

# The Australian Bush Poet's Association Inc.

Monthly Newsletter

No. 8 Volume 4. August 1997

## RIDING WITH THE BREAKER

Most Australians have learned the story of Harry 'Breaker' Morant through the movie depicting his court martial at the hands of the British during the Boer War in South Africa. A lesser known chapter is his life as a bushman and horse breaker in the border country around Bourke.

Bourke in the 1890's was the setting for much of the best writing ever done for the famous Bulletin magazine. The passion of the shearer's strike, militant republicanism, the lives of tough pioneers and the mateship found in the saddle, the wool-shed or lonely tracks supplied multiple themes for Henry Lawson, Will Ogilvie and Harry 'Breaker' Morant. They helped shape the Australian ethos at the time of federation.

A unique way of reliving these days has been devised, simply titled "Henry, Will and the Breaker".

It is a three day adventure covering 700 kms that will take you back to the very locations where these classic bush poems and stories were written. The bush pubs, quiet cemeteries, wide plains, lonely tracks and homesteads will be the setting for listening to these legendary tales being retold by experienced readers.

You can "ride with the Breaker" through his verse.

Day 1. (Wed. Sept 7th.) will be spent in Bourke, listening to talks on the Breaker's life around the Bourke district, hearing Lawson, Ogilvie and the Breaker speak for themselves "on location" around town. Experienced bush poet Ron Stevens of Dubbo will lead workshop sessions with a practical bent for budding 'Breakers' and 'Henrys'. The film Breaker Morant will be shown and an exhibition of Morant's photo's and memorabilia will be available.

The Trek itself starts on Day 2 following Lawson to the vast Toorale Station where he worked as a rouseabout. Then northward following his track to Hungerford on the border. Many of his best know work follows this route.

After camping overnight at the unique Hungerford Hotel, it's south again and east through the stations where the Breaker and Will Ogilvie rode as friends.

Letters, poems and yarns will rekindle the days when the 'saddle was a throne'. Bushranger stories

and the beautiful Ledknapper wildflower area will be bonuses on the final leg back to Bourke.

The trek is planned to finish at the increasingly popular Mateship Festival which begins on Friday 19th September with the Bush Poets night.

It includes a full weekend of genuine bush fun including the opening of a monument for Harry Morant in the poet's corner.

It's a unique opportunity to discover the back of Bourke and experience the bush in a genuinely nostalgic way.

For further information contact Paul Roe at the Bourke Tourist Office. 068 722 280.



Carmel Dunn

## Thank You from the Philipsons

*The family of John Philipson would like to extend our sincere thanks to the many bush poets and other friends for your condolences after his recent death, and during his time in hospital before that. We have received so many cards, flowers, phone calls that we cannot easily answer them all. That is testimony to how popular John was, and how much he will be missed.*

*The kindness you have all shown has made this difficult time easier to bear. Thanks again for your thoughts, and best wishes for your future happiness and success.*

*Ellen, Graeme, Wendy and Kay.*

## *Australian Bush Poet's Association Inc.*

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### **BARDS OF BOWRA**

**Written Competition Junior and Senior**

**Entries close 1st. Sept. 1997**

### **PERFORMANCE POETRY COMPETITION**

**Sunday 5th. October 1997 10am**

**Traditional Poetry — Original Poetry**

**Judges: Warren Bishop - Jo Smyth - Brian Bell**

**Closing date for entries Sept. 20**

**SSAE To Mrs. Maureen Garner**

**2/8 Salamander Parade Nambucca Heads 2448**

**Ph/fax 065 685 369**

### **PALMA ROSA POETS**

A feast of Poetry at Palma Rosa, 9 Queens Road

HAMILTON BRISBANE

#### **\* THE FOGARTY FAMILY \***

Featuring the Inaugural Australian Bush Poetry Champion

**GARY FOGARTY** - wife **TRACEY** - daughter **KELLY**

A very entertaining evening of Poetry and Song.

Wednesday 10th. September 1997

#### **\* FINAL PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR \***

The unforgettable **BOBBY MILLER** and three times

Aust. Junior Bush Poetry Champion, **CARMEL DUNN**

Wednesday 3rd. December 1997

Shows start 7.30 pm. - \$ 15.00 includes supper - BYO drink

Phones 07 3262 3769 — 07 3268 3624

**HELP HONOUR THE OLDEN-DAYS DROVERS**

**THE INAUGURAL**

**CAMOOWEAL FESTIVAL**

**SEPTEMBER 12 - 14 1997**

**Bush Poetry - Country Music - Races - Rodeo**

**Greenhide Rope-making - Saddling**

**Blacksmithing - Arts and Crafts.**

**CAMPFIRE CONCERTS**

**POETS BREAKFASTS**

**DROVER'S BREAKFAST**

A fundraiser for the construction of a

**DROVER'S HALL OF MEMORY**

**A CAMP-OUT AFFAIR**

Good showers and toilets available

More info. Ms. Aidan Day — 077 482 155

Kelly Dixon — Ph/Fax 077 482 153

### **RAMS HEAD HOTEL**

#### **PERFORMANCE**

### **BUSH POETRY COMPETITION**

**Sunday 14th. September 1997**

**Ram's Head Hotel Millmerrin**

**JUNIOR MALE AND FEMALE 8 - 14 yrs**

**NOVICE MALE AND FEMALE**

**OPEN**

Certificates and cash prizes to be won

Enquiries: SSAE to Kevin Barnes

P.O. BOX 64 Millmerrin

**ENTRIES CLOSE 1.9.97**

Phone 076 954 209

Ask a friend to join

The Australian Bush Poet's Association Inc.

\$ 11.00 from now till the end of the year.

\$ 25.00 for renewals.

**Inaugural**

### **BENDIGO FESTIVAL**

**24th - 26th OCTOBER 1997**

**Bush Poets Breakfast Sunday 26th**

**Kyabram Bush Verse Group**

**Grahame Watt - Johnny Johanson**

**The Bush Larrikin**

**ALL WELCOME**

**Historic Rosalind Park**

**In the Old Police Barracks**

**Contact Peter Worthington**

**03 5436 1556**

## President's Letter....

Dear ABPA Members,

Welcome to another edition of the 'News'. With so much input from members it is now a lot easier to compile. Items submitted early are a great help and eliminate a lot of that last minute rush. (Not that there isn't one of course).

The sad passing of John Philipson has been a deep blow to his family, the poets and their friends. Indeed he was well loved and admired for his skills and will be missed. Further poems for John have been printed in this issue adding to the testimonials at hand.

John's family has been overwhelmed by the letters and calls from so many that are unknown to them. I would like to say thank you to those association members who contacted me and the Philipson family. Ellen has asked that all the poets be informed that they are still welcome to give her a call from time to time and that she does not want to be left out of the poetry scene. (067 618 965)

Ros Stair rang me from Gungahlin and asked if our poets would volunteer some help in a fund raising effort by the Gungahlin community to assist the rehousing of an aged couple who lost their old home and entire contents to a fire. This old bloke and his wife have lived in the district all their lives and have been devastated by the loss. One can well imagine the terrible feeling having nothing left of your belongings, your favourite possessions and so on. The townsfolk have rallied and are currently re-furbishing another old house to re-settle the couple. We as poets could help by sending a book or a cassette of our works to Ros so that she can raise further funding through a raffle. My book is on its way. How about it friends? (Ros Stair "Mount Fern" Stairs Road, Gungahlin, NSW 2333).

I am pleased to hear more and more bush poetry coming over the air-waves. Many FM radio stations are requesting cassettes and CD's, ABC radio and TV has added a larger dose of culture to its programmes, such as Landline on Sundays and Our Country. ABC Records is also about to release an album of bush poetry.

Kerry Anne Kennerly gave the poets a big boost when she had Bob Magor (1997 Bronze Swaggie Winner) on her Mid-day Show, travelling poets are being interviewed and are reciting live on air most anywhere there is a roving journalist or a disc-jockey wanting more for his listeners. Maureen Garner of Nambucca is giving her listeners heaps and they are asking for more.

And on top of all this our own Murray Hartin is helping John Laws keep the dream alive on Fridays.

Murray's corporate shows and dinners has done a lot for the revival of bush poetry in the city and have given us a lot of new in-roads into areas seemingly

almost forbidden territory for so long.

Muzza tells me that he has a new book of poetry soon to be launched. 'Having trouble with the cover' so he tells me.

The Big City Muster in September will also be another eye-opener for the writers groups and followers when Joye Dempsey takes the bush to the 'big smoke'. Poets interested in helping out are asked to contact Joye. (See ad. this page).

Quite a number of venues are operating in Sydney at the moment and those known are in the poets calendar.

Further interest from larger sponsors is in the air and should all go well there will certainly be a lot more for the bush poets in 1998. Stay tuned and remember to keep your ears tuned to the 'wireless', you never know when you might hear a verse or two.

Best wishes for now, Regards.

*Frank Daniel*

## From our Secretary. . . .

It is now time to start preparations for the ABPA's Fourth Annual Book of Bush Poetry.

Please send poems for inclusion at your earliest convenience. Not all poems can be included but we will be doing our best.

I am afraid we have not sold enough of our last edition (no. 3) to get us out of the red. Please remember that it is up to us to sell these books. Printing in smaller lots will of course only lead to higher costs, so in order to keep costs down we need more books.

These books are available from my office for \$3.00 each plus postage of \$1.10. Or two copies for \$7.10. Some back issues of no's 1, and 2 are still available. They are all good value and worthwhile inexpensive gifts.

My best wishes to you all,

*Olive Shooter*

**INTERLUDES POETS PRESENT  
BIG CITY MUSTER  
AT THE  
SPRING WRITING FESTIVAL  
ROZELLE HOSPITAL GROUNDS  
BALMAIN ROAD  
ROZELLE NSW  
SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 1997  
9AM - 12NOON  
A Breakfast Celebration of Bush Poetry  
ph. Joye Dempsey 02 9797 7575  
or NSW Writers Centre 02 9555 9757**

## From Johnny Johanson

G'day Frank, I got a letter from Gympie today, informed me that our old mate J.P passed away.

Strewth, that stunned me a bit as the last that I heard was that he was goodo, and looking forward to getting back into harness again.

I do believe that he will be sadly missed by all members and good friends every where, as he was a bonza fella.

Frank I was thinking about things for a while, then all of a sudden I started to write this poem; I think that our old mate John would like to say something like this to everybody if he could.

### "AU REVOIR"

#### An Ode to John Philipson

© Johnny Johanson Yarrawonga Vic.

Do not weep for me, my dear friends,  
For my suffering is no more.  
Whilst, it's not farewell forever  
Just a parting, "Au Revoir."

We will meet again — my good friends  
In those Heavens, up above,  
Where there's happiness, forever more,  
With it's everlasting love!

Do not sorrow by my passing,  
Please don't wail, feel sad, or cry,  
For my body has just parted,  
Soul and spirit - never die.

Feel my presence all around you,  
For I'm there; without the pain,  
With my hand - held out - to guide you  
Till once more - we meet - again!

As you think; I'll be there with you,  
When you dream - or heave a sigh;  
You have memories, as mementos,  
For, in spirit - there'll be I.

So don't weep for me; my dear friends,  
For I suffer - not - no more,  
Whilst, there's no farewell - forever,  
Just a parting - "Au Revoir."

The accompanying poem was the second sent in for publication by Neil Carroll of Dubbo NSW.

Along with the poem was a copy of a letter from the Dubbo City Council stating that his Border Collie was no longer registered with the Council — and would he please bring the arrears up to date or explain.

In reply Neil wrote;

*"Thanks for the warning, but you're out of luck  
The said Border Collie got hit by a truck.  
His replacement's unlicensed, the reason is graphic  
We're waiting to see how he handles the traffic!"*

ITS ON AGAIN.....The

### CAMP OVEN BUSH POETRY FESTIVAL

4TH - 5TH - OCTOBER 1997

AT THE

COUNTRY MUSIC HALL  
NORTH PINE COUNTRY PARK  
PETRIE QLD.

Performance Poetry Competitions

Juniors, Novice and Open Male and Female

Original - Traditional - established Australian

Rhyming Bush Verse

POETS BREAKFAST - CAMP OVEN DINNER

Entry forms.... SSAE to... The Organizer

Camp Oven Bush Poetry Festival

Pine Rivers Shire Council

P.O. Box 5070 Strathpine Q. 4500

### THE NIGHT WE SHOT THE PIG

© Neil Carroll Dubbo NSW

I've shot a few foxes and 'roos in my time  
And ducks.... Mate! I'm really a corker.  
But one shooting incident stuck in my mind  
It's the night that we got the big porker.

We were having some trouble with foxes, for sure  
They were pinching the eggs and the fowls,  
And you should have heard them the evening before  
With the yaps and the squawks and the growls.

Next morning we missed a few chicks from the run  
And the old broody leghorn was fretting  
We saw where a pig had been having some fun  
He'd pushed a great hole in the netting.

So we worked out a way to give him a pay out  
'Twas too cold to sit up all night.  
We loaded the gun, ran a string round the run  
Hooked up to the trigger... just right.

It was well after dark when we heard a dog bark  
Then a squeal, with a high note of warning  
A grunt and a cough and both barrels went off  
We had fifteen dead chooks in the morning.

But all jokes aside it worked, and he died  
In the lignum — and didn't Mum rouse  
Imagine the smell when he started to swell  
Nearly drove us all out of the house.

So we dragged him away, and we burnt him one day  
And I've still got the tusks from his jowls  
From then evermore we bought eggs from the store  
'Cause the dogs ate the rest of the fowls!!

VIRGO (Aug 24 — Sept 23)



WHO SAYS VIRGOS AREN'T CHASED???

Virgos are industrious  
Punctilious, and clean.  
Methodical and logical,  
And lovers of routine.  
They tend to be pedantic,  
(An irritating trait),  
That's why they often lose  
A lot of friends along the way.  
I think I ought to warn you,  
There's one persistent rumour:  
Those born under Virgo,  
Don't have much sense of humour.

'Blue the Shearer'

BARMAH BUSH © Katrina Pearce (11 years)

Some Sundays we go out the bush and have a look around  
We pull up at a camp site and fossick along the ground  
Sometimes we find sinkers or a chair without a leg  
Or sometimes a bag of rubbish hanging from a rusty peg  
Gramp will tell us stories of when the river was clean  
And points out to us where a sawmill might have been  
We drive past the place where Kate Kelly held the horses  
And kept them for her brother Ned to escape from the police forces  
Curious kangaroos look up at us and seem to stare  
At the noisy ute and the dust cloud hanging in the air  
We stand in the back of the ute and look at the river red gum trees  
And our hair is blown backwards by the refreshing summer breeze  
Now Gramp is showing us the place where he used to camp,  
cut wood and hunt  
And then shows us the place where they used to load the punt  
Years ago the paddle steamers used to carry wood  
An old piece of china shows where a house once stood  
The river keeps on flowing from inland to the sea  
But I think that the Barmah bush is where I want to be

VICTORIAN STYLE . . . .

G'day 'Joe'. . . . Tammy here.

You asked me to drop ya' a line about yarin' to the 'billy-lids' in schools.

I mainly aim at an age group from year 3 to 7 as ifind with the younger ones, it goes over their heads a bit and any older they're worried about being 'cool'.

For e.g. Year 10 boys are only thinkin' of footy, and year nine girls are only thinkin' of year 10 boys. So bush Poetry doesn't stand a chance.

Whereas from about years 3 to 7 they don't have pre-conceived ideas or inhibitions and are willing to participate.

First of all I don't tell 'em what to write, or how to write. I define my role as one of encouragement and elaborate on how I go about the job.

The best thing I've found to get the ankle-biters involved is by asking them questions. For e.g. What they think bush poetry is? Why is it written? Differences between bush poetry and blank verse. Usage of rhyming slang etc. I give examples of simple rhyming and construction of poems using my 'Tit For Tat' poem as a model.

I'm fortunate in that I take a caricature artist with me to break up the session a bit. (This helps, so as not to lose their concentration).

At the end of each session (1½ hrs) each student has completed a poster with a four line rhyming poem with a cartoon and drawing to match.

I also present each kid with a 'poetic license'

Tammy Muir of Picola Vic. was taking classes in bush poetry at his local primary school just lately and came across a very talented little girl, Katrina Pearce, who wrote the above poem about the Barmah Bush (Barmah Forest).

It is very pleasing to see results such as this from one so young and we are more than pleased to publish this poem for Katrina.

Like a lot of Bush Poets today, Tammy is taking the message to the kids as often as is possible, with great results. (See Marco's school 'adventures' on page 12.)

The 7th MAPLETON YARN FESTIVAL

for poets preachers and liars  
Saturday 18th October 1997  
7.00 - 12.00pm

In various venues in the village  
Sunday 19th October 1997  
9.00am — 5.00pm

The Lilyponds Park Mapleton  
Enquiries: Jacqueline Bridle 075 5457760

certificate and an encouragement award.

So far this has been well received by both students and teachers and I gain an enormous amount of pleasure from seeing some develop into the next generation of bush poets. Hope this helps,

Tammy.

## BUNDANOON POETS IN THE PUB

On the first Sunday of the month at 2pm poets and performers of all persuasions gather in the Saloon Bar of the Bundanoon Hotel.

It's the only pub in town and if you can find the railway station you can find the pub.

Entry is free and the group always has an open section and an open mind.

Because of the generosity of the NSW Writers Centre they have received a grant this year to bring featured poets into the area.

In August Melissa Curran was guest at the Hotel and gave readings of her work.

Melissa's first book 'The Long Drowning' was published by Five Islands Press and her next book is imminent. She is a fabulous poet and reads her work in an exciting and dynamic way.

Les Murray will be the featured poet at the September meeting.

The third running of the Bundanoon Poetry Cup was held in July, judged by Gay Hagger and the winner was Daryl Champion from Canberra, second was Pam Morrissey from Balmain and third, Peter Lach-Newinsky of Bowral.

There will be another Poetry Cup in October. More news later.

With Spring lonely just around the corner it is time some of the poets got their act into gear and paid a visit to the Bundanoon Hotel

Enquiries to Jennifer Compton on (048) 844 368.

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## MILLMERRAN POETRY

All roads lead to Millmerran for the performance poetry competition at 1.30 pm on Sunday 14th September in the Rams Head Hotel.

\$450.00 in prizemoney and certificates await the contenders.

Entries close with Kevin Barnes on September 1st. so don't delay.

See ad. page 2 or contact the organiser Kevin Barnes of Millmerran on 076 954 209

## THE RIDING OF THE TEARAWAY

© Ellis Campbell Dubbo NSW

I woke up with a feeling of distracting apprehension:  
my brow was throbbing with an ache that clouded comprehension.  
My throat was dry, my eyes bloodshot, my heart wracked in contrition  
but something stirred my foggy mind with warning premonition.  
A memory dawned foreboding of the senseless thing I did,  
by backing foolish boasting with a bet of fifty quid.

I sipped my steaming coffee and I lit a cigarette;  
and cursed the drunken stupidity that lured me to that bet.  
I'd met up with the "Crampton" lads - who'd come in from the scrub -  
and bore their senseless goading well, at Jimmy Murphy's pub;  
till someone said, "You've never tried to ride old Tearaway -  
you've gained a reputation, but you won't take on the grey."

A Bucking outlaw long renowned was Crampton's Tearaway;  
he'd thrown a hundred riders, was unconquered yet today.  
None bent the Crampton tiger's will - the grey was absolute.  
Some claimed he was the roughest horse to ever leave a chute.  
A stupid wager set last night I'd wear the winner's crown  
and best the mighty Crampton grey before the sun went down.

I wasn't scared of any horse - or of the ringer's jeers -  
I'd rode the worst to come my way since early childhood years.  
While droving with my father - since the day my mother died -  
I'd often bested older men and showed them how to ride.  
But years diminish glory and I'm weary of the fray;  
I had no inclination for the scalp of Tearaway.

But grog's deception swayed me and it made my boasting rash;  
today I ride the outlaw grey to save my pride and cash.  
My aching head and shaking hand belie my words last night;  
how can I battle half a ton of heaving dynamite?  
I'll rest awhile upon my bunk, and let those ringers wait;  
my bet is safe till sundown - that's the time they stipulate.

A hazy sun in burnished sky - a glaring furnace face -  
was casting lengthy shadows when I passed the Watson's place  
and entered Crampton boundary gate to take the dusty track  
that leads toward the stockyards and the hill called Razorback.  
The ringers leant upon the rail, surprise on every face;  
they thought I'd forfeit fifty quid and cringe off in disgrace.

Old Tearaway was saddled with the station gear, of course.  
I told them "Strip the lot off - I'm not riding any horse  
that I don't saddle up myself - and use my gear to boot.  
I'll ride your bloody outlaw and collect your lousy loot."  
He trembled when I touched him and his eye was showing white;  
I watched for striking forelegs or an angry stallion's bite.

He crouched low when I girthed him, his hind legs hunched beneath -  
prepared to buck with ears laid back and baring fearsome teeth.  
I grasped his ear and swung to clasp the saddle flaps secure  
between my muscled legs and found that stirrup iron obscure.  
He launched up high and spun mid air, with kink like coiling snake;  
then landed with a stiff-legged jar that made my body quake.

he plunged and weaved and reared as well; showed me just how quick he was to change direction and the reason he had thrown so many champion riders since Crampton had made it known they owned a famous outlaw - part bred Arab, coloured grey. His reputation spread like flame and kept the best at bay.

His mighty haunches launched him like a rocket into space - he stumbled when he landed near the cattle drafting race. He jack-knifed with a tearing wrench - the buck I hated most - his foreleg struck the middle rail and splintered half the post. The straining heaves were torture to my dislocated spine; I prayed he'd soon be winded, but there wasn't any sign.

He squealed his wrath and lunged toward the stockyard corner gate; his foaming mouth a flecking froth and nostrils flared with hate. His writhing grunts were echoed by the ringers round the fence, who watched in breathless agony their famous horse incensed; a bundled, heaving fury. Then he faltered, that old grey; bewildered by this demon who refused to go away.

I felt him losing power, and his viciousness subside - at last the mighty Tearaway was broken in to ride. I rode him to a standstill and his dappled hide was brown; beyond the hill long shadows crept - the sun was goin down. I slipped down by his sweat-stained side - bespattered now with mud. I leant against his heaving flank and spewed a pint of blood.

I staggered to the stockyard rail and faced the ringers there - all stunned to see their outlay tamed, and too confused to swear. I said, "I'll take your fifty quid and give you some advice: you'd better risk your hard earned cash on toss of gambler' dice. Your mighty Tearaway's been tamed, to your eternal sorrow; has anyone here got the guts to ride him out tomorrow?".

The outlaw was unsaddled and I packed my gear away; then drove my ute across the flat to end a wasted day. I vowed I'd never drink again or boast that I could ride - I'd shut my mouth and walk away if someone stung my pride. I've often bragged that I could tame the greatest outlaw foaled; but now I'm sick and smashed up bad, and fifty one years old.

Ellis Campbell won 1997 Cloncurry Muster written competition with the above poem.

Another to his long list of credits. Congratulations, Ellis.

## BIG DOO AT BYMAROO

Another new Queensland venue is the Big Doo at Brymaroo, north of Jondaryan, (off the Toowoomba Dalby road).

A bush poetry competition will be conducted as part of the programme of Line Dancing, and Country Music Talent Quests. Bar and B.B.Q facilities will be operating.

All poetry must be Australian Rhyming Bush Verse and must not contain any offensive or unsuitable material.

A seven minute time limit will be applied, incorporating the preamble, which will also be judged as part of the performance.

Free camping is available on unpowered sites at the Brymaroo Rodeo Grounds. Starting time is 8.00am Saturday 4th. October.

For further information contact G. Bowtell of M.S. 444 Quinalow. 4403

## NEW CD -

### 'PLAYING TO WIN'

Just arrived is news of the release of a new CD from Tracy Fogarty of Millmerrin.

Talented wife of noted Bush Poet Gary Fogarty, Tracy is a well performed singer and her new album has a number of great songs from many writers with a collection of musicians most big names would desire as backing on their own albums.

We wish Tracy all the best for her new album and if you would like to hear her work, just read the advertisement on the back page.

## BIG CITY MUSTER . . . . Interludes / NSW Writers' Festival

DEADLINE AUG 31.  
HURRY!!!!

### WRITTEN COMPETITION

Students under 16 yrs in August. Bush Yarn - Story - Poem — Entry fee \$3.00  
Adult poems — Traditional Rhyming Bush Verse to 100 lines. (Humorous and Serious) Entry fee \$5.00  
Inspirational Poetry. In memory of Jonathon Beck. Entry fee. \$5.00

Name, address and disclosure on separate title page.

Send cheque with entries to The Big City Muster C/- The NSW Writers Centre  
P.O. Box 1056 Rozelle. NSW 2039 - - - Ph. Joy Dempsey. (02) 9797 7575

NOTE!!! Entries close on AUGUST 31 . . . . HURRY. . . . NOTE!!! Entries close on AUGUST 31  
PERFORMANCE POETRY COMPETITIONS. Saturday 13th September. 9 - 12 noon.  
Writers Centre - ROZELLE HOSPITAL GROUNDS. Traditional — Original — Poet's Brawl

## OF MEN AND BOYS

I was almost down to Elders  
when I saw him at their door  
so I turned and sought a refuge  
in the nearby hardware store.  
It's unlikely Ernie noticed  
how I dodged him yesterday  
but he surely must be asking  
why I haven't called his way.  
Over forty years we've managed  
to be open and enjoy  
- in a word that's out of fashion -  
being cobbers, man and boy.

When I've needed help, trust Ernie  
to appear upon the scene  
- whether flood or bushfire threatened  
or my bank was turning mean.  
His assistance started early  
(in a twist of *golden rule*)  
when he thrashed the playground bully  
at our single-teacher school.  
Until then school-days were dismal  
but at seven life began  
to be brighter, thanks to Ernie  
who was nine, almost a man.

Being manly suited Ernie  
who developed strong and straight.  
In his work or weekend football  
he would always pull his weight.  
With a smile and soft 'goodonyer'  
he'd encourage weaker types  
and was never known to foster  
any grudge or petty gripes.  
Yet this champion sagged at Elders  
like a scarecrow, fate's rag toy  
while I slunk, a furtive dingo,  
from my cobbler man and boy.

Was he there to sell the homestead?  
Will he toss it all away?  
He'd have given me the answers  
when I saw him yesterday  
if I'd walked right up to Ernie,  
gripped him firmly by the hand  
and enquired about his future,  
told him 'Mate, I understand  
the enormous blow you've suffered  
...is there anything I can...  
I mean *anything*... Remember  
we've been cobbers, boy and man?'

© Ron StevensDubbo NSW 1997

It sounds simple but I'm certain  
I'd have weakened into tears  
and embarrassed my old cobbler  
as I've done throughout the years:  
like collapsing at the graveside  
of his lovely wife Kathleen,  
to be helped along by Ernie  
who retained a stoic mien;  
or awash with tearful pleasure  
when my lad and Ernie's Roy  
shared a swag of high-school prizes.  
They were mates, our shining boys.

Now today I try to muster  
all my strength but fear I'll cry  
as my son and I stand tortured  
by a grave's unfathomed *Why?*  
I'm confused but humbly grateful  
that my boy's alive and well  
though poor Ernie's Roy went stumbling  
into unimagined hell  
then, by adolescent impulse  
or a closely-guarded plan,  
tied a noose beneath a rafter  
to destroy a youth and man.

For his father's not the Ernie  
that I knew two weeks ago.  
He has shrunk, his eyes are rheumy  
and his tread is shuffling, slow.  
I can feel my son's frame shaking  
and I whisper 'It's okay.'  
Through my tears, across the gravesite  
where the parson starts to pray,  
I see Ernie nod agreement  
and his smile, devoid of joy,  
seems to argue grief's a refuge,  
as is laughter, man and boy.

"Of Men and Boys" was the winning poem in the  
Charleville Bush Balladeers Written Competition, held  
in April this year.

Congratulations again to Ron Stevens.

**MAX JARROTT**  
AUSTRALIAN BUSH POET and YARNSPINNER

Book: 'The Killarney Kid'  
Full of fair dinkum Australian verse \$12.00 pp.  
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The two for only \$25.00

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## PICCANINNY DAWN

© Merv Webster Bargara Q. ('The Goondiwindi Grey')

The old man and his grandson viewed  
A barren bladeless ground.  
When to his left the young lad's eye  
Saw bleached bones scattered 'round.  
'Twas more than one beast's bones that lay  
There exposed to the sun.  
It seemed more like a battlefield  
Where only death had won.

The old man saw the young lad wince  
He reigned in close behind.  
As memories of what took place  
Came flooding through his mind.  
A century turned but not his luck  
For rains had failed again.  
He slowly watched the dams dry up  
While cattle died in pain.

A little water still remained  
Though sought by ferral stock.  
Some brumbies which came down at dawn  
Still often used the block.  
In good times no one cared that much,  
But not so any more.  
The young lad's dad and his old man  
Both knew what lay in store.

A high log fence closed off the dam  
The timber they had sawn.  
Suspended gate it lay in wait  
For picaninny dawn.  
Then as the last mare ambled through  
Wood gate it dropped like lead.  
A wood rail race seemed their escape  
But death lurked there instead.

Their capital had all dried up  
No cash for lead and gun.  
To execute the ferral stock  
Took knife and old man's son.  
With legs astride the wood rail race  
Son grimaced as he drew;  
That balde of death 'cross jug'lar vein  
Then slapped the victim through.

Each fleet foot spirit faltered there  
A hundred yards away.  
While blazing eyes showed fear of death,  
Mouths gave a weakened neigh.  
Then one by one their weak frames fell  
Onto the dusty ground.  
The racing hearts of those poor beasts  
Then gave their final pound.

The slaughter did not save the stock  
For all the dams went dry.  
It fin'ly broke the old man's son  
He watched the grown man cry.  
All this the old man told the lad  
The picture was now drawn.  
On why his dad then took his life  
One picaninny dawn.

---

Piccaninny Dawn was the winning poem in the 1997 Bush Lantern Verse writing competition. Congratulations to Merv. Well done.

## IN DAYS GONE BY

THE LIFE OF A DREADNOUGHT BOY  
20 SHORT STORIES —  
20 POEMS

- \* THE FINAL VICTORY
- \* ONE IN A MILLION
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Based on the life of a young English lad who migrated in 1922 at the age of sixteen years. His life as he lived through the 1920's, 30's, 40's and 50's making this great country his home.

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## A LOT OF BULL IN DARWIN

The Berrimah Hotel Darwin was the scene of the World Championship yarn-spinning for 1997. The greatest collection ever of northern bull-riders, bull-fighters, whip-crackers, beer drinkers, bikies, truckies, ringers, balladists and poets joined forces with naval seamen from five different countries setting the scene for three of the greatest days of over-indulgent yarn-spinning, lying, skiting and exaggerating ever to be heard in the Territory — with many a good poem thrown in for good measure.

Packed houses daily saw Peter Steele, 'The Coonewarra Kid' take out the World Title after six years of trying, with some very far flung unbelievable over baked tall tales about Collingwood and the VFL.

Richard Magoffin of Kynuna Q. was runner up with Tammy Muir of Picola V. in third place.

## POET'S CALENDAR. EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS.

- Sept. 1 Closing date. **Back to Bowra Aust. Bush Poetry Competition** — Open and Junior Written Competition. ( See ad p. 2 )  
Enq. SSAE - Mrs. M. Garner. 2/8 Salamander Parade Nambucca Heads 2448 065 685 269
- Sept. 1 Closing date big city muster written competition. SEE PAGE 7
- Sept. 10 **The Palma Rosa.** 9 Queens Rd. Hamilton Q. 7.30pm. The Fogarty Family from Milmerrin. Gary Fogarty (Inaugural Australian Champion), wife Tracey and daughter Kelly.  
Enquiries: Trisha Anderson. Ph..07 3268 3624. Bookings: Palma Rosa 07 3262 3769
- Sept. 11 **"Around the Campfire"**. A night of poetry with the Kyabram Bush Verse Group.  
Contact Graeme Watt. 03 5852 2084. If you're in the area pay them a visit — you're welcome!!
- September 13 - 14. **Sydney's First Big City Muster.** Part of the Annual NSW Writers' Centre's, Spring Writing Festival — Further information to come next issue. Ph. Joye Dempsey 02 9797 7575
- September 12 - 14 Inaugural **'Droving Yesteryear' Festival Camooweal. Qld.**  
Written Bush Poetry Competition — work previously un-aired publicly. \$3.00 per entry.  
Closes Sept 1st. No entry forms. Send to Kelly Dixon P.O. Box 24 Camooweal Q. 4828
- Sept. 14 **Poets in the Pub - Performance Bush Poetry Competition** - Ramshead Hotel Millmerrin  
Junior - Novice - Open - Male and Female — Entries close Sept 1st. —  
SSAE to Kevin Barnes P.O. Box 64 Millmerrin Q. 4357 Ph. 076 954 209
- September 17 - 21. **Bourke Mateship Festival.** Relive the days of Henry, Will and the 'Breaker'. Join in the Trek.  
A three day adventure over 700 kms. Bush Poetry - Bush Games. Enq. Ph. Paul Roe 068 722 280
- Sept. 20 **Bar-room Yarns and Recitals Commercial Hotel Junee NSW** 11am Ph. 069 241 023
- Sept. 23 Closing date for Entries at the **"Big Doo at Brymaroo"** See below — October 4th and 5th.
- October 4 - 5 **"Big Doo at Brymaroo"** Entries close Sept. 23rd. \$5.00 fee with entry.  
Performance Bush Poetry Competition. Must have rhyme and meter.  
Send details to G. Bowtell. Secretary. M.S. 444 Quinalow. Qld. 4403
- October 4 - 5 **North Pine Bush Poets Group — Camp Oven Bush Poetry Festival**  
Country Music Hall North Pine Country Park Dayboro Rd. Petrie Qld.  
Enquiries to Patti Coutts (07) 3886 1552 Louise Dean (07) 3260 5506
- October 24 -26 **Bendigo Festival. Breakfast with the Poets.**  
Enquiries to Peter Worthington - Ph. 03 5436 1556
- Dec. 3. **The Palma Rosa.** 9 Queens Rd. Hamilton Q. 7.30pm. Final performance of the year.  
Bobby Miller will bring the house down as usual with his brilliance and diversity. Sanity will prevail with the Australian Bush Poetry Junior Champion ('95, '96, '97) Carmel Dunn.  
Enquiries: Trisha Anderson. Ph..07 3268 3624 — Bookings: Palma Rosa 07 3262 3769

- Regular monthly events.** If you happen to be passing through these areas, tell 'em Joe sent ya!
- 1st. Sunday **Poets Get-together**— Traders Restaurant - Mt. Coolumb Qld. (074) 491 991  
*Bundanoon Hotel* Bundanoon NSW Jennifer Compton (048) 836 005  
*Palm Beach-Currumbin Bowls Club.* 9am. Poets Brekkie. Ph. Lorraine 07 5590 9395  
**Pine Rivers Camp Oven Breakfasts. Petrie Q.** Ph. 07 3260 5506 - 07 3886 1552
- 1st. Monday *Aroma's Restaurant & Coffee Shop.* Toowoomba Q. Ron Selby (076) 301 106
- 2nd. Sunday *'Interludes' Ashfield Civic Centre, Sydney* — Joye Dempsey 02 9797 7575
- 3rd. Sunday **Pine Rivers Camp Oven Breakfasts. Petrie Q.** Ph. 07 3260 5506 - 07 3886 1552
- 3rd. Friday *Poetic Folk — Rooty Hill School Of Arts.* Sydney — Arch Bishop (02) 9625 7245
- 2nd. Friday *The Monaro Leisure Club.* 7 pm. Vale St. Cooma. Bush Poetry and Country Music.
- 3rd. Thursday *Queanbeyan Bush Poets.* Phone David Meyers 06 286 1891

### ADVERTISE YOUR FESTIVAL OR OUTING — LET EVERYONE KNOW ABOUT IT

Thank you to the following contributors to this months newsletter:

Paul Roe — Carmel Dunn — Neil Carroll — Johnny Johanson — Tammy Muir — 'Blue the Shearer'  
Katrina Pearce — Ellis Campbell — Jennifer Compton — Merv Webster — Ron Stevens — Mark Gliori  
Valerie Read — Sandra Binns — Ray Essery — Grahame Watt — Joy Dempsey — Rob Russett  
Trisha Anderson — June Lal — Geoffrey Graham — Liz Ward — Mavis Appleyard.

Want an audience of 12,000 listeners? Send recorded work to Maureen Garner Producer/Presenter  
**The Folk Show — 2BBB FM.** 2 Salamander Parade NAMBUCCA HEADS 2448 — (065) 685 869

**DEADLINE FOR MONTHLY PUBLICATION:** 15th. day of the month of issue.  
Send copy to P.O. Box 16 Canowindra NSW 2804 or Fax. (063) 441 962

## CASINO BEEF WEEK

After three years of bush poetry Casino Beef Week is turning into one of the really good festivals to be at.

All the hard work carried out by Jim Haynes, Judith Hosier, Ray Essery and Bob Miller has really paid off. Packed houses and glowing comments were the order of the day.

Congratulations must go to Father Rex Hackett and mine host of the Cecil Hotel, Thomas George, for their parts in organising the festival. Their help and assistance to the poets was far beyond all expectations.

John Major of Baralaba Qld. compered most of the events with the assistance of his good wife Joy — Bob Miller and Ray Essery backing him up.

Consideration must also be given to Sandra Miller for her untiring efforts in keeping the troupe together.

"Someone has to do the worrying", said Ray. "Someone had to keep us in line and do the book-selling for us!"

Bundaberg Rum sponsored the New Voices section of the competition and Col Hadwell of Byron Bay was the winner of this event against a very strong field. Like many of the newer poets, Col is improving all the time.

As a finale to the big week-end all carried on to the Lawrence Hotel at MacLean where a show was put on for the locals under the sponsorship of the publican John Hoy. Another success — booked again for next year.

## NEW AUSSIE BUSH POETRY SHOW GOES TO AIR.

Rob Russet of Community Radio Station Mackay (4CRM) is currently presenting an Australian Heritage programme for two hours every Sunday night.

The Programme consists of bush poetry and songs with music from current and past singers and musicians.

The bush poetry in particular has been very well received by the listeners. Rob would like to receive tapes and discs from any bush poets and singers suitable to be played on his programme, accompanied by a biography if possible.

Rob Russett can be contacted on (079) 535 649 or at 4CRM (079) 531 411.

His mail address is P.O. Box 1075 Mackay Q.

### JOHN PHILIPSON RECITES

TAPES 1, 2 and 3.

Limited number still available.

\$12.00 POST PAID

Mrs. Ellen Philipson

7 Brolga Way Tamworth 4320

## KYABRAM (Vic.) BUSH POETS

Grahame 'Skew Wiff' Watt has retired from his position as President of the Kyabram Bush Verse Group. New man in the chair is Mick Coventry, poet, author and pastry-cook, with Denis Attwood as Secretary Treasurer and Betty Olle as Vice President, and Les Parkinson as Assisitant Secretary.

The 'Ky' group meets every second month, and extends a welcome to visiting poets and or interested travellers. Give them a bell if you are in the area.

Members come from as far as Shepparton, Echuca, Numurkah, Nathalia, Edi and Yarrowonga.

The group travelled to Mooroopna to witness the Noel Cutler production which starred Bobby Miller, Glenny Palmer, Noel Cutler and Milton Taylor. A great show by all reports, sponsored by the Mooroopna Kiwanis Club.

Some of the Ky members performed at a show in aid of "Mittagundi", a mountain camp to help young people where they taste a little of the 'high country' life.

The Apex Club along with the Bush Verse Group will be conducting their Annual Around The Campfire Night in Kyabram on Thursday 11th. September, so if you are in the area, pop along for a good night out. Give Watty a call 03 5852 2084.

## CORNERS OF YOUR MIND

© Joye Dempsey Croydon Park

Though you clear the corners of your mind,  
some memories seem to stay,  
like the dappled shadows that can't be caught,  
but with you emotions play.  
There will always be times when your heart will pull,  
when the hurt will not go away,  
It is then that you must remember,  
he was yours but for only a day.  
With his laughter, his way of walking,  
or the funny things he might say.  
And his smile made a new days dawning,  
seem nothing out of the way.  
Now he's gone and you can't reach to tough him,  
will the pain go away some day?  
Yet you know there, deep in your memories garden,  
your love will forever stay.  
For he's the one who always cared,  
from his hair being golden to grey,  
and memories of your dear John's love,  
time will not fade away.

## SCHOOL SHOWS AND TOURING

Touring schools has become 'bread and butter' for Mark Gliori over the past six years. There are many benefits and drawbacks in constantly touring the 'education' circuit. In answer to the many questions from poets concerning 'style' of performances that are presented in schools and the method by which one would best obtain authorization to present their own performances, Marco has volunteered the following.

**THE WORKSHOP...** Let me first say that a 'show' is a show and a 'workshop' is entirely different. If you can walk into a classroom - recite several poems - interact with students - field questions about 'poetry and your experience with it as a writer and/or performer - initiate some form of creative writing or performance in the class - then in turn offer sound advice to students of any age - all for a minimum of 40 minutes - then perhaps you have put together a workshop that has potential to be marketed to schools - in the very least as a friendly visit by the local poet - or perhaps as a presentation that will be developed over the years to become a popular workshop contracted by the government funded school assistance programs or indeed by the principals of schools having heard great reports of your work.

If you want 'workshopping' experience, it is best to contact local teachers of the age-group that best suits your work (e.g. secondary/primary - grade 2 or grade 7) and arrange a short visit in a class-room situation and see how you go. If you enjoy it you may like to keep in touch with local, state or federally funded arts grants.

Although I have never actually applied for one — Bush Poets can get them too! Otherwise, the school themselves may like to apply for one of several forms of funding/sponsorship available to them, allowing them to pay you to visit.

**PERFORMANCES...** On a standard seven week school tour for the Queensland Arts Council's School Touring Programme I will perform ninety one-hour shows to an estimated fifteen thousand Primary School children and travel around five thousand kilometers in a vehicle hired by me specifically for the tour. I will lose my voice, become very lonely and be sleeping in motels with pink doors, brown carpet and little maps of Africa on the bed linen. I will have good audiences and 'ratbag' audiences. I will perform in tin sheds when it is pouring rain, and in open-air venues beside a basketball game in progress. I will perform to audiences devoid of any teacher supervision while my clothes become stiff and smelly and my props become abused, broken and sometimes 'permanently borrowed'. I am the manager, roadie and performer.

There is no rest, and at the end of a tour I am fit, exhausted, ecstatic, and approaching dementia.

there is expectation in their eyes.

They need atmosphere, they long for laughter, and they usually want you to succeed. One thing is for sure, they will let you know (if only discreetly) whether you are good or not.

You may have elaborate stage sets or discreet props and your script may be rigid or flexible. My Primary show uses fancy dress, musical instruments, a large 'cartoon' style backdrop and includes audience participation.

I perform a variety of poems and slap-stick comedy that are divided into small segments (10 minutes max) of varying moods. My original script took six months to write and has constantly evolved over the last six years.

Once you have some form of show together, you usually apply to the State Arts Council (or similar body) for audition. Once successful you can either approach the schools individually and design a 'flyer' for advertising or you may wish to approach a private 'artist management' group.

Queensland and Victoria are the only states that, having auditioned your show, can offer you a major tour such as the one I described earlier. Other state bodies may tour you under different schemes. Such tours are good paying but bloody hard work and often soul-destroying.

In taking on so much of this work I believe I may have suffered somewhat in the 'profile' department, but for a family bloke, it is irresistible. I only have to work around half the year. I am usually finished work on tour by 3pm and when in one city for several weeks my family comes with me on what amounts to a working holiday. I get to meet wonderful characters and sparkling children. Teachers are overwhelmingly interested and the schools generally hospitable. Most weekends on tour I will have been invited to perform an adult show in the area I am touring which keeps me in touch with my 'adult' shows, which I enjoy immensely. It can feel like the life of a hermit and a rock-star all in one day, and it puts dinner on the table.

A budding country music singer asked me recently what was the highest peak of achievement a Poet/Performer could reach, what were my aspirations.

I thought about it before deciding that if Poetry/Performance could sustain me for a 'career' amount of time during which time my desire for the knowledge of Poetry increased and my writing flourished, then that would be a wonderful crest to peak over. But along life's journey there is much compromise, sacrifice and inevitable yet unforeseeable change... so who knows what lies in wait for all of us — what about you reader — will we see you in a school soon? We hope so!

*Mark Gliori.*

## MY FRIEND JOHN

© Trisha Anderson Hendra Q

The phone-calls came one morning  
It was the third day of July  
From Michael, Frank and Marion  
with news we could not deny.

We all wished that we could have —  
That it wasn't really true  
But we had to face reality  
That fact we already knew.

My memories all came flooding back  
The fun we used to have  
The trips down there to Tamworth —  
I remembered them with love.

Ellen's little sewing room,  
(The place I always sleep  
When I come down to Tamworth)  
Those memories I will keep.

They way John's sense of humour  
Used to prise us from our sleep  
The wicked twinkle in his eyes  
We'd laugh until we'd weep.

Those early morning "get-ups"  
To make it to the Longyard  
We always got there somehow  
But, boy, we made it hard.

We'd party on the night before  
John and I drank Scotch  
We'd all bounce poems off each other  
And he'd never make a botch.

The 'Chainsaw' and the 'Lawn Mower'  
And how to 'Back a Trailer'  
They just kept coming magically  
We knew he'd never "fail ya".

And then Bruce Simpson's magic words  
The legend of 'Gold Star'  
When John recited that one  
You'd hear pennies from afar.

I wished that I had seen him  
But at least we had just spoken  
It didn't help me very much  
But I guess it was a token.

Oh, Ellen, we'll all miss him  
But it makes me very proud  
To have been a friend to such as him  
He stood out in a crowd.

Good-bye dear John and thank you  
You've been the greatest friend,  
I'll always keep you with me,  
These memories — to the end.

## BREAKFAST IN THE CITY

### Bush Poets to open NSW Spring Writers Festival

Bush Poetry, the language of great Australians such as Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson, is experiencing a revival all over Australia. Usually one would have to travel to the country to listen to some of Australia's best Bush authors and performers.

This year they will be coming to Sydney to perform and compete in 'The First Big City Muster'.

The NSW Writers' centre is featuring a Bush Poets Breakfast as part of the Spring Writers Festival weekend, on Saturday 13th. September from 9am to 12 noon in the Rozelle Hospital grounds.

Amongst the guest performers will be John Derum, Denis Kevans, Adrian Bryden, Frank Daniel and Joye Dempsey. Sonia Bennett and Jamie Curlin will perform Bush music. A Poet's Brawl and traditional performance competitions will be part of the mornings events. A written competition for traditional rhyming verse will close on August 30.

It would seem that Bush Poetry is perceived in some literary circles to be the poor cousin of Australian Literature. It says a lot for the tenacity of Bush writers that they have taken their rightful place as part of the cornerstone of Australian culture.

Some literary 'authorities' seem to feel that they have the right to comment negatively on Bush poets work as being inferior. At a recent high profile poetry event the compere, of Greek origin, stated that he hated Bush Poetry, and that as far as he was "...concerned Bush Poets should stay in the bush."

The Bush Poet who was leaving the stage at the time was taken aback by this attack and the statement elicited a quick come-back in kind, which did nothing for cultural or literary relations.

Two further incidents were reported in the ABPA Inc. monthly newsletters. One poet had his work rejected as 'doggerel' by a literary magazine and was advised that rhymed verse had been dead for twenty years, and that he should re-write it. The same work winning a major prize some time later. Another poet, recently moved to Sydney, reported that city audiences were not easy to perform to.

The organizers of the City Muster want to change this attitude as those who have experienced the talent and fun of bush poetry events will tell you that this is quintessential Australia.

Come and judge for yourself at the Big City Muster Bush Poets Breakfast and Brawl at the NSW Writer's Festival from 9am to 12 noon on Saturday 13th September.

## LIMERICK CORNER

Our President couldn't be sounder,  
But one thing will cause him to flounder,  
It's people who say,  
In an ignorant way,  
'Can-O-windra' instead of 'Ca-noun-dra'

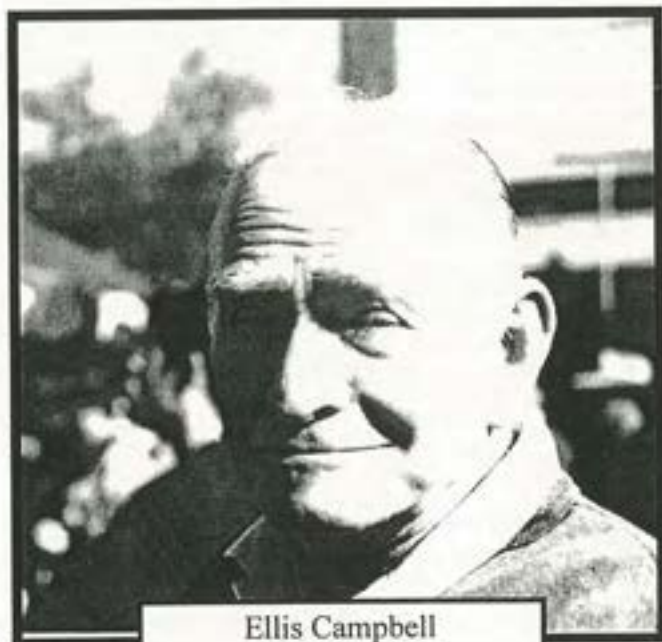
(Watty)



Mark Gliori



Tracy Fogarty



Ellis Campbell

## SHATTERED DREAMS.

© Carmel Dunn Warwick Q

I saw an old man, lean and spare  
With silver running through his hair  
He walked towards me bent yet calm  
And laid his hand upon my arm  
And with his eyes of deepest blue  
He looked at me and then I knew  
That this old man was rare and grand  
He'd waltzed Matilda throughout this land  
And now had handed in his pack  
For a broken heart and a worn out back.

I tried to remove the old mans' frown  
By telling a riddle I'd heard in town  
He smiled at my feeble joke  
And then with pain he quietly spoke  
"I once was a young man unlikely it seems  
And I filled my mind with hopes and dreams  
Of building a home and taking a wife  
How I longed so much for a family life  
And I met a girl who was pretty and smart  
And I loved that girl with all my heart  
With hair of gold and eyes of grey  
I asked her to be mine to stay.

Then a war-torn country gave a cry  
Australia thought 'twas right to reply  
So I donned the tin hat and picked up a gun  
It wouldn't be long till the war was won  
For five long years I heard dying screams  
And every night Mary was in my dreams

When at last the war ended and back home I went  
I found not my Mary but a letter she'd sent  
She'd married another while I was away  
My heart was then shattered as night turned to day  
That day in despair I took to the track  
I knew that my Mary would never come back  
But I still loved her dearly for her kind, gentle ways  
I loved her then, and I still love her today  
As I camped under the stars I tried to forget  
Never do that my child it's a move you'll regret"

And with that the old man shuffled away  
And I've wondered what happened to this very day  
Did he find Mary his bright bonny bride?  
Or is he still living and dying inside.

*The above poem written by 13 year old Carmel Dunn of Warwick Q. was the winning poem in the 1997 Charleville written competition and received a Highly Commended at Winton.*

## FATHER O'LEARY'S HORSE

© Mark Kleinschmidt Longreach Q.

When Father O'Leary departed his flock,  
The sorrow was widespread of course;  
As the parish was poor it hit on a scheme  
To fund raise, they'd auction the horse.

The gelding was jaded and set in his ways,  
Knew nothing of bridle and rein.  
The preacher departed had guided his mount  
With the words of the Lord, was the claim.

It was said that the grey would not budge an inch  
Till he heard "Jesus Christ" and then  
He'd gallop at pace that nothing could ease  
Except for the spoken "Amen".

The bidding was weak, no one would buy,  
Then a voice from the back of the throng  
Said, "I'll pay you ten quid and wager some more  
I can learn him to dance to my song".

The churchmen just grinned, took the price and the bet,  
And saddled the horse for the buyer  
Who mounted and urged, cajoled and then cursed,  
But the nag missed the words of the friar.

At a loss what to do, the horseman gave up,  
Outdone by the steed of a priest.  
While venting his ire, a fierce "Jesus Christ"  
Reached the ears of the obstinate beast.

It shot like a shaft from the string of a bow  
The rider clutched hard to his hat.  
The believers all laughed as the pair left the town  
At a hoof-churning charge 'cross the flat.

The soul in the saddle cried, "Whoa back" and "Stop"  
The pace was too fast to dismount  
So he clung on for life as the pious gave cheer,  
Or so goes the first-hand account.

The grey cleared the fences and logs on the ground,  
He jumped a small stream without pause,  
He headed unerring, why, no one could guess,  
To the yawn of a bottomless gorge.

The rider was helpless to alter his fate,  
His countenance chalky and grim.  
Not knowing the words for steer or stop,  
He prayed for forgiveness of sin.

Resigned he'd become, he'd end in the gorge,  
He'd do both the bet and the ten.  
With the horse at the brink of the sickening jump  
He ended his prayers with "Amen."

Well the nag stopped dead, the rider was saved,  
He'd beaten the roll of the dice;  
And he'd be still around if only he hadn't  
Repeated those words, "Jesus Christ!"

## IT'S IN THE BOOK . . . .

The adjacent poem is taken from the new Book of  
Western Queensland Verse,

### "WESTERING"

By the

1997 Australian Champion Bush Poet  
**MARK KLEINSCHMIDT**

Mark's book is available from  
**Astrelba Publishing 136 Emu St. Longreach Q. 4730**  
The book . . . \$13.00 pp. The cassette . . . \$15.00 pp.

## BACK TO THE BUSH © June Lal Mt. Drutt

Back to the bush is where I'll go  
Where mountains rise and rivers flow  
Where the gum trees tall reach over me,  
Back in the bush is where I'll be.

Back to the bush in this land so free  
Where the curlews call, and I can see  
For miles across the open plain  
And smell the scent of the summer rain.

Back to the bush where the cattle run,  
And the stars shine bright when the day is done  
Where the birds all sing a joyous song  
And the grass turns gold when the summer is gone.

Back to the bush that's where I'll be  
Where the friendly faces welcome me.  
Where the sheep still graze and the brumbys roam,  
And the wild flower blooms around my home.

Back to the bush where stockmen ride  
Thundering hooves down the mountain side.  
Ride through the creek and over the logs  
Ride to the sound of the trusty dogs.

Back to the bush where the camp fires burn  
To welcome me when I return,  
With the billy of tea and a damper hot,  
While the horses rest in a grassy spot.

Back to the bush I'll soon be home,  
Never again so far to roam  
I'll stay where my heart has always been  
Back in the bush, the land of my dreams.

**On the Grapevine . . .** heard that Rex Hockey and Joye Dempsey recently stepped over the edge into the darkness of the unknown to the delight of a very challenging audience at the Sandringham Hotel in Sydney's Newtown.

Although it has been said that city audiences don't appreciate Bush Poetry, Rex and Joye jointly took out the 'Poetry Slam' against a house full of University students. Lawson's Sweeney by far the favorite of the night. Good onya Rex! Well done Joye!

## TELEPHONE ENQUIRY

### or: GETTING NOWHERE

© Sandra J. Queensborough Binns

I rang the bank to talk to them this morning,  
for I wished to ask of them a thing or three,  
about some extra charges they had levied  
upon my life insurance policy.

*"Welcome to your ezy-bank connection.  
If you enquire about savings accounts,  
please press one. For term deposits, two."*  
I don't like this! My anger slowly mounts.

*"If your account is of the business kind,  
please press three; for investments please press four.  
If you require insurance, please press five."*  
Thank goodness, 'cause I couldn't take much more!

Then... *"Welcome to your ezy-surance line.  
Now, if you wish insurance for your car,  
press one; or if it's for your house, press two."*  
I really think this goes a bit too far!

But just in time to save my sanity...  
*"If you have a question with regard to life,  
please press three."* I'm getting somewhere now!  
But the next directions only add to strife.

*"If a new insurance policy you need,  
please press one."* Blood pressures slowly rising.  
*"or relating to existing policies,  
press two."* This really is antagonizing.

Well, when I press the button number two,  
*"Insert the number of your policy,  
then press 'hash'."* it says, but which one is 'hash'?  
The whole thing seems like double dutch to me.

*"For policy renewal, please press one;  
to cancel, number two is what you choose;  
for any other question, please press three."*  
So I press three, what have I got to lose?

*"Please wait for our next Teller to be free,  
and then press nine so that you may continue."*  
I press nine. There's music playing now,  
on S.T.D., it's costing me a fortune!

But that voice I dread comes back on the phone  
and says *"Thank you for calling us this time.  
We're happy that we have assisted you.  
Good-bye, from banking information line."*

Well, it seems I'll never get my answers there  
and I think I'll quit while I am still ahead  
— much more of this could cost my insanity,  
so I think I'll have to send a fax instead!

## GEOFFREY GRAHAM

### AT THE PALMA ROSA

The Palma Rosa has just had a visit from one of Australia's greats in Geoffrey Graham with a terrific new performance, "Ratbags and Romantics".

This three hour performance kept all and sundry well and truly entertained with a mixture of romance, humour, pathos, pride and 'ratbags', enlightening the audience to this wonderful country of ours and how lucky we are to live in it.

Currently Geoffrey is touring Queensland and NSW with his 'Man from Ironbark' show which he also presented with great success at the Palma Rosa. His new show was just as popular.

The next Palma Rosa poetry evening will be on September 10th. with Gary, Tracy and Kelly Fogarty.

Bookings are essential. See ad. page 2.

## JOHN

© Geoffrey Graham Bealiba V

You loved the pioneers and  
the dinkum bards of old  
The verse of Henry Lawson,  
annointed all in gold  
The Banjo was a hero with  
rhymes about the bush  
And Charlee Marshall's poetry  
claimed you for a push

The many poets aussie wide  
including one anon  
were part of your reciting on  
which thrived upon  
One special man whose works you did  
was Bruce the drover king  
With ballads like the great Gold Star,  
and rhymes your heart to sing

Your hissing in the pit was  
the one to make me cry  
but Sweeney was your forte,  
the verse to make you sigh  
So take care where you'r going,  
into the poets fold  
I'll see you up there matey,  
now keep the amber cold.

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### Australian Rhyming Poetry

by

Graeme Johnson

(1996 John Dunmore Lang Poetry Prize Winner)

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## BOWRA — POETS IN THE PUB

The introduction of Bush Poetry to the Nambucca began with an extremely successful evening of 'Poets in the Pub' at the Bowra Hotel in Bowraville on Saturday 2nd. August.

Russell Churcher, folk singer and reciter from Wauchope entertained and acted as master of ceremonies for the evening which was attended by a crowd of around 100 filling the lounge area of the hotel to capacity.

Late comers were unable to be accommodated and listened to the proceedings from the adjoining bar.

Five local Bush Poets entertained with original humorous and serious verse of an extremely high standard, featuring local identities as their subjects.

Best known of these poets were Barry Jacka of of Yarranbella, Geoff Manson from Taylor's Arm, Tony Comyn from Scotts Head, with Tom Stonham travelling from Kempsey, and Ray Cameron from Bomaderry who called in on his way home to the south coast. George New, bush poet from Bayldon, also performed during the evening.

The Back to Bowra Festival Committee was delighted with the response to the poetry and music throughout the evening, thanks to the hosts of the Bowra Hotel, Bernie and Tony Lawler for their sponsorship.

The Royal Hotel will be the next venue for the Bush Poetry in Bowraville when Bush Poet, George New and Fiddler Brian Goddard will entertain and recite in the hotel's beer garden from 1pm. Sunday 24th. August. Pub lunches will be available so come along early and enjoy yourselves.

## HUNGERFORD WELCOMES POETS

What better venue for a bush poetry gathering than the former Cobb & Co. change station at Hungerford?

The Royal Mail Hotel, established in 1870, still retains its outback character and has probably seen little change since Henry Lawson walked in from Bourke in 1893.

Proprietors, Doug and Maureen Bloomfield extended to all poets a warm welcome and local patrons quickly became devotees of bush poetry.

The quality of the verse presented in three sections compensated for the relatively small number of contestants.

This recital was the first for the MacFie Clan Society and Bob McPhee is confident that the "Bard of the Outback" title will be keenly contested in future years.

Several items which had been the property of Will Ogilvie were brought to the venue by local custodians Peter and Margaret Dunk. Will's silver cigarette case, matchbox and personal seal were admired by all and the personal seal was placed on finalists certificates.

Written competition results are as follows;

**John Dunmore Lang Poetry Prize.** 1st. Hendrika Summer. 2nd. Wallace McKittrick. 3rd. Allison Moore.

**Will Ogilvie Poetry Prize.** 1st. Paul Sherman. 2nd. Kelly Dixon. 3rd. John McCaskill.

Judges for the performance poetry were Ron 'Boulia'

## A COW OF A TIME

© Grahame Watt Kyabram V

I am a Jersey heifer,  
of royal and ancient breeding,  
My name is Daisy Splendid Third,  
In line and form I'm leading.

If you only knew my lineage,  
As pure as driven snow,  
You wouldn't even speak to me,  
Without a formal intro.

My mother was a champion,  
Twice winner at the show,  
And daddy was the ultimate,  
(The final straw you know).

No hanky-panky in my breed,  
It's un-natural to my senses,  
For daddy's in a test tube,  
No strays, or jumping fences.

There's Jerseys up at Windsor,  
Owned in England by our Queen,  
I bet she envies our lot,  
When our breeding she has seen.

I can hear her majesty crying,  
"What a splendid way to breed,  
We could pension off young Charlie,  
We could let him go to seed".

"No more tantrums from Diana,  
No more Fergie in a jam,  
We'd keep those young bloods bottled up,  
We just wouldn't give a damn!"

So never scoff at Jersey cows,  
We breed with ne'er a failure,  
Our background is impeccable,  
The Royal Family of Australia.

Bates of Gatton Q., Roy Briggs of Esk Q. and Merv 'Bluey' Bostock of Ringwood Q.

Results of the performance section are;

**Will Ogilvie Poetry Recital.**

1st. Liz Ward. 2nd. Ken Read. 3rd. Denleigh Stenzel.

**Traditional and Established Poetry**

1st. John McCaskill. 2nd. Ken Read. 3rd. Denleigh Stenzel.

**Original Poetry.**

1st. Ken Read. 2nd. John McCaskill. 3rd. Jodie Handley.

The encouragement award went to Valerie Richardson and Junior Champion was Jodie Handley. Overall Champion, the "Bard of the Outback" went to Ken Read of Charleville.

## THE BATTLE OF THE BORDER

The Poets went to Hungerford  
They came from near and far  
McCaskills came by aeroplane  
The judges came by car.

But ere inside the Royal Mail  
They were allowed to look  
Each had to say a verse or two  
With no help from a book.

For Lowood's Denleigh Stenzel  
This was no chore at all  
We couldn't shut the bugger up  
From dawn through to nightfall!

Ken Read was staying off the rum,  
His eye was on the prize.  
When Carol Reffold lost her words  
She smiled and rolled her eyes.

K B brought in a bunny  
And Liz cooked Rabbit Stew  
Doug and Maureen were kept busy  
Their welcome was true blue.

The ghosts of Will and Henry  
Were lingering close that night  
As the poets and the locals  
Gathered round the fire-light.

© Liz Ward. Mount Perry Q.

## THE TAIL OF A SNAKE

© Mavis Appleyard Warren NSW

Going to the toilet  
In Australia's great outback  
I jumped the hose twice going there  
But only once when coming back.

## PLEA FOR AN INSIDE LOO — OUT-BACK

© Mavis Appleyard Warren NSW

With the day so hot and sticky, I thought I'd take a bath,  
Before I stepped into it though — best just nick down the path.  
As I sat and swatted there, I heard a car arrive  
A man's voice called out "Hi there! Anyone alive!"  
I froze and thought 'don't answer — sit and hold your pose!'  
Wiggling as I waited with a million mosquitoes.

Shocked I heard my man say "What brings you way out here?"  
Among the answering chorus heard 'Shooting. Can of beer?'  
Hell! Who is it out there? Gentlemen or beasts?  
I stomped around the loo while the mossies had their feast.  
Is it worth the risk? I'm really not a prude  
But can I let those men know — I'm stuck here in the nude!!

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