



# A.B.P.A.

**Australian Bush Poets Association  
Volume 27 No. 3     June/July 2021**



***“Always remember the beautiful things,  
and the innocence there to be treasured.....”***

# Poets' Breakfast

King of the Ranges  
Murrurundi NSW

Hosted by Carol Heuchan  
With 'Dubby' Doubleday  
Saturday 25th September  
8am - Poetry & Tucker Tent  
Walk-ups welcome!



## 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 - 31th August 2021.
- 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.



## THE 19TH ANNUAL NANDEWAR POETRY COMPETITION

CONDUCTED BY  
NARRABRI & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.  
SPONSORED BY  
NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL

**FIRST PRIZE: \$150 AND TROPHY**  
**SECOND PRIZE: \$100**  
**THIRD PRIZE: \$50**  
**BEST FIRST-TIMER PRIZE: \$50**

ENTRY FORM

Available from:

Narrabri Shire Visitor Information Centre  
Phone : 6799 6760

Or

Narrabri & District Historical Society Inc.  
P. O. Box 55  
Narrabri 2390

Entry forms to be returned to the above address  
Poets must indicate on the entry form if they  
are a First - Timer....yes - or - no

# Important Notice From The Editor

Due to a recent email Hacking Event please note that all submissions should be addressed to

**macpoet58@gmail.com**

until further notice.

A call out to all Members to make sure you Membership has been renewed for 2021 and also your Insurance if applicable.

Membership Renewal Forms are available online at our website

**www.abpa.org.au**

A big thanks to those who have already renewed and may 2021 be kinder to all our members than 2020.

Neil McArthur



## 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:

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Bill Kearns (NSW)  
Jan Lewis (Vic)  
Irene Conner (WA)

### Non Committee Positions

Webmaster	Gregory North	web@abpa.org.au
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### ABPA Magazine Advertising Rates

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#### Black and White Ads

Full page \$95  
Half Page \$55  
Quarter Page or less \$35

#### Full Colour Ads (Space limited and applicable to Printed Magazine only)

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

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

## **Next Magazine Deadline is July 27th 2021**

### **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.

# President's Report

As I write this report we are once more in lockdown here in Victoria. Hopefully the track and trace has improved markedly from previous lockdowns and we will soon be back in business.

On a more positive note we attended the Man From Snowy River Festival in Corryong back in April. It was good to see friends we hadn't caught up with for quite a while and to see how much poetry we had forgotten. A little rusty at times but overall people were as good as ever.

The festival was well attended although numbers were capped. The last time we attended fourteen thousand people went through the gates. It is heartening to see that many of our bush poetry events have returned and are being very well attended.

It was my privilege to present Jan Lewis with a Life Membership of the ABPA for her tireless work in organizing the Bush Poetry Championships in conjunction with The Man From Snowy River Festival, the Victorian Bush Poetry Musicians Benalla Muster and much more.

Preparations are on track for the Banjo Paterson Poetry Festival in Orange next February incorporating the ABPA National Bush Poetry Championship.

Also, the Golden Damper and Frank Daniel poetry competitions will be taking place in conjunction with the Tamworth Country Music Festival in January 2022.

Finally, the ABPA Committee are delighted to welcome new member David Stanley from Bathurst to the committee. David was the winner of the ABPA Golden Damper Original Poetry section at Tamworth in 2020.

Tim Sheed  
President ABPA



 Find us on  
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Visit Our Website  
[www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)

**Great News that the  
Golden Damper and  
Frank Daniel Awards  
will be going ahead at  
Tamworth in January  
2022.**



Tim presenting Jan Lewis  
with her Life Membership

# THE OUTBACK SAILOR

© David Judge

Winner Humorous Section, 2021 Oracles of the Bush, Tenterfield, NSW

When Jimmy got the message which he found hard to believe,  
he was the last selected for the crew.

The ship was in the harbour and in two days it would leave,  
depending on the way the breezes blew.  
The ship was called the Bounty as a tribute to the past,  
with massive sails and rigging and a crow's nest up the mast.

Now Jimmy was an outback boy as rugged as could be,  
his sailing days were on the River Todd.  
Responding to an advert for a daytrip out to sea,  
he thought, there is no way I'll get the nod.  
The advert sought out sailors who had won a race or two,  
so Jimmy wrote, I've won the Todd, not once but quite a few.

Young Jimmy was a stockman on a station born and bred,  
they said there's not a beast he cannot ride.  
They sent him to the Alice to try riding waves instead,  
with books on sailing lessons as a guide.  
When Jimmy built his vessel for the purpose it was meant,  
he knew to sail the Todd would be a dry-as-hell event.

Our Jimmy showed his expertise for sailing on the sand,  
he won that famous race from year to year.  
The only waves he ever saw came from his mother's hand,  
the prize a wooden trophy and some beer.  
A legend in his lifetime he had won all he could win  
and ended up in Sydney where real sailing would begin.

The flight to Sydney was his first to ride an aeroplane,  
he hung on tight and sat without a sound.  
And when he saw the Harbour he said, Gee! you've had some rain,  
ya better get ya stock to higher ground.  
When Jimmy saw the wooden boat, he said is that the Ark?  
which raised the skipper's eyebrows when he heard that strange remark.

He'd never seen so many ships as high as Uluru,  
he'd only sailed in small boats made of tin.  
But as a ship from P&O came slowly into view,  
he said, is this the Dreamtime that I'm in?  
And as the other crew arrived in t-shirts and in shorts,  
his moleskins and his riding boots made Jim feel out of sorts.

And when he told them who he was and where he'd learnt to sail,  
the crew agreed to help him see it through.  
They were so full of envy and in awe of Jimmy's tale,  
what is there that this cowboy cannot do?  
And as the Bounty left the wharf and sailed out past North Head,  
young Jimmy stood behind the wheel to chart the course ahead.

He saw the vast expanses of the ocean and its waves,  
far greater than the mighty Todd in flood.  
The ocean rose above the mast creating liquid caves,  
descending on the Bounty with a thud.  
Across that wild and woolly sea the ship would buck and toss,  
the Bounty unlike any bronc he'd ever come across.



The crew began adjusting sails with calming of the seas  
and needed one good sailor up the mast.  
Our Jimmy from the inland said, it's just like climbin' trees,  
which left the crew and skipper more aghast.  
And after he'd been up and down in no more than a tic,  
he said he saw a barra and it looked like Moby Dick.

The Bounty sailed along the coast with Jimmy at the stern,  
he was a valued member of the crew.  
They got as far as Harrington from where they would return  
and sail back through the Heads as these trips do.  
They anchored for a barbecue on Sydney Harbour lake,  
forget the fish! our Jimmy said, I'll have a T-bone steak!

When Jimmy got to Alice Springs after the trip was done,  
the station stockmen asked him how it went.  
He started with the size of things, how barra weighed a ton,  
the Opera House a hundred metre tent.  
He said how poor the people were, with very little land,  
nowhere to graze their cattle which was hard to understand.

He spoke on local radio to tell of what he saw,  
if anything was, handy for back here.  
With hands on head he thought a bit, then thought a bit some more,  
until he said, I've got a great idea!  
How 'bout we make a copy of that Bridge across their lake  
and build it over Uluru for all those climbers' sake.

Responses were immediate with angry comments made,  
not knowing it was Jimmy's cheeky way.  
They spoke about the cultural harm, others said the shade,  
would ruin all those colours of the day.  
So Jimmy ditched his claim to fame, a path that he had trod,  
but year on year he still returns to sail the mighty Todd.

# JUDGEMENT AT JINDABILL

© Irene Dalgety-Timpone

Winner Themed Section 'Then and Now' 2021 Oracles of the Bush, Tenterfield, NSW

You've never heard of Jindabill? No wonder! Nor had I, until I heard the strangest tale of times now long gone by. My teacher training mentor who'd spent thirty years, outback, had heard the yarn in Coen pub along the Cooktown track.

He knew I was quite worried that I might be sent out West, and said, "What happens, happens. The Department does know best." He must have seen my doubtful glance, my nervous, shifting feet, so, tongue in cheek, he shared with me the story I'll repeat...

Now, Jindabill was fairly small, as towns out West can be: a Church, a store, a butcher shop, a German bakery, a few old houses and, of course, a low-set, one-roomed school. The teacher left to join the War – folk labelled him a fool.

A girl was sent to take his place in nineteen forty-three, a city lass, but keen to go and prove how good she'd be. Louisa Simmonds was her name. Her age? About nineteen. Her lovely face? By far the best the local lads had seen.

Those times were harsh, good jobs were scarce, and young men, one by one, had left to do some soldiering before the War was won – and won it was; but, sad to say, the lads of Jindabill did not return in forty-five and never, never will.

As duty called, Miss Simmonds taught her class and did her best to make life bright and happy for her students in the West; but, year by year, hope faded: generations came and went, and seasons passed relentlessly with seeming malintent.

She was a city girl at heart and missed her former life: she missed her dream of being just a happy, loving wife with children, all her own, to teach, a caring man beside. She came to hate the bitter fact her wishes were denied.

Each year, the School Inspectors came to check on how she taught. They quizzed the kids, compared results, and wrote a fine report. Each year, Miss Simmonds, filled out forms in hopes of 'city shift': each year, her transfer was denied. Her 'sentence' did not lift.

Her birthday fell on Sunday in the year of eighty-three: she gazed into the mirror and was horrified to see a faded, fragile woman, bent in form, and gaunt of face. "My God!" she uttered sadly, "I just have to leave this place!"

She'd tried the legal measures and been shafted, year by year. With no one left to love her, there was nothing left to fear. Resigned at last to act, herself, she took her can of fuel: with bold determination, she ignited her own school.

The local Sergeant viewed the scene and sadly shook his head. He had surveyed the evidence: he knew to whom it led. He turned to poor Miss Simmonds, fixed his gaze upon her face, and read the pain of barren years that nothing could replace.



For forty years, she'd suffered, borne the hell of loneliness: the powers-that-be in Brisbane had ignored her deep distress. To save her soul, she'd taken charge, and simply paid them back! What could they do to punish her? Imprisonment? The sack?

Her youth was lost. Her friends were gone, her home and parents, too. She'd tried and failed for forty years - saw nothing left to do but burn the school that made her feel she'd served hard time in jail. Her sentence, spent in solitude, had left her aged and frail.

The Sergeant knew just how she felt. He'd been out West for years. He understood her motives, empathised with all her fears. He shared her deepest feelings; knew the battles she had fought... "The school was struck by lightning. I'll write that in my report."

Louisa's story moved me then. It moves me more today: it guided me through struggles that I've met along the way. Through forty years of teaching that tried hard to rule my life, I've lived the dream Louisa craved - a mother and a wife.



# The Heart and Soul of Australia

© David Campbell

Winner, 2021 Cloncurry Poetry Prize

There's a spirit in the outback that's a challenge to define  
when a poet tries to find the words he needs,  
and tradition prompts the pattern of a metred, rhyming line  
as a modern critic, disappointed, pleads:  
"Oh no, please, not Henry Lawson, CJ Dennis and the rest,  
like 'The Banjo' and that Snowy River ride,  
with those endless golden sunsets in the deserts way out west,  
and explorers who so tragically died."

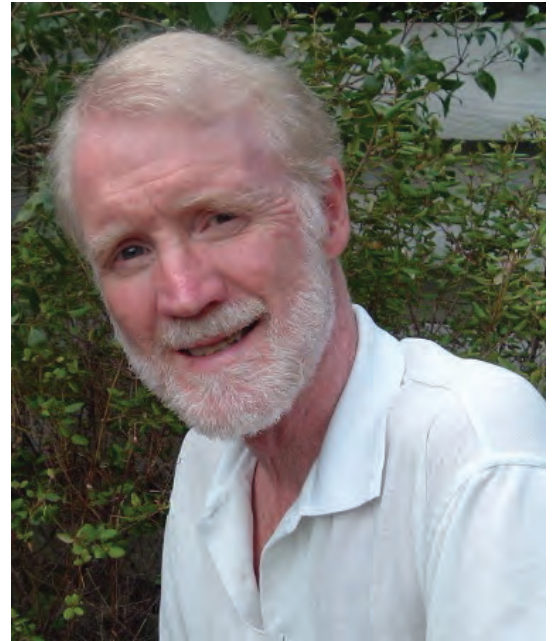
But this seems a situation where that challenge should be met,  
for that history of verse can't be ignored  
as it's given us those stories that we never should forget,  
and I reckon that it still can strike a chord,  
so let's take a journey inland, well away from Queensland's coast,  
to 'The Curry' in the land of Burke and Wills,  
where a township built on copper is now very proud to boast  
of the need that one amenity fulfils.

If you want to find a symbol of Australia's heart and soul,  
it's the flying doctor service that supplies  
so much aid to far-flung outposts as it plays a vital role  
in protecting those who'd have to, otherwise,  
spend a day or more on travel for the healthcare they require  
when emergencies have caught them unprepared,  
so the service can be something that will guide us and inspire  
further thinking about stewardship that's shared.

Like respecting Mother Nature, as we're heading down the path  
of a climate that keeps turning to extremes,  
so we face a world in danger, with a tragic aftermath  
that will mean the end of all our hopes and dreams  
when the food bowls of the nation are just arid, wind-blown sand,  
and the rivers merely latticeworks of mud  
as a tribute to our failure to take heed and understand  
that our legacy could be inscribed in blood.

Leaving nothing in a story spanning sixty thousand years,  
from the early days when settlement began  
with the very first arrivals, through the convict pioneers,  
to the present day, and evidence that man  
is destroying vast resources that are needed to survive  
as pollution spreads its poison through the air,  
and so many species suffer as they fight to stay alive  
in a future that seems destined for despair.

So the welfare of the planet is our principal concern  
as the warning signs get clearer by the day,  
but we still have many lessons that remain for us to learn  
if we want to keep catastrophe at bay,  
and the spirit that we're seeking can be found in all that drives  
the compassion of the flying doctor crews  
in the twenty-four hour service that has saved so many lives,  
dedication that so rarely makes the news.



And those fundamental lessons have to come, in part, from those  
well attuned to all the rhythms of the earth,  
our indigenous first peoples who have known the highs and lows  
of the seasons since the moment of their birth,  
for millennia have taught them how to work with nature's laws,  
how to take just what they need and nothing more,  
a philosophy essential as an urgent global cause  
to avoid a vast environmental war.

But the first step to be taken is a transformation here,  
recognition of so much that's been concealed  
by the steady hum of progress as old cultures disappear,  
leaving wounds that time has certainly not healed,  
the result of crimes committed not so very long ago  
as the white man colonised Australia's shores,  
a disruption that continues, as the headlines often show,  
in a travesty that closes many doors.

It's respect that's so important if we want to change our ways,  
for the planet in its current threatened state,  
but we also have to value the ancestral fires that blaze  
like a beacon with the dreamers who relate  
what's existed through the ages, what is now, and yet to come,  
in the hope that through the years that lie ahead  
true equality will flourish when we're marching to a drum  
that ensures mankind is healthy, clothed, and fed.

So let's follow the example that the flying doctor sets  
as a symbol of what selflessness achieves  
through a caring hand extended, without rancour or regrets,  
an acknowledgement that "service" interweaves  
understanding and commitment to a shared environment  
that depends upon us all to play our part  
in a fragile ecosystem where the curse of discontent  
can so easily destroy a nation's heart.

# BANJO PATERSON AUSTRALIAN POETRY FESTIVAL

## 12th to 20th February 2022

Incorporating

### **NATIONAL BUSH POETRY PERFORMANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS** **17 and 18 February 2022**

Join the community of Orange, NSW and its surrounding villages in a week of bush poetry events for their annual Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival in February 2022. This will be a special festival as the Rotary Club of Orange is partnering with the ABPA to host the National Bush Poetry Performance Championship competition in association with the Festival.

Banjo Paterson was born in Orange on 17 February 1864 and what more fitting way to celebrate than to gather the best bush poets from across Australia in competition, entertainment and storytelling.

Put the dates in your diary and book accommodation early, as Orange has become a sought-after getaway destination. It offers great scenery, food and wine experiences, historic villages and lovely parks and gardens.

The program for the week is looking like this at the moment, and as the year goes on more events will be added.

#### Saturday 12 Feb

- Boree Cabonne historic homestead afternoon tea, Borenore
- Rosebank Guesthouse afternoon entertainment, Millthorpe
- Poetry Brawl, Molong

#### Sunday 13 Feb

- Poets' brunch, Yeoval

#### Monday 14 Feb

- Brekky and Poetry on the Pavers, Orange

#### Tuesday 15 Feb

- Brekky and Poetry on the Pavers, Orange
- Lunch at Ironbark Hotel, Stuart Town (via XPT from Orange)

#### Wednesday 16 Feb

- Brekky and poetry on the Pavers, Orange
- Wrath of Grapes, Heifer Station Wines

#### Thursday 17 Feb

- ABPA National Championship, Orange
- Twilight birthday celebration, Orange

#### Friday 18 Feb

- ABPA National Championship, Orange
- Food and wine night Market, Orange

#### Saturday 19 Feb

- Youth Poetry Competition, Orange
- Entertainment at Strawhouse Wines

#### Sunday 20 Feb

- Rotary Community Market, Orange

#### Monday 14 to Friday 18 Feb

- Poetry performances and workshops in schools

Keep an eye on the ABPA website ([www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)) for information about the National Championships and on the Orange360 web site ([www.orange360.com.au](http://www.orange360.com.au)) for program and booking information about the festival.

Len Banks

***Never feel your Bush Poetry is either too good or too bad to share. Never doubt nor underestimate yourself, nor place too much self-importance on yourself.***

***We write our Bush Poetry as a means to share our stories and experiences. This is what our Readers and Audiences want. That is why Bush Poetry has always had such a staunch following.***

***Poems hidden away in drawers from lack of confidence, or because they are only written for monetary prizes or Awards are the Poems that almost no one ever get to hear.***

***Please send your work to the Magazine to share with other Bush Poetry lovers, Never underestimate nor overestimate the worth of your words!***

The Editor





# MAURIE and THE MAN

by Jan Lewis

At our Covid safe 25th Anniversary Man from Snowy River festival at Corryong, Victoria, it was necessary to have an IN door and an OUT door. Usually we erect the staging at one end, blocking off the door, but swinging the stage around to the side wall turned out to be a nice surprise, and we were able to adapt the décor fairly easily. The new look was popular with most, and a good decision acoustically.

Our featured performers were Greg North, Geoffrey W Graham, The Rhymer from Ryde, Christine Middleton and most states of Australia were represented.

Our new Banjo's stage was christened by new performers receiving our traditional standing ovation, (Many thanks to our dear friends and poets in Western Australia for funding, and Jai Thoolen for his building skills).

With a minimum of competition, - not being a Victorian Championship - there was plenty of opportunity for beginners to polished performers to honour performers past and present. I was interested to hear that many of them felt anxious about performing for the first time in a year or more. So many stories!

We put on small concerts for Corryong Hostel residents and visitors to the Day Activity Group to include them in our festival - very satisfying for everyone, - good practise time in front of a very appreciative audience. One special moment was seeing MFSR festival elder Keith Whitsed's lips silently following the Man from Snowy River poem with Bruce Chandler and then Keith reciting another long poem faultlessly.

At times the weather was chilly, but there was a lot of time spent around the campfire, yarning, singing well into the night, munching on damper or roast mutton, thanks to our cooks Bruce Chandler and Phil McManus. Campfire worked well, mainly due to Kevin McCarthy and Simon Dillon's hearty singalongs and encouraging people to join in

There was competition though - the important Recital of Banjo's famous poem, signature of the festival 'The Man from Snowy River', which was won by Maurie Foun. He's been chasing the title for years, and has had plenty of practice this year, reciting to a steady trickle of visitors bringing their tents and caravans to enjoy some Australiana at his eco camp on the road to Khancoban.

The Jack Riley Heritage Award, for the best original poem, yarn or song was won by Rhonda Tallnash in the female section and Seamus Foley in the Men's. An extra award was presented to Seamus for the higher score. That repurposed trophy was won by Jim Angel in 2001 and donated back to the festival by his family.

A very emotional section of the program was a tribute to Carol Reffold, our first festival since she passed away. Several performers honoured Carol with their poems and music and the Carol Reffold Memorial One Minute Poem was won by Lisa Ride - voted by the audience - and a popular choice. Tintaldrá's late legend Betty Walton was also honoured by the poets.

Lastly, 30 people who attended loved our final session on Sunday night. Its informality, acoustics and variety were wonderful. Much more enjoyable than doing the usual Caravan Park gig in the cold and dark!

Thank you to the festival board and staff, all volunteers, friends, local sponsors and others who made this happen. A full list of prizes is attached

## MFSR POETRY prizes 2021

### Banjo Paterson's 'MFSR' Recital

- 1st Maurie Foun
- 2nd Rhonda Tallnash
- 3rd James Thomas

### Jack Riley Heritage Award - Women's

- 1st Rhonda Tallnash
- 2nd Lynne Frederick
- 3rd Christa Dwyer

### Jack Riley Heritage - Men's

- 1st Seamus Foley
- 2nd David Stanley
- 3rd Matt Hollis

### Lawrie Sheridan Encouragement Award

- 1st James Thomas

### Carol Reffold One Minute Poem

- 1st Lisa Ride
- 2nd Lynne Frederick

### Senior's Encouragement Award

- Margaret Ryan

### Jan Lewis Encouragement Award

- Heather Casey



From South Australia  
Another winning poem in  
the Laura Literary Awards  
run annually by the Rocky  
River 'Riters

# Our Poetry Kids

with Brenda Joy



"My name is Isabelle Doo, and I am 13 years old. I was born in New Zealand, but currently live on the Gold Coast, Queensland, and enjoy competitive swimming, piano, badminton, and reading. I live with my parents, sister, cat, rat, and dog, and love English and Art. I own 231 books, and my favourite authors are Sarah J. Maas, Rick Riordan, and Jeff Kinney."



*Isabelle is a pupil at the AB Paterson College – a non-denominational private school situated on the Queensland Gold Coast.*

Congratulations Isabelle on winning the Junior Poetry section in Laura.

## THE READING ROOM by Isabelle Doo

A sandwich of ink and paper,  
A banquet of pictures and words,  
A meal of chapters and plot twists,  
A recipe to read undisturbed.

An adventure of magic and mischief,  
A planet of fiction and fun,  
A holiday of romance and thrillers,  
A quest on the moon or the sun.

A lake of knowledge and beauty,  
A spring of wild thoughts and dreams,  
An ocean of myths and legends,  
A trench of betrayal and schemes.

A book is a weapon and antidote,  
A quiet, imaginative friend,  
To curl up with by the fireside,  
To read to whatever end.

Some people think books are useless,  
A jumble of phrases and rhymes,  
But we know that the pages are precious,  
To reminisce over one at a time.

So next time that the world gets you down,  
Which is more often than we like to admit.  
Get lost in the pages and listen to;  
The stories who shape us bit by bit.

© 2020 Isabelle Doo (at age 12)

*Judge's comments – From the first line this poem grabs the reader and what a feast follows. Cleverly crafted with many reasons why we should all appreciate books.*

Previously Published 2020 LLA Anthology

And another treat –

## ANCIENT MOUNTAIN by Kate Nicholas Edgar

*Crumbling stone and a heart of rock,  
the ancient mountain stands,  
the true king of the natural world,  
the tallest in all the lands...*

Your majestic snow-capped peak,  
that shimmers in the sunlight,  
like glittering jewels from afar,  
or a shining moon so bright.

Your gaze looks upon the gold horizon,  
somewhere very far out to sea,  
you watch the ochre sunset.  
Burning reds and oranges fly free.

Your peak brushes against dewy clouds,  
touching the very tips of the sky,  
where storms rage and thunder booms,  
and eagles soar so high.

Your ancient beating heart,  
deep below the rocky earth,  
has lived for many long years,  
hidden away by your wide girth.

You're the emperor of the world,  
ever so imposing and grand,  
protective and honourable,  
the true king of the land.

© 2020 Kate Nicholas Edgar (at age 11)

# Walking In Banjo's Boots

By Catherine Lawrence May 12, 2021

Two performances in local libraries brought bush poetry to potentially new audiences as part of Brisbane's Anywhere Festival. The festival, held throughout May, involved a large number of performance groups who staged theatrical and musical events in a variety of alternative venues – 'anywhere' but in theatres. North Pine Bush Poets were invited by the Moreton Bay Regional Council to stage the two performances, one at Burpengary and one at Bribie Island. Both performances opened with "Clancy of the Overflow" done in flash mob style and closed with the same poem set to music and with the audiences providing 'sound effects'. In between were poems and songs with the audiences involved as much as possible, presented by a slightly different line-up of poets at each venue. Covid protocols reduced the sizes of the potential audiences, but not the enthusiasm. The Burpengary show was reviewed by a representative of the Anywhere Festival and it is with some absence of humility that I include it here.



Picture: North Pine Bush Poets' Banjo's Boots performers at Burpengary Library (L to R Mick Martin, Doc Bland, Keith Osborne, Dot Schwenke and Mike Gilmour). Picture credit Creative Futures Photography

Congratulations to Moreton Bay Council for embracing the Anywhere Festival concept. Placing the North Pine Bush Poets' Banjo's Boots celebration of the spoken word in Burpengary Library was an enjoyable demonstration that libraries are 'no longer shush places.'

Bush poetry is a much-loved genre of Australian writing, best enjoyed at a gathering where poets and entertainers recite (and occasionally sing) works old and new. Banjo Paterson is among the most popular and well known of the bush poets—with works including 'The Man from Snowy River' and the words of 'Waltzing Matilda.' So it is not surprising that those who celebrate Banjo Patterson's work, and who seek to emulate his literary style, have created a show that walks in Banjo's Boots.

Established in 1996, the North Pine Bush Poets are lovers of the spoken (and occasionally sung) word. It was great to see that the Anywhere Festival traditions were honoured in the 2021 festival placing of Banjo's Boots in two Moreton Bay libraries. As repositories of memory and story, libraries provide a great community space. Welcoming the audience at the Burpengary Library 12th May premiere performance, Sarah Dashwood (Branch Leader) confessed to being a fan of 'not shush' libraries, so we knew we were in the right place.

The five performers presented a program of new and classic works of solos and duets (as well as an opening collective recitation of Clancy of the Overflow. Mick Martin was a professional compere of the program, demonstrating a range of 'dad jokes,' skilful harmonica playing, and an ability to slip easily into a performance of a number of pieces (I particularly enjoyed The Day I Shot the Telly and Gates on the Track). Dot Schwenke was compelling in performing two pieces, holding the full attention of the audience in both the first and second halves of the show (A Few Kind Words was delivered with excellent comic timing). Doc Bland brought musical flair into the program, where Moreton Bay was an apt highlight.

Newer members of the team, Keith Osborne and Mike Gilmour, demonstrated that they were a match for the more established performers. Osborne's The Nar Nar Goon Pub was a poem in the best traditions of bush poetry (building up to a great punch line), and the audience greatly enjoyed the opportunity to play the role of chorus in his Different Day. Gilmour was a true entertainer, dressing the part for his performance of Banjo Patterson's Mulga Bill's Bicycle, while we all grimaced with him at the end of Lipstick Capers.

Banjo's Boots is a very pleasant way to spend 90 minutes. I really must pay more attention to the programming of events at my local library. And if you are ever wanting to try out Bush Poetry, look up the North Pine Bush Poets, as they have an active program of events across the year.

**Verdict: A free and enjoyable 90 minute show.**

# ROUNDING UP THE CHOOKS

© Maureen Stahl Elliminyt

I came to teach in the country,  
a school with a staff of three,  
fresh from the city it was a  
new experience for me.

A lovely older couple told  
me at their home I could board  
just a block away from school and  
at a price I could afford.

Very soon after I moved in  
they went on a holiday.  
I said that I would mind their chooks  
for the time they were away.

The first morning off I trotted,  
I knew what I had to do,  
I opened up the henhouse door  
and the chooks came streaming through.

Just then a short, sharp gust of wind  
blew the run gate open wide.  
I hadn't put the chain back on  
when I let myself inside.

The chooks were quick to realise  
in the paddock all around  
the scavenging would be better  
than on all their scratched bare ground.

With one accord they fled the run  
thinking this their lucky day.  
I stood and watched the escapees  
with a feeling of dismay.

I ran around and my arms,  
how I yelled then cursed then cried,  
but the chooks chose to ignore me  
as they spread out far and wide.

I found that chooks aren't really dumb,  
which is what I'd always thought,  
these chooks were enjoying freedom  
they weren't going to get caught.

Disdainful stares from beady eyes  
seemed to be saying "You fool!"  
By now the time was ten to nine  
and I should have been in school.

I ran the whole way up the road  
in a very hassled state.  
Mr Mac, the head, was standing  
on duty inside the gate.

"My chooks are out in the paddock  
I can't get them back," I wailed.  
He gave a loud piercing whistle  
and lots of games were then curtailed.

"Grade 5&6 boys over here  
right now," came his lusty shout.  
"The rest of you continue with  
whatever you were about."

The 5&6 boys all converged  
on us with some puzzled looks.  
"We've got a job to do," he said.  
"round up Miss Richardson's chooks."

The boys and I set off at speed  
accompanied by Mr Mac,  
who'd told teacher left in charge,  
"Hold the bell till we get back."

We reached the paddock where the chooks  
were scratching amongst the grass,  
they looked surprised to see these folk  
descending on them en masse.

The boys spread around the paddock  
for this was an easy chore,  
remember these were country boys,  
they had done such jobs before.

The boys advanced towards the run  
the chooks going on ahead,  
then one by one they sauntered  
into the run beside their shed.

So thankfully I slammed the gate  
on the final straggling hen.  
What a relief to see them all  
safely back inside their pen.

We made our way towards the school  
and once back inside the gate  
the bell was rung and school began,  
only fifteen minutes late.



# KING OF THE RANGES

STOCKMAN'S CHALLENGE & BUSH FESTIVAL

## Showcasing Stockmanship Skills

with Bush Festival Entertainment for the whole family



Sam Ebery in the bush at the King of the Ranges

24 - 25 September 2021  
Murrurundi NSW



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King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge Inc.

# KING OF THE RANGES

STOCKMAN'S CHALLENGE & BUSH FESTIVAL

The 2021 Annual

## WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

**\$500 Prize money!**

Original Serious 1<sup>st</sup> \$100 2<sup>nd</sup> \$30 3<sup>rd</sup> \$20

Original Humorous 1<sup>st</sup> \$100 2<sup>nd</sup> \$30 3<sup>rd</sup> \$20

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

and your name on the magnificent Outback Heritage Trophy

\$10 for first two poems then \$10 a poem. (any topic)

Critique (if required) additional \$10 Poems may be any topic.

Entries:

The Secretary, Kay Seath (KOTR)

17/28 Deaves Road, Cooranbong. 2265

Enq: 0416 262399

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

### CONDITIONS

This competition is an **OPEN** event for **ORIGINAL** verse having good **RHYME** and **METER**.

- Previously published poetry that has not been published for monetary gain and has not won a first prize in any written competition will be accepted.
- No responsibility for poems entered in the wrong category. Please check.
- A4 size pages should be used keeping each entry separate, using one side of paper only.
- Entries should be typed where possible.
- Cover sheets should be used. Entrants name or other details or identifying marks of any kind must not appear on any of the poems.
- **Direct Deposit** (stating name & details) to KOTR  
WP Life BSB 03254 Acc 289374  
Or Cheque or money orders for the total amount of entry fees (and any critique fees) should be made out to King of the Ranges (Bush Poetry) and must accompany all entries not paid and referenced by Direct Deposit.

**CLOSING DATE.** Entries date stamped no later than **25th August, 2021** will be accepted.

Copyright remains with the author. Poems will not be used in any anthology without the author's permission. Poems will not be returned.

The winners will be announced at the **Poets' Breakfast** at the King of the Ranges Festival on **Saturday morning 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021.**

If required entrants should supply a SSAE for results to be posted after the awards are presented. Results will be posted on ABPA and KOTR websites.

The judge's decision will be final and no further correspondence will be entered into. As well as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places, there may be Highly Commended awards made according to the judge's discretion.

**ENTRY FEE: \$10.00 PER POEM OR for two poems (Critique additional \$10 per poem)**

Extra poems can be listed on a separate cover sheet. Entry forms may be copied.

Original **SERIOUS** Category (please tick poem if **Critique** required)

Poem Title

1.....

2.....

Original **HUMOROUS** Category

Poem Title

1.....

2.....

Add others if applicable or a separate sheet may be used

**NAME** (Please Print).....

Postal Address.....

..... Code.....

Phone.....email.....

Number of Entries..... Entry Fees applicable.....

plus Critique fee of \$10 per poem (if required).....

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Payment details: Total entry fees plus critique if required:

Direct Deposit Name reference, to KOTR, WP Life, BSB 03254 Acc. 289374

(Payment can also be by chq. or money order payable KOTR, 17/28 Deaves Road, Cooranbong. NSW 2265) Enquiries [kaysie2@hotmail.com](mailto:kaysie2@hotmail.com)

Signed..... Date.....

An adult must also sign if the entrant is under 18 years of age.....

# The Mask

© Mal Beveridge 27th April 2021

I'm perplexed and bamboozled but never I ask  
when I see a stray nose poking out from a mask.  
Is there some secret signal that's sent from this bit  
just to stimulate, trigger or waffle my wit?

Do they protest compliance? An oxygen thief?  
Are they all anti-vaccers who harbour belief  
that submitting, agreeing, to cover a nose  
is a ploy that will lead to a full vaccine dose?

Is it all a conspiracy? What do they think?  
Has all reason and rhyme gone to hell down the sink?  
Do they see, do they fear the thread of a plot?  
Do they all follow blindly some post that they got?

Well perhaps it's religious? The Order of Drip?  
Is the great God of Mucous just waiting to slip?  
"Don't you worry!" they say, "For the truth will not change!"  
But the truth I suspect is much stranger than strange.....

...they would rather face painful and lingering death  
than to cover their noses and smell their own breath!!!

---

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID CAMPBELL, THE NEW BARD OF THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK**

In response to the announcement of his well-deserved success in the Cloncurry Prize Poetry Competition, David mentioned that the competition encouraged poets to use their skills to "continue the great traditions established a century ago by such well-known names as Dame Mary Gilmore, who is buried alongside her husband in the Cloncurry cemetery, Henry Lawson, 'Banjo' Paterson and C.J. Dennis."

David's brilliant poem, 'The Heart and Soul of Australia', is a wonderful example of Bush Poetry that features the technical excellence of the traditional Masters, while, at the same time, projecting the genre, firmly and inspirationally, into the third decade of the Twenty First Century. Contemporary Bush Poets need to emulate David's example.

Many of us have been losing contact with traditional requirements. Change for the sake of change has become the order of the day in some writing circles. It is time for us to re-evaluate our own writings, and to do what needs to be done to achieve what the continuation of tradition demands – adherence to the essential structure, and the poetic and language techniques that were honed so impeccably in the classic Bush Ballads we all know and love. Narrative and character elements, and significant social issues are still priority requirements, but they must relate, as much as possible, to the times in which we live – the here and now of our lives.

There will always be a place in Australian Bush Poetry for the great characters and events of the past. We must also, however, seek for the outstanding narratives and characters of the present. This is the only way we can help this Australian cultural icon continue proudly into the future, untarnished, and highly memorable and worthy of publication.

Congratulations, David, and thank you for re-establishing those precious traditions we need to maintain.

Irene Dalgety Timpone

# Mountains Ruth

© J.P. Coyne, 2021

The mountains were the place for Ruth --  
she loved the mountain air.  
Not working now, no more a sleuth,  
she lived without a care.

Upon a cliff, was built her home—  
the view, magnificent.  
There was no urge to work or roam.  
In peace, her days were spent.

Her project was to build a boat—  
prepare for climate change.  
With rising seas one had to float  
to broaden travel range.

She made a fortune through her book:  
'Some useless crims I've known'.  
She captured many-a-useless crook—  
in prison they were thrown.

She'd had her share of threats and such  
from victims of the law.  
All-over cameras gave much  
security and more.

Kidnapper Joe was in Ruth's book—  
his silly tale was told.  
His fellow cons thought him a sook.  
The shame was many fold.

That sleuthy Ruth he did resent.  
Revenge was on his mind,  
and when his prison term was spent,  
her address he did find.

Joe got himself a brand-new gun—  
"In her, I'll blast a hole."  
He thought the stalking would be fun—  
her death a simple goal.

He caught a train to near her place  
and walked into the bush.  
Behind her house, he made his base,  
but then he felt a push.

He stumbled back, over the edge—  
four metres he did go.  
His fall was broken by a ledge.  
"I saw you coming, Joe."

"Don't worry mate, your in good hands,  
I haven't lost one yet.  
There's often stalkers on my lands—  
some crooks just can't forget."

The fire department rescued Joe,  
police took him away,  
and Ruth went to a boating show—  
it's just another day.

Derby.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA

All roads lead to Derby! WA poets are on their way north to warmer conditions and much poetry and music.

Derby Bush Poets Brunch is on 18th July at the Sportsman's Club. Guest poets are Stinger Nettleton and Cobber Lethbridge.

**W.A. Bush Poets**



**& Yarnspinners Assn.**

Dinninup.

Terry Bennetts and Cobber Lethbridge had a very successful launch of a new CD produced and sung by Terry and Cobber. The poem 'Not Without You Old Mate' was an award winner a few years ago. A very supportive group of poets and friends spent the weekend at Cobber's Corner in Dinninup in WA South West and provided around the campfire atmosphere for the video to be produced. We wish Terry and Cobber every success when the video is out there in the music world.

### NOT WITHOUT YOU OLD MATE

Keith Lethbridge/Terry Bennetts

I've travelled this land from the east to the west,  
From the plains to the mountains high,  
Down in the gullies where wallabies rest  
And out where the broilgas fly.  
I've dined in style at the finest pub  
That ever unfurled a flag,  
But I'm not well suited to fancy grub  
And sleep just as well in a swag.

The wages were low and the yakka was hard,  
And youth has a reckless pride.  
I remember that brawl in the mustering yard?  
It was good to have you at my side.  
And now that we're older, I'm timing my run  
To that beautiful pearly gate.  
I'll call to Saint Peter: "Don't hurry me son,  
I'm waiting for my old mate!"

Chorus

*There's a little bush river that runs to the sea,  
And they tell me the yabbies taste great,  
By a blazing log fire with a billy of tea,  
But not without you, old mate.*

Chorus...

*There's a little bush river that runs to the sea,  
And they tell me the yabbies taste great,  
By a blazing log fire with a billy of tea,  
But not without you, old mate,*

Remember those years when we worked on the road  
And the gravel was hotter than Hell?  
Then when I felt crook, you shovelled my load.  
Oh yes, I remember it well.  
From station to station, from wool-shed to town,  
With many a yarn and a song,  
But when there was only one job to be found,  
Then we just kept moving along.

No, not without you, old mate

Chorus...

*When money flowed easy, we squandered the lot,  
And forgot about taxes and rates.  
We didn't keep records of who paid for what;  
That's never a problem, with mates.  
Remember that time we fell foul of the law,  
When sour-belly whiskey was sold  
It cost us six days and it could have been more,  
But at least we kept out of the cold.*



Terry Bennetts, Cobber Lethbridge at CD Launch

# Great Aussie Reads

*With Jack Drake*

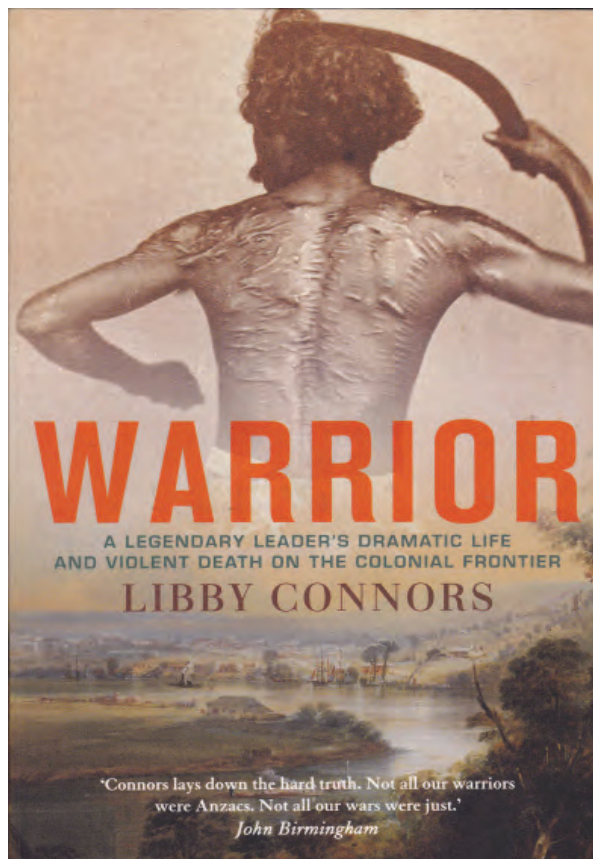


Everybody in America and most of the world, knows the names of the First Nation Americans who fought to resist white invasion. How many of Australia's indigenous freedom fighters do we recognise by name? Not many!

This situation is partially rectified in *Warrior, A Legendary Leader's Dramatic Life and Violent Death on the Colonial Frontier* by Libby Connors (Allen and Unwin 2015).

*Warrior* tells the story of Dundalli, a Dalla man from the Blackall Range area north of Brisbane. This warrior rose to resist the squatter invasion of lands near today's capital city of Queensland. Written off as an outlaw by white society, Dundalli was in reality a fully initiated man of his people who strove to protect his culture in the face of a stronger and more ruthless enemy.

Libby Connors has done a masterful job of piecing together a sketchy history that white Australia has done its best to bury. This book is well worth a read for anyone who wants to know what really went on in colonial times.



During the 1840s white invasion of the Moreton Bay and Darling Downs in South East Queensland, threw up two indigenous freedom fighters – Moppy and his son Multuggerah.

*The Battle of One Tree Hill* by Ray Kerkhove and Frank Uhr (Boolarong Press, 2019), tells the story of their heroic and eventually hopeless campaign to starve out the squatters by disrupting their supply lines and destroying their stock.

Kerkhove and Uhr present a well researched account of those turbulent times that many Australian land owners and politicians would rather was forgotten. *The Battle of One Tree Hill* is a chapter in Queensland's Frontier Wars, a time that has largely been suppressed in the State's history.

If you are interest in the real story of what happened during the colonial invasion rather than the myth of "peaceful settlement" we have been conditioned to believe, give *The Battle of One Tree Hill* a go.

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



# North Pine Bush Poets

G'day poets and poetry lovers,

well our winter weather is here early and it's only early Autumn. I hope you are travelling well with good health, sufficient wealth and good humour. This is truly the best time of year for poets, the camp fires are burning, the days are mostly mild and the poetry comps and events are ramping up. Here are a few activities that might have gone under the radar. The Ekka and North Pine comps are closing fast. I cannot say that the numbers would suggest that you have an increased chance of a result but I can say that you definitely should put at least one entry in. You would like the odds.

1. The Brisbane Ekka is on again. We will have ACTUAL performance poetry AND an online competition guaranteed to impress. Many poets have been honing their skills at home over the COVID 19 lockdowns and many have had the opportunity to compile and present great videos for the separate online competition. The format is so simple now that even I can make it work. This competition was a huge success last year with almost 50 entries, See the information online by one click on this link;

<https://www.ekka.com.au> then go to the search bar on the screen, type in poetry competitions 2021 and you're away. A tip we learned last year. If you need help ask a grandchild, son, or daughter or someone who is good with computers. I think most will manage it though, give it a try. You can also call the ekka contact listed there, she is wonderful and generous with her time.

or contact me if you cannot make the process work [ozbushpoet@gmail.com](mailto:ozbushpoet@gmail.com) 0421514555 but only after trying it first please.

## 2. URGENT !!! \$\$\$\$\$

North Pine bush poets are holding the QLD championships this year, The competition is called "The Golden Wattle Bush Poetry Awards & Qld Championships" competition inquiries ; [president@northpinebushpoets.com](mailto:president@northpinebushpoets.com) check details on [www.northpinebushpoets.com](http://www.northpinebushpoets.com) I would get straight on to it folks.

The ABPA and our other sponsors have very kindly supported our efforts to keep bush poetry alive and thriving. Check the link and act today. Apart from placing in the Qld championships there is considerable prize money available..

3. North Pine Bush Poets are performing at "Verse for Vinnies" in Grovely Brisbane on the 27th of June. This will be considered our charity concert for the year, details for this are on our [www.northpinebushpoets.com](http://www.northpinebushpoets.com) website. Previous fundraising events have produced up to \$14,000 (our best so far) and we pride ourselves on being supporters of those in need as well as promoting Australian bush poetry.



### The North Pine Bush Poets group presents The Queensland State Championships for Written Australian Bush Poetry

Poems must be written with good rhyme and meter and be about Australia, Australians or the Australian way of life.

This competition will be conducted under the auspices of the Australian Bush Poetry Association and in association with the Moreton Bay Readers and Writers Festival and the Fellowship of Australian Writers (Qld).

Entries are welcome from Interstate and overseas.

Open for entries: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Closing date: 28 May 2021. Results: 4 July 2021

#### Classes:

- Open, Novice and Junior sections

#### Prizes

- Overall Champion (from the open class winners):  
\$350 plus Graham Fredriksen Trophy.
- Open
  - Serious – 1st Prize \$350 – 2nd Prize \$100 – 3rd prize \$50
  - Humorous – 1st Prize \$350 – 2nd Prize \$100 – 3rd prize \$50
- Novice
  - Serious - \$100
  - Humorous - \$100
- Junior - 1st prize \$75 – 2nd prize \$25

Details will appear on <https://northpinebushpoets.com/> and the Australian Bush Poets Association website <http://abpa.org.au/events.html>

#### About Graham Fredriksen:

Graham was a very talented bush poet from the Kilcoy region who died in a tragic farming accident in 2010. His family has lived on "The Ten Mile" for generations. Graham was only the second poet to win the Bronze Swagman Award 3 times. He was a founding member of North Pine Bush Poets. His poetry lives beyond him.

The organisers are very grateful to the Championships Sponsors:



ABP



aim Lab



Members of NPBP

all the very best to you and yours

Mick Martin

vice president NPBP

042 15 14 555

The Anywhere Festival & North Pine Bush Poets

invite you to Spend some time in

## BANJO'S BOOTS!

Why did Clancy ride out to the Overflow?  
Why did Mulga Bill trade his horse for a bicycle?

- Fresh performances of Australian bush poetry!
- Our very own award-winning writers and performers!
  - Whimsical new bush poetry!
  - Musical re-imagining of traditional work!
  - Family-friendly fun!



**Burpengary Library**

Wednesday  
12 May 2021  
1.00pm to 2.30pm

**Bribie Island Library**

Wednesday  
19 May 2021  
1.00pm – 2.30pm

Free admission! Bookings essential.  
To book your tickets, copy the QR Code or go to  
<https://anywhere.is/event/banjosboots/>



An Initiative of Moreton Bay Regional Council  
and Moreton Region Libraries

# Vale Ron Stevens

It is with much sadness that we inform our members of the passing of one of our truly great modern day writers in Ron Stevens, of Dubbo. Our thoughts go out to his wife Clo and family. Ron passed away on who passed away on the 2nd April 2021 after a long illness from Asbestosis

Ron won almost every award imaginable for his Australian Bush Poetry and at one time, along with his mate, the late Ellis Campbell, pretty much made Dubbo the Bush Poetry capital of Australia.

Australian Poetry will be poorer for his loss but richer for his legacy.

## THE LEMON TREE

© Ron Stevens

You ask me are there moments I recall as dear,  
if lights shine from my childhood, cardinal and clear?  
Remembrance treads unlikely roads when prodded so,  
by-passing petty paths to glory years ago  
downgraded, seen today as circles in the sand.  
My backtrack journey shows no milestones bold or grand,  
no fancy footsteps down an oak-lined boulevard.  
I halt beside the lemon tree in Granny's yard.

I'm young again, yet it has always shown its years  
with dignity, respected both for fruit and spears.  
My granny can be prickly too when all we kids  
are fighting over marbles – dids and didn'ts, dids  
and knuckles down square tight – the wrongs and rights for play  
and life developed here each nineteen-thirties day.  
With doors and gate unlocked, nobody needs stand guard  
on treasures round the lemon tree in Granny's yard.

A scooter, rusty bike and skew-whiff bilycart  
are shared; and battered gloves to learn the noble art.  
The ring's defined by markings scraped in barren dirt  
and protocol dictates no little suffers hurt.  
With washing hung, our Granny's staring off somewhere  
and wipes her eye as though a phantom's stirred the air;  
perhaps reminding her our Dad, her son, once sparred  
beside a sapling lemon tree in Granny's yard.

The older kids recall his death and Mum's as well  
soon after, but for me the world began with smell  
of chooks, wild choko vines, a kelpie we'd named Dope  
and Granny's pet galah that screeches 'Here's the Pope!  
Indeed the priest appears, though Granny cannot find  
the time to chat but 'Yes, we're coping well, and mind  
you take these lemons!' Hearts are soft, though times are hard  
and bitter-sweet the lemon tree in Granny's yard.

You might be mystified by how I have replied.  
No scholars mentored me, nor sages ever vied  
to guide me from the wilderness of troubled youth.  
If I have safely crossed dark bridges, valued truth  
and decency, it's due to her, a lady long  
since buried, who had wiped my nose and crooned a song  
of County Clare that still can charm this humble bard  
and fly me to the lemon tree in Granny's yard.



*Ron was born in Richmond, NSW, in 1926. He and his wife, Clo have lived in Dubbo, NSW since 1994. After spending from 1944 to 1974 in the RAAF and RAN, Ron took a BA at Macquarie University, majoring in English and History, after which he indulged his interest in writing, particularly poetry.*

*He is a Writing Fellow and honorary life member of the Fellowship of Australian Writers, a long-term member of the ABPA, the Henry Lawson Society of NSW and the Outback Writers Centre, Dubbo.*

*He has travelled widely through the Eastern States, to poetry festivals to give workshops and also to compete in written and performance competitions. Among his many written first prizes have been 'The Bronze Swagman', Winton, 'The Blackened Billy', Tamworth (two), 'The Banjo Paterson Literary Award', Orange (four), 'The Henry Lawson Society of NSW Literary Award', Gulgong (five) and the NSW and Victorian, 'ABPA State Championships'.*

*His first-prizes in performance competitions include 'The John O'Brien Festival', Narrandera and "The Leonard Teale Memorial Award', Gulgong.*

*Ron has judged many competitions over the years and as schools liaison officer with Dubbo RSL Sub-branch he judges local schools' competitions. For the last seven years he has written and recited an appropriate poem for the Anzac Day Dawn Service.*

*His four self-published books of winning verse are now out of print but more recent poems are regularly printed in the literary magazine Free XpresSion and in the ABPA Magazine. His recent first-prize winning poems are included in the Poetry Section on this Website.*

*Ron is highly respected throughout the Bush Poetry community and in particular for his poetic tributes to our serving men and women which make a significant contribution to the national history of Australians at war.*

# Laggan Bush Poets

Article and Photos: by Member: Marion Jordan

Last night's monthly meeting of the Laggan Bush Poets, once again enjoyed the hospitality of mine host, Stuart Campbell, at the Laggan Hotel.

Musical items provided by Peter Painter, Lionel Barber and Elaine Delaney, added to the always-entertaining mix of poetry, stories and humorous anecdotes. 22 people attended and witnessed the half-yearly presentation of donations to charitable causes. At each meeting, money is raised by members and the hotel's patrons through raffles, with worthwhile local charities selected as beneficiaries.

This year the sum of \$350 was presented to Jo Hillan, who accepted on behalf of Sue Banfield for the Crookwell Caring Angels, for the refurbishment of wheelchairs.

A further \$300 was donated to Blaze Aid, with Jenny Painter accepting the cheque on behalf of that organisation.

A sum of \$100 has also been given to a local recipient.

A special presentation was made to organisers, Elaine and Mike Delaney, who have just celebrated their 56th Wedding Anniversary. Member Ian McFaul made the lovely Anniversary cake, which was enjoyed with the usual tasty supper.

LBP were delighted to welcome Irish lads, Darren and Cian, who enjoyed a touch of down-to-earth Aussie entertainment and commented they have never experienced anything quite like it, in their travels.

LBP meet at 6:30 for 7 pm on the first Wednesday of each month, and visitors are warmly welcome to attend.



Jenny Painter and Elaine



Jo Hillan and Elaine



Mike and Elaine

# BEHIND THE FLAG

© Ron Stevens, 2010

Winner, 2010 'Bush Verse Section- Banjo Paterson Writing Awards' Orange, NSW.

They've dragged the carcass out again, being short on news today:  
no earthquakes, terrorist attacks and no love-nest exposé.  
In solemn tones the nation's told of 'a push to change the flag'.  
As evidence, the announcer whips a has-been from his bag  
of past-date polities, trained galahs and old rabid Anglophobes  
those pseudo-Aussie patriots in the green and golden robes.

"Why flog a dead horse, Mate?", I call at the spruiker on my screen,  
"We've heard your arguments before and have found them false and lean."  
He rabbits on, now links his plea with the need to ditch the Crown  
a pea-and-thimble strategy that would take few Aussies down.  
Like many others, I desire a republic in good time  
and regard the House of Windsor as redundant, past its prime.

But the Union Jack that's cornered at the top-left of our flag  
doesn't mean we're still dependent or retain our convicts' tag.  
It stands for institutions which we now treasure as our own,  
that were gained from Mother England as her seeds were widely sown:  
religious toleration, plus education freely due,  
the rule of law shared equally and all race attacks taboo.

Our migrants from a background where no such guarantees exist  
might share my disenchantment were that small British flag dismissed,  
removed from measured prominence where it's been since nineteen-one.  
Since then our flag's remained intact, but for star-point changes done.  
A nation's ensign shouldn't be at the mercy of some fad,  
but built on heritage and pride, it's defences ironclad.

The fabric of our flag is weft with our childhood memories.  
We've watched it lowered Anzac Days and at school-yards in the breeze.  
Its aura whispers sacrifice: at Kokoda, Burma rail,  
Korea, Long Tan, Poziers and Sandakan's tragic trail.  
All those who still appreciate what was Britain's finest hour\*,<sup>1</sup>  
recall the RAAF in comradeship when so few\*<sup>2</sup> faced Hitler's power.

Our flag's respected, mostly loved, both in cities and the bush,  
its future guaranteed despite your assertions of a push.  
It stands for courage, fortitude in the stress of peace and war.  
It binds our past and future, flies as a mateship metaphor.  
So here's my friendly warning for you absurd iconoclasts:  
Remove your fancy colours, nailed to pretentious flimsy masts.



Notes: from Winston Churchill's wartime speeches

1. 18 June 1940 "If the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will say "This was their finest hour."
2. 20 August 1940 (on RAF in Battle of Britain) "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few"

# 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)

## The Fire at Yankee's Gap

© Graham Scobie - 2018

Was the fire at Yankee's Gap in August 0-1-8,  
And crews from wide and far had gathered at the gate.  
One was there a Moggy, from up Moruya way,  
With fighters Grice and Heydon fanging to the fray.

Day One was uneventful with standard fire fare,  
Mopping up the logs and stumps with choppers in the air.  
Then after lunch the Parky bunch called for some assistance,  
With Johnny Dozer Driver carving eastern distance.

Day Two dawned clear and crispy, with work to undertake,  
Tailing Johnny Dozer as he cleared a vital break.  
Through twists and turns, ups and downs the truck stuck close behind,  
Providing vital cover if the bushfire changed its' mind.

From dawn to dusk this tricky task kept the Moggies keen,  
With barely time to scratch themselves, they burnt the diesel line.  
The race was on to ring the fire with means of burning back,  
So Johnny Dozer lit the lights and kept on clearing track.

Came dinner time with end in sight the dozer took a snooze.  
Grice and Heydon looked for home; which exit would they choose?  
With Heydon at the wheel and Grice the navigator,  
They came upon a final turn that dropped down to a crater.

With twelve hours in the saddle a bed begins to beckon,  
Heydon eased the rig around but hardly did he reckon,  
That in the dark, without sun-spark, the truck wheels dropped away,  
With Grice and Heydon hanging there and not much they could say.

But Johnny Dozer was at hand and he become the hero,  
He hit the Cat and brought her back to Yankee Fireground Zero.  
A strap was tied and pressure plied and earthworks undertaken,  
And soon the Moggy boys were free, although a little shaken!

And later on that night in lodgings downtown Bega,  
They told their tale and without fail, with urgings that were eager,  
They made their plans and all shook hands for back again tomorrow,  
The Yankee's fire was pushing on – a new truck they would borrow.



Graham Scobie

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# 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.

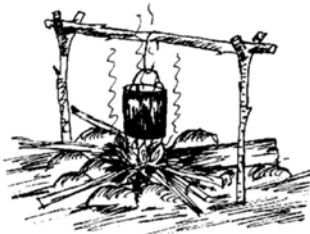
The Billy plaque will be custom-curved and engraved in Tamworth – as it has always been. The winner's trophy plaque will be engraved and attached in the community hosting the awards ceremony. The minor question is where will that ceremony be? The more inviting question is 'Will your name make it onto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

## The 2021 Winton Outback Writers Festival 22-24 June 2021

The 2021 Outback Writers Festival will be held in Winton, Outback Queensland, from Tuesday 22nd of June until Thursday, 24th of June. The venue will be the iconic Waltzing Matilda Centre.

Each year, including COVID YEAR 2020, we have conducted a short story Competition and 2021 entries close on 30th April. 3000 words max. To celebrate QANTAS' first board meeting in Winton in 1921, a special prize will be awarded by the Judge to a writer who also incorporates the acronym QANTAS into their story. The judge will also select entries to be included in the 2021 book. Books 1-5 will be available at the Festival.



Further details from our website [www.outbackwritersfestival.com.au](http://www.outbackwritersfestival.com.au)

Happy Writing.  
Jeff Close

## 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 6571 1398.

**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.

**Kurippla 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 the first Saturday of every month at 1pm at Aitkenvale Library Meeting Room at 7:00pm. Loads of fun. All welcome. Contact Barry on 0487 195 156

**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) 1pm to 4pm. Contacts: Geoffrey Graham 0412725470 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



**LOGAN PERFORMANCE BUSH POETS**  
*Presents*



**LOGAN'S MUDDY RIVER PERFORMANCE  
BUSH POETRY COMPETITION**

*A Three day Muddy River Bush Poetry Festival  
Comprises ....*

*Friday 10th September 6-10pm – The EAGLE TAVERN at (166 Fryer Rd Eagleby) 'Meet and Greet'- an informal get together with walk-ups, competitions and the one minute poem.*

*Saturday 11th September 9-3 pm Beenleigh Show in the PHOENIX ENSEMBLE THEATRE. Competition day - Novice, Classical, Modern, and Original. There will be 15 (max) in each event.*

*Sunday 12th September MUDDY RIVER SUNDAY 9-12pm Beenleigh Historical Village 205 Main St Beenleigh –A wind-down with walk-ups. An award of the 'Most Enjoyable Poet' of the three days-trophy and cash prize- (Judges from audience)*

*Ring Gerry for more information 0499942922  
Or check out the entry form at  
[www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)*