



Volume 19  
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2012

# A.B.P.A.

The Australian Bush Poets  
Association Inc.

*Magazine - (since 1994)*

## Love Me Tender

Congratulations to our own Kathy and John Edwards as they renewed their vows for their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Parkes was the venue for Kathy, John and 25 other couples as Elvis the celebrant led the ceremony for devoted couples to say "I do" (again) or perhaps "I do" (despite everything).

Kathy looked fantastic; a lady in red whose smile lit up the park, but John really stole the show in his new Elvis outfit. They were thrilled that their granddaughter Olivia, age 10, was bridesmaid and that they were chosen to cut the cake.

Kathy and John had a second honeymoon in Katoomba on the way to Parkes (that's before the wedding folks!) Kathy has 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren and 4 books of bush poetry. Her most recent book, "Love and Laughter, the Best Medicine" contains both of Kathy's prizewinning Elvis poems as well as her original humorous and serious verse. see p. 17



COUNTRY music's famous cowboy

## Smoky Dawson

has found a new larger-than-life memorial seat in the heart of Tamworth. Dawson, who died in February 2008, has taken a seat in the Country Music Festival's boulevard of dreams, aka Peel Street and the heart of the January hoedown – resplendent in bronze for ever after. The \$120,000 public art piece of the music legend comes from the studio of Shortland sculptor Tanya Bartlett.



Maxine and George Ireland will be celebrating their 70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary on 23 February 2012 with their friends and family in Taree on that weekend. They were married in 1942 and lived all their lives in Murwillumbah and then a short time in Tweed Heads until 2010 when they moved to Taree to be closer to family. They now live in care at Alma Place, 424 Wingham Rd. Taree 2430

Maxine has always loved poetry and she is a former Australian Women's Champion who participated at many venues in NSW and Queensland. At 93 she now entertains "the old people" in Alma Place at happy hour each week with a poem or two.

THE MAN FROM  
**AUSTRALIAN**  
SNOWY RIVER  
**BUSH CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
FESTIVAL  
*Young Australia*

# STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN Template for the ABPA

1. **Strategic Focus** - What do we wish to achieve with this plan

2. **The Association** - A concise overview of our Association

3. **Analysis** - Identify and quantify key Association opportunities/gaps, barriers, threats, compliance requirements, risks, performance multipliers, critical success factors etc. considering sources for membership and growth.

4. **Products** - Based on the findings of Section Three identify our service's key strengths and weaknesses as they relate to key market opportunities and threats.

5. **Marketing** - Based on discussions at previous sections develop a concise set of highly focussed Association strategies for our highest priorities.

6. **Delivery** - Develop linked strategies with clear targets and time lines to develop capabilities and ca-

pacities

7. **Sources of Funding** - Conduct analysis and strategies for Funding, Sponsorships and Grants, defining key strategies and targets.

8. **Stakeholder Relationships and Alliances** - Describe the current situation and list those key stakeholders that currently contribute to the Association's performance.

9. **Organisational and Management** - Current Association organisational structures and human resource capabilities

10. **Risk Factors and Regulatory Compliance** - Identify high priority risks within each performance area represented by the sections of this plan. The Australian Risk Management Standard AS/NZS 4360 could help in this section.

11. **Corporate Governance** - Areas to be addressed by this section typically would include: Our Structures, Constitution, Committee - Size and Composition, Duties and Responsibilities of the Committee, Committee Performance, Advisors to the Committee, Agreements.

12. **Financials** - Based on the strategies and plans formulated, costings calculated, and income projected develop a set of financials for the duration of the plan

13. **Application of Funding** This section should be linked to all prior planning and at minimum address the following:

- What will be the total funding requirement across the duration of this plan - when and how much?
- Which funds will be involved; how much will they provide and when will they provide it?
- How will the funds be used at each round?

14. **Strategic Action Plan** - The Aim of this section is to integrate all strategies developed across previous sections into a cohesive and balanced plan of highly focussed action that will achieve the overarching purpose of this Strategic Business Plan.

15. **Plan Improvement** - Performance Measurement, Plan Review and Up Date

GULGONG



MORE THAN HISTORY

## Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc Annual Literary Awards 2012

[www.henrylawsongulgong.org.au](http://www.henrylawsongulgong.org.au)

[www.gulgong.net](http://www.gulgong.net)

GULGONG



MORE THAN HISTORY

### Closing Dates 2012

THE LAND Open Written Poetry Award: 28th March 2012

The Oakley Family Emerging Poet's Award: 28th March 2012

The LAND Open Short Story Award : 28th March 2012

The Oakley Family Emerging Writer's Award: 28th March 2012

Leonard Teale Memorial Performance Poetry Competition: 28th March 2012

Student sections:

Primary and Secondary (Short Story or Poetry accepted) 5th April 2012

Entry forms required in all sections. Please visit the above websites or send SSAE to Literary Awards, Henry Lawson Society,

PO Box 235, Gulgong, NSW 2852.

For further information email [henrylawsongulgong@yahoo.com.au](mailto:henrylawsongulgong@yahoo.com.au) or ring the Secretary, Cheryl Peters (02) 6374 1213



[www.facebook.com/henrylawsoncentre.gulgong](http://www.facebook.com/henrylawsoncentre.gulgong)



# President's Message



Another year has passed and here we are again. Doesn't seem that long ago when we were last here. I know that for quite a few of our membership 2011 has been a trying year. There has been sickness, hospitalisation and thankfully recovery. Members are also in ongoing hospital care. We are grateful for the respective recoveries of Noel Stallard and Frank Daniel. At time of writing Milton Taylor has just returned home and Ellis Campbell is well on the mend. Our hearts and hopes go out to Glori O'Brien for a speedy recovery. This last year Cas Van Loon and Liz Ward passed from our midst.

We have come a long way as an Association, from meeting only once per year, to passing emails around a few times a year for discussion, to having regular meetings across the internet. We have had five Committee meetings this year. Our Committee meetings are held via Skype. We have had varying degrees of connective success in our meetings for 2011. It appears that the reliability of that technology is sometimes subject to wind-shifts in the stratosphere as well as El Nino effects across the Pacific. We will persevere.

We've extended the online payment facility to accept Annual ABPA Membership Renewals, Five year Membership Renewals, ABPA Hat Badge and ABPA Public Liability Insurance.

Technology has enabled our Association for a wider inclusion. We now have ABPA members, and others, engaging in online discussions and developing friendships on the ABPA Forum. Members enjoy 'hooking up' at festivals as

well as "popping in" for a cuppa on their travels around our Great Country. This shows that the ABPA Membership is inclusive not exclusive.

We need to be on the lookout for opportunities to engage a wider audience through these enabling technologies; building on what we have so our Culture thrives in the future.

## ABPA – ABLA Agreement

This last year (2011) the Committee ratified an agreement between the ABPA - ABLA. The content of that agreement was posted out to the membership via the August - September 2011 Magazine (Volume 17 No. 4)

The scrutineering of the 2012 entries and the auditing of the judges score sheets have been completed. A copy of the audit certificate, signed by the ABPA appointed auditor, is available for perusal by the membership.

The ABPA - ABLA Agreement in place is non-binding. Either party can walk away. It is important for Bush Poetry that both parties to 'have a go' at making this relationship work.

Through the ABPA - ABLA Agreement, we have a platform where ABPA views and concerns are presented with openness and candour. The next meeting is pencilled in for March. On the table for discussion are (at the time of writing), 1) review of the 2012 Awards, 2) conflict of interest and 3) advertising.

During the year the ABPA Committee has been bogged down in the minutiae of a single issue. Nevertheless outcomes have ultimately been productive. Sadly, being driven by a single (external) issue can deflect focus from ABPA matters and fracture a committee to the exclusion of good governance. It is hoped we can now move on and focus on what is really important - the ABPA.

## FINANCE

The ABPA has issues of diminishing finances. A focus on building and replenishing those finances is a survival imperative. More by luck than good management, if you could call it such, the funds allocated to Clubs for hosting State and National championships was not fully expended this year. Had they been, we would be running in deficit by over \$2600. We have not properly budgeted for those outgoings.

Our major weakness is we have only one income stream - Membership fees. If the ABPA needs more funds we increase the membership fees. This is fraught with danger. We must seek to develop additional funding streams.

We do have a buffer in our investment account, however it would be folly to dip into that fund without a program for replenishment in place. The returns on that investment are unpredictable and vary from year to year <see Kym's Report>

Hosting our own show would be one option. As mentioned previously, discussions are ongoing with the Balladeers to present a show in Peel Street during the 2013 Tamworth Festival. Getting access to appropriate grants and funding is another. However, we need to define what we need money for, how much and for how long.

It must be remembered that we are, after all, a non-profit organisation.

## STRATEGIC PLAN (p.2)

This year the ABPA is 18 years old.. How did we get here? What have we accomplished and is this where we want the ABPA to be? We didn't really plan for this, so maybe we're only one year old, eighteen times over. Where do we want to be in five years time? Ten years? Do we care?

The ABPA as an organisation, and we, as it's members, play an important role in this Country. We are the "Keepers of the Culture". I believe that we, the current membership of the ABPA, should have a say, and take control of the direction of our Culture and our future. To Undertake a Strategic Planning process will define where we REALLY are, what we REALLY want, and where we REALLY want to be in five, ten or fifty years from now.

The process of defining our Strategic Plan will involve the wider membership for input. The process is not trivial but it's not daunting either. A proposed Template as a guide is available for perusal and discussion. I have been part of this process three times now, two Commercial instances and one "Not for Profit" organisation.

The purpose of the Motion for an ABPA Strategic Plan will tell us where we are, where we want to get to and what it will take to get us there. It will PARTICULARLY assist us when applying for grants and funding. It will show Funding organisations that we in the ABPA know what we are doing!

I hope we can set solid foundations through good governance so the ABPA will be a beacon for our Culture and endure well beyond any of us here today.

I submit my report to the Membership and move that it be accepted. ....

Manfred Vijars.

# The Truth about Waltzing Matilda

© David Campbell, Vic  
1st prize Bush Poetry Section,  
A Feast of Poetry (Cooma-2011)

I'll tell you a tale to make you go pale,  
to bother, bewitch and bewilder,  
a story so bold that has to be told...  
the truth about Waltzing Matilda.

Forget what you've heard, for every word  
is false, just a big misconception,  
as Paterson's verse, for better or worse,  
was penned as a means of deception.

You all know the song of that billabong,  
the swaggie, and how he departed  
by taking a swim, the last one for him,  
for that's how the legend was started.

But now lend an ear, I'll tell you right here,  
with hand on my heart and conviction,  
that you've been misled, for all that's been said  
is nonsense, just fanciful fiction.

Realities are much darker by far,  
and secrets are often revealing,  
but now comes the day when someone must say  
what history's page is concealing.

A long time ago a sad tale of woe  
unfolded at Dagworth bush station,  
where it all began with one love-struck man  
and ended in great consternation.

The squatter's young son, named Billy, had won  
the heart of Matilda, a beauty...  
a bright, shining pearl, a wheat farmer's girl...  
who pledged her devotion and duty.

But many a slip 'twixt cup and the lip  
turns fairytales into disaster;  
so much that we do heads off somewhere new  
in ways that we simply can't master.

The night they were wed, well-watered and fed,  
they went for a post-nuptial wander,  
to seal with a kiss connubial bliss  
at billabong-side way down yonder.

Their spirits were high; they strolled 'neath a sky  
ablaze with the stars in their glory...  
she rosy and fair and he debonair...  
two lovers beginning life's story.

A coolibah tree, a nice place to be,  
provided a place for reclining,  
and there they reposed, and very soon dozed,  
quite weary from wining and dining.

So, strange as it seems, they drifted in dreams,  
both floating on clouds of illusion,  
until the spell broke when Billy awoke,  
and suffered a fateful delusion.

He saw in the night his bride clothed in white,  
a vision in that tranquil setting.

Inspired by romance, he asked her to dance,  
and soon they were both pirouetting.

Around and around they whirled to the sound  
of happy rejoicing and laughter,  
but, sadly to say, it all went astray  
in ways that would echo thereafter.

Imagine the scene...a lass of eighteen,  
a newly-wed damsel just waking...  
to see her dear beau slow-slow-quick-quick-slow  
was something that set her heart quaking.

She screamed in surprise at what met her eyes,  
a sight that was hardly endearing...  
he held in his arms, entrapped by its charms,  
a jumbuck in dire need of shearing!

Her scream pierced the air and gave him a scare...  
he recognised what he was doing,  
and saw at a glance there wasn't a chance  
of dodging the scandal ensuing.

While she was asleep he'd waltzed with a sheep,  
and that surely meant he had lost her;  
he'd strayed from her side, abandoned his bride,  
and danced with an ovine impostor!

But that wasn't all, as he heard a call...  
his father was standing there gaping,  
with some of the boys who'd heard all the noise...  
he hadn't a hope of escaping.

Then, to his dismay, his wife backed away;  
the sight of his loved one recoiling  
just addled his brain...he went quite insane...  
it seemed poor young Billy was boiling.

That unhappy man surrendered and ran  
away from the wheat farmer's daughter,  
who broke down and cried as her Billy died,  
engulfed by the dark, murky water.

The squatter, aghast, then buried the past  
by turning his hand to invention...  
a swaggie turned ghost, the billabong's host,  
and troopers out seeking detention.

The Banjo arrived; the squatter contrived  
to add to his epic creation...  
the ghost could now sing, a wonderful thing  
that haunts us through each generation.

But don't go away...there's more left to say...  
this story has one final turning;  
Matilda, poor dear, shed many a tear,  
and faded away with her yearning.

It has to be said, to honour the dead...  
that dance with the sheep surely killed her.  
So now you all know this saga of woe,  
the truth about Waltzing Matilda.

**DUNEDOO**  
**Bush Poetry Festival**  
**NSW STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
**1 - 4 MARCH 2012**

Proudly sponsored by



## Elvis lovers follow the King's dream

By Kallee Buchanan, Luke Wong, Brooke Daniels.

**Parkes, the Graceland of the central west, gets all shook up for the annual Elvis Festival.**

They say Parkes in central western New South Wales is the Elvis Capital of the Southern Hemisphere, and it's easy to see why.

Each year 15,000 Elvis fans and look-a-likes descend on this country town to celebrate all things the king.

It's held during the week of the Elvis' birthday, and attracts visitors from as far away as the United States, England and New Zealand.

They come to relive the Presley era.

"I think it was a rather romantic, exciting era Elvis came from, and I think people like reliving the memories from that time," says Hayley Bates who travelled from Sydney to attend the festival.

About 150 floats shook, rattled and rolled

**The Dunedoo Bush Poetry Festival** is three days of bush poetry competitions, street theatre, puppetry, music, market stalls and comedy entertainment.

Something for everyone of all ages. Anyone can have a go in this supportive environment so join in the fun over the weekend.

The Festival starts on Thursday night. On Friday there is a bus tour of the local area with commentary from

the locals. The Poetry Competition begins on Friday at the Dunedoo Golf Club where entry is free. A \$250 prize will be awarded for the best yarn not told before at the Festival.

The Saturday morning markets will include interesting demonstrations and with early Australian music adding atmosphere. The Dunedoo Central School Poetry Competition will be in full swing with an awards night later in the evening.

### Closing date February 24th 2012

**Thurs. 6pm Meet & Greet – Walk Up — Brawl titles available**

**Frid. 9am Bus tour, bring own lunch. Book early**

**Frid. 4pm Intermediate Competition**

**Frid. 7pm Yarn Spinning Competition**

**Saturday 8am High School**

**Classical – Female**

**Classical – Male**

**Original Serious – Female**

**Original Serious – Male**

**Contemporary – Female**

**Contemporary – Male**

**7pm Original Humorous – Female**

**Original Humorous – Male**

**Announcement of competition results**

**Entry forms:**

<http://www.whhttp://www.abpa.org.au/>

[NSW\\_Bush\\_Poets\\_Championships.html](http://www.whhttp://www.abpa.org.au/NSW_Bush_Poets_Championships.html)

### Written Sections

Open female and male

Intermediate

Juniors

Entry forms on ABPA Website

Entry Forms can be posted to the:-  
 Dunedoo District Development Group  
 PO Box 92  
 DUNEDOO NSW 2844.

Bookings — Joy Beames

Phone 02 6375 1173

Fax 02 6375 1172

Mobile 0428 751 173

down the main street, which was lined with screaming fans reminiscent of Elvis' hey day.

And while the King himself never made it to Australia, the event ensures thousands get a taste of the hype that surrounded him.

But it's not just about the blue suede shoes, it's also about cold hard cash. The festival injects more than \$7.5 million into the region's economy at a time when it's difficult to attract tourists. This year's crowd was a record breaker, and most say they'll be back in 2013 to celebrate the festival's 21st Birthday.

Graeme Mackaway came to Parkes for his sixth Elvis Festival, and he says it won't be his last.

"We'll be back here for every festival for as long as it's running. We just have so much fun - even my 20-year-old-son has taken up being an Elvis performer and singing along, and just loves it as well. All our kids love the music and I just think it'll go forever, because of the younger generation," says Graeme.

The organisers say that younger generation now taking part in the event is what

will make it go the distance, and maybe even another 20 years.

Frank Daniel of Canowindra led the largest gathering of Elvis fans in the poetry tribute to the King at the local bowling club, with Susie Carcary being the most successful poet on the day.

'The Two Short Sheilas' Susie and Melanie, dragged in full houses for their four Elvis tribute concerts with the management having to find a larger venue after the first two shows were sold out.



Susie Carcary



Melanie Hall

## A LITTLE POEM FOR YOU!



Another year has passed  
And we're all a little older.  
Last summer felt much hotter  
And winter seems much colder.

There was a time, not long ago  
When life was quite a blast.  
Now I fully understand  
About 'Living in the Past'

We used to go to weddings,  
Football games and lunches.  
Now we go to funeral homes,  
And after-funeral brunches.

We used to have hangovers,  
From parties that were gay.  
Now we suffer body aches  
And while the night away.

We used to go out dining,  
And couldn't get our fill.  
Now we ask for doggie bags,  
Come home and take a pill.

We used to often travel  
To places near and far.  
Now we get sore arses  
From riding in the car.

We used to go to nightclubs  
And drink a little booze.  
Now we stay home at night  
And watch the evening news.

That, my friend is how life is,  
And now my tale is told.  
So, enjoy each day and live it up...  
Before you're too damned old!

A bee is such a busy soul  
he has no time for birth control  
and that is why, in times like these--  
there are so many Sons-a-Bee's.  
sj

## An interesting note from Will Williams

Author: Charles Tompson (26 June 1807 - 5 January 1883)

**Charles Tompson** was an Australian public servant and it is claimed he was the first published Australian-born poet.

Tompson was born in Sydney, eldest child of Charles Tompson (1784?-1871), a farmer, and his wife, Elizabeth, *née* Boggis. Tompson senior had been convicted at Warwick, England, in March 1802, and arrived in Sydney aboard the *Coromandel* in May 1804. Tompson junior was educated at the Henry Fulton's school at Castlereagh, and entered the New South Wales public service. In 1826 he published *Wild Notes, from the Lyre of a Native Minstrel*, by Charles Tompson, jun., the first volume of verse by one of the native-born to be published in Australia.

Tompson was just 20 years old when his volume was published. Considered as juvenilia it has some merit, but its chief interest lies in its having been the first of its kind. He wrote some verse and much prose in later life, none of which has been collected in a volume.

One poem, *Australia. A Translation of the Latin Prize Poem of S. Smith, a Student of Hyde Abbey School, Winchester*, appeared in the Sydney Gazette for 17 December 1829, and was published shortly after as a two-paged pamphlet, now very rare. Tompson married Hannah Morris at St Matthew's, Windsor, on 12 April 1830; by 1831 he was living in Kent Street, Sydney, and had become a clerk in the colonial secretary's office. Tompson remained there until 1836 when he returned to his Doon Moor Cottage, Penrith where he was a clerk of petty sessions. Later he was clerk at C a m d e n . Tompson was then appointed third clerk in the Legislative Council of New South Wales, rose to be clerk of parliaments in the legislative council, and, in 1860, clerk of the legislative assembly, where he was much liked by members as a courteous and obliging officer. He retired on a pension on 31 January 1869 and died at Sydney on 5 January 1883.

## Santa Doesn't Always Wear Red

By Paddy O'Brien ffc phd

When you have wed, the one you love  
There'll be a child or maybe more  
To see them grow to share their smiles  
In each your heart you do adore

So many years that pass you by  
That ring of gold, that day you wed  
Your dreams, your hopes, your gift of life  
Santa doesn't always wear red

The hand of God, or who it be  
Then opens wide, the sorrows gate  
What's given now is taken  
Leukaemia, see cancer take

The waiting room there side by side  
Their dearest wish for life they wait  
Mother, Father or just a child  
To end this curse, is it too late

A donors gift will save a life  
But those who wait, oh how they dread  
A call at last, a perfect match  
Santa doesn't always wear red

The nurses in their uniforms  
Unnamed faces behind the screen  
Like the backdrops "an opera stage"  
The mercy in their hearts the scene

Doctors visit from ward to ward  
How do they fare when patients die  
To see the soul that someone loves  
How do they hide the tears they cry

But if by chance the tide does turn  
That rehabilitation bed  
New stemcells grow replace the old  
Santa doesn't always wear red

While volunteers in angel form  
Gifts of sunlight, like golden rays  
Their tireless work, to help the cause  
That long replace long empty days

It's only then you see the joy  
Those volunteers, They saw ahead  
To give us hope in times of need  
Santa doesn't always wear red

From aussie friends and overseas  
There's phone calls, good wishes too  
To lift our hopes from loving hearts  
Now turn grey skies to shades of blue

Where cheeks so damp, from untold tears  
Remind us all that day we wed  
Like rainbows bright your gift of life  
Santa doesn't always wear red.

# WINNERS

## JACK THOMPSON LIVE AT THE GEARIN DVD

Five lucky ABPA members were fortunate in having their membership renewals paid up in time for Christmas, and in so doing, were included in a draw for autographed copies of **Jack Thompson, Live at the Gearin**, Favourite Australian Poems, DVD.

This live performance includes classics like *The man From Snowy River*, *Clancy of the Overflow*, *Said Hanrahan*, *The Integrated Adjective* and some lesser known works by Henry Lawson and Jack's own father, poet John Thompson.

The winning ABPA members were Robyn Griffin of Bald Hills Q; Ray Halliday of Yamba NSW; Bill Williams of Queanbeyan NSW; John Best of Mango Hill Qld and Pamela Drury of Harrington NSW.

Members of the APBA can order a DVD of the same show from Fine Poets, the publisher at a cracking \$5.00 off the retail price of \$19.95, which means you get it for \$14.95 plus \$1.55 postage and packing. They'll even gift-wrap it for you and write a personal message on a gift tag so you need do nothing but place your order and the present will arrive ready to go.

To place an order, go to [www.finepoets.com](http://www.finepoets.com) and click on the **Live at the Gearin CD**, and put the word **BONZA** into the discount code box at the checkout. Your discount will be automatically applied. This offer is exclusive to APBA members. If you don't want to use the website, just ring Fine Poets on 0296656135 and tell them that you are an APBA member who wants to order. They're very helpful.



## Test your knowledge

Compiled by Archie Powers

1. Who was the President of the A.B.P.A. in 2008 ?
2. Who was the only female poet accorded a State funeral in Sydney – Nancy Cato, Mary Gilmore or Dorothea Mackellar ?
3. Will Ogilvie was a Scotsman – True or False ?
4. In the poem "How McDougall topped the score" – what is the name of the dog ?
5. Who once famously said – "I can catch ideas anywhere, but I can't always make 'em go in harness – simple stuff is the best" ?
6. "Banjo" Paterson was created a C.B.E. for his contribution to literature – True or False ?
7. What was the name of the publication in which the early poets were first published ?
8. A poem in which the first letter of each line spells out a word, name or phrase when read vertically is called – acrostic, haiku or palindrome ?
9. John Le Gay Brereton was Professor of English at a leading Australian University – True or False ?
10. Who is the Australian poet whose major work has been produced on stage, screen and radio ?

Answers page 20.

## Mirth

©Heather Knight 22 December 2011

There's mirth in the sun as she tiptoes with grace through ruffles of fragrance and Chantilly lace. She giggles and reaches for clouds as they pass, then sails with the wind through the whispering grass.

She chases the shadows that hide in the trees and teases the willows and flirts with the breeze. She kisses the rivers that glisten with cold and drenches the mountains in sumptuous gold.

She knows there's an end to her whimsical day, celestial lights are now making their way. While sprinkling the tips of the trees with her light, she slips from the sky and succumbs to the night.

## From Paddy and Glori O'Brien;

Just a note to thank everyone in the ABPA and other associated poets for their support and well wishes during Glori's time of treatment and transplant for Leukaemia. Her recovery is still ongoing, everyday showing signs of improvement.

In Glori's case things could have gone either way with four patients in her ward losing their battle in the past three weeks.

We would like to give special thanks to the Leukaemia Foundation and all who donate to this worthy cause. Without their support financially and physically families would not survive.

I have written the poem at left trying to cover all aspects of those who give their support. Regards, Paddy O'Brien.

*Paddy + Glori O'Brien*



Heather Knight 22 months



## PLAYED on the BANJO

Charlee Marshall (Winner, Banjo Paterson Award 1988)

We were taking a bus tour of Heaven and they stopped beside Cloud Fifty-eight —  
That's the one where ex-writers have cabins and Omar Khyam keeps the gate.  
Well, I never was much of a playwright, (sic) so I thought I'd give Shakespeare a miss;  
And you really can't contemplate Tolstoy on a hit-and-miss junket like this.

I was born much too shallow for Milton, and I found Burns too lusty and coarse,  
So I strolled to the Heavenly Stockyard where an Angel was catching a horse.  
He was whistling a song of the Outback, with his halo pressed down on his hair,  
So I asked, "don't they call you The Banjo?" and he lifted his head and said, "Yair."

"Sir, I thrilled to your great 'Snowy River', I laughed at your wild Mulga Bill  
Your 'Droving Days' brings me nostalgia, and I dramatise 'Dandaloo' still.  
"I feel I am one with your 'Clancy', your 'Jockey' poem causes a tear —  
Are you writing still?" But he said sadly, "Son, I can't find an Editor, here!"

Then I said, "There is one burning question that is causing dissension down there;  
Could you give me the ultimate answer to settle the point?" He said "Yair!"  
"When you wrote of The Man, was it Riley? Could Hedger of Numbla Vale pass?  
Or perhaps Adaminaby Cochran, McEarchearn, or Louder of Yass?"

"Hellfire Jack Clarke from the ridges, or the Scotchman from down by the Fence —"  
Here the bus-driver called "Are you ready?" " - or perhaps it was Jindabyne's Spence?"  
The Angel stood scratching his halo and running those names through his mind  
Till the tour-guide took hold of my elbow and was closing the windows behind.

"Please," I pleaded. "which one of these riders was The Man? Was it Riley, McNair,  
Clarke, Cochran, Spence, Hedger, McEarchearn?  
And the Angel called Banjo said, "Yair. . ."



**ZONDRAE KING**  
In 'Buttons and Bows'

## NOVEMBER

by Charlee Marshall

If I should die upon a day like this,  
November music in the wind's soft tune;  
November lawns still jewelled from the kiss  
of dewdrops, scattered by November's moon.  
If I should leave this life on such a day  
I'd leave a dream my soul could still remember,  
for heaven cant be very far away  
from here ... my friends... my garden.. my November.  
What better way to spend Eternity!  
A million years ahead to reminisce;  
a timeless time from tears and pain set free,  
if death should find me on a day like this.  
Weep not that I have wandered from the scene,  
but join me in my thanks that I have been.

There are no further mountains I should climb;  
the setting sun shines with a softer light.  
I am an instrument of place and time,  
an evening shadow of a day once bright;  
and though I know, alas, there will be those  
whose hearts will not be with me at the last,  
but write instead 'I love you' on a rose,  
and toss it as the hearse is driven past.  
I hope these vacant words will make amends  
to empty arms and lips I cannot kiss;  
for how could I leave sorrow to my friends  
if I should die upon a day like this?  
They will not weep, if only they remember  
I've found a life that always is ... November.

### The South Coast Country Music Assn

in conjunction with Illawarra Breakfast Poets will be conducting a written poetry competition to coincide with the Country Music Festival in July .

The winners will be announced at the Dapto Leagues Club during the Poets Breakfast of the Festival. Full details will be advertised in the next issue of the ABPA Magazine.

Charlee  
Marshall





The first time I read 'November' I was so moved that I wrote the first stanza of this poem.  
It rolled from the pen, and was washed with tears. I added to it later.

If you haven't read 'November' by Charlee Marshall, I highly recommend you do so. (before reading this, maybe) It would enhance your understanding of why I was so moved.

## ODE TO CHARLEE MARSHALL

(on first reading 'November') (elbow)  
© Zondrae King (01/11)

Where lies this man, with such a heart  
who wrote like this? What was his part  
in history's page. Where does he lie?  
For I would sit an hour by  
his resting place and hope to feel  
his spirit there. Then I would kneel  
a moment more and offer up  
a prayer that many will remember  
the precious words of his 'November.'

What spirit then inspired him  
to write so fair a poem, a Hymn,  
a verse that brought me to a tear;  
to fill my eyes and wake my fear.  
For those few words that I have read  
are whirling round inside my head.  
How sweet the motif, soft the words  
to move the soul inside of me,  
in praise of his sweet poetry.

And why, prey tell, did he write so?  
Was there a way for him to know  
the end was looming very near?  
When writing, did he shed a tear?  
And was sun warm on his back  
or was a cloud of storm so black  
it hid the sun, turned day to night?  
What made him pen prophetic verses?  
A vision or a Gipsy's curses?

I must seek out a library  
and find some other works that he  
has penned. How I adore his skill!  
For surely there'll be volumes still  
I have not read. The thought indeed!  
His words have stirred in me, a need  
to quest until I find his books  
and read until I reach my fill  
of Charlee's pure poetic skill.

\* \* \* \*

my reference to 'elbow' is the name I  
have for that muse that strikes and  
won't let you sit or lie in peace, until it  
has been written down.

# Illawarra Folk Festival

Anyone finding themselves in the area on the weekend of 12th-15th January just had to take in the Illawarra Folk Festival. The festival kicked off on the Thursday at 2pm with Greg North, Jim Haynes, Brian Bell and Zondrae King followed by three full days of music, dance, workshops, and many spoken word events; Limericks, Yarn Spinning, One minute poems, as well as the usual Poets Breakfasts and concerts.

It is hard to pick a headliner from Graham Johnson (The Rhymer from Ryde), Greg North, Peter Mace Jim Haynes, Brian Bell, Barry Lake, and Campbell (The Swaggie). We also had a list of well known regulars including Alan Stone, Mike Richter, Alan Wright, Chris Woodland and the rainbow bearded Feral, the inimitable 'Arch' Bishop.)

One of the Illawarra Breakfast Poets who is fast becoming a powerful presenter is Steve Caskey and a few visiting

performers to Illawarra were Ron Bull, Ron Brown and Barry Parks (Hornsby Folk Club). Sunday we were joined by yet another of the \*IBP, Ron Halsey.

There were not too many women this year, Jan Lewis, Ella Edwards, Zondrae King and Gina Langley are a few names that come to mind. I do hope my memory has not failed me and that I have remembered all the poets who delighted the large crowd during the two hours we had on each of the three mornings.

The final act on Sunday was Nick Lock who, with indulgence from the MC, sang a Lawson Poem and incited a standing ovation, a fitting end to a wonderful festival.

We all missed the veteran performer, Viv Sawyer who is in Hospital. Best wishes for a swift recover to Viv.

\*IBP being the local group of writers Illawarra Breakfast poets we meet every Wednesday at 7am at Coniston. Zondrae King, a woman of words.



## ADELONG SHOW MARCH 11<sup>TH</sup> 2012 Best of the Bush Poetry Competition

We are excited to announce the First annual Adelong "Best of the Bush" Poetry competition. Come to the beautiful historic Gold Mining town of Adelong for a fun filled weekend.

**First Prize \$200 Second Prize \$50**

The 2012 Bendigo Bank Adelong Show will be held on Sunday March 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 at the Adelong Showground. The competition will be the first Inaugural Adelong "Best of the Bush" poetry competition, it will run in conjunction with the Adelong P & A show.

Each contestant will be allowed 8 minutes per reading and each person will be given the chance to perform 2 readings. The readings can be traditional, humorous and or original.

There is a special additional category for original poems based on and containing the Show's theme of "Adelong through the ages". The Winner of this category alongside, the First place winner will have their name placed on a perpetual trophy and be declared Adelong's

Bush Poet Laureates for the Year 2012. The poetry in this category will be part of the 2 readings allowed for each contestant, and in part will be judged by a panel of Adelong citizens for accuracy and content, so do your homework.

Please Note : The competition is an open competition. Places may be limited depending on entries. The competition is to commence at approximately 10am. The show runs from 8:30am to 5:00 pm. The opening parade is at 9:00 am. Entry for the competition does not void entry fee to the show.

There will be a draw for reading times on Wednesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March at the Adelong Citizen Club at 6:30pm. This will be a great start for poets after they arrive in town.

Closing date for entries is March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012, late entries will only be accepted if places are available please send applications to; Adelong Show Society, PO Box 35, Adelong, NSW 2729 or alternatively contact

Adelong P & A Show Society Inc.  
Email: adelongshow@hotmail.com  
Helen Frasier, Mobile: 0400-217797  
or Kerry Luff, Mobile 0414-947374

# Letter from Milton



NEVILLE BRIGGS



*"I haven't been all that well  
As you probably can tell  
By the way me lymph glands  
swell  
And the colour of me eyes..."*

If one is going to preface a letter with a poem excerpt, then why not make it a quality piece by a master craftsman like Marco Gliori?

How remarkable it is that a piece of verse which I have freely quoted should, down the line, prove a wee bit prophetic for me. Karma, they say, will come back to bite ya'!

My last 12 months have presented challenges somewhat, but never insurmountable ones. A turn around in my physical condition now means the Kokoda track distance has been amended in my case to 100 metres and changing my mind is about the most taxing physical activity I can manage.

I was released from my latest stint in Hospital last Thursday and was most pleased about it all, assuming that my prognosis had become more optimistic. I was wrong; for they informed me that the reason for my discharge was that I was due for my annual leave! We will see!

Life they say is a learning curve, and I've found that hospitals have many appropriate classrooms, but apart from one exception I was not allowed to lecture in any of them.

I have been however, much humbled by the attitude of most of my fellow inmates who have shown great fortitude and acceptance through problems considerably greater than mine and who have put into perspective that which could be easily brushed aside.

If I have a negative comment it is probably that the health system needs a shake up, humour-wise. It's a soul destroying thing indeed for one such as me to have so many brilliant one liners and razor sharp retorts not appreciated for their comedic value by health professionals. For instance, I asked the head of a group of visiting specialists if I'd be able to play the violin when I was discharged, to which he responded, "of course you will." "Bewdy," I said, "I've never been able to before." Apart from the strangled sniggering of a red faced duty nurse in the background there was absolute

silence.

On the entourage's departure, a student quickly leaned over my bed and whispered, "You can always take lessons."

Speaking of nurses, I soon discovered how to bring into line those whom I felt needed such treatment. To the ones I was satisfied with I presented a Milton Taylor CD. To those who were less than satisfactory I gave 2 CD's. That soon brought 'em around, I tell yer.

Another slight negative for me is somewhat similar to the situation that cowboy poet Larry McWhorter found himself in which led him to comment to Randy Reiman, "Hey Bud, this thing I've got is playing up hell with my organ donor card." At this point in time I still have my toenails available for donation, although only nine are functional.

OK, I'm sure 2012 will be a far better year for me and for all of you I trust. May we see each other around the traps again and share the spirit and magic of the word we hold reverence for. For those who sent messages of support and love and those who kept me in their thoughts and prayers I thank you so very much.

On a final note, I leave you with this scenario. Christmas day, having just completed my festive dinner of clear broth, apple juice and orange jelly, I am approached by my daughter and family who are paying me a welcome visit. My son in law, gazing down on the breathing tube in my mouth, a drain protruding from my lower ribs, a canula inserted in my arm and a catheter draining my kidneys, was so wise as to enquire, "well, how ya'goin'?" To which I could only reply, "Well mate, actually,"

"I haven't been all that well..."

If you call a Spaniard a bastard and he attacks you and wounds you or even kills you, he can be acquitted of a criminal offence on the grounds that the insult to his mother's honour is an unbearable provocation.

If you call a Frenchman "salle boche" or call a Muslim "kaffir" you had better run because they will be after you with a vengeance. **What about Aussies ?**

## THE WORST AUSSIE INSULT

by Neville Briggs - Singleton Bush Poets

In the Aussie colloquial banter I've been heckled and jeered by the worst. Some suggested my parents weren't married, some lampooned my physique; some just cursed.

I admit, I have troublesome failings; when I really upset apple-carts it would seem that I bear a resemblance to some old working girl's private parts.

Yes, I'm not a fine tireless worker, I've neglected some things that need doing and I have to accept that these faults justly earn me some hissing and booing.

I'm a pelican, pain and a pig, a galah, billy goat, silly goose, and at times they apply adjectives of some gross scatological use.

My thick hide can deflect most of these, even turning the cheek can be done but there's one unforgivable jibe; reprehensibly second to none.

You may call me a dill or a bastard, you can say ; what a dopey old codger, but I'll smack you and whack you and bash you if you dare to go calling me...BLUDGER !!

## ARCHIE BIGG- Bi-lingual Bush Poet of Norfolk Island

Archie Bigg began writing poetry some twenty-five years ago. He had always loved the poetry of Banjo Paterson, Henry Lawson and the other Australian bush poets and decided that the best way to record some of his life's memories and experiences was to put them into verse.

Archie belongs to a very select and small Nationality group – he is one of 2,200 people who are citizens of one of the most interesting places on Earth - Norfolk Island.

Archie's homeland has a strange and discontinuous history.

Polynesians abandoned Norfolk Island centuries before Captain Cook 'discovered' it in 1774. The island became Britain's second Pacific settlement and served as a farm for the struggling colony of Sydney before again being abandoned. It then became 'Hell in Paradise' for convicts – a brutal place of punishment for the worst criminals of the British Empire.

Abandoned yet again it was then given by Queen Victoria to the descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers from Pitcairn Island in 1856.

The descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers and the Tahitian women discovered Christianity on tiny Pitcairn Island and had become the most pious and gentlest people on Earth. They had outgrown Pitcairn Island and asked Queen Victoria for help. She gave them Norfolk Island and their descendants make up the bulk of the population there today.

Archie himself is a direct descendant of Fletcher Christian, the famous leader of the *Bounty* mutineers.

With its own language and income tax, and very little social security provision, Norfolk Island is different. Among other things it's the only nation in the world that lists residents *Nicknames* in the phone book!

Archie, his wife, Celia, their three sons and eight grandchildren all live on Norfolk Island.

In fact, apart from spending time as a child in rural New South Wales, on the Southern Highlands, Archie has lived all of his life on Norfolk Island.

Archie loves the old-fashioned way of life that still exists on the Island and he celebrates that way of life in his verse. He writes in good Aussie English about



*Archie and Jim on a rare cold day on Norfolk Island*

many of the things that Aussies relate to instantly – like *Grandma's Laundry*, here's a snippet:

*I remember Grandma's laundry  
With a basket made of cane  
And lines that stretched from wall to wall  
To hang things when it rained.*

*There used to be a copper  
Out where Grandma used to toil  
And a stick to lift the clothes out  
When the water reached the boil....*

*A saucer on the window sill  
With bags of Reckitt's Blue  
To make the white clothes whiter still  
And good for bee stings too.*

When Archie's friend, Michael (Boo) Prentice, heard his poems at the Norfolk Island's annual Trans Tasman Country Music Awards fourteen years ago, he suggested that they should do something with the poems, so that they could be shared with the many tourists who come to sample the serenity and magic of Norfolk Island.

Together Boo and Archie created "Wonderland by Night" where Archie takes visitors on a night walk through the Norfolk Island native bush. Each poem that Archie recites along the way is illustrated by a diorama in the trees, beautifully lit with coloured lights.

*The Old Tin Shed* is where Archie's magical tour ends, with a cup of tea and cake:

*In our back yard is an old tin shed  
When I've mowed the lawn and the  
chooks are fed,  
I can't disappear but it must be said  
I can hide away in the old tin shed.*

*Out in the shed where I like to be  
There are wonderful things for all to see  
Some say it's junk but it's treasure to me  
Out there in the old tin shed....*

The poem goes on to describe the contents of the shed and ends ....  
*When I'm too old to jump and shout  
As long as I can still get about  
There's one place to find me and there's  
no doubt  
I'll be out in the old tin shed.*

As Norfolk Island has its own language, a mix of Eighteenth Century English and Tahitian, Archie also writes poems in the Norfolk language.

His poem "Ent Me" describing his imaginary son, the one the other three all call "Ent Me" or "Not Me", is well known on Norfolk Island. Sometimes Archie writes in both languages at once, as in his poem *Morla El Do ...* which means 'I'll do it tomorrow' in Norfolk:

*The lawn it needs mowing  
But the mower won't start.  
The garden's not growing,  
It's breaking my heart.  
This summer's been dry  
But what can I do?  
I should fix the mower  
But morla el do.*

*The man from the bank  
Has been trying to call  
But the phone has gone blank  
Since it fell off the wall.  
My account's in the red  
As he tries to get through.  
I'd call in today  
But morla el do....*

And so on!  
(to p. 12)

## DEFENDING BUSH POETRY

VP Read Bicton WA 05.01.11

I'm out on the veranda and I'm shedding tears of blood,  
and if I keep on reading there is sure to be a flood.  
For in this year's Bronze Swagman, at the front, I'm stunned to see  
some odes about computers and a fat girl's misery.  
The works I'm not deriding, but they're certainly not bush;  
the judges must be crazy that they never got the push.

The entries that aren't purely bush throw me into a rage.  
It's worse to see them placed upon the 'High Awarded' page.  
When poems far superior are placed at lower rank,  
it makes me feel disheartened and, quite honestly, it stank!  
In old days The Bronze Swagman was just what it should be now,  
BUSH POETRY its book suggests, but that rule's broken now.

I know there will be scornful grunts that I should thus complain,  
but as a dinky-di bush poet, this invasion causes pain.  
Our history is fading out; it's hardly taught today,  
and if we are not careful it will quickly fade away.  
I don't deny that I enjoyed the two odes that offend,  
but they are the beginning of a sad, disastrous trend.

I've had this conversation many times with poet friends,  
and some have said, to my despair, "Accept the common trends.  
You must accept that times have changed and no one cares a bit  
that our bush poems are fading out. And that's the end of it!"  
I wonder why not one complaint from poets far and wide,  
Why don't they stand and protest: "Put the general odes aside!"

I treasure my Bronze Swagman books. I read them front to end,  
and now that I am growing old each one's my dearest friend.  
I sit out here in summer sun and digest every word.  
I laugh, I cry and sometimes curse, for how my heart is stirred.  
I'm pleading now, with all my might, please poets take a stand,  
defend your art with all your might. BUSH POEMS your demand.

(from p.11)

Archie is very proud of his Norfolk heritage and shares his passion for the Norfolk Island language and culture with the children at the Norfolk Island Central School, teaching them the Island language and customs.

Archie and I struck up a friendship on my first visit to the island many years ago. I included quite a few of Archie's poems in the anthologies I did for ABC Books and Archie's tour is an essential part of the Bush Verse, History and Country Music trips made by myself and Noel Stallard in May each year.

Archie's books and CDs are available from many outlets on the island or online from 'Norfolk Direct'.

Archie is truly the Poet Laureate of beautiful Norfolk Island. Here, to finish this brief sketch about a very unique bush poet, are a few verses from his tribute to the Norfolk Pine and the re-forestation of his Island home:

Jim Haynes

*The settlers came from a distant shore  
With a strange new sound in a bygone time  
The voice of man with his crosscut saw  
As he took for his use the Norfolk pine.*

*And in anguish nature's hands were wrought,  
Be patient, friend, said Father Time.  
But man took all and he gave back nought  
Though it served man well did the Norfolk pine.*

*Then a new generation of man was born  
And he looked to the future beyond his time  
Then he planted the hills that before were shorn  
And he planted the valleys with Norfolk pine.*

*Thus he looked at the forest with different eyes,  
At the beauty there of a tree so fine  
As it speaks to the wind with a gentle sigh,  
A beautiful tree is the Norfolk pine.*

## The John O'Brien Bush Festival

Two big performance competitions  
**Thursday 15th. March 5.30pm**

**Competition and Bush Poetry**  
Poets to recite John O'Brien poetry  
**\$300.00 prize money offered plus a  
collection of Jack Thompson  
Poetry CD's and DVD**  
**Lake Talbot with camp fire  
includes Irish Stew and Damper**

**Friday 16th March 2012**

**Bush Poetry Competition  
hosted by Noel Stallard  
poets to recite 2 poems ---  
one serious, one comedic.**

Application forms are on our website  
[www.johnobrien.org.au](http://www.johnobrien.org.au)

If you need further info please let me know  
**Barbara Bryon**

**Visitor Information Centre  
1800 672 392**

**info@johnobrien.com.org.au**

## WOMBAT

POETS  
GATHERING

AT THE

## WOMBAT

HOTEL

## WOMBAT

NSW

**7pm SUNDAY  
26th FEBRUARY**

Contact: Ted Webber  
[juneted@yahoo.com](mailto:juneted@yahoo.com)  
Ph. 02 6382 7728

A chance encounter with:

## The Aussie Worker

© Carol Reffold 7.1.12

I play with words and images and sometimes I can't manage to stop from laughing right out loud - I find it such a challenge. I met him at our job centre, - where he filled in forms for money.

He told me his work story there - and he wasn't being funny!

He was working out at Berri - in the citrus factory there juicing up the oranges and other fruits quite rare. It was the citrus season - he thought it late November But such a lot was going on - he just couldn't remember.

His first job in that factory was stamping 'use by date' He was canned from that job - 'cos he couldn't concentrate! The next job which he worked at was at the local gym He wasn't 'fit for the job' - that's what they said of him.

Then he worked as a tailor in a swanky Melbourne Shop He wasn't quite cut out for it so they gave him the chop! It really didn't suit him, as a job it was 'sew sew' So he started at the State museum, dusting the things on show.

Then became a State Historian, and started getting fat Until he suddenly realised that no future was in that! Then he got a job at Myers, a big store in most towns as an elevator driver - with too many ups and downs!

He was out of work a while and was starting to panic when he got a job in Brisbane with a local mechanic. He was exchanging mufflers, but found it exhausted him. He then went to the local pool to teach kids how to swim!

He did all their Pool Maintenance work - filtering and straining, He couldn't keep up with it - the work was just too draining! He was a Professional Fisherman, his boat called "Nelson's Drum" After a year or so he discovered that there was no net income.

He worked for "Exclusive Coffees", - (it was an easy job to find) but he found it tiresome, tedious, and "quite the same old grind!" He tried a stint as a train driver, on a train called "Swedish Arrow"

He worked at that for many years but loathed the straight and narrow

The best dollars which he ever earned - and this really made me freak was with the local funeral bloke, at "a thousand bucks a week". But he got fired from that - and I think that was understated when he buried a bloke from Biggenden who should have been cremated!

He worked in the bush cutting sleepers, but then he couldn't hack it, so he got the axe from that job too. He just couldn't seem to crack it! He tried working in a Shoe Factory and I thought this was a hoot when he said to me, quite seriously, that they'd given him the boot!

In a factory out at Bacchus Marsh, processing milk and meat they started up a sub-branch - he couldn't take the heat! They had a bloke from France come out to start them making custard but any way he sliced it - he just couldn't cut the mustard!

He worked for a while in a gun shop, in a suburb near to Perth He thought he was in clover, the best job here on Earth, He met such different people, his network was enlarged, But it all came to a nasty end when he found himself discharged!

He worked on a spud farm at Trentham, but got sacked from there Then worked for a while at ASX\* - and found they didn't share! He thought he'd study to be a doctor, enrolled in doctor school But he didn't have much patience, and felt a silly fool.

The buzzer rang, t'was time to move, and as a parting shot, I said he should try for Canberra\* - with all the skills he'd got! He said he had, he'd tried it once, "Oh the babies which he'd kissed!" But when the re-election came he found he'd been dismissed!

ASX = Australian Stock Exchange  
Canberra = The Australian Parliament -

**American News** ST. GEORGE - Dixie State College hosted its first Dixie Forum: A Window on the World convocation of the 2012 spring semester with a special Monday event on Jan. 30, featuring a presentation by Australian Bush Poetry champion Carol Heuchan.

A native of Hunter Valley, New South Wales, Heuchan is recognized as one of the foremost writers and performers in Australia. She has won seven Australian Bush Laureate awards, including Performer of the Year accolades, and has produced three award-winning CDs and authored four top-selling books to date.

Heuchan's first book "Horseplay" led her to the world of Bush Poetry in 2003, following a career competing with her show horses and horse riding instruction.

Heuchan's visit is co-sponsored by the Center for Education, Business and the Arts.

JULY  
13TH, 14TH & 15TH, 2012

## 17<sup>TH</sup> BUNDY BUSH POETRY MUSTER

JULY  
13TH, 14TH & 15TH, 2012

Noel Stallard

Ray Essery

Jack Drake

Presentation of -  
Bush Lantern Award  
for Written Verse 2012  
Sunday, July 15th

Special guest poets

Across the Waves Sports Club  
1 Miller Street BUNDABERG

Cash Prizes & Trophies  
in all categories



Performance Competition  
Open (men and women separate categories)  
Intermediate, Novice, Juniors (U/8 & 8 yrs to U/16 yrs)  
One minute cup

Bush Lantern Award 2012 - Written Competition for Bush Verse  
Bush Lantern Award - Junior Category - Primary & Secondary Students  
CLOSING DATE: 25th MAY 2012

### FREE Poetry Workshop

In conjunction with the Bundy Bush Poetry Muster week-end Noel Stallard will conduct a children's story telling session on Tuesday July 10th in the Bundaberg Library and a FREE poetry workshop in the Council Training Rooms (behind the Library) on Thursday July 12th from 10am to noon. Bookings essential.

### All phone or e-mail enquiries:

Sandy Lees - 07 41514631  
leesjds1@yahoo.com.au  
Edna Harvey - 07 41597198  
edna\_harvey@hotmail.com  
Jayson Russell - 07 41550778  
blanata@bigpond.net.au

### Entry Forms

SSAE to  
Performance Poetry Coordinator or  
Bush Lantern Coordinator (whichever applicable)  
Bundaberg Poets Society Inc.  
PO Box 4281  
BUNDABERG SOUTH 4670  
Forms also available ABPA website  
[www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au)

## Australian Bush Poets Association Inc (ABPA) Annual General Meeting

for year ending 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011  
at St Edwards Hall, Hillvue Road, Tamworth, NSW.

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

Motion that proxy holders who were not financial 24 hours prior to AGM permitted to hold proxies if membership paid at AGM. Motion carried.

Meeting opened at 2:33 pm.

One minute silence observed in memory of deceased members and relatives.

Special Mention of Cas van Loon, Liz Ward.

Apologies: Carol Heuchan, Kym Eitel, Noel Stallard, Philip Rush, Frank Daniel, Peter Mace

Motion to accept apologies overlooked.

Attendance as per Attendance Book: ?? members.

Confirmation of minutes of year ended 2010 Annual General Meeting. Minutes confirmed, moved Greg North, seconded Des Kelly. Motion carried. Minutes signed by President.

President's Report received, moved

Heather Knight, seconded John Best. Carried.

Secretary's Report received, moved Neville Briggs, seconded Glenn Palmer. Carried.

Treasurer's Report received, moved Cay Ellem, seconded Gary Fogarty. Carried.

### OFFICER ELECTIONS:

Appointment of Returning Officer: Penny Broun.

President; Manfred Vijars - Nominated by Cay Ellem, Seconded by Barry Ellem

President; Frank Daniel - Nominated by Greg North

Elected: Manfred Vijars

Vice-President: Frank Daniel - Nominated by Greg North, seconded by Manfred Vijars

Elected Frank Daniel

Secretary: No nomination. Vacant.

Treasurer: Kym Eitel Nominated by Manfred Vijars, seconded by Cay Ellem, Elected.

Committee members: Cay Ellem, Nominated by Manfred Vijars, seconded by Barry Ellem

John Peel, nominated by Heather Knight, seconded by Sue Pearce

Murray Hartin, nominated by Ross Davidson, seconded by John Lloyd

### State Delegates appointed:

NSW Tom McIlveen by Brian Bell 2nd Glenn Palmer

Western Australia Irene Connor by Bill Gordon 2nd Manfred Vijars

Queensland Wally Finch by Manfred Vijars 2nd Barry Ellem

Victoria Jan Lewis

Tasmania Philip Rush

South Australia no longer operating  
Appointment of Editor: to be appointed by committee.

Appointment of Web Administrator: to be appointed by committee.

Election completed. President thanked Penny for acting as returning officer and thanked the outgoing committee.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

State Titles: Location: Date:

NSW: no nomination. South Australia: no longer operating. Victoria: Benalla - likely to be running a muster rather than championship. Queensland: Friends of the Theatre, Townsville (Lyn Tarring) June 2012

National Titles: Man From Snowy River Festival Corryong 29 March - 1 April 2012

Strategic Plan: Motion that a sub-committee of the ABPA be set up to de-

# YOUNG NATIONAL CHERRY FESTIVAL

The 10<sup>th</sup> annual Bush Poets competition was held on the first weekend in December at the Young Golf Club, with an enthusiastic and attentive audience. As in keeping with this competition, performances was up to the usual high standard. Poets came from all parts of the state and inter-state and also included three new poets, who were warmly welcomed.

Two new judges were added to Clive Edwards, who is in his third and final year and they were Anne Hodges, from Forbes and local tax consultant, Cliff Sheridan. They must have judged fairly and correctly as most agreed with their decisions.

Thanks must go to Dennis and Lynn, from the Lions Club, who did the ushering, Jim and Mary, for adding the scores together and Ted Webber for his very valued help during the year.

Co-sponsors for the evening were Gordon, Garling and Moffatt, Solicitors, Hamblin's Amcal Pharmacy, Mogga's

Marquees and South West Fuels.

Special mention must be made of Mary and John Wark of "Tyronne Orchards", who donated a box of cherries to the champion poet and also to the poets who did not win a prize.

The champion poet on the night was Max Jarrott, from Stanthorpe in Queensland. This is the second visit for Max. Runner-up was a new comer to this competition, but he has been around for some time. This was John Peel, who hails from Tumut. In third place was a regular here – Robyn Sykes, from Binalong.

As usual, a great night and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The Poets Breakfast on Sunday morning, in conjunction with the IGA Big Breakfast, was held at Anderson Park where the audience mainly consisted of bus tour people from all parts of the State. Most of the competition poets performed again plus a Junior Poet's



Cherry Queen Edwina Caldwell, Alex Allet, Gary Lowe, John Davis and Des Kelly at the Young National Cherry Festival

Competition. The standard of these performers was excellent and thoroughly enjoyed. The winner was Nic Duff, while the runner-up was Jackson Sievers. Special congratulations to these juniors.

The sponsors of this event were The Pit Stop Barber Shop and Poets in the Wombat Pub and special thanks to both.

A very successful weekend for the bush poets, with a big thank you to all those poets who made the effort to attend.

Many thanks, Greg Broderick.

velop a five year Strategic Management Plan for the ABPA. The Plan is to analyse our current situation, define our objectives, formulate and implement our strategy, and then measure and evaluate our progress.

The completed plan to be presented at the 2013 AGM of the ABPA.

Moved by Manfred Vijars. Seconded by Gary Fogarty. Carried.

Strategic plan would be a major boost to the organisation. All stakeholders should have input. Many drafts before the final version are recommended.

Maggi Swain Daley happy to be part of sub-committee for strategic plan.

**Copyright protection and Guidelines for artists:** Murray Hartin: Professional poets not represented by APRA. No copyright protection over material. No royalties for poetry. Performers using other people's poems without any reward to the author and those performers being paid.

ABPA control over booked artists at festivals and events.

Author being undercut by performers using that author's work.

Professionalism guidelines for perform-

ing artists at festivals and performances.

**Wider marketing of ABPA magazine:** Cay Ellem: ABPA magazine in newsagents, especially in western Queensland. Country Web magazine an example of a successful magazine. Extending distribution of magazine is something that is likely to attract funding.

Magazine may need to be made more interesting to general public.

State in which organisation is registered may influence where funding can be sought.

**Falling membership:** Murray Hartin: Competition rules may be too pedantic now, not encouraging to talented novice performers. Should be based on entertainment. Put on a show with good quality poets at a festival and encourage novices through competition.

**Avenue for Amateurs:** Bert Pullen: walk-up opportunities at Tamworth. Fliers to be made available sooner.

**Patron:** Tony Windsor. Some discussion about his input and suitability. No motion.

**ABPA should be running an event:** John Norman: rather than ABLA. Tamworth town hall would be a good site for

an event. Capitol theatre another possibility. A show could be feasible at several venues in Tamworth.

It was suggested that the ABPA book a venue for a 2013 show. Gary Fogarty suggested putting it back a year to 2014 to allow more preparation and strategic plan formulation.

Publicity – follow up recent media issues with a view to getting coverage on a current affairs TV program.

**Sponsorship:** Col Driscoll – is it being sought? ABPA committee to further investigate.

**Poetry Recognition:** Murray Hartin: Poets pull big audiences at festivals and none of them recognise poetry. For example, in the Gympie Muster 30 year album and Tamworth Golden Guitars ceremony. It was suggested that the lack of the commercialisation of poetry prevented it from having a higher profile.

**Congratulations Ellis Campbell:** ABPA to write to Ellis Campbell congratulating him on Judith Hosier Award. Moved Jan Morris, seconded Duncan Williams. Carried.

**Meeting closed** at 4:33 pm.

**Late addition to February issue:**

**The Boyup Brook 2012**

Written Bush Poetry Competition in conjunction with its Country Music Festival of 16-19th February will be open to Original Australian verse having good rhyme and metre. There are no subject restrictions and poetry that has not won a first prize in any competition will be accepted.

Entrants should send two copies of each poem, limited to forty lines, with a maximum of three poems per writer.

As per usual cover sheets are necessary and closing date is 10th February 2012.

Entry is \$5.00 per poem.

There will again be two sections: Open, and Emerging Poets (who have not won a writers competition.) There will be \$5.00 entry fee, and \$100 prize money for each section.

Irene Conner has offered to co-ordinate this competition. Please send entries to her at

P O Box 584, Jurien Bay WA 6156 or [iconner21@wn.com.au](mailto:iconner21@wn.com.au)

# Australian Written Championships

## JUDGES COMMENTS

**The 2011 Australian Written Championships were conducted by the Hunter Bush Poets.**

Two qualified judges selected their best twelve poems in each of the serious and humorous categories. The entries were then given a Rank Order score and individual placings were calculated by this rank order (much fairer than actual marks)

From over two hundred entries, the judges, totally independently, selected very close to the same final twelve. When the final rank order markings were used to place the entries it was discovered that the judges had exactly the same top six placings.

All entrants who enclosed an SSAE, indicating a critique was requested, were individually critiqued and returned. Consequently a single 'Judge's Report' was not in order.

Unofficially though, Milton and I later discussed the entries and, with the winning Humorous poem, were impressed by the technical strength of the poem, the language usage, the 'degree of difficulty' and the humour. With the winning serious poem, the overall Champion, it was the poignancy, the simplicity but power of the impact of the story and the correctness of the writing and also the 'haunting echo' of the way it was written that impressed us both.

We also feel that the standard of writing of the top poets these days is very high and it is necessary to take into account so many things that many people neglect. There were some good

stories that were badly written, with irregular metre being prevalent. Often there were rhymes that were unacceptable, poor grammar, spelling errors, inverted language, forced rhymes, childish expressions and a great many with poor or no punctuation at all, making the meaning difficult to follow.

There were also poems that were technically correct but were very basic to say the least. Then there were also some that 'ticked the boxes' but did not hold one's interest at all or, in the case of the humorous, were not really very funny.

Subjective judging will always be controversial but I have said this on a number of occasions - If a writer is regularly placing in competitions, they are probably 'doing it right' and it is just a matter of 'connecting'. For example, a poem may only place sixth in one competition and then may win the very next one.

You will notice that it is generally the same people who win or place a lot of the time. That is because they are GOOD WRITERS and it is just a matter of the particular poem that touches a chord with a particular person.

Critiqued comps are a great way to help upcoming writers - and to make judges answerable!

Competition results page 20.

Carol Heuchan,  
456 Freemans Drive,  
Cooranbong. NSW 2265  
02 49 773210  
[www.carolpoet.com.au](http://www.carolpoet.com.au)

Hi everybody,  
Bill Williams here telling you I have two CD's for sale.  
One, 'Relaxing Aussie Tales'' has a mixture of sixteen numbers told by nine different ABPA members. . .

**Bill Williams, Glenny Palmer, Maureen Clifford, Frank Daniel, Hully, Neville Briggs, Dave Smith, Neil MacArthur and Bob Pacey**

The other CD 'Ideas' is all told and written by Bill Williams.

Either CD's is \$15.00 ea of which \$5.00 will be donated to the ABPA.

**Send order with payment to  
The editor,  
Frank Daniel  
PO Box 16  
CANOWINDRA NSW 2804**

Pictured (r) at the Parkes Elvis Festival  
Melanie Hall - Warren Tanner - Kathy  
Edwards - Frank Daniel - Susie Carcary.





## The Story of Joshua Hurley

by BJ Stirling Winning Humorous Poem Australian Written Championships

This is the story of Joshua Hurley,  
Whose nasal hair flourished; grew long, lush and curly.  
In Winter he used it to keep his ears warm,  
In Summer, protection from insects that swarm.  
Heavy breathing, though, frequently caused it to tangle;  
During climactic moments he'd bloody near strangle.

Now Joshua's girlfriend, a lady called Shirley  
Desired of all things to be Mrs Hurley,  
But had reservations. She could not dispute  
That wedding a man cursed with nostrils hirsute  
Might create social problems. Observers, perhaps,  
Seeing soup strained through curls, might have gastric mis-  
haps.

Though Shirley was not what you might call devout,  
Hardly knew what the Bible was written about,  
When approached by two strangers proclaiming good news,  
Soon changed her perspective and doctrinal views,  
Her life was transmogrified, and, nothing loth,  
She took to The Book; studied testaments both.

It seemed to her, Eve had been foolish to dress  
With only one bloke being there to impress,  
And that Noah was wrong to preserve certain vermin.  
"Why spiders?" she wondered, but could not determine -  
Moreover, thought Joseph a prude to rebuff  
Mrs Potiphar's yearning to sample 'the rough'.

But the Philistine coiffeuse whose fame rather rides,  
On the time she gave Samson a short back and sides,  
Shirley thought was undoubtedly on the right track,  
And decided that she, too, would give it a whack.  
Bought a sharp pair of scissors, a bottle of booze,  
To tranquilize Joshua; help him to snooze.

No longer nasally challenged, he woke,  
Took a look in the mirror, was silent,  
then spoke,  
Snarling: "Shirley, you sneaky and  
underhand bitch,  
Our wedding is off! Your plan's  
struck a glitch!  
I've been offered a fortune to grow it  
floor length.  
Now look at it! Bugger! Oh, Gawd  
give me strength!



Now, these very words, with a nod to translation  
Were spoken by Samson, were his invocation  
On finding his tresses were brutally sheared,  
His elbow length mane; his incredible beard.  
But God, Who gave Samson the strength to avenge  
Would hardly have sanctioned young Hurley's revenge!

Severed ringlets now tightened around poor Shirly's throat,  
While he strangled her slowly, then went on to gloat  
As he used her own scissors to cut her to bits,  
And finally, sated, gasped: "Now we are quits!"  
He then left Australia with great expedition  
To seek pastures greener with no extradition.

He lives in Brazil, has a wife and six kids,  
Has written his memoirs, had publishing bids,  
But because of his history, thinks it is wise,  
To adapt his appearance, assume a disguise,  
So he's let both his eyebrows grow down past his thighs,  
To cover contingencies when they arise.

### BUSH POETRY BOOKS by AWARD WINNING AUTHOR

'BUSH POETRY Laughter, Love & Limericks \$12.00 pp. AN ANGEL ON MY SHOULDER \$12.00 pp  
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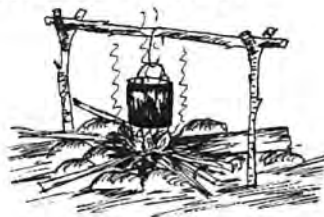
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Deadline for copy - 20th of month preceding the month of issue.

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

## THE BLACKENED BILLY VERSE



### COMPETITION 2012 Judge's Comments

It was my great pleasure to adjudicate on 217 entries for the Blackened Billy awards for 2012. While this number is down on other years, the standard of entries was again very high.

It seems that creativity, humor, passion and sensitivity remain alive and well in Bush Poetry, and continue to be exemplified in the work of many writers. I have been fortunate to digest and appreciate these great skills from year to year.

This year's entries brought about another difficult task in arriving at final decisions on the place getters. I can fully empathize with other adjudicators throughout the Country in the many bush poetry competitions. It is not an easy task.

There were approximately 60 entries that were considered to be of high standard, and to arrive at the final 13 places was not easy. I found that eliminating many entries was a rather emotional decision. And I would only say to writers everywhere, to keep submitting this high standard to the various Bush Poetry competitions.

Many thanks again to the committee of the Blackened Billy organisation, headed by Jan Morris, for another well organised competition.

#### FIRST PLACE: A FATHER'S PRAYER by DAVID CAMPBELL, Beaumaris, Vic

My immediate reaction on reading this entry was one of great pleasure. From the opening lines through the first stanza, I couldn't wait to read more. This is a structured, sensitive and beautifully crafted piece of writing. As the title suggests it is a prayer for hope and expectancy, for the good things in life for his daughter, just prior to her birth.

I am impressed by the usage of single linking nouns and verbs in each stanza to provide balance and stress sound in the creation of the father's prayer. This en-

try needs to be read in the manner in which it was written, with a strong degree of sensitivity and feeling.

Congratulations. A worthy winner of the Blackened Billy for 2012.

#### SECOND PLACE: THE FIRST DATE by VAL WALLACE, Glendale NSW

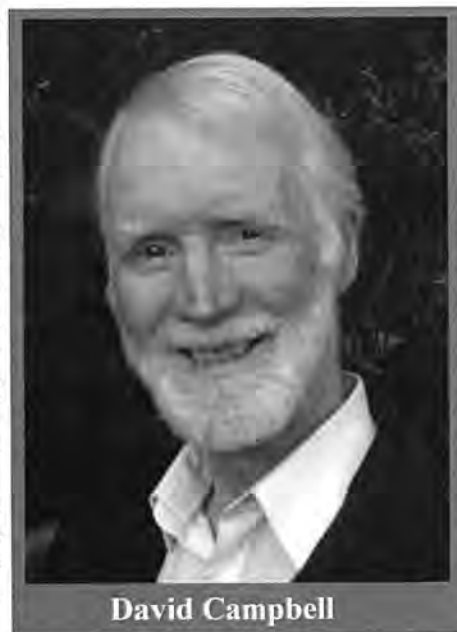
I have not been an advocate for writer's attempts to try and emulate the great poets. However, in this entry written in C.J. Dennis style, I was suitably impressed by this ballad and the memories of old time dancing and courtship thrills of yesteryear. The writer has captured the scenes with great ability and flair. While not quite up to C.J.'s standard, the narrative does flow with good pace and meter. The descriptive and colourful moments are extremely entertaining throughout. Congratulations.

#### THIRD PLACE: WOULD YOU SAY HELLO TO DAD by TERRY PIGGOTT, Canning Vale, WA.

Apart from the sensitivity of this ballad, I was impressed by the balanced pace and rhythm through to the conclusion. This is a story which relates to the bond between two mates, one of whom has suffered a stroke and is in the care of his daughter. The simple, but memorable prose to describe the daughter's cry for help for her father is quite moving. I was engrossed right from the excellent first stanza to the conclusion. Congratulations on the very fine entry.

Balance of results p. 20

Keith Jones  
Adjudicator



David Campbell

# A FATHER'S PRAYER

by David Campbell

I would wish the blue of morning,  
dawning,  
for the colour of your eyes,  
and bright sunlight on the water,  
daughter,  
for a smile to mesmerise  
the darkest soul that you might find  
through all those childhood days  
that time can grant a youthful mind  
in happy, carefree ways.

I would wish the fire of learning,  
burning  
in a passion to succeed,  
and the joy that comes with living,  
giving  
of yourself in word and deed,  
no matter what the future seems,  
so you can still achieve  
the best of all your hopes and dreams,  
the courage to believe.

I would wish the thrill of riding,  
guiding  
a new pony through the glade,  
and the toll of ringers shearing,  
clearing  
out the fleece that leaves the blade  
like snow upon the highest peak  
above the valley where  
we'll go out camping by the creek,  
and do some fishing there.

I would wish the art of feeling,  
healing,  
that your mother knows so well,  
and a love that lasts forever,  
never  
hesitating once to dwell  
on anything that might have been  
if she had not met me ...  
a nature that's so calm, serene,  
and yet so wild and free.

I would wish the turn of seasons,  
reasons  
for accommodating change,  
and adapting to new thinking,  
linking  
fresh ideas across a range  
of challenges that you will face  
as progress marches on  
at mankind's unrelenting pace,  
for my ways will have gone.

I would wish a kindness forming,  
warming  
anyone who might come near,  
so that they can gain some pleasure,  
treasure  
all the things that you hold dear  
in laying out a path through life,  
exemplars that proclaim,  
as daughter, lover, mother, wife,  
you've honoured our good name.

I would wish you understanding,  
handing  
down the wisdom I have learned.  
that the truth can't be forsaken,  
taken  
very lightly ... trust is earned,  
and honesty will bring respect  
in all you do and say,  
while pride, if left to roam unchecked,  
will just lead you astray.

And I wish these things while holding,  
folding  
your sweet mother's hand in mine,  
with the midwife standing ready,  
steady,  
as she watches for the sign  
that you will soon be with us here  
to see this wondrous dawn ...  
a daughter cherished and held dear,  
this day that you were born.

## Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival

In Australia's Most Beautiful Valley  
**19-21 Oct 2012**

**Performer Applications Open**

If you are a performer, or know someone who is,  
spread that word that performer applications for  
KVFF 2012 are now open, closing on 31 March.

Download performer guidelines and application form here.  
<http://www.kangaroovalleyfolkfestival.com.au/page12.htm>

**Follow KVFF on Facebook**

## Don't forget . . . Act Now!

**Boyup Brook p.16.**

**The Australian Championships Corryong**

**[www.bushfestival.com.au](http://www.bushfestival.com.au)**

**Nandewar Written Comp p.20**

**Graham Fredriksen Written Comp**

**[ellesmith7@yahoo.com.au](mailto:ellesmith7@yahoo.com.au)**

**Dunedoo Festival p. 5**

**John O'Brien Festival [info@johnobrien.com.au](mailto:info@johnobrien.com.au)**

**Buderim Bush Poets Concert**

**[www.buderimrotary.com](http://www.buderimrotary.com)**

**WOMBAT 26th February p. 12**

## COMPETITION RESULTS



### 2011 ABPA Bush Poetry

#### Written Championships

**Humorous:** 1st. The Story of

Joshua Hurley - B J Stirling

2nd Aark Raven Mad.

Glenny palmer

3rd Our New Man.

Donald Crane

4th. Gone Metric

Max Merckenschlanger

5th. Me an' Betty Windsor

**Serious:** 1st. The Ghost

Child

Kym Eitel

2nd The Last Post

Heather Knight

3rd The Dungeon on the Hill

Tom McIlveen

4th Across North Queensland

Plains Brenda Joy

Review, Preview 2010, 2011

### 2011 BLACKENED BILLY

1st. David Campbell

*A Fathers Prayer*

2nd Val Wallace

*The First Date*

3rd Terry Piggot

*Would you say Hello to Dad*

#### Highly Commended

Milton Tqylor Ginger Tom

Brenda Joy

The Colour in my Blood

Terry Piggot

A Changing of the Guard

David Campbell

A Stranger Walks Alone

Max Merckenschlager

Henry's Reply

David Campbell Guilt

Trisha Patterson

The Gravesite by the Creek

David Campbell Home

Mal Beveridge

On Three Moon Creek -

Cania Gorge

Nevill Briggs

A Summer Storm



Ron Stevens

### Overall Australian Champion

#### Answers to page 7.

1. Noel Stallard
2. Dame Mary Gilmore
3. True -  
born Kelso, Scotland
4. Pincher
5. Henry Lawson
6. True - 1939
7. The Bulletin
8. Acrostic
9. True -  
University of Sydney
10. C.J. Dennis (Songs of a  
Sentimental Bloke)

Kym Eitel - The Ghost Child  
20 ABPA Magazine - February - March 2012

Welcome to *Narrabri* Shire.  
HEART OF THE NORTHWEST

# 10th ANNUAL

## NANDEWAR POETRY COMPETITION

## WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION

CONDUCTED BY

### NARRABRI & DISTRICT



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FIRST PRIZE \$150.00. PLUS TROPHY

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THIRD PRIZE \$50.00

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or

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P.O. Box 55

NARRABRI 2390

Entries to be returned to above address.



Heart of the North West

## DUBBO POETS

TWO poets with strong connections to Dubbo have captivated the imagination of judges at the 2012 Australian Bush Laureate Awards in Tamworth.

The bush poetry awards, established in 1997 to recognise excellence in published and recorded Australian bush poetry, were held on January 24.

Dubbo resident Ellis Campbell added the Judith Hosier Heritage Award to his swag of almost 500 poetry accolades, while Dubbo-born Max Merckenschlager's work *Musquito - The Black Bushranger* was crowned Published Poem of the Year.

Unfortunately Mr Campbell couldn't make the awards ceremony due to an illness, which he is currently recovering from in hospital.

Maureen Campbell said it was the first poetry awards ceremony her husband had ever missed.

Despite this Mr Campbell was still very excited to be honoured with the award even though he couldn't be at the ceremony, Mrs Campbell said.

"He was thrilled about it," she said.

The Judith Hosier Heritage Award is given to poets for outstanding achievement in nurturing Australia's heritage of verse. Mr Merckenschlager, who began his life in Dubbo but now resides in South Australia, previously won a 2009 Rolf Boldrewood Literary Award run by the Macquarie Library before taking home the 2012 Tamworth prize.

"The bush laureate awards are decided by a team of qualified adjudicators, so it felt great to be chosen above some well-known and successful writers from the bush poetry scene," he said.

His successful poem *Musquito - The Black Bushranger* is inspired by the life of an Aboriginal outlaw sentenced to death by hanging.

"In my poem, I've tried to remain faithful to his story as I researched it," Mr Merckenschlager.

The poem explores the scenario of *Musquito* talking to his jailer before he is hanged.

Mr Merckenschlager said he tried to "tell the story to my reader in a frank and intimate way, as if we were all there in *Musquito's* cell".

"I can imagine that *Musquito* may have wanted to unload to someone, as he waited for the new dawn and the hangman's rope," he said.

### 2011 Overall Australian Champion Written Poem

## Ghost Child

by Kym Eitel

*The two year old daughter of a local farming family, drowned in the creek near their house. The parents say they can still hear her playing in their bedroom each night ...*

As they're laying in the darkness, trapped by trials and curse of life,  
there's a broken-hearted husband and his broken-hearted wife.  
Are they sleeping? Are they dreaming of their little one passed on?  
Cold, wet teardrops on their pillows prove the aching hasn't gone.

So they listen to the darkness for they feel their child is near -  
creeping, creeping as they're sleeping. Yes, there's sadness, but no fear.  
They hear little footsteps patter, and they hear her gentle breath,  
never aging, never aging, youth preserved in tender death.

Oh, the mother's heart is shredded and she longs to stroke blonde hair  
but she knows it's just a ghost child, just the empty warm night air.  
Yes, for many nights before this, she has scrambled out of bed  
feeling certain that the noises weren't just memories in her head.

As she flicks the light and searches, calling, crying; heart lays bare,  
all her expectations shattered, for her daughter isn't there.  
So they sadly lay and listen to the one they'll never hold,  
to their ghost child softly playing in their room, with hair of gold.

Amy's curly locks are sunlit, laughing eyes of summer blue,  
smiling cheeks are soft and chubby with a glow of rose-pink hue.  
Such a perfect little cherub in the photos on the wall -  
she is smiling, giggling, laughing, but for parents, teardrops fall.

They hear scuffling, shuffling, muffling as she plays with toys and sings.  
They hear clinking on the duchess as she tries on Mummy's rings.  
And the cat is watching, watching, with its knowing feline stare  
and it's purring, blinking, purring. Unseen fingers stroke its hair.

Then the angel girl is sleepy, hear her softly, softly yawn,  
then they feel the blankets lifting as she slips in bed at dawn.  
So for now, the family's whole again - with mum and dad, she lays.  
Feeling peace at last, they fall asleep, to dream of better days.

Was it just imagination or a desperate, desperate dream?  
Did they feel her red-lipped kisses by the wisp of moon's bright beam?  
But the morning light brings tears of joy to sail a thousand ships,  
for their cheeks wear lipstick kisses from their angel girl's sweet lips.

Mr Merckenschlager hoped that as his poem becomes more known it will help with the reconciliation process between in Australia.

"We can't change our past, but accepting what happened and (again) "getting inside the shoes or skin" of those aggrieved does help us all to come closer together as members of a united nation," he said.



Max Merckenschlager



Ellis Campbell

# Australian Bush Laureate Awards



The winners in the 2012 Australian Bush Laureate Awards were announced in Tamworth on January 24th at the famous Tamworth Town Hall.

The **Book of the Year** went to Noel Stallard for his work Aussie Verse, his sixth book which is billed as one 'to make you laugh, cry and think' featuring 'genuine Aussie characters - the original Australians, the pioneers, the soldiers, the harassed school teachers and their irrepressible students.



**Album of the Year** was won by Grahame Watt for his release, 'G'day'. Although Grahame has published three books, G'day is his first foray into recording, a successful debut at that!

**Published Poem of the Year** went to Musquito - The Black Bushranger by Max Merckenschlager as published in the book Captured Moments. The poem had previously won a Rolf Boldrewood Literary Award, an awards scheme run by The Macquarie Library which aims to foster the writing of prose and poetry with an Australian content.

## Single Recorded Performance of the Year

went to First Date by Bob Magor from his album The Best Of Sumo Mick, a selection of poems taken from his book Sumo Mick... And Other Verses.

**Children's Poem of the Year** was presented to Bessie Jennings for her work Aussie A-B-C, a delightful work that takes up an entire book, with illustrations by her sister Patricia Gardner, aimed at helping children learn their "A-B-Cs" from a distinctly Australian perspective.

**The winner of the Judith Hosier Heritage Award** - for outstanding achievement in nurturing Australia's heritage of verse - was named as Ellis Campbell for his long association with bush poetry as a poet, poetry performer, judge and as one who works tirelessly to help and encourage new poets beginning to write.

Two retrospective awards that had previously been overlooked were also announced ... the 2009 award for Album of the Year - Original Verse which went to Ray Essery for Coming Home and a 2010 award for of the Year - Original Verse won by Carol Heuchan with I Say.

This 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.

*Photo (from left): Award presenter Manfred Vijars, Bessie Jennings and her sister Patricia (who illustrated her winning work) and Bush Laureate Awards Patron Joy McKean. "Watty" over on the left, Bob Magor (r) and Noel Stallard.*



## Concert

starring

## Mel and Susie

with special guest

## John Best

Kenilworth Hall (show ground)  
Elizabeth St Kenilworth

# Saturday 21 April

BBQ from 5 pm, show 7.30

Tickets from Vanessa on 07 5472 3057  
Profit from this event will go to the  
Rio Tinto Ride to Conquer Cancer

# Bendethera

by Neta Davis

“Bendethera far away in a valley,  
where the cool waters flow.  
Bendethera you have a charm and a loneliness all your own,  
Your great mountains,  
your murmuring waters for-ever flowing,  
your birds forever flying,  
and your wealth forever lying in soils untouched,  
Through nature who shaped you long ago.

“Bendethera you stir a fascination,  
Mingled with loneliness,  
To fashion a heart of steel,  
Or paint the courage with gold.  
Bendethera far away amongst those rugged mountains,  
Where the breezes,  
Play upon the Sunbeams in the fading day,  
The blue wattle –the aroma everlasting.

“Where tales are told true & just,  
From the diary long lost,  
Of corn and pigs and of cattle that grow wild,  
And of horses staunch and brave,  
They could head the wildest steer.

“Hardships and sorrows marked by the lone grave,  
And I fancy there cometh a whisper,  
From a loved one in his youth long passed,  
The caves splendour nestled in the mountain side,  
Their beauty little known,  
Their secrets belonging to the earth.

“Bendethera in the calm and solitude of night,  
Where the moon sends long shafts of light,  
Stealing down the mountain spurs,  
And the waters sparkle like diamonds,  
In a new world of peace.

“other days and other deeds,  
May fade amongst the forgotten things,  
Bendethera time could never take away,  
The memory of the folk who pioneered you,  
In the silence where no roads go by.

Bendethera calling you to me,  
Plant me again with corn and trees,  
For new hands to tend,  
And hearts to enjoy,  
Of my wealth I could give to you,  
Who can come to stay.

Written by the late Neta Davis of Woolla  
on the Deua River.

**BENDETHRA VALLEY** is in the Deua National Park, approximately 320km southwest of Sydney and 100km southeast of Canberra.

Neta Davis was born and raised in this rugged environment, was schooled by her mother, and at one stage in her life had not been to town (Braidwood) in over thirteen years until forced to do so because of an accident.

The story of Neta Davis was featured in <http://simplyaustralia.net/article-cw-neta.html> by Chris Woodland .

Below: Neta in her slab dwelling at ‘Woola’ on the Deua River.



## THE HOUSE OF JOHN O'BRIEN

Its spirit defies its vacant look-  
Though the priest has long since  
gone  
But from here and throughout the  
land  
His poetry still lives on  
For those who love this nations  
verse  
Its more than just a shrine  
A true poetic monument  
The House of John O'Brien

Its past has been protected  
As you view its rooms you'll see  
A trip down through the decades  
Of how the church used to be  
And a fiendish sense of humour  
Has survived from distant years  
For Gog and Magog protect its shed  
From priests who can't shift gears

The house served as a shelter  
For those from across the foam  
Who sat at his desk in wonder  
And wrote their letters home  
New settlers and the homeless  
If you ask around you'll find  
For many years this place has been  
A haven for all mankind

It saw its flock turn up for mass  
Dressed in Sunday best  
And watched as they were all bap-  
tised  
And later laid to rest  
For with all our modern gadgets  
There's one thing I'd like to know  
If we are better off than they were

From that time so long ago  
Now I have heard some rumours  
And it goes beyond the pale  
That people have suggested  
The place be put on sale

So I will say a fervent prayer  
Should it ever face such doom  
That Monsignor Hartigans ghost  
returns  
And haunts every bloody room

TOMAS HAMILTON



Convenor Greg Broderick, Cherry Queen, Edwina Caldwell, Champion poet Max Jarrett at the Young Cherry Festival.



Sue Pearce of Tumut, NSW, Heather Knight, Broadford V., Glenn Palmer, Kooralbyn Q. and John Peel, Batlow NSW

THE MAN FROM  
  
 SNOWY RIVER  
 BUSH FESTIVAL

**AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Entries close 18th February and entry forms are on three websites - ABPA, VBPM and MFSR or contact Jan Lewis [www.bushfestival.com.au](http://www.bushfestival.com.au)



Winners and Highly Commendeds in the 2012 Blackened Billy Verse Competition.

From left: Neville Briggs, NSW (HC), Terry Piggott, WA (3rd & HC), Val Wallace, NSW (2nd), Jan Morris (Organiser), Trisha Patterson, NSW (HC), Keith Jones (Judge).

Seated: David Campbell, Vic (Winner of the Blackened Billy plus 3 Highly Commended certificates)

Entries for the Blackened Billy Verse Competition come from all over Australia and even from overseas. So, when the winners are announced, it is usually difficult to get all of them to actually attend the presentation. However, this year, almost all the winners were able to attend, which made for a very exciting presentation ceremony. The winner, David Campbell from Beaumaris, Vic, has won the Blackened Billy twice before, but this is the first time he has felt able to make the journey. So it was a very special meeting for the organiser, Jan Morris and the judge, Keith Jones to finally meet the man regarded as one of the best modern bush poets in Australia. David won with a poem entitled "A Father's Prayer", described by Keith Jones as a beautifully crafted piece of writing.

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