



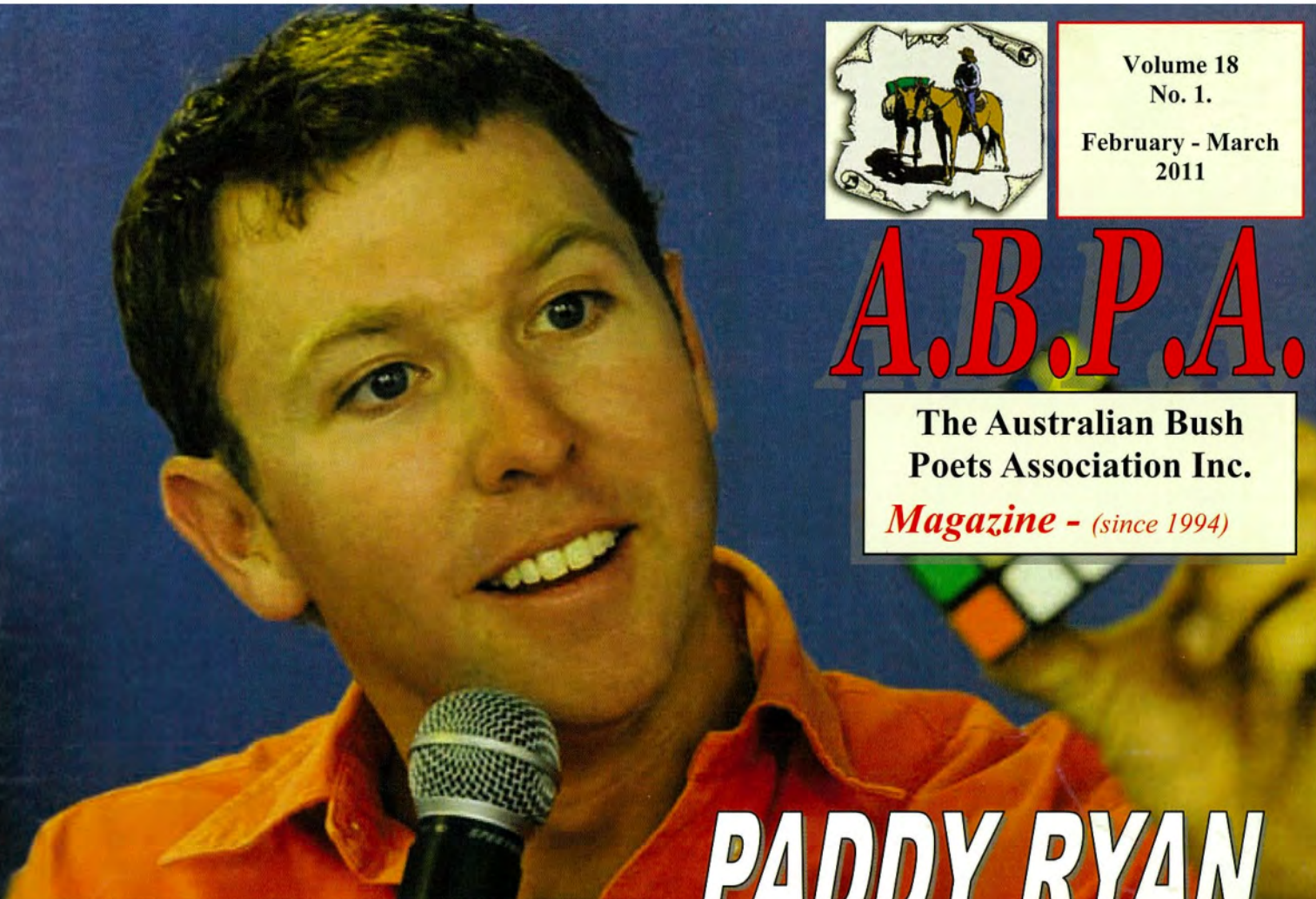
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A.B.P.A.

The Australian Bush
Poets Association Inc.

Magazine - (since 1994)



PADDY RYAN

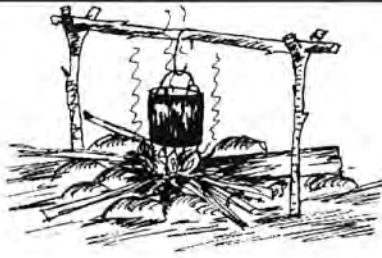


Catherine Clarke

WINS 2011 BLACKENED BILLY
The Rolfe Boldrewood
The Ipswich Poetry Feast
The Gippsland Golden Wattle



- Murray Hartin
- Noel Stallard
- Keith Lethbridge
- Carol Heuchan
- Jack Drake
- Jim Brown



THE BLACKENED BILLY VERSE COMPETITION 2011

Judge's Comments

It was my great pleasure to adjudicate 288 entries in the 2011 Blackened Billy Verse Competition. I continue to be amazed by the quality of entries each year. And this means my task becomes increasingly difficult on each occasion.

Imagine the amount of time given by writers to create entries that embrace our lifestyle and heritage with such clarity and vision. It was interesting to read and re-read narratives of bush lifestyle, hardships, history, love stories, and the beauty of our Country. Such clever prose and imagery is outstanding. This is coupled with great rhythm, rhyme and well-structured meter contained in a majority of the entries.

There were eighty four final entries selected from those submitted, before commencing further elimination. Then a final forty four before the emotional decisions were made to arrive at the three place getters and the ten highly commended entries.

Thank you to all of the entrants. Be assured that every single entry receives the painstaking attention it deserves. Please continue to enter this Competition and keep up the fine tradition of written work.

Once again, thanks to the hard working Jan Morris and her diligence in the organisation of the Blackened Billy competition each year. I would also like to pay tribute to the ABPA and the many Bush Poetry organisations throughout the country who work so hard. There are many people involved who are responsible for keeping the great tradition of Bush Poetry alive and well. Congratulations to you all.

FIRST PLACE: A BUSHMAN'S LAST FAREWELL by CATHERINE CLARKE, South Nilhande Atoll, Republic of Maldives

This is a beautifully crafted story of a bushman who is coming to the end of his life and feels the need to eulogise the wonderment of his experiences before he passes on. He chooses the appropriate setting for the final scene with only his faithful dog and horse as his final companions. The writer's strong imagery, balanced meter and descriptive illustrations are fascinating, and cleverly sustain the narrative to its soulful climax. This is the work of a gifted picture writer and a fitting winner of the Blackened Billy for 2011.

SECOND PLACE: LUNATIC, THE COURIER by ELLIS CAMPBELL, Dubbo, NSW

A BUSHMAN'S LAST FAREWELL

by Catherine Clarke Winner, 2011 Blackened Billy

As a bushman I've been wandering for all my working life,
and I never settled down with home and family, a wife.
I just worked where work was going as a drover, station hand;
did some mustering and shearing, always working on the land.

As the twilight of my years now finds me lost in solitude
and I gaze across this billabong with peacefulness imbued,
now my billycan is boiling so I rise to make some tea,
whilst it seems that Max is dozing – yet I know he watches me.

I retrieve the mug and shuffle to my horse beside the tree,
and he snorts in recognition, brown eyes gazing lazily.
Though within deceptive silence here grave threats at times arise,
he is calm tonight – no danger lurks – I see it in his eyes.

Sometimes lost in idle musings how another life might seem
if I'd dropped this roving bushman's life for that romantic dream,
I reflect – but know the bush was ever in my heart and soul,
and persistently it called me to this solitary role.

For I craved the crackling firelight and the space that looms immense –
was enticed by blazing sunsets so inspiring and intense;
yearned for silence that engulfed me when I laid my bedroll down,
choosing harmony and peace above the noise and lights of town.

So I've never once felt lonely in this splendid, grand expanse,
which has never failed to stir me with its myst'ry and romance.
While its eerie, timeless wonder always held me in its thrall,
its inhabitants beguiled me with each strange, alluring call.

For I've seen the awesome spectacle of brumbies on the run,
with their nostrils flaring, flowing manes, their breath in unison –
heard them shake the ground with thunder and refuse to compromise,
with the love of freedom glinting in their haunted, stormy eyes.

I have ridden round the cattle resting near each water hole,
or when tailing them to shepherd and to keep them in control,
yet felt terrified excitement at a bullock's mad stampede,
with the dust clouds dense, revealing just the crazed one at the lead.

The rewards and satisfaction earned by mustering the sheep,
or the teamwork of the ringers, building mateship that runs deep ...
All these pleasures have sustained me on my isolated track,
so although there's certain things I've missed, I wouldn't take it back.

From the opening stanza, the writer enthralled us with the description of the epic ride through floodwaters by the stockman, Billy Mateer, to warn people of oncoming danger to themselves and their homes. The reader can visualize the near impossible task involved. I was engrossed with the descriptive phrasing, and the use of strong adjectives to describe this hazardous task. The writer has used alternate rhyme for effect, clever stress sounds and meter and appropriate imagery. A wonderful creative effort to describe this prominent event in our past history.

THIRD PLACE: SUMO MICK by BOB MAGOR, Myponga, SA

This entry had my keen attention from the very first line and retained it to the end. The Ringer, Sumo Mick has really involved himself in something big, taking on a Japanese Sumo wrestler during his trip to the city, and the writer expertly outlines every crushing detail of Mick's engagement with his beefy opponent. The reader can almost experience the excru-

Though I've known the bitter heartbreak of the unrelenting drought,
have experienced a desert storm and feared I'd not get out,
witnessed total devastation wrought by bushfire's wrath, and flood,
yet been stunned by man's humanity and sacrifice of blood.

I could not forget the stillness of a soundless outback dawn,
nor the bustling sounds of creatures that begin to greet the morn;
I could not become complacent over ancient rocks and caves,
and escarpments towering – brooding over centuries of graves.

I still wonder at the boundless blue horizons that I scan
with no life in sight, and feel the insignificance of man;
where the stars look etched in crystal and the Southern Cross rides high –
seems engraved on inky blackness in an endless velvet sky.

There a crocodile is surfacing – Max growls, his ears on end,
while another spasm grips my chest and startles my old friend ...
But the croc is only browsing and he slithers off downstream,
while a startled heron takes to flight with elegance supreme.

Now the great red orb is setting and the firmament's alight –
soon the hunting preparations start for creatures of the night.
High above are flawless patterns formed by countless magpie geese,
whilst a massive eagle oversees his realm of timeless peace.

I am lying here prepared for death, for life has run its course;
when you find me, please take care of Max and this old faithful horse.
For my ticker's let me down again and this time I just know –
and I think the dog does too – that it is time for me to go.

I suspect tomorrow's sunrise is a glory I'll not see –
this idyllic spot so fitting as my final memory.
On the eucalyptus breeze I will approach that unknown door,
joining countless other bushmen who have paved the way before.

There's no spirit guide to come for me, no mystery to solve;
there are few who will remember, and there's no-one to absolve.
And quite honestly there isn't any better place for me
to depart this life, than in the bush that's been my destiny.

Though I'll miss so many things about my life here on the land,
I am leaving with a smile, my hat and stock whip in my hand;
I will say farewell to this amazing kingdom unsurpassed,
and within the great Australian bush my soul will sleep at last.

ciating pain with some of the grips Mick inflicts on his opponent. The writer has cleverly made use of alliteration and perfect meter to portray the active stress and motion required for such a ballad. A very clever piece of writing.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

CATHERINE CLARKE	Plea of my People
DAVID CAMPBELL	A Love Story
TERRY PIGGOTT	The Ugly Side of Drought
BRENDA-JOY PRITCHARD	Legacy of a Bushfire
CAROL HEUCHAN	Lunatic
VERONICA WEAL	Trapped
VAL WALLACE	Murdo McKenzie's Ghost
MAX MERCKENSCHLAGER	PM Ariel, Police Grey
CATHERINE CLARKE	Special Connection
WILL MOODY	Clearance Sale

Keith Jones, Adjudicator

WAKE UP TIME

When the shearing sheds are silent
and the stock camps fallen quiet
When the gidgee coals no longer glow
across the outback night
And the bush is forced to hang a sign,
'gone broke and won't be back'
And spirits fear to find a way
beyond the beaten track
When harvesters stand derelict
upon the wind swept plains
And brave hearts pin their hopes no more
on chance of loving rains
When a hundred outback settlements
are ghost towns overnight
When we've lost the drive and heart we had
to once more see us right
When 'Pioneer' means a stereo
and 'Digger' some backhoe
And the 'Outback' is behind the house,
there's nowhere else to go
And 'Anzac' is a biscuit brand
and probably foreign owned
And education really means brainwashed
and neatly cloned
When you have to bake a loaf of bread
to make a decent crust
And our heritage once enshrined in gold
is crumbling to dust
And old folk pay their camping fees
on land for which they fought
And fishing is a great escape;
this is until you're caught
When you see our kids with yankee caps
and resentment in their eyes
And the soaring crime and hopeless hearts
is no longer a surprise
When the name of RM Williams
is a yuppie clothing brand
Not a product of our heritage
that grew off the land
When offering a hand makes people think
you'll amputate
And two dogs meeting in the street
is what you call a 'Mate'
When 'Political Correctness'
has replaced all common sense
When you're forced to see it their way,
there's no sitting on the fence
Yes one day you might find yourself
an outcast in this land
Perhaps your heart will tell you then,
'I should have made a stand'
Just go and ask the farmers
that should remove all doubt
Then join the swelling ranks who say,
'don't sell Australia out'.

Courtesy of Craig Leggett
(Ex SAS & 1 RAR)
Author unknown



Aussie by choice

Manfred Vijars has been reelected for a second term as President of the ABPA. In this interview Manfred talks about his passion for Australian Bush Poetry and his vision for our organisation.

Manfred's parents migrated to Australia when he was two years old. His Dad, a Russian born Latvian, and Mum, a Polish born German, make him "One Hundred Percent mongrel-bred and Australian by choice".

Manfred grew up in country Victoria with an outdoors lifestyle. Weekends and holidays were spent in the scrub, shooting and fishing. His nights were filled with Australian classics read by candle and camp-fire light. He has been a keen bushwalker and outdoorsman ever since. He left home at an early age to do the 'Great Circle' trip. During that time Manfred worked in a number of different jobs. He was a steel-fixer on the Snowy (Blowering Diversion Tunnel); part of a road gang on the Nullabour (Balladonia);

a cane cutter in FNQ (Ingham) and croc shooter in the NT (out of Borrooloola) before a stint in the Services. He also completed an IT Degree as a mature age student.

Manfred presents a weekly radio show on Brisbane's 91.7FM where he showcases Australian bush poetry and folk music.

When did you hear your first bush poem?

My Dad used to read out loud to my sister and I after dinner so he could improve his English

How did you get involved with bush poetry?

I used to memorize and recite Paterson as a kid (definitely my Dad's influence) and thought I was the only one left in Australia who did, until about 7 or 8 years ago a workmate who wrote poetry invited me to a Bush Poetry concert. I felt that I'd come home. I joined the North Pine Bush Poets after attending that first concert.

What is it about bush poetry that appeals to you?

I love the adventure of researching our history; the discovery of a better way to 'say' something (in verse) and playing with a rich pallet of Australian English.

When was your first competition?

Bundaberg Muster 2003. I won their Novice section that year

When did you begin to write?

I played with writing at various times through the years but wrote my first parody (Riga Bill) for a Latvian Cultural event to introduce them to Paterson.

Who has most influenced your writ-

ing style? Which poets do you admire (both traditional and contemporary poets) and why?

I love Lawson for his varied style and penetrating insights into the human condition. I admire Graham Fredriksen and Ron Stevens for the same reasons.

When did you begin the radio show?

About 4 years ago. A local community FM station conducted a training course for up and coming presenters, so I took it. I've had my current slot for almost 3 years now

What's been happening in Tamworth and do you think there is a developing relationship between poets and balladeers?

I had a great run at Tamworth. I won the Lyrics section of the Tamworth Songwriters in 2008 with "Saddle by the Door", and took out the Contemporary Country Song of the Year award in 2009 with my poem "Strum".

Songwriters are always looking for great lyrics, however not all great poems make great lyrics. Often a songwriter will cull, hack and change a piece so it's barely recognisable to the lyricist. That can hurt. Hooking up with a songwriter in a symbiotic relationship is a challenge, unless you can write and play your own music too.

What is your vision for the ABPA?

I'd like to 'see' the ABPA around in 50 years from now, supporting and encouraging young writers as well as preserving our dynamic history (as she is wrote) championing our unique Australian Culture.

We have a great membership, rich with incredible minds, I see the ABPA as a vehicle for those minds and we must ensure that the 'poetry' does not die with them.

Shearing Corral Jericho, Utah, USA, April 26, 1920 (p.8)



ABPA President's Report for year ending 2010



One year flies ever so quickly. Since we last met there have been a few additions in the form of children and grandchildren, there have been illnesses, recoveries and sadly, losses. The flooding tragedies in Queensland and Victoria, and bush-fires in the West have been well reported; they are another reminder of the extremes in this Land we love. No matter what our Land throws at us, we love Her! We also love our fellow man. We demonstrate that by helping when they're down, giving comfort where it's needed and share in the grieving. This is the Aussie Spirit.

Sadly we've lost three poets this last year, Peter Crawford, Graham Fredriksen and David Meyers. Terry Regan, has lost his dear companion, Dalcie. Our hearts are saddened by the losses and our thoughts are with the grieving.

At the beginning of the year (2010) the ABPA committee members installed Skype, a free video conferencing chat programme. We were then able to have 'real-time' meetings via the internet. New technology is not without its challenges, however we have been able to successfully hold six committee meetings this last year.

The agenda content from those meetings was far ranging and it was good to have many of the committee in the same (virtual) room to discuss aspects of our organisation.

FUNDING

Running of the ABPA per year is approximately \$20,000. Annual income is roughly the same based on the last 2 years. The ABPA Committee is looking at passive funding, particularly website banner advertising on the ABPA Forum as well as major sponsors for events.

MEMBERSHIP

Online payments through PayPal for membership applications and renewals should be operational in February. Half-yearly memberships are withdrawn. Five year memberships are now available for \$150 for the five years.

WEBSITE/FORUM

Andy Schanalle stepped up to the crease in the beginning to build, from scratch, the ABPA Web-site. He then added the Forum. The ABPA Forum has connected our community online and given poets the ability to share, banter, compare and critique their works from across the country. Andy also maintained the ABPA site, generously in his own time while continuing his studies in IT. As his studies were concluding he felt it was time to hand the website over.

I know we all wish him well in the pursuit of his chosen profession.

Andy recommended the ABPA website be hosted elsewhere, which we've done.

With the handover came change, if you log onto the ABPA Website (<http://www.abpa.org.au/>) you can see the changes. The website is complimentary to the ABPA Magazine and to this end our Editor Frank Daniel handles the "Events" and "Results" sections on the website. Gregory North and myself, are the administrators and we both have all passwords and access codes.

With the new look design and navigation system, the site will focus on current poets and events.

Events: will list the year ahead for happenings around the Country.

Results: will remain accessible on the website for historical reasons

Poetry: section will concentrate on current award-winning poets and poems.

Tips: for the benefit of members and others interested in Australian Bush Poetry.

Schools: pages will be included later.

Forum: all members are invited to join The New Forum is up and running and The OLD Forum - has been uploaded to the server however searching the old forum is currently limited. We are looking for a solution to this so we can make this fully available.

Some **GENERAL RESOLUTIONS** of the ABPA Committee were ...

The National Archive approached the ABPA to archive the ABPA Website as part of the "Pandora" programme. The National Archive thought our website to

be a site of, "Cultural Significance". There were some concerns over copyright. Given that copyright remains with the author and the works cannot be republished without the appropriate permissions, the Committee gave permission for the archiving.

Job description for State reps and committee members were defined and recorded. The State Reps are to liaise between members and the ABPA and be available for advice re running poetry functions. Also for procuring groups to run State Champs and sit on the committee.

Given that the ABPA fosters original works in written and performance competitions, it was moved that the Australian Championships should have **TWO original sections** for the performance competition.

In order to encourage membership it was moved that, "Competitions run under the auspices of the ABPA", should levy entrants, who are not ABPA members, to the order of 50% higher entry fees for Australian and State Championships. The excess going to the host club/organisation.

A clarification for ABPA written Championships, only 1st place-getters are ineligible. The cut-off time for an award-winning poem to no longer be eligible to win would be the closing date of entries to that competition.

My view has been to adopt a fifty year mindset - where do we want the ABPA to be in fifty years from now? To be around (as an organisation) we need to,

1. develop a strategic plan,
2. nurture, maintain and grow our existing membership,
3. innovatively present our craft to a wider audience and, reach out to young people.

We also need to talk freely with each other to share our ideas. Thankfully technology is available to facilitate this.

Down the road I would love to see the ABPA host (and run) the Australian Championships and assist the States substantially in their respective Championships. To do this we will need to look at appropriate long term funding.

I know I won't be around in fifty years from now, but I would love the ABPA to be.

I present my report to the Membership.
Manfred Vijars **President ABPA**

THE APRON!



Do kids today know what an apron is?

The principal use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath because she only owned a few.

It was also because an apron was easier to wash than dresses and an apron used less material.

But along with that, it served as a pot-holder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the fowl yard the apron was used for carrying eggs, young chickens and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids.

And when the weather was cold grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables.

After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the shells.

In the autumn, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men folks knew it was time to come in from the paddocks to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old-time apron' that served so many purposes.

REMEMBER:

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the window sill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the window sill to thaw.

They would go crazy now trying to figure out how many germs were on that apron.

I don't think I ever caught anything from THAT apron - but LOVE !!!

OUR BRILLIANT AUDIENCES...

Spoken word performance is a craft that requires not a little preparation and hard work. Poets write or choose a poem to recite, and then begin the hard slog of committing it to memory.

Organisers of walk-ups, poet's brekkies and festivals know how much hard work is involved in bringing it all together, but all of this means nothing without an audience.

There are some familiar faces at every event – a dedicated bunch who travel many, many miles to 'follow the poets'. They tend to attend every poet part of a festival and come along clapping and enthusiastic. Their presence is more predictable than a novice with a stutter.

There are many such fans – too many to mention so perhaps we can represent all

bush poetry supporters in the persons of Margaret and Harold Cunningham (pictured) who hail from Parkes, NSW but who can be seen at poetry events from Qld to WA.

In 2010 Margaret and Harold traveled to Tamworth, Harrington, Longreach, Winton, Charters Towers, Bundaberg, Harden, Dunedoo, Bedgerabong, Leeton, and the Central Coast. In 2009 they went to Tamworth, Dunedoo, North Pine Poets in Brisbane, Bungendore, Euabalong, Crookwell, and Harden. The total distance would have been in excess of 20,000ks

Margaret and Harold Cunningham have been following the poetry circuit for many years and joined the ABPA because of their intense love of bush poetry.

They are well-known and loved by many bush poets. They have a vast private collection of poetry books, videos, cassettes, CDs and DVDs that they have purchased at poet's breakfasts, festivals and competitions over 15 years.

Neither of them write or recite poetry, yet their love of bush poetry and support for all reciters is fantastic.

Thanks to all the bush poetry fans who continue to support our heritage and our craft. They spend a fortune on travel and attending events and also purchase the product at the end of the show! Thanks for your encouragement and love of bush poetry. So to Harold and Margaret, Jan and Neal, Barrie and May, Alex and Betty and a hundred others – THANK YOU, don't ever think we don't notice you're there.



ABPA

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Bush Poets Association Inc. was held in St. Edwards Hall Tamworth on Thursday 20th January 2011.

The President's report can be found on page 5.

Office bearers re-elected for 2011 were as follows:

President: Manfred Vijars, Morningside Queensland.

Vice President: Frank Daniel, Canowindra NSW.

Secretary: Gregory North, Linden NSW.

Treasurer: Kym Eitel, Limestone Creek Queensland.

Editor: Frank Daniel

Visit the ABPA Website at www.abpa.org.au

Go to the forum and read the latest poems by members, join in the chat sections, search for lost poetry and/or poets.

CATHERINE CLARKE

talks to Jan Morris

Jan: Why have you been living in South East Asian countries?

My husband is an hotelier. He is transferred within his company to a different posting every two or three years, and all of them have so far been in Australia and Southeast Asia. We met in 1988 while both working at the Manly Pacific Parkroyal in Sydney, and when he transferred to the Whitsundays in 1994, I went with him. This was then followed by postings to Papua New Guinea, Singapore, the Philippines, Darwin, Thailand, Indonesia and now the beautiful Maldives respectively, so it is a nomadic but fascinating lifestyle! For several years now I have been a freelance professional proofreader and editor, so I can do this type of work anywhere we go, which works out very well.

When and how did you start writing poetry?

I've been writing poetry for as long as I can remember – my mother loves rhyming poetry so even as a child I loved it too, being introduced to it mainly through books such as A.A. Milne and Dr. Seuss. Later I developed a passion for traditional poets such as Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Yeats, Shakespeare, Banjo, Henry Lawson and many others. I loved the way in which they put the words together to paint pictures and speak to the heart, and I wanted to do this too!

When I was about eleven I used to enter recitation competitions, and I actually did quite well at the time. However, curiously and rather unfortunately, this is not an ability I appear to have as an adult so I prefer to concentrate on writing poetry, although I am happy to read my work if asked.

I continued writing intermittently over the years, and then whilst taking a short creative writing class in 1994 I discovered the existence of the FAW. I joined the Manly branch, subsequently became a member of both Free Xpression and the ABPA, and started entering poetry and short story competitions. I really enjoyed this, especially as I received several awards for my work. Later I had quite a bit of success with short stories being published in *That's Life! Woman's Day* and the *Singapore Womens' Weekly*, as well as the *Paradise and Friday* magazines in PNG.

While in PNG I was asked to read some of my poetry at the 'Aussie Won-toks' group, and afterwards they asked me to self publish a book to sell at the local market, which was a very rewarding experience. They all sold and I had a lot of fun manning my stall, but most of those poems have since been revised as I've learned more about the craft along the way, and I would very much like to publish a more professional book at some point in the future.

What stirs you to write your picturesque poems, especially about the Top End?

There are many things that stir me to write a poem, from the lives and attitudes of the people of Asia and Australia, to scenery/nature, war and animals – or just something that happens or is said that captures my attention. Things that touch me and inspire a thought or a line are written down in order to try to write a poem around them. While living in Darwin for two years I found I was greatly inspired by the magnificent scenery of Kakadu and its fascinating creatures for example, and several of my poems reflect this. I think it was just the unique beauty of the place combined with its apparent mystery and timelessness.

Apart from landscape, has any person inspired you or encouraged you to write?

My mother, father and two aunties continually encouraged me to write when I was young, and later there were various people who enjoyed my poems and urged me to keep going, including my partner Andrew, so I am grateful to all of them.

Then when I joined the FAW, I kept being drawn to the work of Ellis Campbell. I wanted to ask him if he had any tips, because I really admired his work; however, I thought he might think it presumptuous! Then one day to my immense surprise he wrote to me himself, complimenting me on two of my poems and suggesting I enter a competition in Dunedoo.

We began corresponding and I later sent him a couple of my poems to ask his advice on how to improve them, which he gave freely and generously, as he does to so many. This correspondence then developed into a special, unique friendship that has lasted now for over ten years, but it was only at the 2011 Tamworth festival that I finally met him and his lovely wife Maureen in person. Ellis has been a constant support and encouragement to me over all this time via mail, boosting my confidence in the lean times



and cheering me on in each and every success.

Poetry has always been a very big part of my life; just like music, it has the power to speak directly to the heart and soul and I couldn't ever imagine a world without it!

My warmest wishes as ever,
Catherine

To Each His Own

I cannot change the way I am, I never really try,
God made me different and unique, I never ask him why.

If I appear peculiar, there's nothing I can do,
You must accept me as I am, as I've accepted you.

God made a casting of each life, then threw the old away.
Each child is different from the rest, unlike as night from day.

So often we will criticize the things that others do.
But, do you know, they do not think, the same as me and you.

So God in all his wisdom, who knows us all by name,
He didn't want us to be bored, that's why we're not the same

~Author Unknown~

Posted on Forum by Maureen Clifford

OLD HARRY

© Paul Ashford 2010

Poor old Harry was a drover of somewhat vague descent
born on the western plains in a surplus army tent;
he wore a hat of dangling corks – his jeans were faded grey
He liked to stop and chat just to pass the time away

Then one hot day old Harry was summoned by the boss
who said "Now look here Harry, we've suffered quite a loss;
things are looking very grim since this drought has settled in,
the cattle on the backblock are wearing mighty thin.

So there's nothing for it Harry . . . I think you'll have to go;
Ask for work at Cooper's place where things ain't quite so slow".
So he saddled up old 'Lightning' and headed down the road
he fancied he'd go south a bit, where the Darling flowed.

And stopping by some coolabahs – he paused to have a rest
unsaddled poor old 'lightning' – his mate was past his best.
That evening as the embers glowed beneath the starry skies
he bid goodnight to 'Lightning', then closed his weary eyes.

He never saw the sun rise, never saw another day
he died beneath the Southern Cross his face an ashen grey.

(cont'd from page 9)

For obvious reasons, the NCPR can't give financial help to any of our contestants but the best are on the headliner shows and this year they would be performing with some well know stars (the website has not yet been updated for the 2011 event) www.westernlegendsroundup.com

If you might like to include information on the rodeo or festival in one of your future publications, let me know and I'll send something along.

Once again, thanks for the information and best regards!

Sam Jackson and friends.

. . . . and

How's the bush poetry business in OZ? It's boomin' up this way, the NCPR will be held in Kanab Utah in conjunction with the Western Legends Round-up next August 18th/20th, You Aussies are great poets and entertainers, sure like to see some of you fellers in the competition.

When you get to be my age (150 +) the memory begins to fade, don't recall if I sent this photo (p.4) to you or not?? It's of the Jericho Shearing Station in Utah, circa 1920, my great grandfather and grandfather (standing on the wool sacks) was the manager, pictured is 1/2 of the years wool clip.

Sam Jackson

(see p. 14)

Koori Girl

(c) Hazel Strachan (Corrimal) 2009

I found your camp where you used to be.
I know that you are close to me.
I found your midden on the beach
I sense your presence within my reach.
I hear your voice and feel your hand –
I hear you say "This is my land."
Above the sound of surf and sea
I hear you try to talk to me.
I even think I see your face
each time I walk this lonely place.
It's just a lonely sandy shore –
but here your people are no more.
I know you must have loved it here
in carefree days of yesteryear.
I love it too and feel the peace
of pounding waves that never cease,
of dunes and sea and sandy shore –
it's sad your people are no more.
But can you try to live through me
and love again what used to be?
Just take my hand and walk this shore
for you'll be here forever more.
Take my hand young Koori girl,
we'll walk this shore and feel the swirl
of water as it rushes by,
and then perhaps I'll hear you sigh
and hope that you have found at last
your happiness of days gone past.
For here, your spirit will always stay,
but mine, I know, will drift away.

ONE WET WEEKEND IN JANUARY

Peter Moltoni

I have some work to do this Monday morn—
the river up; six mile of fencing torn
and twisted, lying tangled in the mud
amid the sorry flotsam of the flood.
There's seven hundred head of sheep lie drowned
(not fifty made it to the higher ground),
each carcass stiff with cold and white as snow—
the shearing over not a week ago.
Beyond the fallen line of post-and-wire,
the header squats forlornly in the mire
that was a ten-bag crop before the rain,
but now won't yield a solitary grain.
The tractor standing draw-bar deep in bog
attests to my attempt to cross the quag
to drag the Cruiser out from where it stuck
and foundered when I tried to free the truck.

A single standing jam-post my support,
I ponder on the devastation wrought
so swiftly by the season's fickle mood
and marvel at its reach and magnitude:
at every point within my vision's range
there lies a vast unending sea of change—
a sea of turmoil, carnage and debris,
an ocean where my paddocks used to be.
And as my eye absorbs the doleful view,
I know I have a lot of work to do.
I have an awful lot of work to do.

MUM'S THE BOSS

During the recent flooding in a small town, a young back-packer girl was perched on top of a house with a boy.

As they sat watching articles float by in the water, they noticed an old hat go past.

Suddenly, the hat turned and came back, then turned around and went downstream.

After it had gone some distance, again it turned and came back.

They watched as it did this a number of times.

"Do you see that hat?" said the girl in amazement. "First it goes downstream, then turns around and comes back, then it goes back downstream and then it comes back again."

"Oh, that's nothing, it's only my dad," replied the boy. "This morning my Mum gave strict orders that come hell or high water, he had to mow the lawn today."

Letter to the Editor

Often scribbled a quick note or birthday wishes to known members on the back of the cover sheets when packing the magazines for postage. It is a long, laborious task and just to relieve the boredom I often take time out to pass on a bit of cheek.

Never expecting anything in reply (I often wonder if my notes are ever found) I usually forget what I have done within a few days. (I've had my share of troubles too.)

Knowing that my old mate Ray Halliday was pretty crook I slipped him a 'G'day' one time hoping it would give him a bit of a kickalong. He was unable to make reply, but his good wife Pat noticed some months later he had kept the note and responded.

This resulted in a couple of phone calls, the swapping of a photograph or two and a couple of CD's and that made us all feel good, kind regards and best wishes to everyone. There, now I've written to all of yez!
Joe.

23.11.2010

Dear Frank

A few months ago you "scratched" a few words on the wrapper of the ABPA magazine to Ray (Halliday). I want to let you know that he was really delighted when I drew his attention to your note & since then has several times tried to write a note back to you - unfortunately always failing to get anything very legible onto the paper. After his brain haemorrhage 13 months ago, his speech & memory were the most affected.

He was very lucky that none of his limbs were affected & he has always been able to do the daily toileting, showering etc. He now can write, but what he is thinking is not usually what finishes up on the paper. He has, nonetheless, made remarkable recovery in many ways & is now much easier to care for.

When stimulated his memory can be aroused & he usually can remember when we visit somewhere we have been before so a recent 10 day trip to Sydney was a great event & he surprised me with the places he remembered before we actually got to them, making comments on where we were etc.

Over my many years as editor of the ABPA magazine I have often scribbled a quick note or birthday wishes to known members on the back of the cover sheets when packing the magazines for postage. It is a long, laborious task and just to relieve the boredom I often take time out to pass on a bit of cheek.

Fortunately his speech is also making good progress & while he often says some weird things, it usually can be worked out given time. Answering the phone is still a problem for him as he has trouble remembering people & is rather hopeless in repeating a message etc. He cannot carry out instructions for more than one thing at a time. Given two lots of instructions he usually finishes up doing nothing.

All this is rather heart-breaking for me when I remember the 'old' Ray, but he is gradually recovering without a doubt.

When in Sydney we went up to Springwood to visit Dulcie & Terry Regan. Ray was in good form & remembered a number of things. Unfortunately he knows that he cannot remember any poetry & try as he might he has no recall - he does not recognise things he has written but he does spend quite an amount of time reading through poetry books. He now is having trouble with his eyes & many things he just cannot keep in focus so he is often frustrated. Thank goodness for the many tapes of poetry we have taken at many locations & for the amount now available on tapes etc.

He does enjoy watching & listening to them. Greg North's ad for his new "Stick It" DVD has just arrived so that will be on the Christmas Tree which will keep him amused for some time to come.

So Frank, thank you sincerely for kindly showing interest. Ray still has the ABPA wrapper on the desk & occasionally lets me know he should write back. Maybe one day! I hope you are recovering from your health problems. It is good to see you still being active. I hope you enjoy the Christmas period with your family and hope that the poetry circuit will see you around for a long time to come.

Cheers Pat Halliday

Excerpts from letters from Sam Jackson, USA

Good morning Frank,

Couple of comments and questions. I've been reading the magazines you sent and judging from the material printed there, came to the conclusion that, generally, the talent level of your poets is a step above our Pard's and competition is the answer. For some strange reason, from its inception, there has been a negative reaction to "poetry competition" here in the states, Baxter Black for



instance told me "Cowboy poetry is too sacred for competition" (perhaps he just didn't want any competition in his \$10,000 a show arena) I started the NCPR because I figured competition was the way to improve the genre--and it is slowly catching on (Sixteen of the sixty featured poets at the 2010 Elko gathering were from the rodeo) Milt Taylor gets there about every year.

A comment on the article by Dave Proust on his NCPR debut. that "the poem has to have a horse in it" was not factual. We do have criteria that the poets must follow--Dave had a copy of the rules.

About ABPA: Do you accept membership from the U.S. ? If so, I'd like to join, and would also like to purchase and ad for the NCPR. You fellers are good !!!! and we'd like to see more of you.

... AND Hello Frank

Received the package of ABPA magazines and are enjoying reading them. Your Aussie Bush Poetry is as interesting as it is enlightening to us.

We are pleased that Prousty did so well in our competition (and although I suggest you don't tell him) our cowboy poets learned a great deal from listening and watching as he presented his work, I'm already seeing subtle imitation of his antics.

Our next rodeo, in conjunction with the Western Legends Round-up festival, is in Kanab Utah next August 18 thru 20th . This is the birth place of the NCPR, with the festival and rodeo now in its 14th season The festival is very well attended, folks coming in from all over the country (nearly 8000 in town last year) giving poets and entertainers excellent exposure and I would certainly like to see more Aussie talent involved. Please extend our invitation for any who might be in the States during that time to contact me.

(cont'd page 8)

Corryong Vic.

“Where Legends Ride” runs the slogan for the ever popular **Man from Snowy River Festival**.

Here horsemanship events run side by side with Bush Poetry, Art, Photographic & Multi-Media presentations to bring to life Banjo Paterson’s classic poem “The Man from Snowy River”.

Whilst the modern “Man from Snowy River” is being fought out over 6 preliminary and 2 Final events down at the Showground, “Banjo’s Block” (located just up the road) plays host to Australia’s best Bush Poets who vie for the moniker of the Female & Male Overall Champions (known as the Matilda’s and Clancy’s appropriately).

Subsections accumulating points for these Overall titles include best “Aussie Poem and Aussie Comedy”, Original, Non-Original and best recitation of the Bard’s before mentioned epic. Look for the Digital Story section if you are techno minded. There is also the “Silver Brumby Award” for serious written verse & the “Corryong Larrikin Award” for best comedic written verse.

Banjo’s Block also plays host to three ‘top-notch’ Poet’s Breakfasts and there



Graeme Johnson reciting his famous poem ‘Faces on the Wall’ in the Corryong RSL Board Room where the inspiration for the poem evolved.

will be a strong ‘Australian Light Horse’ theme over the course of the weekend.

Geoffrey W. Graham, Carol Heuchan, Colin Milligan, Helen Beggley, Carol Reffold and Graeme Johnson are among our guests, and Lee Kernaghan is starring in a special ‘extra’ concert.

For Sunday night festival stayers, Phil the new manager of the Colac

Caravan Park wants to run a ‘Red Faces’ fun night at the park.

Contact Jan Lewis (02) 6077 4332 or 0422 848 707 or poet-farm@corryong.net.au

For information and entry forms go to www.bushfestival.com.au

Entries close on February 11th.

Festival dates: Thursday 31st March to Sunday 3rd April.

Two New CD’s from “The Rhymer”

Graeme Johnson’s first new release since 2004 has just arrived on the scene on Pat Drummond’s “Shoestring” Record label. It is a 2 CD Boxed Set entitled “Home Brew” recorded live in the Blue Mountains of NSW.

It contains an original comedy CD called “Light” and another original CD “Full Strength” which contains Graeme’s ‘Australian History’ poems (with the addition of 1 poem by Arthur Green). They can be purchased separately or as a set.

Edited, mixed and mastered by Blue Mountain Sound the quality of the “Live” recording captures the immediacy, humour and passion of Graeme’s poetry as only a “Live” recording can.

The artwork presentation of the 2 CD’s by Amanda O’Byrne from The Valley Studio (including their 8 page full colour booklets) is stylish and fresh continuing themes and colours evident on Graeme’s website and prior releases.

Read what inspired Graeme to put ‘pen to paper’ and what awards were

attributed to the different verses.

The subject matter on “Full Strength” ranges from convict transportation through the World Wars to the industrialization of Sydney’s harbour and on to more recent social issues and current events, whilst the “Light” CD covers subject matter as diverse as the Papal visit, misbehaving canines, role swapping in the household and a love of collecting ‘freebies’.

A definite ‘must have’ for your record collection “Home Brew” is what modern Bush Poetry is all about. (See advertisement page 23).

Some of Graeme’s previous wins include the Henry Lawson Adult Literary Award, the Leonard Teale Memorial Spoken Word Award, the ‘Banjo’ Paterson Award and the Bobby Miller Memorial Award



JUNEE NSW is excited about the re launch of the Junee Rhythm ‘n Rail Festival which will kick off on March 4. The 3-day program is packed with live music, bush poetry, family fun, food and wine, train shuttles and great Junee hospitality. It will be a great weekend; we hope to see you there.

For more information visit the website www.juneeonline.com

Poets Huge Success at Woodford

Woodford's Unique Festival takes you into a different world.

After 25 years the muddy start didn't dampen the spirit of Woodford or the energetic performances of the poets entertaining enthusiastic crowds at the many venues.

The Bush Poets won the Word Team Slam to tremendous applause and appreciation, outdoing the Slam Team by miles. Marco Giori, Milton Taylor, Carol Heuchan and Peter Mace (who kindly stepped in for Murray Hartin, who was busy elsewhere on the debating team and comedy section) did the damage to the opponents who were great sports and whom I'm sure would secretly like to be bush poets. If only they'd go to Milton's workshops.

The P 12 summit dinner was a great success with world nations taking part to solve the global problems. Australia played host to Spain, China, England, U.S.A., Columbia, Ireland, France, Japan, India, New Zealand, Tasmania (yes I know, it wanted to be noticed). Israel and Palestine were together on the same table ably controlled by John Best who dressed for the part, as all nation hosts did.

Hosting the tables were 12 competent poets who had written a motion for the

LONGYARD BUSH POETS

Well, what a terrible Summer in Australia, with the devastating floods on the East Coast and the Fires in the West. Yet in between the Tamworth Country Music Festival provided a welcome distraction, be it all temporary, to a large influx of country music fans.

Although crowds were down an estimated 25%, and a lot of shows were cancelled, the spirit and strength of the Longyard Bush Poets Breakfasts continued on as always and the crowds were not far down at all from last year. With Longyard regulars such as Prousty, Marco Giori, Murray Hartin, Gary Lowe, Brad Maclean, Bill Kearns, Gary Fogarty and co. the shows were as successful as always and allowed some newcomers and old faces such as Kathy Valence and Geoffrey Graham to have a run and entertain the audience to the usual high standard.

Our resident singer, SA's Dave Prior, was an outstanding hit and the good humour of all poets made for a wonderful haven away from the tragedies in other parts of the country.

world to pass.

It might have been a strain but for Marco Giori who chaired for Australia and passed six of them. The rest was collected for future world summits by France's host Farrah Shagger.

Marco and Murray floored them in a very difficult venue, normally frequented by youngsters listening to hep rock music until these masters of poetry arrived, giving poetry some new fans.

Carol (Spain's Matador) was full of bull at the P12 summit, as Greg's India worshiped his.

Juan Snort (Mark Both) Columbia shared his stash with Peter Mace's Ireland who joined the leprechauns for a chat with Anita. Ian Mackay (U.S.A) gave a treasury report and printed more money, while we waited. Meanwhile Milton Taylor (N.Z) looked sheepish all evening.

Our old mate Ted Egan was a most welcome guest speaker. Thanks Ted

This was Woodford's 25th year including the Maleny years and saw many poets from the early days who found success through the Folk Festivals and Country Music Festivals of Australia. So come rain or shine support our festivals.

Reported by Shirley Friend



Our Girl - Shirl

Sunday afternoon we saw a Tribute to Shirley Friend, which drew a great crowd to watch Shirl's mates roast her and her contribution to the Performance Poetry scene which has flourished with her help at all major country and folk festivals around the country. Thanks Shirl, and just reminding you that we were paying a tribute to you, not bloody retiring you!!!

Next year is all booked in with a few changes in the wind, and hopefully without Mother Nature serving up anything unexpected, and the Australia Day long weekend falling during the festival, we hope to see the Longyard crowds bursting at the scenes once more, both in laughter and in numbers.

Neil & Colleen McArthur

THE MEN OF PIKE

They came from near and far away
The men of Pike to work that day
The afternoon shift way down deep
Beneath the mountains oh so steep
A long way in but further out
The afternoon shift sets about
A job not flash but hard and trying
A job that holds the risk of dying

From seventeen to sixty two
They start their shift to see it through
For one his first, for all their last
How could they know there'd be a blast?
For all at once no siren whining
Suddenly the worst in mining
Dust and rubble fill the air
A loader driver thrown clear
Just one other finds the light
The rest are hidden from our sight

And so we learn as news is spread
The news that mining families dread
It's up at Pike there's an explosion
Faces drop and hearts are frozen
Who, how many, where and why ----
Will they make it ---- will they die

Fathers, husbands, brothers, sons
Coasters, Kiwis, Aussies, Poms
Mates and friends who we are seeking
Methane gas from coal seams leaking
Vents exploded, phones unheeded
Level heads and strength are needed
The world above unites as one
To bring the missing to the sun

Rescue teams are standing by
As holes are drilled and experts try
To find a way that's safe and sound
To rescue those beneath the ground
Could robots work where men are mortal
To pierce the dangers of that portal
But alas all effort fails
The darkness of the mine prevails

A second blast of rock and thunder
Hope and prayers are rent asunder
A nation weeps and Coasters mourn
Pike falls silent, dark, forlorn
A hole remains within the ground
Devoid of joy, of life, of sound

Another hole within the heart
Of those forever set apart
From those they loved who went to toil
Digging coal beneath the soil
Those who gave their lives that day
To work a shift for honest pay
They wait at rest within their mine
The men of Pike, the Twenty Nine.



**VALE:
PETER CRAWFORD**

People who were at the Country Energy Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition for the 2010 Finals will no doubt remember the winner of the Original Section, Peter Crawford, who presented a poem called Billy. Peter entered the year before and read his poem in the Heats. His performance was so powerful, the judges were moved to place him in the Finals, where, of course, he couldn't win because it is not acceptable to read your poem in the Finals. Peter went all the way back to Fitzroy Crossing in WA, where he taught indigenous people, and he learned his poem. Last year he came back and this time, after another powerful presentation of his poem, Peter won the Golden Damper for the Original Section. He also won over a very appreciative audience and made many friends amongst the poets.

Peter sent an entry for this year's competition, but apparently, soon after, he became very sick with a golden staph infection. While in hospital in Darwin he had a massive heart attack and died on 3rd January.

Peter was a bright but brief star in the Tamworth Bush Poetry world and we won't forget him.

**AUSTRALIA DAY
AWARD**

SIMPSON, Bruce Forbes, Medal of the Order of Australia OAM Upper Caboolture Citation:

For service to the preservation and promotion of the history of Drovers in Australia as a researcher and author, and to the community.

I was looking for the poem I wrote about plough horses when I found this one that my Dad wrote, he is well into his eighties now and still remembers the horses with a great deal of affection. Ross Magnay.

DRAUGHT HORSES

© Earle Magnay OBE (Over bloody eighty)

I used to drive a team of three,
but sometimes two or one,
but no matter what the number,
at twelve I thought it fun.

With three abreast I'd plough all day'
on an old sun twin disc plough,
with gentle blossom furrow horse
I still can see them now.

Monty was the flighty one so
centre spot old mate,
and on his left to keep him quiet;
we put old lazy Kate.

Dad showed me how to harness them,
on go the winkers first,
Then the collar next the hames,
with bot flies at their worst.

"Inside the legs you'll find their eggs,
there see them all down there?"

PRESS RELEASE

Gympie born Noel Stallard was awarded at the Tamworth Country Music Festival

the 2011 Judith Hosier Golden Gumleaf Award for outstanding achievement in nurturing Australia's heritage of verse.

As a teacher for thirty five years Noel gave students an appreciation of the writings of Australia authors and has been very active in performing the works of the pioneer poet John O'Brien; best known for poem, *Said Hanrahan*. In recent years he has promoted the poetry of Bruce Simpson, a writer of prose and verse whose writings capture vividly the droving way of life in early Australia. Noel's CD entitled *Bruce Simpson* was awarded the Tamworth 2010 Golden Gumleaf Award for CD of the Year.

Since Noel left teaching thirteen years ago he has continually taken our Australian poetry to the children in the schools and was awarded the 2009 Golden Gumleaf Award for his children's book, *The Bush Animals' Band*. He has won numerous awards for his performances and writings of Bush Poetry and is regularly called upon to judge the various competitions.

For the past five years

Just get a piece of kero rag,
and wipe it down the hair."
"Now this is how to work the plough,
that lever keeps it straight,
so do a round, I'll watch awhile,"
and then "You're doing great."

If we ploughed an acre,
we'd had a real good day,
a bit extra in the nosebags,
"You've all done well today!"

When harrowing, Kate got a rest,
Just two were needed then,
That job I reckon, looking back,
was harder on the men!

Now if carting water,
from the well across the flat,
old lazy Kate got harnessed up,
'cause she could handle that.

The draught horse friend, has had its day,
A pity but it's true,
But I'll always remember;
what the staunch old horse could do.

But the tractor's taken over,
though I think it lacks the charm,
back then the good old draft horse,
was the engine of the farm.

Noel with his committee has been endeavouring to build a 1.6 million dollar *John O'Brien Centre* attached to the Visitors Centre in Narrandera so that present and future generations can appreciate the significant contribution this pioneer poet made to the annals of Australian literature.

As President of the Australian Bush Poets Association for four years Noel brought about significant changes to the judging criteria for Performance and Written Competitions of Bush Poetry.

Noel now lives with his wife Ann in the Brisbane suburb of Arana Hills.

Noel Stallard



Bruce Forbes Simpson OAM



Australian Bush Laureate Awards – 2011 winners were announced in Tamworth on January 18th.

Book of the Year went to Murray Hartin for his work *A Whole Lotta Muz*, a combination of Murray's best poems and hilarious columns.

Album of the Year was won by Jack Drake for his release, *Australian Bush Poetry Classics*, a CD which forms the basis for a teaching package for students in late primary and high school classes.

Bush Poem of the Year went to *Gallipoli* by Keith "Cobber" Lethbridge, the same poem that won the famed Winton Bronze Swagman Award in its year of entry.

Single Recorded Performance of the Year went to *Black Saturday* by Jim Brown, the second year running Jim has claimed this award. The poem is a reflection on Victoria's tragic and disastrous "Black Saturday" bushfires.

Children's Poem of the Year was named as *Petunia* by award-winning poet Carol Heuchan.

The Judith Hosier Heritage Award – for outstanding achievement in nurturing Australia's heritage of verse – was presented to Noel Stallard for his work in promoting Australian verse to children, both as a teacher and school administrator, through his shows and workshops in schools and for his

service as a past president of the Australian Bush Poetry Association.

The award was also made especially for Noel's tireless and lifelong promotion of the verse and memory of the great Australian poet John O'Brien (Monsignor Patrick Joseph Hartigan) which has led to the planned establishment of a multi million dollar John O'Brien Centre to be built at Narrandera in NSW

This year was the 16th year for the Bush Laureate Awards which were established in 1997 to recognise excellence in published and recorded Australian bush poetry. The Australian Bush Laureate Awards will be held in Tamworth again next January, with nominations scheduled to open in August.

Further information, including coverage on the work of all nominees, can be obtained from www.bushlaureate.com.au. For full details of finalists and nominees, visit www.bushlaureate.com.au.

Further media information, including contact detail for winners, call Max Ellis on 0438 667 314 or Bob Kirchner on 0419 998 386

Finalists for the 2011 Australian Bush Laureate Awards

in alphabetical order by title of work.

For Book of the Year...

- A Whole Lotta Muz*
by Murray Hartin
- Autumn Collection*
by Ellis Campbell
- For All We Are*
by Brian Beesley
- Hold Yer Horses!*
by Carol Heuchan
- Whimsical Wanderings*
by Des Bennett

For Bush Poem of the Year...

- A Second Glance*
by Murray Hartin

- A Swaggie's Tale*
by Donald Adams
- The Drover's Wife*
by Helen Harvey
- Ernie McBurney's Ride*
by Ellis Campbell
- Gallipoli*
by Keith "Cobber" Lethbridge

For Album of the Year...

- Australian Bush Poetry Classics*
by Jack Drake
- Australian Made*
by Peter Mace
- Dust*
by Tomas Hamilton
- The Naked Truth*
by Marco Gliori, Murray Hartin & Brad Maclean
- Tasha & Other Tales*
by John Best

For Single Recorded Performance of the Year

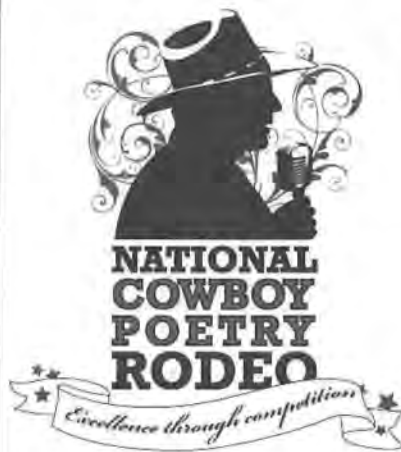
- Black Saturday*
by Jim Brown
- The Cricket*
by John Best
- How the Fire Queen Crossed The Swamp*
by Jack Drake
- The Hypnotist*
by Marco Gliori
- The Yoga Incident*
by Murray Hartin

For Children's Poem of the Year...

- I Worry 'bout The Penguin*
by Jim Haynes
- I'd Like A Brontosaurus*
by Stephen Whiteside
- Magical Magical Moon*
by Peter Winkler
- Petunia*
by Carol Heuchan

BUSH POETS: Invitation to attend!!!

If you happen to be travelling in the U.S. this coming August come see how you 'stack-up' against North America's Cowboy Poets!!!
Dave Proust made a fine showing in 2010!!



Sam Jackson

The National Cowboy Poetry Rodeo
extends an invitation to enter our unique competition,
now in its 14th year,
taking place this coming August 18th thru 20th in conjunction with
Kanab Utah's spectacular **Western Legends Round-up.**

\$6,000 prize money
Silver Buckles
Trophies
Headliner show stage time

For information, please email
Sam Jackson, last2camp@kanab.net

OLD BARNS AND MEN

by Samuel A Jackson

Its Boards are loose, and warped, and weathered.

Shingles flyin' in the wind.
Timbers leanin', ridge pole sags.
A hundred seasons done it in.

Settin' lonesome, sad, neglected,
seems to sense it's end is near.
Recollections long forgot—of
friends with hammers workin' here.

Status once was never questioned,
vital structure in its day.
Uses that this shelter rendered—
far beyond just 'storin' hay'.

Stood majestic, stately, noble.
Stout design, yet gentle charm.
Served as banner to the world;
message was: "Successful Farm!"

Answered all whose glance might query
lineage of the builders clan
who tilled surrounding fertile fields
to earn their living off this land.

Proudly served each generation,
guarding them in work and play,
thirsting not for acclamation,
'care' was more than ample pay.

Hidden back in every shadow,
clues and scars of past events;
'Jackson fork', it's tines a rustin',
lies beneath the fallen fence.

Inside, hangs the fraying fibers,
once a hay rope dangled there.
Listen closely, hear the laughter?
Children swingin' through the air.

Climb the loft, there in a corner,
boards once blackened by a fire.
Boys a smokin' pipes of corn silk,
dealt with sternly by their sire!

Reckon sounds of men at work as
tons of hay are hoisted in.
Ropes'er creakin', pulleys squeakin',
horses neigh above the din.

Soon winters cloak of frozen whiteness
covers fields and pasture land.
The barns importance more apparent,
inside doors now seems more grand.

Amplly storing food and fiber,
walls to break the winters gale,
"haven" seems well to describe'er,
guests within stay hearty, hale.

Time moves on and progress quickens.
new techniques come into play.
Less reliant on the farmstead,
children grow, then move away.

Oldsters now are those remaining,
seeing things once only dreams;
tractor chuggin' up the furrows
now out works a dozen teams.

With time required for its nurture
crowded out by other chores,
the barns demise is now beginning—
'modern times' the predators.

This reminisce makes quite apparent;
'Old Barns and men, are much the
same',

When young and useful—both have
value—

When old, the world, forgets their
name!

© Sajac '96



YOUNG NSW

The Young Bush Poetry Competition was held for the ninth year in conjunction with the National Cherry Festival on Saturday 4th December.

Again, a wide representation of poets attended from parts as far afield as Stanthorpe, Deniliquin and Bateman's Bay. An excellent audience was in attendance and thoroughly enjoyed the night. Special thanks goes to the three judges Frank Hewett, Joanne Johnson and Clive Edwards for their efforts in deciding the winners over the serious and lighthearted sections of the competition.

The Saturday morning Poets Breakfast was transferred from the park due to inclement weather to the Town Hall. A big Breakfast was served by the staff of the local IGA and the Young Writers.

A junior Bush Poets competition was



Pictured at Young Cherry Festival. Greg Broderick (coordinator) Becky Calvert (Cherry Queen) Frank Daniel, Robyn Sykes and Des Kelly

held and the entrants showed considerable promise; their poems were well presented and very well received.

A MAN'S GOTTA DO, WHAT A MAN'S GOTTA DO

by Maurie Foun - Corryong Vic.

"Look, if I'd wanted a hand I'd've asked, alright, you can see its likely to take a while," she said she thought I might need some help, I'm not silly, I know that smile.

Now some things a man's gotta do on his own, and cleanin' his shed is top of the list, you know where you put things years ago, they're buried treasures that can't be missed.

And if I ever get to live long enough, I know I'll find a use for it all, me dad taught me 'never get rid of good junk', they're his tools hangin' there, on the nails in the wall.

But I don't know, it just accumulates and when I find there's somethin' I need, as long as I know where I've got it stashed, hell, I'll always save the cost of a feed.

I've got plenty of offcuts of four be two's, here's the Fowler kit for bottlin' fruit, and tools laid on for all of youse; Jeez, them peaches we stewed, tasted beaut.

There's coils of wire and packets of nails and I know there's some books here I kept from school; tins of paint, and look, shells from snails, oh, and stone the crows, here's me three foot rule!

I haven't seen it since metric came in, 'ere's some screws to sort on a rainy day, wonder what's hidin' in this rusty tin? they're not goin' out, they'll earn their pay.

Blowed if I know why mum ordered a skip, but I'm forced to admit, I can't keep it all, it's a horrible thought, that trip to the tip, sayin' goodby's, a really rough call...

'Cause it's all worth a bob; bugger, that's comin' back! I can easily fashion somethin' from it, it'll do for another screwdriver rack, how can I tell? - don't be a nit...

Look, you've only gotta sight the grain, it's well seasoned too, I'm not lettin' that go, and me old sawhorse has surfaced again, here's some seeds I must've forgot to sow.

Now I know the missus means very well, yeah, it is high time I sorted this mess, and I don't mind the cobwebs and musty smell, but you're strictly 'excused', if you're wearin' a dress...

There's too many questions, that detached sorta stare, I reckon she knows how I'm feelin' inside, I know she likes to do her share, I'll have to let me feelin's bide.

Just look at this stuff I've got over 'ere, me bike and me tins of this and that, all filled with memories of things held dear, and 'ere's the taxidermied cat.

Well I s'pose I'd better keep pressin' on, Jeez me body thinks its time to be slowin', ah well, there'll be a bit less to flog when I'm gone, be sunrise again, the way I'm goin.

"Hey Mum, when'd you say the skip was due?"
A no! there's flarin' white ants in me floor!
that's all I need, its enough to spew,
I'm callin' it quits; hey!... where's the door?



GOLDEN DAMPER AWARDS

At the 2011 Country Energy Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition, compere Dave Proust commented on the way this competition has been the launching pad for a great many of the top poets performing around Australia today. This year's competition proved to be no different, with an interesting mix of the old and the new and, in some cases, the "new" showed up some exciting new talent from performers we are bound to see a lot more of.

The Tamworth Poetry Reading Group is very grateful for the support of so many of the "older" competitors of the past, who help out with compering, and even helping out with a difficult mike stand during the Heats (thanks Manfred). In particular, we would like to thank all those who helped promote our inaugural Children's Competition and to Geoffrey Graham and Noel Stallard, who made our one and only competitor feel like King of the Kids. We hope to try again next year and will be looking for everyone to spread the word and encourage the kids to enter. Congratulations to Jye Osborne (pictured) of Moama NSW, who has the honour of being the first winner of the Country Energy Children's Bush Poetry Competition.

The winners for the 2011 Country Energy Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition are:

TRADITIONAL OR ESTABLISHED WORKS

1st Noel Bull - Musk Vic. 2nd Brenda Joy - Coochiemudlo Island Q. 3rd Peter Mace - Empire Bay NSW

ORIGINAL SECTION 1st Graeme Johnson - West Ryde NSW, 2nd Jim Riches - Albany WA

3rd John Best - Mango Hill Qld

Thank you to the competitors who travelled from near and far, and especially to the Queenslanders, for whom just getting here must have been a supreme effort.

Jan Morris



McDreamy arrives in Tamworth

Tamworth's own bush poet "The Bush Nurse" Maggi Swain-Daley's dream was to breed a baby donkey and this has happened just in time for the New Year, with the arrival on the 30th December 2010 of a baby jack donkey. 'Dream Weaver' is his formal name but Maggi has decided to give him the nickname of McDreamy due to his handsome features.

Proud mother donkey 'Meng Dynasty' is an English bloodline donkey and McDreamy's father is Casanova, Maggi's black Spanish jack.

Meng is no stranger to the front pages of the Tamworth Northern Daily Leader, featuring in one of the photos of the year in 2009 when she accompanied Peter Pratt, Country Music singer-songwriter star in the Kootingal Anzac Parade in April 2009. Peter wore authentic World War One Uniform as the Australian war hero, Simpson and Meng was his trusty donkey. A young friend was carried on the donkey's back as the wounded soldier. They were a great success with the large Anzac crowd.

Maggi and her husband Peter own Geebung Australian Stock Horse Stud at Moore Creek, 9 kms from Tamworth towards Attunga, and it is there that



Meng has proven her true worth. "She is not just a performing donkey" Maggi said. "Meng is very skilled at calming the young foals when they are being weaned from their mothers, so she is a great asset to the stud".

Maggi is a fair-dinkum nurse who works in Tamworth. She performs her own brand of humorous verse as the "Bush Nurse" at Tamworth bush poetry

venues, has been guest poet at the Gympie Muster and has wowed crowds in Macquarie Street in Sydney and many festivals in NSW and Queensland.

Many of her performances raise funds for local charities so keep your eyes out for 'The Bush Nurse', Meng and McDreamy around the bush poetry circuits.

Peter Pratt as Simpson



RHYMES AND RUBIKS CUBES

It is no secret that Paddy Ryan is one of Australia's most naturally gifted bush poets. Paddy's career started as a seven year old at Duri (near Tamworth) Public School under the guidance of his primary school principal, Lyn Wright who was using bush poetry as a literacy tool. Lyn introduced her students to the poetry competition at the Fireside Festival at the Longyard Hotel organized by Jim Haynes.

The two outstanding poets on this occasion were Alli and Paddy Ryan, who went on to become regulars at Jim's Big Bush Brekkies and the Australian Bush Laureate Awards held annually in Tamworth, not to mention Paddy's successes and acclamations at various folk and country music festivals.

Now fast approaching twenty years as a bush poet, Paddy has been part of many compilation albums with various poets including Jim Haynes, Blue the Shearer, his sister Alli and others, but has never released a solo album until now – an album and DVD.

Two of the fourteen tracks to watch out for are original pieces called 'Billy Goat's Bluff' and 'The Neighbours Kangaroo'.

These Poems have been well received right around western NSW and southern Victoria. Due to popular demand they



were a must for this record. Paddy was also helped by some other old friends. "I felt the album needed at least one serious track" Paddy said. "I couldn't think of a better poem than 'Patches' a favourite of mine written by a terrific wordsmith, Graeme Watt. I also had two great local poets by the names Winston Doak and Gordon Edmonds record a guest track each, which I felt gave good variety to the CD. On a whole I'm very happy with the way Steve Newton put this all together, a good mix of fun, humour and Australiana all expressed in that unique thing we know as "Bush Poetry".

DVD's were first introduced to the poetry world by another well known poet Gregory North. "I think Greg's DVD has worked really well for him, there is a lot of visual stimulation in the way he tells his poetry, not the sort of thing you can

capture on a recording." Paddy said.

"It was never something I'd really thought about doing until I wrote the one about the Rubik's Cube; that all started when I was given one such puzzle for Christmas by my sister Lissy, (Who must hate me to give such a frustrating gift!) I spent months trying to work it out and everyone I spoke to just kept saying "Throw the thing away!" When I finally mastered it I thought to myself I should write a poem about this, I mean just about everyone has at least tried to get a side before throwing it in the bin. I really thought people might be able to relate to a poem about the frustrations of the Rubik's Cube."

But not just as a poem, Paddy felt it needed something more, a visual effect to go with it. "Firstly I timed myself solving the cube then wrote the poem about the same length, the idea was to solve the cube on stage by the time I finished telling the poem. People loved it, it's a whole lot of fun!"

So was this the motivation for the DVD?

"Absolutely, like I said before, not the sort of thing you can capture on a recording. Paddy's CD/DVD 2 Disc set is available now for \$25 plus postage. You can contact Paddy for sales inquires at paddyryan1@hotmail.com or send money order or cheque to 54 Warwick Road Tamworth NSW 2304

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Poetry Meets Country Music Head On At Hog's Breath!

For the forth consecutive and highly successful year, the Hog's Breath Country Comedy Show dragged in great crowds to see Adam Kilpatrick, Dave Proust, Dave Prior and Neil McArthur mix Country Music, Poetry, Stand-up comedy and downright lunacy into a package of great overall entertainment. With special guests Sally-Anne Whitten and Brad Maclean, the audiences kept rolling in each day of the festival to see Performance comedy Poetry match it with the best of Country comedy music and make a unique mix for the Tamworth Festival faithful.

It shows that Poetry performers can match it with anyone and have really cemented the Poets place in the overall tapestry of the Tamworth festival. So it's onwards and upwards for another great run next year, with Laura Downing hopefully recovered enough from ill health to return as well to the show and give our Hog's Breath fans an even bigger and better show!

Neil McArthur



The **FREE POETS CALENDAR** has returned with as many claimed dates as are available at time of printing. Secretaries are asked to submit details of their coming events in 2011 as per the following list. To allay costs, copy of events and festivals would be appreciated if accompanied by a paid advertisements prior to the event date. Poets, please contact secretaries to ensure information is correct.

February 17-20 **WA Open Performance Championships Boyup Brook** Closing date Jan. 31st Irene Connor 0429 651 155 iconnor21@wn.com.au
 March 3-6 **Dunedoo—NSW State Championships** Ph. 02 6375 1173 (ah) 0428 751 173 -em. edgefield57@hamboursat.com.au
http://abpa.org.au/NSW_Bush_Poets_Championships.html
 March 27 1.30 p.m. An afternoon of poetry - Greenslopes Bowls Club, Brisbane featuring Milton Taylor and Anita Reed \$10 07 3343 7392
 March 17-21 **Narrandera** NSW The John O'Brien Bush Festival www.johnobrien.org.au info@johnobrien.org.au 02 6959 1766
 March 30 Closing date Gulgong Henry Lawson Literary Awards Performance sections PO Box 235 Gulgong 2852 contact Cheryl Peters (02)63741213 see p. 7
 March 31-April 3rd **Corryong** Vic. Man from Snowy River Bush Festival www.bushfestival.com.au info@bushfestival.com.au Closes Feb 13th
 April 2 Vic. Bush Poets and Musicians Assn. Meet at **Corryong Festival** Contact Jan Lewis 02 6077 4332 poetfarm@corryongcec.net.au
 May 29 **North Pine** Mid Year Charity Concert Contacts: Dot 07 32036681 or Barry 07 34823541
 July 8th, 9th & 10th: **Bundy Bush Poetry Muster** - Across The Waves Sports Club.
 Contact Bette Shiels 07 41553293, Sandy Lees 0741514631, Jan Facey 0418152777
 August 12-14 Bushmans Heritage Festival, Casino Village RV Resort 02 6662 1069 www.casinovillage.com.au
 August 19-21 **North Pine** Camp Oven Festival. Performance & written competition. Contact Dot: 07 32036681 or Barry 07 34823541.
 October **Hunter Bush Poetry Festival** - Morisset NSW www.hunterbushpoets.org.au
 October. **Harden** NSW Taste of Country performance competition with Frank Daniel.
 October **Kyabram** "Around the Campfire" Thursday night before the Vic. Championships. Les Parkinson 03 58522281 Mick Coventry 0427 522097
 October Vic. Bush Poets and Musicians Assn. meets at **Benalla** Contact: Jan Lewis 0260774332 poetfarm@corryongcec.net.au
 October 21-23 **Kangaroo Valley** Folk Festival Applications from May to August 31
 contact Stuart Leslie www.kangaroovalleyfolkfestival.com.au e. poetry@kangaroovalleyfolkfestival.com.au
 November **Rudds Pub** Nobby Qld.
 November 5th **Dalgety** on the Snowy River Lee Taylor-Friend leetaylorfriend@hotmail.com
 November 18-19 **Upper Lachlan** Wool Wagon Awards - **Crookwell** NSW Ph. 'Spud' 02 4832 1004
 December **Young** NSW National Cherry Festival Poets Competition. Greg Broderick. gbroderi@bigpond.net.au
Regular Events:
 1st and 3rd Sundays **North Pine** from 9.00 am at True Blue Cafe, Old Petrie Town Phone: 07 34823541 or 07 32036681
 1st Sundays 2pm **Milton-Ulladulla** Bush Poets and Yarnspillers Ulladulla Ex-Servos Club. John Davis 4455 2013 Chris Woodland 4457 1614
 1st Sundays (Not Jan) Aussie Poetry Show with Greg North Clarendon Guest House Lurline St **Katoomba** (next to RSL) 10.30am 02 4782 1322
www.gregorynorth.com.au
 2nd Sundays (even numbered months) **Bendigo Goldfields** Bush Poets Inc. Newmarket Hotel 1.30-4.30pm 3rd Sunday April and June Ken Jones 035441 5121
 Geoffrey Graham 03 5446 3739 kjones158@hotmail.com
 2nd Sundays Poetry at the Pub **Katoomba** Blackburn's Family Hotel 2.00 to 5.30 pm. All forms poetry free entry Denis Rice 02 4782 6623 trice@pnc.com.au
 1st Fridays Royal Hotel **Bungendore** Blackboard Walk-up Poetry and music Lorraine McCrimmon 0421958576
 1st Fridays **WA Bushpoets and Yarnspillers** Association Bentley Park Retirement Village Ian Langley 9361 3770 www.wabushpoets.com
 1st Monday Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec. **Kyabram** Bush Verse Group 7.30pm Mick Coventry 0427 522 097
 2nd Saturday - **Bundaberg** Poets' Society Inc. meet. Rum City Silver Band Hall, Targo Street 1.30 pm.
 Contacts: Bette Shiels 07 41553293 - Sandy Lees 07 41514631 - Jan Facey 0418 152 777
 3rd Saturday **Port Macquarie** the Lions' Den Hastings River Drive 1pm-4pm Monthly walkup and afternoon tea Bessie Jennings
 Last Wednesday of the month **Gosford Bush Poets**, 7pm Gosford Hotel, Mann Street, Gosford.
 Contact Vic Jefferies 0425252212 (vicjefferies@optusnet.com.au) or Peter Mace 43693561
Written comps closing dates:
 Jan. 31st **Boyup Brook** Open and Emerging poet categories Irene Connor 0429 652 1555 iconnor21@wn.com.au
 March 30 Gulgong Henry Lawson Literary Awards PO Box 235 Gulgong 2852 contact Cheryl Peters (02)63741213
 May 20th: **Bundaberg** Bush Lantern Award for Bush Verse 2011. (Contacts TBA.)
 July 15: **North Pine** Camp Oven Festival. Performance & written competition. Contact Dot: 07 32036681 or Barry 07 34823541.
 July 30th. **Nandewar Poetry Competition**. Info and entry forms Secretary, Historical Society PO box 55 Narrabri 2325 tourism@narrabri.nsw.gov.au
 October 12th: **Upper Lachlan Wool Wagon** Written Awards Crookwell NSW Ph. 'Spud' 02 4832 1004

NORTH PINE FESTIVAL BACK AT COUNTRY MUSIC HALL

North Pine Bush Poets are back in their old stamping ground for their Camp Oven Festival on 19, 20, and 21 August 2011. The Country Music Hall is in the grounds of Old Petrie Town, which used to be called the North Pine Country Markets, near Petrie, on the outskirts of Brisbane.

Something new this year is the Walk Up Concert in Costume on the evening of Friday 19th. All poets are welcome to perform even if not competing in the competition. For those who hate dressing up, please note that it is not compulsory, but we hope that most will be able to rustle up some kind of costume, and it will give a great opportunity for much fun and hilarity.

The competition categories will be Junior 7 to under 13, Junior 13 to 19, Novice, Open Original Serious, Open Original Humorous, Open Classical/Modern Serious, and Open Classical/Modern Humorous. Yarn spinning and One Minute Poems are on the program, and if time permits, there will be Duos.

NARRANDERA'S JOHN O'BRIEN FESTIVAL The Australian Festival of Word and Song

17 - 20 March 2011

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**Greg North - Noel Stallard - Brenda Joy
Geoffrey W Graham - Frank Daniel - Sameera**

**Lazy Harry - Luke Dickens
and much much more!**

**www.johnobrien.org.au
02 6959 1766**

GIPPSLAND GOLDEN WATTLE BUSH POETRY COMPETITION 2010

JUDGES COMMENTS:

I was pleased to find so many entries with good thyme and metre, even though it made the ask of judging this competition a very difficult one! Every entry was read at least twice and eventually I still had over thirty poems to consider.

These were read over and over again as I slowly came to a decision. The final dozen poems were very good indeed and it was hard to separate them. Several may well go on to win other competitions.

Two good poems were discarded because they had been previously published. Some entries were very short and although poems don't have to reach the line limit given, it's advisable to take advantage of the chance to fully develop a storyline or theme.

Some entries contained good storylines and imagery but were let down by irregular metre and/or poor rhymes. Some displayed awkward phrasing, changes of tense or attempts to maintain the metre by forcing stress onto the wrong syllable of the following word. Reading the poem aloud, with attention to correct pronunciation, may assist with identifying this problem. Punctuation is also an important element and in some poems this was minimal or missing entirely.

I know only too well how easy it is for the eye to "see" what the brain knows should be on the page, so all poets need to take time to proof-read carefully for spelling and pun-

tuation errors. Revision and changes made to a poem can sometimes result in lines with missing or additional words, and these "typos" can affect the metre. These days the standard of bush poetry is so high that poems need to be presented as faultlessly as possible.

I would like to thank the organizers and all the entrants for giving me the opportunity to read some very good poems. I congratulate all the poets for the amount of hard work they've put into their entries and hope those who were not successful this time will keep writing, revise their poems and go on to greater things in future. Good luck to you all.

First place, no. 21 'Spirit of Australia'

The wonderful imagery and descriptive language employed by the poet are combined with excellent metre and rhyme, making the poem a pleasure to read. Drought, bushfire, cyclone and flood are graphically described and the final stanza provides a fitting conclusion.

Runner-up, no. 46 'Floodtide'.

This is another topical poem. It displays skilful use of internal rhyme and some vivid imagery. The initial conflict between the characters adds interest to the basic storyline and the ending reflects the resilience of both the pioneering spirit and the flooded country itself.

Veronica Weal.

Results:

First Place. \$1,000.00 'Spirit of Australia' Catherine Clarke
Second Place. 'Floodtide' David Campbell

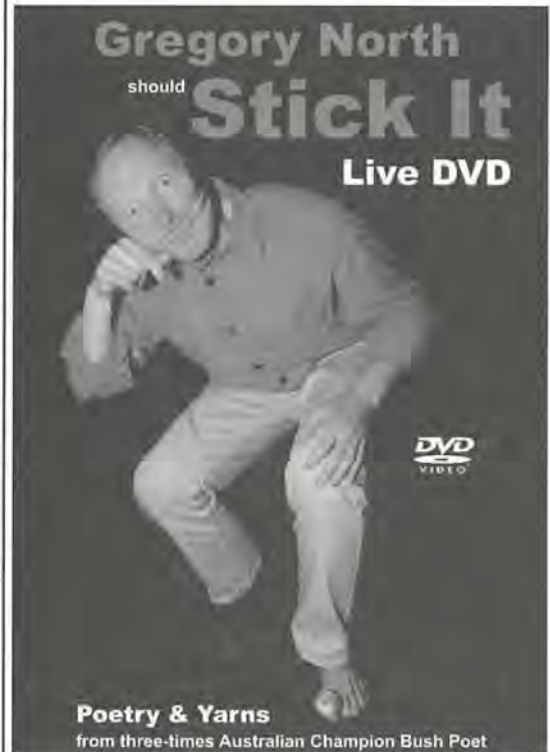
Highly Commended:

'Grandad's Purple Donkey' Kym Eitle
'The Builder' Ellis Campbell
'Riders on the Wind' David Campbell
'Poetry as Therapy' Kym Eitel

Commended:

'Confessions at Sundown' Ellis Campbell
'Bill's Story' Tony Hammill
'The Black Pearl' Valerie P Read

New DVD Out Now



The latest offering from three-times Australian Champion bush poet, **Gregory North** is now available.

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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.

BRONZE SWAGGIE - 40 YEARS

The Bronze Swagman Awards conducted by the Winton Tourism and Business Association Inc. has now entered its fortieth year.

Louise Dean of Wookatook Gift and Gem in Winton is currently collating a special 40th Anniversary book featuring all the winners and runners-up from 1972—2011 which will hopefully be available in

July/August this year if all goes to plan.

You can be a part of this book by submitting a small message of support e.g. "... congratulations on achieving 40 years..."

Joe Blogs, Winton Qld.

These quotes will be printed into any blank spaces and would add a personal touch to the book.

Congratulations to Keith Lethbridge for winning the "Bush Poem of the Year" at the Australian Bush Laureate Awards on January 18th.

Our association with the

Bush Laureate awards is working well. Another great step on the road to promoting bush poetry.

Entries for the 2011 competition close on April 30th.

wooka2@bigpond.net.au
Louise Dean

Graham & Louise Dean
Wookatook Gift & Gem
P.O. Box 120
Winton, Qld. 4735
Ph: (07) 4657 1296
Fx: (07) 4657 1541

'THE OLD TIMER' (Winning poem 2009 Nandewar Poetry Awards) by Donald Crane Toowoomba Qld.

Is this the fate a man deserves who's laboured till the end,
who's long outlived his 'useful' years and much too patient friend?
There in his squatters chair he rots, the ling'ring years now left,
a body sapped by time's cruel hand, life's spirit now—bereft.
A drover's horse meets kinder fate to end long years and hard,
that finds itself alone, en route-to fiendish knacker's yard.
Where life's end comes, as soon it must, brings swift and blest release;
a long and painful death replaced by everlasting 'peace'.
No stockman would such 'peace' deny his pain racked equine friend,
or bushman e'er whose time has come not seek such speedy end.
For thoughts that plague a bushman's mind and fill his heart with dread,
are drawn out months of living hell, when best that he were dead.
What harsher hand could man be dealt than spend his final days,
a shuffling shell of former self—his mind a muddled haze.
To shuffle round in slippered feet, house bound by day and night,
with pallid face and faltering mind—a sad and hapless sight.
Is this the price a man must pay for 'extra time' he's gained,
when 'useful' years are gone, long gone, when sense of worth has waned.
For rough tough men from outback runs however smart or great,
In life's last draft, when time is up, are shown the same 'bush' gate.
Unkindly shunned and mocked by those too young to understand,
the hurt they cause in hearts of men who wear the bushman's brand,
How many days must man endure this pain of ling'ring hell,
How many more to wait forlorn, till tolls the final bell?
The old man sat in squatter's chair in drear and sombre mood,
with nought to do to pass the hours, with too much time to brood.
For oft the vaunted 'golden years' can be the most unkind,
and idleness a worthless balm to soothe a troubled mind.
The old man knew his time was nigh, his spark of youth was gone
Long gone as well the will to live and wish to carry on.
Along the one way track that leads to sadness and despair
A hasty and peaceful end was now the bushman's prayer.
That evening found the self same scene—the old man sitting there,
with fresh tamped pipe and mug of tea, in well worn squatters chair,
But pall-like o'er the now mute scene there hung a ghostly chill,
his pipe unlit, his brew undrunk, his body strangely still.
A fleeting glimpse at prostrate form, one glance at crease lined face
showed from the cards that life had dealt he'd played his final ace.
No need the pallid face to scan to know his soul had passed,
his fervent plea's been answered now—he's found his peace at last.



Spirit of Australia © Catherine Clarke 2010

The tussock's gusting down the hill: the red sand mocks our crying,
for soil is cracking, dehydrated livestock sadly dying.
The wells are dry, the land is desiccated, nothing's blooming—
we wake to heartbreak every day; no sign of rain is looming.
The dust whips over arid fields; we fight a losing battle
of pulling thirsting sheep from mud holes, shooting starving cattle.
The birds are falling from the trees, no strength in them for soaring,
whilst ev'ry eye turns heavenward, for sweet respite imploring.
We have to wait it out—there isn't any other option—
we chose this life, this place, in our great country of adoption.
Yet though the drought is merciless and all supplies depleted,
we'll come dirough this just like before, brought low but not defeated...

Vast forests savaged by the flames, with heat that's all consuming;
all living things their imminent demise are now assuming.
The crackling gums are buffeted by untamed winds of fury,
as Mother Nature rages—stands unyielding judge and jury.
Black ash is flying through the air and roos take flight in terror;
dense smoke conceals escape routes and too late they see their error.
The stench of burning bush and carcass is abomination—
the die is cast, we have to beat this dreadful conflagration.
From conquered furnace, houses razed, defiant smould'ring embers,
fresh hope will spring with life anew, whilst everyone remembers,
Though bush fires bring such tragedies no victory can sweeten,
this toughened harsh rough country's sometimes licked, but never beaten...

The coastline's whipped with high speed winds, the palm trees wildly thrashing—
huge waves spew forth their anger on primeval rocks they're smashing.
There's not much hope for any boat still coupled to its mooring;
as sea churns fiercely, ruthless, heavy, stinging rains are pouring.
Though preparations have been made we still remain astounded
at power of the elements, and unleashed hell unbounded.
From shelter we're inert with shock at force of winds prevailing—
uprooting objects in its path, producing eerie wailing.
Although we're safe inside with sturdy hatches firmly battened,
we cannot help but fear our homes will be completely flattened.
But we will salvage all we can when wrathful storm's abated,
and start again—we're often crushed, but never subjugated...

The plains are swamped; swift rivers run throughout the drowning city,
and in the country bloated livestock floats—the sight's not pretty!
The people flee as homes are wrenched and carried in the torrent;
they try to save their pets and come to terms with sights abhorrent.
Survivors cling to battered trees to wait for their salvation,
whilst on the news we're watched by every person in the nation.
The animals are moved to higher ground in scenes chaotic,
afraid, confused and terrified at nature's rage aquatic.
Belongings float away; some lost their ey'ry prized possession—
must start from scratch—a necessary, slow and sad progression.
But weapons that the elements seem always to be wielding
may see our spirits dampened, tried, oft' sunk, but never yielding...

Adversity may belt this massive continent of splendour—
this timeless land of ancient race, and all who would defend her;
yet through the droughts and tempests, fires, each conflict and confusion,
her people rise to challenges with guts in great profusion.
And, be it man or-be it nature who aspires in taming
tis rugged, wild enormous place, her pride she'll be reclaiming.
For country-wide, although she's knocked she'll rise and come up fighting—
descendants of her pioneers still sense their zeal igniting.
Though life is sometimes rugged, cruel, and she may seem reflective—
her passion often tested—she will not be found defective.
Enduring, free and bountiful with loyalty deep seated,
the Aussie spirit triumphs, and will never be defeated.

This is freaky!!

Submitted by
Margaret Tinham,
Melbourne.

This year we WILL experience 4
unusual dates.....

1/1/11, 1/11/11, 11/1/11
and 11/11/11.....

Now figure this out..

Take the last 2 digits of the year
you were born, plus the age you
turn this year and it WILL equal
111...



VALE: DULCIE REGAN

Farewell Dulcie Regan; not a bush poet but one of our best loved and most admired supporters over the past fourteen years.

Dulcie was diagnosed with with an aggressive brain tumour and Parkinson's Disease in June last year and sadly lost her brave fight on 15 December 2010.

Dulcie always accompanied husband Terry to bush poetry events Australia wide and was renowned for her voluntary assistance at festivals. She could always be found working on product tables and was prominent in her assistance at Tamworth's Longyard Hotel bush poets breakfasts for many years.

Dulcie will be sadly missed by all her bush poetry friends.

JULY
8th, 9th, 10th - 2011

16th BUNDY BUSH POETRY MUSTER

JULY
8th, 9th, 10th - 2011

Across the Waves Sports Club Inc. 1 Miller Street BUNDABERG

Special Guest Poets

Neil McArthur

Gregory North

Bill Kearns

Presentation of
Bush Lantern Award
for Written Verse 2011
Sunday - July 10th



Bush Lantern Award 2011 - Written Competition for Bush Verse
ALSO

Bush Lantern Award - Junior Category - Primary & Secondary School Students
CLOSING DATE: 20th MAY - 2011



Cash Prizes & Trophies
in all categories

Performance Competition

Open (men & women separate categories)
Intermediate, Novice, Juniors (U/8yrs & 8 yrs to U/16 yrs)
Duo Performances, Yarnspinning & One Minute Cup

FREE Poetry Workshop

In conjunction with the Bundy Bush Poetry Muster week-end Gregory North will conduct a children's story telling session on Tuesday July 5th in the Bundaberg Library and a **FREE** poetry workshop in the Council Training Rooms (behind the library) on Thursday July 7th from 10am to Noon.

All phone and email enquiries:

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bette.shiels@bigpond.com

Sandy Lees 07 4151 4631
lees@fastel.com.au

Jan Facey 0418 152 777
janfacey@bigpond.com.au

Entry forms

SSAE

Performance coordinator or
Bush Lantern Coordinator
(whichever is applicable)
Bundaberg Poets Society Inc
PO Box 4281
BUNDABERG SOUTH Q 4670
or email. lees@fastel.com.au



Noel Stallard



John O'Brien

NARRANDERA'S JOHN O'BRIEN FESTIVAL - The Australian Festival of Word and Song

The award-winning Narrandera's John O'Brien Festival is 17 years' old, feisty and fabulous - Four days, forty performers, over 100 hours of entertainment with bush poetry, music, dance, comedic acts, a street party, and more - all offered reflecting the renowned poet's Irish heritage and bush humour.

The festival is one of the longest running in NSW and takes its name from poet/priest Father Patrick Hartigan ('John O'Brien') who created a host of marvellous bush characters in verses such as 'Around the Boree Log', 'Tangmalangaloo' and 'Said Hanrahan'. Father Hartigan lived and ministered in Narrandera from 1917 until 1944, and many of his compositions were penned during that time.

One doesn't need to be an aficionado of Australian poetry to know that John O'Brien stands in history with Banjo

Paterson and Henry Lawson in creating wonderful poetry that depicts the Australian way of life in pioneering days; especially paying tribute to the rural pioneering heritage of the Irish settlers. Because of this connection, the Festival is traditionally held around St Patrick's Day and this year will be held in Narrandera from the 17th to the 20th of March.

Centrally located on the junction on the Newell and Sturt Highways, Narrandera is ideally placed to welcome visitors to this event that is growing in reputation as Australia's Festival of Word and Song.

Festival goers will again be treated to a great variety of bush poets (including Australian Champion Gregory North, and everyone's favourite - Frank Daniels), lots of music and dance. A new addition to the festival is the "Poetry, Port and Pottage Evening" - the title being self-explanatory.

More than 30 different events occurring all over the town - at parks, pubs, clubs and even the gorgeous Lake Talbot Aquatic Complex.

Saturday's Street Party is always popular when Narrandera's main street is closed to vehicular traffic and packed with street performers and market stalls.

An extra special feature in 2011 will be TV Australian Idol runner-up, Luke Dickens, in concert. An ex-shearer from Young, Luke is certainly making his mark in the music world and has just come back from entertaining our troops in Afghanistan where his country rock show was a real hit.

Contact:

Barbara Bryon
0400 346 043 or
email - barbara.bryon@bigpond.com

ON ROSARY HILL- GALONG.

Written by Sister Margaret Gillespie RSJ.

Did they stand among the rocks upon this hill
and watch the purple dawn or sunsets glow?
did young men dream, and did the women sing
the secret songs that only women know?

And near the creek, with water running clear,
did the mothers and the little children come
to search for food, and chase the butterflies,
and hear the bees beneath a flowering gum?

When winters icy hand seized all the earth
with frosty nights and gusts of chilling rain,
did they gather in their makeshift shelters here,
among the rocks, to bear the seasons pain?

Perhaps some fallen tree upon this land
once saw them hunt the snakes and kangaroos,
some branches still may hold the distant songs
of kookaburras, owls and cockatoos.

That ring of stones upon the slope below,
was it perhaps a secret meeting place,
where the elders took the younger men by night,
to hand on old traditions of their race ?

From deep within their dreaming time they knew
that all creation spoke of mystery;
a spirit strong encompassed all the earth,
and lived in every mountain, rock and tree.

These rocks have stood a million years or more,
recording in their hearts the memory
of vast creations limitless expanse ,
and the tiny phase of human history.

And if these rocks could speak, what would they tell?
a tale of campfire's smoke, corroborees;
of human passion, hunger, birth and death,
the heritage of all Earths families.

Are the remnants of these people buried
here in soils too deep for tears or memories;
are not the settlers who replaced them,
too, interred within the Galong cemetery?

For time is not impressed with human deeds,
and earth does not distinguish great or small;
we may walk the land with proud and heavy tread,
but in the end, its arms will claim us all.

On winters nights when darkness holds the earth,
if you listen, there's a wailing, sad and shrill,
a cry for children lost, and land mislaid,
the Ngunnawal, their spirits with us still.

Margaret Gillespie has been a Sister of St. Joseph for more than fifty years. Most of that time was spent in Catholic Education and Parish ministry. Poetry has always been a part of her life, and the Spring Sabbatical at Galong NSW has been a source of inspiration for her Galong poems. Margaret now lives in Scarborough Queensland.

2 NEW CD'S OUT NOW!

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Award

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P.O. Box 655
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'The Spirit of Australia', (p 21) by Catherine Clarke, the winning entry in the 2010 Gippsland Golden Wattle written competition was just one of four major winning titles in the past few months.

ABPA Member Catherine Clarke and her husband Andrew are currently living in the Republic of the Maldives working in the hospitality trade.

Catherine says her first experience of Tamworth this year was amazing; there are simply no adequate words to describe the feeling of not only receiving two Highly Commended awards and being one of the three finalists, but then actually winning the Blackened Billy, especially on top of her recent Ipswich Poetry Feast win against 1,244 entrants, and winning the Rolf Boldrewood written award (Dubbo) and the Gippsland Golden Wattle! Catherine said she "was totally stunned when the Blackened Billy win was announced."

"Three days later I still feel as if I was dreaming. I already think 2011 is one of the best years of my life and it's only just started!"



MY FAVOURITE ANIMAL

My little parrot Oli
Oh how he is so jolly
His preferred word is peek-a-boo
And don't remind me of his poo

His cage is bigger than a church
He should sleep on his bright blue perch
He has this cute sun-yellow bed
He likes to sleep on that instead.

by Josie Southern, Singleton NSW

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP AT SINGLETON

NEVILLE BRIGGS
SINGLETON BC GP

Over two days in January school holidays, I volunteered to run a workshop for children aged 8 to 11 years at the Singleton Library.

There was a good response, twice as many applications were received as could be accommodated.

The object of the workshop was to introduce beginners to rhyming and metred poetry.

On the first day their eyes tended to glaze over and they became fidgety when required to grapple with the technicalities of metre and rhyme. But they were most interested in the Triantiwon-togongolope and all joined in to learn the correct pronunciation.

On the second day they were most enthusiastic to present their newly minted poems and had a chance to practice performance poetry in front of the class. And they got a free pizza for lunch.

At the conclusion of the workshop, a copy of Jim Haynes' "Big Aussie Book of Verse for Aussie Kids" was presented to the library for the encouragement of children's poetic education.

The accompanying poem is by a young lady, under 11 years, and a raw beginner, to show what she had learned in our little workshop.



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