

# ABPA

The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.



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Magazine - (since 1994)



## 2008 AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONS

Carol Heuchan and Greg North were successful in taking out the Australian Bush Poetry Championships at North Pine during August. See the Presidents Report and pages 4-5 and 24 for more.

**CLOSING DATE**  
**ABL AWARDS**  
Pages 3 & 9.



Entries are now being taken for the 2009 Australian Bush Laureate Awards to be presented in Tamworth, Country Music Capital, on Tuesday, January 20. Nominations close on 17th October 2008. Finalists in the Australian Bush Laureate Awards will be released in December with winners announced at the gala presentation concert in the famous Tamworth Town Hall during the January country music festival.

They love the lilt of language,  
They've a gift, they entertain,  
They've blazed  
the tracks we travel  
Their like, may never come again

It behoves us, we 'come-latelys'  
To this Bush Poetry game  
To recognise these treasures  
Dignify them, with a name . . .

**LIVING  
FESTIVAL  
TREASURES**

Maxine Ireland - Alex Allit - Mary Hodgson



## THE ONLY WAR WE HAD (Beachhead Vietnam) © Graham Fredriksen

Ours was no wall of fire to breach,  
no grim machine guns roar,  
no D-Day scenes upon the beach -  
our baptism to War;  
just apprehensions, yes, - and pride -  
and armed and loaded, we  
stepped from our landing craft beside  
the great South China Sea.  
My father, two decades before,  
had, not that far away,  
stepped to his Southeast Asian war  
one red, heroic day;  
and plunging from his landing craft  
he swam and lunged and ran,  
while hard ahead pillboxes strafed  
out death on Tarakan . . . .  
But ours was never Tarakan -  
I'll pay you tribute, Dad -  
and yours was much more righteous than  
the only war we had.

Ours was no far Gallipoli:  
the stories Grandpa told  
recalled no "friendly" beachhead; he  
recalled a tenuous hold  
on life and land and always the  
most precious hold on gains—  
across the Turks' peninsula,  
on western Europe's plains;  
you fought and held each sacred yard  
(the trenches witness bore)  
and marked the frontlines plain and hard  
upon the Maps of War;  
you dug in, held, then forward moved,  
and always knew your foe . . .  
but, Grandpa, Vietnam just proved  
war always isn't so.  
And your "war to end ALL wars" sits  
no statement ironclad;  
the folly of it all—but it's  
the only war we had.

I picture Grandpa peering through  
his "loop" on Sari Bair,  
as Turkish lines came into view -  
the enemy was there;  
he knew their faces, their designs,  
the foe was obvious,  
but in our war the Indochines  
looked all the same to us:  
the ally from the South; the "gook"  
the North had sent to fight;  
the in-between who daily took  
our side and in the night  
came back to kill us; bar-girls whom  
we bought in Vung Tau bars -  
who'd offer more than we'd presume  
with Russian S.L.R.s.  
Retired now to a "safer pos"  
I, disillusioned, add:  
ours was no set-piece war -  
but was the only war we had.

A war consumed with "body counts" -  
attrition, never land;  
place names that we could not pronounce,  
we'd conquer, then we'd hand  
them back again: land burned and bombed  
and drenched with brave,  
brave blood of boys who'd fought and martyrdom'd  
their youth for transient mud.  
The lines were always misty, blurred -  
where there were lines at all -  
our "baby-killing" war; absurd,  
we'd answered to a call  
to tear apart a people who  
(we'd not then have believed)  
inferred no threat to me or you  
but just a threat perceived.  
Our time had come "to war" . . . because . . . ;  
the logic's spare and sad -  
ours was no holy war, but was  
the only war we had.

A generation raised on tales  
of courage under fire,  
where every road to Manhood trails  
through bullets and barbed wire;  
a base ideal to grow up with:  
the patriotic chore,  
perpetuated in the myth  
of passage rites through War.  
To Tarakan, my father's beach;  
Grandpa's Gallipoli;  
for Country and for Empire, each  
stood hard with Liberty.  
And thus the notions "communist",  
"collapsing domino",  
had urged the next-in-line enlist:  
Malaya; Borneo;  
then Vietnam - the noble cause -  
Australia's Iliad;  
our "rising to the steel" that was  
the only war we had.

Yes, clad in camouflage fatigues  
we disembarked; the drum  
the past beats over briny leagues  
had bade we young men come,  
to . . . slant-eyed girls in silken skirts  
and children peddling "coke",  
where Truth is casual and flirts  
with blood and battle smoke.  
And home we stole in dark of night  
(they say, in "shameful" ranks);  
no welcome home parade that might  
salute a nation's thanks.  
And old men at the R.S.L.  
say: "Just a skirmish, son.  
You wouldn't know a real war; hell,  
you never even won!"  
Good soldiers? well . . . not hypocrites -  
the politics was bad;  
it's not much of a war -  
but it's the only war we had.



### GRAHAM FREDRIKSEN

This is part of the foreword to Graham's book *"Another Day in Paradise"*, copies of which may be obtained by phoning the author direct on 07 54971045

"On the night of Easter Sunday, 1998, exactly two years after our group: the North Pine Bush Poets formed and I performed my first-ever poetry.

"I stood on the edge of the Billa-bong in the newly-opened Waltzing Matilda Centre in Winton, in western Qld., and performed a poem to an assembled crowd dotted with the who's who of Australian Bush Poetry. I had just received their most prestigious award for written verse: "The Bronze Swagman". It was indeed a proud and humbling experience to receive this recognition.

"After my delivery of the winning poem: "Battle of St. Quentin's Canal", I was told that one could almost smell the gunpowder, see the smoke and feel the shrapnel as the tragic historic battle epic of Australians fighting in someone else's war unfolded: a great complement of performance and writing..... it was a time to cherish.

"I now have pleasure in presenting to you this book: a culmination of two years writing and forty years living; and featuring the award poem."

Such is Grahame Fredriksen, a fine researcher and sticker for accuracy in his work.



## G'day Members,

Congratulations to our 2008 Australian Bush Poetry Performance Champions, Open Category: Carol Heuchan and

Greg North Junior Category: Matthew Collins and to our 2008 Writing Champions, Open Category, Graham Fredriksen and Junior Category: Violet Macdonald

Those of us who were privileged to have witnessed these championships were enthralled with the skill of the performers. Of all the competitions I have been involved in over the past twelve years both as competitor and judge this was the one that produced the highest standard. Audiences were captivated by the dramatic presentation of works from our pioneer poets, our modern poets and the original works of the performers. The skill these contestants displayed when they brought to life the action, ideas and relevant emotions of their respective poems brought thunderous applause from a most appreciative audience who, like this judge, felt privileged to have witnessed such exemplary performances. Another real winner from these championships was Bush Poetry.

All of the above was only possible due to the outstanding team work of The North Pine Bush Poets. In this Olympic Year it was this group of poets that picked up the baton of sponsorship, took on the many problem bends of logistics and ran so determinedly to pick up the gold for organisation. Congratulations North Pine, you've done us proud! My

### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**BENALLA** Victorian State Champs.

10-2 October Ph. 0428 312 287

**MORISSET** NSW State Champs.

17-19 October 02 4994 5926

**DORRIGO** NSW Festival

24-26 October (see p. 23)

**HARDEN** NSW Taste of Country

25-26 October 02 6386 2575

**CROOKWELL** NSW Wool Wagon Awards

14-15 November Ph. 02 4832 1004

**DALGETY** NSW Snowy River Fest.

info@snowyriverfestival.com

**YOUNG** NSW Cherry Blossom Fest.

Ph. 02 6382 2506

understanding is that North Pine will take the ABPA option of running consecutive Australian Championships. So make a note in your diaries to be at the Bray Park Bowling Club in Brisbane on 21, 22 and 23 August 2009 for this gala event on the Bush Poets' Calendar.

For members who do not have their own web site, Andy Schnalle our web master would assist you in setting this up on our website's Forum. Andy assures me this is not complicated and you do not need to be a programmer for this task. You need to be registered for the forum and then follow the prompts that he has established. Andy is happy to assist.

Stuart Marshall, an ABPA member, has made a worthwhile suggestion about the sale of members' books and CDs. He does not have a computer or Internet connection and therefore can not access websites for details of such products and he suggests that just as we put out a Calendar-of-Events for the year as an attachment in our first newsletter we could consider a similar attachment with respective details of books and CDs that members have for sale. It would only apply to financial members for that year and the current \$5 Book Shelf advertising fee could be used. Please email me (those who have Internet!), to let me know what you think and I will take your comments to committee.

Please keep encouraging students to enter the On-Line-Bush Poetry Competition. It is pleasing to see the response we are getting.

Over the past few months I have been involved as a judge of various written bush poetry competitions. While I have read many excellent poems I am always disappointed that so many entrants have such wonderful, unique stories to tell through the genre of bush poetry but appear to have limited knowledge of the consistent metre that this form of writing requires. One gets the impression that some believe "if it rhymes" it is bush poetry. My appeal is to our Bush Poetry Groups to use the recognised good writers in your area to run workshops particularly on "consistent metre" as this is the aspect that most aspiring writers find difficult and it is this aspect that is restricting their writings from getting the recognition they deserve.

With gratitude,

*And Stallard*



## New Category

Organisers of the annual Australian Bush Laureate Awards have announced that nominations

for the 2009 Awards are now open and a new category – Bush Poem of the Year – is being introduced.

The new recognition category – for the best individual piece of Australian rhymed verse – is expected to be a strong feature of this year's Awards.

"Nominations must be original verse first released in a commercially published book during the eligibility period," said a spokesman for the Awards, "with a limit of one nomination per poet."

The category has been introduced following consultation with poetry groups as another way of highlighting individual poems and authors as compared to a body of work.

"While the recorded or vocal section of the Awards contain a category for Single Recorded Performance of the Year as well as for a body of work with Album of The Year, in the published writing section there had been recognition only for Book of the Year," the spokesman said.

"Poem of the Year now recognises individual pieces of published rhyming bush verse in their own right."

The Australian Bush Laureate Awards, which started in 1996, already bestow prestigious Golden Gumleaf trophies in five other bush poetry categories... Book, Album and Single of the Year, Children's Poem of the Year and the Judith Hosier Award for outstanding achievement in nurturing Australia's unique heritage of rhymed verse.

The Awards presentation, long hailed as one of the most enjoyable Tamworth Festival events, will be staged in the historic Tamworth Town Hall at 2pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2009.

As well as the Golden Gumleaf presentations, the Bush Laureate Awards gala concert features performances by many of Australia's outstanding bush poets and appearances by leading country music guest stars.

The eligibility period for nominations for the 2009 Awards is October 1, 2007, to September 30, 2008.

The closing date for receipt of nominations is Friday October 17 and nominations can be downloaded off the Awards website...

**REMINDER:** Walkup poets are advised to record their names for appearances at St Edwards Tamworth on January 19th and 21st. Please phone: Edward Parmenter on (02) 6652 3716.

## GOSSIP BY THE FENCE © Pamela Fox Aug. 2008

Viciously the words are flowing,  
Two old cronies by the fence,  
Passing on the gossip showing  
all compassion's in suspense.

Every day their lives so shallow  
sees them leaning on the fence.  
Their regard for others callow,  
Spreading tales at truth's expense.

Day by day these old hags flourish,  
Gaining joy from gossip spread,  
Adding flavour stories nourish,  
Pay no heed to truth now fled.

Each one feeds the other's hunger,  
Gleeful at each new event.  
Wicked woman, scandalmonger,  
Causing pain, they are hell bent.

Hurting folks who hardly know them,  
their own souls grow vile and black.  
Can a kindly word now show them  
from this path they should turn back?

Would they listen to my warning?  
Would it bring a change immense?  
Would enlightenment start dawning?  
Stop this gossip by the fence?

## POETS IN SONG WRITERS RESULTS



The National Awards Night in Sydney on 27th August was, as always, a "glittering music industry event"

The Australian Songwriters Association has a lot to offer people who create original music in Australia, from the grass roots amateur to experienced and published songwriters.

The ASA conducts the Australian Songwriting Contest, the largest competition in the country, providing great prizes and industry exposure to all finalists. It is a highly respected and extremely prestigious event offering more than \$36,000 in prizes. APRA/AMCOS, the major sponsor provides \$3,000 to the Songwriter of the Year! Its services extend from personal assistance, to professional feedback on new material, and live performance opportunities for all original performers across Australia, via our network of Wax Lyric events.

ABPA Members noted amongst the finalists in 2008 were Alec Raymer (pictured) and John Kaye of Plainland

## AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The First place-getter in the Junior Written Comp (Primary)

### HANDFUL of DUST

by Gabrielle Morri

The frolicking fire flickers warmly  
Centrepiece of my kin  
Seated cosily around the campfire  
Let the story-telling begin.

The Elder tells of Dreamtime creation  
In his knowing we trust  
He sings and sketches in the sand  
Holding a handful of dust.

Painted performers kick up red dirt  
Mimicking emu and 'roo  
clapping sticks awaken the spirits  
With the droning of didgeridoo.

Sand figures mystically rise and dance,  
Fire shadows tersely thrust,  
Shaping silhouettes of the Dreaming  
From a handful of dust

Children's grins glow like embers,  
Aboriginal pride ensues,  
Connecting us with our tribal land  
To chase away the blues.

The ceremonial customs of our people,  
To the future we entrust,  
See our spirited story live and dance  
In a handful of dust.

The First place-getter in the Junior Written Comp (Secondary)

### STORM CLOUDS

by Violet Macdonald

The sky has dimmed to charcoal black  
The clouds all group as one  
The wind is still across the land  
I break into a run.

And as I race towards the house  
I hear it in pursuit  
The storm is slowly brewing  
And my path is in it's route.

I grab the old door handle  
And then quickly get inside  
Mum's standing by the window  
As the kids all run and hide.

She cradles Charlie in her arms  
And all he does is cry  
She whispers that it's angels bowling  
High above the sky.

I stare outside the window  
And watch as lightning splays  
Across the fields and heather grounds  
In thin and crooked rays.

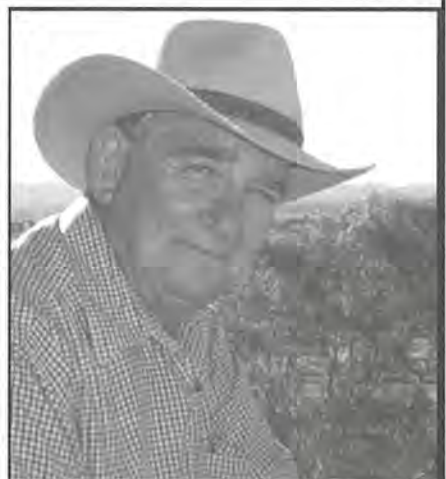
The thunder roars as fighter planes  
The lightning strikes again  
The trees stand tall against the dark  
Though bending now and then.

The elephants get counted down  
The lights flash from the skies  
Mum whispers that it's angels bowling  
And Charlie cries and cries

Qld. for 'Footprints in the Sand'; Alec and Johnny were also nominated for the Rudy Brandsma Award.

In the Top 10 Lyrics writers category Alec had three successful entries, an equal 1st, a 3rd and a 9th for his lyrics - 'At the Woolshed Friday Night'; 'Mist on the Macintyre'; 'The Pride of the Stockman'; and from Lithgow NSW 'This Great Land' by Cill Van der Velden.

The ASA's Australian Song-writing Contest began in 1979, and is Australia's longest running national songwriting contest for professional and amateur songwriters. Songs are submitted on CD or via Sonicbids and are judged by Music Industry experts on originality and craftsmanship. The song does not have to be performed by the songwriter, but it must be original and unpublished at the time of entry (i.e. the song must not be signed to a publishing



company). The recording quality of material is not relevant to the judging process. Whilst at the Awards Alec received a call from Mushroom Records announcing his selection as a finalist in his category at the NAB Song-writing Competition. (page 7)

# 2008 AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

"We think that went off alright, eh!" under states the fact that the 2008 Australian Bush Poetry Championships hosted by the North Pine Bush Poets, was a resounding success.

They came from near and far to battle it out over three days, to grab a piece of glory and determine this years Overall Australian Champions. The pressure was on from the outset, and a finer field of talent is rarely gathered in one place.

Friday morning saw 25 children from around Brisbane and Redcliffe show us what they could do, and quickly put the older performers on notice something special was in the air. The Novice Field while down in numbers rated highly for talent and entertainment value.

The next event was the Billy Hay Memorial Yarn-spinning, and while there were true tales told, Dear Old Bill would have been chuckling, at some of the liars this segment produced. They've still got it mate.

MC Milton Taylor's renowned compassion and kindness, as opposed to Garry Lowe's, Melanie Hall's and Noel Stallard's less than encouraging scores and comments in the Friday Night Show, must have made some of the new comers wonder what sort of a viper's nest they had dropped into.

Saturday morning came early, as all mornings do during Festivals and she was on from the start. Magnificent performances one after the other, "That'll take a bit of beating" to be followed by, "I dunno, this one could be better." One unofficial, astute judge (aren't they all) said she had 16 winners at one stage in a field of 20. A tough league and this went on for two whole days.

Unrelenting pressure on performers and judges alike, and an endless energy that propelled us on saw everyone rising to the occasion. Some faltered as happens but they will return stronger to once again thrill their listeners.

The weather was great, we had some whinges, some hiccups, but hey what's a picnic without ants.

Saturday night's Gala Concert was a sell out two weeks prior.

Garry Lowe, Melanie Hall, Noel Stallard and Milton Taylor performed in a manner worthy of such high expectation. The presence of the talented contestants, possibly inspired them more than a little.

Sunday morning dawned super early, competition commenced at 8.30am, an all original day, serious, solemn, beautiful words painting beautiful pictures. Magic stuff.

Lunch, then the competitors final chance to impress. Original Humour swept over us through the afternoon towards the Awards Ceremony. Councillor Rae Frawley officiated.

The 2008 Female Australian Champion for the second year in a row was Carol Heuchan from Cooranbong NSW.

The 2008 Male Australian Champion was Greg North from Linden NSW.

The Overall Winners won \$1,000 and a Royal Doulton Crystal Bowl each.

The 2008 Australian Bush Poetry Written Competition received 123 entries. The numbers were disappointing, but the quality of poems submitted was high.

Graham Fredriksen of Kilcoy Queensland took out the Trophy and \$500.00 major cash prize for his powerful poem. 'The Only War We Had'. Congratulations to Graham and all entrants, for without our writers there'd be nothing to perform. Full placegetters and Highly Commended results on page 21.

The North Pine Bush Poets Group and all performers and writers and spectators associated with the successful 2008 Australian Bush Poetry Championships, wish to thank and recognise the generosity of the following sponsors.

Moreton Bay Regional Council - Caravanning - It's a Freedom Thing Quest - Community Newspapers - Radio Stations 98.9 FM - 612 ABC - 4BC, and 99.7 Community Radio.

Quietly pleased with whole operation, now its over, The whole group can take a bow.

## HARDEN NSW SET TO GO

### \$2,000 Prize-money

The Kruger Trust has again assisted Harden's Taste of Country with another \$2,000 in prize-money for the annual bush poetry competition, dinner, Brawl and breakfast.

An Open Bush Poetry Competition (male and female combined) and Dinner sponsored by the Kruger Trust, will be conducted at 6pm on Saturday night 25th October and a cooked **Poets Breakfast** the next morning. Charges for the dinner will be \$30 per head and \$10 for the breakfast. Bookings are essential, it's a popular venue.

In addition, this year will be a **Poets Brawl** open to all comers to be held after the comp whilst the judges are finalizing their scores

Originally known as the Harden-ed

Liars, this function is one of the most popular in the south with its proximity to Canberra and the Riverina.

The competition will be conducted in two sections:

1. Serious - Original or non-original
  2. Humorous - Original or non-original
- paying five places in each section. (1st \$300 - 2nd \$250 - 3rd \$150 - 4th \$100 - 5th \$50) plus \$100 for the Brawl and two prizes of \$100 each judged by an audience vote at the Sunday Breakfast; a total of \$2,000.

Limited entries at \$10.00 each includes dinner for competing poets closing on 10th October. There are no entry forms so nominations should be made in writing including full details and titles of the selected poems.

Bookings can be made with Lorraine Brown 6386 2555 (B.H.) or Connie McFadyen 6386 2575 e-mail [conniemcfadyen7@bigpond.com](mailto:conniemcfadyen7@bigpond.com)

## TASTE of COUNTRY HARDEN NSW

25th 26th October  
Bush Poets Dinner  
Performance Competition  
& Brawl  
Plus Sunday Brekkie

**\$2000.00**

**Prize-money**

Contacts:

Lorraine Brown 02 6386 2555 (B/hrs)  
Connie McFadyen 02 6386 2575  
e-mail: [conniemcfadyen7@bigpond.com](mailto:conniemcfadyen7@bigpond.com)

HARDEN ARTS COUNCIL  
PO Box 205  
Harden NSW 2587

## POET OF THE MOUNTAIN

The winner the 7<sup>th</sup> Mt. Kembla Poet of the Mountain (2008) is Zondrae King from Corrimal NSW who took out the award with her poem "The Hem of Her Apron". It was a most adept poem about the great mining disaster of 1902 at Mt Kembla where 96 men died.

## ZONDRAE KING



### Stolen Years

© Zondrae King (Corrimal) 01/08

I stand before this mirror and it's something strange to see  
for I don't recognize the face that's looking back at me.  
It should be my reflection there or so we're always told,  
but I am not that wrinkled, not that grey and not that old.  
Inside I feel I'm just the same, still seventeen, you see.  
If I am that lined stranger there, who stole those years from me?

Was it a band of pilferers who crept into my flat  
and stole from me my middle years. Ah, yes it must be that.  
I do recall that several nights, when babies needed me  
I didn't sleep but sat all night with infant on my knee.  
But that was just some nights I lost. I nursed you through your fears.  
How come it is I find that I am missing sev'ral years.

I well remember hours spent, so still, beside your bed  
caressing every precious curl that nestled on your head.  
The time I gave up walking with you to and from your school  
first one then two then three of you, 'child safety' was the rule.  
But that was just a moment here, an hour there, a day  
it didn't really feel like years. How did they slip away?

As time moved on, the mem'ry clear, when I took kids to sport  
I'd think of things I'd like to do, but days were just too short.  
In sun or rain or freezing wind, just watching you compete.  
Then win or lose, some loving words to make the day complete.  
They weren't years that I spent then, just half of Saturday.  
So where are all the stolen years? Who whisked them all away.

At night, I'd lie awake in bed, through teenage years and more  
and wait for you to slip your key so softly in the door.  
Then worrying as you grew up and helping with your quest  
career paths to shape your life, which calling fitted best.  
You stood there in your wedding gown and I stood by your side.  
To me, you were my little girl and not his blushing bride.

It feels like yesterday, I filled my final teenage year.  
What happened to my twenties? When did thirties disappear?  
I still remember golden years and now I'm into grey.  
But where are all the stolen years I've lost along the way.  
I think they're wrapped in memories and stored within my heart  
to resurrect in quiet times or when we are apart.

Then I will smile remembering the joy you gave to me  
when still a babe and feeding, safely nestled on my knee.  
To once again be holding fast a chubby little hand  
and then let go as off you walk. (Mothers will understand)  
So where are all the stolen years, the years 'tween now and then?  
Were they surrendered wisely? Where did they go, - and when?

I'm older now. My hair is grey. My life is soon complete.  
Today I find it's grandchildren who play around my feet.  
and when they ask me "Grandma, what did you do with your life?"  
I'll tell them proudly, that I was a mother and a wife.  
The years I can't account for were so fast and full, it's true.  
I'll say to them "the stolen years have been passed on to you."

Hers was a story of a woman's courage in the face of death, her anxieties, reflections and fears, yet her husband survived . . . a lovely twist to the end. There were 6 finalists in the Open Mic. section. Highly commended were Thelly Martin with an original 'Earth's Axle' and Trevor Taylor with 'A Minutes Silence'. Commended were; Fiona Latz who recited her free verse poem "The Wolf and a Key", and a high recommendation from the M.C. Nick Rheinberger, Len Leffley for his poem "Grape Leaves", Trevor Taylor for a poem by Cath Walker "Ballad of the Totems", Zondrae King for her poem "Stolen Years" and an emerging artist, 13 years old Aiden Chilcott with his own work "A Friend".

Len Leffley wrote a beautiful piece in memory of Cate Stevenson who passed away early this year. She was the inspirational force behind the Poets Breakfast since she started the Festival 6 years ago. Len's work was titled "Memory of Cate" which Dave Berry read out for him and presented it to Cate's husband afterwards.

The new Heritage Museum which was opened on Saturday 2 August will now be the home of all the Poet's of the Mountain Anthology, displaying every work presented in this year's and all the following years to come. It will be an excellent way of giving our talented poets an ongoing collection of their work. We hope that this will encourage poets to come out of the 'woodwork' and show the 'spirit of the mountain' in their own performative works.

The morning was fabulous as the poets vying for prizes had their time on the stage interspersed with fast and furious comedic performances by both the judges, Viv Sawyer and Russell Hannah and ABC Radio man Nick Rheinberger.

Nick actually is calling for poetic justice works to be sent to him about the Tasmanian company Blundstone from where he has been buying his size 13 boots for many, many years, and are now closing down.

It is a true dilemma for Nick so any 'Ode to the Blundstone' anyone can come up with would be much appreciated. Subscribed by Wendi Leigh

The winning poem t Mt Kembla's "Poet of The Mountain" Festival 3/8/08

## The Hem of Her Apron

© Zondrae King (Corrimal) 08/06

Like most girls of her generation she was clever with needle and thread,  
preparing with hope for the future, coverlets for both table and bed.  
Every petticoat, bonnet and linen was carefully folded away  
then stored in a drawer or a camphor wood chest awaiting her wedding day.  
There were cottons to wear in the summer. For winter some woolens were best.  
As the hem of her apron was finished she put it away with the rest.

She learned how to sew by eleven and continued on throughout her life.  
When love came to her she was twenty. She took vows as a coal miner's wife.  
The cabins that made up the village had slab sides and plain wooden floors,  
a room with a table, a simple bed and fuel burning stove by the doors.  
The wash tub stood out by the tank stand with the copper and stick leaning by.  
The hem of her apron was sodden as she hung the wet clothes out to dry.

By noon on each Tuesday and Friday she had baked on her mother's advice  
batches of biscuits and meat pies and fruit pies, bread that was crusty to slice.  
Instead of the scraps of old fabric she had sewn to a thick padded square,  
sometimes she would use just a dish cloth to handle the hot pans with care.  
Her baking would cool on the table then she'd wrap them and store them away.  
The hem of her apron was crusty with the flour and grease from the tray.

Her usual habit was order and that Thursday she scrubbed the board floor.  
She mopped and she dusted, moving the soot then sweeping it all out the door.  
The force of the blast nearly floored her. First she felt it then she heard the sound.  
Her instinct told her there was peril to the souls who were still underground.  
Then she rose and in great trepidation she joined with the rest of the line.  
The hem of her apron grew dusty from the road as she ran to the mine.

A full shift of men had been working at the time of that earth shaking blast.  
Her husband had not made the surface. She would hold on with hope 'til the last.  
With each one they dragged from the rubble she would look and then sigh with relief  
over bodies of men who'd been robbed of life. This time coal was the thief.  
She joined with a small band of others, and the priest, seeking comfort in Psalms.  
The hem of her apron was crumpled as she crushed it between anxious palms.

Circumstance can make heroes of many. The humblest can often be brave.  
From the darkness she saw stumbling figures helping others to walk from the cave.  
All at once he broke through to the sunlight. The darkness had felt like a shroud.  
Passing on his companion to others, he searched for her face in the crowd.  
With a small cry of joy she ran forward and he stooped to receive her embrace.  
The hem of her apron was blackened as she wiped dirt and tears from his face.

It was only three hours she waited in the dust and the crowd and the chill  
and though he returned there were others who, remaining below them, were still.  
That July in the mine at Mt Kembla, ninety six men were lost to coal.  
We remember them still with a tribute, each one is a martyred soul.  
Round the world there are millions of miners. Disaster can occur any day.  
The hem of her apron's a symbol for those who stand vigil this way.

You can find this poem in Zondrae's first little book of poems.  
Zondrae King [zandwking@optusnet.com.au](mailto:zandwking@optusnet.com.au)

### Donna and Vera's Poem 6.7.08

From Jacqui Warnock of Narrabri, after a spell in the Kimberleys WA.

Kimberley waters are clear and inviting  
But try as we may the fish are not biting  
Though we cast and we wait  
The hook they'll not take  
Of big catches here we'll not be skiting - YET!

### REMINDER:

Walk-up poets are advised to record their names for appearances at St Edwards Tamworth on January 19th and 21st. Please phone: Edward Parmenter on (02) 6652 3716.

## MIST ON THE MACINTYRE

©A E Raymer 2008

It's many years since I left home  
to taste the world's delights,  
To sing its songs, to right its  
wrongs, to scale its lofty heights,  
But way back in the corners of my  
overactive mind  
Are memories of yesterday and  
what I'd left behind.

Now I'm leaning on a railing,  
watching cold grey seas roll by,  
And heading back to dusty tracks  
and hot and thirsty skies.  
The bluebells will be ringing when  
I step upon the shore,  
And I guarantee the willows won't  
be weeping anymore.

CHORUS:

I know it now but I refused to see  
There's no place on this earth I'd  
rather be.  
Where the Southern Cross is shin-  
ing  
Lies my cloud's silver lining,  
And I'm going where the gums are  
calling me.

I'm going home to see the land  
that I ignored before.  
I'll take a train across the plain  
they call the Nullarbor.  
I'll sit and watch a creek run by  
beside a field of grain,  
See the mist rise on the Macintyre  
at sunset, after rain.

I'll watch the willows wash their  
hair along the Castlereigh,  
The gentle flow of water glow as  
sunset ends the day.

The years will see me wander all  
across the Great South Land,  
For I mean to leave my footprint  
firmly bedded in its sand.

CHORUS;

I know it now but I refused to see  
There's no place on this earth I'd  
rather be.  
Where the Southern Cross is shin-  
ing  
Lies my cloud's silver lining,  
And I'm going where the gums are  
calling me.

(Successful entry in the Australian  
Songwriting Awards).

(See p. 4)

## BROLGA DREAMING

© V.P. Read Bicton, WA.

Winning entry 2008 Bronze Swagman Award



An urban Aboriginal who's never seen the bush;  
I grew up in the city with its endless strife and push.  
I do not know my heritage, or of my totem lore;  
My parents can't remember tribal stories any more.  
Yet, in my soul are yearnings that will never be denied;  
My heart is ever haunted by a Dreamtime locked inside.  
At night I dream of places where in life I've never been,  
And dance the ancient dances that before I've never seen.

I sit and watch our children playing in a city street  
With traffic fumes around them, and hot tar beneath their feet.  
There's hopelessness within me. There is something I must do;  
The Spirits never tell me, so I haven't got a clue.  
Some how, some way, it urges, all these children must go home;  
Back to the womb that bore them; places where the ancients roam.  
Back to the Brolga dreaming, and the secret, sacred caves;  
Back to their tribal totems, and the Elders' lonely graves.

I've done the white man's dreaming, and I've tried to live their ways,  
But mateship's not extended, and I'm rarely given praise.  
My home's supplied by welfare, who don't care it's falling down;  
I drive a clapped-out Falcon on my forays into town.  
I've tried to rise above it, black despair and grim defeat;  
The overwhelming sadness in my people when we meet  
In parklands near our ghetto, where we talk and laugh and play;  
Forgetting for an instant that we live the white man's way.

I've tried the drugs and liquor, but no comfort can be found;  
Lost in that dark oblivion that has no sight or sound.  
It never stopped the chanting that was thrumming in my brain;  
The drone of ancient music that is causing so much pain.  
White folk don't understand it, plagued by strange, compelling dreams  
That take me to a strange land; rugged hills and tortured streams.  
Back to my Brolga Dreaming; distant land so far away;  
Back to the tribal dancing where ancestors stamp and sway.

I ask my old grandfather if he'll tell me what he knows,  
But he cannot remember in his alcoholic doze.  
My parents will not tell me of their childhoods dark and grim,  
When taken from their gunyahs, authorized by white man's whim.  
They drink to drown their sorrows, and to dull the ancient song  
That calls them to their homeland; to the place where they belong.  
I'll find no peace in cities, nor in any place I'll roam;  
For ancients of my Dreaming, all my life, will call me home.



## BACK HOME!

© Bert Pullen - Tweed Heads 3.3.08

I've been away awhile you know, to visit Argentina  
and on return see the grass grow and looking  
so much greener;  
Yet when I left we were in drought, 'twas the  
longest ever dry,  
and the main news most talked about was  
water in short supply.

But now I hear about the flood that rose up in  
a hurry,  
and I now learn that Kevin Rudd had said  
that we were sorry,  
And Bernie Banton stood his ground to fight  
the corporate giant,  
and he hung on to the last round, till death  
'gainst odds defiant.

And what about those Indians to come back  
from a thrashing,  
and interest rates went up again while stock  
exchange went crashing,  
and I notice the price of fuel has now hit an  
all time high,  
and some say as a general rule, soon we  
won't afford to buy.

Yet with all this stuff to collate, I shall sift  
through at my will,  
and I have no doubt we will rate the lucky  
country still,  
and if you witnessed what I've seen you  
would count yourself as lucky,  
the rich and poor so much between, from  
mansion to a shanty

Yet for me, 'twas the very poor, the squalor,  
the horse and cart,  
the real poverty that I saw still tugs at strings  
of my heart,  
So if you whinge, you're on your own regard-  
less of the reason,  
and I'm so glad that I got home before the  
footy season.



Congratulations to Mary and Bill Kemp of Kempsey who will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary on 11th December. They were married at Wauchope in 1948.

Long time association member Ray Halliday of Yamba on the NSW far north coast has been seriously ill in hospital for the past six weeks. He's had a pretty rough time of it so here's hoping he's on the road to recovery by now.

Long-John Best advises that the North Pine Poets Regular monthly event will still be on the 1st and 3rd Sunday mornings at a new venue, the Fern Gully Café. No longer at Dad and Dave's place. New phone numbers are 07 3886 2660 and 07 3285 2180

North Pine has also **claimed the date** for the Australian Championships with a new date to be set down for August 2009. The dates will be approximately the same time as this year, coming up to the Gympie Muster.



## The Friday Night Dance

by Morva Power

Take those curling pins out of your hair  
May then put on your prettiest gown.  
We'll shake off the years that have aged us  
and have a night out on the town.  
All the folk around here think we're past it,  
too old for some fun and romance  
They reckon we're just two old fogies  
not up to the Friday night dance.  
So we'll show them some fine points of dancing  
and take to the floor with a whirl  
I'll swing you right round in the corner  
just like when you first were my girl.

All the young blokes today stand there shaking,  
they don't hold a girl in their arms  
They prance and they jig to the music  
arms length from those bundles of charms.  
How I wish we were back in the woolshed  
the smell of fresh wool in the air  
We danced through the night till the dawn broke  
then vowed our whole lives we would share.  
Let's remember those nights on the dance floor  
the pleasure and fun we had then.  
We'll have one more fling while we can  
May and relive those good times again  
Though we know we are older and slower  
we're never too old for romance.  
Let's store up a new set of memories  
tonight at the Friday night dance.

*The Hunter Bush Poets  
(an affiliate of Hunter Valley Folk Club)  
Presents*

### The NSW OPEN BUSH POETRY STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

sponsored by Morisset Country  
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**Bookings: Contact  
Secretary, Robin Franks  
02 4994 5926**

**rfra0155@bigpond.net.au  
or go to**

**www.hunterpoets.org.au/dnn**

**DATE CLAIMED FOR NEXT YEAR  
17th October 2009**

## THE ABL AWARDS

We are pleased to announce that entries are now being taken for the 2009 Australian Bush Laureate Awards to be presented in Tamworth, Country Music Capital, on Tuesday, January 20.

As you may have seen in the news, we have added a category this year for bush poem, so this year, nomination is open for.. Book of the Year; Bush Poem of the Year; Album of the Year; Single Recorded Performance of the Year; Children's Poem of the Year  
Another major alteration for 2008/9 is in the criteria of the Children's Poem category. We have opened it up by making individual published poems or recorded poems eligible for the category, rather than entire books or recordings. Many poets have single poems aimed at younger readers or listeners in their books or albums and we hope this will encourage more writers to do this without necessarily having to produce specialised childrens publications or recordings.

We have also included the requirement for one poem per writer in this category and some others.

In addition to the above categories, we have the Judith Hosier Award given for services to bush poetry. Finalists in the Australian Bush Laureate Awards will be released in December with winners announced at the gala presentation concert in the famous Tamworth Town Hall during the January country music festival.

Nominations close 17th October. Details and further information can be obtained from our website [www.bushlaureate.com.au](http://www.bushlaureate.com.au) or by phone 02 6762 2993, or by emailing [info@bushlaureate.com.au](mailto:info@bushlaureate.com.au) or by writing to PO Box 73, Tamworth, 2340.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.  
from Max Ellis

## Bryan Kelleher Literary Award

Australian Unity in association with the Australian Natives' Association and Henry Lawson Memorial & Literary Society invited submissions of original bush poetry to be considered for the inaugural Australian Unity Bryan Kelleher Literary Award. Bryan Kelleher was a long-standing member of the Australian Natives Association who was passionate about acknowledging and honouring Australian achievements. The Australian Unity Bryan Kelleher Literary Award is their way of celebrating and preserving the substantial contribution Bryan made during his long association with the ANA and the Henry Law-

son Society.

The response to the Australian Unity Awards literary competition was outstanding with 334 entries received. The judges, after reading all the submissions were very impressed by the standard of poems.

Congratulations to Ed Walker (pictured) and David Campbell on taking out the first three places. In addition, the judges were particularly impressed with the poems entered in the Young Achievers awards designed to encourage our young writers to continue to grow as bush poets.

The winners of the Young Achiever awards were: Daniel Terrington, Grace Lund and Rupert Christie.

The Henry Lawson Memorial and Literary Society Inc. was formed in 1923 by a group of



people who wanted to celebrate the memory of one of Australia's greatest story writers and poets, Henry Lawson.

The group meets once a month and members read and recite their own works as well as stories and poems by Henry Lawson and other traditional Australian writers.

Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month, at Monastery Hall, St Francis' Church, corner Lonsdale

and Elizabeth Streets in Melbourne.





**Tom Stonham**

**1914 - '18**

© 2008 Tom Stonham

I'd dropped in for a drink  
 at The Pub With No Beer.  
 I saw a sad sight there  
 and cried a quiet tear.  
 Now, I'm no bleedin' heart  
 but you'll know what I mean...  
 The three McGee brothers...  
 1914 - '18.

Three old-fashioned photos,  
 faces framed on the wall.  
 Three World War One Diggers  
 who had given their all.  
 'way back then, here and now,  
 ninety long years between...  
 The three McGee brothers...  
 1914 - '18.

Proud father, proud mother,  
 girls who loved them, good friends  
 came to wish them Good Luck  
 as their final leave ends.  
 Then 'away to the fray',  
 (yes, such words were once said)  
 where the grim Western Front  
 saw all three brothers dead.

Three words, 'Killed in Action!'  
 Where, when, how did they die?  
 Three young Aussie soldiers,  
 A.I.F. ... P.B.I.\*  
 Gallipoli, France, Flanders,  
 blood-drenched trenches in Hell!  
 The three McGee brothers.  
 Taylor's Arm, fought and fell.

John, Michael and Patrick,  
 gone, yet somehow, still here.  
 Wind, waratahs, wattle  
 'round The Pub With No Beer.  
 We lost sixty thousand,  
 what those lives might have been.  
 Like... those three McGee brothers...  
 1914 - '18.

\*Poor Bloody Infantry



**Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc Literary Awards 2008**

Pictured left, Helen Rhodes representing Country Energy, Terry Regan Winner of the Country Energy Leonard Teale Memorial Performance Poetry Competition and Don Jones, The Land newspaper, sponsors of the Henry Lawson statuette.

**HELP REQUIRED** One of Cheryl Peters current projects is establishing a website for the Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc Literary Awards and The Henry Lawson Centre. Cheryl would like to include as much detail as possible regarding previous winners and photos of interest. However, it appears that the Society's records are incomplete with winning entries retained but without details of the poet etc. and some winning entries not being available. If anyone has information relating to the history of the Gulgong awards, photos etc they would be most grateful to receive them, by email or snail mail.



**Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc Literary Awards 2008 National Primary Student Section, Years 3-6 Winner**

***Shearing out the Back***

Jess Hancock, Hargraves Public School

We are shearing out the back  
 We clip the sheep that are white and black  
 'Click' go the shears as we cut the wool  
 Oh gosh that sheep was as big as a bull

Weeks have been spent shearing those sheep  
 The pile of wool looks almost neck deep  
 The fleeces are soft, black and white  
 Those shearing guys shear into the night

Packing the wool into big white packs  
 Bending down you can see their bony backs  
 Sipping coffee as the morning comes to life  
 Breakfast is served by the wife

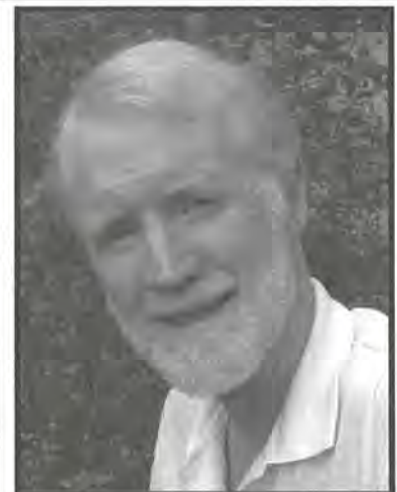
The floor boards are dirty, brown and black  
 Look at that great big wool stack  
 Life is great when you work in the shed  
 The fleeces feel softer than my bed

The chutes are dirty, dinted and scratched  
 Like the pants of mine the wife has patched  
 Up the tracks the shorn sheep run  
 Over the hills and into the sun

When I go back into the house  
 I've got to be as quiet as a mouse  
 All my kids are tucked up in bed  
 Now it's time for me to be fed

I get a beer and watch T.V  
 What a great day it's been for me!

Contact the Secretary, Cheryl Peters, Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc., PO Box 235, 147 Mayne St, Gulgong NSW 2852 email: henrylawsongulgong@yahoo.com.au



**DAVID CAMPBELL**

Winner of the 2008 Henry Lawson Society of NSW Literary Award for 'The Ballad of Mulligan's Pub'. The runner-up was Don Adams of Paraparaumu NZ with 'The King is Dead' followed by Kym Eitel of Limestone Creek Q. with her poem 'A Bell in the Mist'

## THE BALLAD OF MULLIGAN'S PUB by David Campbell, Beaumaris, Vic

We were footloose and free, just the kelpie and me,  
as we wandered the wilderness trails,  
from the Pilbara sands through the red desert lands  
to the outback of west New South Wales.

Then one day in the heat I was feeling quite beat  
and encountered a welcome surprise.  
On a dusty old track stood a tumbledown shack  
with a sign that brought tears to my eyes.

### MRS MULLIGAN'S PUB – ICE-COLD BEER AND GREAT GRUB

There it was in that landscape so dry,  
where there wasn't a tree or a shrub I could see,  
nor a bird in the pitiless sky.

I had travelled so far, and yet there at the bar  
sat a man I will never forget.  
He looked up with a grin, and said: "Come on right in,  
yer'll be wantin' some tucker, I'll bet!

Take a break, grab a chair, 'cause I'll soon be right there,  
an' I'll get yer whatever yer need.  
Mrs M, she ain't 'ere, but I'll pull yer a beer,  
an' I'll cook up a bloody good feed.

Put yer feet up, old chum, an' I'll give yer the drum  
while I'm working away on that meal.  
While I spin yer a tale yer can shout me an ale."  
I just laughed and said: "Mate, it's a deal!"

"Now it ain't 'ard ter guess that the place is a mess,"  
he began, "but this pub is unique,  
an' the reason's a beaut, it's a flaming great hoot...  
'cause it bloody well weren't 'ere last week!"

When he saw my quick smile he said; "Ang on a while,  
yer'll be thinkin' I'm playing a part,  
but a month yesterday it was miles thataway...  
an' I'm telling the truth, cross me 'eart!

Yer'll 'ave 'eard of the drought in these parts 'ereabout,  
it's been killin' the country fer years.  
But the heavens awoke an' the bloody drought broke...  
you ain't 'eard so much laughter an' cheers!

When the rain fell in sheets kids was surfen' the streets,  
we'd a lake where the desert 'ad been.  
But we drinkers stood fast sayin': Stewth, can it last?  
There ain't nothin' like this that we've seen!

Though we sandbagged the door it came up through the  
floor  
an' the water soon covered our knees...  
it's the devil ter drink when yer thinkin' yer'll sink  
on yer very first time overseas!

That's when Mrs M spoke sayin': Listen, no joke,  
I agree that the outlook ain't good,  
but I'm tellin' yer straight that we made this town great  
by supportin' our mates when we could.

It defines 'ow we live, all the 'elp we can give  
when the prospects ain't lookin' too bright.  
So the answer is plain, all you blokes use yer brain,  
an' I reckon we'll soon set things right.

We'll make Mulligan's boat, get the pub 'ere ter float,  
it's the best chance we got, mates, no bull!  
In the cellar down 'ere we got barrels of beer...  
but they're no bloody good when they're full!

So we all gave a cheer an' we 'auled up the beer,  
an' 'ere yer'll be thinkin' I'm daft...  
but we drained all the dregs from a good dozen kegs,  
an' we floated away like a raft!

Well, ter cut it all short, it's right 'ere we made port  
when the sun came ter warm us once more.  
Though we did what we could, like a lump of old wood,  
we was wrecked on this desolate shore."

Now, I know what you think...I had too much to drink...  
but the sting in this tale's a real beaut,  
for I met down the road, busy fixing her load,  
Mrs M in a rusty old ute.

'Ow-de-do, mate, she cried, 'ope yer made it inside,  
'cause the Mulligan name must live on.  
When yer out on the street tell the people yer meet,  
so the story will spread when yer've gone.

'Cause I'm headin' right back with some canvas an' tack,  
ain't no way that me pub's gunna fail.  
When the next Big Wet comes we won't sit on our bums...  
we'll be headin' fer town under sail!

Now I've done what she said and the story has spread  
from the Alice to old Gundagai.  
If you're out on the plain when the rain comes again...  
watch for Mulligan's Pub sailing by!

## NSW South Coast JUNIOR POETRY COMPETITION

Thanks to the efforts of NSW south coast resident John Davis of Ulladulla the annual Junior Poetry Competition held on September 13th continues to grow as a feature event between the four regional schools of Shoalhaven Anglican, Milton Public, Ulladulla Public and St. Mary's Catholic Schools.

Sixty one entries were received in the written section which was judged by the current South Australian State Champion who commented highly on the quality of the submissions.

There were twenty-nine performers in the under 12's section covering both Classical and Contemporary works with no less than five original entries.

Cash prizes in the recited sections went towards the purchase of school library books (\$100) with Ulladulla winning by the narrow margin of one point.

Thanks to the generosity of local sponsors a total of \$665 was distributed in prizes.

A special appreciation is also due to Chris Woodland, Tania Smith, Lurline Gainsford, Darren Smith, and Ruth Davis who worked as judges and coordinators. Congratulations to the teachers from these four schools for their efforts, there is no doubt without their work, encouragement and dedication this event would not be the success that it is. (p. 21)

## Will Ogilvie, Ben Hall and John Meredith

The question of who wrote The Death of Ben Hall has been asked many times over the years. To my knowledge the poem was first published under the writer's name in 1924, so why does the question persist?

Australia's eminent folklorist, the late John Meredith (1920-2001), had for much of his life suspected that this powerful ballad had been written by Will Ogilvie as he believed that there was 'a certain quality' in the Scottish poet's works which 'is missing from the work of his contemporaries'. Merro called this quality 'Gaelic mystique' and he could recognise it in the Ben Hall poem.

When researching material for his book on Ogilvie, The Breaker's Mate (Kangaroo Press, 1996), Merro found that Nancy Keesing had discovered that the Smith's Weekly had published the poem in 1924 under Ogilvie's name. Accompanying the poem was a graphic sketch by Stan Cross showing the shot bushranger clutching his bloodied chest, head thrown back and the silhouette of a distant trooper holding a rifle. Merro was so impressed with this page from the Smith's Weekly that he had a copy made, framed it and hung it on his wall.

There could be a few reasons why The Death of Ben Hall had been attrib-

uted to other names, including the ubiquitous 'Anon'. Ogilvie had something to say on this general matter himself (though not necessarily relating to the Hall ballad) under the heading Literary Thieves. In this he mentions one plagiarist who had Ogilvie's A Scotch Night printed in several Scottish newspapers

under the name of Bogue. The Bulletin - with tongue in cheek - suggested that Bogue was a misprint of Rogue!

certain individuals, claiming them, in a sense, as their own. The Duke did say that the chap that claimed and sang Shearing in a Bar, though a dirty fighter, actually did a good job of the song.

How the writing of The Breaker's Mate came about is also of interest. In 1992 I introduced John Meredith to Jim Kiley (1939-2001) of Bourke. Jim was a drover in the old days, a poet and songwriter whose song When the Big Mobs Came to Bourke won the Heritage Award at Tamworth in 1985. While discussing favourite poets the name Will Ogilvie came up. Ogilvie had spent considerable time around the Bourke area and had been employed at Belalie station, between Enngonia and the Queensland border, north of Bourke. The three of us questioned why a book had not been published of this favoured poet of the outback. While travelling homewards a couple of days later Merro suggested



WH OGILVIE



BEN HALL

Similarly, the great Duke Triton got into a rough scrap with a bloke that sung Duke's Shearing in a Bar, claiming he had written it himself. Communications being as limited as they were in earlier days, when poetry was everywhere, especially on the track, it was a fact of life that many claimed other people's works as their own. Also, I suppose that some items became special party pieces for



JOHN MEREDITH

### GLOBAL WARMING

by John Highfield - Hamilton V

Ice compressed and coalesced in the Polar Region  
 into icebergs that travel legions  
 commanded by currents and tides  
 glistening with sun melting their sides  
 finally arriving alongside  
 Circular Quay harbourside  
 Stowaway seals disembark  
 and swim to the Taronga Zoo Park  
 Diminishing icebergs stand as a warning  
 to the future in a world of global warming  
 Harbour levels rise and we wonder why  
 how long the Opera House will silhouette the sky  
 And will Sydney a new Atlantis be  
 to be found by future generations below the sea  
 To ask nations to trade Co2 pollution  
 is this the solution  
 but we wonder why  
 global warming; sceptics sought to deny

### BUNDY NEWS

The Annual General Meeting of the Bundaberg Poets' Society Inc. was held on September 13th and the following is the executive and committee for the next twelve months :- President - Jayson Russell; vice-President - Sandy Lees; Secretary - Dean Collins; Assist. Secretary - May Avis; Treasurer - Sam Dye; Publicity Officer - Sandy Lees; Committee members - Reg Outen, Maureen Outen, Jan Facey & Joan Lane". Contact phone numbers for the Bundaberg Poets' Society Inc. are 0411360922, 41514631 or 41591705.

#### BEREAVEMENT - JIM LYSAGHT 4-8-1934 -30-8-1008:

Jim Lysaght, a past President and dedicated club member until his failing health, passed away on August 30th. Jim was first diagnosed with cancer in 1995 but never complained. He once said: "There are three things a person needs. You live for the day but there is more than that. First of all you have to be positive, then you have to have faith, and then you have to set yourself goals." One of Jim's goals was to reach his & wife, Joan's golden wedding anniversary, which they did. Even when his health was at it's lowest he was still interested in the club's activities as well as the Bundy Muster. Our sincere sympathy and loving thoughts to Joan and his family.

that I write the Ogilvie book, as he stated, it had to be done. I countered by asking that, as he had about twenty books under his lap, why didn't he research and write this book. In answer, he claimed he had written his last book. For a couple of weeks following that trip he pressed me on the subject, but I kept declining; employment, family and living too far from the Mitchell Library in Sydney, I gave as reasons for non-acceptance of his suggestion. Before three weeks had elapsed he rang me one night and said that he had found someone to write the Ogilvie book. When I enquired, 'Who?' He replied, 'Me!'

It was while he was researching material for this book he came across the recently unveiled bronze statue of Matthew Flinder's cat, Trim, adorning a window ledge at the Mitchell Library in Macquarie Street. He subsequently wrote a poem about this historic feline, simply titled Trim, which, if I recall correctly, was published in the Stockman's Hall of Fame newspaper. Merro instigated considerable discussion of Ogilvie through the pages of the SHOF and readers of that journal were, without doubt, in favour of acknowledging Will Ogilvie as their most popular out-back poet.

Two years after the publication of *The Breaker's Mate*, a chap contacted Merro and told him that the hut Ogilvie had used on Belalie was still in existence. Merro now became as passionate as ever with this knowledge and after a couple of phone calls we went on what was to be the great man's last field trip. He wanted photos of the poet's hut for a second book he was writing on Ogilvie, which he called *The Scottish Jackaroo*. (He had discovered a considerable amount of extra material which had inspired this new book, even though he had stated that *The Breaker's Mate* was to be his last literary effort.)

I was not optimistic of our chances of locating the hut. Floods had isolated Bourke and Merro had no idea how huge the original Belalie had been before it had been cut up and made into smaller holdings. I knew where Belalie homestead was, but the cottage seemed to be a long, long way from that spot. Fortunately, Merro, with the bit firmly between his teeth convinced me we had to give it a go.

I was still very dubious about our hopes when we found we had to cross several kilometres of floodwaters as we came, slowly, into Bourke. A couple of

days later, after catching up with friends, we headed towards Enngonia, from where we headed northwest. This was all red country which had absorbed the heavy rains and responded with a great show of growth, including the magnificent desert grevillia that begged to be photographed. We also came across the grave the bushranger 'Midnight' (Thomas Law, cattle duffer, horse thief and murderer of a police sergeant) as we headed further into country I was now unfamiliar with.

Eventually we found the place and spoke to the friendly owners Michael and Averill. Michael showed us the hut, which was in excellent condition, being well cared for by he and his wife. He explained that the hut had been shifted since Ogilvie's time, as its original position was prone to the occasional flooding. Inside, Michael showed us a homemade clothes cabinet, which he was convinced was used by the great poet. Outside he showed us an old utility, which had had a bed frame welded to the back and had been used for spotlight shooting. We were told that this bed had also been in the hut. Unfortunately it was beyond restoration to be preserved as another Ogilvie-associated artefact.

Merro was extremely frustrated in not being able to find a publisher for *The Scottish Jackaroo*. It now resides safely in the National Library of Australia, hopefully to one day be enjoyed by appreciative Australians.

Chris Woodland, 1.9.2008.



## ONE 'T' IN PATERSON

© Frank Daniel - Canowindra NSW  
8.9.08

'An error' you say, or a 'typo'!  
Careless is my point of view.  
'Banjo' saw fit to use only one,  
many persist using two.

It's blasphemy, that's what I call it.  
Irreverence comes to my mind.  
He only used 'one' in his signing,  
how many of you are so blind?

You can see by the sample above,  
third letter after the 'P'  
whenever you write the bush bard's name  
remember - there's only one 'T'.

## HOME is the TRAVELLER



What a month it was for Blue Mountains Poet Gregory North. After celebrating one of those milestone birthdays he set off to Queensland to

compete in the Australian Bush Poetry Championships at North Pine winning three of the four sections and an Australian Championship trophy. Greg was runner-up in 2007.

With such a high standard of overall competition the win was all the more rewarding placing another feather in the cap of a man who has won numerous awards around the country since his initial foray into performance poetry just five years ago.

Greg was introduced to the traditions of bush poetry as a student at Katoomba Primary School and it took nearly 30 years for those seeds to bear fruit.

It was the experience of watching Milton Taylor and Terry Regan and the late Denis Kevans at Katoomba's monthly Parakeet Poetry Gathering that spurred him on.

After North Pine he spent the next week at the Toyota National Country Music Muster near Gympie. There he took part in a performance at the local school, performed in three of the poets breakfast concerts to thousands of people and played a part in the 'Poetry Olympics' for 'team China!' His team lost, but he did make the front page of the local paper.

An appearance at Kilcoy for their bi-monthly poetry and singing meeting and a few days stopover with Grahame Fredriksen and long nights discussing poetry and punctuation combined with a little farm-life where he added to his experiences 'milking a cow'.

From there he travelled back into NSW for a show at the Ashford Public School and then as guest performer at the 'Helicopter Ho-down' in Inverell with Prousty and Laura Downing.

Greg's performance of 'The Man from Snowy River' featuring fourteen different accents with a hat for each one has been a crowd favourite wherever he goes.



IAN HAWTHORN with the WAR DIARY

Original poems of legendary Australian Bush Poet AB 'Banjo' Paterson have been discovered in an 1899 cash book whose back pages contained unseen Paterson poetry.

Major GL Lee, a commander of a squadron of NSW Lancers during the Boer War in South Africa used the cash book as a diary for listing horses and writing his private thoughts.

'Banjo' Paterson who travelled with Major Lee as a war correspondent aboard SS Kent also used the book to write *'There's another blessed horse fell down'* and *'Johnny Boer'*.

The discovery of this 109 year old war diary has thrilled Australian literature buffs.

Former soldier Ian Hawthorn, a self-described "nosey parker", found the material while snooping through old documents in an archive storeroom at Australia's oldest military base, the Royal NSW Lancer Barracks at Paramatta.

Volunteers at the museum which displays vehicles, weaponry, uniforms and memorabilia, have only begun to sift through a "heritage goldmine" of maps, manuscripts, scrapbooks and war diaries.

The diary itself is hugely significant as the personal diary of Major Lee, who led the regiment fighting in the Boer War.

At the back of the diary, here are a series of hand-written poems signed AB 'Banjo' Paterson.

One of the poems is all about the horses on board. They were forever falling down, which caused chaos, and it stands to reason Paterson was inspired to write that poem while he was on the SS Kent.

Most are known Banjo Paterson poems that predate the publication dates, but in some cases they have verses significantly different from those in the published editions."

Mr Hawthorn said Paterson, who famously wrote *The Man From Snowy River* and the national song *Waltzing Matilda*, wrote the poems in an inspired moment on the long, chaotic journey to South Africa.

Librarians have verified Paterson's signature, but an official authentication is still needed.

"This has to be a landmark discovery," Mr Hawthorn said. "We need to have the handwriting authenticity verified, but it will be costly."

Mr Hawthorn is seeking sponsorship to have forensic experts authenticate the writings as those of the bush poet celebrated on Australia's \$10 note.

Extract from  
**Another Blessed Horse fell Down**  
*And when the war is over, and the fights are past and done*  
*And you're all at home with medals on your chest*  
*And you've learned to sleep so soundly that the firing of a gun*  
*At your ear hole wouldn't rob you of your rest*  
*As you lie in slumber deep, if your wife walks in her sleep*  
*And tumbles down the stairs and breaks her crown*  
*Oh, that won't awaken you for you'll say it's nothing new*  
*It's another blessed horse fell down!*

**APPRECIATION:** The Editor would like to show his appreciation to **Duncan Williams** (ex Tamworth) of Randwick NSW for suggesting the above story (among many others) and also to former ABPA Editor **Maureen Stonham** of Nambucca Heads NSW for her continued support in research and assistance with the magazine. Goodoneyzboth.

## THE BUSH MANS BOOK

by Will Ogilvie



All roughly bound together  
 The red-brown pages lie  
 In red sirroco leather  
 With scored lines to the sky:  
 The Western suns have burned them,  
 The desert winds dog's-eared,  
 And winter rains have turned them  
 With wanton hands and weird!

They flutter, torn and lonely,  
 Far out, like lost brown birds;  
 The Western stockmen only  
 Can spell their wondrous words;  
 And gifted souls and sages  
 May gather round and look,  
 They cannot read the pages  
 That fill the Bushman's Book!

But open, night and day-time,  
 It spreads with witching art  
 A picture-book of playtime  
 To hold the Bushman's heart,  
 And learnèd in the lore of it,  
 And lessoned in its signs,  
 He reads the scroll, and more of it,  
 That lies between the lines.

He sees the well-filled purses,  
 From Abbot-tracks like wires,  
 And hears the deep-drawn curses  
 That dog the four-inch tyres!  
 He knows the busy super  
 By worn hoofs flat as plates,  
 And tracks the mounted trooper  
 By shod hoofs at the gates!

He knows the tracks unsteady,  
 Of riders "on the bust,"  
 Of nags "knocked up already"  
 By toes that drag the dust;  
 The "split" hoofs and the "quartered,"  
 He'll show you on the spot,  
 And brumbies that have watered,  
 And brumbies that have not!

So, North and West o' westward,  
 Nor-West and North again,  
 The Bush Book is the best word  
 Among the Western men;  
 They find her lines and hail them,  
 And read with trusting eyes:  
 They know if old mates fail them.  
 The Bush Book never lies!

First published in  
*The Bulletin*, 14 December 1905

# POETRY RUNS IN HIS VEINS

After reading "Why Bush Poetry?" (August 2008), Julie Jenkinson of Ubobo Queensland submitted the following about her son Trent who is keeping the traditions of our forebears well and truly alive and was recognized for this on Australia Day this year.

Trent won the Calliope Shire Council Australia Day Cultural Award presented to persons who have made a noteworthy contribution to the cultural life of the community or had made an outstanding achievement in cultural activities. Trent won this award in recognition of the numerous free performances of bush poetry that he had given to the community over the past four and a half years.

Trent started learning and reciting bush poetry at ten and a half years when neighbours asked him to give a whip-cracking display for some tourists visiting their cattle property for Beef 2003.

With whip-cracking as strenuous as it is, Trent's mother thought he would knock up fairly quickly, and with a lot of visitors expected from overseas she taught him a funny poem about a kangaroo 'Bluey's Boxing Kangaroo', by Ray Rose, to recite as well. Trent performed that poem well with only a little prompt here and there.

Seven of the visitors, three of them school teachers, appealed to Julie and her husband to encourage their son to continue to learn bush poetry as they felt he had a natural talent for it.

Looking back now, says Julie, 'that poem was a herculean effort on Trent's part as it contains 27 verses. (Talk about pushy mothers, Julies learnt a lot since that first poem!)

Trent continued from there entering his first competition at the Mt Larcom Show that year where he received a first place and realised that bush poetry was fun and that he enjoyed making people laugh.

In 2004 Julie received some funding from RADF for Trent to have some speech and drama lessons to help his confidence and to learn stage presentation and delivery etc. He entered the local eisteddfod and although he did well he didn't enjoy it much as it was too formal. In his own words, 'they

were too stiff and uptight! Under this speech and drama teacher he also sat for and passed with merit - Grade I, Speech & Drama from Trinity College of London.

When he went to board at St Brendan's, Yeppoon, for high school, the staff were all very supportive and encouraged Trent to perform in competitions, special events such as Senior Citizens Week, and fundraising activities such as Royal Flying Doctor barbecues etc. He also performed for the school at their Open Days and their fund raising rodeos. He represented the school in the annual Educational Supplement, which appeared in the Queensland Country Life last year. Boarding schools use this lift-out as an advertisement to families looking for a school for their children.

Trent and his mother have learnt a lot from other poets in their journey's to festivals and competitions etc. They have all encouraged him, some of them have given him advice, little tips, books, and CDs but absolutely everybody has given him encouragement, enthusiasm and friendship. They have taught him how to laugh off a mistake or a forgotten line and just generally how to have fun with bush poetry.

"At Bundy this year, I was thrilled to see Trent give a new young beginner one of his own CDs as encouragement" said Julie, who has now started performing herself. "And I must say that all of the poets and organisers that we have met in Charters Towers and Bundaberg have been wonderful and have encouraged me as well as Trent. They have really made us feel as though we belong and we really love being part of the Bush Poetry family. We owe them all a very big thank you.

Trent was taken to Charters Towers for the Qld State Championships where he won two gold and a bronze medal in the 13-18 years section and received a second in the written competition for this section.



**Trent Jenkinson 'Silver Budgie'**  
Award winner, Charlee Marshall  
Written Competition 2007

In July Trent was taken to Bundaberg for the 'Bundy Muster' where he competed in the novice section and won two first places.

Trent has now left school and started an apprenticeship in January as a boilermaker in Rockhampton.

## NEW BOOK!

Victorian poet and author **Stephen Whiteside** of Glen Iris has released his second book of verse 'Early Poems and Songs', a follow-up to his successful 'Poems of 2007'.

'Early Poems and Songs' includes 'Omeo', still Stephen's most popular performance piece. It also includes such favourites as "History's Witenesses", "A Walk in the Big Smoke", "I Wish I Was A Wombat", "The Fruit Song", "The Humpback Whale Song", and many more.

Stephen Whiteside has been writing and performing rhyming verse for grown ups and children for over thirty years. Many of his poems have been published in magazines and anthologies, both in Australia and overseas.

Stephen performed these poems and songs at "The Troubadour", "One-C-One", Anita Sinclair's "Living Room", with the Street Poets at "Cafe Jammin", and at other pubs, clubs and festivals in the '80s. Many of these poems were written in the '70s! Most have never been published before.

Stephen Whiteside,  
15 Hilltop Avenue, Glen Iris, Vic.  
3146 (see p 21)





## FESTIVAL: CJ DENNIS TOOLANGI CENTENARY

What's so special about the year 1908, our counterpart 100 years ago? After all, the 1890's, the golden decade of *The Bulletin*, had passed, and World War I had not yet begun. Don Bradman was born in 1908. It is regarded as the year of the birth of rugby league, and the modern Olympic marathon was first held in 1908.

More importantly, it is the year in which the well known and much loved Australian poet, CJ Dennis, first moved to Toolangi, a small forested town 70km east of Melbourne. Dennis was to write the books for which he became famous in or near Toolangi, and it was to remain his home for most of the remainder of his life.

Dennis was born in South Australia in 1876, and spent his childhood in the hot, arid regions north of Adelaide. As a young man, he spent a miserable time in Broken Hill, nearly dying of exposure at one point. After returning to Adelaide for a time, he moved to Melbourne, where he languished aimlessly. It was here that the illustrator Hal Waugh introduced him to Toolangi in 1908. The cool, lush environment of the forest appeared to revive him.

Bushwalker Robert Kroll, passing through Toolangi one day, met Dennis and became a friend. He introduced Dennis to John Garibaldi Roberts and his wife, who presided over a colony for artists at their property, "Sunnyside", in nearby Kallista in the Dandenong

Ranges. Roberts worked for the Melbourne Tramways Company, and kept a bunch of retired tramcars scattered in his paddocks. Dennis was allowed to live in one, and it was here that he wrote his most famous book, "The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke".

Fame and wealth eventually came to Dennis. He purchased property in Toolangi, and built his own house. He also married, although the couple were destined never to have children.

Dennis was a great lover of Shakespeare, especially the play "As You Like It". He named his home "Arden" after the "Forest of Arden". He excavated a small lake beside the house which he called "Touchstone Tarn". He named a pet tortoise that lived in the lake "Melancholy Jaques", and a home for fantail pigeons that hung above the water was "Villa Rosalind".

In 1934, the English poet laureate John Masefield visited Melbourne, which was then celebrating its Centenary. He was a great admirer of the works of Dennis, and planned to meet him at the offices of the Melbourne Herald, where Dennis was employed to write a topical poem every day. Unfortunately, Dennis was unwell at the time, and not up to the trip. Masefield therefore elected to travel, with his wife, to meet Dennis at his home in Toolangi.

The day turned out to be a great success, and Masefield wrote about it afterwards with great affection. The two poets hit it off famously. Masefield and Dennis were photographed sitting side by side on the banks of Touchstone Tarn, and Masefield planted a copper beech tree nearby. It is now a mature tree, in fine health.

Dennis died in 1938. "Arden" passed into the hands of Frank Thring Senior.

Unfortunately, the house burnt down in 1965. The property has been run for many years as a tea-room, however, under the name of "The Singing Gardens", the title of Dennis' final book. The proprietor, Jan Williams, is a great fan of the poems of CJ Dennis, and takes very seriously her responsibility as guardian of the Dennis heritage.

In October this year, the townsfolk of Toolangi are holding the inaugural "Toolangi Festival". A large part of the purpose of the festival is to honour the "CJ Dennis Toolangi Centenary". A written poetry competition is being held in the lead-up to the festival.

(Contestants are encouraged to write in

## 2008 VICTORIAN OPEN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Victorian Open Bush Poetry Championships are once again shaping up to be a great weekend of entertainment. Entries in the performance competition have been received from as far away as Murrumba Downs in Queensland, so it will be a great chance to see not only Victoria's best, but also some of Australia's best bush poets performing.

As well as the performance competition, the weekend will feature poet's breakfasts, a Noel Stallard concert on Friday night and a variety concert on Saturday night.

If you are travelling to Benalla to the championships, why not consider staying in the area for a couple more days? There are a number of great attractions in the area. You might consider taking a trip along the Ned Kelly Touring Route or visiting the Weary Dunlop Memorial and Art Gallery in the Botanical Gardens. The area also boasts a large number of great recreational activities, with sporting clubs and walking tracks all within easy reach.

For further details, see the ad on the next page. J.P.



the style of CJ Dennis.) The winners (there are also various junior categories) will be announced at a ceremony to be held at Stephen Whiteside, 15 Hilltop Avenue, Glen Iris, Vic. 3146 "The Singing Gardens" on the afternoon of Saturday, 18th October. On the following afternoon, bush poets from all around the country will gather to showcase the poems of CJ Dennis, again at "The Singing Gardens".

Events and activities will also be held at Giverny Estate winery, Toolangi Tavern, and Toolangi Forest Discovery Centre. Further information can be found at

< [www.toolangi.net/toolangi\\_festival.htm](http://www.toolangi.net/toolangi_festival.htm) >

© Stephen Whiteside 02.09.08





**THE VICTORIAN OPEN  
BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS  
BENALLA VICTORIA  
THE HEART OF NED KELLY COUNTRY  
October 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 2008 - Benalla Bowls Club**



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For further details, contact:

John Peel

The Secretary Victorian Bush Poetry and Music Association

Phone: 0428 312 287

Email: peel\_jg@hotmail.com

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- LAKE BENALLA WALKING TRACK

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## PIGEON POETRY

They say Australians will bet on just about anything, but what about a poem? "Pigeon Poetry", held on August 3, 2008, brought poetry and sport side by side!

Poetry fans and pigeon fanciers joined forces at Stanwell Tops headland to watch the first race of its kind, in which the verse-carrying avian athletes raced to reach their loft at Mt Ousley near Wollongong.

Each competing pigeon was released with two others, to act as both pacemakers and bodyguards along the coast, where peregrine falcons have been known to rip out the throat of lone birds.

It was poetry in motion with the

words of eight commissioned bards, fastened to the legs of eight, elite homing birds, carried aloft in a unique flight of imagination along the NSW South Coast.

The Birds and the Bards linked in a unique event with a 'bird-cam' beaming live pictures of the event. Billed as the world's first pigeon-powered poetry competition, a tiny camera was fitted to a one of the racing pigeons in an attempt to record the race.

The race day was however a great success with race-caller, Murray Hartin entertaining punters and patrons.



## WINTON BUSH POETRY FOR 2009

Get your thinking caps on and take pen to paper for the 2009 Bronze Swagman Award. The Bronze Swagman award is recognized as one of the most prestigious awards in Australia for written Bush Verse, and is now in its 38th year.

An anthology of verse from the Competition is published by Winton Business & Tourism Association each year. Entries close: 30 April 2009 with the winner announced at the Outback Festival in September.

The very successful Junior Bush Poetry Awards will feature 'The Little Swaggies Written Competition' which attracted 474 entries in 2008.

This Competition aims to encourage the WRITING of Traditional-style Australian Bush Verse, incorporating RHYME and RHYTHM.

The Junior Performance Competition attracted 123 Individuals & 21 Groups performances in 2008.

This Competition aims to encourage the PERFORMANCE of Traditional-style Australian Bush Verse and will be held at the Winton Shire Hall on Tuesday 7th and Wednesday 8th April 2009.

The WALTZING MATILDA BUSH POETRY competition at the famous Outback Festival 22nd – 26th September 2009.

Thursday 24th September  
7.30am - Poets Breakfast

Friday 25th September  
7.30am - Poets Breakfast

Saturday 26 September 7.30am -  
Poets Breakfast

Announcement of Bronze Swagman Award 2009

For further information please contact Louise Dean Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry Awards

P.O. Box 120

WINTON. QLD. 4735

Phone: (07) 4657 1296

Fax: (07) 4657 1541

E-mail: [wooka2@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wooka2@bigpond.net.au)

## STOP PRESS:

### Obituary

**COLIN JOHN NEWSOME**  
(12.10.1916—21.9.2008)

The last page has turned in the life of one of Australia's living legends, Colin John Newsome, who was born at Wellingrove (a village North West of Glen Inness) on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1916.

One of Colin's teachers at Wellingrove School was big fan of Australian poetry, especially the works of Henry Lawson and 'Banjo' Paterson and it was from this teacher that Colin acquired his love of Bush Poetry. Colin wrote poetry for many years and was a keen reciter, often seen at Tamworth and numerous other festivals.

He published two major books of poetry and yarns, 'The Green Tree Snake' and 'Dingo Howler' as well as a number of smaller books of poetry and short stories.

Colin was probably one of the last of our unique Australian Bushmen, a robust character of great physical strength, a tent-show fighter and wrestler with Jimmy Sharman's Boxing troupe; a shearer, wool-presser, a stockman, drover, farm worker a yarn-spinner.

His love of Poetry shone through with many of his factual Poems depicting the good times and the struggles he lived through.

May he rest in peace!

**TRIVIA:** Many inventions have taken several centuries to develop into their modern forms.

How long after the invention of canned food was the can opener invented?

Peter Durand invented canned food in 1813. There was one problem – Ezra Warner didn't invent the can opener for another 45 years (1858).

It's doubtful that the shelf life was that long, so why the delay between the two? Well, people were just following the directions on the can that read, "Cut round the top near the edge with a chisel and hammer!"

Why do we save our coins in "piggy banks"?

During the Middle Ages, dishes and pots were commonly made of a clay called pygg, and the jars were often used to store spare coins. People called this their pygg bank or their pyggy bank. Hundreds of years later, people forgot that pygg referred to the clay. As a result, when nineteenth century English potters received requests for pyggy banks, they produced banks shaped like actual pigs.

## WRITTEN RECORD © John Davis Moruya NSW 9.8.08

Much has been written about swagmen and where the swagmen rest

Much has been written about stockmen and where the stockmen are best  
And there's not much new about drought, bushfire, starvation and flood

Dying livestock, dust storms and dead men, green grass and miles of mud  
A lot has been written about maidens, left behind at the sliprails alone

And the wild rover that left her, the one that never came home  
The cattle that rushed in the night, wild eyed and mad through the scrub

Cooks who were just bait layers and near poisoned us all with their grub  
Tales about horses that no-one could ride, how they were beat in the end

Stories of men honest and true who gave their life for a friend  
Tales of selectors and how they done it hard, way out there in the bush

Yarns about Bushmen coming to town and outwitting the big city push  
Stories of workers busting their cheques at the very first pub that they found

Travellers camping with gidgee log fires and swags spread out on the ground  
The hustle and bustle of woolsheds, shearers and the tallies they shore

The battler, the prospector, the hatter, and the drifter dodging the law  
Cattle and horsemen from east in the mountains, considered some of the best

Drovers, stockmen and ringers who spent most of their lives in the west  
Mustering away out in the centre swallowing yards of red Cooper dust

And the toughest of men who worked there, if they were tougher they'd rust  
Paterson and Ogilvie and Lawson, Gordon and Boake and the rest

Wrote much about all of these subjects and they were our very best  
But today there's a new crop of poets and there's still many a tale to be told

So pick up your pens and write them, add yours to those poems of old  
Those of you from the old generation, you're the last ones to know how it was

To work with bronco and packhorse and live on stations all over oz  
And you young ones with science and computers write all about the new way

For you are the aged of tomorrow, what you write will record life today

## GYMPIE BUSH POETS 2008

Another Muster over so soon, but another hat full of memories from the Bush Poet's Breakfasts. Kicking off on the Tuesday in the Muster Club, the Poets were unleashed upon a full house and that old familiar roar of early morning laughter rang through the Amamoor Forest.

With Marco Gliori introducing some regular faces and new madmen and women, the likes of Brad Maclean keeping the audience rollicking with their poetic ramblings of mayhem and madness, as well as the return of Bluey the Chook for the raffles, it was no surprise to see the Muster club packed out again for the following two days.

The Audience were involved each day and Chrissy Edwards took out this years Camper's Brawl with a great one-minute poem.

Then on Friday it was off to the Muster Theatre with the Breakfasts and a new line-up of Poets for the last three days and again jam-packed houses. Darren Colston also joined the fray with his spine-tingling ballads. It's

great to see the support of the breakfasts as strong as ever, with people dragging themselves out of Tents, Vans and Swags to be there by 8am!!

Friday also saw the Poet's pitted against each other in the Poetry Olympics at the Outback Club, with China and Australia matching it in such memorable events as Heavyweight Lying and Synchronised Rapping.

Australia won in a controversial decision, and as Captain of the China team, I can say we were 'Bloody Robbed!!'

Saturday saw myself and W.A. Poet Peter Capp thrown in with Win T.V. Personalities and Country Music Singers at the Outback Club for the DownUnder Debate, 'Is Country Music Better Than Sex?'

Marco mediated in an over-flowing tent and the response was tremendous but the Country Music Affirmative lost, and again I was 'Bloody Robbed!!'

But a great boost for Poetry to be involved in something a little different at the Muster and easily hold it's own. Sunday was the final breakfast and farewell to the 2008 crowd and then it was again over to the Outback for the finals of the 'Musterbeenbloodygood

## Monday Morning

by C.J. Dennis

I often pause to contemplate  
The sadly barren mental state  
Of persons whom it is my fate

To meet on Monday morning.  
They should be, after Sunday's rest,  
Alert, clear-minded, full of zest;  
But everywhere they are oppressed,  
Bad-tempered, dull and yawning.

But I? I'm always strangely bright,  
Primed with ideas and full of fight,  
With brain alert and eye alight

With rare exhilaration:  
All due, no doubt to my wise bent  
To do no thing I should repent,  
And to a Sunday wisely spent  
In pious contemplation.

I do not wish to set myself  
Upon some loft moral shelf  
And treat my brother man, poor elf,  
To haughty patronising.  
And yet I feel I have to say  
That I regard the laggard way  
That men approach their work this day  
As utterly surprising.

Oh, I could write, this gladsome morn,  
With vigor of a man new-born  
Rare verses, full of lilting scorn  
About my fellow's failings;  
Or I could write on politics  
And heave a hundred verbal bricks,  
Using the rhymster's thousand tricks  
In homilies and railings.

But I resist; for, being kind  
I know that human nature's blind  
And weak and frail; I have no mind  
To call down envious curses.  
And, tho' I tremble on the verge,  
I manfully resist the urge,  
And sing, where I might shout and splurge,

These rather halting verses.

First published in The Herald, 28 April 1930

Poetry Competition' Gary Fogerty hosted a great line up for the final which was won this year by Queensland's Carmel Lloyd in a unanimous point's decision, given by the audience.

Another great Muster over, but planning for next year has already begun with some of Australia's most vivid imagination's planning the Attack Of The Bush Poets for Gympie 2009!!

Neil McArthur



## **The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.**

(Established 1994)

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Arbn 104 032 126

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**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

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### **BUSH POETS CALENDAR of EVENTS 2009**

**Deadline for next magazine**

**20th November 2008**

**Contact Editor**

(details on left)

### **ADVERTISING RATES**

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2/3 Column	\$15.00
Full Column	\$20.00
Half Page	\$40.00
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## **THE 2009 BLACKENED BILLY VERSE COMPETITION**

for written works

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**Tamworth**

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**January 23rd 2009**

Entry forms from

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or send a SSAE to

PO Box 3001

West Tamworth 2340

\*\*\*\*\*

## **THE 2009 TAMWORTH COUNTRY ENERGY BUSH POETRY COMPETITION**

**Performance Competition**

**West Tamworth**

**Leagues Club**

Heats: Tues 20th,

Thurs 22nd & Fri 23rd Jan

**Finals: 24 January 2009**

In Blazes Auditorium

**Golden Damper**

**Awards**

to winners of

**Original & Traditional Sections**

**plus Cash Prizes for all Finalists**

**Entry forms available**

**October 1st**

**Send SSAE to**

**Jan Morris, PO Box 3001**

**West Tamworth 2340**



## COMPETITION RESULTS

### Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc Literary Awards 2008

Adult Written Poetry  
1st *The Ballad of Mulligan's Pub*  
David Campbell Beaumaris Vic  
2nd *The King is Dead*  
Don Adams, Paraparaumu NZ  
3rd *A Bell in the Mist*  
Kym Eitel, Limestone Creek Qld  
**Highly Commended** *The Mask*  
John Roberts, Cunnamulla Qld  
*Chasing Sundown*  
Alec Raymer, Plainland Qld  
*The Ghost of Crackenback*  
Kym Eitel, Limestone Creek Qld  
**Commended**

*Ordinary Man*  
Ron Stevens, Dubbo NSW  
*Listening*  
Merle Parkin, Mildura Vic  
*Farewell to Youth*  
Ellis Campbell, Dubbo NSW  
*The Big Mob from Big Burrawang*  
John Roberts, Cunnamulla Qld  
**Leonard Teale Memorial**  
**Performance Competition**  
1st Terry Regan, Blaxland NSW  
2nd Roderick Williams, Killabakh  
3rd Carol Heuchan, Cooranbong  
**Highly Commended**  
Ellis Campbell, Dubbo NSW  
**Commended**  
Manfred Vijars, Morningside Qld  
Other Finalists:  
John Roberts, Cunnamulla Qld  
Jim Tonkin, South Maclean Qld  
Graeme Johnson, West Ryde NSW  
Matt Wills, Frenchs Forest NSW  
**Primary Students**  
Jess Hancock, Hargraves Public School.

### Caboolture Urban Country

### Music Festival Bush Poetry

Written Bush Poetry 2008

Adult Section

1st Kym Eitel - Limestone Creek Q.  
*The Ghost of Crackenback*  
2nd Kym Eitel -

*A Pocket Full of Kisses*  
Encouragement Award  
Frank Conroy - Taigum, Queensland  
Tom Barrett  
Junior Section  
1st Ashley Salter - Sandstone Point, Queensland *Australian Beauty*

### ABPA Performance Championships 2008

Cat 1(b) Junior Comp 7 under 12

3rd Seamus Coulson  
2nd Beau Burcher-Kemp

Cat 1(c) Junior Comp 12 to 16

3rd Daniel Szabo Scarborough  
2nd Amy Collins

Cat 2, NOVICE

1st Matthew Collins  
3rd Brian Weier

Cat 3 Open Classical (Male)

3rd Roderick Williams  
2nd Terry Regan

Cat 4 Open Classical (Female)

3rd Carmel Wooding  
2nd Carol Heuchan

Cat 5 Open Modern (Male)

3rd Dean Collins  
2nd Terry Regan

Cat 6 Open Modern (Female)

3rd Pamela Fox  
2nd Carol Heuchan

Cat 7 Open Humorous - Original

(Male)  
3rd Geoff Mann

2nd Dean Collins

1st Gregory North  
Cat 8 Open Serious - Original

(Female)  
3rd Susan Carcary

2nd Carmel Wooding

1st Carol Heuchan

Cat 9 Open Serious - Original

(Male)  
3rd Dean Trevaskis

2nd Terry Regan

1st Gregory North

Cat 10 Open Humorous - Original

(Female)  
3rd Kathy Edwards

2nd Dot Schwenke Scarborough

1st Carol Heuchan

Cat II - Billy Hay Yarn - Spinning

1st Dean Trevaskis

Overall 2008 ABPA Champion

(Female)

HC Heuchan Cooranbong NSW

Overall 2008 ABPA Champion

(Male)

Gregory North Linden NSW

Open Written Competition

3rd Arthur Green - "Firestorm,

Flyne and Sarah-Jane"

2nd Veronica Weal - "The Horse in

the Snow"

1st Graham Fredriksen - "The Only

War We Had" Kilcoy

HC Ellis Campbell - "One Day at a

Time"

HC Kym Eitel - "Wrath and Splen-

dour"

HC Veronica Weal - "Haunted"

HC Ron Stevens - "The Stranger"

Junior Written Comp

1st Violet Macdonald - "Storm

Clouds" (Secondary)

1st Gabrielle Morri - "Handful of

Dust" (Primary)

2008 Festival Living Treasures

Maxine Ireland

Alex Allitt

Mary Hodgson

2008 Bronze Swagman Award

(Judge: Janine Haig - Chinchilla)

Winner: Valerie Read Bicton, WA.

"Brolga Dreaming"

Runner-Up:  
Veronica Weal Herberton, Qld.

"Rebecca and Molly"

Highly Commended entries:  
Veronica Weal Herberton, Qld.

"Bonny Brown Horses"

Zondrae King East Corrimal, NSW.  
"Silver Moon"

Don G. Adams Paraparaumu Beach,  
NZ.  
"Four Views of an Australian Sum-

mer"  
Allan Goode Nerang, Qld.  
"Mates Always Help You Out"

**Australian Unity Bryan Kelleher**  
**Literary Award**

First Prize;  
Ed Walker - Birth of Our Spirit

2nd David Campbell - The Ballad of  
Mulligan's Pub. 3rd David Camp-

bell - The End of Midnight  
HC George Fordham - Waltzing  
Matilda (my view of things)

**Young Achiever awards:**  
Daniel Terrington - Gurrags & the

Greedy Croc of the Darling  
Grace Lund - A Heart of Gold

Rupert Christie - Tom and the Mob

2008 Bronze Spur Written Awards  
1st 'I'm Sorry, Laurie' by Kym Eitel

2nd. 'Redundant' by Colleen  
McLaughlin

3rd 'Lady Bushranger' by Kym Eitel

**Murrumbidgee Dusty Swag Awards**  
Max Merckenschlager SA

2nd & 3rd & HC  
**Riverglades Wetlands Competition**

3rd Max Merckenschlager SA  
**South Coast Junior Perf. Comp.**

1st Caitlin Bonser Ulladulla Public

2nd Rose Pearce Milton Public 3rd

Bianca Maude & Brooke Kalocsay  
Milton Public 4th Allison Maher

Ulladulla Public 5th Alice Gates  
SAS.

**Original Written Section**

1st Kirsten Brook 2nd Sarah McIn-

tyre 3rd Rachel Barnes 4th Haley

Perrin 5th Mandy Lee Oldfield

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## Book Review:

by Veronica Weal

"The Final Muster"

written by Ellis Campbell



Think of bush poetry, and names spring instantly to mind - Henry Lawson, "Banjo" Paterson and Will Ogilvie for a start. If you're a fan of modern bush poetry, Ellis Campbell's name is also at the top of the list.

Just as the Old Masters recorded events of their day in rhyming verse, so do today's exponents of the genre, and nobody does it better than Ellis Campbell from Dubbo, NSW.

Ellis stands tall among today's bush poets. Some write from imagination alone, but after many years spent working in the bush, Ellis has a varied store of genuine experience on which to base his verse. He also possesses a gift for the essentials of bush poetry - rhyme and rhythm - plus an amazing ability to create images with words.

This unique combination of talent and hard work has seen him win over 140 of Australia's top awards for bush verse, and has enabled his previous books to reach the short-list for the Bush laureate Awards at Tamworth, NSW. To his credit, Ellis has been generous in sharing his skills with aspiring poets, and many owe their success to his mentorship and support.

Now Ellis has released his latest book, "The Final Muster". It contains forty first prize-winning poems not previously published, and topics range from bush to city life, from serious to humorous to thought provoking.

Some poems will make you laugh, others will move you to tears, and each poem is written with an easy skill which other writers may well envy.

For instance, in "Last Call Of The Coo-ees", a poem based on a little-known facet of Australia's war history, the following lines appear:

# Ernie McBurneys Ride

© Ellis Campbell  
Queensland State  
Titles 2008

It was stockman Jack McBurney and his only son named Ernie that were riding ranges to the west of here. They were searching scrubs for cattle on the station Old Seattle, for some strays evaded muster every year.

And the stockhorse Ernie mounted was the type that always counted when the bullocks broke to vanish into scrub. He'd survived a hundred musters where the gidgees grow in clusters the old chestnut bore the scars of rock and shrub.

But the stockman's mount was flighty — sired by the great Swans Mighty just a young colt barely broken in to ride. Jack declared the roan a beauty, though as yet unfit for duty on a stirring chase where mountain scrubbers hide.

But their search went unrewarded, for the dark ravines afforded all the shelter wild stock needed from the heat. Now the stockman and young Ernie, wearied by their fruitless journey, were reluctantly conceding their defeat.

As the evening shadows lengthened so a bank of storm clouds strengthened, out beyond the range of mountains to the right. With their horses' footsteps dragging, and their spirits somewhat flagging, they commenced the long ride homeward through the night.

A vibrating clap of thunder seemed to rip the sky asunder and a chain-like flash of livid lightning gleamed. All around the bush was glaring, like a lurid furnace flaring an eruption straight from hell, it surely seemed.

While the storm raged unabated, and the ground reverberated and the mountains vivid splendour blazed with flair — a gigantic box tree shattered as explosive lightning scattered strips of scorching, acrid timber everywhere.

Both the startled horses bolted, and bewildered riders jolted as they plunged through trees amidst the blinding rain. And the hardy chestnut *Rajah* — like a soldier's gallant charger — kept his pounding feet upon the rough terrain.

But the anxious young colt bounded, through the rough scrub wildly floundered, reared and bucked across uneven, rock-strewn ground. As a horseman of some station, Jack clung on in desperation, but the roan horse plunged in terror newly found.

And, despite Jack's skilful riding, dark misfortune lurked abiding and his head was bashed against a stringybark. As he crashed to ground, in senseless — midst the scrublands wild and fenceless his last thoughts were all for Ernie in the dark.

But old *Rajah* never faltered as his pounding hoof beats altered to accommodate conditions quite perverse. His young rider sat bewildered where the heavens' dome was gilded with the angry storm cloud's lightning growing worse.

Through this iridescent rattle Ernie glimpsed the roan colt's saddle an despair assailed the young lad's chilling veins. For the saddle flaps were flailing and the bridle reins were trailing and no rider steered this demon with the reins.

Was his father dead or crippled where the low line ranges rippled — midst the wilderness that cast its awesome mask? With the rain and darkness blinding Ernie knew his chance of finding where his father lay could prove a daunting task.

But he halted *Rajah's* racing, turned his head to set him facing to the driving rain and sleety hail that blew.  
And the chestnut stepped out boldly, while his lean flanks quivered coldly, and his wise eye seemed to state the old horse knew.

There amidst the looming starkness of the driving rain and darkness the old stockhorse picked his way among the trees.  
And he found his way unerring through the rushing gullies stirring, while the gushing water swirled about his knees.

With the horse's instinct guiding Ernie sat there numbly riding through the lonely scrub while thunder boomed again.  
But young Ernie knew that steering might confuse the horse and, fearing for his father's safety, let him take the rein.

And he sensed his numb brain praying till he heard the old horse neighing and his father's voice called weakly down the track.  
"I'm here, Ernie, in this hollow — where old *Rajah* leads just follow — I was sure his sense would bring you safely back."

There his father's form was lying with the darkened shadows vying, mud and blood bespattered o'er his pain-wracked face.  
And his words were softly spoken, "I'm afraid my hip is broken. I can't walk and you won't lift me from this place."

"There is only one decision — curse the dark and lack of vision let old *Rajah* take you homeward come what may.  
Though you doubt his path's direction, don't attempt the least correction, let the old horse wander freely on his way.

I will need a helicopter — ring up Fred from *Nellie Nopta* say I'm somewhere to the south of Clapman's Bore.  
Go now, son, and don't you worry, for there really is no hurry I'll survive until they find me-say no more."

With a firm handclasp they parted and young Ernie bravely started through the dark aboard the gallant chestnut horse.  
Into darkness blankly staring — quite devoid of any bearing till he reached a flooding, tree-lined water course.

For a moment *Rajah* halted — snorted once, but never faltered as he plunged into that muddy, gushing stream.  
And he breasted current's swirling, where the foaming logs were twirling, swept from banks into the rushing water's teem.

But the raging whirlpool's sweeping made their motion barely creeping, bore the horse and rider downstream with its force.  
And young Ernie's heart was pounding louder than the current's sounding, but his hand went out to pat his noble horse.

Up the greasy bank he floundered while his gasping snorts resounded and the homestead lights came into Ernie's view.  
Somehow feeling rather older, Ernie stroked old *Rajah's* shoulder, and the tear that stained his cheek was overdue.

As the signs of light were dawning, on a misty summer's morning, Fred McMurtry's droning 'copter hummed its tune.  
With his bushman's knowledge guiding — and eternal hope abiding he was certain he would find his neighbour soon.

The McBurneys are still working on the station, never shirking when it's time to start the mustering again.  
But their wife and mother Heather always warns them, "Watch the weather and leave early if there's any sign of rain."

On the flats of Old Seattle *Rajah* wanders with the cattle, and is rarely given any tasks to do.  
Jack relates the tale with pleasure, "That old chestnut is a treasure, for his instinct surely saved the lives of two."

*"Like thunders roll resounding hooves awoke the drowsy dawn.*

*A horse as black as night itself - on winging echoes borne — burst forth in frenzied gallop from the misty morning's haze, magnificence in every stride and coal black eyes ablaze.*

*His nostrils flared, his heavy mane and wavy tail blew free, he'd massive haunches, graceful legs and hooves of ebony".*

What a wonderful image of a horse! And Ellis is equally at home creating pictures of inner city life, as in the poem 'Who Cares?'

*"Orange street lights dully smoulder through the evening mist and fog, sluggish fight on grimy pavement blurred by everlasting smog."*

When Ellis picks up his pen to paint a picture of the vast outback of Australia, you see it clearly as you read the words of "Outback Reflections":

*"An unrelenting, boundless space that's etched in visions stark an everlasting sun-drenched plain that bears no boundary mark".*

Ellis has seen and experienced it all, and it shows in his work. He breathes life into his characters, horse breakers and stockmen, shearers and courageous outback women. This collection is sure to delight his fans and win him many new admirers. I recommend this book to all lovers of good bush verse, and with Christmas not too far away, it would make the perfect gift.

Noel Stallard, President of the Australian Bush Poets Association, has written a fitting tribute to Ellis on the back cover of "The Final Muster."

Like Noel, I refuse to believe that this latest collection is final, and look forward to reading many more of Ellis Campbell's wonderful poems. Veronica Weal

## **DORRIGO NSW**

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**Trent Jenkinson**

Fifteen-years-old Queensland Bush Poet, Trent Jenkinson is already an old hand at the game of reciting and has marked 2008 as his best yet, winning over the audience at Calliope's Australia Day Awards presentations and taking home the shires cultural prize.

Trent's first performance at age 10 was a huge hit and gave him a passion that has grown with the years. He has delivered in excess of 80 free public performances of bush poetry, has entertained to raise money for various causes including the Royal Flying Doctors service and has performed at numerous celebrations such as Australia Day and Senior Citizens Week.

In February last year Trent released his own CD of Bush Poetry and in June of the same year won the "Silver Budgie Award" at Biloela for the junior section at the Charlee Marshall Written Bush Poetry Competition. Trent has competed in seven Bush Poetry Performance competitions, winning five of them and placing second in the other two. Trent also sat for and passed with merit - Grade I Speech and Drama at Trinity College of London. (Go to page 13)



**Poet of the Mountain**

The winner of this years Mt. Kembla Poet of the Mountain is Zondrae King from Corrimal NSW with an original poem "The Hem of Her Apron". It is a most adept poem about the great mining disaster of 1902 at Mt Kembla where 96 men died. It was a story of a woman's courage in the face of death, her anxieties, reflections and fears, yet her husband survived... a lovely twist to the end. (to p. 5)



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Back Row L to R Pamela Fox - Carmel Wooding - Roderick Williams - Geoff Mann - Dot Schwenke - Kathy Edwards  
 Susan Carcary - Brian Weier - Cameron Rabbit. Front Row L to R Terry Regan - Dean Collins - Greg North - Dean  
 Trevaskis - Carol Heuchan - Judy Collins (Editorial) - John Best; Photo - supplied by John Best (To page 5)

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