



The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

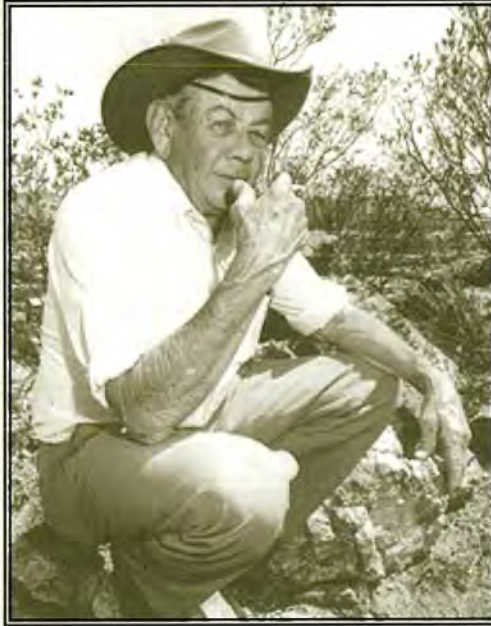
Bruce Forbes Simpson

Living legend, packhorse drover, bushman, explorer, historian and researcher, bush poet and storyteller, Bruce Forbes Simpson is one of the truly unique Australians living today. His knowledge of outback Queensland and regions 'further out', the cattle industry, droving and mustering, is unsurpassed and well recorded in verse and prose in his many ABC books of Australian literature.

His stories and yarns encompass a wide range of bush characters; tell of the trials and tribulations of the outback cattle drovers and the tough and uncompromising conditions under which they survived.

Bruce Simpson was a bushman and drover up until the 1960s. He is unique in that he has the eloquence to relate his experiences in literary form and is the author of a series of popular books about life in the Australian outback in times gone past - a way of life that has now become part of our cultural heritage.

Year after year Bruce Simpson walked mobs of cattle more than 1200 strong on outback droving trips from the Northern



Territory to the railhead at Dajarra or to fattening properties 'inside' (in Queensland).

Bruce Simpson was born in 1923 on a small farm west of Mackay in northern Queensland and, armed with the basics, having missed a secondary education through the depression years, started his career as a stockman on Alexandria Station on the Barkly Tablelands of the Northern Territory, an occupation that carried him through the rest of his working life.

In 1947 Bruce was one of four stockmen droving a mob of cattle on 'Glenormiston', a remote Queensland gidgee country property west of Boulia when they discovered relics that may have uncovered the mystery of explorer Ludwig Leichhardt's disappearance in 1848. He tells this story 'In Leichardt's Footsteps' from ABC Books. Subsequent searches for the site have failed.

Bruce won the inaugural, and now coveted and most prestigious, Bronze Swagman Award for Bush Verse in 1972 and again in 1975.

In 1990 he toured the United States with a group organized by the Australian Stockmen's Hall of Fame and the American Western Folklore Center.

His book 'Songs of the Droving Season', published by ABC Books, won the Australian Bush Laureate Award for Book of the Year in 2003.

MARCO GLIORI

'Poets Never Lie'!

The ever increasing pace was on again for Marco in 2007. After a hectic schedule at Tamworth performing in shows with The Naked Poets at The Tamworth Golf Club, the Longyard Hotel Traditional Bush Poets Breakfasts, and featuring as a performer and presenter at the Australian Bush Laureate Awards Marco attended the prestigious Somerset Literary Festival on the Gold Coast.

As well as a stack of private functions throughout the year, iconic events such as the World Polocrosse Championships, The Bowen Fishing Classic, and playing host and compere for some amazing comedy and poetry events at the big venues such as the Gympie Country Music Festival, Mildura Country Music Festival, he found time for his Writer In Residency Programs for schools such as All Saints at Robina Toowoomba State High School and schools in Western Queensland where Marco, as well as having a ton of fun, continues to fly the 'Working Against Abuse' banner for young Australians.



Marco Gliori is a corporate poet whose original contemporary poems and anecdotes promote the appreciation of the many and varied characters that make up each unique industry conference. His strong sense of mateship and community is apparent, making his performances a

highlight of any conference. In past years Marco has been commissioned to write specific poems for major events including Australia's Federation Celebrations, and the 100 year anniversary of Waltzing Matilda. During that year Marco was awarded the prestigious Spirit Of Matilda Award for his services to Bush Poetry, an award presented to Marco by the late Slim Dusty.

Marco's contribution to a conference can take many forms. It may be at a conference Breakfast, where his lighthearted renditions will set the mood for the rest of the day. Marco's informal nature allows any group to feel comfortable, listening to his humorous, 'off the cuff' performances.

He is not a 'reader of poetry' he is an entertainer. Whether on tour in the outback with the Museum Curators for the Ludwig Leichardt Exposition, or in the back bar of the Sandy Creek Hotel with a group of Football Fanatics, or in the plush surrounds of a five star Hotel, Marco has something special to say and an atmosphere to offer that every conference attendee will find refreshing and authentic.

(Cont'd page 7)

GHOSTS

© David Campbell, Beaumaris Vic. 2007

In the city of a morning as a brand new day is dawning
I can see their ghosts no matter where I gaze,
for although their ancient midden is forgotten,
lost, or hidden,
yet their world lives on despite our modern ways.

For they told their country's glory as a slow,
unfolding story,
where each page spelt out the lessons of their race,
and the secrets of a nation were passed on in conversation
to explain the sacred laws of time and space.

In the fragrance of a flower I can sense their mystic power
as they trod the wild bush country of the west,
when the storm god's rolling thunder
made them lift their heads in wonder
and give thanks the land had once again been blessed.

When the day's alarm is ringing
I can hear a magpie singing,
with a lilting call that's music to my ears,
and the coffee-pot soon after is a kookaburra's laughter
that will banish all my sadness and my tears.

As I ride the concrete highways
I see tracks and long-lost byways
of a people who could follow nature's signs.
Through the desert's noonday burning
or with midnight's pale moon turning
they could travel all their old familiar lines.

From a narrow, cobbled alley I can conjure up a valley,
with a river flowing swiftly through a glade,
and the city's frantic bustle soon becomes the quiet rustle
of the red gums that provide some welcome shade.

Then the smog so thick and choking
is a ground-mist whitely cloaking
a green meadow in the winter morning's sun,
and the traffic's noisy rumble is the effervescent tumble
of the river in its reckless seaward run.

In the first light on a building
there's a younger sun's rays gilding
an escarpment lifting proudly to the sky,
where a cave is nightly shelter near a mud-flat river delta
that gives water and a constant food supply.

On the careworn, tired faces I can see the subtle traces
of a yearning for the freedom of a land
where the magic of each season
is the only rhyme and reason,
whether lofty mountain slope or desert sand.

Then I hope, in all my dreaming,
that the starlight faintly gleaming
and the sun that burns each day across the sky,
will protect our land's tradition
in the face of man's ambition
and ensure the ghosts that live there never die.



CAMP OVEN WRITTEN AWARDS



David Campbell of Beaumaris Victoria was the winner of this year's Camp Oven Written Bush Poetry competition with his poem 'Ghosts'.

Second was Kym Eitel from Thangool, Qld. with 'A pocket full of Kisses'. Kym also placed third with 'A Bell in The Mist'. (p.19)

Highly Commended was Donald Crane of Toowoomba Qld for his entry 'The Bush Mother' and Joyce Alchin from Corrimall NSW with her poem 'A Morning After Rain'.

The North Pine committee extends its gratitude to all the competitors for their continued support and look forward to a bumper crop of entries in 2008 when they hold the Australian Bush Poetry Championships. This event will be in lieu of the Camp Oven Festival and will commence Friday 22nd August and finish Sunday afternoon the 24th of August. The venue for this event will be the Pine Rivers Memorial Bowls Club located at the corner of Sparkes and Francis Roads, Bray Park, not far from the normal site. These dates follow close on the heels of The Brisbane Exhibition, and place travellers to the Gympie Muster just an hour or so away.

Who knows, like so many before, you may fall in love with the place sell up and go live there. If you do, the North Pine Bush Poets will make you more than welcome.

SNOWY RIVER FESTIVAL DALGETY NSW 16-18 November

'Where the best and boldest riders take their place'.

Well! Perhaps not this year, but the horse flu won't put a stop to a great festival.

IT'S STILL ON! The 'Snowprint Book Shop' - Bush Poetry Competition, poets walk-ups, poets breakfasts, yarn spinning and story telling, Snowy River History and Stories from Yesteryear all hosted by Frank Daniel with lots of cash and prizes up for grabs.

Download entry forms

<http://www.snowyriverfestival.com/index.html>

Enjoy a wide range of bush related crafts and activities:

Great country style food - Folk and Country musicians - 'The Sunny Cowgirls' and 'Open Air' Band Saturday Night 'Brumby Bar & Bistro' Cooe Cup - Clydesdales - Whip-cracking Competition - Kids Entertainment - Dog High Jump competition - Bush Dance Saturday Night - Heritage Displays - Art Exhibition

Bush dance and picnic dinner on Saturday night at 7pm

Some Far Dinkum, True Blue, Foot Stompen Fun!!

For tickets email: info@snowyriverfestival.com

Phone 02 6456 5071 or

On the Banks of the Snowy River, 'Banjo' made it famous, now we make it fun.

The President's Report



Dear Members,

By the time you read this, Novotel Brisbane will have honoured Bruce Simpson by giving his name to their new Boardroom in Brisbane. When I notified Bruce of Novotel's intention he could not believe that this was not a hoax. "Are you sure they've got the right bloke, Noel?", was his query. It took several phone calls to convince him.

Novotel will pick Bruce up at Caboolture in a limousine on the Sunday afternoon, accommodate he and Heather in Novotel Brisbane overnight and on Monday the 24th, at a special morning tea, the new Novotel Boardroom will be deemed the Bruce Simpson Boardroom.

On your behalf members, I have the honour of paying tribute to Bruce and as his eyesight does not allow him to read, I will present three of his poems. The Packhorse Drover, Rocky Creek and Vale Rusty Regan. Bruce won the prestigious Bronze Swagman award in

1972 and 1975. We can only hope that other significant companies will follow Novotel's initiative and honour other significant modern bush poets.

Thank you for the response to the Second Draft of the proposed Performance Bush Poetry Criteria. There were several criticisms of the changes made between Draft 1 and Draft 2. What the committee will now do is consider the proposals and the conflicting options and come up with a definitive set of Performance Criteria and while it will not please everyone, it will be what the ABPA will use in the foreseeable future.

Unfortunately this next item is of some concern. Some of the public have seen fit to write letters of complaint about material used in concert performance. The complaint is about how they on previous occasions had enjoyed the bush poetry concerts but when they brought friends to a recent show they were shamefully embarrassed. The sexual references were blatant not subtle, explicit rather than implicit and crude rather than clever. Members, there is a responsibility on all of us who represent the Bush Poetry Movement and choose to entertain the paying public to use material that does not offend. What would not offend a boozy bar mob might well offend a general audience.

Most of our audiences are family oriented people, mums, dads and grandparents and I appeal to all performers to use appropriate material for your respective audiences and if you are to err then err on the side of conservative rather than risqué. We owe it to those

who have built up our audiences over the past fifteen years to use material that will keep bringing people back and avoid that material which would turn them away.

The Australian Championships in 2008 and 2009 will be held for the first time in Brisbane.

The North Pine Bush Poets will organise these championships and they will be held in 2008 on the 22, 23 and 24th August at the Pine Rivers Memorial Bowls Club. Look for regular notices in the Newsletter for what Brisbane and the North Pine Bush Poets can offer you at these championships.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking North Pine poets for taking on these championships and look forward to assisting them in their endeavour.

Your reminder to renew your membership and take out your insurance for 2008 will be in the December newsletter.

With gratitude,

SECRETARIES!

PLEASE NOTE!

Deadline for the 2008

Bush Poets

Calendar of Events

20th of November 2007

Email notices/changes to the editor@abpa.org.au

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

will be held in

St Edwards Hall, Hillvue Road, Tamworth at 1.30 pm on Thursday 24th January 2008

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting will be held prior to the A.G.M.

Agenda item to be approved "Constitution Amendment - Model Rules for Incorporated Associations 1984.

Rule 8 to be amended so that 1st July be replaced with 1st Jan where necessary.

In accordance with rule 15 for incorporated Associations, nominations are requested for the election of Office Bearers of the Association, and ordinary members of the committee. A representative from each State is required.

(a) Nominations must be in writing, signed by two members of the association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate.

(b) Nominations must be delivered to the Secretary of the Association at least 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the Annual General Meeting at which the election is to take place.

(c) Nomination and proxy forms are available on request.

The following Office Bearers positions are required to be filled.

President. Vice-President. Secretary. Treasurer. Three Committee members, and a delegate for each State.

Ray Essery

'The Mullumbimby Bloke'



Where do you start with a bloke like this? The question's been asked before, but *'The Mullumbimby Bloke'* is a more memorable character in real life than in print.

THAT LITTLE OLD SHACK IN MULLUMBIMBY

© Ray Essery 2007

There's a little old shack in Mullumbimby
and that little old shack belongs to me
with Bangalow palms and chincogan
by the river that roams to the sea.

And that little old shack in Mullumbimby
has a rusty old roof and a gate
with shutters that rattle in the moonlight
when the wind is blowing so late.

The backyard is covered in vines
now hiding an old tin shed;
there a home for dancing blue wrens
while butterflies flutter overhead.

There's a little old lane down the back
where old men shuffle along
while old ladies gossip the fence
about those days now long gone.

Long gone but never forgotten
for those memories keep flooding back
when the doors 'd squeak, the floors 'd creak
and the paint is dried and cracked.

Yes there's a little old shack in Mullumbimby
standing as proud as can be
with its rusty old roof and old wooden gate
by the river that roams to the sea.

Ray is a North Coast man with dairy farming and cane cutting forming his earliest memories. With such a full life as a lad on his father's dairy farm to nine years in the Royal Australian Navy, marriage and a family, a term as a shopkeeper, two years running a pub in Sydney, owning a dairy farm, driving trotters, two near-death accidents and conducting an excavation business to bush poetry, there is so much to say.

Ray Essery was one of the 'new breed' of poets to emerge in the early days of the resurgence of bush poetry as we know it today.

He is a man who has known joy and adversity and translates his experiences in yarns and verse. His droll sense of humour and his unique style of performance has made him a favourite with audiences.

Ray rocketed to fame in the early nineties with his first appearance at Tamworth's Imperial Hotel when he treated the crowd to the memorable story of *'The Opening of the Mullumbimby Show'*; an experience not to be forgotten by the organizers, judges and audience alike. He was so unique, all were left speechless. Offers of help with his rhyming came from willing hands wanting to be part of the 'Essery

incarnation'; but the 'Essery' style has never changed, and all for the better: Ray was much sought after as a performer and today ranks highly among our better entertainers.

Unless one has experienced 'The Mullumbimby Bloke' a true appreciation of his work is very hard to assess. It is difficult to tell where Ray stops and the character begins. What he writes and how he performs is something no other performer has ever been able to emulate. His writing skills are polished, perfected and rounded off in his own special way with some of the most amusing and entertaining poems.

Not only is the poetry entertaining, but so is the character himself and, more than anything, the often unexpected and sometimes long awaited rhyme.

Audiences can't get enough of him.

Over the years Ray has achieved many accolades, most notably being the Gold Medal Winner, Tamworth 1994; Overall Best Poet at both the Gympie Muster and the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers 1995. He has been heard on radio and has appeared on ABC TV.

He was elevated to the Bush Poets Wall of Renown at the Longyard Hotel in Tamworth in 1996. He won the Pat Glover Award for story telling at Port Fairy in 1997.

Ray has been a member of the very successful Naked Poets Group since inception having seen many sell-out shows nationally.

Ray won the 2005 Australian Bush Laureate Award for his Australian Bush Verse CD of the year.

Contact 'The Mullumbimby Bloke' via esseryramsc@optusnet.com.au or on the mobile 0438 843 817.

Home: 02 6684 9817 or 02 6644 8285

DORRIGO FOLK & BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

2007 will see this annual event continuing on a great tradition begun six years ago.

The Dorrigo festival offers what is now a unique experience. Performers and audience alike mingle and take part in jam sessions around the campfires and participate in workshops with other musicians and music lovers.

More formal concerts are also held at various venues around the town. Performers and visitors just love the friendly country town atmospheres and the intimate style of the festival.

A wide range of music encompasses styles from Bluegrass to Swing with Rock, Celtic, Roots, Tin Pan Alley, Blues and Hillbilly. Bush poetry is another feature at

the Dorrigo Heritage Hotel with 'The Rhymer from Ryde', Graeme Johnson at the helm conducting poets breakfasts, open mic sessions, walk-ups and a 'Skills of the Stage' and 'Kids Kapers' workshops with something for everyone.

To compliment the Saturday night Bush Dance giving everyone a chance to fully participate there will be an afternoon dance workshop.

Festival dates are from 26th to 28th October - for more information go to page 15.



GIPPSLAND BUSH POETS

2nd Annual

**GIPPSLAND WATTLE BUSH POETRY AWARD
OPEN WRITTEN COMPETITION**

\$1,000.00 First Prize

Minor prizes:- \$250.00 and \$100.00

(Also Highly Commended and Commended awards)

Entry cost is \$10.00 per poem or \$20.00 for up to 3 poems.

For an entry form, send an S.S.A.E. to:-

Gippsland Bush Poets written competition,

C/o P.O. Box 453

MAFFRA Victoria 3860.

Or email:- bjdraper@netspace.net.au

Entries close on October 31st 2007

Gippsland Bush Poets members are ineligible to enter.



Proudly sponsored by



2008 Bronze Swagman Award for Bush Verse – Entry forms now available



Contact: Louise Dean, P.O. Box 120, Winton, Qld. 4735
Ph : (07) 4657 1296 Fx : (07) 4657 1541
Email : wooka2@bigpond.net.au

Important Notice

Since 1972, the aim of the Bronze Swagman Award for Bush Verse has always been, and always will be, “.. to encourage the writing of **new** works...”.

The Conditions of Entry for the Bronze Swagman Award are “... Poem/s must be the entrant’s own work and written exclusively for this competition... must not have been printed, passed around, nor used in any other media... Poem/s must not be entered into another competition until after results are announced.....”.

***The Conditions of Entry for every competition are different.
PLEASE (to avoid disappointment), read the conditions of entry
BEFORE you enter any competition!***



JURASSIC JEWEL

© Roderick Williams May 2006

Jurassic jewel, oh Wollemi, your ancient beauty shines -
 Out from your secret hiding place where dwells your stand of pines.
 A rare surviving conifer, your special little band -
 Survived two hundred million years throughout Gondwanaland.

Araucariaceae, wow! That's your family name -
 The bunya, hoop, are cousin trees, the kauri just the same.
 The Norfolk Island are your kin, though lands are split apart -
 And sap from monkey-puzzle pines, flows through your precious heart.

The oldest fossil, taking us back ninety million years -
 Was all the proof we had of you but now there's joy and cheers.
 We thought the Ice age wiped you out till David Noble saw -
 Down in a gorge, a wonderland, that's opened a new door.

I'm envious to say the least that I was not there too -
 To view your beauty underneath 'the southern sky of blue',
 But more importantly we have the chance to watch you grow -
 And keep your species live and well, through drought or ice and snow.

Your magic resin polar cap protects you in the cold -
 Through dormancy and winter's chill - come springtime you unfold.
 You melt your cap protector then, burst forth with warmth and light -
 To give much joy with new designs, you are a sheer delight.

Your habit of self-coppicing is 'cool' without a doubt -
 It's helped you through disaster times of savage fires and drought.
 Your bark like bubbling chocolate is distinctly unique too -
 You're old and rare and beautiful and I'm in love with you!

Two ancient beauties live with us you will be pleased to know -
 Tiny yet, but what excitement we'll share as they grow.
 Jessieurassic one is called, named for my special mate -
 The other Rodericaceaus, with title, Seal and date.

Through propagation, thought, and care, the family's growing strong -
 Tree sales will help endangered breeds, and help to right the wrong.
 Enlightening all those who cherish life on earth - and care
 for wonders like the wollemi, a world we all can share.

"Our two beautiful trees (still in pots) grew another nineteen inches during summer and now are sitting and waiting in dormancy (shielded by their resin polar caps) to be planted out in a special place come springtime, where they will be safe from (human) predators!! Yes, our little beauties have coppiced an attempted poison shower already. Jessieurassic coppiced most of it (over the fence) when I lived for a very short time at Old Bar, but love and care and the wollemi's ancient survival skills pulled it through.

It broke my heart when I realised (via two other lovely neighbours) that this had been deliberately done, but I wish you could see Jessieurassic now! Different in ways to her mate, but stunningly beautiful!!" Rod Williams.

Granny and the Gopher

Dylan Cartledge
 (14 years)



Granny owned a Gopher,
 A sleek and shiny thing.
 Unaware at time of purchase
 Just what trouble it would bring.

It was because of Granny's back
 That she invested in this horror.
 Life, she thought, could be free and easy
 And she'd not be such a bother.

Some simple lessons she was given
 On how to operate the gears.
 Gran mastered these with ease
 Denying any sneers.

Her first outing a real success,
 Shopping was done without a fuss.
 Wind in her hair, cruising the path
 Making pedestrians jump and cuss.

The fun went on for a few weeks more
 But it stopped, with a bang.
 Gran put the Gopher through the garage
 door
 You should have heard the slang.

Parking, it was easy,
 She knew to knock it out of gear.
 Backwards she meant to go
 Forwards she went with fear.

The garage door was looming fast
 Gran's heart began to beat.
 Fear rising in her chest
 Her doom she knew she'd meet.

The acquaintance lasted seconds
 Sparks and splinters filled the air.
 Along with lots screams and yells
 The garage door in need of repair.

Black and bruised was poor old Gran,
 Quite stunned by this encounter.
 Tiny stars were spinning round,
 The door was left to flouter.

Family racing and fussing round,
 Gran waking up in bed.
 She looked up with battered smile,
 "Hallelujah! I'm not dead."

Gran, now sits and does her art,
 And sometimes quietly knits.
 Meals on wheels supply her food,
 The Gopher now in bits.

Gran and her hotrod have parted ways,
 Still a twinkle in her eye.
 The family's really worried,
 A motor scooter has caught her eye.

The Eudunda SA Storytelling Festival! - Harvesting the Yarns 2007

November 10th - 11th Eudunda Gardens - Eudunda SA

Come along, join in & enjoy a weekend of fun for all the family.



Lots of entertainment with Storytelling performances, poetry, music, recorded stories, story writing competition for all ages

Book Stalls and Displays

Kidzone: Interactive storytelling, book readings, games

For more information go to www.eudunda.net and click on storytelling or email kirsty.dudley@eudunda.net or phone 0429 681 044

If you are a storyteller, bush poet or musician & would like to perform please contact us ASAP so we can fit you in the program! We'd love to include YOU!

Entertainment and activities starting
Saturday 10th November 11am to 9pm
Sunday 11th November from 8am



ALL WELCOME



Events
South Australia



In Memory of
Colin Thiele
1920-2005

MARCO GLIORI (from page 1)

As a conference entertainer or presenter, Marco has the ability to put into perspective and bring reality to many situations through his entertaining and enveloping style. His presentations become part of the conference. They can be an interlude to a busy day or the highlight of the conference dinner. Either way Marco adds another very different dimension to any conference or function. No-one will be disappointed after hearing a Marco Gliori presentation of Australian Bush Poetry.

Despite the attendees being of very diverse backgrounds and ages, Marco appealed to everyone.

Marco is a self-confessed high school underachiever who discovered his passion for poetry quite by chance. He now makes a living out of inspiring thousands of Australian school students to give poetry a go by presenting interactive poetry workshops for primary and high school students.

"I was one of those underachieving, attention seeking boys in the classroom. I was sports mad, there was a creative side to me but it was never harnessed. After school I spent 10 years with the Queensland Police Force. I

was made a Detective Senior Constable and was soaring through the ranks. I started to get a reputation as the police poet. It was good PR for the police force as it was during the Fitzgerald Inquiry."

But Marco knew deep down police work was not where his future lay and decided to quit his secure job to pursue poetry. "It was something that was burning inside me", he says. "I left with no future, no job, certainly no job as a performance poet and moved to the Sunshine Coast.

Marco began performing his unique style of stand-up poetry and his popularity soon grew. The Queensland Arts Council asked Marco to tour the state and bring poetry to students in rural and remote areas. For the next 10 years, with his young family in tow, he did just that, widening his tour to Victorian schools as well.

"It's everyday stuff . . . I include comedy, race calls . . . for me poetry has always been about the rhythm of words, everyday speech patterns, the way people talk. That makes your poetry very user friendly. I don't pretend to be a literary genius. I'm definitely a performance poet. My poems are now



recited all around Queensland, in eisteddfods and schools everywhere. My aim is to entertain and be relevant," he says. "The day I wake up and the kids are turning their heads and shuffling their feet I just won't do it. There's an energetic feel to my poems, a confrontation of characters, pandemonium - I love putting actions into my poems."

Marco is a member of the famed Naked Poets . . . but that's another story for another day.

It was Marco who coined the phrase
'Poets Never Lie . . . !'



KEN MITCHELL, a new member of the ABPA, is one of the leading cowboy poets in the Canadian West, and is looking forward to his next trip to Australia to study the national genre of Bush Poetry.

Ken Mitchell is a playwright, story-teller, poet and actor whose work has been seen around the world. He wrote the groundbreaking "Country Opera" *Cruel Tears* with Humphrey and the Dumptrucks in 1975, the script for the award-winning film *Hounds of Notre Dame* (1981), and the novel *Stones of the Dalai Lama*, published by Soho Press, New York (1993). He is the author or editor of over 30 books - including poetry, fiction, drama, history. . .

Raised on his father's cattle ranch near Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Mitchell kicked off his spurs at 17 to go to university, and went on to become a prolific author and playwright.

He has had over 30 novels, story collections, poetry, and plays published. His screenplays, television documentaries, radio dramas and outdoor epics have been acclaimed internationally. In 1987, his award-winning drama *Gone the Burning Sun*, was produced in Melbourne, starring the noted Australian actor (and bush poet) Rod Williams, and Mitchell flew from China for his first visit to Oz.

His most recent publication is a volume called "Rhyiming Wranglers", *Cowboy Poets of the Canadian West*, which has been hailed as "a masterful job... Mitchell has done for Canadian Cowboy Poetry what John and Allan Lomox have done for traditional cowboy music." Ken is a retired professor of English from the University of Regina, where he now lives and is the artistic director of *Burning Sun*, a Saskatchewan theatre company dedicated to original works and celebrations of the spoken word.

In his sixties, Mitchell teamed up with his kid brother Slim, and the Mitchell Boys began presenting their poems and classic cowboy pieces (including Banjo Paterson's) around the Saskatchewan rodeo circuit. The Mitchell Boys then joined up with a 96-year-old horse rancher and cowboy poet Bill Gomersall. He was an old friend of their father's and he not only told stories, he could still recall the poems

THE MISSOURI COTEAU

© Ken Mitchell Regina Canada

Sure good to see ole Henk again ridin with our crew
along the trail on the big coteau. Bin years since he was through.
He left here for the rodeo, then took up tendin bar
and livin the life of a vagabond with a banjo and guitar.

But there's heavy lines across his face and his eyes seem kinda dull
as if them years he spent down South been etched inside his skull.
'Boys', sez he, 'I'm tickled green to be sitting by your fire
cause all the fancy bars I've seen can't set a tone no higher.

'Way out here on the high plateau your spirit gets a shake
like the smell of coffee on the boil, a thing you don't mistake.
That grub we ate was what I craved, each night in every town.
Your venison and biscuit pie in taverns can't be found.

'Oh, I've sampled horses' doovers in the bistros of Orleans
and all the bins on the Broadway -
but they can't match Donny's beans.

And smart talk? Well, I heard lots,
in some courtrooms here and there
but I tell you men, my learning began when I hearded ol' Bill here swear.

'As for music, I took in a few big concerts in my days,
but I still prefer the steady purr of a crackling pinewood blaze.
Or the plaintive howl of a coyote prowling through yon aspen wood
is gonna affect the hair on your neck, like no soprano could.

'I've wandered the world, looked at great art -
your Leonardos and Vince Van Go,
but if you want a study a masterpiece, take a sunset on the Coteau.
Look at it there, all purple and gold, 'gainst a blue like a robin's egg.
No painter I know can capture the flow
of those shapes on heaven's lake.

'Folks rave about the glory of the sights of ancient Rome.
They line up by the million to gawk at old St. Peter's dome
But if you seek a vista that will soothe your achin' eyes
Just come up here and stretch out on the land of living skies.

'Now pour me out another cup of Donny's black-as-bullshit brew;
the cafes I been sippin late are thin as Moose Jaw stew.
I want to sit and reflect a bit on the loneliness of bars,
and the music of the Big Coteau, and the distances of stars.

[permission: Ken.Mitchell@uregina.ca]

of his youth. He recovered all his skills of those bygone years, and Gomersall and the Mitchell Boys became a sensation throughout western Canada and featured on national television.

They toured schools and libraries within their home province during Bill's centenary year in 2005, and a new generation learned at first hand the power of the spoken word. On his centennial birthday, Bill and the Mitchell Boys launched their first CD, "Wanted, 100-Year-old Bill Gomersall", with a cover like an outlaw gang poster.

Bill continued to write and perform until he died, the day before his 101st birthday. Since then, the Mitchell Boys wrote (and opened in June) a new musical show about Bill and his stories, called "No Ordinary Cowboy" presently making the rounds of theatres and festivals throughout western Canada. www.burningsun.ca



DAMPERS

by Keith Garvey

Knew a bloke once called Damper Dan
Remember the bludger well I can
And his dampers
Bottomless moleskins hangin' slack
Tin of treacle, sticky and black,
Heap of flour in a dirty sack
For dampers
*

Always camped by a bore-drains flow
Whiskey and greasy and foul and low
Eatin' dampers
Never would buy a loaf of bread
'Too bloody dear' he always said
Cooked every day like lumps of lead
Heavy dampers
*

Down he'd sit with a toothless grin
Mixin' the dough in a gallon tin
For dampers
Over his bulgin' bottom lip
Nicotine and slobber would slip
Run down his pipe and slowly drip
In the damper
*

Bore-drain water and weevily flour
Welded into a mixture sour
For damper
Stick to yer ribs and clog yer pipes
Give the goes as well as the gripes
And he'd say, 'She's a lovely feed, by
cripes
Bonzer damper'
*

Beef or mutton he wouldn't touch
Brownie or cake he didn't like much
Only damper
'Nothin' he'd say, 'like good clean flour
Never gets stale or mouldy or sour
Nothin' gives yer muscular power
Like damper'
*

Follered his funeral without regret
Went where there's plenty of heat, I'll bet
For dampers
And it's safe to bet the devil could tell
How he sits all day by the hearth of hell
With his sack of flour and his evil smell
Cookin' dampers
Soddy bloody dampers

The LITTLE WORN OUT PONY

Anonymous



There's a little worn-out pony this side of Hogan's shack
With a snip upon his nuzzle and a mark upon his back;
Just a common little pony is what most people say,
But then of course they've never heard what happened in his day:
I was droving on the Leichhardt with a mob of pikers wild,
When this tibby little pony belonged to Hogan's child.

One night it started raining – we were camping on a rise,
When the wind blew cold and bleakly and thunder shook the skies:
The lightning cut the figure eight around the startled cattle,
Then down there fell torrential rains and then began a battle.
In a fraction of an instant the wild mob became insane,
Careering through the timber helter-skelter for the plain.

The timber fell before them like grass before a scythe,
And heavy rain in torrents poured from the grimly blackened sky:
The mob rushed ever onward through the slippery sodden ground,
While the men and I worked frantically to veer their heads around;
And then arose an awful cry – it came from Jimmy Rild,
For there between two saplings straight ahead was Hogan's child.

I owned not man or devil, I had not prayed since when,
But I called upon the blessed Lord to show His mercy then;
I shut my eyes and ground my teeth, the end I dared not see
Great God! The cattle – a thousand head – were crashing through the trees.
"God pity us bush children in our darkest hour of need,"
Were the words I prayed although I followed neither church or creed.

Then my right-hand 'man was shouting, the faithful Jimmy Rild,
"Did you see it, Harry, see the way he saved that child?"
"Saved! Saved, did you say?" and I shot upright with a bound,
"Yes, saved," he said, "indeed old man, the child is safe and sound.
I was feeling pretty shaky and was gazing up the track,
Just then a pony galloped, the kid hopped on its back.

"A blinding Bash of lightning then the thunder's rolling crack;
With two hands clasped upon his mane he raced towards the shack."
"Good heavens, man," I shouted then, "if that is truly so,
To blazes with the cattle, to the shanty we must go."
We reached Bill Hogan's shanty in fifteen minutes' ride,
Then left our horses standing and wildly rushed inside.

The little child was there unhurt but shivering with fear.
And Hogan told us, "Yes, thank God, there's the pony brought her here."
There's a little worn-out pony just this side of Hogan's shack
With a snip upon his nuzzle and a mark upon his back;
Just a common little pony is what most people say,
But I doubt if there's his equal in the pony world today.

Keith Garvey was born in Frog Hollow, Moree, New South Wales. He worked in several out-back occupations and has published numerous books of bush stories and verse based on these experiences; all composed from practical experience coupled with a photographic memory as much of his life was spent as a stockman. His poetry and short stories vividly portray life in the shearing sheds and cattle camps of an earlier era.

A fellow shearer once commented that 'Keith's inclusion in a shearing team always assured plenty of entertainment as he recited a repertoire of poems from a retentive memory that is the widest of any man he has known'.

As old time drover, shearer and bush poet Colin Newsome once said of Garvey's work, 'if small exaggerations are present, they are something that all poets are guilty of to some extent.'

CROOKWELL A BIG SUCCESS

The Inaugural Wool Wagon Awards held at Crookwell in the Upper Lachlan Region of the NSW Southern Tablelands on 8th and 9th September was nothing but a resounding success with over fifty entries in the open and junior performance competitions and forty entries in the written section. Prizemoney amounted to \$2,500.00 in cash along with some of the finest handcrafted trophies seen at any competition awarded to the winners. These magnificent Wool Wagon trophies were designed and hand made by Ron Evans.

Dubbo writer Ellis Campbell added further to his long list of written successes taking out first prize in the written section with 'Master Stockman' and fourth place with 'The Passing of an Era'. Runner-up was another consistent winner in Joyce Alchin of Corrimal NSW with 'The Shadow of the Pine'. Third place went to local writer and new ABPA member Ian McFaul who was closely followed by Des Bennett of Morwell Vic and Graeme Johnson from Ryde NSW.

Junior writers were well represented with 120 entries from the Northern Territory, Queensland, NSW and Victoria. The under sevens was won by Sarah Stephenson of Five Mile Tree Public School and William Hammond of Five Mile Tree Public School took out the under 12s. The under 16's class was won by Dylan Cartledge of



Garry Cullen Organizer of the Children's Sections in the Upper Lachlan Wool Wagon Awards.

Coutts Crossing (Grafton) NSW.

The Performance competition was a great challenge and kept the judges on their toes as the audience was treated to some fine classical, contemporary and original work.

The Overall Winner was Jim Brown of Heathmont Vic.

Dylan cartledge was the overall winner of the junior sections and placed third in the Open Contemporary Section.

The walk-up concert on the Saturday night saw some exceptional performances by Gary Lowe, Michael the Living Poet, Claire Reynolds, Lisa Quast and Jim Brown.

Major sponsor for the weekend was the Upper Lachlan Shire Council



DEAR SANTA

© John Norman
(The Old Fella)

I know it's just October,
but Christmas is coming up,
so I thought I'd order early
for a Queensland heeler pup.
I know we live a long way out,
but Cobb'n'Co. made it here
and I had a thought on how to
spell your poor reindeer.

You could use a set of four in hand,
(make sure that they're shod)
and you could quickly fly out here
with my Queensland heeler dog.
Santa, I know there's lots of other kids
that will be waiting up for you
but I haven't seen you out this way -
it's been a year or two.

See! The drought killed all our cattle
and it wilted all our crop -
It's been nearly six years now, and rain?
we haven't seen a drop.
Dad says it's affecting everything
and all the prices will go up
and so it worries me now Santa,
can you afford one heeler pup?

I know that he'd be faithful
and I'd always treat him right
I'd let him off when working
and chain him up at night.
I know that he'd be handy
after this blessed drought
when we can get more cattle
he could help move them about.

I promise I'll look after him
and I'll feed him every night
if only you could get him here,
it would help make things right.
For it's not much fun for a kid out here,
it's harder growing up,
but for me it would be much brighter
with a Queensland heeler pup!



Crookwell Overall winner Jim Brown (centre) with Alby Schultz, member for Hume and ABPA Editor and compere Frank Daniel (right).



From 'Where the outback drovers ride'
ABC books, 2005.

The DROVER'S YARN

(or Brady's Ghost) by Bruce Simpson.

A drover it was that told this tale,
In the bar of the top hotel;
He hooked a boot in the brass footrail
And his gaze through the doorway fell.
"Back in the thirties it was," said he,
"In the days when me beard was black.
I was coming in from the VRD
With a mob on the Wave Hill track.

"Fifteen hundred all built for speed,
Lean gutted and wild as hell,
They sulked by day and refused to feed,
They were demons when darkness fell,
For they galloped as only a scrub mob can,
And most of you fellers know
A man needs horses like Peter Pan
When the Bull's head bullocks go.

I've seen some stags that could carve it out,
But the mob just seemed to fly.
We lost two hundred, or there about,
As we came through the Murraraji.
And the camp I had, if you'd call it that,
Would have driven a saint to booze,
A one-eyed cook and a myall black
And a couple of jackaroos.

But we battled out on the downs at last
And I knew that the rest we'd save,
For they settled down and the worst was past,
When we camped by Brady's grave.
My two gun horses were on that night,
They could gallop both fast and true,
My favourite bay, whose name was Flight,
And a big black horse called Blue.

The mob fed up like a milking herd,
Contented as stags could be,

They camped at once and they hadn't stirred,
When I went on watch at three,
But a deadly stillness a man could feel
Was over the camp that night—
Not a bullock moved, they seemed scarcely real
In the pale moon's eerie light.

I often had seen those signs before
And I knew that the harm was done.
Then the bay horse leapt to the muffled roar

As the whole mob went as one.
I swung Flight into a racing stride,
To wheel 'em before they spread,
When the old horse swerved in his tracks and shied,
And I gasped as I turned my head.

For passing close in the dim half-light
And riding a coal black steed,
A phantom rider, all glowing white,
Was racing to swing the lead.
It was Brady's spirit, I knew full well,
As the ghostly pair sped on,
And the black horse flew like a bat from Hell,
The way that the lead had gone.

Well, I followed up in a kind of daze
As the spectre wheeled the lead,
And we flogged them back through the dusty haze,
To the camp with surprising speed.
They steadied down when we got them back,
But I knew by the eerie glow,
That Brady's ghost, on his nighthorse black,
Was still riding to and fro.

I'll admit I never was scared so bad,
And I've seen some queer things too,
But that mob of bullocks was all I had,
So what was a bloke to do?
The sky in the east was growing pale,
And the phantom had gone from sight,
When there came from behind me an anguished wail
It's perishing cold, all right.

I jumped as shot, then I wheeled about,
For the voice was one I knew,
And the sight I saw was without a doubt
All the stranger for being true,
For strike me dead as a gidgee post
The "steed" was poor old blue
And the spectre I thought was Brady's ghost,
Was a naked jackaroo."

GYMPIE MUSTER WET! WET! WET!

It has been 13 years since the National Country Music Muster endured such a torrential downpour. The swollen rivers were not enough to keep artists and fans away, as the organizers hired four-wheel drive buses from Fraser Island to get performers and the public in and out of Amamoor Forest, throughout Friday and part of Saturday.

The Poets arriving from across Australia included Peter Capp (WA), Neil MacArthur (Vic) Murray Hartin (NSW), Gary Fogarty (Qld)

Dave Proust was off duty from his job as fireman, but not as a genuinely nice bloke, attending two First Aid emergencies throughout the week with audience members collapsing. At last reports both were recovering well. Mr Proust, 'entertaining, and life sustaining'!

The Breakfasts were very well attended considering the deluge, with fans slipping and sliding their way each morning to the Poet's Tents. The Naked Poets show went off well, featuring a host of their most popular skits and poems and a sprinkling of new stuff, that has fans begging (well; one bloke asked) for Album No. 5???? Mmmmm We'll see...

Winner of this year's Musterbeenbloodygood Poetry Award was Dion Cross from Chinchilla with his hilarious piece about being present at his daughter's birth. He also produced another about his Mother in Law and he, ending up in a very comical dilemma.

Peter Mace and Jim Brown were both well received at the Muster along with Mel Hall, Shirley Friend, Ray Essery, Dan Thompson and last year's Musterbeenbloodygood winner Dean Collins from Bundaberg.

Singers Darren Colston and Pat Drummond both added that wonderful musical element to the Breakfasts, and The Poets Brawls were 'quick-fire' and fantastic this year, incorporated into The Breakfasts, and won by Janine from NQ (Camper's Brawl) and Neil MacArthur (Poet's Brawl).

Thanks too, to John and Sandy Lees, Cindy Fogarty, Therese Proust, Sandy Miller, Julie Gliori and all the 'auxiliary staff' who keep us moving along so smoothly, at such a monster event!

All in all, the Muster was wet, wild and wonderful, and those who attended will always remember 2007 with a grin...and no doubt, a poem or two.

Cheers

Marco Gliori

Host of The bush Poets Breakfasts
National Country Music Muster

TOM CHAPMAN

Much of the early part of Tom Chapman's life was spent on a small family poultry farm on the outskirts of Melbourne, his father having some soldier re-settlement assistance after WW2. There was no mechanisation, all the feed mixing was done manually, mostly by Tom with the feed ingredients loaded into an old tin bath.

All of that area, in the intervening 50

years, has been well and truly engulfed by suburbia, and what were open spaces for riding horses are now houses and narrow streets with barely enough room to do a three point turn. Sad to see it go, but 'progress' happens.

A number of relatives had sheep and cattle properties, and times spent there left lasting and enjoyable memories.

Circumstance dictated that Tom lived mostly in big cities (Melbourne and Sydney), but now he enjoys semi-retirement in Tamworth NSW.

'Even Tamworth is getting a bit big and busy' thinks Tom, 'I would like to go further out, but my wife is a city girl, and in any case, in our 70's it's time to settle down.'

Tom likes the places where the loudest noises are the sound of your own pulse in your ears and a magpie or crow in the distance. (And he's a trombone player!!!)

A lot of Tom's poetry is about real life experiences and memories from those earlier times, but there are also some contemplative pieces as modern



times and changes are considered, and the responsibilities we ourselves have to society, plus, of course, an injection of humour, which helps us all to retain some of our sanity.

Not all of Tom's poetry is in the traditional 'bush style', but some of his notable influences are Paterson, Lawson, Kendall, as well as Shakespeare, Milton, Browning, and Tennyson; but overall the bush style predominates.

SIMMO'S DAM

© Tom Chapman Tamworth

'Where're you going,' Mum said to me,
"Make sure you're back in time for tea."
"Yes, we'll be back for sure, you see
We're going to Simmo's dam."

A lump of meat, a piece of string,
A big jam tin was all we'd bring.
We didn't need another thing
When going to Simmo's dam.

Out along an old dirt track
About three miles to there and back,
We'd bag ourselves a tasty snack
From out of Simmo's dam.

The water there was thick and grey,
The banks were slippery with wet clay,
And we'd catch yabbies half the day,
When down at Simmo's dam.

We weren't concerned about falling in
The muddy water, soaked to the skin,
We would always be back again,
For time at Simmo's dam

It was beyond the edge of town
And on the bank we'd all squat down
With not a care that we might drown
In the waters of Simmo's dam.

But progress always marches on,
And Simmo's dam has long since gone.
There's a council park where once upon-
A-time was Simmo's dam.

And now in that small council park
The local kids meet after dark
And drugged syringes leave their mark
On the site of Simmo's dam.

The dangers faced in those old days
Were small; compare the current craze
Where life is what the user pays
Where once was Simmo's dam.

The simple things of life are lost
When things like Simmo's dam
are tossed.

I think we need to count the cost
Of losing Simmo's Dams.



The ABPA's latest member, Wayne Pantall comes from Victoria Park, Western Australia.

He had a gravel road kick start in 1952 in the Great Southern Region of WA where characters and situations and the building industry provided a wealth of memories and inspiration for this brick laying poet. He quit high school in 1967 and worked 'full-time' in bulk grain handling, played football for both the Central Great Southern and Upper Great Southern Football Leagues before Perth's big smoke beckoned.

After a stint as a pest exterminator he went as a mud-mixer, pushed wheelbarrows and shovels by day and sang in a pub rock band at night.

Wayne draws his poetic inspiration from stints as a Sapper, a Marathon Runner, hiker, Bolshy Local Government antagonist and 'Put-it-Righter'.

Making matters worse for politicians and local councillors was the fact that he completed High School at age 41, gained a University entrance and actually 'learned things'.

Using our unpretentious Aussie vernacular Wayne believes that using a little rhyme, rhythm and ratbag helps to entertain others in our traditional yarn-spinning way. We all have untold stories, it is just the lack of imagination and will that he see as a limiting factor.

Wayne has been hooked on bush poetry for the past six years and hopefully for a long time to come yet. It's a great change from singing in the 70's rock bands, he still loves the stage, and likes to adapt an appropriate poem to music whenever he catches his breath.

He draws a lot on his bush upbringing to average about one poem a month. The results of his work go to air on ABC Great Southern and South Coast Breakfast shows to be shared with people who grew up in similar environments, all manifested in verse with local familiarity. 'All topics are fair game', he says, 'even the truth'.

Inaugural Burrinjuck Waters Competition

The Inaugural Burrinjuck Waters State Park bush poetry gathering to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the commencement of the Goondah to Burrinjuck Railway was held on the weekend of 1st and 2nd of September. A performance competition was held in conjunction with a luncheon in the convention centre with an audience of some sixty patrons.

Poets competed for \$1,000 divided over two sections, Classical and Humorous with Carol Heuchan of Coorabong and Jim Weatherstone (ACT) taking first and second place in each section; third places going to Leigh Brown of Yass and Ted Webber from

Young.

Former Longyard performer and Imperial competitor, Leigh Brown of Yass NSW made a comeback to bush poetry with an AB Paterson poem and an original.

Sunday morning saw another eighty line up for the cooked breakfast and walk-up poetry featuring a number of new poets. Heather Hickman of Mittagong won the holiday for two awarded to the best amateur poet.

The Burrinjuck celebration was declared a success and organizer Rex and Lorraine Davis of the State Park are planning another bush poetry turnout for the same time next year.



Lee Brown at Burrinjuck

On Old Albany Road

© Wayne Pantall waynepantall@westnet.com.au

The warm smell of bread in the mist and the smoke,
matches the cheer of the grocery bloke,
who is busily setting up shop for the day,
as a wagon comes rolling from Albany way.

On Albany Road as a freckly kid
smiles at the milko adjusting the lid,
of the billy can brimming, so creamy and white;
sister Ivy is stroking the mare on the right.

The penny they spend on the Albany Road,
rattles a purse in a humble abode,
and will jingle the till of the quaint butcher shop,
as the change for old Nanna Brown's sausage and chop.

The Smithy accepting the fish from a man,
passes the penny and takes down a pan,
while his teapot is welcome to one and to all,
with a joke and a yarn for whomever should call.

The penny is warm from the palm of the girl,
who gives with a "Thank you" - grins with a swirl,
running happily home, bringing bread for the toast,
with fresh butter and jam, of which Dad eats the most.

On Albany Road as the penny goes round
tables and counters there's joy at the sound,
and a warming of souls at the take and the give,
of reciprocal values of 'live and let live'.

For hundreds of miles from the north to the south,
good local money, is food in the mouth
of the farmer, the postie, the teacher, the nun,
of the kids in the bush and the towns - everyone.

Our concrete and bitumen highway today
serves as a means to whisk dollars away
to a man overseas, with a screen and a mouse,
who is raising the lease, on what once was her house.

The sight of the old copper coin in the sand,
is warm to her heart, and warm to her hand,
as old Ivy Jean Amity nuzzles a mane,
and is skipping down Albany Road once again.

COURAGE

by Marco Gliori

This true tale was told to me by a little bloke one day at a Bush School, and the emotion of it all, later hit me driving down the highway. The 'loyalty' shown by his mate, was indicative of the sacrifice the Diggers made for their loved ones in times of war.

Pets can teach us so much about life, responsibility and loyalty, yet humans often take them for granted -

He got the dog when just a pup,
He too a babe, they both grew up
And ventured down each newfound track
Like they were never turning back.

The dog knew when his bus was due
And scored a stolen snack or two,
But like the faithful mutt can boast
She knew when she was needed most.

The boy was nine, two bucks he got
To mow the lawn, the day was hot.
An angry Brown Snake came behind,
The bitch shot out and went in blind.

She broke its back with one wild flick,
Yet even so, that snake was quick.
It nailed her too, three bites she copped.
She staggered, wagged her tail, and dropped.

Oblivious, the boy mowed on
Till soon he turned and stumbled on
His lifeless mate, his only pet,
And a snake that begged the sun to set.

He watched it twitch until the end,
Then hugged with grief his fearless friend,
Left alone to testify,
And ponder, for who he might die.

* Did you hear about the bloke whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.

* A backward poet writes inverse.

* When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.

* Every calendar's days are numbered.

FRANK DANIEL

Bush Poetry is a laughing matter and if ever you need a good laugh then you need a good dose of fair-dinkum Australian Bush Poetry.

This is what Frank Daniel of Canowindra NSW has been serving up to his audiences for the past twenty years.

A true-blue Aussie with an Irish Heritage, this bloke believes in keeping his country's story-telling traditions alive. Most people believe whatever Frank tells them but, as he so often says... "**Only half the lies I tell are the truth!**"

Frank is a fifth generation Australian and a native of Bungendore on the Southern Tablelands of NSW. He had the three 'R's bashed into him by the Sisters of St. Joseph and was educated to third year.

With pioneering stock on both sides of his family he has seen many facets of rural life; the family farm being the scene of many of his stories.

He is well sought after as an enter-

tainer, compere and after-dinner speaker and has appeared at all the major festivals nationally since 1992.

He was first introduced to the Bush Poetry scene by 'Blue the Shearer' (Col Wilson) and Jim Haynes at Stuart Town, (Ironbark) in 1992.

Joe (his preferred middle name), has taken out seven national Yarn-spinning titles, the latest being the 2007 ABPA Australian Yarn-spinning championships; was runner-up in an International Yarn Spinning competition at the 1997 Adelaide Comedy Festival and was a finalist in the World Championships the same year in Darwin.

In 1998 he took out 'Performer of the Year' at the Australian Bush Laureate Awards and was inducted into the Bush Poets Wall of Renown in Tamworth the same year.

He won the inaugural 'Yarnspinner of the Year' title at the 2005 National Folk Festival in Canberra and for many years until 2005 hosted the Traditional Bush Poet's Breakfasts at the famous Yarnyard Hotel in Tamworth.



An inaugural member of the ABPA Inc. Frank has served seven years as President, two years as Vice President and five years as editor.

In 2004 he was appointed Australia Day Ambassador to Canberra and was awarded the Australia Day Citizen of the Year in Canowindra.

He was given a life membership to the ABPA at the 2007 Annual General Meeting.

'MOTHER SNOWY' – LIVE OR DIE???

(An open letter to the politicians who lied. . .)

© Lee Taylor-Friend Jindabyne NSW 2007

It is unfortunate that so many people are so unaware that all the Political grandstanding at the Mowamba Weir decommissioning in 2002 and promises of environmental flows have amounted to nothing.

It is now five years since the nation celebrated the return of the first environmental flows to the Snowy River when Mowamba Aqueduct was turned off, but eighteen months ago it was turned back on, depriving the Snowy of its natural headwaters.

Her shallow breath, just audible, she's gasping in her pain.
Sweet memories stir her slumber with a gentle flush of rain.
Her strength and power, all but gone;
she's lost so much she bore.
A rich and vibrant entity that almost is no more...

But not because she can't be saved;
her life has been deferred.
Is it weakness? Lack of caring?
Hearts of stone that won't be stirred?
Were your promises as shallow as the river in her pain?
Will you stand up and be brave enough
to give her life again?

Or will money greed and power simply sentence her to die
While the world looks on in horror
and they ask the question 'Why?'
Will you silence those that mock you
or just laugh, ignore and gloat?
Will you make good on your promises
or squeeze her parched, dry throat?

Would you pass a dying stranger,
just ignore her gasps for life?

Would you simply not acknowledge
your own Mother, Daughter, Wife?
She's a Mother to the ranges; she's a Daughter of the snows,
She's a nurturing Wife and Lover
to the land through which she flows.
Will the 'Man from Snowy River'
be the 'Man from Snowy Swamp'?
As our river lies there choking
while the pollied rant and romp!
Your grand promises were 'plentiful' environmental flow
But she ended up with 'Bugger-all',
where did the water go???

How can the people ever trust whilst politicians lie?
They promise 'life eternal', then sentence her to die.
Lets give 'The Snowy' back her life,
'Mowamba Weirs' a start,
When will our river flow again, or don't they have a heart???



GOLDFIELD'S MUSICAL PROGRESSES

South Australia's Jacqui and Max Merchenschlager have finished the draft script for their musical play 'Beyond The Blues' - bridging today and the time of Victoria's goldrush. They have recorded 12 of the 15 songs and placed them on the internet at their weblink. The finale, called 'Dream of the Rainbow Serpent', has a multicultural message and is intended to be sung by the whole cast just before the curtain falls. If you're interested you can listen to the song by going to www.lm.net.au/~treetops/poetry.htm The lyrics are also on-site and any feedback is welcome.

Max and Jacqui have a strong commitment to restoring the health of our Australian environment and to the



process of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous sectors of our Australian community. Over eleven years as owners of 'Blackwood Seeds', they have harvested native seeds for revegetation projects in South Australia.

Feel free to make contact with Max and Jacqui at treetops@dragnet.com.au



A Unique Experience October 26th to 28th

Festival Highlights

Horton River Waybacks
Chilly Strings - Evan Mathieson
Sun Burnt Celts
Sonia Bennett & Katie McMahon
Anthony McGloin
Margaret Bradford
Headland and Latitude
Coyote Serenade - Fiddlesticks
Fellowship of the String
Pirate Brides - Backbeat
The Sheep Dogs
Perch Creek Family Jug Band

BUSH POETRY

Poets Breakfast

7.30am Saturday

Dorrigo Heritage Hotel

with

Graeme Johnson

'The Rhymer from Ryde'

'The Coffs Mixture'

Ed and Marg Parmenter

'Skew Wiff'

Garrulous Grahame Watt

Murray Suckling

OPEN MIC SESSIONS

All Welcome to have a go

Poetry Workshops

'SKILLS OF THE STAGE'

and

'Kids Kapers'

with

Graeme Johnson

Festival Hotline

02 6657 1229

Website

www.dorrigo.com/festival

Email

festival@dorrigo.com

Poetry Director Graeme Johnson

Ph. 0419 415 137

CALENDAR UPDATES

SECRETARIES PLEASE NOTE:
CALENDAR UPDATES FOR 2008
REQUIRED BY 20TH NOVEMBER
FOR THE DECEMBER ISSUE

Poets in the Park Café on the Park
3rd Monday 6 Park Parade Shorncliffe Q
Phone Peter Hine 07 3267 6104

Kilcoy Unplugged now meets at Jack's
Place Restaurant in Mary Street Kilcoy Q

October 10-11 2007 Eudunda SA
Storytelling Festival - Bush poetry and
music contact: 0429681044
kirsty.dudley@eudunda.net or phone

November 30 07 Closing date

WA State Championships

Written Competition -

Brian Langley, 86 Hillview Terrace St.
James WA 6102 Download entry forms

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~ ~ Claiming the Dates ~ ~

August 22-24 2008

Pine Rivers Brisbane

AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Watch for future updates

September 20-28 2008 Longreach Queensland

The Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame

20th ANNIVERSARY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Good kiwi joke

A Somalian arrives in Manukau City as a new immigrant to New Zealand. He stops the first person he sees walking down the street and says, 'Thank you Mr. New Zealand man for letting me in this country!'

But the passer-by says 'You are mistaken, I am a Pakistani'.

The man goes on and encounters another passer-by.

'Thank you for having such a beautiful country here in New Zealand!'

The person says 'I no Kiwi. I from Hong Kong'

The new arrival walks further, and the next person he sees he stops, shakes his hand and says 'Thank you for the wonderful Kiwiland!'

That person puts up his hand and says 'I am from Iran, I am not Kiwi!'

He finally sees a nice lady and asks suspiciously,

'Are you a New Zealand citizen?'

She says, 'No, I from Tonga!'

So he is puzzled, and asks her, 'Where are all the New Zealanders?'

The Tongan lady looks at her watch, shrugs, and says...

'Probably at work.'

JACK SAMPSON'S GRAVE

© Ellis Campbell Dubbo NSW 2007

Winner of Charlee Marshall Golden Cockatoo Award,
Biloela Queensland 2007

A dreary cemetery lies beside an asphalt road,
where tawny grass waves gently in a section rarely mowed.
The rusted gate is bent and sagged, its creaking hinges groan
wild scraggy weeds infest the path among the cobbled stone.
Here ancient headstones rear aloft-such images construe!
Some faded, cracked and vandalized-and many leant askew.

Majestic marble monuments all splashed by scaring rust,
deciphering the long bleached names

might leave you quite nonplussed.

A century ago this art was lovingly applied
to represent a mourner's care for someone close who died.
In one neglected corner where the lofty box trees wave,
I found the shoddy remnants of a long forgotten grave.

A rusted chain with rigid links half buried in the ground,
and little else remained except a sadly sunken mound.
A rabbit's burrow dug beneath the head-stone's tragic tilt –
a spiky cactus growing through the garbled stones and silt.
On some impulse I knelt beside the sorry headstone there
and rubbed the sandstone's gritty face to find an inlaid square.

I scratched away the scaly moss that peeled like flaking paint;
elated I discovered there- in lettering so faint –
an epitaph. Jack Sampson. Killed in 1884.

An overwhelming sadness came that I could learn no more.
Jack Sampson killed by whom or what-an epitaph obscure?
What circumstances killed poor Jack? The secret rests secure.

There's nothing states his age or race, or where his death took place;
perhaps he died in prison, midst some scandal or disgrace?
A wild bushranger was this Jack-an outlaw doomed to die?
Did troopers shoot Jack Sampson dead and no one care to cry?
Or was he just a godless man who knew no church or faith?
No plots allotted for his kind-and who might sense his wraith?

An accident or lawless death by some malicious thug -
a hangman's noose or poisoned by some kind of lethal drug?
Thrown from a horse or hit by train, drowned in a flooded creek –
a victim of a tiger snake or something quite unique?
And was he old, or stricken down while in the prime of youth?
A million guesses I might make without a hint of truth.

Why is he buried here alone, beneath this clump of trees,
where no one sees his lonely grave or feels this whispered breeze?
Perhaps a pauper lacking cash whom none would proudly claim,
a burden on the state's finance who died alone in shame?
A lost illegal immigrant- a stranger to our shores?
A native ostracised from clan because of tribal laws?

Was life a lonely journey, too-like death has been for him –
a drifter with a secret past decreed by fate or whim?
For all those long and silent years, where grass remains unmown,
forgotten by the whole wide world he's lain, ignored-unknown.
Where wistful breezes softly sigh through moon-lit trees above,
a lonely piece of earth his lot, devoid of care or love.

This poem was inspired by a walk through Gulgong cemetery. In one corner, midst tall trees and unruly grass, are a few long neglected graves. Some of the old hands claimed this portion was reserved for lawless characters or those with no religious faith. This may, or may not be true.

WORKING DOGS . . .

RALPH PATRICK

© Maureen Clifford – Kallangur Qld.

We bought a new pup today,
bought him down Tenterfield way
He's liver and tan and a good looking man
and if he works out then he'll stay.
He's a friendly obedient chap
a really handsome young pup
he's settled right in and has the biggest grin
and with food we just cant fill him up.

The pet lambs, well they just ignore him
they're used to the odd dog or two
and Fernando the horse, as a matter of course
just walks by him as good horses do.
He chases the pet goats all over,
but leaves little Teneille well alone
but Sasha he chases, she head butts him, then races.
one day for his sins he'll atone.

He's working out well is Ralph Patrick
he's learning to handle the sheep
he works with Anushka and she really pushes,
but out at the rear young Ralph keeps.
He's already mustered a stray Dorset.
The rams they don't faze him at all,
and he got so much praise for catching this ram
that he thought he would muster them all.

So off down the gully he trotted,
independently and all alone
and without too much fuss and no help from us
he went and brought all the rams home.
Well what could you say – we don't want them,
just leave them alone and let be.
They need to stay in that paddock
because the ewes are all pregnant you see.

So we told him he was a great dog
and a good job he certainly did
but 'twould be better by far if he stayed in the car
and only did what he was bid.
We had thought that one day he would be the top dog
and that's the way it should go down
for Buster is slower now he's getting old
and Ralph was the new kid in town.

But sadly our little Ralph picked up a bait
and sadly the little man died
and I was no longer there when it happened
but I know that the boss cried.
So now Ralph's brother Red is out there
helping Anushka and Buster too
but he's not yet as good, as Ralph Patrick
but one day perhaps he'll fill his shoes.

Welcome to Maureen Clifford, a new member from Kallangur in Queensland.

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PO Box 3001 West Tamworth 2340

**THE 2008
COUNTRY ENERGY
TAMWORTH
BUSH POETRY
COMPETITION**

**Performance Competition
West Tamworth
Leagues Club**

Heats: Wed 23 Jan to Fri 25 Jan
Finals: Saturday 26 January
2008

Golden Damper Awards
to winners of
**Original and Traditional
Sections**
plus Cash Prizes for all finalists.

Entry forms available
October 1st.
Send SSAE
to Jan Morris, PO Box 3001
West Tamworth 2340



**COMPETITION
RESULTS**

NORTH PINE Q.

Novice 1st. Bruce Tye
2nd. Arthur Green
3rd. Jayson Russell
Intermediate
1st. Mary Hodgson
2nd. Janeen Mapson
3rd. Dot Schwenke
Serious - Non Original (Male)
1st. Peter Mace
2nd. Dennis Scanlon
3rd. Kevin Dean
Serious - Non Original (F)
1st. Susan Carcary
2nd. Carol Heuchan
3rd. Mary Hodgson
Humorous - Non Original (m)
1st. Paddy O'Brien
2nd. Bernie Keleher
3rd. Dennis Scanlon.
Humorous - Non Original (F)
1st. Susan Carcary
2nd. Carol Heuchan
3rd. Leanne Jeacocke
Serious - Original (Male)
1st. Manfred Vijars 2nd. Lyndon
Baxter 3rd. Paddy O'Brien
Serious - Original (Female)
1st. Carol Heuchan 2nd. Susan
Carcary 3rd. Jan Facey
Humorous - Original (Male)
1st. Peter Mace 2nd. Dennis
Scanlon 3rd. Manfred Vijars
Humorous - Original (Female)
1st. Carol Heuchan
2nd. Susan Carcary
3rd. Cay Fletcher
Overall Female Champion
Carol Heuchan
Overall Male Champion
Peter Mace

**BURRINJUCK
WATERS NSW
Open Classical**

1st. Carol Heuchan Cooranbong
2nd. Jim Weatherstone ACT
3rd. Leigh Brown Yass NSW
Open Contemporary
1st. Carol Heuchan
2nd. Jim Weatherstone
3rd. Ted Webber Young NSW
**CROOKWELL NSW
WoolWagon Awards
Classical**
1st. Carol Heuchan
2nd. Gary Lowe
3rd. Jim Brown

Pavarotti knocks on the
Pearly Gates.
St. Peter opens them and says,
"Oh Luciano, it's you. Come on
in - squeeze through".
Pavarotti says "I have a letter
from the Pope for you."
St. Peter opens it up and reads,
"Here's that tenor I owe you."

Claire Reynolds
Original Serious
1st. Jim Brown
2nd. Carol Heuchan
3rd. Gary Lowe
4th. John Lloyd
Original Humorous
1st. Gary Lowe
2nd. Jim Brown
3rd. Carol Heuchan
4th. Lisa Quast
Contemporary
1st. Jim Brown
2nd. Gary Lowe
3rd. Dylan Cartledge
4th. Lisa Quast and John Lloyd
Written
1st. Ellis Campbell
'Master Stockman'
2nd. Joyce Alchin
'The Shadow of the Pine'
3rd. Ian McFaul
'A Stones Throw from the Stars'
4th. Ellis Campbell
'Passing of an Era'
5th. Des Bennett
'The Saga of Dingo Ern'
6th. Graeme Johnson
'Gray Star'
Overall Champion
Jim Brown
Junior Sections
Under 7's
1st. Sarah Stephenson
2nd. Alicia Lyons
7's to 12's
1st. William Hammond
2nd. Lachlan Fairbank
3rd. Lachlan McCue
Equal 4th. Jayden Eddy
Thomas Picker
Under 16
1st. Dylan Cartledge
2nd. Daniel Banfield
3rd. Teniele McGaw
4th. Kyle George

4th. **Schools Written Section
Under 7.**
1st Josie Laverty (6yrs) Crook-
well *'Windy Day'*
2nd William Auld (5yrs)
Maningrida NT *'Maningrida
Bush'*
3rd Charles Syme (6yrs) Manin-
grida NT
'Fun in Darwin'
7-11 years
1st Isabelle Toole
Crookwell
'Our Neighbours'
2nd Nickolas Skelly
Crookwell
'The Bodyline Series'
3rd Lachlan Fairbank
Crookwell *'The Drought'*
12-16 years
1st Dylan Cartledge
Coutts Crossing NSW *'Granny
and the Gopher'*
2nd Travis Arnold
Crookwell
'Kakoda Track'
3rd Dylan Cartledge
'The Farmers Grips'

**2007 DUSTY SWAG
WRITTEN AWARDS**

1st. Donald Crane *'Bush Logic'*
2nd Kym Eitel
'A Bell in the Mist'
3rd David Campbell
'The Last Swagman'
4th Joyce Alchin
'A Morning After Rain'
Theme Verse
1st Margaret Glendenning
'My Time Machine'
2nd David Campbell
'Depression Years'
Under 18 years
Bree Turner - *'Timeless Time'*
Group awards
Thornton Public School

**58th National Cherry Festival
YOUNG NSW
Cherry Capital of Australia
BUSH POETRY
COMPETITION**

Young Golf Club

**Saturday & Sunday
1st & 2nd December**

\$1,000.00 Prizemoney
Entries restricted - ~~early~~ entry advised

Entries now filled

**Contact Greg Broderick
02 6382 2506
gbroderi@bigpond.net.au**

**The Australian Bush
Poets Association
Inc.**

(Established 1994)

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Membership: Annual subscriptions
\$30.00 1st January to 31st December
payable to the Treasurer.

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The Australian Bush Poets Association
Inc Newsletter is set-up, published and
posted direct to subscribers bi-monthly
by the ABPA Inc.

**Deadline for copy—20th of month
preceding the month of issue.**

Note: Every endeavour is made to inform
readers, poets, competitors etc., of
functions, written and performance
competitions and so on. Space does not
provide to print competition entry terms
and conditions, or details beyond the
closing dates and dates of such event.
Further information can be obtained from
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HARDEN NSW**

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Saturday Night Competition

Sunday Morning

Breakfast & Finals

Rob Provan - Harden Arts Council
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BUSH POETRY
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Benalla Bowls Club
BENALLA

20th - 21st OCTOBER

\$3000 Prize money + trophies

Lady's, Men's and Junior

Performance Competition

Inc. novice & intermediate

Closing Date October 12th

Adult and Junior

Written Competition

Closing date September 22nd

Contact: The Secretary

V.B.P.M.A

113 Clarke St Benalla Vic 3672

Email: colmandy@people.net.au

A BELL in the MIST

© Kym Eitel - Thangool Qld.

(Runner-up 2007 North Pine Camp Oven Written Competition)

Our lives are made up of several parts – family, work, health, etc – and sometimes when something is taken from us, it is easy to focus on what we have lost, instead of appreciating what we still have ...

As morning spread her rays of gold, the branches shivered dew.
The clouds of cotton drifted in a sky of peacock blue.
I saw a flash of rabbit ear where timid creatures dwell -
from hollow log to shadowed place ... I heard a tinkling bell ...

Like phantoms through the swirling mist, vague shapes began to form -
two horses walked the river's edge to find a spot more warm.
They found a grassy clearing by the sloping, sandy bank.
... I thought I heard a bell again ... The horses stopped and drank.

Reflections rose to kiss them as their lips and water met.
They splashed and liquid diamonds left the horses sparkling wet.
The ripples glittered silver as the sunlight danced around.
The horses played and shook their heads ... again I heard the sound ...

The mare and filly listened to the music of the bush -
the busy whirl of finches and the treetops' steady whoosh.
The smaller filly softly neighed, then turned and walked away.
The mare behind her flicked an ear - a chestnut, flecked with grey.

They climbed the bank to nibble grass, then sauntered nose to tail.
The bell grew slightly louder as they walked along the trail.
What caused the pretty tinkling noise? I looked around in vain.
Beside the weeping willow tree, the bell rang once again.

Then suddenly, I realised ... the filly made the sound!
A bell was plaited through her mane - it rang as she moved 'round.
I climbed the fence and crept up close to figure out just why ...
but what I saw was very sad. It made me want to cry.

I understood it finally, why two had moved as one
to get a drink, or nibble grass or snooze in morning sun.
The little filly always led, the old mare walked behind,
their shadows always blended ... for the chestnut mare was blind.

That poor old horse! She couldn't see - what use to be alive?
And yet, she seemed so happy, like she wanted to survive.
I sat upon the rabbit's log and closed my teary eyes,
let blinding blackness cloak me as I pondered her demise.

I thought about her lack of sight, the bleakness of her world,
and then I felt her breath on me - awareness then unfurled.
The mare felt warmth of midday sun, the chill of morning breeze,
the joy of scratching itches on the bark of shady trees.

She tasted thistle's milky juice, heard singing birds fly high.
She loved to hear her owner's call when bringing apples by.
She smelled the Pepperina's bloom, the mossy banks of clay,
and savoured cool, sweet water from the river every day.

She rubbed against the filly and the old mare seemed content -
found comfort and security when breathing in her scent.
But most of all, she heard that bell and knew a friend was near.
Her life was full of beauty, so I wiped my away my tear.

I realised there's more to life, than just what meets the eye -
a lesson I'll hold dear at heart until the day I die.
I saw the trust and bond they share -, true friendship they had found.
The young horse shared her gift of sight to help the mare move 'round.

The old horse shared her gift with me through gentle, whiskered kiss -
she helped me see her life was happy, filled with joy and bliss.
Then, nose to tail, they strolled away and nodded me farewell.
They vanished in the mist ... but I will always hear that bell.

A Tad More Grass



From Neville O'Dell
45 Drayton Green Way
KINGSLEY WA 6026
nevodell@bigpond.net.au

**\$20 each
posted**

*"I know that you've been waiting
Now the time has come to pass
Sit back, relax, enjoy yourself
And read A Tad More Grass"*

'Skew Whiff'

What's in this book?

A Tad More Grass is a well illustrated, soft cover, 212-page book with 33 chapters. It's an amazing collection of lawn bowls yarns, anecdotes, poems, stories, cartoons and quips which truly represent the humour and good fun spirit which exists in all bowling clubs.

This book will give non-believers an insight into lawn bowls, and bowls fanatics will enjoy every page. To the outside world bowls is a bit of a mystery, and bowlers themselves at times appear slightly mystified by the game. But this book explains in a humorous manner the intricacies of the so called 'rules' and the unusual terms used on the greens.

You'll learn how to classify skippers and find out what makes them go crook.

Support Alzheimers.

Every week about 1000 Australians are diagnosed with a form of dementia. Research holds the key to delaying its onset and in the longer term finding a cure. All profits from the sale of this book go to Alzheimers - by buying a copy of this book you will supporting a very worthwhile organisation.

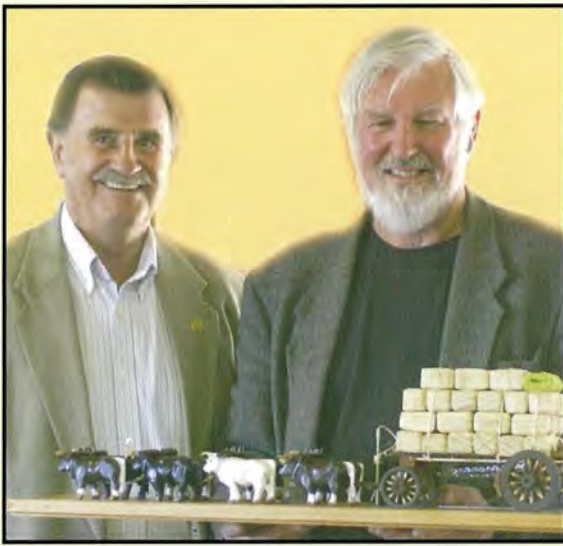
Neville's first book 'Bowl 'em Over' raised in excess of \$20,000 for Alzheimers.

A number of Graeme Watt's humorous lawn bowls poems are included.

Read 'The 'Bare'
Facts on page 6.



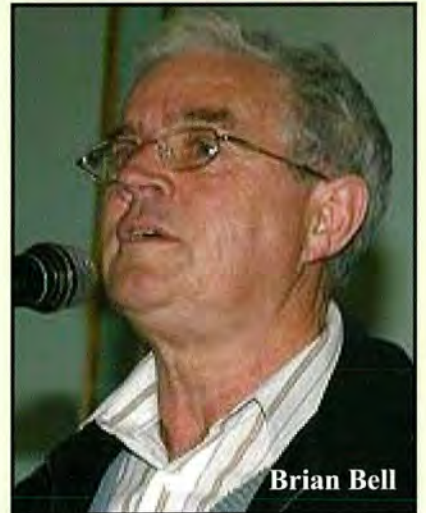
**Alzheimer's
Australia**
Living with dementia



Overall Winner of the Upper Lachlan Wool Wagon Awards for performance poetry was Jim Brown of Heathmont Victoria, pictured with the Member for Hume, Alby Schultz, and the Perpetual Trophy made by Ron Evans.

Dylan Cartledge (right) of Coutts Crossing (Grafton) NSW, winner of the Schools Written competition for 12-16 years age group, and under 16's performance section.

Queensland Ladies State Champion (2007), Claire Reynolds of Gloucester who competed successfully at Crookwell. (centre right)
(Paul Anderson Photography).



Brian Bell



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JESUS THE HEALER

© Brian Bell - Glenbrook NSW

The Lord looked down upon the world
and saw things weren't too good.
His word had been forgotten
or at best misunderstood.

'My Son' he said 'you must return
to Earth's polluted shore,
to demonstrate your powers
till they worship us once more'.

'Yes, Father' said the Nazarene
and followed this request.
He advertised that healing
would restore those freely blessed.

A crowd assembled in the park
to chance to touch this man.
Each person healed had definite proof
of God's eternal plan.

But one on crutches backed away
as Jesus ventured near.
When asked 'Do you want healing, Son?'
his face was filled with fear.

Then Jesus simply said to him
'You're ruining my show'.
He answered 'Stop! My compo claim
has three more weeks to go!'



Having a bit of a purple patch of late is **ELLIS CAMPBELL** of Dubbo, one of our best known contemporary writers.

On the first weekend in September he travelled with his wife Maureen to the Inverell Poetry Festival where he won the Performance Poetry Competition, something he has done on two other occasions.

On the same weekend news arrived from Mudgee that he was runner-up in their written competition.

On the Monday he received word in the mail that he won the competition at Eastwood Hills in Sydney and then on

Tuesday he was advised of another win at Camooweal Qld.

Further to all this, in Wednesday's mail he was advised of not only a win, but a clean sweep at North Arm Cove having taken out the first three places.

A couple of years ago, he achieved that same extraordinary rare feat in a competition at Narrabri.

On the 'seventh day' he rested so to speak, only to receive news that he had taken out a first and a fourth prize in the Upper Lachlan Wool Wagon Written Awards at Crookwell NSW.

Congratulations Ellis, jobs well done old mate.