m@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](mailto:editor@abpa.org.au)



As we head into the Festive Season, we are seeing things around the Country returning to something like normal at this time of writing. Borders on the East Coast have all opened up to each other again and hopefully we will soon have enough control over this Covid to get out there and return to both Bush Poetry Performances and Competitions.

This issue is normally full of our Tamworth Events and our upcoming AGM. You will find enclosed a voting slip for nominating Office Bearers for the upcoming year. Please try to return it as soon as possible and if you are willing to put your hand up for a position, it would be quite welcome. It doesn't take up much of your time and gives those who work so hard a bit of a break. In saying that, I have found our current Committee to be one of the best I have had the opportunity to work with over the years I have been Editor and thank them sincerely for uncomplicating the process of running our Association and being both positive towards our future direction and for their wonderful support of all things Bush Poetry, both Modern and Traditional.

Hopefully the time spent at home during these times has been creative for most of our Members and we look forward to you all renewing your Annual Membership and maybe even give one to a friend or family member as a Christmas gift.

Thanks to all those who have supported the Magazine during this trying year and may you all have a safe and happy Holiday Season.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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

As this disrupted year winds down towards a not so silly season, it is time to look forward to better times with a vaccine drawing ever closer and the potential for things to return to near normal.

With the disruption to state borders caused by the virus we have had to cancel our planned National Bush Poetry Championships which we were planning for Orange in February 2021, with the intention of holding it there in 2022.

The Dusty Swag Bush Poetry and Story Telling written competition, which closes at the end of November has received over fifty entries with an almost equal split between adults and primary school children.

In a conversation with bush poet Greg North he stated that Winton has had a very successful year because Queenslanders who were planning cruises or overseas travel decided to have a look around their own back yard. It is an Ill wind etc.

The ABPA committee has been working on updating our constitution and will be presenting it for ratification by members at our AGM, being held on Wednesday 20th of January 2021 at 2pm via zoom. A pdf of the document is available on the website below the Presidents report.

Those wishing to nominate for membership and office bearers roles on the committee will find the nomination form on our website and can send them to our returning officer at [web@abpa.org.au](mailto:web@abpa.org.au).

Those wishing to attend the AGM should send their notice of interest to [treasurer@abpa.org.au](mailto:treasurer@abpa.org.au) prior to the scheduled date so they can receive the zoom link.

The ABPA committee has been successful in increasing our membership by approximately fifty percent over the year, (due to the diligence of our treasurer), which is very pleasing and bodes well for a strong future for the association.

The breakdown of our membership numbers by State are:

NSW	111
Qld	88
Vic	38
WA	16
SA	1
Tas	1
ACT	1
NZ	1
Thai	1



I thank the members of the current committee for their work over the last twelve months and the Association looks forward to an active and exciting 2021.

Timothy Sheed  
President ABPA

**Visit Our Website**

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





# Vale - Peter Blundell

It is with great sadness that I pass on the news that we have lost another of our great Poets - Peter Blundell. Sheep breeder, Woolgrower, Stockman, Camp drafter, Past President of the Australian Stockhorse Association - Peter Blundell of 'Mt Malakoff'

Stanthorpe passed away in hospital in Stanthorpe on 26th September after a short illness.

Peter has been writing and presenting Australian Bush Poetry for most of his life - a wonderful, creative writer who has published a book with a selection of his works - 'Cathedral of the Bush' - including a few humorous poems, but his great love was serious poetry depicting our beautiful Australian Bush.

He would spend many hours on horseback mustering his sheep and composing beautiful poetry - and then spend many more hours "sitting around the kitchen table" reciting poetry to his children Peter and James, and then to his grandchildren PB, Harry and Nicola - Peter lost his beautiful wife Marjorie (who sang exquisitely) many years ago but he said in her twilight days she always seemed to know when he was reciting his poetry to her.

His children now all continue that tradition - they all excell in poetry and songwriting and all still enjoy "sitting around the kitchen table telling yarns, poetry and singing songs"

Trish Anderson

The Bush Poetry world lost another of our "old hands" recently on 26th September, 2020. Peter Blundell of Mt Malakoff in the traprock country west of Stanthorpe, Queensland, left us peacefully after a short spell in hospital.

Peter was a bushman in the old tradition. He spent time as a young man working at Alexandria Station on the Barkly Tableland and pursued a lifetime interest in horses, dogs, stock and camp-drafting.

He wrote beautiful, lyrical poetry both humorous and serious, and Peter's book "Cathedral of the Bush" is a joy to read. The whole family had wonderful singing voices and were active in the local Stanthorpe Little Theatre.

I spent a lot of happy times in Peter's company comparing our own and other poets' work, and am sorrowful to acknowledge the passing of one more of those who kept bush poetry alive through the years when much of Australia was of the opinion it had passed on with Banjo and Henry.

Jack Drake



Peter Blundell with his son's James and Peter.

Born in the Stanthorpe Hospital on 19 February 1936, Peter called the Traprock region, West of Stanthorpe, home for his entire life.

He was always a very active community member, playing both tennis and cricket locally as a young man. He was a foundation member of Stanthorpe Toastmasters, and appeared in many musicals and stage productions.

He had a wealth of stories about building horse stalls and the rodeo arena. Peter was President of the Show and Rodeo Society in 1974, 1975, the Centenary year, and 1976. Breeding and showing horses and Campdrafting were passions of Peter's.

He travelled extensively through Northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland to attend these events. He became a member of the Australian Stock Horse Society in 1972, was the inaugural President of the Queensland State Management Council, and was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society in 1990. He was also a bush poet, capturing the funny stories, anecdotes, beauty and severity of the country and people he loved so dearly. His self-published booklet of his verse is a timeless reminder of what he found important, what gave his life reason and purpose, why he loved his land so much, and why he was so determined to be "carted off in a pine box". Peter is survived by by sons, Peter and James, grandchildren, Peter, Harry, Nicola,, Briar, Travis, Fian and Rhia and great grandchildren, Charlie and Maddie

The words 'absolute gentleman' have surfaced time and time again in people's condolences. He was definitely that, but many other things as well.. irascible, loyal, infuriating, incredibly loveable, the list goes on. Vale Peter.

# *From Galipoli With Love*

© Tom McLveen

*Winning Poem Silver Quill W.A. Championship 2020.*

I am sending this and hoping Dad, that the girls don't get to see  
what is truly going on behind the scenes.  
I would rather them believing God is here protecting me  
than to know that we were blown to smithereens.

We were confident of victory and were spoiling for a fight,  
as the Ninth and Tenth Battalions paved the way...  
the Eleventh copped a hiding though, in spite of all their might,  
when they disembarked just north of Suvla Bay.

We were sure the Turks would turn and run from the mighty Third Brigade  
and that we could take the Dardanelles with ease.  
But apparently they'd seen behind our fearsome masquerade,  
and refused to yield or bow on bended knees.

I was with the second wave of troops that had scrambled two abreast  
from the rowing boats the tugs had towed ashore.  
We had landed in the middle of a flamin' hornets' nest  
in a blazing hell of blood and guts and gore!

There were bodies strewn like bits of wood all along the stony beach,  
where the withered kelp lay stranded, rank and dried.  
There were others floating shoreward through the shallows out of reach,  
as they drifted in like flotsam on the tide.

If we'd only taken Chanuk Bair, in that very first advance,  
then the sacrifice may not have been in vain.  
If the landing hadn't gone amiss, we may have stood a chance  
of achieving something from this whole campaign.

We have bitten off a little more than we'll ever get to chew,  
and have opened up a can of worms it seems.  
For the Turks are worthy warriors, and jingoistic too...  
but misguided by the Kaiser's crazy dreams.

They're persistent little buggers though, I have got to give them that...  
for they like to do their fighting tete-a-tete.  
They've been culling us like rabbits, in a game of tit for tat  
and can give about as good as what they get!

We have names for every mountain top and for every cliff and ledge,  
and for every gully, gorge and hidden trek.  
There is Baby Seven Hundred, Walker's Ridge and Razor's Edge...  
and of course you would have heard about the Nek!

It was where the Third Light Horse Brigade were deprived of half their men  
in a suicidal bayonet attack.  
They were slaughtered there like cattle in a butcher's holding pen,  
till the Brass had intervened and called them back.



## *From Galipoli With Love cont.....*

We have called it Godley's abattoir, as it's tainted with the blood  
of the hundreds who have died to no avail  
for a lousy bit of wilderness and acreage of crud,  
with a spattering of broken rock and shale.

When I look around, I wonder now... why I volunteered for this,  
when I could have been at home in Inverell.  
I would just as soon be playing cards with Mum and Little Sis,  
as be playing devil's advocate in hell.

It's the Sydney blokes who do it tough, in the scorching midday heat...  
as they've never had to rough it in the scrub.  
They would rather be at Bondi, chasin' sheilas down the street,  
or be sipping grog in some suburban pub.

But they're eager in a donnybrook, when the chips are really down,  
and are partial to a bit of fuss and strife.  
They have learnt the art of fighting on the streets of Sydney Town,  
and are handy with a bayonet and knife.

They are generous with cigarettes, and have taught us how to smoke,  
and are full of wit and clever repartee.  
They are always stirring mischief and they love to share a joke,  
and have been a calming influence on me.

We've been fighting here since April Dad, with our backs against the wall,  
and our senses numbed by nauseating stink.  
I suppose I should be grateful that I'm even here at all  
I'm alive and breathing oxygen...(I think!)

What a God forsaken, bloody mess! It is hard to verbalise  
and explain the dreadful things we've seen and done...  
for the trenches here are swarming with mosquitoes, rats and flies  
from the corpses that lie rotting in the sun.

If you think the flies at home are bad, you should see them over here!  
They're as thick as ours, but not as purely bred.  
They will hang around till evening and then seem to disappear,  
when the mozzies come and hassle us instead.

It's the smell that's driving me insane, and the thirst I cannot slake...  
from the putrid taste of ruin and decay.  
It's the overwhelming pungency in every breath I take,  
and the thought of you and Mum so far away.

I am signing off and hoping Dad, that the girls don't make a fuss,  
when they get to hear there's nothing much to tell.  
I would rather have them thinking God is here protecting us  
than to know that we've been damned and sent to hell.



# *The Heart of Darkness*

© David Campbell

Winner, 2020 Betty Olle Poetry Award, Kyabram, Vic.

I have seen the heart of darkness on an ancient killing field  
where the bones of men were sleeping till the march of time revealed  
what the dogs of war had ravaged on a long-forgotten day  
when so many lives were shattered by the price they had to pay.

I recall my mother weeping when she spoke her father's name,  
when she told me of the message and the fateful day it came  
with the news that he was "missing", lost in action near Fromelles,  
where the victims numbered thousands when they tolled the final bell.

For she also lost her mother from the life that they had known  
as the trauma left her broken, feeling frightened and alone,  
so a bright and cheerful woman faded, bitter and withdrawn,  
and quite soon my stricken mother had another cause to mourn.

When we're honouring the fallen we should also not forget  
all the families remaining and the challenges they met,  
for the grief was overwhelming, and a burden hard to bear,  
and while some could overcome it, others yielded to despair.

For so many had no closure when their menfolk disappeared,  
though they always kept on hoping through the years and persevered  
with the letters and the questions, asking where and how and why,  
simply seeking a few answers and the chance to say goodbye.

That is why I paid attention when I read the distant news,  
for they said investigators had uncovered many clues  
that might help to trace the background of the bodies they had found,  
all the secrets that lay buried, hidden deep beneath the ground.

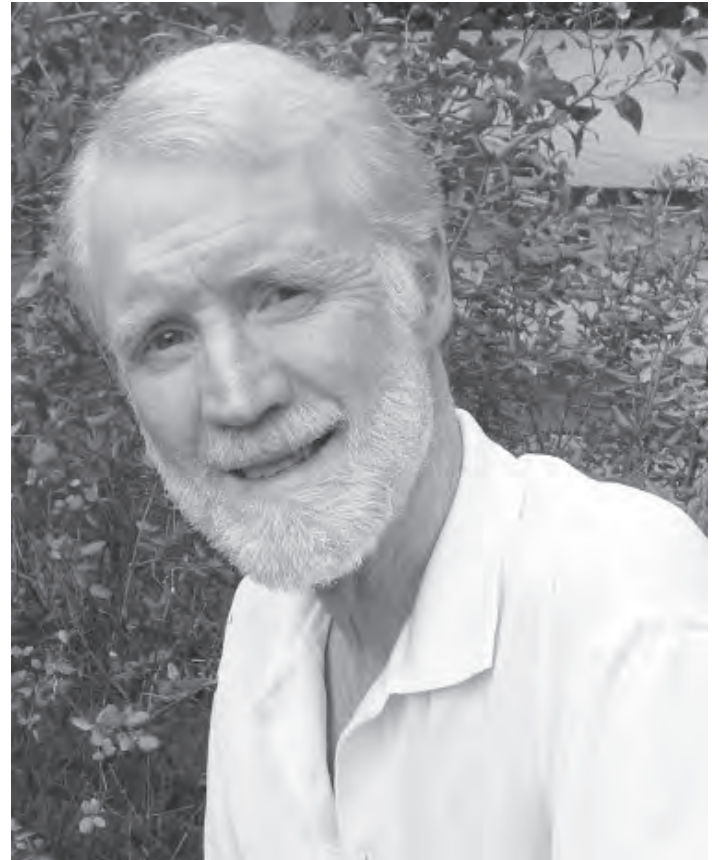
There were buttons, boots, and buckles, and the sort of private things  
that a soldier might have carried, such as fountain pens and rings,  
and they linked all those together while they tested DNA  
to shed light on what had happened on that catastrophic day.

They identified some bodies, though my Grandad wasn't one,  
but the story made me ponder on the deeds he might have done  
in the many years that followed, and the life that could have been  
if the war had not intruded, wiping any future clean.

So I had to pay a tribute to this man I never knew,  
to respect what he had suffered and accord him what was due,  
which explains why I am standing on this barren stretch of earth  
far from where he left his loved ones in the country of his birth.

As I bow my head in prayer I am conscious of the debt  
that we owe to those who fought here, therefore no-one should forget,  
though a hundred years have vanished, it can never be denied  
that the freedom we're enjoying meant that countless thousands died.

If I concentrate and listen I can hear the call of birds,  
and from somewhere in the distance there's the muffled sound of words  
as a mother calls her children who are playing in the sun —  
but imagination takes me, and I'm carrying a gun.



I am running, firing blindly at a foe I cannot see,  
for they're fortified in trenches with machine guns aimed at me,  
and the gates of Hell are open as my world explodes in flames,  
and these men, my close companions, lie there lifeless, merely names.

They have perished in an instant, all their love and laughter fled,  
celebrated in a letter — maybe captured, maybe dead —  
but that thought is just a flicker in a maelstrom of pain,  
and I wonder if I'll ever see the home I love again.

Yet I'm running, still I'm running, as I've never run before,  
till I see my wife and daughter waiting, smiling, at the door,  
but their faces are receding and their smiles are growing dim,  
and I hear my comrades calling as they sing the battle hymn.

I have seen the heart of darkness on an ancient killing field  
in a momentary madness when the ghosts of time revealed  
what is meant when brave men whisper of the horror that is war —  
and I'm running, still I'm running, as I've never run before!



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA

It has been a very busy time for WA Bush Poets. After our group sojourn to the north for winter our first event was the Nambung Country Music Festival. Travellers flocked to the event, the weather was perfect and great entertainment from totally local performers was enjoyed by all. Terry Bennetts was ably assisted by Ian Fletcher, Billy Higginson and son, Darby at the sound desk. He had a great lineup of musicians with the poets being organised by WA President Bill Gordon who had most of our poets readily agreeing to perform. We are indebted to hosts Brian and Gloria White for welcoming us to Nambung Station for this wonderful event.

### W.A. Bush Poets



& Yarnspinners Assn.

Toodyay .

Then our State Championships was on again in Toodyay. We were welcomed once again to this great town and again the weather was perfect (except for our Sunday afternoon wind down which we had to relocate to the newly renovated Victoria Hotel—not a bad relocation!) It was a very popular win for **John Hayes** (who received a standing ovation when he received his award from Shire President Rosemary Madasci). John has not enjoyed good health for some months but rallied brilliantly for the weekend. The results were very close till the final tally with Roger Cracknell the runner up and Christine Boulton third. It was also great to see Christine back and performing once again after having a break. We also announced the winner of the Silver Quill and for the second time, **Tom McIlveen** was the winner, closely followed by equal runners up **Terry Piggott** and **Keith (Cobber) Lethbridge**.

Following Toodyay we performed once again at the Seniors Council **Have A Go Day** at Burswood (Perth). It is an event that encourages people of all ages but mainly seniors, to get out and enjoy their recreation, whether it be sport, music, collections, canoeing, bush walking etc. Poets performed on the main stage along with local musicians and instrumental groups.

We are now looking forward to our **Port, Pies and Poetry** Christmas Muster in December. Our January calendar is full up with **Perth Fringe Festival** and our poets will be once again performing for five evenings on the Crystal Swan (Floating Function Vessel) and then our annual **Australia Day** picnic at Wireless Hill (Perth).



**Peg Vickers** (Albany) performed at Nambung Country Music Festival



**TOODYAY STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS WIND DOWN**  
Back Row (LtoR) Judge Terry Bennetts, Event CoOrdinator Meg Gordon, Judge Terry Piggott  
Front Row Judge Robyn Bowcock, WA State Champion John Hayes



Toodyay Shire President **Rosemary Madasci** presented the trophies to **WA State Champions John Hayes** (winner) **Roger Cracknell** (RU) and **Christine Boulton** (3rd)



At Remembrance service as part of Seniors Council **Have A Go Day** at Burswood. Members of 10th Light Horse and WA Bush Poet, **Bev Shorland**



**WA State Championships Yarnspinning** winners presented by **Andrew McCann**. **Bill Gordon** Equal 2nd, **Peter Rudolph** Winner, Equal 2nd **Arthur Leggett**



WA President **Bill Gordon** (right) presented Runner up equal 2nd certificates in **Silver Quill Written Verse Competition** to **Terry Piggott** (left) and **Cobber Lethbridge** (centre)

From South Australia

A winning poem in the  
2020 *Laura Literary*  
Awards run annually by the  
Rocky River 'Riters

# Our Poetry Kids

with Brenda Joy

*Kate Nicholas Edgar*



Congratulations Kate on receiving a  
*Commended Award in Junior Poetry* in Laura  
for your lovely poem **Forest**.

## **FOREST**

**by Kate Nicholas Edgar**

Whilst raindrops gently fall  
upon the dark green leaves,  
the songbirds sing a melody  
that whispers through the trees

The serene peace of the forest  
soars through the evening sky  
As twilight comes, and into dusk,  
the hopeful spirits fly.

The midnight moonlight spills  
onto the silent, dark, dark night  
casting shadows from the treetops  
illuminating the brightest light.

And as the night turns to dawn,  
as the pale moon begins to fade,  
the silent forest awakens.  
The sky is now a bright, blue shade.

When the sun rises high up above  
and smiling, begins to shine,  
the hopeful forest shines with it,  
life thriving, a tranquil sign.



The forest is gentle and peaceful.  
Quietly, it thrives, sways and grows.  
Why can't we learn  
from the serene forest  
and bring hope, as the peace flows?

© 2020 Kate Nicholas Edgar at age 11

The Judge's Comments about **Forest**:  
*This describes a walk through a forest. Well  
thought out with good message at the end.*

*Poem pre-published April 2020  
Laura Literary Awards Anthology.*

From Christchurch, New Zealand

*Hollie Lill*

## **LOCKDOWN POEM**

**by Hollie Lill**

We are at home in lock down  
for a month or so.  
Going out of our bubble is a definite NO.

So at home we played,  
decorated the footpath with chalk,  
this made our neighbours smile  
when they went for a walk.

During the day we walked and flew our kite.  
We stayed up later to watch movies at night.

School work was different,  
we spent time on a chrome-book.  
We learnt by weighing and measuring  
to become a cook.

When this is over, I look forward  
to playing with a mate,  
Flipping on bars and chatting –  
it will be just great!

© 2020 Hollie Lill (at age 7)

*Poem pre-published August 2020  
Free XpresSion Literary Magazine*





## TWO OF A KIND - Keith (Cobber) Lethbridge

He's just an old pot-lickin' mongrel  
With a host of unlovable ways,  
Lethargic and lean, bad-tempered and mean  
And he's certainly seen better days.  
He's never been cuddly or caring,  
He's more like psychotic or strange,  
And he'll never be cute, the unsociable brute,  
If he doesn't stop scratching that mange.

I'm hanged if I know why we keep him;  
He doesn't deserve to be fed;  
The neighbours agree he's as ugly as me,  
And they won't shed a tear when he's dead.  
Last week he went "missing in action",  
Then staggered home, barely alive.  
We never found out what the fight was about,  
And the other dog didn't survive.

He doesn't respond to our whistle,  
And he'll never roll over or beg.  
The Postie complained that he shoulda been chained,  
When he piddled all over his leg.  
Yes, he's just an old pot-lickin' mongrel,  
And he's neither a pet nor a guard;  
We let him inside but it prickles his pride,  
So he camps all alone in the yard.

*Just a pot-lickin' mongrel – Woof! Woof!*  
*What a flea-bitten smell! – Woof! Woof!*  
*He's covered in scars from his battle with cars*  
*And he's certainly headin' for Hell – Woof!*  
*Just a four-legged felon – Woof! Woof!*  
*Headin' out on a spree – Woof! Woof!*  
*But I really don't mind coz we're two of a kind,*  
*That pot-lickin' mongrel and me.*

Now some dogs take care of their masters,  
Respectful and loyal to the end,  
While others prefer to be known as a cur;  
They don't want a man for a friend.  
We toss him a bone every morning;  
It stops him from eatin' the chooks.  
We can't understand why he snaps at our hand,  
But he doesn't mind crawlin' for crooks.

He won't let us wash him or groom him;  
He turns a deaf ear when we call,  
And with no "beg your pardon" he digs up the garden  
Without feeling guilty at all.

Yes he's just an old pot-lickin' mongrel,  
Out howlin' all night at the moon;  
And everyone knows when he turns up his toes  
It won't be a moment too soon.

*Just a pot-lickin' mongrel – Woof! Woof!*  
*What a flea-bitten smell! – Woof! Woof!*  
*He's covered in scars from his battle with cars*  
*And he's certainly headin' for Hell – Woof!*  
*Just a four-legged felon – Woof! Woof!*  
*Headin' out on a spree – Woof! Woof!*  
*But I really don't mind coz we're two of a kind,*  
*That pot-lickin' mongrel and me.*



# WHEN SANTA VISITS OZ

© Peter White, Eagleby, 2020

We know that Santa lives and works at the North Pole  
And Christmas there is Winter time, cold with snow and sleet.  
But in Oz it's Summer and Santa, poor old soul,  
If dressed in his Winter gear, would severely overheat.

He dresses for the weather when he comes down Aussie way  
And doesn't wear a fur-lined cap upon his head.  
He packs away his Winter suit and boots for another day  
And dons his singlet, shorts, thongs and Akubra, all in red.

For company on this lengthy trip comes Alf his senior elf.  
The two of them each enjoy the very different scene.  
The first time Santa made the trip he came all by himself,  
But Australia is the loneliest country he had ever seen.

His sleigh is worse than useless here so it is left behind.  
His reindeer are all snuggled up in his well-stocked byre.  
Santa keeps a wagon here and to pull it he will find  
A team of local harness-broken boomers he can hire.

Alf first applies some axle grease to cut down on the noise.  
Then they hitch the boomer team to the wagon tongue.  
Both of them then load up all the many sacks of toys,  
And several canvas water-bags at the front are hung.

To protect their precious load they use a Poly Tarp  
And tie it firmly to the sides with a "Truckie's Hitch".  
With "Santa Red" and "Poly Blue" their Christmas rig looks sharp.  
To begin their journey, Santa gives the reins a twitch.

Now he and Alf will pass the time talking on their rounds.  
From the north which is in the middle of "The Wet",  
To the south and east and west his boomer eight-hitch bounds.  
Alf makes sure that not one child will Santa Claus forget.

The weather here is quite extreme with floods or searing heat.  
It's enough to make poor Santa feel a bit unhinged.  
"You seem disconcerted, Santa", Alf said from his seat.  
"You would be too," said Santa, "if your beard was bushfire singed!"

Every household will ensure that they leave enough  
Snacks for Santa and his team on the eve of Christmas Day.  
They leave a long-neck "coldie" and a slice of good plum duff,  
And for the boomers it's not carrots but fine alfalfa hay.

Right across this wide brown land every Christmas Eve  
Alf helps Santa with his gifts for every Aussie child.  
Through the door on the verandah Santa will enter and leave.  
"The chimneys are too narrow. You'd get stuck," Alf said and smiled.



They stop to have a smoko break and brew a billy of tea.  
From the Esky Alf removes a pack of corned beef 'sangers'.  
Santa said, "Alf, please pass the sauce to me.  
What a pity we've no time to fry some eggs and 'bangers'."

Smoko over off they go to finish up their job.  
Way out here the roads are rough the wagon starts to shake.  
They pass a herd of feral goats, a hundred in the mob.  
They have to move along apace with dawn about to break.

Past Windora, Coober Pedy, Dimboola, Oodnadatta,  
From Goondiwindi to Dunedoo, Mudgee and Corryong,  
Beyond Coolgardie by Tarraleah, to Robe and Wangaratta,  
Darwin, Alice Springs and not forgetting Wonglepong.

From Kowanyama to Thargomindah, Geraldton and Bright,  
Like Lucky Starr, Alf and Santa have been everywhere.  
From Gilgandra to Billinudgel travelling through the night,  
Alf and Santa spreading joy for all of us to share.

From Meekatharra to Cootamundra, Boggabilla and Bourke,  
From Kununurra to Wilcannia, Roma and Deloraine,  
They carry on, hour by hour, to finalise their work,  
Returning to the point of their departure once again.

Santa shouts Alf a beer in a XXXX tin,  
Saying, "So that our journey goes without a hitch,  
Let's swap our thongs for jandals and we'll pack a chilly-bin,  
And visit the Aussies' Kiwi cousins, just across the ditch."

# Winton

## Waltzing Matilda

1895-6

Gregory North

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in Winton in 1895."*

Jeff Close OAM, Chair, Waltzing Matilda Centre Ltd.

What did the newspapers have to say when solicitor and poet Andrew Barton "Banjo" Paterson visited Winton 125 years ago? During his visit, he and Christina Macpherson created what became Australia's best-known song – Waltzing Matilda. Through contemporary newspaper reports, the book paints a picture of the Winton that "Banjo" visited in 1895-6.

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2539

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DOWNLOAD ENTRY FORMS FROM ABPA WEBSITE OR [www.showdayonline.com](http://www.showdayonline.com) and follow the prompts  
OR Contact John Davis 37 George avenue Kings Point NSW 2539  
Ph 02 44552013 email [jda76436@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jda76436@bigpond.net.au)

# PRE NATIVITY

© Graham Fredriksen - 1956-2010

A carpenter came with his concubine—  
and heavy with child was she;  
the innkeeper spake from his mug of wine:  
"There's no place left in this place o' mine  
for a couple the such as ye.

"All the rooms are full—and three to a bed—  
and the worst time of the year;  
'tis a job I have just t' keep them fed—  
the cheese is done, and so is the bread,  
and they've finished off the beer.

"'Tis the government's fault, as ye'd have t' know,  
for they've called in a census, see;  
now the village is full and to overflow,  
waggoners, footmen, wherever ye go,  
from all over the Back Countree.

"Cameleers in from the Further Out,  
and shepherds from Way Beyond;  
but that's what bureaucracy's all about—  
they haven't a clue, and ye know there's nowt  
we can do but sit and despond.

"But a roof ye need; well, I have t' say  
there's only one place I know:  
back up the track but a little way,  
a barn there is where they bring the hay—  
ye could bed down there, I trow.

"Though ye may have t' share yere lodgings, ay,  
with a cow and a sheep or two;  
but I see ye've a donkey outside hard by,  
so a few more animals shouldn't try  
ye much when ye're makin' do.

"Ye take the third turn back on yere right—  
there should be enough light t' see;  
the stars are out, and they say last night  
that a new star came—and ever so bright—  
ah! but stars are just stars t' me.

"Well, I must be at it, I've mouths t' feed  
and soon ye'll have an extra one;  
ay, ye shall, by the looks, indeed,  
so be off with ye now, and Heaven speed—  
and here's to a hearty son!"

# MERRY CHRISTMAS SON

© 2012 Manfred Vijars

At Christmas time when just a lad I'd hover 'round the kitchen  
smells of magic in the air, my tastebuds would be twitchin  
watching Mum mix cakes in bowls her wooden spoon is clicking  
She'd glance my way and with a laugh the spoon was mine for licking!  
... then with a grin, she'd say to me - "Merry Christmas Son"

Cooking was her great delight - some say it was her calling  
And every Christmas was the same, the table would be sprawling  
with lots of goodies, lots of treats. I'm playing with my cousin  
then from the chook-house running back, I tripped and broke a dozen.  
... she feigned anger, but still called out, "Merry Christmas Son!"

The family grew as families do with in-laws, pets and grandkids  
Now little 'tackers' run amuck - one knocked her box of jam-lids.  
With all those treats on display it's hard to stop small fingers picking.  
But how things change, instead of me, my kids now do the licking  
... Still twinkling eyes would say to me, "Merry Christmas Son."

And Mothers age, as Mothers must, I made it there beside her  
She found the strength to linger on, I see now how our times were  
precious. I thought She'd live forever, but She's gone.

I shed a tear amid the cheer for, "Merry Christmas Son."  
...and I'm sure you know I love you, so - "Merry Christmas - MUM"





# Great Aussie Reads

*With Jack Drake*

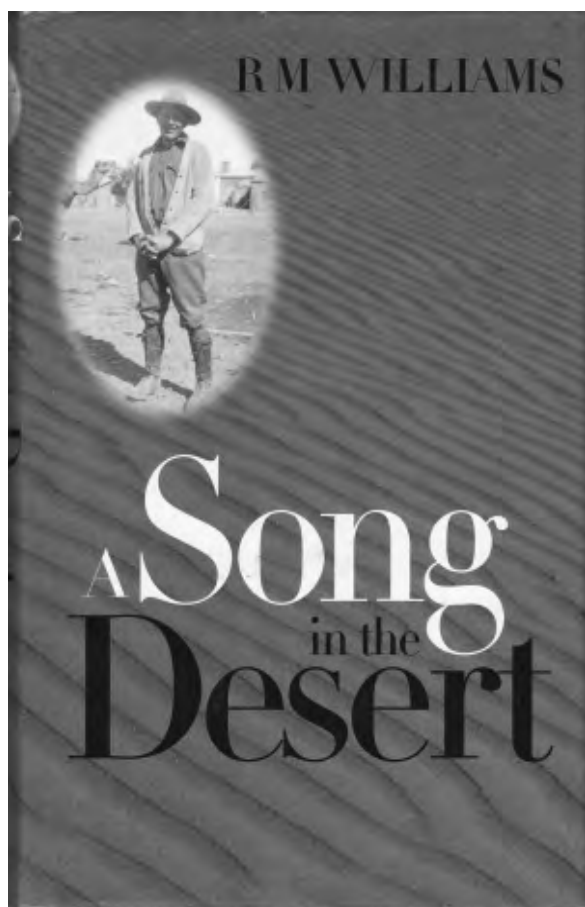
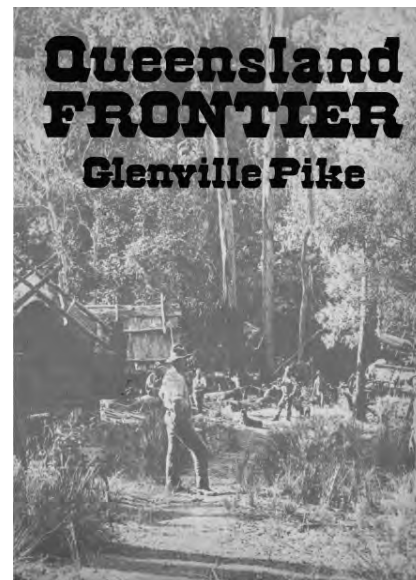


One of the most prolific recorders of Northern Australian History was the late Glenville Pike. His works are getting harder to find but can still be obtained through libraries or for sale on line.

I consider his best work to be *Queensland Frontier* (Pinevale Publications 1982). Pike wrote in the style of Ion Idriess and Bruce Simpson, bringing history to life in a way everyday people could read and enjoy.

*Queensland Frontier* is no work of academia that sends you regularly diving for the dictionary. It seems to me some scholarly writers use their works to skite about how many “twenty dollar” words they know. Glenville Pike wrote it like he heard it, and any of his twenty plus books is worth a read.

He has been nit-picked by other historians and like Ion Idriess did not always get it exactly right, but he preserved a great deal of history that would never have been recorded but for him.



Well-meaning missionaries who attempted to bring the Gospel to indigenous Australians, met with spectacular failures in all parts of the nation. Trying to win souls for a 2,000 year old doctrine from a people who had spent 60,000 years developing their spirituality was never going to work, but like most zealots, the missionary fraternity didn't think of that.

In 1926 Australian icon R.M. Williams was offered a job as camel man and general factotum with one William Wade, a London Cockney with a burning ambition to bring enlightenment to the poor Australian “savages”, whether they wanted it or not.

*A Song in the Desert* by R.M. Williams (Angus and Robertson 1998) is Reg Williams' story of three years in the Central Australian interior with Wade. Although Williams does not say it, there is a fair chance the missionary would not have got very far without R.M.'s bushman skills.

*Song in the Desert* is well worth a read as it gives a first hand account of desert travel and survival before four wheel drives and satellite phones had even been thought of.

True to his vision, William Wade spent his life ministering to the Aborigines and R.M. Williams' account of their time together is well worth reading.

# WELCOME TO THE 2021 BANJO PATERSON AUSTRALIAN POETRY FESTIVAL

The Community of Orange, NSW, is pleased to provide a small program of events celebrate the birth and life of Andrew Barton (Banjo) Paterson in the Orange region. COVID-19 restrictions this year have prevented us from holding national events so we are focusing on events that can be held within COVID rules while showcasing the wonderful entertainment of Australian Bush Poetry - made famous by Banjo Paterson.

This is the eighth Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival since we celebrated Banjo's 150th birthday in 2014 and this one will be marked by the unveiling of a magnificent 3m tall bronze sculpture of Major Andrew Barton Paterson at Yoeval, where he lived as a young boy.

Involving young people in the appreciation of Australian Bush Poetry is one of the aims of our festival and again we will be sponsoring school workshops 'immerse in Verse' with Bush Poet Greg North as well as holding a youth Bush Poetry Competition for the young poets to recite their own original poem.

While in the region, enjoy the rest that the region has to offer - scenery, wineries, museums, galleries, villages, restaurants, cafes, sporting facilities and shopping.

For more information about the Festival and a full list of the Events Program go to

[www.orange360.com.au](http://www.orange360.com.au)




For more information on the Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival accommodation and packages

[orange360.com.au](http://orange360.com.au)

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## ANIMALS IN GOVERNMENT

*by Len Banks*

The lion is the king of beasts;  
the mightiest of cats;  
but even His Royal Highness  
needs a team of bureaucrats.

To govern in this Kingdom  
doesn't need a grand election,  
because we understand  
that there is natural selection.

The spider is the spin doctor,  
but not one you can trust,  
'cause all the scripts are written  
by the bull who leaves some dust.

The Speaker of the House will be  
a polly from the floor.  
She does a cracker of a job  
to uphold the jungle law.

The sled dog team is keen to run.  
They'll represent the State;  
and question time will focus on  
"de mouse" who took "de bate".

The emu in the cross bench seat  
cannot get off the ground.  
The kangaroo will cross the floor  
in just a single bound.

The seagulls in the Senate  
will wait for chips to spill,  
in the hope that they'll defeat  
the platypus's bill.

Now back in the Department,  
the dog gets all the ticks,  
while the fox is on suspicion  
of harassing all the chicks.

The tortoise heads up transport  
and is always running late;  
and the elephant's in charge of health  
even though he's over weight.

The Audit Team led by the snake  
slides in before you know.  
The wombat digs up hidden bugs  
that are picked up by the crow.

The lion's team is loyal and strong  
despite its composition.  
So while he rules the kingdom  
there's no worthy opposition.

# Bringing the Cattle Home

© Irene Dalgety Timpone

Each sunrise at the homestead was a beauty to behold –  
with Nature's palette at its splendid best:  
the colours of a bushfire mixed with clouds and edged with gold,  
stark contrast to the darkness in the west.

Each new day brings such promise to the people on the land –  
for them, hard work and hope are much the same.  
The pristine glow of dawn revives their faith in all they've planned,  
and gives them strength to play life's complex game.

The cattleman's worst nightmare is that fire burns his run,  
consumes the last of dwindling Summer feed,  
takes lives of men and cattle, ruins homes before it's done –  
the last thing that bush folk will ever need.

We watched the dark smoke rising, one hot day in ninety-four.  
Mum said, "There's nothing more that we can do.  
We'll set the sprinklers going, beat the flames back from the door,  
survive the hell this bushfire puts us through."

In pre-dawn chill, we went outside to face the world, next day,  
the burnt-out landscape not a welcome sight.  
A pall of black surrounded us and stretched so far away:  
no miracles had happened overnight.

Some fifty miles of fencing-wire lay tangled on the ground,  
the horses huddled near the house-cow's shed.  
Three hundred head of Herefords were nowhere to be found.  
They'd seen the open gates and, wisely, fled.

The native birds had flown away, the kangaroos had left.  
The bloodwoods and the gums were deeply charred.  
The scorched remains of orchard trees had left my Mum bereft:  
she'd nurtured them when times were more than hard.

She'd worked the place for many years. Oh, how that woman tried  
to prove that she could manage on her own.  
She lived out all the dreams she'd shared with Dad until he died:  
she lived the life they'd planned, but all alone.

Mum gazed at blackened, empty fields, and seemed so frail and small,  
her former love of life no longer there:  
her shoulders bowed down underneath the heavy weight of all  
the extra burdens that she had to bear.

Although Mum always seemed to take each challenge on the chin,  
the task of bringing home her precious herd  
had caused a constant worry that she always held within.  
She did not share, with me, a single word.

Through day and night, Mum fretted for her house cow, Smokey Jane.  
She'd pampered her old pet for many years,  
and though she tried so hard to make a secret of her pain,  
I often saw a sudden flow of tears.

Some eight months after bushfire day, clouds built up in the East,  
the dark and churning kind that signals rain.  
A heavy clap of thunder crashed to tell both man and beast  
our world would soon be set to rights again.



I sensed the mixed emotions that my mother tried to hide:  
the long-feared muster would be no mean feat.  
Oh, yes! That made her anxious, but she felt enormous pride –  
the fencing restoration was complete.

Where would we find the cattle and how could we bring them back  
down timbered gullies, steep and overgrown,  
through miles of unfenced country, all without a single track?  
Two women had to do it on their own.

I listened to the welcome noise of heavy rain, all night,  
and thought about the round-up days ahead.  
I heard the strangest noises as I waited for the light:  
they added to my growing sense of dread.

I peered out through a window, saw the faintest golden sheen  
to signify the coming break-of-day,  
and heard a measured shuffling, sensed slight movement yet unseen,  
saw shadows shifting not too far away.

I heard impatient lowing and then, all at once, I knew  
that Smokey Jane was waiting by the fence.  
The darkness lifted slightly, and the herd came into view!  
I've never felt elation more intense.

My mother was delighted and, until her dying day,  
she loved to share her special 'dairy tale' –  
how Smokey Jane brought home the herd by leading all the way,  
then led her month-old heifer to the bail.

Each new day brings such promise to the people on the land –  
for them, hard work and hope are much the same  
The pristine glow of dawn revives their faith in all they've planned,  
and gives them strength to play life's complex game.



## DENTURES TO THE RESCUE

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by TREVOR SHAW

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2017 *Blackened Billy* winning poem: *Dentures to the Rescue*

*Urban Country* written poem: *A Gift for the Wife*

*Kangaroo Valley* written poem: *Proudly, True Blue Volunteers*



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## WINNERS OF THE TOOLANGI CJ DENNIS POETRY COMPETITION 2020

### Category 1: Open Poetry

Shelley Hansen, First Prize, My Singing Garden  
Brenda Joy, Second Prize, In a Mangrove World  
David Campbell, Third Prize, The Lesson We Must Learn  
Brenda Joy, Highly Commended, Deluge of The Plains

### Category 2: Open Short Story

Shelley Hansen, First Prize, No Flies on The Sentimental Bloke  
Gwen Pascoe, Second Prize, The Jogger  
Bill Bean, Third Prize, There Was Once

### Category 3: Poems Written by Adults for Children

Shelley Hansen, First Prize, School at Home  
Brenda Joy, Second Prize, Hanging Out  
Caz Goodwin, Third Prize, Feeling Sick  
Susan Hancy, Highly Commended, Possum Problems  
Kevin Pye, Highly Commended, Just Imagine

### Category 3: Poems Written by Adults for Children

as Judged by the Poonindie Community Learning Centre  
Carolyn Foreman, First Prize, Taking the Shortcut to School  
Di Scotte, Second Prize, Fright Night  
Sharon S. Rushton, Third Prize, The Woods at Night

### Category 4: Primary School Students

Taasha Korsten, First Prize, Seasons  
Shria, Shah, Second Prize, Flames of The Forest  
Eleni Quinn Chapman, Third Prize, CJ Dennis in the 21st Century  
Chloe Lee, Highly Commended, The First Human  
Nelson Whippy, Highly Commended, First Love

### Category 5: Secondary School Students

Natalie Barr, First Prize, Brush Strokes  
Natalie Barr, Second Prize, Letter for The Earth  
Tessa Quinlan, Third Prize, Black Rain Falling

## Bundy Poets Battle On Through Covid.



Hi All

This was the first time we've been able to have a meeting since March this year when Covid-19 caused chaos. We had fourteen at this first meeting with apologies from ten others who just wanted to stay safe for another at least. This meeting was held in our backyard after John put up a tarp and we sat our regulation 1.5m apart. This meeting also coincided with our AGM and the results are below for the 2020/21 year.

President: Jayson Russell

Vice-President: Edna Harvey

Secretary: Sandy Lees

Treasurer: Cate Henry

Publicity Officer: Sandy Lees

Afternoon Convenor: Kevin Bennett

Equipment Co-ordinator: John Lees

Cheers  
Sandy xo

# THE BETTY OLLE POETRY AWARD 2020 – RESULTS

1ST David Campbell Aireys Inlet VIC 'The Heart of Darkness'  
2ND Catherine Lee Mona Vale NSW 'Stolen'

Highly Commended Brenda Joy Charters Towers QLD 'Imitation Eagles'  
Highly Commended Max Merckenschlager Murray Bridge SA  
'The Women Walkers of Hahndorf'

Highly Commended Terry Norwood Bowral NSW 'Currying Favour'  
Highly Commended Ross Rolley Cairns QLD 'While we await the Rain'  
Commended Tom McIlveen Port Macquarie NSW 'Old Man Drought'  
Commended Terry Piggott Lynwood WA 'The Love of her Life'  
Commended Kevin Pye Mudgee NSW 'I Regret to Advise'  
Commended Brenda Joy Charters Towers 'Too Ancient to Bleed'  
Commended Peter O'Shaughnessy Eaton WA 'I Came Across a Shearing Shed'

## THE BETTY OLLE JUNIOR POETRY AWARD 2020 – RESULTS

1ST Penny Mason Kyabram VIC 'Who I become in the Bush'  
2ND Evelyn Browne Kyabram VIC 'Six States and Two Territories'  
Highly Commended Layne Warde Kyabram VIC 'My Australian Place'

## NANDEWAR POETRY COMPETITION RESULTS 2020

1st Place – The Poppies Dance by Heather Knight  
2nd Place – From Waltz to Rock and Roll by Robyn Sykes  
3rd. Place – Our Fairy Dance by Tom McIlveen  
Highly Commended  
Where Angels Tread by Tom McIlveen  
Freddie K by Tom McIlveen  
Dear Old Mum by Robyn Sykes

## 2020 IPSWICH International Poetry Feast

### RESULTS OF OPEN AGE – BUSH POETRY

1st (and recipient of the overall winner 'Babes of Walloon' award)

Irene Dalgety Timpone 2nd Tom McIlveen

Remembering Bill the Bastard Where Angels Tread

Bringing the Cattle Home

3rd Irene Dalgety Timpone

Runners Up – Highly Commended Awards

Kay Goring

Tom McIlveen

John Roberts

John Roberts

Tom McIlveen

BUSH POETS SUCCESSFUL IN OTHER SECTIONS –

IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL AWARDS OPEN AGE – Local Poets Highly Commended Maureen Clifford Joe's Mate

**More Results can be found on our Web Page at**

***www.abpa.org.au***

# Letters To The Editor

Dear Mr. McArthur,

I am a financial member of ABPA and, during the past twelve months, an occasional entrant in various ABPA affiliated Poetry Competitions. I am neither a highly educated individual nor a published writer or poet. I have attempted to create Australian Bush Poems over the past year and did manage to have one piece published in the 2020 Bronze Swagman's Anthology. That work is titled 'Across the Basalt Wall'.

I write by way of an objective critique of written poetry competitions and respectfully request that this letter be published in the ABPA Magazine. I will also direct a copy to other individuals who may feel inclined to issue an informative response.

I have noted that each Competition I have reviewed carries similar 'Conditions' which are, in part, included in the ABPA Web Site 'Competition Guidelines'. The following is a 'copy and paste' from that document.

Australian Bush Poetry is poetry that tells a story with rhyme and metre about Australia, Australian history, Australians and/or the Australian way of life.

Poems are judged on entertainment value, rhyme, metre and story-telling methodology.

In addition, I have received and reviewed my own and other 'Critique' notes that have been requested of Competition Judges. Those comments, combined with opinions supplied to me by experienced Poets, have helped explain the essence and disciplines contained within a high quality 'Australian Bush Poem'.

My understanding of the major 'Conditions' is as follows:

'Story' or 'narrative' is critical and is the heart and soul of a written poem.

'Rhyme' must be perfect. No 'half' rhyme, no 'forced' rhyme.

'Metre' as established in the opening stanza must be consistently maintained.

'Syllable Count' as with metre. It must be consistent.

Spelling, grammar and punctuation must be precise and correct.

'Language' simplistically means, 'the correct word in the right place'.

'Structure' should be simple unless a Poet's ability permits an opportunity to be more creative without creating confusion.

Avoid placing 'stress' on any preposition.

Avoid using abbreviations, numeric numbers.

Avoid creating contractions simply to secure a certain metre or count.

My concern is that the true 'Australian' art of creating poetry in the valued tradition of Patterson, Lawson and others is being lost. My interpretation of the 'Conditions' listed here are not being met. In my opinion, many written poems that have been awarded prizes and distinctions in the past few years are wide of the mark. Winning entries are often riddled with errors that are glaringly obvious.

I understand and accept that a new and modern 'style' of writing should evolve. Such a shift, however, must demand that written poems adhere to the values and the 'Conditions' that are detailed on ABPA Entry Forms. This is not happening. 'Near enough is good enough' is applied to basic grammar, spelling and punctuation. The acceptance of this habit is destructive.

It appears to me that more Poets are modifying content, style and language in an effort to appease the new 'norm'. Structure I have never seen in my amateurish reviews seems to be used simply for the sake of it. There is no apparent improvement to quality. There is no further enjoyment extended to the reader.

I do not understand the politics or governance of ABPA and affiliated entities but somebody, somewhere, must take a stand on this if we are to protect this grand heritage we have. There is a lot of talent and effort being directed into all sorts of work but that must not be a signal to abort that which Aussies hold dear.

Thanking you for your anticipated consideration and publication.

Yours sincerely,

Ross Rolley.



## 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.

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

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

**Bundaberg Poets Society Inc.** 2nd Saturday of the month. Rum City Silver Band Hall, Targo Street. Contact 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, Woorim 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

**Mansfield Bush Poets Group** - Second Tuesday of the month 1pm - 3pm, Mansfield Library. Contact Val Kirley 0400 654 596

### 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

# ***You are invited to be part of the 2021 Blackened Billy Verse Competition***

The 31st Annual Competition continues the legacy of Tamworth Poetry Reading Group (TPRG).

Since 1991, thousands of entries have been submitted, recording many aspects of Australian country and character. Past Award winners provide exemplary guidance for writers seeking rhyme and metre mastery.

"The Blackened Billy Verse competition has encouraged writers to put pen to paper to produce the most incredible range of rhyming verse, over the years honing their skills to now produce some of the best bush poetry ever written, as good as, if not better than Paterson or Lawson." - Jan Morris, on behalf of the Tamworth Poetry Reading Group (November 2019).

Competition Founder Jan remains a guiding force. The 2021 Billy is in the kiln. Made in the hills of Moonbi, by two blokes who play with clay above where the fibreglass chook is perched to attract tourists and draw attention to the poultry industry. Ian and Fred have been crafting the unique and hard-won Billy trophy annually since 1991.

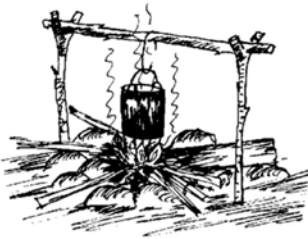
The Billy plaque will be custom-curved and engraved in Tamworth – as it has always been. The winner's trophy plaque will be engraved and attached in the community hosting the awards ceremony. The minor question is where will that ceremony be? The more inviting question is 'Will your name make it onto the Trophy Plaque?'

The 2020 Awards Ceremony was celebrated as part of the Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival. It is anticipated the Awards for the 31st Billy will be announcing during the 2021 Festival, currently estimated to run from 13-20 February. Covid times add question, and Festival organisers will not decide for some time yet about happenings. Late October at earliest. In the interim, entrants should submit the BB2021 entries prior to the 30 November closing date.

In 2020, the Blackened Billy Verse Writing Competition was warmly welcomed by locals, poets and media, with newspaper and television tuning in to capture and share advice of the winners. The success of previous poetry events in Orange has lured an Australian Performance Poetry Championship to Orange for 2021. Excited to see what opportunities are realised, as the Covid-19 saga unfolds.

Entrants for the 2021 Blackened Billy Verse Competition may submit entries via postal or electronic means. Publication of future Tribute Books containing Blackened Billy Winners is likely. Will you be in it?

## **\$1000 Prize Pool**



<b>First Prize</b>	<b>\$500 plus Trophy and Certificate</b>
<b>Second Prize</b>	<b>\$250 plus Certificate</b>
<b>Third Prize</b>	<b>\$150 plus Certificate</b>
<b>Highly Commended</b>	<b>5 x \$20 plus Certificate</b>
<b>Commended</b>	<b>5 x Certificate</b>

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## ***AN OUTING (My thoughts today, after coming in from the garbage bins.)***

© Bessie Jennings, 16/4/20

Are you staying put at home, and just a bit stir-crazy?

Think of an excuse to go outside.

Don't just vegetate in front of TV, being lazy.

Here's a list of outings I have tried:

Monday, do some washing; hang out underwear and socks;

Tuesday, bring them in to fold and press;

Wednesday, take a gentle stroll out to my letterbox;

Thursday, take the garbage out, I guess.

Friday, find a rose to prune, and give my plants some water;

Saturday, a quick dash to the shop;

Sunday, chat across the fence to next door neighbour's daughter.

When will this hectic list of outings stop?

No more sitting yarning in our lovely coffee shop;

no more playing cards to see who wins.

Now our big excitement is our weekly garbage drop.

With any luck, we'll meet beside the bins.

## Back Block Bards

# Bush Poetry Raises \$100K for Dementia Research

from Allan Vagg

My family has always had a long-standing love of bush poetry, creative writing and story-telling going back generations. Growing up as kids (although my wife would say I am still just a big kid!), Dad would read and recite to us all the time many of the classics as well as his own writings. We grew up, and still live, on a sheep & cattle grazing property West of Hillston. With a lot of time sitting on motor-bikes mustering sheep left to our own thoughts, this was well before podcasts were a thing so I guess the foundations were certainly set for story-writing.

As we got into primary school, my sister and I would follow Dad around to various fundraisers and functions locally to recite, he'd do a lot of his own poetry, we would do other people's, and Mum would always be there with the folder following along in case we got stuck.

But we loved the flowing rhythm and rhyme of the bush poems, we found them easy to learn and remember. My sisters' favourite poem to recite was 'Blue Lake Bill the Bunyip', for those who know it it has a running time of about 18 minutes, not a bad effort for a girl in Year 5 to know off by heart! But we were schooled at home by Mum via Correspondence, and I wouldn't swap that upbringing for anything.

Skip a few years, boarding school, college, girls (somewhat unsuccessfully), cricket and rugby (moderately more successfully), and Great Northern (nailed it), I had kept up a bit of writing when inspiration struck but hadn't done a lot over those years.

So, why the back story? Because of what came next in 2013, when Mum was diagnosed with Younger Onset Dementia at age 51. Following all the adjustments to this (skip a couple more years) and still not knowing how or why, we got to a stage where we felt we needed to create a positive out of what was a pretty negative situation. It was Gran who said, "We have all written a bit of poetry, let's put it together into a book and sell it, with all money donated to fund Dementia Research?"

So, we did. Eight authors, all related across 4 generations, became the Back Block Bards.

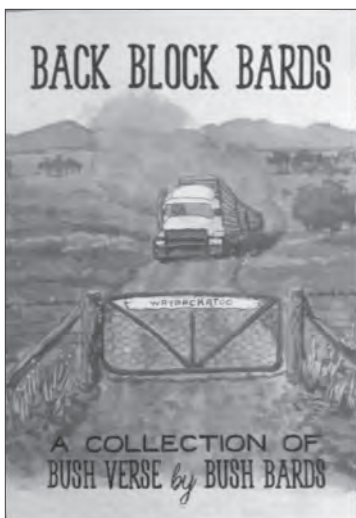
The book was launched in October 2018 with an art exhibition by Gran, with all proceeds being donated to Dementia Australia Research Foundation. Since then the support for the campaign has been enormous and it has quickly taken on a life of its own. We didn't know what to expect but it has far exceeded any expectations we could have had.

Two years later, 2 re-prints of the book, a CD, a large number of performances including Casino Beef Week where we got to share the stage with Ray Essery & Neil McArthur, we are really proud to announce we have donated a total of \$100,000 to the Dementia Australia Research Foundation, all raised through the Back Block Bards bush poetry campaign.

It's just been an incredible result so far, from a personal point of view the support has been overwhelming, from a poetic point of view it is heartening to see the level of support for genuine storytelling in an age of the 24-Hour News cycle and Clickbait headlines on demand.

I have renewed my passion for writing bush poetry and really enjoying it, and huge thanks to the entire Back Block Bards family and committee for their work so far. How good's bush poetry!!

## *The Perfect Christmas Gift!!* **BACK BLOCK BARDS**



Back Block Bards is a group of related bush poets and is a contribution to the rich history of bush verse in Australia. All the poets featured are born and bred in western NSW and our verse is largely based on experiences from this area.

We released a book, Back Block Bards, comprising 56 poems in 2018 and recently our first poetry CD, Circle Work In The Carpark!



Following a close family connection with Younger Onset Dementia, the Back Block Bards was formed as a Not-For-Profit group to raise money to fund research into this insidious disease.

Books are \$25 each and CD's \$15 each, available from our website. Every cent raised is donated to the Dementia Australia Research Foundation!



To date we have donated \$100,000 to DARF!

***www.backblockbards.org.au***



# AUSSIE SPOKEN BLOKE

Graham Scobie



Aussie Spoken Bloke

Aussie Spoken Bloke is a CD of 15 original bush poems by south coast NSW poet, songwriter and musician, Graham Scobie. Some of the poems were originally released as songs on Graham's music CD's, *By the Banks of the Billabong*, *Aussie Gospel Bloke*, *100 Years Australia* and *Granite Town*, but all began life as bush poems. Others were written more recently such as *The Fire at Yankee's Gap* which occurred in August, 2018, and which Graham fought as a member of the Mogendoura Rural Fire Service Brigade. Other poems such as *Stand to Intention* and *Backburn 3am* were written over the 2019/2020 bushfire season as Graham and his wife, Michelle, run a farm just outside Moruya and a bushfire burnt most of the property on Thursday, 23 Jan 2020.

Copies of the CD are available from Graham for \$10, including GST and postage, on 0409 225957, [graham@scobie.com.au](mailto:graham@scobie.com.au) or PO Box 87, Moruya NSW 2537. A sample can be found at [www.scobie.com.au](http://www.scobie.com.au)

## ***A Huge 'Merry Christmas'***

***to ALL our Members who worked so hard  
throughout 2020 to keep  
our Bush Poetry alive under some of the most  
challenging conditions  
our great Country has ever seen!***

***May you all share wonderful times with Families and  
Friends***

***and may 2021 be a Poetically Prosperous one for all!***