

A.B.P.A.



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The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

Magazine - (since 1994)



Clancy and Banjo

Corryong Victoria had a significant weekend of poetry, entertainment and horse activities with an outstanding re-enactment of Paterson's 'The Man from Snowy River'. Truly a remarkable spectacle, with the mountain setting, the horses racing down the hillside; the local horsemen and women and Riley's riders; the Animal Wranglers, Barry Chambers and Lachie Cossor all creating an electric atmosphere with poetry performances by Jack Thompson and Geoffrey Graham. (pictured above)

Visitors to the **John O'Brien Bush Festival** at Narrandera were treated to some outstanding performance from the beautiful Ami Williamson in the Anzac Tribute and her special concert appearances during the weekend's celebrations. Ami appeared at the National Folk Festival Canberra over the Easter weekend showing her versatility on the keyboard and as a singer and comedic entertainer before breaking into an operatic number

A special feature in this issue is that of **James William Gordon** (Jim Grahame) who's granddaughter Phillipa Hollenkamp was discovered living locally by John Davis of Ulludulla NSW. Phillipa was invited to a meeting of the local Bush Poetry Club to give a talk on the work of the 'last of the bush balladists' and his writings which have entitled him to a high place amongst the poets of Australia. A handwritten letter from Henry Lawson to Gordon was also exhibited and is reproduced on page 22.

Ami



A Lasting Impression by Greg North took out the first prize in the Silver Brumby Awards for original serious written poetry at Corryong in April.



A LASTING IMPRESSION

© Gregory North February 2008

Jack London wrote, "The proper function of man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time."

"Man's proper function is to live,
not simply to exist",
are words Jack London used they say –
a wise old adage, still today,
but here's an awful twist.

When Arthur lay in hospital
frustration fuelled his groans.
He'd push aside the oxygen
then try to get away again,
till straps revived his moans.

"For God's sake, get these off me!"
he shouted at restraints.
His struggles were in vain it seemed,
with no escape, again he screamed.
No ears for his complaints.

Some hours before, the doctor asked,
"How are you Arthur, mate?"
Just... "Good",
he said without a thought.
How could he be? He sounds distraught.
Could he be thinking straight?

Dementia was responsible
for Arthur's rash reply.
A fall inside a nursing home
had brought him to this bed of chrome
with straps and bars up high.

Pneumon'a too had clawed its way
inside his feeble frame.
"I want to die. Oh, kill me please."
Was that his wish, or his disease
still playing out its game?

"Man's proper function is to live,
not simply to exist",
and *that* existence cannot be
called living – not for you or me,
but we may *not* assist!

His daughter and her child had come
to visit that same day.
They spoke few words.

 Their stay was short.
How long had they been his support,
and watched his mind fall prey?

I got to thinking what he'd been
before his mind gave out.
A father, husband, engineer
a-gush with yarns behind a beer,
who always chimed, "Your shout!"

Or had he been a scientist,
or sportsman of renown?
A civic leader, perfect host,
or tradesman said to be the most
reliable in town?

Or was he 'Farty Arty' once,
who'd have them all guffaw
when roaring wind would pass his gate
at Lion's club through hot debate
and have them on the floor?

Well, what he'd been, he wasn't now,
and living, this was not.
Did Arthur have a right to die?
Or should we never question why
and leave him there to rot?

"Just kill me if I get like that,"
we've all heard people say.
"There is no quality of life
if mind is gone or pain is rife.
Don't let me get that way".

They moved him to another room
but I still heard him wail.
I mused about his strength of will.
Could will alone bring on a kill
to free him from his jail?

"Your father doesn't have much time,"
I overheard the call.
And when the morning dawned for me
I knew that Arthur now was free.
His moans weren't in the hall.

Just how would friends and family
remember Arthur's span?
As Farty Arty with his beer,
or one-time Father of the Year,
or sorry, broken man?

For me, his pleading haunts me still.
A thought I can't resist.
Will I crave death when life won't give?
Man's proper function is to live,
not simply to exist.

MYXOMOTOSIS

The rabbit went to the doctor
He wanted a diagnosis.
The doctor said 'I'm sorry
But you've got Myxomotosis'.
'And to compound all your worries
You've got Alzheimer's Disease,
So before you leave the surgery,
Don't forget to pay your fees'.
'Thank goodness for that said the rabbit,
Without any sign of grief,
For I thought I had Myxomotosis,
And this is a great relief'.

Big Russ (a long time ago)



PALMA ROSA

In October 2008, James Blundell released his 10th album *Portrait of a Man*. After 20 years in the music industry, having played concerts in venues ranging from stadiums to pubs and everything in between James still hasn't found anything that beats the thrill of getting up close and personal with an audience.

James Blundell will be performing at the Palma Rosa on Wednesday 17th June alongside his father Peter when they present a 'The Silver Tongued Devil', a night of music and verse. Together they will explore the mystery of life on the land with a romantic yet sometimes cynical view that can only be obtained by farming families. Peter Blundell, who still presides over the family's farm in Stanthorpe will be presenting his eloquent bush prose. His love of the English language, and putting words together gives him great pleasure; his poems are a record of his life in the bush, written for his family, and their generations to come, a reflection of his philosophy on that life.

"I've watched the old mans writing develop over the last decade to where I believe he is writing some of the best bush prose around," says James, "Peter Blundell has an affinity with the bush and its romance second to none".

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PRESIDENTS REPORT



G'day Members,

That Frank's long awaited operation went off successfully was the best news since our last Newsletter. The build up of fluid in the brain had brought about many restrictions on Frank's mobility and ability to function as he was accustomed. Recently he informed me that immediately after the op he felt great, "could have kicked a football", but then suffered ten days of the old dizzy spells and headache symptoms. Fortunately they have now gone and he feels things are on the improve. By the time this has gone to print he would have had his scheduled check-up visit to the surgeon and we hope and pray that that report sees him, "firin' on the eight".

Thank you to those members who sent me an expression of interest with regards being listed on the Register of

Judges for Performance Competitions. I have sent out some invitations to people whom I know are currently judging various competitions and I should have a Register available for the August/September newsletter. Any member who feels he or she is qualified to be on this list and is keen to judge such competitions please email me your expression of interest by the end of June.

With regards Performance Competitions several members emailed me their support for that system that I outlined at the AGM where the judges' "Rank Order" rather than "Raw Scores" is used to determine place getters. I realise how people are reluctant to change but where a "fairer" process can be used I believe it is incumbent upon us in administrative roles to argue strongly for the "fairer" system. I have sent out a copy of the above system to those who were not at the AGM and were interested in analysing the process and if others want a copy they only have to contact me. Whether or not the members want this system officially recognised will be determined at the 2010 AGM.

Could I encourage the bush poetry writers to support the various written competitions that groups organise. Some one asked me why the John O'Brien Festival at Narrandera had dropped in recent years the Written Competition that had been part of this event. Well I know it was dropped because the entries were so

few that it did not warrant the organisation entailed. If we don't use these competitions we'll lose them. Do we have to lose something before we recognise its value? The lyrics of an old song come to mind,

"Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got till it's gone"

With regards the John O'Brien Centre that is to be built attached to the current Visitors Centre in Narrandera we have submitted to the Council our architect's sketch plans for the building and have received two "expressions of interest" from display designers for the interior of the building. Both the building and the possible displays are exciting and hopefully we will have Council approval in the next month or so. Currently we have raised \$46,905 which will cover the initial fees of the architect and display designer. Please let me know if any of the Poet Groups would like me to come to your area for a fund-raising concert.

Kym Eitel has generously updated the Register of Judges for Written Competitions (see below). If any member feels they should be on this list and is not please contact me.

With gratitude,

Noel Stallard

ABPA Judges List as at 1st June 2009

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Noel's
new book
for Kids
Go to
page 15.

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CORRYONG

Man from Snowy River Bush Festival

ANZ POETRY & BUSH MUSIC

Banjo's Block buzzed with poets, storytellers and musicians inside the hall and around the campfire in a very successful and entertaining weekend program. The friendly atmosphere at the block created by John Anderson guaranteed good connections with friends old and new and participation by people of all ages.

Jan Lewis once again did a fantastic job coordinating the Poetry and music part of the festival with assistance from a plethora of supporters, including judges, Helen Begley, Maggie Murphy, Brian Bell, Bob Kaighin and Walt Cudlip; compere, Trevor Best very capably stood in as MC for Frank Daniel, who was undergoing an operation at Sydney's RPA Hospital.

Poets and musos included Geoffrey Graham, either as himself or 'The Banjo', Jill Meehan and the Starry Night Ram-

dren and their amazing poems, on Thursday afternoon, Friday and Sunday mornings. Michelle Roberts and Renee Matthews were winners of the Junior 'My Country' recitals to honour the spirit of mateship shown during the recent bushfires. Other highlights were the Comedy competition with 'Kath & Kim' comperes and the Bowling ladies poem by Betty Walton and friends, complete with stalker. Many other great moments were enjoyed by appreciative audiences.

A change of venue saw the tribute to Jack Riley moved from his graveside to the Man from Snowy River Museum. Those attending saw a wonderful play put together by a local teacher and Sister Pat which incorporated the story of Jack Riley's demise and the return of his body to Corryong. The play included a poem by Betty Walton read by the Year 7 girls; a prayer by Sister Pat; an Andrew

Chinn song performed by the KIDS and the MFSR recital by Geoffrey Grahame.

The crowd was delighted by the children and their amazing poems, on Thursday afternoon, Friday and Sunday mornings. Michelle Roberts and Renee Matthews were winners of the Junior 'My Country' recitals to honour the spirit of mateship shown during the recent bushfires.

Other highlights were the Comedy competition with 'Kath & Kim' comperes and the Bowling ladies poem by Betty Walton and friends, complete with stalker. Many other great moments were enjoyed by appreciative audiences.

The highlight for many people was the re-enactment of the great poem a few kilometres outside the town. Truly a remarkable spectacle, with the mountain setting, the horses racing down the hillside; the local horsemen and women and Riley's riders; the Animal Wranglers - Barry Chambers and Lachie Cossor all creating an electric atmosphere.

To be present at this event is akin to an Anzac day or Australia day event. More than a few people had a tear in the

eye and the sea of people present were well rewarded for their wait.

Imagine the lead-up scene: local children dressed for the occasion and engaged in old-fashioned games, men sitting at tables playing cards with a good bottle on the table, Trevor Best and the Simpsons et al playing most appropriate music for the occasion.

Geoffrey regaled the audience with a couple of his poems and the event was topped off by Jack Thompson reading 'the Man' from atop a buggy as part of the re-enactment scene.

The Anzac concert hosted by Graeme Johnson at the RSL hall was once again well attended with a great variety of songs and poems by participants.

For the fourth time in a row, Betty Walton emerged triumphant to win the Matilda Award for best overall female against the runner-up, Annette Roberts.

John Peel won the prestigious Clancy's Choice Award for best overall male performer with 'The Rhymer from Ryde', Graeme Johnson as runner up.

Judges of 'Banjo' Paterson's 'Man From Snowy River' chose John Peel from Batlow for the coveted MFSR Recital trophy. Maurie Foun was runner up and also took out the Lawrie Sheridan encouragement award.

The Inaugural Reciters Award adjudged over the three poets breakfasts was taken out by Barry Tiffen of Wodonga.

(Pictured John Peel left, and the 'Rhymer from Ryde', Graeme Johnson)



blers as well as a large number of competitors.

The event kicked off on the Thursday night with a meet and greet and walk-up performances at the Corryong Hotel.

Geoffrey Graham attended the Opening ceremony at the memorial Hall, officially opened by the Honorary Minister, Time Holding, surrounded by a stunning display of photos and art works all competing for prizes.

The crowd was delighted by the chil-

FOR THE NUMEROLOGIST

If you're numerologist,
and numbers are the go,
on August seven you will find
a think that you should know.

At six seconds past five minutes
past the hour of four a.m.,
if you haven't nodded off to sleep
you'll find a little gem.

The time and date is sure to be
a number you'll find fine
it's 04:05:06/07
and then 08/09.

And it will never happen again,
(at least not until 2109)
Cheers big Russ April 09

PARKERS LAW

Beauty is only skin deep,
but ugly goes clean to the bone.

JOHN O'BRIEN FESTIVAL

Thousands of visitors flocked to Narrandera for the John O'Brien Festival across the weekend of 20-23rd March with the organizers thrilled with the outcome of the four day annual event.

The John O'Brien Festival (inspired by the poetry of John O'Brien, creator of Hanrahan, the mythical town of Tangmalangaloo) is a gem, full of brush lore and music, poetry, busking, street parades and most of all humour.

The majority of the events were sell-outs with crowds bursting out of many venues, while around 3,500 people participated in and watched the street parade on Saturday afternoon. Most moved around to the Narrandera Park for the festivities after the parade.

The three poets breakfasts in Narrandera Park compered by Vic Jefferies and Frank Daniel drew huge crowds 'neath the flourishing shade trees. Over thirty five poets from as far as Western Australia and Queensland as well as Victoria and New South Wales held their own with a never diminishing enthusiastic audience.

The Anzac Tribute hosted by Frank Daniel saw a capacity house responding exceptionally to the poems and songs dedicated to those who served

All events were well attended with a grand finale at the Lake Talbot Swimming Complex: another great crowd in a great setting with brilliant performances by the entertainers.

Newcomer to the festival programme Ami Williamson is one of those rare female singers. While her roots are firmly in the tradition of singer/songwriter, her richly diverse upbringing has had Ami taking the stage not only in opera and classical, but also touring with her father, country music artist John Williamson. Ami is now focused on her song-writing, performing her own compositions in a one woman show at music venues.

A graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, her repertoire has spanned diverse styles including jazz, pop, country, traditional folk and early music to classical recitals and opera. Amidst Ami's original music are songs from Costa Rica, Germany, USA, Italy and Ireland - an intimate, global journey through song.



Ami's show features her many versatile talents from her fabulous piano playing, to a fan dance song to a highly original opera aria, where she accompanies herself on drums!

Bob Campbell (Fiddler Bob), a first time performer at the John O'Brien Festival, told the Argus that he was impressed by the festival and the town.

"I really enjoyed it," he said. "It was my first trip to Narrandera and the people were really friendly, always stopping in the street to say hello.

It was such a friendly town and such a friendly festival."

Mr Campbell performed his final show for the Festival during the Sunday Concert at the Narrandera Exservicemen's Club, with the auditorium full to the brim.

"It was a great response and the auditorium was chockers," he said.

"I will be back next year for sure, if of course they ask me!

"All up it was a great weekend and I reckon the organisers should be congratulated."

Ami Williamson has recently returned from entertaining the troops in the Solomon Islands and in Iraq and Afghanistan with Angry Anderson and Tania Zaetta.

"What do you get when you mix an entertainer with a songwriter? An opera singer with a comedian? A folk singer with a set of drums? A show girl with a poet?.....Ami Williamson!" -

The Courier Mail, Sydney.

Ami played three shows to packed Marquees at The National Folk Festival and was MC at their annual World Poetry Debate.

(Below)

Wilma O'Loan, Mildred Langley, Dr Frank O'Loan, Father Frank Bell (former altar boy at St. Mels Catholic Church) and Noel Stallard caught up at the Festival. The O'Loans are former residents.



BOYUP BROOK COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL – BUSH POETRY REPORT



Bill Gordon

The bush poets breakfast at Boyup Brook Country Music Festival is one of the largest bush poetry events in W.A. 'The best yet' was the most repeated comment heard after the Poets Breakfast on the Sunday morning. A crowd of 1500 heard some of the best of the West Australian Bush Poets & Yarn-spinners, including current champion Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge.

The current Australian champion, Greg North, from Linden, in the Blue Mountains of NSW, had the audience enthralled with his unique talent and an



Jim Haynes & Melanie Dyer

unforgettable version of 'The Man From Snowy River' recited in fourteen different accents each accompanied by an appropriate hat.

Jim Haynes was back again, with the misadventures of his mate 'Dipso Dan'. Jim also conducted two workshops for poets, one on writing, and one on performing. Over twenty people attended each workshop, and gained a great deal from Jim's extensive experience as a poet, performer, and lecturer at the Country Music College.

Jurien Bay poet Irene Conner writes with compassion and sensitivity, and although new to reciting, she presented her poems in a very capable manner. Irene is undoubtedly 'the voice of social conscience' among WA Bush Poets.

WABP&YS President Brian Langley as the 'City Poet' resplendent in his Aussie Day outfit, was a contrast to the RM's and Akubras of the 'Bush' poets.

Peg Vickers from Albany was also making her first appearance at Boyup Brook. Peg delighted the audience with her poems about Grandad and his misadventures on and off the farm. Wayne Pantall and Catherine McLernan were more first timers at the festival.

This year a written competition was held, with a section for Emerging Poets (who had not previously won a written competition) and an Open section.

The open winner was David Campbell of Beaumaris Victoria with 'Sunset Rider'. (more results p 21.)

Being a late minute decision to hold this section, it was pleasing for the organizers Irene Conner and Brian Langley to get twenty-six entries. Irene and Brian, who had coordinated and judged, read the winning poems on the day.

Congratulations to the successful poets.

WABP&YS President Brian Langley paid tribute to the men behind the biggest bush Poets Breakfast in WA. Brian Gale started eighteen years ago with a crowd of 30, in the garden at Harvey Dickson's Country Music Centre. Ron Evans took over a few years ago, when Brian was overseas. Lately, Bill Gordon (pictured) has been responsible for managing the event and spending many hours organising the events, and seeking sponsorship to ensure



Irene Conner

that the event is one which provides great entertainment to all who attend.

Apart from the Sunday morning,

Bush Poets were featured in the park on Friday and at the Boyup Brook Club on Saturday morning. These were open mic. sessions and some availed themselves of the opportunity to have a go.

A big 'thank you' from the organizers to all the poets who performed over the weekend; to Jim Haynes for the workshops, to rising country music star, Melanie Dyer and to Irene and Brian for the written competition.

Thank you also to the Sponsors, McIntosh & Son, Katanning and Stawool Brokers. Their support makes it possible for the organizers to bring Poets such as Greg North across from the east coast.

The Boyup Brook Country music Festival is the premier country music event in WA, and the Bush Poets are recognized as an important part of the festival.



Brian Gale

At the National Folk Festival in Canberra at Easter Time, I mentioned that I had written a poem about the fact that a number of people have confused me with Greg North.

In the past I have copped the following comments: "What costume are you going to wear today" (Corryong 2009); "Are you the bloke that did the poem about the football game last year" (Canberra 2009); and "Are you the bloke that does the poem about the ute" (Canberra 2009).

In 2006 at Canberra, I was congratulated on performing the "ute" poem at the poets' breakfast - I did my poem, "The Birds Show Them Little Respect", that year - so I let the bloke know that it wasn't me.

Back in 2007 at Corryong, Jim Brown asked if he could film my "Man From Snowy River" performance - I very quickly answered, "You might want to check with Greg North - I'm John Peel".

There have possibly been a few more instances as well, but these are the ones that spring to mind.

Perhaps I should learn one of Greg's poems, that'd really confuse people I reckon.

Regards, John Peel

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

By John Peel 12/4/09

"What costume do you think that you are going to wear today?"

"I don't dress up much more than this," was all I had to say.

"I really love the one you do about the footy game."

And I have to say, "It wasn't me." - it seems a downright shame.

There appears to be a bloke about that people think is me and I have got a good idea of who this bloke would be.

He comes from the Blue Mountains, more precisely, Linden way, and to be a little more exact - he's Gregory North, I'd say.

And I wonder if this other bloke has tried to make some sense of people telling him, "I love the one about the fence."

Or perhaps the people ask him if today he's going to sing when he does the poem all about his meeting with "The King".

But then again, I think that I could have a little fun and cloud the water even further still by learning one of his poems. That'd throw them off for sure -

that bloody Gregory North bloke has a lot to answer for!

CHARLEE MARSHALL COMPETITION RESULTS 2009

Significant prestige was given to this year's Charlee Marshall written poetry awards, when the Central Queensland Local Government Association included the presentation ceremony in its program to wrap up celebrations of fifty years of CQLGA conferences. The audience which included CQ mayors and councillors, past and present, gave a warm welcome to our Australian Bush Poets Association President, Noel Stallard, to the Biloela Civic Centre courtyard, Saturday 9th May, for the presentations and poets' brunch.

Kym Eitel



This competition is a truly Australia wide and an International event.

The Junior section for the Silver Budgie Award was won by Violet McDonald, Oxon, UK, with her poem 'Homesick'. Second placing went to Natalie McIver, Springsure, 'True Blue Mate'.

Highly Commended: Jacqueline Isidro, Brisbane, 'Going to the Party'; Mareli Muller, Brisbane, 'Trouble on the Reef'; Natalie McIver, Springsure, 'The Outback Bush Band'.

The Thangool Writers and Reciters took out the quinella in the Golden Cockatoo Awards, with Kym Eitel, now Limestone Creek, winning with

Trevor Shaw



HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE

Gregory North

Now poor John Peel, he reckons he's got naming complications when people in the rhyming world get mixed associations.

This problem's not unique to him. It's happening to others.

I have been misidentified by poem-loving brothers.

And ladies too have said, "You did that one about the fences."

I look at them and wonder if they're losing all their senses,

prevent my eyes from rolling as I answer them politely,

"No, that's John Peel you're thinking of"

(my fists are clenching tightly).

I s'pose I see how people mix us up - both fine and youthful.

That's all we have in common though, if being really truthful.

We don't look much alike at all, we come from different places.

He doesn't even carry hats around in big white cases!

But Johnny should be happy,

'cause it could have been much worse -

he could have been mistaken for a really shocking verser!

As mentioned earlier, it's not just him with this dilemma.

There's someone I'm mistaken for, that sets my hands a-tremor.

Our names so often get confused. We're closer in appearance.

But getting gigs sometimes requires some massive perseverance.

The organisers seem to think I'm likely to delay 'em.

I'm sick of people thinking I'm that bloody Geoffrey Graham!

'Nails in the Mango Tree'. Trevor Shaw of Biloela was placed second with 'Aftermath'.

Highly Commended: Donald Crane, Toowoomba, 'Pioneers'; Ellis Campbell, Dubbo, 'Existence of Monotony'; Ted White, Mapleton, 'A Theory worth a Mention'; Valerie Read, Bicton, WA, 'Mother's Paranoia'.

Four other poets, Bob Pacey, Don Longbottom, Lea Taylor and Trevor Shaw assisted Noel with the well-received poetry program.

Many thanks to Gary Fogarty who judged this year, and very special thanks to the Biloela library personnel, especially Rachael Leighton, for the behind-the-scenes co-ordination

Dunedoo Festival Review 2009

The 11th Annual Bush Poetry Festival was held over the weekend of the 5-8th March 2009 at the bustling little Warrumbungle Shire Council hamlet of Dunedoo in Mid-Western NSW. Don't let the little town title fool you though; the 11th Bush Poetry Festival is a premier event on the Bush Poets calendar for those that enjoy performance & written verse. Competitors come from all over the country to have a crack at the 'coveted' titles on offer.

The event started with a casual 'meet & greet' at the local caravan park on the Thursday night with a 'round the campfire' session to warm everybody up. Friday night saw the first performance section 'kick off' the weekend with the Yarnspinning Competition at the Golf

Club. The Club was packed to see Claire Reynolds from NSW take the title in this lively & spirited event where the "winner takes all". "Johnson's Antidote" Bush Band finished off the night.

Saturday saw the competition proper commence bright and early in the School Auditorium (decorated by wallhangings from a local artisan) with 3 more performance sections, Traditional, Original & Contemporary encompass

ing 61 individual performances of a very high overall standard.

The Sat evening "Variety Concert" was hosted by Festival judges Milton Taylor & "Lenny" Knight who entertained the crowd with their songs, bush verse & jokes. Other esteemed judges for

the weekend were Monica Foran & Anne Neal. Weekend Comperes were Gary Lowe & Max Neal.

Sunday saw a "Poet's Breakfast" and "Poet's Brawl" (i.e. the 1 minute poetry competition) held in the local park with the Poet's Brawl being won by "The Itinerant" Bernie Keleher.

Overall Female Champion was Susan Carcary and Overall Male Champion was "The Rhymer from Ryde" Graeme Johnson.

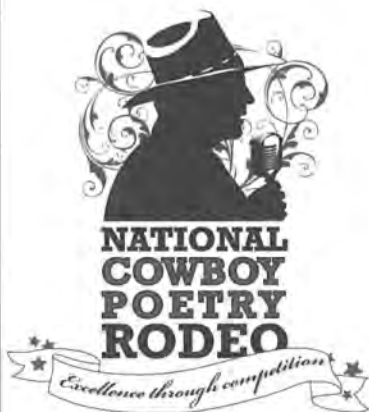
Sue Stoddart and the members of the Dunedoo and District Development Group deserve to be highly praised for their organization of such a friendly and highly professional show. Thanks should also go to Peter Fallon for his major sponsorship of the weekend.

Graeme Johnson



Winners at Dunedoo 2009

Left
Graeme Johnson and
Claire Reynolds.
Right
Susan Carcary and
Bernie Keleher



COWBOY POETRY COMP

The editor received the following invitation from SA Jackson to compete at the National Cowboy Poetry Rodeo, Montrose, Colorado in September.

"Morning Frank, why don't you get Milt Taylor and any other bush poets and

head for Montrose Colorado this Fall?"

This is not my first of such invitations so I thought I should pass this one around for your interest. (I have entry forms).

The Cowboy Poetry Rodeo is an event, fashioned after a stock rodeo, designed to pit the skills of one cowboy poet against those of another in such a manner as to further develop the talents of both, with an over-riding goal of advancing the genre of cowboy poetry to a degree benefiting both performer and audience.

The rules basically state two separate divisions of competition: *Rising Stars* (the up-coming poets) and *Silver Buckle* (those having won in previous years.)

This competition is open to all Cowboy Poets except professionals (those who earn more than one half of their annual income by performing cowboy poetry). The cash purses amount to 80% of the entry fees paid into each event, plus an added purse donated by sponsors.

In the first go-round poems are not to exceed four minutes, with the top fifty percent going into round two - not exceeding five minutes in presentation.

What Cowboy Poetry is: (An extract from the long list of rules/conditions).

4 -1a; Any poem, prose, ballad, story, or song with a basic pastoral theme about country living, ranch life, or farm animals. (for the purpose of this competition, stories about deer hunting, the Klondike or similar writings will not be considered as Cowboy Poetry.)

This work can come from anyone who feels that they, either through experience or research, can realistically address the subject. Working as a cowboy, or actual ranching experience is not a requirement. Stories may be written about the past, present, or future. There is no restriction on geography, every area of the world has its rural life and is fair game.

In the 'Rising Star' and 'Silver Buckle' divisions there are four sections, Poet Serious - Poet Humorous - Reciter Serious - Reciter Humorous with an entry fee of \$80 per each event. Entry fee for the 'Shoot Out' is \$200. Total prize-money \$7,000.

SA Jackson email: last2camp@kanab.net



Hunter Bush Poets

an affiliate of
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presents.....

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www.hunterbushpoets.org.au

or ssae to Carol Heuchan

456 Freemans Dr., Cooranbong. 2265

Be early - Limited Entries

Closing 1st October

Enquiries Carol 02 49 773210

The Old Cart

by Pamela Lawson-Kerr- Carwoola NSW

I gazed at the old cart rotting there,
And my thought flew back to yesteryear
When your sides were blue and your spokes were red
And a well-muscled bay, handsome, well fed,
Pulled with a will and patiently toiled
Between shafts that were lovingly oiled
And a child with hair that blew in the breeze
Stood on your tray where she balanced with ease,
As the old bay horse obeyed the commands
Of her kindly voice and her gentle hands.



Limericks - by Pamela Lawson - Kerr

Say scientists, we're sure you'll agree
That our climate is born of the sea
Though the truth of the question
Is our fearful obsession
With clearing the land mass of trees.

A certain young sergeant called Pete
Complained as he studied his feet
I'm curious to know
How they can smell so
When I haven't been out on the beat.



GIPPSLAND BUSH POETS

4th Annual AUSTRALIA POST
GIPPSLAND WATTLE BUSH POETRY
OPEN WRITTEN COMPETITION

\$1,000.00 First Prize

Minor prizes:- \$250.00 and \$100.00
(Also Highly Commended and Commended awards)

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

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

Gippsland Bush Poets written competition,

C/o P.O. Box 453

MAFFRA Victoria 3860.

Or email:- bjdraper@netspace.net.au

Entries close on October 31st 2008

Proudly sponsored by



Ellis Campbell has agreed to be this year's sole judge.

OLD GRANNY SULLIVAN

John Shaw Neilson

A pleasant shady place it is,
a pleasant place and cool --
The township folk go up and down,
the children pass to school.
Along the river lies my world,
a dear sweet world to me:
I sit and learn -- I cannot go;
there is so much to see.
But Granny she has seen the world,
and often by her side
I sit and listen while she speaks
of youthful days of pride;
Old Granny's hands are clasped;
she wears her favourite faded shawl --
I ask her this, I ask her that:
she says, "I mind it all."
The boys and girls that Granny knew,
far o'er the seas are they,
But there's no love like the old love,
and the old world far away;
Her talk is all of wakes and fairs --
or how, when night would fall,
"'Twas many a quare thing crept and
came," and Granny "minds them all."
The day she first met Sullivan --
she tells it all to me --
How she was hardly twenty-one
and he was twenty-three.
The courting days! the kissing days! --
but bitter things befall
The bravest hearts that plan and dream.
Old Granny "minds it all."
Her wedding-dress I know by heart;
yes! every flounce and frill;
And the little home they lived in first,
with the garden on the hill.
'Twas there her baby boy was born;
and neighbours came to call,
But none had seen a boy like Jim --
and Granny "minds it all."
They had their fights in those old days;
but Sullivan was strong,
A smart quick man at anything;
'twas hard to put him wrong...
One day they brought him from the mine ...
(The big salt tears will fall)...
"'Twas long ago, God rest his soul!"
Poor Granny "minds it all."
The first dark days of widowhood,
the weary days and slow,
The grim, disheartening, uphill fight,
then Granny lived to know.
"The childer," ah! they grew and grew --
sound, rosy-cheeked and tall:
"The childer" still they are to her.
Old Granny "minds them all."
How well she loved her little brood!
Oh, Granny's heart was brave!
She gave to them her love and faith --
all that the good God have.

They change not with the changing years;
as babies just the same
She feels for them, though some, alas!
have brought her grief and shame:
The big world called them here and there,
and many a mile away:
They cannot come -- she cannot go --
the darkness haunts the day;
And I, no flesh and blood of hers,
sit here while shadows fall --
I sit and listen -- Grany talks;
for Granny "minds them all."
Just fancy Granny Sullivan

at seventeen or so,
In all the floating finery
that women love to show;
And oh! it is a merry dance:
the fiddler's flushed with wine,
And Granny's partner brave and gay,
and Granny's eyes ashine...
'Tis time to pause, for pause we must;
we only have our day:
Yes, by and by our dance will die,
our fiddlers cease to play;
And we shall seek some quiet place
where great grey shadows fall,
And sit and wait as Granny waits --
we'll sit and "mind them all."

Daybreak Over The Bay

© Maxine Ireland

I stood on the bow of "Waisinda"
in the first grey light of day.
I scarce could discern the outline
of the hills beyond the bay.
For the blackness of the night-sky
had just begun to pale
And the only sound was the flap, flap, flap,
of the morning breeze in the sail.

The stars, no longer brilliant,
hung pale in a milky sky,
playing 'peek-a-boo' through
a wispy cloud as it drifted by
The sea was dark and forbidding,
the shoreline hidden from sight,
But in the East rosy glow
that heralded the light.

The gentle rhythmic splashing
of waves against the bow,
As she ploughed the tropic waters
in that grey ethereal hour,
Brought a sense of quiet solitude;
of suspended animation
As I pondered the day's awakening
in silent contemplation

Soon the eastern sky became ablaze with
vivid orange and gold
and mirrored a ribbon colour
over the sea as it rolled
Wave upon wave like a core de ballet danc-

ing in unity.
With the crests of the waves a mantle
of silver filigree.

Then the fiery sun tipped the mountain
peaks and tinged the cloud with red
And the silence was shattered by the
screeching of gulls as they circled overhead
A tiny spiral of purple smoke
curled up from a village fire,
As the light came running down the hill to
the beach as the sun rose higher

Now the stars were gone, the sky was blue
and I was amazed to see
The rugged mountains, the ragged cliffs
and the gentle rolling sea.
My attention was caught by the dolphins at
play it was fanciful to see
It seemed they were showing "Waisinda"
the way.
As they frolicked ahead with glee.
Out before the bow they raced;
out for the wide blue sea.

I Think I'm Gunna Die

by Kym Eitel

*My husband and I work together on our
farm. I don't mind driving the little bomb
Leyland around, or hooking up 1 tonne
bags of fertilizer on the crane, or operating
the forklift or module builder in picking
season, but I don't particularly like moving
irrigation pipes, especially in tall cotton.
He thinks I complain a lot.
What do you think?*

I hate this farm. I hate this heat!
I think the ground has cooked me feet!
I'm absolutely stuffed and beat!
'Cos I'm no farm-hand ath-a-lete!
... I think I'm gunna die.

If we move pipes again I'll cry!
Why must it be so hot and dry?
And why can't rain fall from the sky?
Oh God, I think I ate a fly!
(hack) ... I wish that I could die.

I wish we weren't in so much debt!
If we won Lotto, we'd be set!
We'd fly off in our private jet,
instead of oozing smelly sweat.
... Oh please just let me die!

I reek of yuk, my face is red,
with 'hat hair' sticking to my head,
and both my arms are feeling dead.
I think my boots are full of lead.
... I know I'm gunna die.

I've got to get the kids at three,
and wash their clothes, and cook them tea.
If HE says, "One more job, Sweet Pea,"
I'll ab-so-lute-ly guarantee,
... It's HIM who's gunna die!

Chasing Your Dreams

© 2003 Veronica Weal

There's a weary young boy swimming lap after lap
On a cold windy day after school;
But the grandstand is empty, there's no one to clap
When he finally climbs from the pool.
But his mind remains focused, he blocks out the cold,
And he thinks of a future that gleams
With a brightness reflected by medals of gold -
He's a boy who is chasing his dreams.

There's a waitress who works in a run-down cafe
In the town that she always called home,
And she dreams, as she's clearing the dishes away,
About London, and Paris and Rome.
In the evenings she works in the pub, serving beer,
With no time to herself, so it seems;
But she cheerfully strives for a goal that is dear -
She's intent upon chasing her dreams.

On a street in the suburbs a young couple stare
At the house they are hoping to buy.
It is old and neglected, but what so they care?
They are young, and their hopes are set high.
Though the mortgage and bills wont be easy to pay,
And misfortune may wreck all their schemes,
They are planning extensions, and children one day -
And together they're chasing their dreams.

There's a man who lies still in a hospital bed,
And his body is blackened and burned.
He's a volunteer firefighter, left there for dead
When the wind unexpectedly turned.
And his wife prays to Heaven to keep him alive,
As her world falls apart at the seams;
But the staff are amazed at his will to survive -
Single-minded, he's chasing his dreams.

On a drought-stricken property out in the west
Starving sheep dig for roots in the dirt.
And the owners push scrub - they are doing their best -
But they're beaten, they can't stand the hurt.
Then the rain tumbles down, and their weak new-born lambs
Are submerged by the fast-rising streams;
But the rain keeps on falling, it's filling their dams -
So they'll stay, and rebuild all their dreams.

You need strength when misfortune must be overturned.
You need courage when put to the test.
When the things that you want are not easily earned,
That's the time for producing your best.
And the bravest are those who will never give in,
For tenacity often redeems;
So they fight to the end, and quite often they win -
For they never give up on their dreams.

There are times when those dreams will be hard to achieve,
There are times when you'll stagger and fall;
But you'll pick yourself up, if you truly believe
You can triumph in spite of it all.
For the goals that you reach for can only be won
If you carry the fight to extremes,
So refuse to give in; Never say that you're done -
And don't ever stop chasing your dreams.

Marco and Muzz Tour

EASIEST TOUR EVER

Bush poets sure know how to live it up. Imagine this... acclaimed Australian Bush Poets Muzza Hartin and Marco Gliori, along with South Coast singer songwriter, Sam Stevenson do four shows in four days ... sounds tough eh?...yet by some unbelievable stroke of good luck, perhaps even a twist in the fabric that entwines our destinies, after the first successful show in North Sydney, the second of those shows in Newcastle would be cancelled. The third show at a bubbly little resort town, even though cut short, became a huge thrill for the five audience members who had never before been entertained by a performer who could remember all their names, while the fourth and final show was free for anyone who could be dragged in, and was staged as a warm-up to a Sydney Grunge Band, in a dimly lit cellar in Manly. All these various highlights, are just a glimpse of the joy that is touring with two mates who smoke and drink incessantly, can sniff out a slice of bread by the time the front door swings back, and have an insatiable desire for hours upon hours of reclining, grazing, watching

television, finely honing their performance skills, quenching their thirst for human interaction by arguing with the Pizza Delivery boy, and occasionally, when they could haul their fat bums off the couch, farting, smiling, and wallowing in each other's company. If you're not mates by the end, then maybe you're just not cut out to be a celebrity, to take your part in the whirlwind life that famous people find themselves trapped in, stalked by old ladies whose chin fat wobbles at you like a turkey as they rub your leg and say, 'isn't the singer handsome'. Well listen here old lady, Bush Poets are rugged, and maybe we don't wanna be like some smooth wavy-haired dude from the south coast whose love affair with the needle is obvious...(so what if he has diabetes... 'image' is everything man). So folks if you see any photos appearing in the magazines that follow these crazy Bush Poets around, believe only half of what you see and read, and then just kick back and relax by putting on one of their best-selling CD's, available in most airport lounges, 'cause that's where they'll probably leave the stock not sold on this tour.

2009 UPPER LACHLAN WOOL WAGON AWARDS

Junior written and performance poetry

ENTRIES CLOSE 30TH OCTOBER

send name, address, age and name of school plus 3 A4 typed copies and cover sheet to

Barry Murphy, 12 Goulburn St. Crookwell 2583
hone 02 4832 1004.

Age groups written and performance.

Under 9; 10 to 13 years; 14 to 17 years.

CASH PRIZES TROPHIES - OPEN CLASSES

A day without sunshine is like night.

On the other hand, you have different fingers.

99 percent of lawyers give the rest a bad name.

Half the people you know are below average.

He who laughs last, thinks slowest.

The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese in the trap.

Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry Awards 14th Annual Junior Festival

Hundreds of young people from across outback Queensland limbered up for Australia's largest junior poetry performance competition.

The Waltzing Matilda Junior Bush Poetry Festival held in Winton, in the state's west, is the largest junior poetry performance awards held in the nation featuring individual and group performers.

Organiser Louise Dean says the Winton region is known as the home of Waltzing Matilda, where Banjo Paterson wrote the famous verse in 1895 creating a link with Winton and Bush poetry.

The Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry Awards – Junior Performance Section, was held in Winton on Tuesday 7th and Wednesday 8th April 2009. Overall, there were a total of 349 student performers – 156 Individuals and 22 Groups, which demonstrates a huge commitment to the idea of promoting bush poetry and public speaking for our younger generation.

This year, 10 schools from across the outback region participated, plus the two local Winton schools. There was also

the special Teachers Section, where 6 teachers braved the stage to perform for their students.

Janine Haig from Eulo and Gary Fogarty from Millmeran were the judges this year, with Jennifer Haig from Longreach working as Compere.

Sponsors for this event were Corfield and Fitzmaurice, Mrs Jean O'Connell, Winton Shire Council, Wookatook Gift & Gem, Winton Business & Tourism Assoc Inc. and the Waltzing Matilda Centre.

Any event is not possible without volunteers who help to make the Festival a wonderful success. Thanks must go to everyone who contributed in any way.

Don't forget Tuesday 30th and Wednesday 31st April 2010 for the 15th Annual Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry Awards – Junior Section

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

HYMN No.365

A minister was completing a temperance sermon.
With great emphasis he said,
'If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

With even greater emphasis he said,
'And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said,
'And if I had all the whisky in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

Sermon complete, he sat down.

The hymn-leader stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, nearly laughing,

**'For our closing hymn, let us sing Hymn No. 365,
'Shall We Gather at the River.'**

LOST WITH ALL HANDS

HMAS Sydney 2

©Peter Mace

Her hull was laid down on a far distant shore
When the threat to world peace was too great to ignore
Designed for a purpose and that purpose was war
The dockyards were building the Sydney.

Launched when the great depression held sway
In action to keep the Italians at bay
By blockading the ports in the Med, far away
From her namesake, the city of Sydney.

With the world now at war the real work has begun
Against Germany now, soon Japans rising sun
The Bartolomeo felt her twin six inch guns
The day she was sunk by the Sydney.

Steaming down south to the west of Shark Bay
A freighter is seen at the close of the day
With the flag of the Dutch flying there on display
But a raider is stalking the Sydney.

The Captain approached what he thought was a friend
But the one thousand yards is too close to defend
When the flag of the Reich on the mast did ascend
And all hell breaks loose on the Sydney.

Taking water and burning she turns on the hun
Returning her fire "these colours won't run"
Determined to finish what she has begun
She fought to the end did the Sydney.

The battle is over, both ships drift in the haze
The Kormoran scuttled and the Sydney ablaze
The painful conclusion made after six days
All hands have gone down on the Sydney.

The bronze woman stands gazing grief etched on her face
Symbolizing the mothers and wives who with grace
Had waited for news on the last resting place
Of their loved ones who served on the Sydney.

It was just a dark smudge on a video screen
But the hunters were cheering for what they had seen
Then the thoughtful reflection on what it may mean
Had they found the wreck of the Sydney?

A nation had waited sixty seven long years
Long after the loved ones had shed all their tears
Then a shadowy shape on the sonar appears
And reveals the wreck of the Sydney.

A cold watery grave for her captain and crew
No one will ever know what they went through
When the Kormoran's guns and her torpedoes flew
Straight into the heart of the Sydney.

The fate of six hundred and forty five men
Remembered in silence by the navy, and when
The wreaths were cast out and the priest whispered amen
They prayed for the souls of the Sydney.

The wreaths were cast out – the priest whispered amen
And they prayed for the souls of the Sydney.



HMAS Sydney was a light cruiser of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) between 1934 and 1941. Sydney had great success in the first years of World War II, but controversy and mystery surrounded the loss of the battle-hardened ship and her crew in November 1941. She was sunk on 19 November 1941 with the loss of all 645 hands, which represented the greatest loss of life in an Australian warship, and the largest Allied vessel to sink with all hands during the war.



After years of searching, the wreckage of the German vessel that sank HMAS Sydney, the auxiliary cruiser Kormoran was found on 12 March 2008. On 17 March 2008 the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced that the wreck of HMAS Sydney had also been discovered, on the previous day.

PETER MACE

Peter got into the Bush Poetry scene rather later on in life. He had learned a few of Banjo Paterson's poems to recite around the campfire on many a trout fishing trip, when he was transferred to Vales Point Power Station, as a control room operator.

His new boss was an ex footballer with the nickname of "Darkie". Peter made the mistake of referring to his new boss by his nickname on his first day on shift. The reply he got was "Mr f---ing Darkie to you!!!"

As it turned out they both had a great love of Australian Bush Poetry and over the years could be found reciting in the Power Station, Keith (his real name) also hailed from Tamworth so every year Peter gets to stay with Keith and his extended family during the festival.

About the same time Peter discovered the Folk Festival scene and ran into the man who would become a great influence on his poetry, Mr John Dengate, not only was John a great songwriter, singer and poet but shared with Peter a deep love of Ireland, her history and her people.

With Peter's wife Anita hailing from South Armagh in Northern Ireland the "craic" when they all got together was mighty.

Peter had been attending a poetry group in Gosford while still working, and when the convener fell ill and it was in danger of folding got together with Vic Jefferies to keep it afloat. Peter and Vic had eight people at their first night of running the "Gosford Bush Poets" then decided they would try to attract a feature poet every second month.

Their first feature poet was John Dengate.

They have now been running the "Gosford Bush Poets" for three and a half years, the average attendance is sixty with a record of one hundred and one the night that "Blue The Shearer" was the guest.

In 2005 Peter raised the courage to have a go at his first poetry competition, and entered in both sections of the "Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition" His original poem, titled "The Poor Poet" was a finalist, and he was away!!

In 2007 he won the Tamworth Competition with his original poem "Courting Mary" and was a finalist in both sections in 2009.

Peter has had success in competitions in Bundaberg, Dunedoo, North Pine, Narrandera, Crookwell and the EKKA in Brisbane.

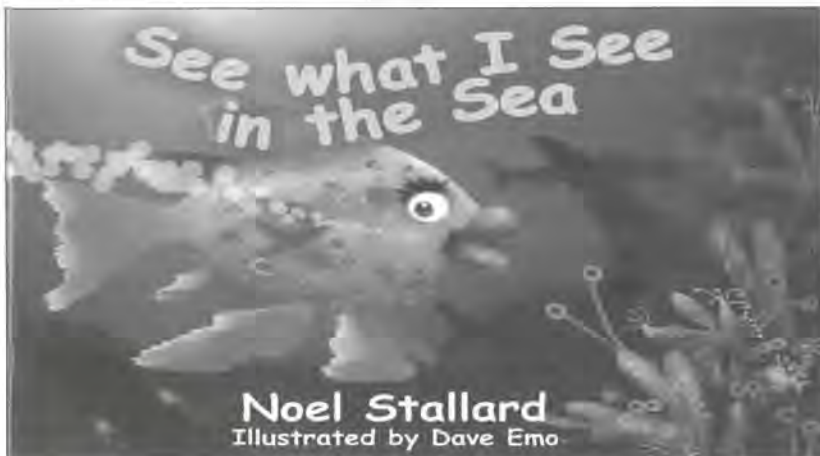
At the "National Folk Festival" in 2008 Peter was the "Reciter of the Year" for performing the moving Monty Grover poem of the Boer War "I Killed a Man at Graspan"

Peter and John Dengate were together at the "John O'Brien Festival" the day the wreck of the HMAS Sydney was located, when Peter arrived home he wrote "Lost With All Hands" the story of the Sydney 2.

The poem would become a finalist at the 2009 "Bush Laureate Awards" and would be played at the "National Maritime Museum" following an address by Mr Ted Graham, the director of the "Finding Sydney Foundation"

Peter has recorded two CD's, "C'mon for a Laugh and a Cry", featuring "Courting Mary" and his moving tribute to Captain Alfred Shout "What Price a V.C." and "Lost With All Hands" The story of the HMAS Sydney 2.

Peter lives on the Central Coast of NSW and can be contacted on (02)43693561 on email peterthepoet@gmail.com



See What I See in the Sea

is the latest children's book by Noel Stallard, illustrated magnificently by Dave Emo.

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Email: heritagepoetry@dodo.com.au

Url: www.noelstallard.com

2009 VICTORIAN OPEN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2009 Victorian Open Bush Poetry Championships will be held at the Benalla Bowls Club from 16-18 October. Once again, a great weekend of entertainment is on offer. Entrants are likely to come from far and wide to be a part of the competitions, 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 include poets' breakfasts (from 8am) on Saturday and Sunday, and variety concerts on Friday and Saturday nights (from 7:30pm).

This year, for the first time, a yarn-spinning competition will feature as a part of the Friday night entertainment. The Australian song competition will return again to be another highlight.

Competitors of all levels are catered for. This year there will be three novice prizes up for grabs – one more than last year. In the written section, a full poem critique from the written judge will be available for an additional fee.

In an effort to encourage the development of the poets of the future, junior competitors will not be charged an entry fee to their respective sections this year. To level the playing field between junior competitors, they will be divided into three sub categories in the written (junior primary, senior primary and secondary) and two in the performance (primary and secondary). This is a big improvement on the single category in each of the performance and written categories of previous years.

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. (See page 19)



Gosford Bush Poets

The Gosford Bush Poets are an informal group of poets, poetry lovers, versifiers, yarn spinners and the occasional songster, who over the past three and a bit years have seen their regular monthly meetings swell from an attendance of eight to more than one hundred.

The group meets at 7pm on the last Wednesday night of each month at the Gosford Hotel, cnr of Mann and Erina Streets, Gosford (opposite Gosford Railway Station).

Entrance is totally free and everyone is welcome to join them in a good old fashioned night of fine poetry and great friendship.

For further information contact:

Vic Jefferies (right) at
jeffries@tech2u.com.au
02 9639 4911



Peter Mace (right) at
peterthepoet@gmail.com
02 4369 3561



RAGING INFERNO

© Max Jarrott - Stanthorpe Q. 7.2.2009

As I sit and watch the setting sun in a place that God made first,
I think of those raging bushfires and their never ending thirst,
A fiery furnace so fierce, as the brave fire fighters fought on,
Fanned by a gale they had no chance, till many good homes were gone.

Victoria on February seven, it was as hot as the hobs of hell,
Up to forty-seven degrees in a vicious hot heat wave spell.
Bushfires raged on like they'd never seen and burnt many folk and stock,
It's hard to write of such anguish mate, 'cause it's been such a terrible shock.

A blackened earth for miles and miles and millions of wildlife lost,
Whole towns destroyed, plantations too, oh what is the total cost?
We'll never know and we pray each day for the folk who must remain,
Who will rebuild and continue on to live in that land again.

A Nation rallied to urgent need from compassion within the heart,
Raising millions and millions of dollars to give brave people a start.
The goods we gave will give some help but we'll never grasp the pain,
For loved ones lost in the dreadful fires. Pray we never see it again.

I'll leave this tribute in God's good hands for there's nothing more I can say,
Many good folk may say the same as in faith to the Lord they pray.
We may find it hard to understand, the life on earth 'we live,
We should say thanks for our blessings mate

and the help we were glad to give.



Max Jarrott

of Kilarney Qld. was an inaugural executive member of the ABPA elected in 1994. One of the earliest performers who adapted his poetry to the use of props to compliment his performances; his favourite being AB Paterson's 'Johnsons Antidote' during which he drew from his swag a giant goanna and a tiger snake who fought in mortal combat until the goanna swallowed the snake whole.

A Book for Kids (1921) by C.J. Dennis
Illustrated by C.J. Dennis

Do you remember 'The Triantiwontigongolope'? Or 'The Song of the Sulky Stockman'?

In 1921, C. J. Dennis dedicated A Book for Kids to children 'over four and under four-and-eighty' and it has been making Australian children laugh ever since.

With a foreword by Andy Griffiths, black dog books is bringing C. J. Dennis to a new generation of readers. As Philip Adams says, it's 'an Australian classic'.

"C. J. Dennis was famous as a writer for adults long before he began to write for children. He and his wife had no children of their own, and the first story he wrote especially for young people was for a friend's son, who was in hospital following an accident. The story was all about some strange people called the Glugs, who lived in the land of Gosh, and Dennis found that he enjoyed writing it as much as young Bert enjoyed reading it. The story later became the book THE GLUGS OF GOSH, a favourite with adults and children alike.



"Dennis went on to put together A BOOK FOR KIDS, a marvellous collection of verse and stories, illustrated with his own sketches. His wife later recalled: "I never knew Den more happy than when he was doing A BOOK FOR KIDS."

"One day he brought out his cover design to show her - a sketch, finally in fact not used, of a baby reading a book. She liked the picture enormously but both of them had the uneasy feeling that something was wrong with it.

They puzzled over the problem for a while and then she saw it - the baby's big toes were on the outside of its feet! "That shows how much I know about babies," said Dennis laughing uproariously as he went back to his study to alter the drawing.

Dennis did know one very important thing about children - he knew how to make them laugh - and his book, with favourite verses like "The Triantiwontigongolope", "The Ant Explorer", "The Circus", "The Band", "Our Cow" and "The Swagman", has entertained thousands of kids "over four and under four-and-eighty", as Dennis' dedication puts it, since it was first published in 1921. It has now sold well over 45,000 copies.

"BOOK FOR KIDS is brilliantly illustrated. The vitality and merriment of these poems are as fresh today as they were when Dennis had such fun creating his book so many years ago, and it is certain that for many years to come "good children over four and under four-and-eighty" will continue to enjoy the work of this clever, vigorous writer, and to accept the invitation to "think of things, and laugh" with him."

black dog books 15 Gertrude St. Fitzroy V 3065 Ph.03 9419 9406 dog@bdb.com.au

GOING TO SCHOOL by CJ Dennis

Did you see them pass to-day, Billy, Kate and Robin,
All astride upon the back of old grey Dobbin?
Jigging, jogging off to school, down the dusty track -
What must Dobbin think of it - three upon his back?
Robin at the bridle-rein, in the middle Kate,
Billy holding on behind, his legs out straight.

Now they're coming back from school, jig, jog, jig.
See them at the corner where the gums grow big;
Dobbin flicking off the flies and blinking at the sun -
Having three upon his back he thinks is splendid fun:
Robin at the bridle-rein, in the middle Kate,
Little Billy up behind, his legs out straight.

AUSSIE TRIO IN NEW ZEALAND

Naseby is a quaint and friendly town nestled in the snowy foothills of Otago in New Zealand's South Island. The area is known for it's excellent curlers and world-first artificial luge track. Each Easter Naseby's Ancient Briton Hotel plays host to the Bards, Ballads and Bulldust Festival.

Mine host Roch Sullivan welcomed back Milton Taylor, as well as Melanie Hall and Susan Carcary for their first appearances. The event was great fun and well attended. Local poet Ross McMillan (aka Blue Jeans) and balladeer Martin Clunes celebrated Otago history and heritage with poems and songs about mines, rivers, snow and of course sheep.

NZ folk singer (and former Play School star) Marcus Taylor was a highlight, and the program also included the remarkable talents of Phil Garland and Roger Lusby.

Kiwis love Australian bush poetry and all three of our Aussie ambassadors went over extremely well. They all braved icy conditions to play a game of curling (lawn

bowls on ice, complete with brooms) but luckily the luge track was not filled with ice!

Following the festival our intrepid three travelled the South Island and had the opportunity for further

performances with local balladeers. Roger Lusby organised a brilliant concert in Roxburgh and it was great to hear of his adventures in Antarctica in rhyme

A highlight of the trip was a visit to the grave of 'Somebody's Darling', the subject of Milton's award-winning poem. The grave is set beside the mighty Clutha, the river that took 'Somebody's Darling's' life, and it is joined by the grave of the man who is said to have carved the original wooden headstone.

The South Island's spectacular scenery was the perfect backdrop for Milton, Melanie and Susan to celebrate Aussie bush poetry to a wonderful Kiwi audience.





Letters to the Editor

APOLOGY:

The Beaudesert Country and Horse Festival has elected a brand new committee which is planning a brand new, shorter and more condensed festival but, in their wisdom, have decided not to hold any poetry events in conjunction with the 'Beauy Bush Bards' in 2009 as advertised in December.

The BBB's have staged bush poetry at this festival for the past thirteen years and are most apologetic to those who have made long range plans and are now inconvenienced by this cancellation which has been brought about through no fault of their own.

Dear Frank,

I hope you can spare me a small space to explain some confusion that exists re the Outback Writer's Centre's involvement in the Rolf Boldrewood Literary Awards.

For several years the Outback Writers Centre did conduct an annual literary competition, but when John Bayliss, Director of Macquarie Regional Library, supported by Dubbo City Council and ABC Radio,



expressed a desire to conduct a much larger competition in honour of well known novelist, Rolf Boldrewood, (pictured) the Outback Writer's Centre agreed to forego their competition and support the new one.

Ron Stevens and I volunteered to judge the poetry section of the Rolf Boldrewood competition for two years until it became established and Peter Dargin agreed to be the convenor, but the Outback Writer's Centre does not control or fund this competition in any way.

The Rolf Boldrewood competition, with its attractive prize money and Boldrewood trophy, is going from strength to strength. It closes in September each year and interested persons can contact The Convenor, Box 1042, Dubbo, 2830 for more information or entry forms.

With thanks,

ELLIS CAMPBELL.

From **Max Merckenschlager**.

Today I received a copy of summer-2008 Prosopisia (an international anthology of poetry and creative writing) from Anuraag Sharma of India, which has two of my poems included, "Brown Beach K.I." and "Last Of The Nomads". Other Australian contributors include John Kinsella and Phillip Mead, and Les Murray is on the editorial board. It's nice to be considered in or by such illustrious company.

LAST OF THE NOMADS

Two lovers crept from the comfort zone of midnight camp and Dreaming laws with never a backward look or pause they fled to the black unknown.

Beyond the reach of law and peers and Mandildjara tribal lands together, in their clasping hands they held the coming years.

From seasons fair and seasons grim from desert sands that freeze and burn for thirty years they'd not return though dreams would never dim.

And in a world embracing change they simply lived from day to day so often nothing shared to say and neither thought it strange.

In oneness with their mother land they gave and needed nothing more two beacons on a desert shore two mortal specks of sand.

FROM the EDITOR:

Please accept my apologies for the errors in the April-May issue of the bush poets magazine.

Firstly, the photograph on the back page was not that of Garry Lowe, but of the late Judith Hosier, a long time stalwart of the association until her sudden passing on the eleventh of February 1999.



Not Garry Lowe

Judith Hosier

A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.

If you think nobody cares, try missing a couple of payments.

Why do psychics have to ask you your name?

Light travels faster than sound. That's why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY POETS BREAKFAST

For Great Lakes and Taree District Written Competition for School Students.

The Midcoast Sundowners Bush Poets Group are preparing to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Great Lakes and Taree District Written Bush Poetry Competition for School Students.

Special preparations are now well underway for the event which has been scheduled for Sunday, 28th September, 2009 in Tuncurry, possibly at The Loop Building, (formerly the Girl Guides Hall), located at the junction of South and Pell Streets, Tuncurry, NSW. The venue can be confirmed by phoning Reid Begg 02 6554 9788 and will be confirmed in next month's newsletter.

Entry is free and open to all Primary School students who reside in the Great Lakes and Taree Districts and close on Sunday 28th August, 2009.

Cash prizes of \$35.00 will be awarded to the fifteen highest scoring poems and all entrants will receive a certificate. Organisers are hopeful that this year, if funds allow, a further 5 prizes will be awarded.

A barbecue breakfast will be available from 8 am and will be followed by the presentation of awards at 9 am. Successful entrants will recite or read their poems on stage, and they will be joined by local and visiting poets who are cordially invited to attend. Other enquiries should be directed to Reid, phone 02 6554 9788.

Organisers wish to express their appreciation to their event sponsors whom to date this year are Country Energy and local accountancy firm Harrison, Main and Macarthur of Forster.

The Midcoast Sundowners Bush Poets aim, in starting this competition, was to encourage junior poets to write rhyming Bush Verse and, judging from the volume, high standard and quality of past entries they have certainly achieved their aim.

The Sundowners are excitedly looking forward this event and they invite everyone to come along and share what will be a delightful day of entertainment.



**THE VICTORIAN OPEN
BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
BENALLA VICTORIA
THE HEART OF NED KELLY COUNTRY
October 16th – 18th 2009 - Benalla Bowls Club**



YARN-SPINNING COMPETITION

At least \$250 in prizes on offer

AUSTRALIAN SONG COMPETITION

Original and Other Song Sections Over \$200 in prizes on offer

PERFORMANCE BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

Men's, Women's and Junior (Primary and Secondary)

Novice, Intermediate and Open levels

Approximately \$2,500 on offer with trophies

Entries Close In All Performance Competitions October 2 2009

WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

Open and Junior (Junior Primary, Senior Primary and Secondary)

Approximately \$700 on offer with trophies.

Critiquing option available.

Entries Close September 10 2009

For further details contact

JOHN PEEL

Secretary Victorian Bush Poetry and Music Association

Phone 0428 312 287

Email peel_jg@hotmail.com

Entry forms available on line at www.abpa.org.au

Or send SSAE to

JAN LEWIS Assistant Secretary VBPA,

275 Cudgewa Valley Road

Cudgewa Vic. 3705

**ON YOUR VISIT TO BENALLA, YOU MIGHT LIKE
TO TAKE IN THE FOLLOWING ATTRACTIONS**

- BENALLA ART GALLERY
- PERFORMING ARTS AND CONVENTION CENTRE
- WINTON MOTOR RACEWAY
- COSTUME & PIONEER MUSEUM & VISITORS INFORMATION CENTRE
- BENALLA AND DISTRICT WINERIES
- NED KELLY TOURING ROUTE
- BOTANICAL GARDENS
- LAKE BENALLA WALKING TRACK

For further information

www.benalla.vic.gov.au and click the link for tourism and recreation for details of attractions and upcoming events Phone: 03 5762 1749

Accommodation Enquiries

Rose City Motor Inn 03 5762 2611

Caravan Park and Cabins 03 5762 3434



**2009 ABPA
AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
hosted by
The North Pine Bush Poets Group QUEENSLAND
21st, 22nd, 23rd, August 2008**



Written Verse Competitions

CLOSING DATE 31st July 2009

OPEN SECTION 1st Prize \$500 and Trophy

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

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

Entries with fees must be posted to the coordinator,

Mary Hodgson, 37 Mooloolah Rd. Mooloolah Qld, 4553

JUNIOR SECTION Primary Secondary

First Prize \$50 \$100

Second Prize \$30 \$60

Third Prize \$20 \$40

Entries (Free for Juniors) must be posted to:

Junior Written Judge, Noel Stallard,

PO Box 131 Arana Hills 4054 Qld.

ALL Entry Forms

http://www.abpa.org.au/Bush_Poetry/Championships/Australian_Bush_Poets_Championships_2009.html

Accommodation: http://www.abpa.org.au/championship_files/aust/2009_Accommodation.pdf

Further information: SSAE - The Secretary

Manfred Vijars PO Box 701 Morningside Qld 4170.

Or email: manfred@rocketfrog.com.au

Performance Verse Competitions

CLOSING DATE 10th AUGUST 2009

\$1,000 prize money plus trophy

to overall Male and Female Australian Champions

Total prizes exceeds \$7,000

VENUE (All Events) - CLUB PINE RIVERS

Cnr Sparkes & Francis Road BRAY PARK Qld. (Nth Bris.)

Categories: Junior and Novice

Open Male and Female

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

Entry Fees \$10 each category (Juniors Free)

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

Novelty Events:

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

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

Saturday Night - Gala Concert - Bookings Essential

Phone Club Pine Rivers on 07 3205 2677

Saturday NIGHT GALA CONCERT

with **Marco Giori - Milton Taylor -**

Zita Horton - John Best

The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

(Established 1994)

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Arbn I04 032 I26

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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.

ADVERTISING RATES

1/3 Column	\$10.00
2/3 Column	\$15.00
Full Column	\$20.00
Half Page	\$40.00
Book Shelf	\$ 5.00

Poet's Calendar and Regular Events free. (One line only) - Poets Calendar Booklet free. (Deadlines Apr 30 and Oct 30)

To allay costs, copy regarding a festival or event would be appreciated if accompanied by a paid advertisement.

Terms strictly C.O.D. with ad.

Send details in plain text along with payment to: The Editor.

4 Short Street Canowindra NSW 2804

email: editor@abpa.org.au

Ph. 02 6344 1477

A TASTE OF COUNTRY HARDEN NSW Oct. 31 - Nov. 1, 2009

Performance Poetry Competition
Poets Breakfast Sunday

Poets Brawl

\$2000.00 Prize-money

Limited Entries

Closes 1st October

Connie McFadyen 02 6386 2575

e-mail: conniemcfadyen7@bigpond.com

HARDEN ARTS COUNCIL

PO Box 205

Harden NSW 2587

Derby WA Poets Breakfast Sunday June 28th

Contact details:

Robyn Bowcock

ph 08 9191 1611

08 9191 1782 (A/H)

Email: fatesbe@aapt.net.au

Robyn Bowcock
PO Box 67
DERBY WA 6728

Perform
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performances
by emerging
word artists

writerstent.com

Coo-ee Festival Poetry Competition

The competition has six sections

- Coo-ee March
- Outback
- Humorous
- Open
- Open High School
- Open Primary School

This is a written competition with award winners invited to read their poem at the presentation night

Entries close Friday, August 21, 2009

Presentation Night - Friday, October 2, 2009

For more information or an entry form
phone 6847 2308 or write to the secretary at
PO Box 171, Gilgandra NSW 2827

Father and Son Duo

James Blundell & father, Peter Blundell
in Poetry and song performing their
'two-man show'

THE SILVER TONGUED DEVIL
JAMES & PETER BLUNDELL

at

PALMA ROSA

WEDNESDAY 17th JUNE 2009

Cost \$30.00

(including supper BYO Drinks)

7pm for 7.30pm

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

PALMA ROSA

9 Queens Road Hamilton 4007

Bookings and enquiries:

Palma Rosa 07 3262 3769

Trisha Anderson 07 3268 3624

COMPETITION RESULTS

BOYUP BROOK W.A.

Open Winner: "Sunset Rider",
David Campbell, Beaumaris, Victoria.

Highly Commended: "The Old Bush Poet"

Val Read, Bicton, WA.

"The Day of the Horse",

Doug Berry, Ravenshoe, Qld.

Commended: "Wheeleie Bin of Dreams",

Doug Berry, Ravenshoe, Qld.

"Modern Day Matador",

Doug Berry, Ravenshoe, Qld.

Emerging Poets Winner:

"The Halcyon Days",

Terry Piggot, Canningvale, WA.

Highly Commended:

"How Quickly They're Forgotten"

Pamela Fox Beaudesert Qld

Commended: "Out on the Western Shaw"

Terry Piggot, Canning Vale WA.

JOHN O'BRIEN FESTIVAL

Around the Borce Log Open Comp.

1st. Stan Gray - Vic

2nd. Alec Allitt - Deniliquin NSW

3rd. John Peel - Batlow NSW

Open Bush Poetry Competition

1st. Alex Allitt - Deniliquin NSW -

Blue and the Sheep (BMagor)

2nd. Dulcie McLean - Orange NSW -

Ponderings on Prunella (Original)

3rd. Garry Lowe - Berkeley Vale

NSW -

Played Strong, Done Good (Original)

4th. Ken Tough - Wagstaff NSW -
Outback (HLawson)

WINTON Q 14th Annual Junior Performance Festival 2009

A total of 349 Students performed:

156 Individual Performances:

22 Group Performances

PRIMARY Year 1

First: Tymika Brunner, Windorah S.S.

Second: Holly Forster,

Third: John Durack, Winton S.S.

Year 2

First: Annie Magoffin, Longreach S.S.

Second: Cheyenne Martyr,

Third: Chloe Davis, Winton S.S.

Year 3

First: Chloe Hitson, Ilfracombe S.S.

Second: Eathan Medill, L.S.O.D.E.

Third: Sophie Jones, Ilfracombe S.S.

Keely Perry, Longreach S.S.

Year 4

First: Jayden Aay, Barcaldine S.S.

Second: Zara Lynn, Longreach S.S.

Third: Katie Magoffin, Longreach S.S.

Year 5

First: Jontti Arnold, Longreach S.S.

Second: Yolanda Aay, Barcaldine S.S.

Third: Darci Perry, Longreach S.S.

Year 6

First: Grace Sheehan, Longreach S.S.

Second: Holly Hitson, Ilfracombe S.S.

Third: Caitlin Hawe, L.S.O.D.E.

Year 7

First: Alise Murie, L.S.O.D.E.

Rinalda Aay, Barcaldine S.S.

Second: Meghan Murie LSOE

Third: Sally Magoffin, Longreach S.S.

CLOVER NOLAN AWARDS

Primary

Winner: Rinalda Aay, Barcaldine S.S.

Second Darci Perry, Longreach S.S.

Secondary — Winner:

Liam Murie, Nudgee St Joseph, Bris.

Runner-up: Emma Durack Winton SS

SECONDARY

Year 8:

First: Gemma Cusack, Winton S.S.

Year 9: First: Liam Murie,

Nudgee St Joseph College, Bis.

Year 10:

First: Emma Durack, Winton S.S.

GROUPS

Group Year 1, 2 and/or 3

First: Longreach School of Distance

Education

Second: Winton State School

Third: Barcaldine State School

HC: St Patrick's, Winton

Group Year 4 and/or 5

First: Winton State School

Second: Longreach State School

Third: Ilfracombe State School

HC: St Patrick's, Winton

HC: Barcaldine State School

HC: L.S.O.D.E.

HC: Windorah State School

Group Year 6 and/or 7

First: Our Lady's School, Longreach

Second: Winton State School

Third: Longreach State School

HC: L.S.O.D.E.

HC: Ilfracombe State School

HC: Windorah State School

HC: Barcaldine State School

HC: St Patrick's Winton

Group Small School

First: Stamford State School

Second: Evesham State School

Group High School

First: Year 8 and 9, Winton State

School

SPECIAL AWARDS

The Bob Miller Memorial Encouragement Award for Group Speaking

Winner: Years 6 and/or 7 LSOE.

Waltzing Matilda Special Medal

For the best performance by a student

from a School of Distance Education

Winner: Alise Murie, L.S.O.D.E.
The Bob Miller Memorial Encouragement Award for Junior Presentation
Winner: Zoe Lynn, Longreach S.S.
The Bob Miller Memorial Encouragement Award for Secondary Presentation

Winner: Emma Durack, Winton S.S.

CORRYONG V.

POETRY & MUSIC 2009

Written Serious Gregory North

Written Humorous David Campbell

Original Photostory with sound

Jim Brown

Non-original Poem/Yarn/Song

Graeme Johnson

Original song/poem/yarn

John Peel

Banjo Paterson's 'MFSR' Performance

John Peel

Aussie Comedy Performance

Graeme Johnson

Aussie Gum Leaf Playing Champion

Jeffrey Wilmot

Matilda Award Betty Walton

Clancy's Choice Award

John Peel

One-Minute Poem Carol Reffold

Poets' Breakfast Reciter Award

Barry Tiffen

Lawrie Sheridan Encouragement

Award Maurie Foun

Seniors' Encouragement Award

Stan Gray

Jan Lewis Encouragement Award

Duncan Williams

Self Published Award Ken Prato

Matilda Award Overall Female

Betty Walton

Clancy's Choice Overall Male

John Peel

WALLA WALLA WAGON WHEEL AWARD

for

WRITTEN BUSH POETRY

Entry fee - \$5 per poem - 3 for \$10

No entry form required

Please supply:

Two copies of each poem entered

Cover sheet for each poem entered

Entries close October 9

Entries, Cheques/money orders to
Erica Nadebaum, 11/33 Mardross Crt.,
Albury NSW 2640

Enquiries to den53@austarnet.com.au (02) 60405337

LISMORE EISTEDDFOD

The Lismore Musical Festival Society presents its 2009 Eisteddfod at the Lismore City Hall from September 13 to October 2. The spoken word sections will be held in the Lismore & District Workers club on the 19th and 20th of September.

Phone 02 6621 6015. Entries close on 6th June.

A section with cash prizes exists for amateur performance poets who are aged between 17 and 100 years.

Schedules and entry forms are available to Write and Perform your own poem from

The Secretary,

Val Axtens,

PO Box 278

Lismore NSW 2480

vaxtens@yahoo.com.au

Coolac

Wp J. A. McManus
Storekeeper.
Coolac (N.S.W.)
22.3.20

Dear Old Jim

Squint at above address

C% J. A. McManus
Storekeeper.
Coolac. (N.S.W.)
22.3.20

Dear Old Jim,

Squint at above address.

I've been sentenced to six months Bush again, and shanghaied here; but I'm satisfied with my fate. No need to describe the place - you'll know.

Your people can't be too far away. Well you know how I hate writing letters but if I'd written you a Shakespeare from Sydney I couldn't have told you half about. - Besides it was two years on drink and less than enough to live on. - It was the cursed allowance over and over again - like the old remittance system you know.

But I stick to Mrs. Byers all through - You'll hear of her from Joe Noonan 'Worker' Office St. Andrews Place Sydney. There's a pub next door, but you know, all the interest seems to have gone out of life since we parted. Need I explain more?

Is "Old Peter" Alive yet? - and "Pincher"?

I got the portraits you sent me - Mrs B has them safe in Sydney - and all your letters; but I was drinking or recovering all the time. I feel that this letter will reach you before you leave Leeton.

Hold out for prices between the Bulletin and Smith's weekly (rogues both) you'll think out a way to manage them either by letter or word of mouth. Ask or demand to know what their rates of payment are, and how much per word you are getting, and work one against the other.

Send your best to the 'Bully'; requesting them to return 'rejects' promptly then send rejects to "Smiths Weekly" - they'll jump at em.

The white man and friend at "Smiths" is one Adamson, sub editor - but I thought I put him in touch with you. And above all save all your clippings and original copies with a view of submitting to A&R or someone for book publication - you've got enough for a book now.

I paved the way with Mr. Robertson of A&R's with some of your best. But your stuff is all good some splendid. It throws all mine on similar lines into the Mens Hut rubbish heaps altogether. But then you had all the experience and I next to none - except for 6 months in Bourk (sic.) and beyond in '90 - '92.

Somewhere round on the Griffith or Yanko, or Hay line is one William (otherwise Bill) McManus returned soldier, if you meet him. introduce yourself and tell him I'm staying with his father. (He's at Beelbanger.)

Remember me very kindly to Mrs. Gordon, Jean, Frankie, both Bonnies and any of your old mates. And write by return.

From Your Old Mate

Uncle Harry

Henry Lawson

Henry Lawson



H.L. at his cottage in Leeton

POET'S CONNECTIONS Items relating to poets associated with Gundagai - Henry Lawson, Banjo Paterson, Jim Grahame and Jack Moses - are displayed, together with memorabilia on songwriter Jack O'Hagan, who wrote 'Along the Road to Gundagai'.

Some of Henry Lawson's possessions, such as his walking stick, restored chair and dictionary, together with his letters to Grace McManus who cared for him in 1920 at Coolac just north of Gundagai, are treasured gallery exhibits. So too is the first X-Ray brought into country NSW by a Dr. Mawson, who practised in Gundagai from 1906 (a brother of famous Antarctic explorer Sir Douglas Mawson).

Chelmsford Place radiates out to the north. There is a band rotunda and a beautiful tree plantation. Next to the rotunda are three water towers (1912, 1937 and 1974) with neo-gothic battlements in medieval mode. Adjacent is the impressive Hydro Hotel (1919) originally built to house executives of the Water Conservation and Irrigation Com-

Murrumbidgee Irrigator

ADVERTISING MEDIUM OF THE LETON IRRIGATION AREA
LEETON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1947

(Excerpt from) **Civic Dinner To Jim Grahame**
CITIZENS AND VISITORS HONOUR THE POET



The historic Honour Night to Jim Grahame (Mr. J. W. Gordon) was celebrated in Leeton on Friday night amidst spectacular scenes of pageantry, public rejoicing and a grand festival of music, song, dancing verse speaking, everything being the original

compositions of the poet, set to music by Australia's leading musicians or recited by talented elocutionists. Something of the rhythm and grace of Grahame's poetical writing was recaptured also, and realistically portrayed in the dancing exhibitions which were such a delightful feature of the programme. It was an occasion that will be looked back upon in the years to come, as a milestone in the history of Leeton, and perhaps Australia.

Messages and apologies were read by the Shire President at the dinner, along with the letter received from John O'Brien (Rt. Rev. Monsignor P. J. Hartigan).

LEETON, TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 1949

VALE JIM GRAHAME (Excerpts from) Australian Poet (Mr. J. W. Gordon) Passes Away Suddenly

The news of the passing of Jim Gordon, more widely known through his poetical writings as 'Jim Grahame', was received with profound sorrow by his innumerable friends and admirers.

The end came so suddenly and unexpectedly that it was a severe shock to the entire community, and many found it hard to realise at first that genial and kindly hearted 'Jim', who was such a familiar figure, had gone from their midst. He passed away suddenly at his home on Friday last after he had returned from a visit to town to collect his mail.

No one was at the home, Farm 748, Amesbury. His wife was called away only on the Wednesday previous, through the death of her brother Mr. J. MacIntyre, of St. Mary's.

The late Mr. Gordon is survived by his widow, one son (Frank) and three daughters Jean, Bonnie and Ruby.

He was recognised as the last of the bush balladists and his writings have entitled him to a high place amongst the poets of Australia, amongst those from whom he won eulogism being Australia's National Poet, the late Henry Lawson with whom

he was a close personal friend in days gone by.

The sadness of the occasion is heightened by the section of real Australian bush land so vividly portrayed in his prolific writings. . . . Jim passed away peacefully sitting on his own doorstep under the bright blue sky with the bright sun shining down upon the trees and the flowers in the picturesque grounds of his home which he loved so well. Apparently he felt unwell just as he reached the door and sat down to rest for a moment on the doorstep. As he rested there his soul took flight, peacefully and tranquilly in the bright light of day. . . .

. . . . The late Jim Gordon was born under the flap of a tilted cart in Creswick Victoria on October 23, 1874. His father was a Highlander and his mother Australian born (nee Morgan), of Welsh parentage. In his young days Jim was a great roamer and worked at many trades in the bush. . . .

For about twenty years he worked on farms and stations in the western districts of New South Wales. . .

It was during this time, at 18 years of age, that he met Henry Lawson at Bourke.

. . . . His first published verse was in the Sydney "Worker" in 1902, and the first of his Bulletin verse appeared in the Christmas number of that journal in 1903 and was entitled "Boundary Riding."

In 1947 his book "Under Wide Skies" was published by the citizens of Leeton. National recognition of Jim Grahame's contribution to Australian Literature was granted by the Prime Minister in 1947 on the occasion of his 73rd birthday, when he was awarded a literary pension.

He came to the Irrigation Area in the early days of the settlement and was employed by the Irrigation Commission. He remained with the Commission until he reached the retiring age.

His years of retirement were quietly spent at home; and he found occupation in freelance writing, and pottering around in his garden with its gums, willows, poplars and wattle growing around the weatherboard home at Amesbury. Jim's friends were legion. Everybody was glad to meet him walking along the streets of Leeton on his visits to town, right up to the day of his death, he was halted every few yards by friends eager to exchange a word or two and express good wishes.

mission who were supervising the construction of the MIA. The building was sold and enlarged in 1924. Its life as an hotel began without an alcohol license as, at a time when abstinence and prohibition movements were sweeping the west, the town was 'dry' in its early days, much to the consternation of Henry Lawson. Lawson, one of Australia's best known poets, was invited to Leeton in 1915 to be given two guineas a week and

a house in return for articles and poems publicising the MIA. He accepted and lived at Leeton from January 1916 to September 1917, publishing a number of articles, which were not always favourable. He spent much of his time here revising early work for publication in Selected Poems (1918). While there he met J.W. Gordon (aka 'Jim Grahame') who is thought to be the model for one of Lawson's central fictional characters,

'Mitchell'. The two had first met during Lawson's celebrated outback trek in 1892-93.

At that time there were 'drunks' express' trains taking the likes of Lawson to watering holes at Whitton and Narrandera. Lawson's cottage, in Daalbata Rd, on the eastern side of town, has been little altered though it is not open for public inspection.



Jim Grahame

JIM GRAHAME

Mr. James William Gordon -

Jim Gordon was born in 1874, under the flap of a tilted cart, at a mining camp in Bloody Gully, Creswick Victoria.

At eighteen years of age he set out on horseback making his way to Bourke, NSW. There, in 1892 he met with 25 years old Henry Lawson, and after a stint at working in the shearing sheds they humped their bluey's to Hungerford on the Queensland border and then back again to Bourke.

It was Henry Lawson who gave him the pen name Jim Grahame (which Jim adopted in 1916).

"... under the blue sky with the warm sun shining upon him, feeling unwell he sat down to rest a moment . . . as he rested his soul took flight peacefully, in the bright light of day"

Jim died alone sitting on the back doorstep of his farm at Leeton NSW, on Friday 12th August 1949, his wife being away on family matters.

From 'Amongst My Own People' by Jim Grahame.

When the circumstances at times prevented us from meeting for a few days, or perhaps a week, we would exchange written messages and these occasionally were in humorous vein. For instance the one reproduced below concerned a dog Henry owned, which had acquired chicken-killing, child-biting, and horse-chasing habits.

PUBLIC NOTICE

To all whom it may concern

Lost, a Dorg Named "Charley." The man wot finds that Dorg and Brings him back to me, will get the Biggest Hidin' a Man ever got from the undersigned.

Yours truly,

Henry Lawson.

When I am Very Old

by Jim Grahame
(from an unpublished original manuscript)

When I am very old
-And it will not be long-
I'll linger in the bush
And sing its rugged song
Slow will my footsteps be
Seeking a place to rest
Facing the setting sun
-I've always loved the west-

As the long shadows creep
And night is falling fast
I'll make a final song
Singing to the last
While on earths curved rim
Girt by a crimson wall
I'll see a cities gates
And sired temples, tall

Pennants will wave me high
-Like flaming locks of gold-
Marking the way for me
For I'll be frail and old,
A star will light the sky
Long 'ere I reach the wall
And as I pass the gates
I know the night will fall



Phillipa Hollenkamp

Great-granddaughter of James William Gordon, or 'Grandpa Jim' as her mother still fondly calls him.



HENRY LAWSON

(Photograph by Charles Wilson, Bourke 1892)

Henry Lawson, born in 1867, was an Australian poet and writer who wrote about Australia, he was totally deaf at 14 years of age. Lawson's poetry and prose inspired the feeling that life was worth living during the hardship of the 1890's depression. The great irony is that Lawson himself was a deeply divided man. He was a soul burdened with an insatiable craving for love, a combative spirit with impossible hopes that mankind might sort itself out.

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On 2nd September, 1922, Henry died at Abbotsford, Sydney. The Prime Minister of the day, William Morris Hughes decreed a State Funeral and the late Henry Lawson was laid to rest in Waverley Cemetery.