

# The Australian Bush Poet's Association Inc.

Monthly Newsletter

No. 10 Volume 4. October 1997



## BOURKE MATESHIP FESTIVAL

Ellis Campbell & Ron Stevens, both from Dubbo, were the guest poets at the North Bourke Hotel for the Bourke Bush Poets' Night on Fri 19th September. Despite heavy rain, at least 200 supporters & participants enjoyed themselves under canvas in the pub's backyard.

The poetic focus of the festival was Breaker Morant, a plaque in whose honour was dedicated on the Sunday in the park's *Poets Corner*, alongside those of Henry Lawson & Will Ogilvie. At the ceremony, Ted Robl from Victoria spoke of his 16 years research into Morant's life and previously unpublished verse. Robl hopes to have the first of what could be a six-volume history published by early 1998. A street parade preceded the park ceremony. Onlookers cheered marchers, floats & the Salvation Army band. Town pride & mateship are certainly not dead in Bourke, despite unfavourable press reports occasionally.

Ron was one of a 17 member group which took part in a four-wheel-drive Poets Trek of nearly 800k, in the steps of Henry, Will & The Breaker. It began in Bourke on Wednesday, with readings from the works of these poets & photo displays, etc, followed by a session from Ron on the crafting of bush verse. The afternoon was spent visiting Bourke historical links with the poets; after which a poets' dinner was held at the Port of Bourke hotel. Thursday took in various sites on the way to Hungerford, where again poetry spiced an ale or sixteen, before bed at the Hungerford hotel.

The trekkers arrived back in Bourke in time for the bash at the North Bourke, with verses dripping from their ears. But a whale of a time was had. Ron recommends next year's trek to any bush verse lover. The team of locals led by Paul Roe of the Bourke Tourist Centre & Geoff Bullock from Dalby Old, is a great one.

In Bourke, Diane Tyson of Radio 2WB spreads the poetic gospel far and wide.

## MIRACLES DO HAPPEN

The organisers of the "Bards of Bowra" Bush Poetry Performance Competition were touched when the first place-getter of the Original Section, Don Lloyd, "The Bard from the Pillar Valley" donated his winners cheque to Regional Cancer Services in Coffs Harbour.

Don, who has had as many bad times in his life as good times could relate very strongly to the needs of cancer sufferers and their families, presented his cheque to Back to Bowra President, Vic Bird at the close of proceedings at the Inaugural Back to Bowra Bush Poetry Competition held at the Bowraville Bowling Club on Sunday 5th. October.

Don's first ever performance in the competitive arena simply made the audience of over one hundred, erupt into laughter with his humorous rendition of 'The

Writer's Dinner" a very popular winner with the crowd.

Speaking to competition organiser, Maureen Garner on the following day, Don seemed to be suffering what is known in Bush Poetry Circles as 'post festival blues' and can't wait until the next one rolls along.

## STRINGYBARK CREEK

© John Manifold

Late one October afternoon  
When rain was in the sky,  
A horseman shouting witless words  
Came belting madly by.

Straight for Benalla Town he rode  
And shouted as he came;  
But no one recognised the horse  
Or knew the rider's name.

Silence came down behind his back;  
On countless cocky farms  
The people watched the Wombat Hills  
Not moving eyes or arms.

None knew, and not for days we knew,  
That in the hour he passed  
Lonigan died, and Kelly's hands  
Were dipped in blood at last.

And Kennedy was yet to die,  
And McIntyre in flight  
Half-crazed upon a crazy horse  
Would scour the range all night.

But silence fell on all the farms  
As down the road they flew —  
The horse that no one recognised,  
The man that no one knew.

## 1998 WILL BE BIG

The need to plan well ahead for festivals and so on is becoming more apparent as organisers make known just what is ahead for 1998.

Bigger and better events are coming to hand for the Tamworth CM Festival in January. Easter will be a busy time for poets from as far north as Winton and Longreach to Kiama and Jindabyne in the South.

The popularity of bush poetry needs no mention at all going by the number of festivals this year and the response from the various centres.

Organisers are asked to keep the ABPA informed as early as possible of coming events.

*Australian Bush Poet's  
Association Inc.*

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**GLENGALLAN  
COUNTRY MUSIC — BUSH POETRY  
COMMUNITY HALL  
ALLORA Q.**

**NOVEMBER 15 - 16 1997**

With

**BOBBY 'THE LARRIKIN' MILLER**

Bush Poetry starts 9.30 Saturday

Entry fees. \$5.00 Seniors — \$3.00 Juniors

**Junior section.** (Own choice)

**Senior Male and Female**

**Original - Traditional and Humorous**

**Entries to Brenda Moscrop**

**154 McEvoy St**

**Warwick Q. 4370**

Ph. 076 615 962 — (ah 076 648 217)

**PLAN AHEAD FOR HOLIDAYS**

The Mt. Isa Writers Assoc and Mt. Isa Folk Club  
present

**The Mt. ISA**

**INAUGURAL BUSH POETS FESTIVAL**

**Queens Birthday Weekend 1998**

**Mt. ISA'S 75th ANNIVERSARY**

**Ph. 077 435 201 Fax 077 433 386**

The  
**BLACKENED BILLY VERSE  
COMPETITION 1998**  
ORGANISED BY  
**THE TAMWORTH  
POETRY READING GROUP**

SUPPORTED BY  
**Seed and Grain Sales Tamworth  
and  
A.M. Printing Services**

**Closing date.... 30th November 1997**

**First Prize. \$150.00**

**and The Blackened Billy Trophy**

**Second Prize. \$100.00**

**Third Prize. \$ 50.00**

Send entries with separate details to:  
**The Blackened Billy Verse Competition  
Tamworth Bush Poetry Group  
P.O Box 1164 Tamworth NSW 2340**

**THE BRONZE SWAGMAN AWARD**  
Worldwide competition for BUSH VERSE  
**1998**

**AUSTRALIA'S UNIQUE AWARD FOR  
TRADITIONAL BUSH VERSE  
Prize.**

**BRONZE STATUETTE OF THE SWAGMAN**

Designed and sculptured by Daphne Mayo

**Value \$2500 Plus a Winton Boulder  
Opal, Value \$250**

SSAE to

The Secretary

Winton Tourist Promotion Association

P.O. Box 44 Winton Q. 4735

Phone. 076 571 502

Fax. 076 571 322

**Entries close on January 31st.**

NOW AVAILABLE  
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"VERSE STORIES OF AUSTRALIA"**  
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Featuring "The WOMBAT FLASH"

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**LOOKING FOR  
A CHRISTMAS PRESENT  
CHECK OUT  
THE BOOK-SHELF  
ON THE BACK PAGE**

## President's Letter ....

Dear ABPA members.

I've had a few very busy weeks with work as well as performing and, again, as last month, the newsletter is upon me without any warning. Nothing like being prepared.

Thank you for all the kind words that keep coming in regarding the newsletter. It is encouraging indeed. This issue may be a little late so please accept my apologies.

Being part of the Opera in the Outback celebrations in South Australia was a very interesting interlude. A lot can be said for the organisers. What a mammoth task it was with four big days of activities.

On the first day at the town of Quorn, north of Adelaide, campdrafting was the order of the day, with country music the flavor at night starring Lee Kernaghan and a host of country music talent.

The second day was at Hawker where the Shearers Run was conducted at the local showground. Here I performed to American, Italian, English, German, Canadian, Asian and New Zealand tourists who paid a packet to see me — and of course The Bushwackers, Vince Brophy, and some opera singer from the 'shaky isles'.

Australian bush poetry is more popular than I ever imagined with the tourists. And for those who hadn't heard it before, it was a real treat. I was impressed when asked to recite the old 'Banjo' Paterson classics, the more I did the more they wanted. The 'Banjo' has more world wide appeal than I thought, especially with some of the Americans.

At the historic Arkaba Woolshed near the Wilpena Pound in the Flinders Ranges, a woolshed dance was conducted and a huge marquee had to be added to the woolshed to cater for the large numbers. Here with the Bushwackers and Vince Brophy, I am pleased to say the bush poetry again was very popular, with some of the Hawker audience present and a stack of brand new faces. I fulfilled my contract so to speak and later in the night was elated to be asked for another round of yarns and poems. A half-hour encore put a pretty big grin on my face I can tell you.

Sadly I missed out on the big City Muster and have not had any reports from Sydney as yet.

Boorowa had it's festival of the fleece on the long week-end and I was pleased to meet up with some members, Ted Webber of Narellan Gardens and Mick Gallagher of Mt. Colah, who really set the place rocking with a wild rendition of The Man From Ironbark. A few shy locals recited for the first time in public and went home totally full of encouragement.

Boorowa, which is about 80 k's north of Canberra looks set to carry on with more bush poetry in the new year.

The same for the organisers of the Bega Festival on the far south coast, they will be including bush poetry again in next years programme.

That's all for now, best of luck to all, and keep on writing and reciting, Regards .

*Frank Daniel*

## Secretary's Notes.

Dear members,

I've got a bit to say this month, so I'll get straight to the point. In regards to membership I have found in our model rules which form the constitution of our association that there is no circumstances which allow for any other than ordinary membership. That is no Junior or Life Memberships.

If any member wishes to make changes to the Constitution then it will have to reach me early enough to have the change approved by the Dept. of Consumer Affairs for consideration at the Annual General Meeting. The resolution would need a mover and a seconder. This would have to be back in time to print the resolution in the Newsletter allowing notice of such to ABPA members.

A concern of mine is the position we were in with regard to memberships expiring through the year. This caused a lot of confusion with the members list, and I think that we should overcome this by accepting subscriptions only to the end of the year for new members as we have been doing lately. (Or plus the additional subscription for the next year.)

Renewing members will pay the full subscription fee of \$25.00 regardless of whatever time of year they pay.

Members who have not renewed before the end of February 1998 will not receive a March Newsletter.

I want to thank you all for the way you have helped me out, and I especially thank Ron Selby for his assistance. He is always willing to help and I see him around the poetry events with the Annual to sell. It is much appreciated.

And finally, 'Bluey' Bostock! If you read this would you please contact me as I haven't been able to get you on the phone.

Write a few poems, eh?

Regards,

*Olive Shooter*

**.Wanted Urgently.  
Suitable Photographs  
for  
Reproduction in Newsletter**



## BOWRA POETS IN THE PUB

News just a little too late for inclusion last month tells of another successful Bush Poetry event staged by the Back to Bowra Festival committee in the beer garden of the Royal Hotel at Bowraville on Sunday 24th. August.

Led by the 'Bayldon Bard', George New, a team of fourteen reciters kept the crowd of around 80 people amused and entertained for over three hours.

Adding to the afternoon's entertainment was Brian Goddard, fiddler from the Bellingen based Bush Band, Tallowood.

Local reciters were in abundance, with the fairer sex winning the day with eight representatives ably accounting for themselves. Simon Campbell, from Turramurra, who is well known around the poetry circuit as 'Rhymin' Simon' was visiting the area and gave a good account of himself during the afternoon.

Local teachers John Boswell and Mick Bains ably rendered John's poem put to music, "The One Notion Party" and there's no prize for guessing the subject person of his witty ditty.

Amongst the reciters were Peggy Channells, Mathew Sincock, Janette Lewis and Pat Richardson who were all students in Back to Bowra Bush Poetry Workshops which were conducted in August.

### Talent Quest Success for Bayldon Bard.

George New, the "Bayldon Bard" won First Place in the Kempsey All Star Country Music Festivals Talent Quest on Friday 12th. September. Kempsey, birthplace of the great Slim Dusty and known locally as the "Cradle of Country Music", fielded some stong competition for George, with many fine Country singers and musicians taking the stage to be judged.

George commented, when awarded the trophy, "This is for Bush Poetry".

Good on ya George! Congratulations.

## NAMBUCCA VALLEY BRINGS HOME THE BACON

On Sunday, 14th. September the Kempsey All Star Country Music Bush Poetry Performance Competition was held at the Moon River Motel in Kempsey.

Ably co-compered and judged by Ray Essery, "The Mullumbimby Bloke" and Russell Churcher from Wauchope, the competition attracted fourteen reciters who competed in both Traditional and Original sections.

Amongst those appearing was Roy 'Camilleroi Didge' Newman, a very talented Aboriginal Poet and exponent of the didgeridoo. Roy, who had won the instrumental section of the Festival Buskers Competition the previous day, treated the audience to a fine performance of poetry and didgeridoo playing.

Nambucca poets came to the fore in winning both

the sections. Marj Trotter came first in the Traditional with "The Battle of Hasitngs" by Marj Constanduras.

Barry Jacca from Yarranbella via Macksville, took the honours in the Original Section with his "Strange Things Happen On Country Roads".

## CAMOOWEAL — DROVER'S YESTERYEAR

Camooweals inaugural 'Droving Yesteryear' Festival was held from September 12th to 14th. Reports to hand indicate that it was a great success, with the organisers very happy with a 'good roll up of Country Music people and about 10 bush poets'.

Judge for the written verse competition was 'Bluey' Bostock, of Brisbane. Ellis Campbell of Dubbo took out the honours in this section followed by John Russell, Roma Q. Third went to Ron Stevens, Dubbo.

Bruce Simpson and Kelly Dixon judged the spoken word contest. The Traditional section was won by Ian Tarlington of Gayndah followed by Merv Webster of Bargara and Bill Hay of Brisbane.

The Original section was won by Merv Webster, with Jack Gardiner and Col. Newsome second and third respectively.

The Humorous verse was won by Merv Webster, Mark Thompson, second and Bill Hay third.

A huge crowd was in attendance and the profits from the weekend will ensure a follow up again in July next year.

## BEGA FESTIVAL

The Bega Festival held over a week from the 22nd to the 30th of September saw for the first time bush poetry as a featured event on the programme.

The 1996 Australian Champion, Milton Taylor of Portland NSW and Frank Daniel of Canowindra entertained the very receptive audience with their full on collection of yarns and poems on the Saturday night.

Mrs. Eileen McCoy of Bega, her daughter Ros and family delighted the audience with some very talented fiddle playing — jigs, reels and old time favourites.

ABC radio gave the poets a lot of air-play and encouragement. Kate Carrigan of South East Radio ABC Bega also features a lot of Australian Bush Poetry during her radio segments. On Sunday Morning following 'Macca', Madeline Randall can be heard on ABC where she also includes verse from time to time.

NOTICE.

**AUSTRALIAN  
BUSH POET'S ASSOCIATION INC  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
TAMWORTH  
24TH. JANUARY 1998  
2.30 pm sharp !!**

— NEW BOOK —

**“BLUE REMEMBERED MOUNTAINS”**

**A Book of Poetry and Short Stories**

by

**CORRY de HAAS**

**6 Riverstone Road**

**HELENSVALE QLD. 4210**

**\$10.00 Post-paid**

**NEWS FROM THE WEST**

Yes! They're still alive and going well over in the west. Apart from an odd item from Val Reid we have not heard from the WA Bush Poets for some time.

Chairman of the West Australian Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners, Rusty Christensen, has penned a line to bring us 'up to speed with events in the west'. Rusty was the man who got the ball rolling with the assistance of the good office of the City of Melville, to whom they owe a debt of gratitude. However from now on they are very much on their own, but thankfully the foundation has been laid on which they will be able to build a vibrant and happy structure.

The purpose of their Association is to foster and encourage the conservation of this unique Australian culture and imperatively establish strong links with their supporters, be they writers or performers of bush poetry, balladists, yarnspinners, bull-dusters, liars or those nice people who enjoy the fellowship and warm friendly atmosphere of their happenings.

Rusty says that the surface has only just been scratched in W.A. Keith Lethbridge and he experienced the warmth and the extent of the bush poets fellowship in the East when they visited Winton and Longreach in April and May this year.



**MOONLIGHT HILL**

© Corry de Haas. Helensvale. Qld.

Spring came to me one day on Moonlight Hill  
 With scent of Jacaranda on the air,  
 I often stayed awhile — a stolen hour to fill  
 When someone spoke beside me, he was there;  
 And something old, yet ever new  
 Enhanced the day's serene tranquility,  
 His eyes locked into mine in silent rendez-vous  
 I lost my sense of place in his reality;  
 He moved toward me and all the world grew still  
 The day we fell in love on Moonlight Hill.

Then summer happened once on Moonlight Hill  
 Emotions rose, like bubbles in a stream,  
 Cicadas sang in chorus near the water-mill  
 We filled the lazy hours with endless dreams;  
 And somewhere way behind a curtain waived my past ...  
 Today was all we lovers 'd ever need;  
 We danced to distant music that would last  
 A life-time, so we thought, in youthful greed,  
 Then winds of war arrived with wintry chill  
 From distant shores they reached to Moonlight Hill.

Now I sit alone again — remember still  
 The day Spring came to me on Moonlight Hill...

As a direct result connections made at that time with many of the ABPA members saw a recent visit to the West by the talented poet, Bob Magor, during September.

Heats of their Wireless Hill competition are now under way with the first held on October 3rd. The second heat will be on 7th November and third heat on December 5th.

All heats are held at the Riverview Room, Raffles Hotel, Canning Bridge at 7.30 pm.

The finals will again be held on Australia Day 1998 at Wireless Hill, Ardross.

Rusty's phone number is 9364 4491. Secretary, Lorelie Tacoma, 9310 1500.

A bush poets breakfast is held on the first Sunday of each month at

Victoria Hall. 179 High Street Fremantle. Ph.9431 7270

**BUSH LAUREATE AWARDS 1998**

**For work produced from Nov 1 1996 to Nov 1 1997**

- FOUR SECTIONS:** 1. **Book of the Year** — **Published Original Australian Rhymed Verse**
- 2. **Recorded Album of Australian Rhymed Verse** (on commercially produced cassette tape or C.D)
- 3. **Recorded Performance of the Year** (A single, or a single track from any album)
- 4. **Heritage Award.** (Publication in book form emphasising Australian Heritage; historical, geographical or social — Including a reasonable amount of original verse.)

**Fee \$10 per entry — ENTRIES CLOSE 3rd. NOVEMBER 1997**

**Entry forms available — send SAE to GOLDEN GUMLEAF ENTERPRISES  
112 Crescent Road, Hamilton Qld. 4007**

## DIVINE INTERVENTION

© Greg Young, Mt. Coolum Qld.

My daughter looked so stunning, with eighty-four plaits running down her back — with beads to highlight here and there. She oozed self-satisfaction, to the flood of kind reaction. Much attention — all related to her hair.

But soon her smile was shattered  
when her best friend had hers plaited.

I was stunned how such an act could so inflame.  
And her words were, "It's not fair, that she too has plaited hair.  
I did it to look different — not the same.

As my friend, I wished her well — but I wish she'd go to hell.  
If she wants to, she should set her own hair trend.  
Go tease her hair or dye it, or longer she could try it.  
But not the same as me — and so offend."

Then much to her relief, there occurred — to end her grief.  
an event that some would say, had 'outside' help.  
For the poor girl got sunstroke, and her local doc. bespoke,  
"Your plaits exposed the sunshine to your scalp."

So today her friend's unplaited. She's zinc creamed and strictly hatted  
and when sighted most agree she looks quite odd.  
And while I dismiss religion, my daughter — just a smidgen  
believes, since then. there just might be a God.

## THE BLACKENED BILLY VERSE COMPETITION

The 1998 Blackened Billy Verse Competition organised by the Tamworth Poetry Reading Group is not as far away as you might think.

Entries close on November 30th for this prestigious event in the Bush Poetry stakes which always draws large numbers of entrants.

Entry fee is \$3.00 per entry and is limited to three per person.

Poetry entries must be bush verse, entrants own work, with name, address, phone number etc. placed on a separate page, not on entry.

Winning entries will be announced and prizes will be presented prior to the finals of the 1998 Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition held at the Imperial Hotel on Saturday 24th. January at 11.45 am.

Winners will be notified by telephone and will also receive a copy of the results.

## BOB MAGOR GOES WEST

South Australian Bush Poet, successful author and prolific writer and winner of the 1997 Bronze Swagman Award, Bob Magor of Myponga S.A. journeyed to Perth during September.

A great night of hilarious (and sometimes serious) entertainment was enjoyed by some 40 folk at Keith Lethbridge's Bi-Centennial Shed at Armadale.

Bob's special talent gave those present an insight into some of the professionalism, the presentation and the wit of the more experienced performance bush poets. He gave an interesting preamble on the enthusiastic and wide practice of bush poetry throughout Australia. The programme was bright and varied, with Bob's poems relating to tales of his life on the farm keeping them rapt.

Local performers were the 1997 Australia Day Bush Poets Winner Keith Lethbridge, plus Rusty Christensen, Jeff Swain, Brian Gale from Margaret River, Val Reid vs. Peter Capp, Peter Capp vs. Val Reid, plus 'musicians' on clarinet, lagerphones, box drums, guitar etc. It was a cosy atmosphere with a barbeque and log fire then the comforts of the Hall.

Visitors appreciated the warm hospitality and the wonderful supper provided by Keith and his delightful family.

A Come All Ye non-competitive night was held in the River Room at the Raffles Hotel on Friday 22nd.

August. A most enjoyable evening of fun, laughter and bush poetry with many new and not so new recitations coming from the performers.

It was great to hear the talents of Val Reid who has a special gift and humour in her writings which suffer little when read by this grand lady of bush verse.

Host for the evening was Australian Champion Yarnspinner, Kel Watkins who demonstrated his versatility by regaling all with his yarns as well as keeping a potentially fractious crowd in hand.

Favourites were Keith Lethbridge and Leigh Mathews from Armadale, and the 'Ardrossan Assassin' Jeff Swain and Rusty Christensen.

## WINTON WATER Keith Lethbridge WA.

When eating your breakfast at Winton,  
Enjoying your bacon and toast,  
You can tell straight away who has showered —  
The poor beggars who stink the most!

## THE WIFE'S LAMENT © Mavis Appleyard

Why is it that I'm beautiful  
Desirable and all,  
Only on the evenings  
Just before you call,  
"Come to bed, love,  
Leave the plates"  
When you have spent all day  
With your mates!!!!??

## A WILDFLOWER BY THE WAY

Will H. Ogilvie

The sun-rays burned like brands a-fire  
And, with a half-mile spread,  
In blue grass to their heart's desire  
The big Windorahs fed.

I rode the wing — a frail pretence;  
What trick doth Love disdain? —  
And halted at the split-rail fence  
And fastened Gauntlet's rein.

She stood before her cottage home,  
A maid of dimpled charms,  
And churned the suds to snow-white foam  
Across her nut-brown arms.

Then falshed those splendid orbs of brown:  
She whispered soft and low,  
"I'd love to see this Sydney town  
Where all the cattle go!"

I took her sun-kissed hand and said  
(And half believed it true):  
"No lady there has lips so red  
Or arms so soft as you —

"Or eyes one-half so bright!" I chaffed  
To pass dull time away;  
But Brown Eyes of the Barwon laughed,  
"So all you drovers say!"

I had no longer need to speak —  
Chained by those eyes of brown,  
I kissed her once for Barwon Creek  
And twice for Sydney town;

Then gathered bridel-rein once more  
And heard a heart-beat say,  
"The drover's life were dull but for  
The wildflowers by the way!"

## MT ISA GIVES EARLY NOTICE

The Mount Isa Writers Association and the Mount Isa Folk Club have combined to present a Bush Poets Festival in 1998. The Top End Folk Festival will be held on the Queens Birthday week-end, so the writers will present the Bush Poets Breakfast. It is felt that the two groups will combine very well. Being an inaugural event poetry wise, it is hoped that all will go well for them, as they have only just taken the first steps and know that they have a lot more to do.

If you are planning holidays in the north next year make sure that Mt. Isa is on the agenda, and be part of the 75th. Anniversary of Mt. Isa celebrations.

For further information contact ABPA member Fay Sloman at 4 Holt Cr. Mt Isa Q. 4825. Ph.077 435 201

## Vale: Betty Houston

© Bette Shiels Bundaberg Q.

A caller rang to say  
my best friend had passed away,  
And a large portion of my heart was set adrift.  
Betty Houston was her name,  
and my life won't be the same,  
For her passing left a monumental rift.

Bundaberg was her birthplace,  
And she loved its every face,  
Spreading joy and laughter everywhere she went.  
Seeing good in everyone,  
she shone brighter than the sun,  
To me our friendship sure was Heaven sent.

Now I know that when one passes,  
their life's seen through rosy glasses,  
But I never give false praise posthumously.  
Betty's soul was like the dawning,  
clear as crystal in the morning,  
Reaching everyone she touched so humorously.

Her smile brightened up a room,  
swept it cleaner than a broom,  
Many people's lives she lightened as if driven.  
Now her music has been stilled,  
poetic words remain unfilled,  
And I thank God for the friendship I was given.

But she had a higher calling,  
her one love could see her falling,  
As he caught her in his arms so lovingly,  
And I see her smiling face,  
lighting up a special place,  
A new star is shining down for all to see.

## CLIFTON AND BRYMAROO

The bush poets held a large audience enthralled for two mornings at the recent Toowoomba Country Music Festival held at Clifton.

The poets breakfast was run by former member Carmel Randle of Preston who did a mighty job with audience participation as well as the entertainment.

Apart from Carmel, performing poets included Milton Taylor, Bobby Miller, Ray Essary and Trevor Kuchel. Carmel Dunn also showed her talent. All performed with great competence and are worthy ambassadors for bush poetry.

Another competition held in the same general area was the Bid Do at Brymaroo country music and bush poetry festival where two of our members took places. First prize went to Max Jarrot of Killarney with Ron Liekefett of Lawnton runner-up. Third place went to Doreen Frazer of Twin Towns.

## AROUND THE TRAPS

### Results of Competitions to hand.

#### Gulgong Henry Lawson Literary Awards.

Highly Commended. Brian Bell, *"The Village Hall"*

Congratulations to member Graeme Johnson of West Ryde who received Second Placing in the Leonard Teale Memorial Spoken Word Awards at the Henry Lawson festival with his poem, *"Minehan's Lament"* James Warner won this section.

#### Montrose Wines Poet's Corner Competition.

First. Ron Stevens Dubbo. Highly Commended. Norma Balzer. Ballina (2nd) Ian Smith NSW (3rd). Mudgee Valley Writers Competition.

First. Liz Vincent. Picton.

Second. Gloria Anderlini Cairns. Highly Commended. Ellis Campbell Dubbo and Gloria Anderlini.

Commended. Emmott O'Keefe Killara. Ellis Campbell, Ron Stevens.

#### Hasting FAW Competition, Port MacQuarie.

(Gilbert Mant Award Australian Bush Verse).

First. Yvonne Colyer, Korora Bay.

Second. Ellis Campbell. Dubbo. Third. Emmott O'Keefe.

Highly Commended. Ted Clowes, Annandale. Dawn Sergeant, Wauchope. Commended. Geoff Allen, Balgowlah. John Bird, Ocean Shores.

#### Art and Craft across Australia. Cairns. Q.

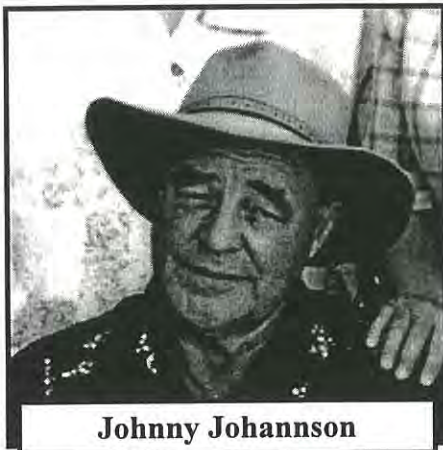
The winners of the Australian Rhyming Verse competition which closed on 31st July were; Seniors section. Keith Bostock. Juniors. Carmel Dunn.

#### RUDD'S PUB — NOBBY

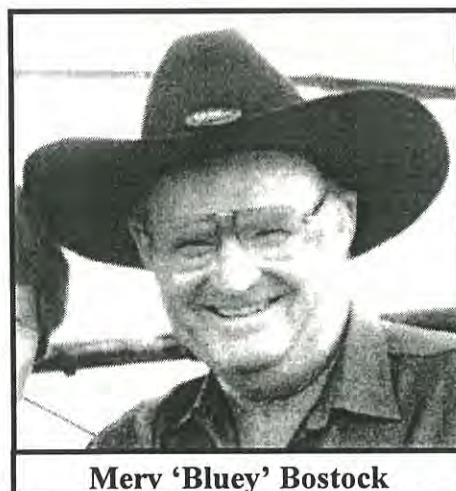
Following the opening of the Sister Kenny memorial museum at Nobby Qld. a few hours of good poetry was enjoyed at Rudd's pub.

Nobby is the heart of Steele Rudd country and the home of the Dad and Dave stories On Our Selection.

Among our members were Ron Selby who was in good form, Tom Clark with his well performed A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson, Ken Hood with his inimitable way of reciting and singing and old Nobby-ite Olive Shooter. Other local performers added to the variety and the enjoyment of the day.



Johnny Johannson



Merv 'Bluey' Bostock

## NEWS FROM KYABRAM

The Kyabram Vic. Apex Club in conjunction with the Kyabram Bush Verse Group held their 8th. annual "Around the Campfire" evening on September 11th. at Kyabram.

A good-sized, appreciative crowd was entertained with bush verse and tall tales from local and visiting poets. The evening was compered by Grahame (Skew Wiff) Watt and featured other locals, Betty Olle, Mick Coventry, Denis Attwood, Ric Raftis, Kaye and Mal Mattingly, Grace Leamon, Les Parkinson, Bev Williams and visiting poets Des Ginnane (Numurkah), Beth Bashford (Berrigan), Peter Worthington and Ray Stuchberry (Bendigo), Tammy Muir (Picola) and John Johansson (Yarrowonga).

All poets entertained in a casual and non-competitive atmosphere, which has proven to be a successful formula for this event over previous years. The Apex Club "Best Yam Spinner" was won by John Johansson, while the "Best Poet" Award went to Des Ginnane. The inaugural "Skew Wiff Kelly" Award (named after Watty) was won by Beth Bashford.

A Primary School Written Competition was held in conjunction with the "Around the Campfire" evening and a total of 97 entries were received. The winning poem, "A Clean Earth", was written by Micaela MacLachlan of Haslem Street Primary School, Kyabram.

### "ROUGH BUSHIES AT HEART"

42 BUSH POEMS

BY

TIM SCHERF

\$10.00 Post Paid

Tim Scherf 'Sandy Hills'

Tenterfield. NSW 2372

"ROUGH BUSHIES AT HEART"



## BARDS OF BOWRA — WRITTEN COMPETITION RESULTS

The Bowraville Folk Museum was the venue of the Opening Ceremony of the 1997 Back to Bowra Festival which included the presentation of the Bards of Bowra Bush Poetry Written Competition which attracted 77 entries.

The Open Subject Competition was won by Ellis Campbell of Dubbo with *"Return to Nowhere"* which was read by visiting Sydney Poet, Warren 'Arch' Bishop. A highly commended certificate went to Carmel Randle of Preston Q. for *"Jason Doesn't Live Here"*. Ellis Campbell was commended for *"A Reformed Alcoholics Tale"*.

Local bard Peter Thomas was successful in winning the Local Subject Section with the *"The Cedar Cutters of Nambucca"*. Peter also took out second place with a Highly Commended *"The Bowraville Ducks"*. Peggy Channels from Macksville was Commended with her beautiful poem *"Our Local Hero"*, which told the story of the bravery of Private Jack Simmons and his Award for Valour on active service.

A crowd of some one hundred people gathered to hear from 17 bush poets who came from as far as Forster in the South to Grafton in the North. Judges were Warren 'Arch' Bishop, Brian Bell and 'Rhymin' Simon' who all travelled up from Sydney for the festival.

Don Lloyd won the Original Performance section with his hilarious poem *"The Writer's Dinner"*. Barry Jacka from Yarranbella received a Highly Commended with *"Strange Things Happen On Country Roads"*. Cathy O'Keefe from the Nambucca Writer's Group was Commended for her poem *"A City Wedding"*.

Reid Begg of Forster won the Traditional Section with the Bobby Miller Poem *"The Will"*, receiving a positive response from the audience for his first win in performance competition.

"Rhymin' Simon" was Highly Commended for *"The Eastern Gobble Guts"* by Denis Kevans. Janette Lewis from Mullaway was commended for *"Ah Whiteman, Do You Have Any Sacred Sites"* also written by Denis Kevans.

Junior Bards Presentations were made by George New who conducted special workshops at three Nambucca Valley Schools prior to the competition.

Results were as follows. Primary School Section:  
First. Rian Elliott — Bowraville Central School. *"My Bush Poem"* Highly Commended. Travas Burns — Bowraville Central School. *"Bowra Moto X"* Commended. Kristy Rutherford — Bishop Druitt College, Coffs Harbour. *"Gum Trees"*.

High School Section results were: First Carmel Dunn. Scots P.G.C. College, Warwick Q. *"The Parting"* Highly Commended. Carmel Dunn. *"With You"*. Commended. Carmel Dunn. *"The War's Not Over Yet"*.

The Special School's Award, a complete works of A.B. "Banjo" Paterson went to Scots P.G.C. College, Warwick Q. to celebrate Carmel Dunn's success in the competition.

Why spend a fortune researching your family tree.

Become a politician and your opponents will do it for free.

— Anon.

## A Clean Earth.

© Micaela MacLachan Kyabram V.

As I look at the sea  
I see a deep green  
The shimmering water  
The fish to be seen.

Sand under my feet  
as I walk alongside  
the water with waves  
and a park with a slide

The toddlers are laughing  
and splashing about  
The seagulls are flying above  
The people are playing volleyball  
and giving a shout  
Kids make sandcastles with love.

But just metres away  
The cars blow grey fumes  
The trees choke on smog  
And so do the dunes.

But most of all people  
They're making the mess  
Like litter, graffiti,  
They couldn't care less.

If only it mattered  
in some people's dreams  
To care for our beaches and land  
We could all work together  
and make it, it seems,  
A clean Earth, a world that is grand.  
So love our big planet  
And show that you've cared  
Respect all its creatures  
This world can be shared.



Col Wilson — aka "Blue the Shearer"



*The Stone Walls of Windsor  
are Wailing Tonight*

“The Stone Walls of Windsor are Wailing Tonight”,  
The presses are dealing with death as they write.  
While two little Princes were woken from bed  
And told that their mother, the Princess was dead.  
Our star ship’s lost steering and its main guiding light,  
“The Stone Walls of Windsor are Wailing Tonight”.

The fairytale Princess with a yearning to teach,  
With the commoner’s touch, not a “Royal” out of reach.  
And now in a casket her body has come,  
Draped in a flag to a “rum-a-tum-tum”  
The renegade royal with no need for a throne,  
For the whole world has given her one of her own.

And slow the gun carriage moves on to St. Paul’s,  
The planets at anchor around it’s great walls.  
The Thames threads in silence the sad hearts of men.  
There’s tear in the eye on the face of “Big Ben”.  
To her slipper of crystal the palace would ring,  
Through her lyric of love she would teach it to sing.

In death joins immortals like Monroe and Dean,  
For the commoners crowned her at heart as their Queen.  
And all the dead Poets and all the dead Kings  
Who have written of love, and have ruled worldly things,  
Through all of their empires where suns never set,  
Will worship a Princess we’ll never forget.

Now walking behind her are five men in black,  
Wishing to Christ they could turn the night back.  
In step and in mourning this vice regal wing,  
A Duke and two Princes, a brother, a King?  
And on through old London, the horses’ hooves carry,  
As a billion arms ache to hold William and Harry.

“The Stone Walls of Windsor are Wailing Tonight”,  
Our Princess Diana has left in the night.  
The candlelight’s fading on Elton’s sad song,  
Her beauty surrounds us ... can’t believe that she’s gone.  
But she’s left us clear searchlights in twin vaulted joys,  
The flash of her eyes . . . in her two little boys.

© Robert Raftery Picture Writer Brisbane 13.9.97.

**MEMOIRS OF A CONFESSED TOMBOY**

Review by Sondrae Johnson. Shepparton V.

An avowed tomboy has written her memoirs and packaged them into a slim volume of poetry, titled *Mischief, Memories, Mates*.

Beth Vincombe-Bashford, a nurse whose pioneer forebears hail from Barham, endured years of gentle teasing for her habit of encapsulating events into verse, then filing them away in a drawer some where.

**SCORPIO**

**THE STING IS IN THE TAIL!!!!**

Scorpios are cunning types.  
They’re crafty and they’re sly,  
A lot of them are lawyers,  
And that’s the reason why.  
A randy lot of buggers,  
They’re quite obsessed with sex.  
Your won’t run into Scorpios  
With super intellects.  
You shouldn’t mess with Scorpios,  
The female or the male —  
Remember that old saying?  
“The sting is in the tail.”

(Oct. 24 — Nov 22)  
“Blue the Shearer”

When she retired, she decided it was time to do “something for myself” — so, backed by her husband Bill, she published her own work.

*Mischief, Memories, Mates* is a humorously written collection of cameos; tribute to those incidents, events and pathways most people merely tread.

Vincombe-Bashford has mapped them instead, transforming the every day events into enchanting word pictures.

Family photos attest to the authenticity of her poetry but it is Shane Nipper’s cute line sketches throughout that thread a visual trail through the slim paperback.

*Mischief, Memories, Mates* is available from the author for \$12.50 plus \$3.50 for post and handling.

**Mischief, Memories, Mates.**

by

**Beth Vincombe-Bashford**

**\$16.00 Posted.**

**P.O. Box 18 Berrigan NSW 2712**

**Ph/fax 03 5885 2275**

**Practice makes perfect**

**The old saying goes.**

**But that isn’t quite true — it appears.**

**For Doctors and Lawyers**

**aren’t perfect**

**And they have all practiced — for years. Anon.**

## PLAYTIME at LAKE MERAN SCHOOL

© Beth Vinecombe - Bashford. Berrigan NSW

You've often heard people of my vintage state how we didn't have toys like today.  
We made our fun as eachday came along, (well, we thought it fun anyway).  
I fondly recall such an incident, when my brother and I were both caught,  
Along with the other remaining eight kids, who were dobbed in by two students from Boort.  
This story took place at the Lake Meran School, where we all arrived there by horse,  
The steeds were unsaddled and let to run loose, (in a fenced off section of course).  
Well the morning had dragged, the lunch hour was dull, and we searched for something to do.  
When one of the boys (my brother I think), said "Let's have fight with horse pooh!"  
Sides were chosen and swords were drawn, then off to the horse-yard we ran,  
Five against five seemed fair enough, and soon the battle began.  
With no respect for the opposite sex, manure was gathered and flung,  
They sailed throught the air and the splattering sounds soon had us all smelling of dung.  
The air was thick with offensive missiles, midst screams and shrieks of laughter,  
Not giving a thought to the mess we were in, and the price we would pay in the after.  
Don't think for one minute we didn't have fun, the challenge was always there.  
To see who could heave the bigggest of buns, and land one fair and square.  
Oh what a sight we must have been, when Miss Ubergang called us back,  
To stand in line with hands outstretched, with the cane she gave us a 'whack'.  
My clothes were a mess, my hair was 'yuk', my face (like my clothes) did stink,  
I now regretted my misdemeanour, and what would my mother think!  
I didn't have long to wait to find out, for the moment I stepped in the door,  
She already knew via 'the party line' and we were in trouble once more.  
To make matters worse our teacher now lived with us out there on the farm,  
We found it very difficult to turn on the innocent charm.  
This all took place many years ago, I was only eight at the time.  
I must admit that I've aged with the years, but the memory I treasure as mine.  
And when I see the kids of today, throw out their frisbies and run,  
I think of that day at the Lake Meran School, the day we played "Who flung dung".

Ask a friend to join The Australian Bush Poet's  
Association Inc. \$ 7.00 from now till the end of the year.  
\$ 25.00 for renewals.

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

Thank you to the following contributors to this  
month's Newsletter: Maureen Garner, Geoffrey  
Graham, "Blue the Shearer", Corry de Haas, Robert  
Raftery, Ron Stevens, Neil Hulm, Judith Hosier,  
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Don Lloyd, Carmel Dunn, Tom Dunn, Ray Essery,  
Claude Morris, Adam Krause, John Manifold, Fay  
Sloman, Olive Shooter, Kelly Dixon, Joe, Rusty  
Christensen, Keith Lethbridge, Mavis Appleyard,  
Greg Yound, Bette Shiels, Mich Coventry, Micaela  
MacLachlan, Beth Bashford, Val Reid, Ros Stair,  
Wally Finch, Ray Mitchell. **BLESS Y'Z ALL!!!!**

### ADVANCE DATE CLAIMER

**QANTAS — WALTZING MATILDA  
BUSH POETRY AWARDS  
WINTON Q.  
8th. 13th. April 1998**

### "JUNIOR BUSH POETRY FESTIVAL"

**Official Opening of the  
WALTZING MATILDA CENTRE**

**N O P A - '98  
NATIONAL OUTBACK PERFORMING ARTS  
LONGREACH QLD  
APRIL 5 - 9 1998**

**MORE INFORMATION NEXT ISSUE**

## POET'S CALENDAR. EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS.

- Nov. 3rd. **Closing date for Golden Gumleaf Bush Laureate Awards.** See advertisement page 5.
- Nov. 15 - 16 **Glengallan Country Music - Bush Poetry** Allora Community Hall. Starts 9.30 am. Bush Poetry on the Saturday. Entry Fees. Senior \$5.00 Junior \$3.00 Junior section — own choice. Senior Male and Female — Original - Traditional - Humorous. Entries close October 31. Send to Brenda Moscrop 154 McEvoy St. Warwick Q. 4370 Ph. 076 615 962 (ah. 076 648 217)
- Nov. 23rd. **The Dog on the Tuckerbox Festival.** Poets Breakfast. 8.30 am. Ph. John Barton 02 6944 1450
- Nov. 30 Closing Date. **The Blackened Billy Verse Competition 1998.** Written Australian Bush Verse. Entry fee \$3.00 per entry. Limit of 3 entries per person. Send with separate details to Tamworth Poetry Reading Group. P.O. Box 1164 Tamworth NSW 2340
- Nov. 30 Closing date for **Snowy Mountains Bush Poetry Club** Junior Championships Written Competition Under 16 Years. Free entry. Place name address etc on back of entry. Post to Neil Hulm. Sec. 361 Cheyenne Drv. Lavington NSW 2641
- 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
- Dec. 30 Tumbarumba Bowling Club. Tumbarumba NSW. Snowy Mountains Bush Poetry Club Championship Recitals.
- January 22 - 24 **Tamworth Poetry Group Bush Verse Competition. Imperial Hotel Tamworth**  
Entry forms from Tamworth Poetry Group P.O. BOX 1164 Tamworth 2340
- January 24 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING — AUSTRALIAN BUSH POET'S ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**St. PETERS SCHOOL TAMWORTH. 2.30 PM SHARP.**
- January 31 Closing date. The Bronze Swagman Award for Australian Bush Verse. See article this issue.
- Jan 31 Bungendore NSW Country Muster. Bush Poets Breakfast, Brawls and so on. All welcome.
- Feb 1. Frank Daniel — Blue the Shearer — Bobby Miller. Ph. Toni Flanagan. 02 6238 1651
- Feb. 28 Closing date. Central Coast Poetry Society's Henry Kendall Poetry Competition — 1998  
1998 SSAE to D. Theodore, Competition Secretary, C.C. Poetry Society, 57 Empire Bay Drive, Kincumber. 2251
- Easter 98 Snowy Mountains Country Music Festival — Jindabyne. Bush Poets Breakfasts — Campfire yarns. More news later. Put it in your programme for '98. Ph. Christiana Kern. 02 6459 4511
- June 1998 Mt. Isa Writers Association and Mt. Isa Folk Club. Mt. Isa Inaugural Bush Poets Festival in conjunction with the Top Half Folk Festival Queens Birthday Weekend. Celebrating Mt. Isa's 75th Anniversary. Phone 077 435 201 Fax 077 433 386
- 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  
*Pine Rivers Camp Oven Breakfasts.* Petrie Q. Ph. 07 3260 5506 - 07 3886 1552  
*Victoria Hall. 179 High St. Fremantle WA. Ph. 9431 7270*
- 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

### CHAMPIONSHIP RECITALS

The Snowy Mountains Bush Poetry Club will be conducting its Annual Championship recitals at the Tumbarumba Bowling Club on December 30th at 8pm.

Held in conjunction with the Bar Room Yarns and Recitals the Open Championship boasts \$150.00 prize-money and the Ladies Championship \$50.00. Entries may be made at the recitals.

The Junior Written Section (Under 16 yrs) closes on November 30 and must be original work.

Entry is free and name and address needs to be written on the back of the entry. Send to Neil Hulm Sec. at 361 Cheyenne Drive. Lavington NSW 2641

### RAIN

Claude Morris

Though sweet is the sunshine after rain,  
There's something that's just as sweet —  
It's the rain that comes to the scorching plain  
Where the rain clouds seldom meet.

The scent of the rain on the parched-up ground,  
As it patters a soft refrain,  
To many a man, the scent and sound  
Is as slumber after pain.

## Profile. Ray Mitchell

### The Office Girl and the Drifter

Ray Mitchell was born in 1924 and now resides in Maryborough Qld. with his lovely wife, best friend and good mate, Mary. He says this makes him a bit long in the tooth 'but we still have our sense of humour and our wits about us and enjoy ourselves in the good life.'

They particularly enjoy being a member of the ABPA and look forward to receiving the monthly newsletter to catch up on the comings and goings of all the members.

Ray left school in 1937 at thirteen years. That was the 'norm' he says in those days. The 'Thirties' were known in history as the boy labour era, when kids were placed in a job and the Fathers and elders were put off.

Ray didn't like his first job; or the second; or the third and so dropped out to become a 'knock-about drifter'. He soon found himself working along the Western run as it was known in those days, working from the Thomson Reaches 'Longreach' clear through to the Lachlan River at Cowra.

He was a tailer on the stock routes with the drovers, a tar-boy and picker-upper in the sheds, cleared gidgee scrub and 'mucked about with horses'. He even did a stint on the timber along the NSW - Qld. border — all this before he was called up for the army at 18 years in 1942.

Ray says he had some good times, bad times and wretched times. After returning from the war, Ray found himself 'pegging a lift' to anywhere, nowhere in particular. As fate had it, late one evening on the highway near Tenterfield, with the setting sun in his eyes, he managed to hail a huge semi-trailer heading south. Before he knew it he was aboard as a passenger with a 'heap of Pugs and Wrestlers' courtesy of the Jimmy Sharman Toupe. Ray recalls how he 'wanted out of there straight away'. Horses were bad enough he thought.... but!

Nevertheless they turned out to be a first class lot of blokes and Ray was with them all the way to the Melbourne Show, taking in many showgrounds and sizeable towns along the way.

He had a lot of fun and if nothing else, they taught him how to pick himself up and to battle on with life — something that seems to be lacking in life today. After mastering the art of picking himself up for the one hundredth time he left Sharman's boys on amicable terms and wished them well.

It was at this point that his life changed for the better. At 22 years of age he met a most delightful, gentle, considerate little blonde who said she was 18 years old. They were married two years later in Melbourne. Mary has been a great mate, wife and mother of their five children and now enjoys being a grandmother to their children.

Eldest son Bill is general manager of Australia Post in South Australia; eldest daughter conducted a hairdressing salon in Toowoomba and Oakey on the Darling Downs; daughter no.2 graduated in Psychology and Political Science at the University of Calgary, Canada; daughter no. 3 is a registered Nursing Sister in Perth W.A. and the youngest son is Pilot Captain flying Hercules from the Richmond Air Base in NSW.

They are all married and well settled. To quote Mary, who also left school at 13 years, *'Not a bad effort for from an Office girl and a drifter.'*

The Mitchells conducted their own business for quite a few years on the Darling Downs before retiring.

They were introduced to the ABPA by Milton and Lovene Taylor when passing through Longreach last year and look forward to a long a lasting friendship with the Bush Poets Association.

Ray dabbled a little in verse writing and over the years has penned a line or two. Given most of it away to any one who wanted it. Like all good poetry it brought a little bit of fun to others — reward enough for Ray..

## THE PARTING

© Carmel Dunn (13) Warwick Q.

Darkness slowly creeping  
Closing in on every side  
But he must dismiss his terror  
Must forget his fear and ride.

Ride for the life of a comrade  
Who lay on the blood-stained dirt  
Ride for a sense of mateship  
Ride to shroud the hurt

He knew his friend was dying  
He saw the body shand with pain  
And in a tangled swirl of memories  
He could see his youth again

A sturdy grey beneath him  
And the stars above his head  
Singing songs on nightwatch  
A task the stockmen dread

The Silence soon was shattered  
with a sound to end his fun  
And it filled his heart with terror  
The cattle on the run

He remembered all about that night  
The tree that came too fast  
The branch that knocked him from his horse  
The thought he'd breathed his last

When a figure rose from the darkness  
Said, "You're in a bit of strife"  
That voice became his best mate  
The friend that saved his life

He realised how the roles reversed  
Perhaps you'd call it fate  
The very man that saved his life  
Now lay his dying mate

As he galloped through the Aussie bush  
He tried to clear his head  
But somewhere, deep inside him  
He knew his friend was dead

So ride he must in terror  
Try to clear his tortured brain  
Ride for the love of that comrade  
Ride to numb the pain.

This poem by 13 years old Carmel Dunn of Warwick Q was the winning entry in the Junior Bards of Bowra — High School section for 1997.

## MATERNAL LOVE or ODE TO ALL MOTHERS

© Mavis Appleyard Warren NSW

I push, I shove, I grunt and groan,  
My body tired and aching.  
My nightie's getting in the road  
Oh, what a time it's taking.

A gloved hand pats me on the rump  
He says "You're doing fine"  
I moan and push, shove and grunt,  
For strong love of mine.

I give a sigh, the welcome cry,  
Our son, you would be knowing,  
He grins at me so happily,  
"Thanks, Mum, we got it going."



Geoffrey Graham

## POET'S LONG TREK

Recent news from Geoffrey Graham is that he has at last returned to his home in Bealiba Vic. after what is perhaps the longest ever trek by an Australian Bush Poet.

Starting with his very popular "Man From Ironbark" show on Anzac Day at Eugowra, Central Western NSW, Geoffrey journeyed via horseback through Orange, Blayney, Oberon, Goulburn and all towns along the way to Canberra, performing nearly every night.

He then took his 'Banjo' show up North to Weipa with lots of Queensland towns between,

## THE SOUTH-WEST COUGAR

© Val Reid Bicton WA

I went down south to meditate, to sit around and dream,  
To rest beneath the Tinglewoods beside a rippling stream.  
To commune with Mother Nature, to forget city strife,  
To hug a tree, drink billy tea, reorganise my life.

When I reached my destination, I camped in forest dense,  
And sat upon a boulder, of life to make some sense.  
In the balmy calm of evening, my spirit sorely spent,  
I sat, o'ercome with wonder, inhaling bushland scent.

I heard the boobooks calling - then a sudden, chilling howl,  
Weird noises whispered round me - wild creatures on the prowl.  
Then the bushes near me rustled - I felt a twinge of fear,  
Though knowing only foxes, or rabbits, ventured near.

While sleeping, peace was shattered by a maniacal scream,  
So awful, I was terrified, - it must have been a dream.  
Then I saw a shadow casting upon the canvas walls,  
And then made out the silhouette of what had made those calls.

My blood then turned to water, and tears began to flow,  
I fell upon my trembling knees and prayed to see it go.  
But the animal seemed hungry - it roared in famished rage,  
And I could see the headlines splashed over the front page.

I heard the velcro tearing as the flap was opened wide,  
I screamed out like a banshee as the creature leapt inside.  
As it snarled, with green eyes gleaming, anticipating tea,  
I never had a doubt that its evening snack was me.

then back home via the Gulf, Mt. Isa and Cloncurry, finishing the trip at Nambucca Heads. Certainly a long time to be away from the family and home.

On the way he had a ball at the Rocky festival which he says will only get bigger and better. Marco, Bobby, Gary, Glenny, John and Keith were all in fine form and Sandy Thorne, whom he hadn't seen before was excellent.

After performing School Shows across Australia for many years, he managed to fit in a special performance for the Queensland Arts Council, so now has authorisation for School Shows in Queensland as well as in NSW.

Geoffrey was pleased to see so many of the Bush Poets and supporters along the way. 'We'd be lost without their support and friendship'.

"Special thanks," says Geoffrey, "must go to Trisha Anderson and Maureen Garner to name just a couple, and of course my amazing on the road duo, Bert and Trish."

Geoffrey reports a terrific festival at Karoondah a few weeks ago run by Jeanette Wormald, a top performer and a great first time organiser.

To top it all off he has just returned from the Winton Festival in September. Numbers were a bit light this year he says, but spirited work from Noel Cutler, The Goondiwindi Grey, Ray Rose and the amazing Billy Hay held the Bush Poets in good stead.

It was ten foot high, I tell you, and nearly five foot wide,  
I knew my life had ended, it'd surely have my hide.  
I grabbed the kero lantern and swung it round my head,  
The creature swiped it with a paw, and I collapsed from dread.

Of course, I'd heard the stories of the cougars in the South,  
But like most of us who've heard them I thought them word of mouth.  
They say a travelling circus overturned and some escaped,  
Or that sailors from a troop ship left some cubs down in the Cape.

This thing was overwhelming, I was reeling from the shock,  
And then it started snarling and fell upon my sock.  
It sniffed appreciation and rumbled with pure glee,  
Then, like a playful kitten, it rubbed itself 'gainst me.

Can anyone imagine my overwhelming fear?  
The panic and the terror with that animal so near?  
Cornered by that dreadful creature, 'twas indeed an awful plight,  
As I, now in a stupour, prayed and pleaded in my fright.

How I longed for the city and the dangers lurking there.  
The dreary glass-eyed buildings, pollution everywhere.  
In all my wildest dreamings I never thought I'd be  
Devoured in south-west bushland - as a flamin' cougar's tea.

When I woke up some hours later, the animal had left,  
And in packing I discovered, of socks I was bereft.  
My friends have often told me that my feet exhale a smell  
That is akin to rotten eggs. To sniff it was pure hell.

I believe that putrid odour is why I'm alive today.  
Aphrodisiac to cougars that live in lonely way.  
But, of course no one believes me when this tale I relate,  
They always raise their glasses. "Tell us another, mate!"

## THANK YOU POETS

Last months request from Ros Stair of Gungal NSW saw twelve poets answer the call and donate product for raffling as a fund raiser to assist the aged couple, Neville and Cath Neighbours, who lost their home and contents in a fire during August.

Over \$12,000 was raised at a charity auction in Gungal, as well as money raised from the raffling of the poets material.

Locals rallying to a cause can never be beaten in some of these small country towns, and the generosity of local builders, concreters, labourers, farmers, merchants and townspeople was so overwhelming.

Neville and Cath will be moving in to their new home about mid October with even some cash to boot. Thanks to good old Aussie mateship.

### The South-West Cougar

by Val Reid of Bicton WA was runner up in the Diamond Shears Henry Lawson Literary Competition. 1997.

## NEWCOMER SCOOPS THE POOL Pine Rivers Bigger Than Ever

Forty seven poets arrived at the Camp Oven Bush Poetry Festival to compete in the seven available categories and were completely swamped by newcomer Noel Stallard who won every section he entered.

Noel is a school teacher from Arana Hills in Brisbane and has been performing at clubs and for private groups for some years. His presentation of selected poems by Hartigan was polished and wonderfully entertaining and the judges placed him first in the Novice, Male Serious and Humorous sections.

The other multi-category winner was Carmel Randle of Preston who won the Female Serious and Humorous and was proclaimed the Camp Oven Festival Champion.

Carmel's daughter, Zita Horton won the Original with Mark Thompson second and Merv Webster third.

The Junior Competition was won by Sarah-Jane Driver. Ashley Culpitt was second and Kelsey Horton third. Courtney Denning was Highly Commended.

Trish Anderson was placed second to Noel Stallard

in the Novice with Russell Plunkett third. Carmel Dunn from Warwick was second in the Female Section with Trish Anderson third.

Zita Horton was awarded second place in the Female Humorous with Carmel Dunn third. Ian MacKay from Kenilworth was second to Noel Stallard in the Male Humorous with Bill Glasson from Clifton third.

Ian Mackay was also second in the Male Serious with Mark Thompson third.

This was the second Camp Oven Bush Poetry Festival. Held on the 4th and 5th of October at the North Pine Country Park near Petrie. Heats for all sections were held on Saturday followed by the Camp Oven Dinner which was hosted by Carmel Randle as Gertrude.

Sunday morning kicked off with a Poet's Breakfast presented by "The Larrikin" Bobby Miller who encouraged other bush poets to come on stage, entertain the audience and join in the fun.

The finals of the competition followed and the Pine Rivers Shire Mayor, Yvonne Chapman presented the prizes. The Festival was organised by the North Pine Bush Poets Group.

## The Day the Circus Came to Town

© Ray Mitchell Maryborough Q.

There once was a town on the Darling Downs in the shadow of the range.  
A stouthearted, prosperous town known far and wide for its pristine fame.  
Boasting two pubs, a school of arts, busy railways and quite a few stores,  
A lane where lovers traded hearts — six churches, and a houseful of whores.

It happened a Circus arrived one day, down the long dusty road it was sighted.  
A big Brass Band was leading the way, crows flew backwards and kids were excited.  
The opening night was a whiz-bang affair with people from all around there;  
Farmers, graziers and breeders of note, townsmen and one man of prayer.

There was ol' bog-eye Bob from the uptown pub and the Secretary-Pres from the Club  
Madame X with her ladies so sweet and petite, under the watchful eye of the local police  
The chairman was there from the local shire, Bankers and wives and lest we forget  
A big buxom blonde with the distric squire and the editor from the local gazette.

As the night endeared they clapped and cheered the whole jolly marquee was packed  
When a bungler lit by a half drunken twit was tossed under the elephant squattings act  
The exploding sound blew a hole in the ground then followed a deafening roar  
The elephant jumped up and seized a tent pole and bolted clean out through the door.

Outside in the night a young mare took fright wrenching it's tether from the rail of a chute  
It took off like a hare with the sulky mid-air with the crazed elephant hot in pursuit  
They scattered Salvation down the street banging Booth's drums on their once a month meet.  
Some jumped to the left, some leapt to the right all Hell was let loose on that night.

The corner was sharp where the wheel left the cart and started off on it's own campaign.  
It shot through the sky just as straight as a dye and struck the Captain on duty in lovers lane  
He let a bellow, staggered and fell low, calling out to save his poor soul from Hell.  
As he rose to his feet he reached to the Heavens on high and saw the elephant crossing the sky.

He dropped to his knees in a prayerful stay his eyeballs near blown from his head  
Oh! Lord, you do move in mysterious ways were the last words the poor Captain said.  
The mare was found home by the slip-rails — the spring-cart was strewn all around.  
But despite a huge offer from the Circus coffers that crazy elephant has never been found

This tale is true that I'm telling you, there's never a lie written here  
How the ol' timers all swear 'it's still out there' in the mountains and foothills around  
If you listen intently on certain nights of the year, near lovers lane you will always hear  
Midst the caw of the crows and hoot of an owl a trumpet blow with an elephants sound.



**Brian Bell, Jo Smyth,  
Warren 'Arch' Bishop**  
Judges for the Inaugural  
Bards of Bowra Bush  
Poetry Performance  
Competition 1997



**(L to R) Reid Begg, Winner of  
the Traditional Section and  
Don Lloyd, Winner of the  
Original Section at the Bards of  
Bowra Competition 1997**

Maureen Garner of Nambucca Heads has written acknowledging the assistance of the ABPA in helping organize the Inaugural Back to Bowra Competition.

The events were successful far beyond their wildest dreams and already they have a list of improvements to be implemented next year.

Maureen feels that they are well on the way to enticing some of our more seasoned poets to perform on the Mid North Coast.



## THE SPIRIT LIVES

Liz Ward of Mt. Perry Q. has written to express through these pages her sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks to those people, known and unknown, who assisted in cash or kind, for their thoughtful messages, cards and flowers which came from near and far to cheer her on her way after her hospitalization in Camooweal last month.

Liz writes, 'the spirit of mateship has always been a precious thing to bush men and women.' When she was a youngster it was common to see, at bush-races, picnics and country dances, what was then called a 'tarpaulin muster'. A tarp or saddle blanket was thrown down and donations were thrown into it to help a person or family down on their luck.

Recently Liz travelled to Camooweal's Inaugural Droving Yesteryear Festival but did not get to take part in it. Thanks to a her wise and caring friend and former nurse, Marian Dixon, Liz was 'shunted into hospital to receive a pacemaker'.

Marian set off for Mt. Isa from Camooweal with her patient Liz to meet the Isa Ambulance about half way. Liz spent a night in the 'Isa' Hospital and was flown next day to Townsville Hospital where the pacemaker was fitted.

In her absence, those wonderful people in Camooweal took her problems to their hearts and collected a substantial sum of money to assist her. Many of them had probably never heard of Liz, yet they gave generously to help.

Aboriginal artist Shirley McNamara donated one of her paintings of a bronco-branding scene which was auctioned off and purchased by Ted Egan for a considerable sum.

Home now in Mount Perry, Liz is recovering well, and like she said, "Thank you all so much!" Get well soon Liz.

All the best from the Bush Poets

## THE WRITERS DINNER

© Don Lloyd

These writers put on a posh dinner  
They said they were launching a book  
Now I've always been interested in culture  
so I thought 'Why not take a look?'

The track pants I wore were new ones  
A tee shirt was pulled over my head,  
but as they were having the do in a club,  
I left my thongs and wore joggers instead.

I wasn't sure how writers might do things  
probably get drunk and sing a few songs  
and hopefully if they're gonna do speeches  
they'll be ones that aren't very long.

As for food I know all about entrees.  
That's little snags and sauce in a tub  
served with a big glass of cold beer  
like happy hour down at the pub.

I was really keen for a go at the tucker  
and reckoned they were leaving it late  
then thought 'shit! they're serving up road kill'  
when I seen what they'd put on my plate.

For a long time I looked at it in horror  
and thought 'what on earth is this muck?'  
I thought 'perhaps it's a blue octopus puree  
after being run down by a truck'.

I swear the thing was eating my spud  
my first thought was 'The mongrel's not dead'  
so I tried to finish it off with my fork  
but couldn't work out where is its head.

Well that put me right off the tucker  
and I thought 'so much for culture old mate'.  
There was some toilet paper folded up fancy  
so I used it to cover my plate.

Still that meal gave me some respect for authors  
because if they regularly graze on that stuff  
then I can assure you there's no wimps among them  
No, those bloody writers are tough.

## THE SWAGGIE

Adam Krause (10yrs) Concordia Primary School Toowoomba Qld

There once was a swaggie  
who went to the dam  
To fill to the top  
his old billy can.

He tipped it until  
it was full to the brim,  
But he didn't see the turtle  
that swam right in.

He went back to the camp  
and got some wire,  
To tie the billy can  
above the fire.

The water boiled quick  
because the fire was hot.  
The swaggie was happy,  
but the turtle was not.

He grabbed hold of the billy  
and poured it in his mug,  
And then he heard a plop,  
and glug, glug, glug.

He looked in his mug  
and shouted with glee,  
"It's my lucky day!  
Turtle soup for tea!!"

Ten year old Adam  
Krause of  
Toowoomba was  
the winner of the  
Primary Little  
Swaggies Award in  
the 1997 Bronze  
Swagman Awards  
conducted by the  
Winton Tourist  
Promotion Ass.

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