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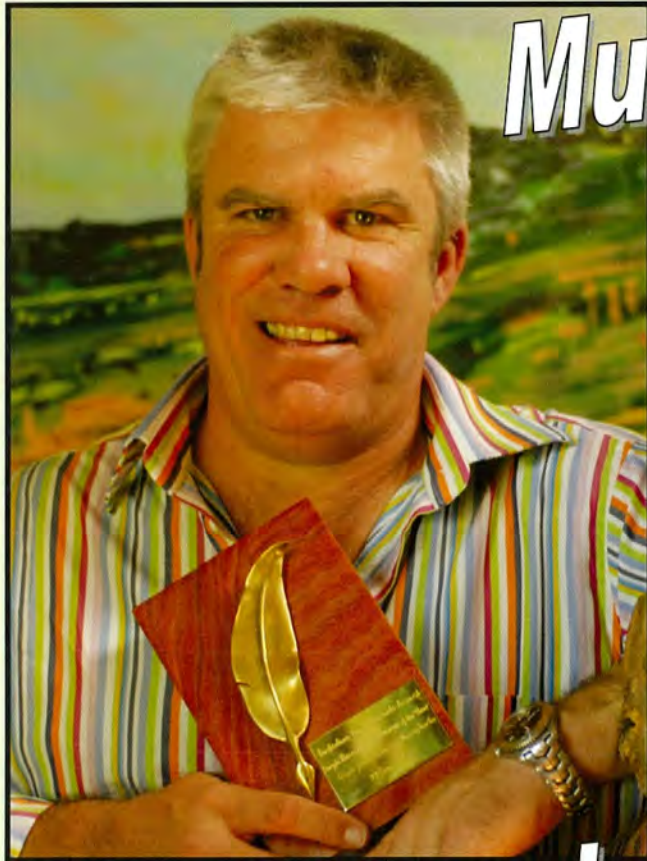
Magazine

The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.



Volume 15
No. 2
April - May
2008

Magazine - (since 1994)



Murray Hartin

Murray Hartin was born in the Northern NSW town of Moree on a stinking hot day in 1963, February 2 to be precise, and was a long time coming, according to his mum, Loretta. 'No point me being there, I would've got the tractor on the job,' said his dad, Kev, who spent the afternoon in the air-conditioned comfort of the bowling club playing pool.

While in this day and age that may well be unthinkable, unsupportive and chauvinistic, back in 1963 a nine-hour birth on a stinking hot day, well, Kev probably pulled the right rein.

The family moved into town when Muz was six and during the ensuing seven years he played rugby league, cricket, got his fair share of A's and took the lead role in three school plays with the critics describing his performances as indifferent.

He then went to boarding school at Barker College in Sydney where he was introduced to both the sport of rugby union and the beverage Bundaberg Rum during the train trips home on the North West Mail with both associations still a big part of Muz's life.

He went on to play in the First XV, the Second XI and watched athletics training from his dormitory window. His 297 in the Higher School Certificate was a remarkable achievement given his unparalleled ability to avoid work and his 32-day suspension prior to the HSC, along with four of his boarding mates; this is still a school record. (to page 22)

Ellis Campbell

The revival of the Poets Wall of Renown during Country Music Week is destined to fill yet another gap in recognizing our Australian Bush Poets. The Longyard Hotel Wall of Renown was first started in 1992 when Judith Hosier and Jim Haynes saw the need to recognise contemporary poets, and now, under new management, will continue to grow and maintain its original theme as 'The Longyard Legends'.

Ellis Campbell (81) of Dubbo NSW was inducted in January along with 'The Naked Poets', the most successful bush poetry group ever.

Ellis has achieved what he has through hard work and dedication. When he wins, it is not the value of the trophy that is important but what it represents. He doesn't take anything he has for granted but is grateful for all he has. He gets great satisfaction from helping others. When someone that he has given writing tips to wins a competition, he's genuinely just as pleased for them as he would be had he won it himself.



Longyard Legends PAGE 12



THE VOYAGE

© Graeme Johnson

(A fictional account of the rigours and hardships faced by the convicts transported to Australia.)

*NB: The poem is written in the language of the time and uses spelling as such. These are not errors.

When you read this O' remember me Rose,
and bear me up well in your mind.
Think of me daily well held in your arms,
as I leave you so sadly behind.
For I'm lag'd for me sins off to Botany Bay.
Far away from your body and kind.

Led to the judge at the Bristol Assize,
and cast up for death for me crime.
Then to be spared and put out of this town,
for fourteen dead years is me time.
I've been marked for to suffer the penal reform,
of harsh fatal shore's foreign climes.

O' how I fret for the sight of your face.
The life that together we made.
Mine is the fault and our chance it has past,
and the last of me cards has been played.
For our Prison Cart stops at the old Portsmouth docks,
where I fear that me hide will be flayed.

Heckled and shamed on these dark cobbled streets.
How cruelly they taunt and guffaw.
But nothing compares to the horror that rose
When I sighted the old 'Man O' War'.
Our Prison Hulk moored at the docks like a slum.
I feign could believe what I saw.

Struck then to muster and held to account.
We huddled and shivered on deck.
Called then to answer, Thom Spicer me name.
Me pitiful body a wreck.
From the gawk and the leer of the ship's motley crew,
Stripped naked for them to inspect.

We are the carcass they seek to devour,
as stifled we cram down below.
Brutally beaten and treated like dogs.
So into the hammocks we throw.
Stacked like sardines in the foul stinking air,
in three layered bunks head to toe.

Pray for me Rose for me health does decline.
For I perish and rot in this hold.
Black swollen gums from the scurvy's red mange.

I despair that me strength is not bold.
For the plagues and the poxes and vermin abound,
and death and the shadows are cold.

Four lonely months we sat tied to the coast,
'til our Brigantine came into sight.
Transporting us to the land New South Wales,
to Bayside to further our plight.
For me past it is blighted as England expels,
the dross of its prisons from sight.

High on the water from Portsmouth we sail.
The Marquis of Court our new boat.
Hoisting the flag red and white called the whip,
that warns of the prisoners afloat.
I scarcely can fathom the gamble we take,
as we grab the trade winds by the throat.

Better not think all the voyage is fine.
There's time for to swear at this hell.
Heat from the sun melts the tar from the boards,
to burn off me flesh as it fell.
For when seas they do boil and when winds they do stir,
O' the Oceans of Neptune do swell.

Six months at sea finds me now dumb of speech.
How stunning this Bright Sidney Isle.
I gaze like a fool at the wonders I see.
This harbour that charms and beguiles.
The trials and terrors I now put behind.
The voyage undertaken worthwhile.

I stare like a mute as I seek to explain,
a land none could dare to invent.
Billowing sails push us by sunken coves.
Past a landscape so strange and so bent.
For the bush and the flowers have shapes of their own,
when such strangeness to nature is lent.

There I was claimed by the master John Wells.
Assigned as a government man.
Sent there to work of the bulk of me time,
at the governments leisure and plan.
At the forge of a Blacksmith I sweat out me term.
I work hard to shorten me span.

But then came a pardon from Governor Bourke.
A 'Ticket of Leave' by their laws.
Free I am now to establish a trade,
and Master be I of me chores.
Now me burden and strife has been cut by six years.
Me past into history withdraws.

Though by strict terms me new freedom is bound,
for me 'Ticket' they quick can revoke.
Chances are plenty to prosper and thrive.
Ring the words that the Magistrate spoke.
But I can't bring you back to my side me sweet Rose.
I bear up this sorrowful yoke.

I write to you now of the man I shall be.
From this letter you'll soon understand.
That I'm drawn to this Country and all that it holds.
The gifts of this bountiful land.
For me future and fortune and fate lie ahead.
As a man re-invented I stand.



PRESIDENTS REPORT

G'day Members,

Recently I had the pleasure of being involved in the Port Fairy Festival and The John O'Brien Festival at Narrandera. On each occasion I was pleasantly surprised at the interest shown in not just the modern bush poetry but the traditional. At one venue when only the poems of John O'Brien were offered in Port Fairy we had a full theatre of devotees on one day and three-quarters present on the other; and in Narrandera because the venues were booked-out before the festival started, patrons were disappointed that they could not get a seat for one of three two-hour concerts of this pioneer poet. This is a very healthy sign for our bush poetry and indicates that we are satisfying a significant number of the public with our Australian entertainment.

With regards the John O'Brien Centre, that we are fund-raising to build in Narrandera, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you members for the support you have given. To date we have raised \$38,947.68 which has enabled us to engage an architect to design a suitable structure. The delay by the Narrandera Council in telling us which side of the current Visitors' Centre they want us to put the structure is becoming very frustrating as our architect cannot begin designing until he knows the site. When the final design is accepted by the Council we will produce a Prospectus and go to big businesses and government agencies to get the majority of the \$1 million dollars. If there are any poetry groups that would

be interested in hosting a fund-raising-function I would love to come and perform for your patrons but you can appreciate I need the locals who know the locals to do the ground work.

Because the new Assessment Sheet for Performance Competitions that was accepted at the January AGM does not have individual Criteria scores, the previous ABPA procedure for ties is no longer applicable. People have approached me as to what tie-breaker system should now be used. Until the Executive Committee has had time to discuss the various options I suggest you use - the majority decision of the judges. So while the total aggregated scores of Contestants A and B might be the same the contestant who has the highest scores of two out of the three judges will be declared the winner.

Could I encourage members to support the various bush poetry groups that are organising the State and National Championships. Those of us who have been involved with these would know just how much time is spent chasing up sponsors, organising venues, selecting appropriate judging panels, advertising and encouraging schools to be involved. These bush poetry competitions give the public a great range of bush poetry entertainment with examples of traditional, modern and original poems. These competitions and similar festivals are where we have the best chance of showcasing the bush poetry and getting more people "hooked" on our Australian story telling through rhythm and rhymed verse. The North Pine Bush poets are hard at work preparing for the National Championships which are to be held in Brisbane for the first time. If we are a spectator or a competitor we need to give these organisers the support that will ensure that their efforts are seen to be worth while.

With gratitude,

Neil Stallard

Alcohol is not the answer, it just makes you forget the question.

A proverb is a short sentence based on long experience.

A bachelor's life is no life for a single man.

After all is said and done, more is said than done.

Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.

A DIGGER'S LAMENT

I would not have missed it for the world,
but I know that it's not right,
To miss the thrill of being alive in battle,
and to miss being in the fight.
I miss the fleas the flies and lice, the mud
the blood and snow.
I miss standing to on the firing step, at
dawn to 'greet' the foe.
I miss that binding esprit de corps, when
every ANZAC soldier is like a brother,
I miss that blind faith you have in mates,
when you would trust no other.
I miss the taste of water from old petrol
tins,
and ships biscuits that would gag a cow.
I miss the ways you can cook bully beef,
to disguise the taste when it's gone sour.
I miss the sun baking and the swimming,
when they think you have gone barmy.
I miss living in my shorts and slouch, and
serving in the naked army.
I miss making home made jam tin bombs,
because we had no mills grenades,
I miss the bent back and the stooping gate,
to dodge the snipers enfilade.
I miss trying not to look important, be-
cause enemy ammunition might be low,
I miss digging graves with a bayonet, and
planting crosses in a row.
I miss blokes like Simpson and Jacka;
they broke the mould when they made
those two,
I miss the barking cough from old Beachy
Bill, and dodging the shrapnel that he
threw.
I miss the target practice between the
trenches, with 303 and periscope,
I miss the daily pint of drinking water,
and washing without soap.
I miss the chilling trill of the peelers whis-
tle that kicks off every stunt
I miss the chatter of the "Emma Gee", and
that nervous thrill before the hunt.
I miss that metallic taste of naked fear,
that taste of copper in your mouth,
I miss the taste of Navy rum drunk neat,
when you think your courage has gone
south.
I miss those short softening up barrages,
because we were always low on shells,
I miss the lonely run across no mans land,
amid the battle cries and rebel yells.
I would not have missed it for the world,
but I know to feel that way is wrong,
To miss the sight and smell, the touch and
taste, and that sweet sound of a battle's
song.

SSC KELSEN "The Bunyip from the
Bush Poets society"

HELP THE ABPA GROW - GIVE A SUBSCRIPTION TO A FRIEND



Susan Carcary

2008 NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL CANBERRA

Once again the National Folk Festival celebrated folk life in all its myriad forms, with some old favourites and many new surprises. From its traditional styling of Australian, Celtic, Balkan etc. to more contemporary interpretations, there was something for everyone. To sum it up in one word, the philosophy of the National Folk Festival would be *participation* and there were many chances to get actively involved, whether it be dance, song, playing an instrument, reciting poetry or just trying ones hand at some visual arts.

Australian Bush Poetry came to the fore with over 120 individual performances over the four days in Andrew Pattison's Troubadour Wine Bar with audiences overflowing the venue to around 300 daily. The Merry Muse, the Troubadour and the Palladium also featured bush poetry to packed houses over the weekend.

The Reciter of the year was judged over the first three days of the festival by the 2007 winner Laurie MacDonald of Watson ACT, a non-enviable position that goes to the winner each year. The perpetual trophy for this competition has been handed down since 1973 and bears a long list of talented performers.

In his presentation to the winner at the fourth brekkie this year, Laurie MacDonald said it was a very tough decision coming to a final result with two outstanding performances, forcing him to make a 'non-prize-winning' Highly Commended award to Joe Lynch of Maleny Q. whose *'Letter to Iraq'* was featured a number of times over the Easter weekend.

The 2008 Reciter of the Year was Peter Mace of Empire Bay NSW who recited a Boer War poem *'I Killed and Man at Graspan'*, written by Monty Grover.

The Yarn-Spinner of the Year title went to Susan Carcary of Canberra for her

ANZAC TRIBUTE NARRANDERA

The Anzac Tribute is without Narrandera Public School Choir doubt the highlight of the John O'Brien Bush Festival. The Country First Credit Union sponsored open Bush Poetry Competition was won by Barry Tiffen of Leeton NSW followed closely by Garry Lowe of Berkeley Vale and Peter Mace of Empire Bay NSW. Judges were Geoffery Graham, Graeme Johnson and Greg North.

Usually held outdoors in the Memorial Gardens, the 2008 tribute was re-convened because of the record high temperatures to the Auditorium where five hundred patrons took in the verse and song afforded by twelve bush poets and musicians and the Narrandera Public School Choir.

The Anzac Tribute is not confused with the traditional Anzac Day Ceremonies on April 25th. It became part of the John O'Brien Bush Festival in 2000 so that those who did not serve, through no fault of their own, or for various other reasons, might be able to say thank you and extend their gratitude to those returned men and women who helped make Australia what it is today.

The growing crowds at this annual event has shown the organizers that their efforts in arranging this Anzac tribute have not been in vain, and that through the medium of bush poetry and song we can hail, not only the Anzacs, but all the men and women in all facets of war since them.

The Narrandera festival committee sincerely thanks the contributors to this tribute: Garry Lowe, Jason and Chloe Roweth, Graeme Johnson, Geoffrey Graham, Tom O'Connor, Noel Stallard, Eileen McPhillips, Greg North, John Denigate, Vic Jefferies, Peter Mace, Frank Daniel (co-ordinator) and the

very humorous story about hardship encountered by her family in Scotland resulting in their migration to Australia as *'Ten Pound Poms'*.

The Yarn Spinning was conducted in a very fitting atmosphere at the 'The Drover's Camp' by last years winner Greg North of Linden NSW. Severely restricted to one hour per session, this event saw twenty-seven story-tellers with nine finalists on the fourth day. Susie now holds the title till Easter 2009 when she will comper and judge, 'all a part of her great win'.

I Wear The Poppy

SSC KELSEN "The Bunyip from the Bush Poets society"

I wear the poppy, to remind me every day,

Of the price paid by so many, on those fields so far away.

I wear the poppy, every day so all will know,

That I pay a silent tribute, to all the crosses in their rows.

I wear the poppy, for all those gone to God and home,

For all the Anzac sons and daughters, this is their special poem.

That is why I wear the poppy, on each and every day,

To show that I remember them, for I honour them this way.

'Bunyip' (SSC KELSEN 'The Bunyip from the Bush Poets Society') produced this poem dedicated: "To those who returned home to their families and loved ones, and were then to face their own personal battles alone."

And when the war is over,

What will I do then,

With no happy band of brothers,

And with no conclave of men.

How to face the cheering crowds,

And those who cannot know,

What to tell them when they ask,

"What was the status quo"

And how to ease that inner fear,

Of friendless days alone,

To only be at peace when with

My brothers of the tome?

For my brothers in the line,

Are the only truth I know,

I want to stay with them forever,

Where the gentle poppies grow.



**REMEMBER
THE ANZACS**

**HMAS
SYDNEY**

**The
Dome of Souls**

**GERALDTON
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**



In November 1941, the HMAS Sydney was lost off the coast of Geraldton WA whilst engaging the German Raider 'Kormoran'.

This magnificent HMAS Sydney Memorial is located at Mount Scott Geraldton

It has become the country's premier site for honouring the Australian sailors who were lost without trace during a World War II battle in 1941. Sydney and her men disappeared after a battle with the German ship, Kormoran.

While the Kormoran was also lost, many of her crew survived the ordeal.

However, the watery graves of both the Sydney and Kormoran sailors remain a mystery.

The dome centre-piece of the beautifully designed memorial features a filigree panel of 645 silver gulls surmounted on seven pillars, to represent the lost Sydney sailors and the seven states and territories of Australia.

The interior concave side of the southern Wall of Remembrance shows ghostly photographs of the ships and the names of the 645 men who lost their lives.

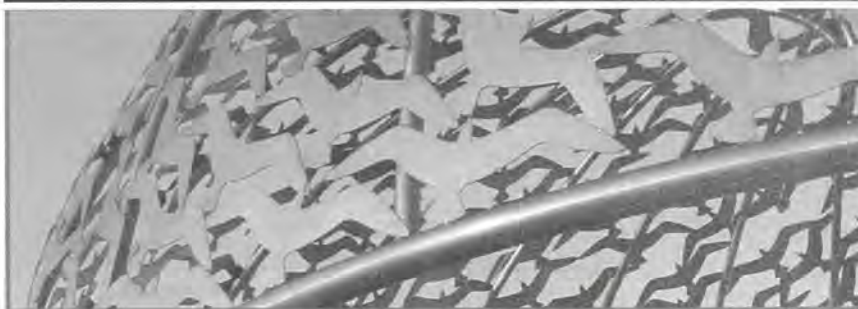
To the north, a bronze statue of a woman gazes desperately out to sea as

she awaits news of the ill-fated Sydney. She is holding her hat against the sea-breeze, her skirt is blown back by the prevailing wind. She is anxious, tense, her gaze for ever fixed patiently on the horizon - she is eternal, the figure of a waiting woman, grieving for her lost loved one.

Nearby is the Stele, made of stainless steel - a single, dramatic shape representing the bow of the HMAS Sydney.

The combination of these elements results in an extremely moving and fitting memorial.

On 19 November 1998, during the strains of the Last Post at the dedication of the HMAS Sydney memorial site in Geraldton, a large flock of silver seagulls flew in formation above the crowd. The memorial's sculptor, Joan Walsh Smith, was so struck by the flight of the birds that she decided to incorporate 645 seagulls into the 'dome of souls' she was designing; a gull for each of the men who lost their lives in HMAS Sydney.



The foregoing story was prepared for this issue of the magazine in February 2008.

What a magnificent discovery to find news on 17th March that as a result of a deepwater survey, the HMAS Sydney has been discovered within twelve kilometres of the wreck of the Kormoran, both only a short distance from the scene of the 1941 sea-battle.

Its hull largely intact, the Sydney



lies on the seabed 2.5 kilometres down, about 100 nautical miles off the West Australian coast.

The federal government has moved to protect the wrecks of both the Sydney and the Kormoran, with a declaration under historic shipwrecks law to ensure they are not damaged or disturbed.

Both will be classed as war graves. Pictured:

The HMAS Sydney in 1940



BUSH POET STRIKES GOLD

by Melanie Whelan

The tale of Bill the fencing farmer's sporting glory has snared Ballarat's John Peel one of the nation's most prestigious bush poetry awards.

Mr Peel, a Ballarat engineer, took home his first Golden Dampier award as winner of the Tamworth Bush Poets' original work and performance division.

The competition puts Australia's best poets up against each other as part of the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

Mr Peel's poem *The Fence Off* tells the story of a farmer who discovered fencing is a sport and winds up locked in a duel with an Olympic fencer - who came equipped with a sword.

The farmer draws on his expertise and parries back with a star post, knocking the Olympian over and stringing up wire to fence him in.

Mr Peel said winning the Golden Dampier with his own work was a huge thrill.

"It was a big honour, having my name alongside great bush poets and competing against the New South Wales and Queensland champions," he said.

"It's one of the most prestigious awards, probably more so than the nationals, because it's at Tamworth during the festival."

Mr Peel started bush poetry at primary school in NSW and is a founding member of Ballarat's Eureka Bush Baladeers.

He said his ultimate aim was a completion of his work to be published.

THE FENCE OFF

© John Peel Ballarat V. 15/7/07

From a farm in western Victoria, in the midst of the mallee scrub,
Not too far from a one-horse town with a tiny run-down pub,
Where the paddocks are mostly brown and dry, with barely a hint of green,
Came the most unlikely champion the world has ever seen.

Now the bloke who owned this piece of land was a farmer known as Bill.
It was here that he worked tirelessly to hone his greatest skill,
And overall, he had ten thousand acres on his run
Which meant that there was always stacks of fencing to be done.

When Bill erected fences, the wires ran straight and true,
His posts were always vertical, with perfect spacing too.
When he strained the wires to tension, he'd never had one break
And he did the job quite rapidly, without a sole mistake.

Now Bill enjoyed a beer or two occasionally in town
And one hot night, just after he had knocked a couple down,
His mate called 'Blue' said, "Did you know that fencing is a sport?"
Bill answered, "No," then sipped his beer and sat there deep in thought.

"Well it says so in the paper," the reply he got from 'Blue',
"And I reckon that there wouldn't be a bloke can fence like you."
Bill thought some more before he said, "I ought to chance my arm,
Taking on the sports elite won't do me any harm.

So 'Blue' got up and made it known to everyone in town
That Bill was keen to duel against a fencer of renown
And then he stated, just before the crowd began to clap,
That, "Bill can make our one-horse town a landmark on the map."

So they contacted the 'Herald Sun', in Melbourne, that next day
And the paper sent a journalist to see them straight away.
People told him that, "Our Bill's the best," in all his interviews
And 'Bill the Fencing Farmer' made the back page sporting news.

A promoter read the story and he got in touch with Bill,
He informed him that, "The time has come to show the world your skill,
For I've arranged a date and place for you to have a chance
To battle with the champion, who's all the way from France.

So Bill went into training for his championship debut,
Not just on his own farm, but on neighb'ring places too.
He built a fence for everything from deer to chooks and cattle,
'Til finally, the day arrived to fight the champ in battle.

The centre court at Kooyong was the venue that they chose,
And Bill turned up with posts and wire and dressed in farming clothes,
With a ten-pound sledge, a strainer and some tools for working soil.
His opponent came in armour, with a regulation foil.

The crowd was full of country blokes, who came in Holden utes,
As well as that, there were toffy gents, who dressed in ties and suits.
And just before the duel began, Bill heard the crowd applaud,
Then saw that he was up against a joker with a sword.

Bill grabbed himself a star-post, when the duel got underway,
He figured he could use it best to keep the champ at bay.
The champion made a thrust at Bill, who somehow parried back,
This stunned Bill into action and he went on the attack.

Bill banged the champ with the star-post and knocked him to the ground,
With one blow each, he planted half a dozen more around
The fallen fencer, and he gained the upper hand,
When he strung and strained the wires, before the champ could stand.

2008 AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2008 Australian Bush Poetry Championships (22-24 August) will offer the best bush poets in Australia in a comfortable, modern venue, a warm friendly welcome from the North Pine Bush Poets and easy access to some of south-east Queensland's top tourist attractions. For information about accommodation go to www.abpa.org.au or phone (07)3285 2180 or 0419 707 385.

At the local station you take a train to take you to the heart of the Brisbane Ekka (8-15 August) or one to take you to Brisbane's Southbank parklands where you can view Brisbane from the river cruising on a City Cat, enjoy ethnic food in a riverside restaurant or investigate the new Gallery of Modern Art or the Museum.

Or you can catch the train north to the Australia Zoo for the day (just check with the Zoo that your train will be met by a courtesy coach). Alternatively you can drive about three-quarters of an hour to the Zoo, getting a good view of Tibrogargan, the old man of the Glasshouse Mountains, looming over the Steve Irwin Way.

Not far north from here are the tourist towns of Maleny and Montville, with waterfalls and short rainforest walks nearby. There are also magnificent panoramic views of the Sunshine Coast with its beautiful rivers, beaches and headlands a short distance to the east.



If you're looking for a bush camping spot for a short stay, the bellbirds' sounds can be heard all day when camped at Harvey Moreland Park, off the road to Kenilworth.

Living in the little town of Mooloolah in this region is an 86 year old member of the North Pine Bush Poets, Mary Hodgson. (see photo) who is the co-ordinator of the 2008 Australian Bush Poetry Championships Written Competition.

Mary was a dairy-farmer's daughter who rode to school. She was in the A.W.A.S during WW2, a teacher in various places in Queensland for many years, and later on a teacher in the Northern Territory, in a mining town, in an indigenous community, and on the School of the Air in Katherine. She was a whiz at tennis and danced every week till a couple of years ago.

She loves bush poetry and regularly drives to North Pine (as well as to Woodford and Kilcoy) from Mooloolah. She recites and has been placed in competitions in recent times. The North Pine Bush Poets are grateful to Mary for her work in coordinating written competitions, a position she has filled several times previously.

For information about the Written Competition and the Performance Competition, see the half-page advertisement on page 15.



GRAEME JOHNSON

Graeme Johnson first came upon Bush Poets at the Australian Bush Music Festival in Glen Innes in 1995.

Fast forward to 2008 and Graeme's performing persona, "*The Rhymer from Ryde*" has taken over his life.

Poetry obsesses his every waking hour, and spare time, when available, is consumed by research, writing & learning new work. He has become one of the most widely known Bush Poets in the land and has amassed a bevy of awards, both written & spoken, for the quality of his work. He has also been accredited by the Australian Bush Poets Association as a judge for written competitions.

He has won the prestigious Banjo Paterson Writing Awards 2004 (for Bush Poetry), the John Dunmore Lang Poetry Prize and been runner up in both the Henry Lawson Society of NSW Adult Literary Prize and Leonard Teal Memorial Spoken Word Award. He has also been a top 10 finalist in the Australian Bush Poetry Championships on many occasions.

His more recent successes include a 3rd place in the "*Blackened Billy*" written section at the Tamworth Country Music Festival 2008. Prior to that he picked up a first in the Brisbane Show Competition in 2007 as well as winning the Henry Lawson Adult Literary Award in the same year.

Also an accomplished MC and Stage Manager in his own right, Graeme's performances are renowned for their vibrancy, humour and heartfelt emotion. In the true larrikin style his reciting covers everything from the silly to the serious, Traditional to Contemporary and most definitely Original.

It was truly brilliant workmanship that Bill had put on show
And the champion ran out of time to try and land a blow.
The officials were unanimous, declaring it a win,
'Cause 'Bill the Fencing Farmer' had 'fenced the fencer in'.

The crowd all stood and clapped and cheered, all very much impressed
That a humble Aussie farmer had won against the best.
In terms of being champion, Bill earned himself the crown
And there were weeks of celebration in the little one-horse town.

And these days in the one-horse town, Bill's statue's in the park
And in the world of fencing, he had truly left his mark,
For though he duelled just once before deciding to retire,
There are fencers now who've downed their foils to fight with posts and wire.

THE SENTIMENTAL BLOKE

Of all the wonderful writings of CJ Dennis, *The Songs of the Sentimental Bloke* is perhaps the best loved.

The Bloke was an immediate success when first published in 1915 selling over 66,000 copies in 18 months. In 1919 it was made into a film starring Raymond Longford and Lottie Lyell.

In 1973 and original negative of the film sent to America in 1921 was found in the vaults of George Eastman House in America, it's true identity obscured for many years by the mislabelling of its six cans of negative as *The Sentimental Blonde*.

A screening of the Sentimental Bloke was shown at the National Folk Festival Canberra courtesy of the National Film and Sound Archives of Australia.

2008 SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2008 South Australian Bush Poetry Championships will again be held in conjunction with the South Australian Country Music Festival in Barmera (31st May – 9th June).

There will be State Championship competitions in both performance and written sections.

The performance championships will be held in the Barmera RSL hall on 7th June, and will be conducted under the guidelines of the ABPA. Prizes for the first three places in the open performance section will be \$150, \$50 and & \$25. Certificates will also be given to each place winner. Poets will be required to perform a traditional poem and also an original serious poem and a humorous original poem. (An entry fee of \$5 for each poem is required).

A prize of \$100 will also be awarded to the highest performing South Australian poet, who will gain the title of SA State champion.

Performance entries will be accepted up to the evening of 6th June.

The written competition, for the title of SA Bush Poetry Champion (written), is an open event for original verse having good rhyme and meter. Previously published poetry

THE LEGEND KEEPS COMING BACK

The following letter was published in the Catholic Weekly, 2nd March 2008.

“NOT ‘the’ MAN.

Having read Yarn Spinners and bush poets and Man from Snowy River (CW Feb 3) I feel compelled to set one thing right. Fr Patrick Hartigan (aka John O'Brien) may well have taken the last sacraments to Jack Riley of Bringebroong but the latter was certainly not *“The Man from Snowy River”*.

I am an old lady and have always loved poetry. In 1939 I bought the book *The Man from Snowy River* by A.B. Paterson.

Recently I retrieved the book out of some old treasures and noticed that I had pasted in the book a newspaper cutting beside the Snowy River poem. I remember doing that but didn't put the date.

The letter was sent in by a HB Paterson (AIF), the son of AB Paterson.

He was sorry, he wrote, to contradict the many people who had other views but that his father had told him on a number of occasions that there really was no such man as “the man from snowy river” and in fact – his Dad added – he could not remember any definite incident which gave him the original idea.

On one occasion someone had actually written to AB Paterson and asked him to compose an epitaph for a monument to a local celebrity who “was the real man.”

Needless to say he declined.
G. Heffernan,
Mittagong, NSW.”

[Printed with kind permission from Kerry Myers, Managing Editor, Catholic Weekly.]

AB Paterson married Alice Emily Walker of Tenterfield on 8 April 1903. Their daughter Grace was born in 1904 and a son Hugh Barton Paterson was born in 1906. The Paterson's lived at 'West Hall' in Queen Street Woollahra (Sydney) at the time.

Banjo's poem, 'The Man from Snowy River' was published in the Bulletin on 26th April 1890. The poem received wide acclaim and is, indeed, 'a household word today'.

'The Man' was a fictional character, and Paterson made that plain, saying that he did not intend to describe any one man or incident. (ref. AB Paterson Complete Works 1885-1900 p.xxiii, in the introduction written by his Granddaughters Rosamund Campbell and Phillipa Harvie, Sydney 1983)



Pictured left. Ros Campbell and Phillipa Harvie at the unveiling of the AB 'Banjo' Paterson memorial, Orange NSW 2002



that has not won a first prize in any written competition will be accepted. An entry fee of \$5 per poem is required (up to 3 poems).

The prizes for the written section are: 1st \$150, 2nd \$100 and third \$50. Certificates will also be awarded. SA Bush Poets acknowledge the generosity of Peter & Heather Chapman Carpentry and Joinery (0885577151) for their

sponsorship of this event.

Entries date stamped no later than 30th April will be accepted.

The written competition will be announced at the performance championships on the 7th June.

Please apply for entry forms for each section by mail to: The President, SA Bush Poets, PO Box 134, Owen, SA 5460.

BUSH POETS AT BOWRAVILLE THEATRE

Arguably one of Australia's most talented and successful writers and performance bush bards, Roderick Williams and his Bonza Blue Dog, Jessie, will feature at this year's Bush Poets Soiree at Bowraville Theatre on Saturday, 2nd August at 1.30 pm.

The performance will begin with a 'Welcome to Country' by Gumbaynggir man, Gary Williams, of Nambucca Heads, who has known Rod for many years.

Born in Lismore, Rod's childhood was spent working hard on the family farm amongst horses, cattle and in banana plantations and his early working life included time timber cutting, post splitting, fencing, as a saw mill worker, stockman and later as a professional shearer and actor.

Scoring top-tallies in these two main professions, Rod is proud of his ability and staunchness within the shearing industry as well as for his nomination for Best Actor in the prestigious Victorian Greenroom Awards for Australian Professional Stage Performers in 1988.

Committed to Australia's indigenous people, he travelled to Wattie Creek, N.T., to Wave Hill station in 1970 and worked and fought beside Vincent Lingiari and The Gurindji Tribe, to win back the rightful ownership of their land.

He began writing seriously in 1998



Rod Williams and Jesse

and these life experiences equipped him well to become one of Australia's most lyrical and highly descriptive writers of Australian Bush Poetry. His performance experience as a professional actor also provides exceptional entertainment.

His successes include a NSW Performance Championship in 2005, 3 wins and several placements in the sections of the prestigious Tamworth Bush Poetry Championships, and has received innumerable awards at other performance and written competitions throughout the country.

During his shows he also accompanies himself on guitar, singing original and traditional Australian bush songs.

His deep love of children has seen him develop two special Department of Education approved programs for Primary and Secondary school children during which he is accompanied by his best mate, Jessie, who adds to the delight of the young audiences.

His book, 'Frogs, Dogs and Kids' was awarded the 2003 Golden Gumleaf Award for Book of the Year in the Australian Bush Laureate Awards in Tamworth and he has recently released a CD of this book.

His book and CD, "Travel the Red Road" were finalists in 2002 and 2005. He has also added another book, "Forest of Dreams and Other Journeys of the Red Road".

Aspiring bush poets of all ages are also welcome to share their work on the day and they can either read or recite their verse or that of another author.

Entry is \$8.00 and all funds raised will contribute to Phase III of this historic theatre's improvements, a building extension which will provide much needed dressing rooms for performers.

Devonshire teas, snacks, tea and coffee will be available during interval from the Theatre Café.

Bowraville Theatre is located in High Street where we will look forward to the pleasure of your company for this afternoon of very Australian entertainment.

All enquiries to Dorothy Evans, Phone 6564 7828.

Photo courtesy of Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth.

Submitted by Dorothy Evans for and on behalf of Bowraville Theatre

CASINO NSW BUSHMAN'S HERITAGE WEEKEND 15th,16th,17th August

The Casino Motorhome Village is situated on the south side of Casino, NSW, on what was the local airport; decommissioned over 6 years ago it is now open for all light planes, gliders, ultra lights etc.

The village concept is the first in Australia for all types of R.V.'s to stop overnight, a week, or live in ensuite sites whilst traveling around our beautiful country. With over 300 acres of land, some has been made over to cottages and manufactured homes with

room for Motor-homes along-side.

The park includes a pool, a club house, free movies in a hangar that has carpet bowls, darts, 8 ball and table tennis for all, plus, outside, a pitch and putt golf course. Regular activities include craft, woodwork, line-dancing, dining in the club house, cards and happy hour in the free BBQ hut.

The surrounding areas are beautiful for day trips to the Border Ranges, Nightcap National Park, Richmond Ranges, Tamborine National Park and many more, with only an hour's drive to Evan's Head, Iluka, Yamba and Byron Bay.

Casino is cattle country and part of the rich Northern Rivers district, lying on the banks of the Richmond River in The Richmond Valley.

The village hosts many and varied

events during the year, including the Poet's Weekend in August to be hosted by Gary Fogarty assisted by Marco Gliori, Ray Essery and others well known to the bush poets fraternity.

An open amateur afternoon will be just part of the celebrations with the stage available for walk-up poets, yarn-spinners, singers and musicians with the best and most popular to be adjudged by the audience and the professionals, with a trophy included in the prizes.

There will be a Bush Poets Breakfast and a writing workshop which will include such topics as publishing and recording.

Make it one day or three, there will be no admission charges to the poetry events.

go to p. 21

GHOSTS IN AN OLD HOUSE

© VP Read - Bicton WA

Winner: Scribblers Competition 2007

The old house looked pathetic as it crouched upon the hill;
no sign of habitation, and the place was quiet and still.
The grey stone walls were crumbling,

and the window panes were smashed;
the wire-strand fence was twisted,
and the rusty roof was gashed.

It made me feel despondent when I felt its sad despair,
but as I turned to walk away, soft voices called me there.

Was it imagination? Did I hear the old house call?
Did children's laughter echo from the long-deserted hall?
Those shadows at the window –

were they ghosts from long ago?"
Or were the gentle breezes causing memories to flow?
My family were the people who once lived upon this land;
those wonderful old pioneers who'd built this station grand.

Here's where I spent my childhood
when that house was just a shack;
two bedrooms and a kitchen and a bough shed out the back
where Mum would do the washing,

and then all us kids as well;
on chilly winter mornings, Oh!
You should have heard us yell
as we were scrubbed from head to toe
with bars of Velvet soap;
to dodge the day's ablutions, we just never had a hope.

Our family lived by Holy rule; no other law applied;
we owed allegiance to God,

then husband to his bride.
And we were taught that kith and kin
came first without a doubt;
that friends and neighbours got respect,
from boss to rouseabout.

At night we'd sit and read our books
in golden lantern light,
while frenzied moths died horribly in kamikaze flight.

I hated work upon the farm,
those endless, dreary shores
of milking cows and feeding chooks,

then tending to the bores;
of clearing land and carting rocks;
of ploughing sandy soil;

I thought I'd find much better work
than all that thankless toil.

And so I rolled my swag one night,
and left without a care;
I never saw this place again; I wandered everywhere.

And now I've come back to my roots
and tears are falling free
as from the shadow's depths

I hear my loved ones calling me.
I feel a hand upon my face and hear a gentle sigh;
I know my mother's standing here, and I begin to cry.
Oh, how I wish I'd never gone to chase a pot of gold
when all the riches of this earth

were mine within this fold.

GOOD HEALTH

from Dr. Lance Parker



THE PHONE RINGS!

'Mrs. Ward Please.'

'Speaking.'

'Mrs. Ward, this is Dr. Jones from the Medical Testing Laboratory. When your doctor sent your husband's biopsy to the lab yesterday, a biopsy from another Mr. Ward arrived as well, and we are now uncertain which one is your husbands. Frankly, the results are either bad or terrible.'

'What do you mean?' Mrs. Ward asked nervously.

'Well, one of the specimens tested positive for Alzheimer's', and the other one tested positive for A.I.D.S. We can't tell which one is your husbands.'

'That's dreadful! Can you do the test again?' questioned Mrs. Ward.

'Normally we can, but Medicare will only pay for those expensive tests one time.'

'Well, what am I supposed to do now?'

'The people at Medicare are recommending that you drop your husband off somewhere in the middle of town. If he finds his way home, don't sleep with him!'

TO JOHN O'BRIEN

© John Dengate at Narrandera 14.3.2008

As I sit on the pub verandah, sharing a glass of wine,
I look out over Narrandera and I think of you, John O'Brien.
You've been dead for two generations, but though in the clay
you lie,

Among people of two great nations, your writing will never
die.

I feel fire burn in my belly, for though my old beards turned
grey,

My mothers name is Kelly...and it's almost Saint Patrick's
day!

You lived as a priest and a writer, yours was a voice unique
A humorist, a prelate, a fighter.. from the pages I hear you
speak.

I see them now : old man Carey and all the Carey clan;
Golden haired laughing Mary.. I see the old mass Shandry-
dan;

I feel your faith on those pages, a faith that I much admire-
Your verses will live down the ages for they're filled with a
Celtic fire.

The Irish Australians.. God bless them (and old Father Har-
tigan's pen!)

No trials could defeat or depress them.. there were never
such women and men!

While ever the southern cross blazes, while ever the sham-
rock is seen,

We'll sing Father Hartigan's praises and be true to the gold
and the green

John Dengate 14/3/2008 (Verandah of Murrumbidgee pub, Narrandera)

BUSH POETS VISIT AMERICA



Milton Taylor of Hartley, NSW and Jennifer Haig, of Eulo, Qld., recently traveled to North America to perform bush poetry in a variety of venues throughout the West. Both began their tour in Colorado, where they participated in a "school outreach" program. Along with American cowboy singer/songwriter and humorist Pop Wagner, they performed in twelve schools throughout the Denver area. They then took part in the Colorado Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Arvada, where they joined more than thirty other poets and musicians for a three-day festival featuring performers from eleven states and one Canadian province.

Following that event, Taylor and Haig toured through the Southwest with cowboy poet Dick Warwick, an Australian folk and poetry festivals. They visited Santa Fe, New Mexico, did some hiking around Sedona, Arizona, and spent a day at the San Diego Zoo in Southern California. They also dipped



south of the border for an afternoon of shopping in Tijuana, Mexico. They spent seven hours beating their way through the Los Angeles megalopolis at rush hour during a heavy rainstorm, then experienced a presage of things to come when the major north-south freeway, Interstate 5, was closed by snow just north of LA. The next morning they were able to find an alternate route north, enabling them to arrive in Merced in time to perform at a private party to which they had earlier committed.

They visited South Lake Tahoe, on the California-Nevada border, where Milton and Jennifer took the gondola to the top of the Heavenly ski slope. They also toured the old mining town of Virginia City, then bolted for Elko, Nevada, arriving there for the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering just ahead of a series of snowstorms that severely inconvenienced and delayed later travelers. Both Taylor and Haig were featured on the bill for the week-long event, the oldest and most prestigious cowboy poetry festival in North America.



Jennifer and Milton continued a tradition begun in 1990, when a number of Australian poets, including Ted Egan, Marion Fitzgerald, Nerys Evans, Bill Gunn, Ranald Chandler, and Bruce Forbes Simpson journeyed to Elko, providing many Americans with their first taste of bush poetry. Since then more than a dozen Aussies have attended the event, where they are perennial favorites. Their recitations have, over the years, had a positive effect on both the writing and on-stage presentations of their American counterparts. Both Haig and Taylor were a credit to the craft of bush poetry and to Australia during their visit to America, where their flawless performances earned rave reviews



ABPA correspondent for this article, Dick Warwick of Oakesdale, Washington USA, has visited Australia on four occasions in the last twenty years.

Restricted to time on these visits he still managed to take in a good number bush poetry venues some of which included Illawarra, Canberra, Port Fairy, Winton, Canowindra and Corryong festivals.

Dick is a farmer, a cowboy poet and a number-one host to Australian poets when in America.

and a cadre of fans.

Haig returned to Australia after Elko, while Taylor and Warwick proceeded north through Oregon and Idaho to the state of Washington. Both were suffering from influenza by the time they arrived at the Warwick farm near Oakesdale. They were flat on their backs for more than a week, while howling snowstorms blocked roads with five-foot drifts, making travel, even down the driveway, impossible for days. By the time snowplows pushed the roads open, Taylor and Warwick had recovered enough to perform shows in one school and four public venues, including a theater appearance with Canadian Doris Daley, the Academy of Western Artists Female Poet of the Year. That was Taylor's last show of the tour, leaving him out of CDs and ready for the feel of Australian soil, after more than seven weeks in America.

Pictures: Milton Taylor
Mark Twain, Dick Warwick and Jennifer Haig
Pop Wagner and Jennifer Haig
Dick Warwick

LONGYARD LEGENDS

1992

Gertrude Skinner spent much of her life as a bushman's wife and raised her family on out-back properties. She retired to Tamworth where she wrote her first poem at the age of seventy-two. She has written everything from gospel songs to poetry about the hardship of the old bush life but is perhaps best known for her humorous classics such as *'That Avocado'*. A great character, she produced books and tapes of her poetry, appeared at festivals and on TV and radio and was a much-loved performer at the Longyard Poetry Festivals in June and January. Elected June 1992.



1992

Charlee Marshall was born in the great depression and raised around Rockhampton, Queensland. He won numerous awards for his poetry including several Banjo Paterson Awards and worked tirelessly to keep isolated writers in touch with one another from his home in Thangool, Central Queensland. A familiar figure at Poetry gatherings and Folk Festivals Charlee published a collection of verse as well as a collection of cricket stories. He was acclaimed, 'Liar of the Week' by the other poets at the first Bush Poets' Breakfast Festival held at the Longyard in January 1991. Elected June 1992.



1992

Mark Gliori is a Queensland who represented the new wave of young Bush Poets. He had a distinctive style of narration with a strong rhythm and a good ear for the vocabulary and speech patterns of the bush.



Mark won major awards for both original poetry and traditional recitation and performs in schools for the Arts Council and organised poetry events for the Folk Federation. In true bush tradition his verse varies from the sentimental and stirring to the hilarious. Mark launched his first book of poetry, *'The Cakemaker's Revenge'* at the Longyard in January 1992. Elected June 1992.

1993

Marion Fitzgerald spent all her life on the black soil plains of Northwest N.S.W. so it is not surprising that her very original poetry was written from the point of view of various farm animals. Her spirited recitation of this poetry led to her winning two major awards at Tamworth in 1988 and 1989 and being chosen to represent Australian Bush Poetry at the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Nevada U.S.A. in 1990. Marion published two collections of her verse and drawings, *'Among Udder Things'* and *'Some More Udder Nonsense'*. She made her recording debut at the Longyard in 1991 on the album *'The Bush Poets - Live!'* Elected June 1993.



After a lapse of ten years the once popular Poets Wall of Renown has been re-established at the Longyard Hotel.

Annually at the Fireside Festival held in June each year, bush poets were inducted acknowledging their contribution to bush poetry with eighteen poets added to the list up until 1998.

The ABL Awards were introduced in January 1996 at the Longyard, but because of crowd numbers, that ceremony eventually found a new home at the Tamworth Town Hall.

From 1998 the photographic display was discontinued and eventually removed from the Goonoo Goonoo room into storage.

The Gallery will be replaced and will include Photographs of the 2008 inductees Ellis Campbell and the Naked Poets.

This issue of the ABPA Magazine sees the start of a long list of inductees since 1992 and will continue on with ensuing issues.

Each short bio is relevant to the inductee up to the time of election.

Longyard Breakfasts

The famous Longyard Hotel in Tamworth has added another nine days to its impressive eighteen years as the home of Bush Poetry in Tamworth.

2008 had one of the strongest line-ups ever with favourites, Ray Essery, John Lloyd, Melanie Hall, Neil McArthur, Marco Gliori and Maggi (the bush nurse) Swain-Daly and invited guests Frank Daniel, Kathryn Kelly, Tom Curtain and Lance Friend keeping the audience in fits of laughter with generous servings of traditional Australiana.

Longyard Legends 2008

After a lapse of ten years, the once very popular 'Poets Wall of Renown' had a welcome revival this year with the induction of Ellis Campbell and the 'Naked Poets'.

Ellis, for his continued successes in over three hundred written competitions, his contribution to writers workshops and his column 'Writers' Tips', which appeared in this magazine (now to be found on the ABPA Website www.abpa.org.au); and the 'Naked Poets', as a group, for taking bush poetry to new audiences na-

1993

Murray Hartin was born and raised in the Moree district. Urged on by some rugby mates he entered and won the Original section of the first Bush Poetry Competition held at the Longyard Hotel (1987). Murray subsequently stayed on in Tamworth as a reporter on the regional newspaper, The Northern Daily Leader. Always keen sportsman and observer of human behaviour, his poetry varies from social commentary to unbelievably tall tales. He has toured Australia as a Bush Poet and poetry from his book, *'A Few Quiet Words'*, has been featured on national radio programmes such as the Alan Jones Show. Murray has been a popular part of Bush Poetry at The Longyard right from the start. Elected June 1993.



1993

John Philipson was born in Leeton in the Riverina, developed a love of Australian Poetry as a kid in the thirties, and has been reciting and spinning yarns ever since. He worked in a variety of rural



industries as an orchardist, wheat and rice grower, cattle farmer, farm goods salesman and for the Department of Agriculture on the brucellosis eradication scheme. John won the Traditional section of the first Bush Poetry Competition held at The Longyard and has played a vital part in the poetry events there ever since. He made many bus tours around Australia as resident story teller and reciter for Hannaford's Coaches. Elected June 1993.

1993

Jim Haynes claims to be from the mythical town of Weelabarabak. Others say he was raised on the shores of Botany Bay and went bush as a young man. He taught in outback schools, sold sapphires, worked in radio, pursued an academic career and taught Literature, Writing and Drama. As a professional entertainer, Bush Poet and songwriter he toured extensively in Australia and overseas. He was special guest at the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Nevada USA in 1993, appeared at Expo'92 in Spain and organized and hosted the Bush Poets' Breakfasts and Fireside Festival at The Longyard since their inception. He recorded several albums of songs and poems on the EMI label. Elected June 1993.



OASIS BUSH POETS

'The Bangtail Muster' is one of the highlights of the bush poetry held each year at the Oasis Hotel during Country Music Week in Tamworth.

It is run over three days and adjudged by the audience using voting cards. Those voting place their phone numbers on the reverse side of these cards to become part of the draw for a magnificent Citizen Wall clock; the winner this year being Dee Clifford.

The 'Bangtail Muster' is organized by Garry Cullen and Barbara Groves who have enticed quite a few supporting sponsors including Kakadu Australia, Akubra Hats, Hiscock's Saddlery, Ian Harold Boots and Citizen watches.

'The Old Fella', John Norman of Pottsville NSW, won the Bruce Bloggs

Memorial Trophy taking home two gold watches. Denis Scanlon won the Ian Harold Boots for 'all over excellence' as well as two gold watches for winning the Poets Brawl.

Shirley Everingham won herself a new Akubra hat and Mike, 'The Living Poet' won the Kakadu oil skin for the poem with the most Australian Theme.

Garry and Barbara wish to extend to all the contestants, poets, singers and musicians their heartiest congratulations and thanks for making the competition another big success and are looking forward to an even bigger event next year.

John Norman, the 2005 winner, was also a finalist in the TSA 'Australian Salute Awards' and Manfred Vijars of Morning-side won the *lyrics only* section of the songwriters competition.



Garry Cullen



Neil MacArthur

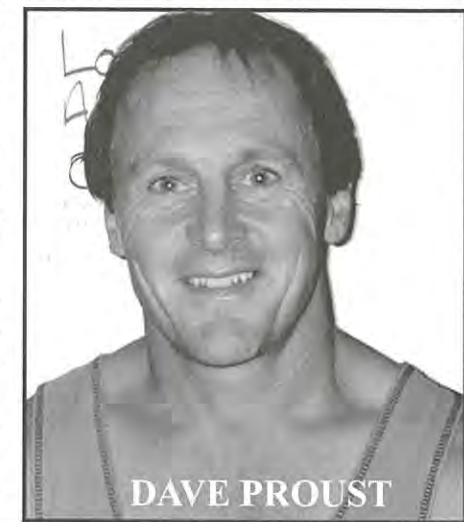
NEW COMEDY SHOW

A new show format came into being at Tamworth this year with the continuing merging of poets and musicians, and none better than the Country Comedy show which ran for seven days at the Hog's Breath Café.

It was the brainchild of madcap Adam Kilpatrick, who invited Dave Proust, Laura Downing and Neil McArthur to join him in an hilarious two hours of Stand-up, knock-'em-down entertainment. Once word started to spread the venue was booked out for most mornings of the festival and is a definite to return bigger and better in 2009.

As performance poetry continues to grow and satisfies newer audiences, so too does Country Music. The Hog's

Breath was a great success and according to Neil, one of the funniest shows at which he has ever performed.



DAVE PROUST



From the Editor:

When advising new writers I always stress the importance of 'workshopping' poetry over and over again. Editing is so important, but I slipped up on page 7 in the February issue with an article about CJ Dennis. In particular, one that I had lifted from another source, believing it to be correct and not realising the error. It will teach me to stick to my old pattern of rewriting each story before publication.

Two readers, quick off the mark to let me know, were John Peel and Greg North.

Greg especially delighted in letting me know because only a few days before I 'chipped' him for two spelling mistakes in a letter I received from him. 'Typos' he calls them.

Ballarat's John Peel, of course, was more precise offering quotes from *'The Sentimental Bloke'*.

It's obvious that the writer, who's notes I copied, doesn't read his own material, because the *'Bloke'* does have a name - it is 'Bill'.

John wrote: "In the first book of the series, *'The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke'*, there are two poems at least that give this fact away. *'Doreen'* and *'Mar'* are the two examples that I have seen this in."

"Doreen", opens with the stanza:
"I wish 't yeh meant it, Bill."
and continues to call him by name in other stanzas.

"In the poem *'Mar'*, his name is revealed in stanza eleven when Mar invites him to *'...Some more tea, Willy? 'Ave another cup'* - to which the bloke objects with

"Willy! O 'ell! 'Ere wus a flamin' pill!

*A moniker that abvus makes me ill,
'If it's the same to you, mum,' I replies,*

"I answer quicker to the name of Bill."

Thank you John and Greg - I appreciated your comments and was more than pleased that we have at least two dedicated readers of the magazine.

[ps. I knew his name was Bill, but I'll have a hard time convincing anyone after this.]



MOLLY SPARKS of Kyabram V reports that an Australia Day poets breakfast and competition was held at Neerim in conjunction with its Agricultural and Horticultural Show.

Molly and Johnno Johnson were invited to attend by some poets they met at the big Mildura Music Festival last September, so they decided to make a long weekend of it and had a great time of it as well. There was no entry fees payable and a free sausage sizzle with bacon and egg for the competitors

Of the many categories were sections for Best Read and Best Original (*read or recited*) with ribbons for the placegetters and trophies for the best overall presentations.

Special guests were Ed Walker (2006 Victorian Champion) and Doug Burns. Johnno added a blue ribbon to his swag of prizes and Molly took out 'seconds' and a Best Overall Presentation.

Eddie Dalton of Oakleigh Vic. has advised that Australian Unity in association with the Australian Natives' Association and the Henry Lawson Memorial and Literary Society is inviting submissions of original bush poetry to be considered for the inaugural Australian Unity Bryan Kelleher Literary Award with \$2,350 in prize-money..

Bryan Kelleher was a long-standing member of Australian Unity, was active in the community and passionate about acknowledging and honouring Australian achievements. It will be the Unity's way of celebrating and preserving the substantial contribution Bryan made during his long association with Australian Unity and the Henry Lawson Society. Entries close on 30th June 2008. (See Calendar Updates page 20)

BEST SELLERS RECORDS BROKEN

Over 1000 copies of Neil Hulm's latest book, *'Aussie Country Comedy'* have been sold at Collins Booksellers, Albury, NSW.

Kristen Brill of Lavington bought the 1,000th book and was presented with six of Neil's hanging posters and also a

sizable voucher from Collins Booksellers.

Collins proprietors, John and Judy Hudson said Neil played a large part in the sales of *'Aussie Country Comedy'*, his thirteenth book. This is an all-time record which has never happened before. We have never sold anywhere near this number of the one title!!!".

Mr. Hudson continued, "It is not unusual for Neil to sell up to forty books in one day as he sits at the front of the store, striking up conversations with potential buyers. The book appeals to a whole range of people. Comments made include, 'great for Father's Day', 'fantastic, we love it!!!"

'Aussie Country Comedy', which went on sale in March 2005, is now in its 5th print".

Mr. Hudson concluded, "Neil has got the time, but his book has also got the broad appeal and of course it's got the humour!!" The book is available from Neil at 361 Cheyenne Drive, Lavington NSW 2641 and is priced at \$15.00 pp.

From Mid-April Victorian Poette **Carol Reffold** will be stationed at the Gilbert Tourist Resort in Cloncurry until the end of May - then moving to the Copper City Caravan park in Mt Isa for all of June and July.

Carol extends an open invitation to all travelling members of the ABPA to come in and make themselves known to her and maybe take the opportunity to join in the fun around the campfire and say a couple of poems.

SYDNEY POETS TAKE NOTE a meeting will take place at 12noon on Saturday 3rd May in the Auditorium of the Carnavan Golf Club at Notting Hill Road, Lidcombe, to discuss using this venue for regular poetry meetings.

Sydney based poets and others are cordially invited.

It is hoped that poets, performers and readers will attend so that the spoken word will not only be kept alive but also spread much further afield.

Those wishing to attend should contact Billy 'Lobo' Lasham on 0410 560 939

Popular poet and performer **'Johnno' Johnson** is recuperating after a months sojourn in Kyabram and Shepparton hospitals with a string of things wrong with him that we haven't the space to redord. Johnno, we missed you at Narrandera and will be sad that you can't make it to Corryong as well.





Introducing
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Ellem
 of Murrumba Downs Brisbane Qld. Barry and Cay (formerly Cay Fletcher of Taree) were married early in February and have been enjoying their honeymoon touring NSW and Victoria catching up on their many friends along the way and taking in Dunedoo and Narrandera poetry competitions as well.

Good luck Barry and Cay from the
 ABPA Inc.



Banjo the brave:

Scottish tribute to Matilda poet

Children from a small village in Scotland have joined forces with the NSW town of Yeoval to honour Banjo Paterson, the man who wrote *Waltzing Matilda*.

Rocks collected by pupils from Carmichael Primary School in South Lanarkshire are being shipped to Australia to help build a cairn to commemorate the legendary poet.

Banjo's parents emigrated from Carmichael to Australia in 1850 and he was born and raised on the family's Buckinbah Farm, near Yeoval.

In 1895, at the age of 31, he wrote *Waltzing Matilda*, setting it to music based on the Scottish song *Thou Bonnie Wood of Craigielea*.

The idea of the cairn came from Alf Cantrell of Yeoval Historical Society, which has made the town a destination for Banjo fans. A museum has been created and there is now an annual fes-

tival in his memory.

Mr. Cantrell said: 'Banjo was a great Australian, a great man and he had a connection with Yeoval and Scotland so it seemed a good idea to build a cairn.'

Children collected stones from the Buckinbah farm on the same day as the children in Scotland collected their stones.

The cairn, an ancient Scottish tradition for marking burial sites, will be built using both sets of stones.



2008 ABPA
AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
 hosted by
The North Pine Bush Poets Group QUEENSLAND
22nd, 23rd & 24th August 2008



Written Verse Competitions

CLOSING DATE 11th July 2008

OPEN SECTION 1st Prize \$500 and Trophy

2nd Prize \$300 3rd Prize \$100

Adult fees are \$10 per poem or 3 for \$20

Entries with fees must be posted to the coordinator.

Mary Hodgson, 37 Mooloolah Rd. Mooloolah Qld, 4553

JUNIOR SECTION

Primary Secondary

First Prize \$50 \$100

Second Prize \$30 \$60

Third Prize \$20 \$40

Entries (Free for Juniors) must be posted to:

Junior Written Judge, Noel Stallard,
 PO Box 131 Arana Hills 4054 Qld.

ALL Entry Forms

http://www.abpa.org.au/Bush_Poetry/Championships/Australian_Bush_Poets_Championships_2008.html

Accommodation: http://www.abpa.org.au/championship_files/aust/2008/Accommodation.pdf

Further information: SSAE - The Secretary
 M Vijars PO Box 701 Morningside QLD. 4170.

Or manfred@rocketfrog.com.au

Performance Verse Competitions

CLOSING DATE 11th AUGUST 2008

\$1000 prize money plus trophy

to overall Male and Female Australian Champions

Total prizes exceeds \$7,000

NEW VENUE (All Events) - **CLUB PINE RIVERS**
 Cnr Sparkes & Francis Road BRAY PARK Qld. (North Brisbane)

Categories: Junior and Novice

Open Male and Female

('Classical' - 'Modern' - 'Original Serious' - 'Original Humorous')

Entry Fees \$10 each category (Juniors Free)

Billy Hay Memorial Yarn-spinning Trophy - Entry Fee \$5

Novelty Events:

Duos - One Minute Poem (time Permitting) - Open mic sessions

Friday Night - Poet's Brawl - (gold coin entry at door)

Saturday Night - Gala Concert - Bookings Essential

Phone Club Pine Rivers on 07 3205 2677

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ABPA INC. 24TH JANUARY, 2008. ST. EDWARDS HALL, HILLVUE ROAD, TAMWORTH

Meeting opened at 2.10 p.m. One minutes silence observed in remembrance of deceased members and relatives.

APOLOGIES: Dennis Scanlon. Evan Schnalle, Vic Jefferies. Paddy O'Brien. Glori O'Brien.

Attendance – as per attendance book. (31 members)

Confirmation of minutes of 2007 AGM (m) E. Parmenter. (2) Manfred Vijars.

2007 minutes signed by the President.

President presented the 2007 report. Moved acceptance Frank Daniel. (2) Ray Essery. Carried.

Secretary presented the 2007 report. Moved acceptance Tom Chapman. (2) Olive Shooter. Carried.

Treasurer presented the 2007 report. Moved acceptance Manfred Vijars. (2) Gabby Colquhoun. Carried.

ELECTION - OFFICE BEARERS

Penny Braun was asked to act as Returning Officer, who declared all positions vacant.

Before the election took place, Carol Heuchan asked for a point of order and asked that State Reps should be part of the Committee, and was informed that a previous motion had been passed indicating that State Reps were part of the committee, and were also to act as Publicity Officers for that State, and Secretary to contact Department and have model rules adjusted. Penny Braun advised that nominations for the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer had been received prior to the meeting, and in accordance with the model rules, were automatically elected.

ELECTED OFFICERS:

President – Noel Stallard.
Vice-President – Frank Daniel.
Secretary – Ed Parmenter.
Treasurer – Margaret Parmenter.
Committee – Cay Fletcher, Peter Mace, Melanie Hall.

STATE REPS.

N.S.W. – Carol Heuchan.
Queensland – Manfred Vijars.
Victoria – Dennis Carstairs.



BEAUDESERT WRITING WORKSHOP

Nineteen budding poets attended the Glenny Palmer writing workshop which was conducted on 16th February by the Beaudesert Bush Bards with help from a Regional Arts Development Grant through Beaudesert Shire Council and Arts Queensland.

The BBB's thank Glenny for what proved to be an informative and entertaining day. Some poets travelled quite a distance to attend and all expressed their thanks to the group for arranging the workshop.

Glenny emphasised the importance of getting rhyme and rhythm correct if the reader is to get maximum enjoyment from the poem. She also gave special advice on writing with humour and on

publishing. During the afternoon everyone had the opportunity to share some of their works with a supportive audience and to gain pointers on performance.

The BBB's have a new meeting place and would welcome anyone interested in poetry with rhyme and rhythm to attend their meetings. Except for the March meeting which has been put back one week to the 28th because of Easter, the poets meet on the 3rd Friday of each month at 9.30am at the Beaudesert Arts & Information Centre. They also perform at the Beaudesert Markets on the 1st Sat. at 9.30am.

Contact Pamela on 5541 2662 or Betty on 5541 2664.

South Australia – Maurie O'Brien.
Western Australia – subject to confirmation.
Tasmania – Philip Rush – subject to confirmation.

APPOINTMENT OF EDITOR.

Frank Daniel accepted this position.

GENERAL BUSINESS.

Performance Judging Sheet. Final draft tabled by Noel Stallard, this resulted in much discussion with several amendments being accepted. The President advised that he would amend the draft sheet. A vote was taken on the acceptance of the new judging sheet by a ballot result of 18 for, 7 against.

TITLES – 2008.

NATIONAL – NORTH PINE.
QUEENSLAND – CHARTERS TOWERS.
VICTORIA – BENALLA (subject to confirmation)
SOUTH AUST. – BARMERA.

(m) Andy Schnalle. (2) Susie Carcary. Moved that the 12 month trial period from the 2007 A.G.M. motion for: The ABPA to compensate the organising committee of the Australian Championships an amount of \$1,000 after the event providing that such competition has been run under the current ABPA rules, be also adopted for 2008. (m) Cay Fletcher. (2) Greg North.

Amendment – Moved that the 12 month trial period be removed, and replaced with 'continue permanently' (m) Andy Schnalle (2) Shirley Everingham. Carried.

Secretary asked that the new committee remain for a committee meeting after the closure of the A.G.M. Meeting closed 3.50 p.m.

Signed. Ed. Parmenter, Secretary.
Signed. N. Stallard. President.

OUTBACK ICON

by Ray Rowling - Ulladulla NSW

With eyes as sharp as a hawk
and a heart that's true to the bone,
she has the strength of a bullock
and her kingdom is her home.

The cockies wife's an icon
from the outback where she comes,
where the red roo pounds it's mark
and the swift black emu runs.

She can outride a jackeroo
have a drover lose his pride,
be as gentle as a kitten
or take strips off your beaten hide.

She'll fix a leaking water tank
and that fence she'll wire strain,
but when the land is dry and dead
she can not hide the pain.

She loves her children dearly
her husband is her King,
I've heard her give command
but never heard her sing.

The stockmen admire her stance
they address her simply as ma'am,
when it comes to the crunch as often
it does she's as forward as any man.

She's a housewife, she's a mother
she's a nurse and she's the vet,
she's a carpenter and a plumber
but she can't bring on the wet.

So tilt your hat for the cockies wife
she's queen of this outback place,
she's the epoxy that bones it together
and does it with cotton and lace.

We salute this outback icon
who won't throw in the towel,
who keeps this country running
and to whom the angels bow.

Air hostess to passenger at meal
time.

'Sir! Would you like dinner?'
Passenger. 'What's my choice?'
Hosty. 'Yes or no!'

Grandmother had a prescription for
birth control pills. She told the
Chemist that they helped her sleep at
night.

'How do they help?' he asked.
'Each morning I grind two of them
up and put them in my grand-
daughters orange juice; and that
helps me sleep at night!'



Coffs Harbour Golf Club
is proud to present...

BUSH POET EVENING
Featuring Grahame Watt, Ray Essery,
Ed and Margaret Parmenter

Friday 16 May
7:30pm – 10:00pm

ONLY \$10pp

Dinner available
before show -
Call 6658 0258
to make your
reservation

Call 6652 3244 to make your booking
www.coffsharbourgolfclub.com.au



Golden Wedding

The golden anniversary is one of the most celebrated wedding anniversaries. And rightly so! Spending half a century in love with one person is a wonderful statement about the gift of married life.

ABPA Secretary and Association Treasurer, Ed and Margaret Parmenter will celebrate fifty years of marriage in May.

Ed was born in Picton, the son of a dam construction worker (Warregamba among others) Edward Phillip Parmenter and Alice (Tess) Simmons, a descendant of Henry Thomas Green, the first volunteer in the NSW A Field Artillery Battery, who served in the Sudan in 1885. (See vol. 14 no. 4)

Margaret was born in Granville, the daughter of Harold (Dick) Smith and Beryl a very well known stage dancer in the Parramatta area.

Both keen ice-skaters, Ed and Mar

garet met at Sydneys Glacierium when in their teens, Margaret then working as a private secretary for an insurance firm in O'Connell Street, and Ed an apprentice to Bartholomew's Electrical.

They were married at the Holy Trinity Church, Parramatta, Margaret (20) and Ed (22) and went to live at Parramatta, with Ed working for the Prospect County Council and Margaret with the insurance firm at Parramatta.

In 1974 they moved to Coffs Harbour where Ed, as Engineering Officer, was employed by Northern Rivers County Council for 25 years.

The Parmenters have two sons and a daughter and six grandchildren.

Ed and Margaret played A Grade tennis for many years and Ed was always been a proficient golfer.

Congratulation Ed and Margaret.
Best wishes from all our readers!!



Thomas Alexander Brownne
(Rolf Boldrewood) (1826 - 1915)

Information for writers.

Rolf Boldrewood, aka Thomas Alexander Brownne, is placed with Marcus Clarke and Kingsley as the three great colonial novelists.

Following is information on the 2008 Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards.

His book 'Robbery Under Arms' which was written in Dubbo has been one of the most famous in Australia's literary heritage plus spawning a stage play and five films.

The 2008 Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards were launched in the Macquarie Regional Library, Dubbo,

on Sunday 3 February 2008 by the Regional Director, John Bayliss. The Rolf Boldrewood project is the Outback Writers' Centre's major activity for 2008. The 2007 competition attracted 251 quality entries from Australia, New Zealand and Thailand.

The Awards are for prose and poetry with an Australian theme to commemorate the writer and writing of Robbery Under Arms in Dubbo.

Prose is limited to 3000 words-fiction, article or essay (including family history). Poetry is limited to 80 lines and can be in any form or style.

First prize in each section is a Boldrewood bust-by sculptor Brett Garling (who is now creating a full-size bronze of The Man from Snowy River) valued at \$100 plus \$600. Second prize is \$300 and third prize \$150. Highly Commended and Commended certificates will be awarded at the judges' discretion.

Closing date: 19 September 2008. Entry forms are available from:

The Convenor,
Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards
P O Box 1042, DUBBO NSW 2830
www.mrl.nsw.gov.au 02 6801 4501
Please end a SSAE for return of forms.

The Outback Writers' Centre and the Macquarie Regional Library aim to remember the past and foster the future through The Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards.

The 2007 Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards Poetry prize went to David Campbell Vic with *The White Man's Way*; Mark Miller NSW *The Return* and Arthur Green Qld *Skiska's Song*.

Please help support the



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OF AUSTRALIA

**Author and Poet
John Davis
has pledged
\$5.00
to the**

**Royal Flying Doctor Service
from the sale of each book**

**A BUSHMAN'S
TALES**

"The Way I See It"



The Australian Outback and life in the bush over the past 60 years as told by a true 'bushy' in a memorable selection of poems and short stories

by **JOHN DAVIS**

Finalist, 2006 South Australian Bush Poetry Championships

\$22.00 Posted

37 George Avenue
Kings Point NSW 2539
Ph 02 44552013



To the Editor

SPELLING MY NAME

Dear Sir,
My name is never Graeme,
Nor ever, ever Grime,
My name is so misspelt,
It happens all the time.
I know it's not a simple name,
Like Frank or Noel or Bill,
But "Spare me days!" it's not so hard,
Just try it, if you will.
They say your name expresses
Your character and such,
Perhaps it's true in my case,
It adds that little touch.
So spell my name correctly,
And save me saying "Damn!"
It's 'G' and 'R' and 'A' and 'E'
And the middle bit is 'HAM'.
From: GraHAME Watt.

**EMMAVILLE BUSH
POETS**

The Inaugural combined Bush Poets Breakfast and Poetry Competition at the Emmaville Sheep Race Festival on Saturday 15th March was a very successful event with ten poets performing, including some of the best in the state according to the Competition Convenor, Mr. Bob McPhee.

No entry fee was required and \$400 prize-money was on offer.

Poets were required to recite two humorous or light-hearted poems to the delight of the crowd.

The prize-winners were in order of

placings, Tony Kelly of Tenterfield, Jimmie Brown of Inverell, Ellis Campbell of Dubbo and Max Taylor of Inverell.

Judges were Liz Ward from Esk Q. and Bob McPhee from Torrington.

The organizers are now looking towards forming a larger committee with a view to conducting annually a full weekend competition incorporating school children's sections, duo events, campfire yarns and written compositions in ballad style with a Celtic theme embracing local mining history as well as the performance competition.

The A.J BUSH
POETRY
COMPETITION
& BUSH POETS
BREKKY



The A.J BUSH
POETRY
COMPETITION
& BUSH POETS
BREKKY

SUNDAY 8TH JUNE 2008 - Beaudesert Showgrounds

**POETS BREKKY - 8am - Admission \$8.50 includes hot breakfast
COMPETITION from 9.30am - no admission fee**

Golden Horseshoe Written Competition

Adult 1st Prize \$200, Runner Up \$50

Entries to be received between 1st and 8th May 2008 - Adult Nomination fee - \$6.50 per poem or 3 for \$15

Logan Shire or Scenic Rim Schools Competition - No nomination fee. \$70 prize money

The subject is open. Poems must not have won first placing in any competition

A special Patron's Trophy will be awarded to a poem written by an adult and one
by a student which best depicts the festival theme of "Then & Now"

Novice and Open Performance Competition

\$640 prize money. Nomination Fee - \$6.50 per poem

closing date - 1st June (late entries accepted if space is available)

Novice Original and Novice Traditional (M & F combined)

Open Male Original, Open Male Traditional — Open Female Original, Open Female Traditional

Nomination forms can be obtained by emailing chfest2@bigpond.com or from the ABPA web site.

Telephone Pamela at 07 5541 2662 or Festival Office 07 5541 4355

Free camping will be available at the Showgrounds on 7th and 8th June

July
11th - 12th - 13th
2008

14th BUNDY BUSH POETRY MUSTER



Marco Giori

Presentation of 2008
Bush Lantern Award
for Written Verse
Sunday, July 13th

Gregory North

Cash Prizes
& Trophies

*Across the Waves Sports Club Inc.
1 Miller Street*

BUNDABERG Qld

Melanie Hall

Performance Competition:

Open (men & women separate categories)

Intermediate, Novice, Juniors (Under 15) Duo Performances,

Yarn Spinning & Bundy Rum One Minute Cup

Bush Lantern Award 2008

Written Competition for Bush Verse

Closing Date - May 30th - 2008

All phone or email enquiries:

John & Sandy - 07 4151 4631

ees@interworx.com.au

Jason - 07 4155 0778

blanata@bigpond.net.au

Dean - 07 415 1705

(for new email: check website)

Entry Forms:

SSAE to

Performance Poetry Co-ordinator

or Bush Lantern Co-ordinator

(whichever is applicable)

Bundaberg Poet's Society Inc.

PO Box 4281

BUNDABERG Q. 4670

or website:

abpa.org.au/bushpoetry/entry.htm



FREE POETRY WORKSHOP

In conjunction with the Bundy Bush Poetry Muster week-end Melanie Hall will conduct a story-telling session on Wednesday July 9th and a free poetry workshop in the Bundaberg Library on Thursday July 12th - 10am - Noon. Limited numbers - Bookings essential

The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

(Established 1994)

Abn: INC 9877413

Arbn 104 032 126

Website: abpa.org.au

President: Noel Stallard

11 Cestrum St, Arana Hills Qld. 4054

Ph 07 3351 3221

heritagepoetry@dodo.com.au

Vice President: Frank Daniel

PO Box 16 Canowindra NSW 2804

Ph. 02 6344 1477

fda70930@bigpond.net.au

Secretary: Ed Parmenter

1 Avenue St Coff's Harbour 2450

Ph/fax. 02 6652 3716

Email: coffsmixture@hotmail.net.au

Treasurer: Margaret Parmenter

1 Avenue St Coff's Harbour 2450

Ph/fax. 02 6652 3716

Email: coffsmixture@hotmail.net.au

Editor: Frank Daniel

PO Box 16 Canowindra NSW 2804

Ph 02 6344 1477

editor@abpa.org.au

Webmaster: Andy Schnalle

Ph. 07 4934 1335

web@abpa.org.au

Printer: Central Commercial Printers

43-47 Keppel Street, Bathurst NSW 2795

Tel: (02) 6331 4822

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 the organizers by sending an SSAE (stamped self-addressed envelope) to the addresses supplied.

Huge four days of bush poetry Casino Beef Week

Guest Poets Include

JOHN MAJOR

MURRAY HARTIN

RAY ESSERY

Thursday 29th May 2008

11am. Walk up Poets

6.30 - 8pm Bush Poetry Show

Friday 11am-1pm Walk up poets

Saturday 11am -1pm Walk-up Poets

4pm - 6pm Parade Muster

Sunday 1st June

11am to 1pm

BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

ALL WELCOME

further enquiry ring Ray Essery on

0266448285 or 0266843817

**A Taste of Country
HARDEN NSW
25th October 2008
Open Performance
Bush Poetry Competition
Restricted numbers
Open Poets Brawl
Sunday Breakfast
Lots More
See Next Issues**

YAKANDANDAH V.

What a weekend it was in Yackandandah with the streets and venues crowded with lookers, listeners, musos and poets!

The 30 plus degree temperature didn't dampen (or melt) the enthusiasm of the throngs of young and old ... and the in-between ... who flocked to Yack. to enjoy the music, the market and The Spoken Word.

The Shed, an old warehouse, was converted to accommodate both The Spoken Word program and youth activities. The floor was covered with carpet and filled with sofas, couches and arm- chairs ... amazing that no one went to sleep!

The cloth-lined walls were adorned with 101 children's poems, all entries from the local primary schools' competition. These will be the poets of the future. The winners and their schools both benefited from prize vouchers kindly donated by local businesses.

Award certificates will be sent to the three winners in each of the age categories.

A special feature of the décor was the display of four cut-outs of famous Australian poets.

The Spoken Word program consisted of Poet's Breakfasts, poetry workshops, story-telling workshops and a yarn-spinning competition.

The wonderful attendance at The Poet's Breakfasts was entertained by a very animated Carol Heuchan whose poems and performances had those present expressing howls of laughter or tears of emotion and joy.

The story-telling workshops by Marie Finlay created sincere interest in those attending, and revealed little-known aspects of this art.

The Golden Shovel (actually a rusty one!) award for yarn-spinning was a deserved win to a first timer, Annette Nichols.





Sixth Annual
**NANDEWAR POETRY
COMPETITION**

WRITTEN
BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

Conducted under the auspices of the
Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

First Prize \$150 plus Trophy
Second Prize \$100
Third Prize \$50

Closing Date July 31st 2008

Winners announced and Presentations at a date and
venue to be announced.

Entry Forms: Send S.S.A.E. to
The Secretary
Narrabri & District Historical Society Inc.
P. O. Box 55
Narrabri 2390

**The Bushman's Heritage
Weekend**

A Celebration of Bush Poetry
CASINO VILLAGE

15th - 16th - 17th August



Come share your orations
Whimsical or serious - traditional or modern
Enjoy interaction with other poets
Join in the Amateur afternoon of song and verse
Go to the website www.casinovillage.com.au

or
Phone David or Dawn 02 6662 7804
Site bookings 02 6662 1069

Casino Village
69 Light Street Casino 2470
More details page 9

**COUNTRY
CHARACTERS**

(Traditional Verse)

Country Characters
anywhere in Australia

Includes a 1st Prize winning poem
and two Highly Commended poems

\$17 + \$1.50 postage

Cheque or M.O.
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HEATHER CORFIELD
"WINDRUSH"
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BUSH POETRY SOIREE

Bowraville Theatre

High Street, Bowraville NSW

featuring

Bush Poet

Rod Williams

& his **Bonza Blue Dog**

Jessie

1.30 - 4.30 pm

Saturday 2nd August, 2008

Entry - \$8.00

Local and visiting poets welcome.
Devonshire teas, snacks, coffee avail-
able from the Theatre Café

Enquiries - Dorothy 02 6564 7828

*A fundraiser for
continuing theatre restoration*

DUSTY SWAG 2008

1st. April - 30th. June

<http://dustyswag.zoomshare.com/>

For Entry Form & Rules

Theme: 'Wetlands, Web of Life'

Section: Under 18's to
Schools Years 3 to 8 for Cash Prizes

Teacher Notes on

'How to Enter'

Authorised Rex Tate. Alexandra
rexassoc@virtual.net.au -

MHR and Yea Wetlands Trust
are co-sponsors

MHR at [ceaca.com.au/mhr/](mailto:ceaca.com.au/mhr/dustyswag)
dustyswag

CALENDAR UPDATES

Australian Unity's Bryan Keleher Literary Award - Written Competition. \$2,350 (See page 12)

Entry forms from australianunity.com.au/literaryaward 03 8682 6778

LOST POETRY Looking for a poem recited by an old man some 65 years ago called 'The Bookies Dream'. Can anyone help? The first two lines are as follows or thereabouts. 'The bookie he lay in his rosewood bed and a smile crept o'er his face - For he dreamt he was fielding in paradise in a wonderful three horse race.....'

Please contact the editor. editor@abpa.org.au or PO Box 16 Canowindra NSW 2804

(Continued from page 1)

Muz -

'Look, that was a bit of harmless fun that the teachers took far too seriously,' explained Muz. 'The biggest part of the extra-curricular activity was at the expense of the headmaster and I think he was the only one that prevented us from being expelled - at least he saw the funny side.'

After failing English it made perfect sense that Muz was destined to be a journalist and a poet but the journey there was anything but direct.

After leaving school he had a brief period back on the family property, spent three years working for the Amoco Oil Company in Sydney, which helped finance his love of rugby and its associated after-match functions, moved to Tamworth with the Caltex Oil Company, headed to Sydney with the TNT Group and then back to Tamworth.

There was a stint in Scone working as an assistant electrician during the construction phase of Kerry Packer's polo property, followed by two weeks as a school handyman - 'I was only handy 'cause I lived round the corner' - before stumbling into journalism with the highly respected Tamworth regional daily, The Northern Daily Leader.

Whether he was covering sport, court, police rounds, applying for a position with Manpower, posing as a nude model for the TAFE College art class or tandem parachute jumping, Muz attacked each assignment with gusto and soon had his own column.

A win in the inaugural bush poetry competition at the Tamworth Country Music Festival in 1987, despite a big pre-final celebration that left only four hours to pen the winning verse, which somehow focused on a gunfight between a koala and a possum, opened the door to the world of entertainment. Murray stuck with journalism until 1996 when he made the switch to full-time poetry on the corporate and sporting circuit.

He recently spent eight months as editor of his hometown paper but is now back where he belongs, in front of a microphone telling yarns and making people laugh. It's been an interesting journey. Through no fault of his own Murray has been retrenched by the likes of Sir Peter Abeles, Kerry Packer and Rupert Murdoch - 'Yeah, I've been associated with some big names, never got to meet them though'.

He has traveled throughout Australia, meeting the people who become the inspiration for so many of his poems such as Billy Hayes, the hero of Murray's epic and hilarious tale Turbulence, which incredibly made it to Num-

ber 16 on the National Country Music Charts. The poem won the Performance of the Year category at the 2000 Australian Bush Laureate Awards, his mad-cap crew of mates that help him make up The Naked Poets won Album of the Year in 2001, Muz made it a Trifecta by winning the Book of the Year title in 2002, the NPs won Album of the Year again in 2003 and Muz's album Muz! Was a stand-out non-winner in 2004.

Murray won the ABL Award for the best single recorded poem of the year in 2008 with his very moving 'Rain from Nowhere', a poem about the need for fathers and sons to talk to each other when things get tough.

While rugby is still a passion, he played for Hornsby Colts, Barker Old Boys, Manly and won a first grade premiership with his beloved Tamworth Pirates, his body has waved the white flag and those jinking runs and bone-crunching tackles are but a distant memory, if in fact they ever happened at all.

But he can still talk about them, as well as yarns about giant cod, hog-whisperers and The Grog Olympics. He can touch your heart with poems about his dad, Australia and characters he has met in his travels. Murray was heard regularly on The John Laws Morning program between 1997 and 1999, he has released three books of poetry and has just put out his first live CD.

He still writes a weekly column for the Albury Border Mail and the Moree Champion and is hoping to expand that to as many country newspapers who are prepared to have a look at what is rather a unique take on world, national and personal events.

Equally at home fronting captains of industry and sporting legends as he is in fronting the captain and kids of the local primary school, Murray Hartin is a refreshing talent who makes you proud to be Australian.

'Basically it's about having a good time,' Muz said. 'If you're in front of an audience you have an obligation to entertain and I operate on the premise that if I'm having a good time and the audience is having a good time, well, it doesn't get any better than that. It's a buzz and a privilege to have the opportunity to experience the whole thing.'

This poem was written for Mother's Day by Shirley Williamson of Longwarry Victoria who turned 86 years on March 3rd this year.

THE EMPTY ROOM

© 'Pedro's Girl'

Shirl V Williamson Longwarry Vic.

On the left of the hall is an empty room,
so silent and somehow dead,
for the precious one who dwelled within,
today this room has fled,
Just a short three years she lived there
endeavouring to do her best,
and though days were mainly happy,
some nights there was little rest.
For the call of an older companion,
brought her with duty face to face,
and she's gone to spend her days with him
in this other together place.

On the left of the hall in the empty room
the furniture still is there,
but without the warmth of a loved one,
it looks so cold and bare.
And the green and grey of the paintwork -
mauve and white and gold,
without her personal presence
seems so stark and cold.
For a room becomes the background
of the person who lived within,
and with her now gone it seems to be
a sad and lonely thing.

On the left of the hall the empty room
will surely thus remain,
for I could never find another,
to suit it so well again.
Though the furniture may be shifted
and other put in its place,
I know each time I enter there
I'll see the loved ones face.
So whenever there are flowers in the garden,
for Mum I'll pick a bloom,
and place it on the left of the hall,
in her now empty room.



RAIN FROM NOWHERE

© Murray Hartin

His cattle didn't get a bid, they were fairly bloody poor,
What was he going to do? He couldn't feed them anymore,
The dams were all but dry, hay was thirteen bucks a bale,
Last month's talk of rain was just a fairytale,
His credit had run out, no chance to pay what's owed,
Bad thoughts ran through his head as he drove down Gully Road.

"Geez, great grandad bought the place back in 1898,
"Now I'm such a useless bastard, I'll have to shut the gate.
"Can't support my wife and kids, not like dad and those before,
"Crikey, Grandma kept it going while Pop fought in the war."
With depression now his master, he abandoned what was right,
There's no place in life for failures, he'd end it all tonight.

There were still some things to do, he'd have to shoot the cattle first,
Of all the jobs he'd ever done, that would be the worst.
He'd have a shower, watch the news, then they'd all sit down for tea
Read his kids a bedtime story, watch some more TV,
Kiss his wife goodnight, say he was off to shoot some roos
Then in a paddock far away he'd blow away the blues.

But he drove in the gate and stopped – as he always had
To check the roadside mailbox – and found a letter from his Dad.
Now his dad was not a writer, Mum did all the cards and mail
But he knew the writing from the notebooks that he'd kept from cattle sales,
He sensed the nature of its contents, felt moisture in his eyes,
Just the fact his dad had written was enough to make him cry.

"Son, I know it's bloody tough, it's a cruel and twisted game,
"This life upon the land when you're screaming out for rain,

"There's no candle in the darkness, not a single speck of light
"But don't let the demon get you, you have to do what's right,
"I don't know what's in your head but push the bad thoughts well away
"See, you'll always have your family at the back end of the day
"You have to talk to someone, and yes I know I rarely did
"But you have to think about Fiona and think about the kids.
"I'm worried about you son, you haven't rung for quite a while,
"I know the road you're on 'cause I've walked every bloody mile.
"The date? December 7 back in 1983,
"Behind the shed I had the shotgun rested in the brigalow tree.

"See, I'd borrowed way too much to buy the Johnson place
"Then it didn't rain for years and we got bombed by interest rates,
"The bank was at the door, I didn't think I had a choice,
"I began to squeeze the trigger – that's when I heard your voice.
"You said 'Where are you Daddy? It's time to play our game'
"I've got Squatter all set up, we might get General Rain."
"It really was that close, you're the one that stopped me son,
"And you're the one that taught me there's no answer in a gun.
"Just remember people love you, good friends won't let you down.
"Look, you might have to swallow pride and take that job in town.
"Just 'til things come good, son, you've always got a choice
"And when you get this letter ring me, 'cause I'd love to hear your voice."

Well he cried and laughed and shook his head then put the truck in gear,
Shut his eyes and hugged his dad in a vision that was clear,
Dropped the cattle at the yards, put the truck away
Filled the troughs the best he could and fed his last ten bales of hay.
Then he strode towards the homestead, shoulders back and head held high,
He still knew the road was tough but there was purpose in his eye.

He called his wife and children, who'd lived through all his pain,
Hugs said more than words – he'd come back to them again,
They talked of silver linings, how good times always follow bad,
Then he walked towards the phone, picked it up and rang his Dad.
And while the kids set up the Squatter, he hugged his wife again,
Then they heard the roll of thunder and they smelt the smell of rain.

Graeme Johnson is a Poet who writes and performs both traditional and original verse following in the footsteps of Australia's rich heritage of rhyme and meter.

Graeme Johnson

Known as "The Rhymer from Ryde", Graeme hails from country NSW and has lived in inner city Sydney since 1991.

After meeting some colourful characters called "Bush Poets" in 1994, Graeme was inspired to combine his love of language with 25 years of theatrical experience to take his poetry "back to the people".

Often described as "painting pictures with words", Graeme uses his skills to draw his audience into his stories about our Great Southern Land and its people.

Whether it is his recollections of travels in the countryside, his love of our colonial history, or reliving the experiences of the bohemian residents of Sydney's past, Graeme is drawn with fierce patriotism to embrace the virtues that makes us the "Aussies" that we are today.

In the last 10 years Graeme has received over 70 awards (across written & spoken word competitions) for his Bush Poetry, Free verse, Limericks & Yarnspinning. (to p.7)



NEWS INSIDE:

The Australian Bush Poetry Championships in August North Pine p7
 South Australian Bush Poetry Championships - Barmera p8
 Bush Poets at Bowraville & Casino Bushman's Heritage Weekend p9
 Good Health from Dr. Parker p10 Bush Poets in America p11
 LONGYARD LEGENDS p12 Around the traps p14
 ABPA AGM p16 as well as a wedding p15 and a Golden Wedding p17

The tale of Bill the fencing farmer's sporting glory has snared Ballarat's John Peel one of the nation's most prestigious bush poetry awards. John, a Ballarat engineer, took home his first Golden Dampier award as winner of the Tamworth Bush Poetry competition. Read 'The Fence Off' on page 6.

John Peel



The Anzac Tribute is without doubt the highlight of the John O'Brien Bush Festival.

Pictured below are three of the fourteen contributors to the tribute,

John Dengate, Noel Stallard and Peter Mace.

(Report on page 4)



POETRY in this ISSUE

<i>The Voyage</i>	Graeme Johnson	2
<i>A Diggers Lament</i>	SSC Kelsen	3
<i>I Wear the Poppy</i>	SSC Kelsen	4
<i>The Fence Off</i>	John Peel	6
<i>Spelling My Name</i>	Grahame Watt	9
<i>Ghosts in an old House</i>	VP Read	10
<i>Outback Icon</i>	Ron Rowling	16
<i>The Empty Room</i>	Shirl V Williamson	22
<i>Rain from Nowhere</i>	Murray Hartin	24