

A.B.P.A.

Australian Bush Poets Association

Volume 22 No. 2

April/May 2016





21st BUNDY BUSH POETRY MUSTER 2016
July 1st - 2nd - 3rd
Across the Waves Sports Club, 1 Miller Street, Bundaberg.



Jack Drake

Special Guest Poets

Noel Stallard

Glenny Palmer

Cash prizes and trophies in each category.

Presentation of the Bush Lantern Award for Bush Verse 2016 Sunday, July 3rd.

Performance Competition

Open (men & women separate categories)
 Intermediate, Novice, Juniors (U/7 yrs, 7 yrs to 12 yrs & 13 yrs to 17 yrs)
 Duo Performances, Yarn Spinning & One Minute Cup

CONCERT TICKETS
 Saturday Night \$15-00 pp
 Prior purchase advisable



Bush Lantern Award 2016 Written Competition for Bush Verse

ALSO

Bush Lantern Award – Junior Category - Primary & Secondary School Students

Closing date: May 20th, 2016

FREE Poetry Workshop

Jack Drake will be conducting a **FREE** poetry workshop in the Sails Function at Across the Waves Sports Club on Thursday, June 30th from 10.30 a.m. until 12.30 p.m.

All phone or email enquiries:-

Sandy Lees – 07 41514631 or leesjds1@yahoo.com.au
 Edna Harvey – 0 428574651 or edna_harvey@hotmail.com
 Jayson Russell – 07 41550778 or bianata@bigpond.net.au

Entry forms also available from Bush Poets website - www.abpa.org.au

Entry Forms

SSAE to :-
 Performance Poetry Co-ordinator or Bush Lantern Co-ordinator (whichever applicable)
 Bundaberg Poets' Society Inc.
 PO Box 4281
 BUNDABERG SOUTH. 4670



THE 14TH ANNUAL

NANDEWAR POETRY COMPETITION

CONDUCTED BY
 NARRABRI & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
 SPONSORED BY
 NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL



FIRST PRIZE: \$150 AND TROPHY
SECOND PRIZE: \$100
THIRD PRIZE: \$50

ENTRY FORM

Available from:
 Narrabri Shire Visitor Information Centre
 Phone : 6799 6760
 Or
 Narrabri & District Historical Society Inc.
 P. O. Box 55
 Narrabri 2390
 Entry forms to be returned to:
 The above address

RATHDOWNNEY 2016

2016's Rathdowney Heritage and Country Market Bush Poetry Competition on Sunday May 1 will have an event to suit everyone, even those poets who can't come to Rathdowney!

For full explanation of events and prize money please download entry form from the ABPA website or email: geraldineking@virginbroadband.com.au or ring Gerry King on 0755478342.

Events this year include:

A Children's, A Novice, an Open Original, and an Open Established event, as well as:
 The '**RATHDOWNNEY IDLE**' A COMEDY EVENT THAT CAN BE A POEM OR SONG and IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ORIGINAL!

For poets that can't come on the day there is two events "**THE Poet on FILM**" competition and **THE POETRY AND MULTIMEDIA** competition. So get your camera out and get filming.

Walk-ups start at 8.30 am, in the grounds of the Rathdowney Information Centre and Museum, Mt Lindsay Highway Rathdowney. See you there!

EDITORIAL

Notification of Membership Subs increases For 2017.

Due to the rising costs in all areas of compiling, publishing and posting the Magazine, the following has been decided upon at the recent ABPA Committee Meeting:



NOTICE TO MEMBERS

After extensive discussion following recommendations from the 2016 AGM, the ABPA Committee has approved the following increases in Membership Fees and Conditions. These will come into effect on the 31st of December 2016 for the 2017 Membership Year.

1. The ABPA Annual Single Membership Fee will be \$45 per year entitling the member to a **hard/paper copy** of the ABPA Magazine. OR
2. The ABPA Annual Single Membership Fee will be \$35 per year entitling the member to the ABPA Magazine in **electronic format** only.
3. The ABPA Annual Dual Membership Fee will be \$15 per year. (Note: This means that a couple with a hard/paper copy would pay \$60 per year and a couple receiving an electronic copy would pay \$50 per year. Only one copy of the ABPA Magazine is issued per couple.)
4. The Junior (Under 18) ABPA Annual Membership Fee will remain at \$20 per year entitling the member to an electronic copy only of the APBA Magazine. (Note: Discretionary judgement may be made about a hard copy being provided for juniors members in remote areas without internet access. Requests to be made via the ABPA Treasurer.)

Happy writing and performing to all and safe travels!
Neil McArthur editor@abpa.org.au

NOTE:- Next Magazine Deadline for submissions is May 25th

ABPA Committee Members 2014

Executive:

President	-- Tom McIlveen	president@abpa.org.au
Vice-President	-- Hal Pritchard	halenda@live.com.au
Secretary	-- Rhonda Tallnash	secretary@abpa.org.au
Treasurer	-- Shelley Hansen	treasurer@abpa.org.au

Members on Committee:

...John Peel	peel_jg@hotmail.com
...Robyn Sykes	robinsykespoet@gmail.com
...Carol Reffold	patchworkpoet@hotmail.com

ABPA State Delegates:

NSW	-- Rob Christmas	r_e_christmas@yahoo.com
Queensland	-- Cay Ellem	cayandbarry@gmail.com
South Australia	-- Bob Magor	bobmagor@chariot.net.au
Tasmania	-- Phillip Rush	auspoems@bigpond.com
Victoria	-- Jan Lewis	info@vbpma.com.au
West Australia	-- Irene Conner	iconner21@wn.com.au

ABPA Editor	-- Neil McArthur	editor@abpa.org.au
Web Administrator	-- Greg North	web@abpa.org.au

AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETS ASSOCIATION

**Proudly Supporting The Cerebral Palsy League
Through Magazine Printing**

ABPA Magazine Advertising

Rates

Black and White Ads

Full page \$80
Half Page \$40
Quarter Page or less \$20

Full Colour Ads (Space limited)

Full Page \$200
Half Page \$100
Quarter Page or less \$60

Poets Calendar and Regular Events free (one or two lines only)

To help offset costs, articles regarding a festival or event would be appreciated if accompanied by a paid Ad.

*Send all details in plain text or PDF Format to
editor@abpa.org.au*

All payments to be made within 14 days to
The Treasurer Shelley Hansen

99 Lindah Road West
MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650

or via Direct Debit to ABPA Account
Bendigo Bank
BSB: 633000

Account: 154842108

*Please put your name/club/invoice as
reference so Treasurer can identify who the
deposit is from.*

President's Report



Greetings to all fellow ABPA members. Well the dust has finally settled, and we have a new committee in place. Unfortunately, newly elected President Bill Yates has had to resign due to heavy political obligations and the unexpected sudden and serious illness of his brother.

As vice president, I thought it befitting to step up and take over the reins from Bill, and was duly elected by fellow committee members.

Hal Pritchard, outgoing president from last year, has very kindly offered to fill my previous position of vice president. Hal brings experience, expertise and passion to the committee and is proving to be a great asset to the newly established team. We have had three committee meetings since the AGM in Tamworth, and the new team is beginning to gel together very nicely.

We have also managed to finally find a wonderful treasurer, (another Queenslander)...the lovely and talented Shelly Hansen from Maryborough, to fill the massive void left by our departing treasurer, legendary Greg North, who as many of you will know, is heading 'North' with the birds for winter, to the fairer climes of lovely Winton. We wish you well Greg. We couldn't have a better ambassador flying the flag for us in entertaining outback travellers and keeping the culture of Australian bush poetry alive and well. Greg, who has indeed been the quiet achiever of the ABPA, has done so much work over the past several years, giving unselfishly of his time during his terms as secretary and then treasurer, when he very kindly stepped up to take over the reins from our beloved and sadly missed Kym Eitel.

Welcome aboard Shelley, we are very fortunate to have you on the team and are confident that you will be a great asset to not only our newly elected committee, but indeed to the ABPA overall, and without doubt, I am confident you will successfully fill the shoes of your legendary predecessors.

I would also like to thank Robyn Sykes for stepping up to fill the mandatory position of Public Officer.

The Banjo Paterson Bush Poetry competition was once again held at Orange this year, on 21st February; Dunedoo Festival on the 3rd of March; Milton Show on the 5th of March; John O'Brien festival on 18th March and the Man from Snowy River festival, incorporating the Victorian Bush Poetry championships 2016, is coming up on the 31st March through to 3rd of April at lovely Corryong.

So once again, welcome to all new committee members and thank you for stepping up to give unselfishly of your time and talents in keeping our wonderful association functioning and destined for bigger and even better days to come!

In Poetry, Tom McIlveen.

Come and join in the fun of the forums at our website

abpa.org.au

Membership to the website is free. Monthly writing assignments, plenty of poetry to share and be critiqued if you so wish. Plus results of and entry details for a range of competitions around Australia. Come along and interact even more at the above website address!

Outgoing Vice Presidents Report 2015

ABPA SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

The ABPA FORUM

The ABPA has an on-line Forum where members, and non-members can engage in discussion on a wide range of poetry related topics. Activity on the Forum waxes and wanes from time to time and many who don't engage in the on-line banter and sharing, simply log in and view the many topics to keep abreast of what is going on in our circle.

Some raw data from our site logs for 2015 ...

The top pages visited on the ABPA Web-Site are

Visits to the Forum Topics Page -	13,156
Visits to the Events Page -	7,529
Visits to Award Winning Poetry Page -	4,581
Visits to Competitions Page -	1,780

The top search phrase to access the ABPA site was, "australian bush poets association forum"

ABPA FACEBOOK SITE

Late in 2013 I created the ABPA Facebook Page as part of our ongoing media strategy, Maureen Clifford was appointed Administrator and has been serving in that capacity since then.

She keeps the content fresh and relevant, where as of December 2015, the 'Like' base is over 500.

In Facebook terms, a 'Like' means a 'direct link' to that person. So, whenever a new article is posted to the ABPA 'page', it is delivered instantly to your own.

Because people who 'like' our ABPA Page, have friends of their own, our 'Reach' is currently over 1800 people whenever we post content to the site. Such is the power of Social Media.

If we don't embrace and engage the many modern tools available to us, our genre of Australian Bush Poetry will be consigned to obscurity and our words left to the silverfish.

The Australian Times Poetry publication

Maureen is also the editor of "The Australian Times Poetry" publication, and has been since mid 2013. Subscribers come from Canada, the USA, Africa, Great Britain, Europe and even from, The Kingdom of Bhutan. This publication is a great platform to showcase. Maureen believes in presenting poetic works in the best visual light, so, oft times a photograph will be married to a poetic piece. These visual presentations attract a greater engagement through comment. Currently Maureen is flooded with submissions from overseas. I would commend that the ABPA Committee encourage more of our membership to submit their works to this excellent publication.

Strategy for the Future of the ABPA

Our membership is disparate, the one common thread is a love for Bush Poetry. In our midst we have professionals, amateurs, readers, reciters, performers, writers, lovers of poetry and their supporters. Our objectives are, "To be the peak body for Bush Poetry in Australia" and our major goal areas are,

- 4.1 Long term Financial Security
- 4.2 Increase and Maintain Membership
- 4.3 Utilise Enabling Technology for ABPA Goals

Sadly, division seems to be creeping into our ranks. One division is the notion of 'Pub' poetry presented at entertainment venues, opposed the notion of 'literature'.

By way of reminder, our membership is disparate. The common love is rhyming Australian Poetry. The 'performers' are the ones attracting the crowds by entertaining them. The writers in our midst continue to excel in writing beautiful verse. If anyone believes that entertaining 'pub' poetry to be invalid and detrimental to Australian Bush Poetry, then don't accept membership moneys from that sector.

More disturbing, at a number of committee meetings during the year, I heard the strongly put statement, "The Golden Dampers MUST be saved AT ALL COST!" Given our objectives, our mandate is clear, it is to, "Save the ABPA - AT ALL COST!" That ABPA Committee members are not focussed on the longevity of the ABPA is reprehensible!

I would urge the incoming committee to seriously re-think any activity (competitions), usually run by the clubs, that benefits few, yet costs the ABPA in financial and physical resources with no real rate or return (increase in membership).

Manfred Vijars

'Escape'

©Catherine Lee

When we're digging endless ditches while the sun attempts to thwart,
huddling deep beneath the sandbags draped on iron cross support
(our defence from bombs, the shrapnel that descends from darkened skies),
disinfecting them and sweeping for the omnipresent flies—
then I turn my thoughts to shearing and the life I had back home,
to the smell of grease and honest sweat, the buzzing of the comb;
picture roustabouts collecting wool with swift and practised sweep,
hear the yelping dogs, the shuffling feet, the bleating of the sheep.

While we're picking off the lice and mozzies feasting on our flesh,
when there's rotting food and stagnant air, scarce water that is fresh,
watching maggots inching slowly down the sides of every trench,
and there's nothing to describe this overwhelming filthy stench—
then we try to summon up the scent of eucalyptus trees
and the jacaranda swaying in a gentle summer breeze,
or the pungent pine that permeates the forests after rain,
plus the fields of wheat and ripened corn, the fruit and sugar cane.

When we're climbing up the ridges, slipping back in searing heat
with our bodies drenched and aching, worn-out boots tormenting feet,
lugging biscuit boxes, building timbers, bullets round our heads,
and a quick death's all we pray for as disease and anguish spreads—
then our minds search out a mountain range where mounted on a horse,
we are riding fast through tussock, native ferns or yellow gorse
with the freedom of the wind above the rivers and the plains—
we imagine our respective homes, their picturesque terrains.

When we venture into no-man's land to bury fallen mates,
now just grisly meals for vermin as decay accelerates,
where our tears flow unimpeded as we're sickened to the core
and we wonder at the so-called guts and glory of a war—
then the only hope for sanity, the courage we require,
is determination, humour, recollection to inspire;
this transports us to the beauty of our countries far away,
irrespective of the nightmare we are living here today.

When that fear begins to surge to which a digger sometimes yields,
that instead of reddened Aussie earth, New Zealand's verdant fields,
we will die here on this foreign shore without a second chance
just to merge with Turkish dust to prosper poppies in their dance—
then it's best to dwell on common comforts, nations ever free,
on our homelands where we'll reunite with friends and family;
where the promises of love and dreams and melodies unsung
mingle longingly with visions of a faithful dog's wet tongue.



I'm Waiting

©Bob 'Pa' Kettle

I'm waiting by the radio, to hear the latest news,
About Kaiser Bill from Germany, and the course that he would choose.
He attacked poor neutral Belgium, so Britain had declared war,
The mother country asked for help, for what they were fighting for.
Australia was her ally; so we said we'd lend a hand,
To fight against the German horde, over in that European land.

I'm waiting at the Railway Station, to catch a train to town,
But I didn't know when I enlisted; my world would turn upside down.
We trained hard with our 303, with the Bayonet I did excel,
For we were tough, and young, and strong, and we planned to give them hell.
We sailed across the deep blue sea, for victory we strove,
But we didn't know, and could not guess, what would happen in ANZAC cove.

I'm waiting in our landing craft, as the shells fly overhead.
I see the boat beside us hit; I know they all are dead.
We hit the beach and scramble on, to the safety of the cliffs,
Passed mangled bodies and blood soaked sand; I'll tell you; I'm scared stiff.
For weeks we lay in trenches deep, to survive we fired back,
At Johnny Turk across no man's land, until someone ordered--Attack.

I'm waiting on the battle field; see, I'm not the type that begs,
For help to get me to my trench, 'cause I can't feel my legs.
I try to crawl to hide somewhere, as the battle rages on,
For as a soldier I'm no use; and nearly everyone else is gone.
Is that a gentle voice I hear? Though my head feels rather wonky,
"Come on old mate, we'll get you home, let me put you on my donkey."

I'm waiting in my hospital bed, where the Morphine kills the pain.
I wonder what my life now holds, as I'll never walk again.
My transport now is my wheel chair, no personality like my horse,
Who carried me over hills and plains; I won't give in to remorse.
My mind now does all my travel, in the books that I now write,
No matter what life throws at you, you just can't give up the fight.

I'm waiting now with my grandson, getting ready for Vietnam,
To that Asian war they're fighting, Man's inhumanity to Man.
Did two world wars teach them nothing? Were the lessons never learnt?
That in war there are no winners, just the lives wasted and burnt.
I'm waiting for the politicians, to cease forever debating,
How nations can all live in peace. For this; I know; I'm waiting.



Vale Geoff Mann

It is with great sadness I wish to inform all members that Geoffrey Gordon Mann passed away on Saturday 13th February 2016 aged 69. The family is totally devastated at the loss. So too are all his many friends and followers of his bush poetry recitals. Geoff battled Mantle Cell Lymphoma and he spent the last five weeks of his life in the Cairns Private Hospital surrounded by his wife, 3 children, daughter-in-law and his 2 adored little grandchildren.. He was a very unselfish man who gave his attention and time to all. Cairns ABC Radio station paid two tributes to him Monday 15th February. His funeral at Gordonvale was huge and when they put 45 photos of his life on the screen, to everybody's surprise his own voice recited nothing better than The Randy Rooster which brought little giggles and smiles to all. So you could say he had the last laugh!!!! He will be missed very much by his family and his APBA family as well. Geoff was a very popular performer and competitor and our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.



This poem arose following a two week group visit to the Mimili alcohol-free Aboriginal community in Central Australia. While there, I found myself challenged, not only by the oppressive heat, and by the much slower pace of life, but by the subtle arrogance inherent in my culture. I discovered that the locals had no real need for us to be there, but were eventually gracious enough to invite us to shed our footwear, paint up and participate in a mini-corroboree celebration. (The incongruous reference to cars arises from the excess wrecks lying around).

Mimili 1993

© John Robertson
Ringwood, Vic.

I am the greedy plastic man, weaned on a rubber teat
My power is plastic money, I wear sandals on my feet
My mind's a rambling chatterbox, my soul's a wayward youth
It scoffs at what is sacred and disregards the truth
My culture is disposable, but doesn't easily rot
My standing in society depends on what I've got

Full of expectations, I came driving from the city
I've come to trade your heritage for money and for pity
I'll feed you coca cola, cigarettes and beer
I'll give you diabetes and a god that you must fear
Let me walk on sacred sights and photograph your truths
I'll take away your memories like I took away your youths

I am the greedy plastic man - grasping at your heels
Feed me with the vital fluid, show me want is real
Sitting here beside you, in the sand, among the cars
You share with me your vision of a life under the stars
The sweeping view of desert scape makes room for open mind
For nakedness of feeling, my sprung coil to unwind

I'm learning to be patient, to listen and to wait
To open to unfolding dreams and tune in to my fate
The sand absorbs the preciousness, my clinging to my fears
It sucks away the sentiments I've carried round for years
Our common earth beneath us, our common sky above
Unites us in a fragile bond, the circle of our love



COBBER SAYS G'DAY

©Keith Lethbridge

It's drizzlin' in the city,
And me shirt's a little damp.
Feelin' cold and wet and lonely
And I've got no place to camp.
Now my feet and back are aching
And my whiskers turning grey.
If you pass by Burracoppin,
Tell 'em Cobber says g'day.

Yesterday I was a young man,
Livin' life without a care,
Hitching rides across the country,
Never settling anywhere.
Didn't want a wife or children,
Didn't want the bills to pay.
If you pass by Widgiemooltha,
Tell 'em Cobber says g'day.

There's a windmill, slowly turning,
Out by Tuckanarra way,
And the ashes of a camp fire
Where I often used to stay.
Hell, it's raining in the city,
That's the price you have to pay.
If you pass by Tuckanarra,
Tell 'em Cobber says g'day.

Didn't have a hungry childhood
And I never went to war.
Maybe life was too darn easy,
Guess I'll never know for sure.
Hey, tomorrow is my birthday....
Or was it yesterday?
If you pass by Meekatharra,
Tell 'em Cobber says g'day.

There's a girl in Kununurra,
She was young and sweet and kind,
Swore she'd follow me forever,
But I wiped her from my mind.
Now it's pourin' in the city,
But me dreams are far away.
If you pass by Kununurra,
Tell 'er Cobber says g'day.

This darn cough feels like bronchitis.
It's the "coffin cough" I think.
Just as well I've got no 'baccy
And I can't afford a drink.
I'll feel better in the morning
If I live to see the day.
If you pass by Badgingarra,
Mukinbudin, Yandeyarra,
If you pass by Boothendarra,
Tell 'em Cobber says to have a ball,
God bless you all.....
G'day!

A Shadow on the Water

© David Campbell

Winner, Open Section, and Best Overall Poem, 2015 Gilgandra Coo-ee Festival

There's a shadow on the water where she lies ten fathoms deep
in the graveyard of the tall ships where the bones of sailors sleep,
and her voice is still heard calling when the wind is from the west,
for a soul that cheats the Devil cannot be allowed to rest.
All the old ones know the legend of Jack Dillon and his fate,
as he journeyed with his sweetheart on the way to celebrate
the new life they'd build together in that wondrous southern land
where they hoped to make their fortune if events should go as planned.

Do you love me, Mary Ellen,
though we'll always be apart?
Can you offer me, my darling,
some forgiveness in your heart?

For they rode the Roaring Forties on a schooner from the Clyde
to the coast of South Australia, just a young man and his bride,
with their future spread before them through those long and happy years
when a couple raise their children in a world that's free of tears.
But there's nothing that is certain on the path that lies ahead,
and all those who sail the oceans know that haunting sense of dread
when the thunderclouds start forming and the wind begins to rise
as Poseidon vents his fury under dark, forbidding skies.

*Do you love me, Mary Ellen,
in the sea-mist's ghostly haze?
Will you walk with me, my darling,
through the sunshine of our days?*

When the Captain saw the tempest that was looming in their wake
he forewarned them of the danger, telling them, for safety's sake,
to seek shelter in their cabin, as the deck would be no place
for a young man and his sweetheart and the perils they might face.
But Jack Dillon thought the weather was a monster he could tame,
so he said he'd not be beaten and surrender his proud name.
He would stand with Mary Ellen, he would stand and he would fight
all the demons that were howling in the blackness of the night.

*Do you love me, Mary Ellen,
can you still recall my voice?
Do you understand, my darling,
why I made that fateful choice?*

So he lashed them to the foremast as the windstorm drove them east,
and the darkness closed around them in the belly of the beast,
where he cried to God in Heaven to deliver them from Hell,
but the Devil gave him answer from the depths where spirits dwell.
And the Devil said he'd bargain, but that there would be a toll,
and the price of their salvation would be Jack's immortal soul;
when his earthly life was over and he sought eternal peace,
then perdition would be waiting at the moment of release.

*Do you love me, Mary Ellen,
through the heartache and the pain?
Can you tell me please, my darling,
that our dreams were not in vain?*

As the topmasts cracked and splintered and the shrouds were ripped away
he heard Mary Ellen screaming and so shouted he would pay
any price that was demanded if it meant that they'd survive,
for the only thing that mattered was to keep them both alive.
And at once the storm abated to an eerie, brooding calm,
with the lovers clinging tightly, overcome, but safe from harm.
Whereupon young Jack recanted of the promise that he'd made,
saying pledges made in torment shouldn't have to be obeyed.

*Do you love me, Mary Ellen,
in the stillness of the night?
Do you call for me, my darling,
in the early morning light?*

But the Devil has no pity, and his anger is extreme,
so he branded Jack a liar and destroyed his cherished dream
with a swirling mass of water that swept Mary to her death,
and Jack Dillon heard her crying as she drew her final breath.
There's a shadow on the water where she lies ten fathoms deep
in the graveyard of the tall ships where the bones of sailors sleep,
and her voice is still heard calling when the wind is from the west,
for a soul that cheats the Devil cannot be allowed to rest.

*Do you love me, Mary Ellen,
though we'll always be apart?
Can you offer me, my darling,
some forgiveness in your heart?*



THE YANDEL'ORA CATTLE PASTURES.

© Tom McIlveen

Winner of 2015 Rolf Boldrewood Literary awards..

Our History was once unique, enshrouded by a strange mystique
which lingered like a verdant veil around its progeny...
a primitive and ancient place of granite rock and vacant space,
where Dreamtime legends merged with prehistoric fantasy.

Beyond a treacherous ravine there lay a wondrous vast terrene,
where Dharawal had lived since primal 'Dreaming' had begun.
Beneath the sacred mountain crest, the hallowed ground was duly blessed
and titled Yandel'ora by the Goddess of the sun.

A place where time did not exist, surrounded by a ghostly mist,
creating rainbow colours through prismatic drops of dew.
Refracting violet and green, with red and orange in between
the indigo and lilac tinged with hazy shades of blue.

The Aborigines had planned, as keepers of this hallowed land,
to generate new pastures where the sun refused to shine.
Beneath a canopy of shade, where mildew moulded and decayed,
they cleared around the stringybarks and stately turpentine.

They'd burnt the bush and singed the trees, as if attempting to appease
the Gods presiding over this mercurial domain.
When every leaf was smoked or charred and blackened trunks forever scarred,
the Shaman would begin to dance to conjure quenching rain.

As new-sprung shoots of grass emerged, the famished fauna had converged
to graze upon the lushness of this lavish sheltered place.
The open pastures proved ideal for cattle who had come to feel
at home amongst the kangaroos in tranquil open space.

These stock that came from foreign shores, to supplement depleted stores,
had soon become accustomed to their alien abode.
No longer need they fear the stroke of flogging whip and dreaded yoke,
nor struggle with the burden of an unrelenting load.

Endowed with hardy hoof and hide, they quickly bred and multiplied
without endemic predators to keep their numbers down.
In pristine wilderness and scrub, through eucalypt and wattle shrub,
they milled and strayed to grasslands, that would soon become renown.

The Yandel'ora Pastures teemed with birds and animals that seemed
unusual and foreign to the migratory herd.
The lorikeets in reds and blues and sulphur crested cockatoos
had screeched in indignation as the roving cattle stirred.

A magpie's sweet melodic tones had lulled the dull persistent drones
of bawling stock competing in this symphony of sound.
The antics of a romping calf had made the kookaburras laugh,
as tiger quoll and platypus sought refuge underground.

A dingo, wallaby and crow, united by their common foe,
had eyed the bold intruders with suspicion and dismay.
Their trampling hooves and hacking horns uprooted brush and scattered thorns,
to open up the virgin bush allowing passageway.

Devouring everything in sight, they seemed to have an appetite
that proved to be insatiable in search of daily fare.
Reluctant to migrate or roam from fertile fields of silty loam,
they thrived in Yandel'ora with its hot and humid air.

The herd continued to inbreed from Africander Zebu seed,
descended from Bos Indicus and Taurus bovine strains.
Exotic lines improved and crossed, with necks and shoulders still embossed
and traces of the Drakensberger running in their veins.

For seven years they were concealed, until their presence was revealed
by native Dharawal within the Yandel'ora zone.
With cattle in such short supply the government was keen to try
and claim this wild nomadic herd to complement their own.

The scrubbers' coats were brown and white, with some as black as tarry night,
embellished, brindled, gold enhanced with spots of grey and red.
Their silky hides and dewlap necks were splashed with streaks of coloured flecks,
in contrast to domestic stock that pioneers had bred.

Malicious stock were culled and shot and carcasses were left to rot –
a cruel and grim reminder of the prevalence of man.
Australian cattle breeds endured, had procreated and matured
to interbreed according to a predetermined plan.

Those cattle pastures are today, now decomposing in decay
and poisoned by the chemicals that spew from urban drains.
With trees removed and forests cleared, the Mother Bush we once revered
is desecrated now – although her legend still remains.



THE LAST FRONTIER

© Terry Piggott

(Winner of Serious Section WA champs)

I camp beside a shady tree, the billy on, a mug of tea
and look around here thinking just how lucky I must be.
To live out in this wilderness and know what freedom means,
far from the noisy city and the chatter of machines.

Yet most prefer the urban life, a steady job - a home - a wife;
while my heart lies out here, away from towns, their noise and strife.
I love the arid inland with its hint of mystery,
an ancient land as old as time and steeped in history.

The first Australians breathed this air; a sacred place they trod with care,
their footprints may be now long gone, but other signs are there.
Their Gnamma Holes are still here now to catch the rain once more
and tribal art adorning caves, tell of their life before.

Those people had known freedom too, throughout this land that they once knew,
until their lifestyle was destroyed, as winds of change swept through.
Yet as the light is fading and I gaze out from this hill,
I sense their spirits still dwell here; I guess they always will.

I think then of the pioneer, a hardy bloke who knew no fear
and roamed into this then unknown, with just a star to steer.
But there's a tinge of sadness knowing now what happened here;
the coming of the white man saw a culture disappear.

These days its nomads just like me who wander here far from the sea
and though it's harsh and rugged, it's a special place to be.
I look out from my vantage point across the quartz strewn ground
and I can see such beauty as I slowly look around.

Nearby are hills then distant peaks with ghostly gums and bone dry creeks;
out here you'll find the solitude, the bushman always seeks.
And there's a hint of timelessness that seems to touch this place,
where years of tribal history have barely left a trace.

For years I've camped beneath the stars, away from towns and crowded bars,
escaping from that madness and the endless noise of cars.
Yet still I keep on moving out to try and stay ahead,
of miners and the drillers as their new endeavours spread.

I know that progress has to stay and nothing can stand in its way;
the dollar has the loudest voice, no matter what they say.
I sense these days I'm seeing here Australia's last frontier
and wonder if in time to come, will this all disappear.

I look around this magic land of Spinifex and deep red sand,
with weathered hills surrounding me wherever I may stand.
And if by chance you venture here, this place is sure to please;
a harsh yet fragile land, of ghostly gums and mulga trees.

Our Poetry Kids

LEFT BEHIND

© 2015, Maddison Riley (at age 10)

She wipes her hand on her apron
as six o'clock has come.
It's time to light her candle
and pray for her only son.
Every day she waits for news,
praying he's still alive,
always waiting patiently
for good news to arrive.
He's gone away to war you see,
fighting to keep us free.
And as she lights her candle she quietly whispers,
"Lord please – bring him home to me."

PEOPLE WHO WENT TO WAR

© 2015, Chloe Thomas (at age 9)

Down in our trench, it is dark and wet,
wondering how lonely and hard this will get.
Only surrounded by darkness and cold,
I tell myself to stay strong and bold.
All the time thinking about family and friends,
wishing this war would come to an end.
Loud noises and shouting are all we are hearing,
while hunger and thirst is a normal feeling.
Then early one day there was silence and calm,
no more loud noises and no more harm.
Finally the war is over and done.
Peace and kindness has eventually won.
Let us remember and never forget,
those who fought at war –
they deserve our respect.

YOUNG SOLDIER

© Joshua Murphy (at age 12)

He left the farm and his family, to fight for us across the sea,
from Inverell, a country boy, at seventeen, not much older than me.
At home his mother prayed to bring her son home from war.
And three years on he returned to her, but he'd changed from what he saw.
He never spoke about the things a young man should never see
and lived his life without his mates he had left across the sea.
He never left his home again and never travelled far.
He kept his secrets safe from us. That young soldier was my Pa.

The above 3 poems were written in response to the 2015 ANZAC Oracles – Bush Poetry Competition for Children run by Jann Newman and the Oracles of the Bush Festival Committee, Tenterfield, NSW. We thank Jann and also teacher Lynette Ainsworth and the pupils of St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Tenterfield.

And here's a little gem from Ollie Primrose of Jerrabomberra.

ANZAC

© 2015, Oliver Primrose (at age 11)

As you say goodbye
you want to cry
BUT WHY?
As your son fights
It goes all cold
as the lights fade.
He will get hurt one way, or another.
As his friends fall, he prays for his Mother.
Innocent lives are wasted.
Their names will be pasted
on a cross.

The above poems were pre-published in the Free XpresSion magazine in November, 2015.

Meet Our Committee

2016 ABPA PRESIDENT TOM MC ILVEEN

Tom has always been a wordsmith since his childhood where his love for English and traditional Australian prose and poetry developed. This continued through his teen years where he was "...obsessed with singer/songwriters..." of the folk genre. He returned to bush poetry writing in 2009 following the death of his brother and has been "...writing relentlessly ever since."

Tom has been one of the ABPA's leading writers for the last four years and he is the current holder of the title ABPA Australian Male Written Champion. In Tamworth this year he took out the original performance section of the ABPA Golden Dampier.

It is clear that Tom, despite his busy career, loves bush poetry. He has served the ABPA as past Secretary and as the NSW State Delegate for 2014/2015.

In addition, Tom runs the very successful performer's concert at the Tamworth Country Music Festival which raises funds for the ABPA, and the walk-up sessions in St Edwards Hall which allow other poets, the opportunity to perform and interact.

It is fitting that Tom's involvement should now extend to the Presidency. He has the support of the Executive and Committee and is to be thanked for his continuing input to the ABPA.



2016 ABPA VICE PRESIDENT Hal Pritchard

Whilst not a poet, Hal's background in management and television throughout his career as an electronics engineer, linked him to the entertainment world. After retiring, Hal was ready to settle into a peaceful life travelling and enjoying his love of Nature. However, having a wife who had become an award-winning writer and performer, he was drawn into the bush poetry world, initially as a supporter until he took over the ABPA Presidency for 2014/2015.

Hal's vast experience and the 'people skills' acquired through business, his capacity to keep abreast of the modern scene as an avid reader, and his life experiences gained through extensive travel in Australia and overseas, fitted him well for this administrative and 'flag-waving' role. Hal says that "...it was a wonderful opportunity to represent and help a band of such talented and creative people who share my passion for the preservation of the Australian culture through our unique bush poetry art form..." whilst the travel the role entailed, "...suited the gypsy in me."

As Vice President, Hal is enthused to support the 2016 ABPA Committee to evolve and expand and his input will be invaluable.



2016 ABPA SECRETARY Rhonda Tallnash

Rhonda's family line stretches back to the original free settlers, imbuing her with an innate, "...interest in all things Australian." Combining this with her appreciation, as a special education-
alist and writer, for the capacity of rhyme and metre to provide a solid basis for the development of children's oral language skills, it was not surprising that she 'found' the bush poetry movement in 2010 and hence the ABPA.

Her success as a performing poet and her status as the current ABPA Australian Female Performance Champion, pays tribute to her subsequent dedication to our genre.

As the 2016 ABPA Secretary, Rhonda has already shown that this enthusiasm will extend to her demanding but rewarding role. Rhonda is the ideal person to help maintain, carry forward, expand and improve on the basis set up by the previous Committees. We are lucky to have her.



2016 ABPA TREASURER SHELLEY HANSEN

As a poet, Shelley Hansen of Maryborough, Queensland, (who was featured in the Meet a Poet section in January, 2016), has been making inroads into the winners' lists of many top written competitions. In addition, she is into her fifth year of presenting her verse as a regular guest on ABC Local Radio Wide Bay. With her husband Rod, Shelley performs at local and regional concerts.

It is therefore, with great pleasure, that the ABPA welcomes Shelley to the 2016 Executive. With the initial back up of outgoing Treasurer, Gregory North, who has kindly filled the gap until a suitable replacement was found, Shelley's skills will ensure the on-going smooth financial running of our organisation. We thank her for accepting this role.

Together with these considerable poetic skills, Shelley has a background in accountancy and administration, having worked for many years in Project Accounting at Ergon Energy. Rod and Shelley have also run their own painting contracting business for the past forty years.



GREAT AUSSIE READS

with Jack Drake



This is the second book with this title I have reviewed in these pages. The first one dealt with the life of the late Harry Dulhunty, but Fred Brophy's autobiography *The Last Showman* (Penguin Books Australia 2014) has every bit as much right as Larry to the Title.

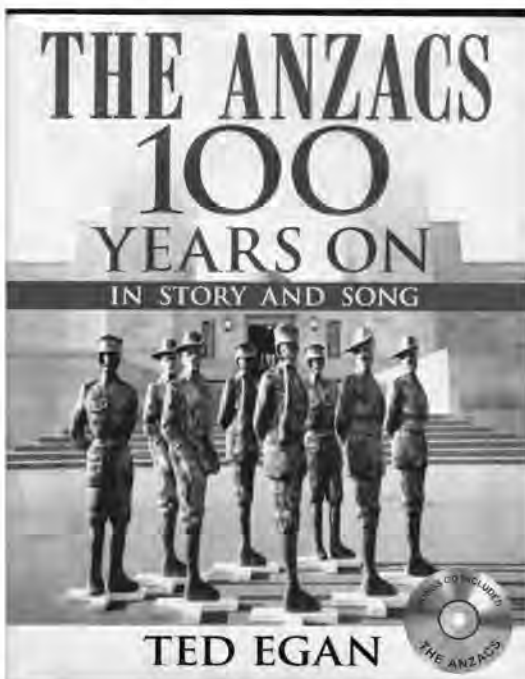
Anyone who has attended iconic events like the Mt. Isa Rodeo or the Birdsville Races, will know of Fred Brophy, the man who continues to run Australia's last boxing tent.

Brophy, after a bit of a rocky start in life, has successfully followed in the steps of the old time boxing showmen who made boxing tents a uniquely Australian institution. With assistance from writer, Sue Williams, he tells his always entertaining and sometimes turbulent history in the straight forward manner of a knockabout Aussie bloke.

It is interesting to note that a poet many of us knew and loved, the late Col Newsome, was a fighter who travelled with Fred Brophy's predecessor, the great Jimmy Sharman. Surely the tent shows both boxing and buckjumping, of Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Australia, are a mine of inspiration for bush poets.

Fred Brophy's story is an entertaining rambunctious journey that will probably never be taken again when Fred quits the road. Brophy is a relic of a time when Aussies stood on their own feet and took responsibility for their actions rather than crying to the legal system after getting knocked on their bums. It imparts the very basic rule 'If you put your hand up for anything, don't whinge if you get beaten.'

Good on ya Fred for putting your story on paper and I'm glad there's a copy on my bookshelf.



In Tamworth this year at Ted Egan's new show at the Frog and Toad on Goono Goono Road, Gary Fogarty described Ted as 'a man who has created his own genre'. Very true. Ted Egan is an entertainer like no other and his latest effort has added yet another element to this man's prodigious talent.

The ANZACS 100 Years On in Story and Song by Ted Egan (Wild Dingo Press 2014) truly deserves to be called 'a great Aussie read'. It could also be called 'a great Kiwi read' and 'a great Turkish read'.

Ted has documented the history of the ANZACS, followed their history over the 100 years since Gallipoli and reproduced the words and music of the songs they sung. He has told of the magnificent contribution of the women, children and old people left behind and their part in the war effort. The medics, the nurses and all the supporters of the front line heroes have not been forgotten.

I saw the show and bought the book which contains a CD of the sound track. I also got the three DVDs which are an optional extra and throughout the show, I have to admit my hankie got a fair sort of a workout.

Ted has included taped interviews in his show with the late Jack Nicholson, a Gallipoli veteran, in the role of a co-narrator, and records his life in the book.

One episode that particularly touched me, concerned Ted's uncle Bob who was on leave in London from the Western Front. He was taken to a show by his sister who was a nurse. This veteran of the mud and blood was appalled by the frivolity and carelessness of West End society. He rose to his feet and shouted "Don't you know there are hundreds of young Australians lying dead on The Somme and not even buried yet!" What war did to our finest young men is staggering and Ted Egan has captured tragedy and triumph alike.

The ANZACS 100 Years On is very worth reading and should make Australians even more proud of Ted Egan and all our serving soldiers.

More great Aussie reads at
www.outbackbooks.info

Jack Drake

My Bloody Life!

© Glennie Palmer

"THAT BLOODY POSSUM" Episode 1.

The time is almost nigh for Joey-poss to be evicted from his penthouse...which is situated beneath my elevated bedroom floor, approximately two and a half feet from the pillow upon which I lay my weary head at night. And where assorted possum take-over bids regularly erupt at all hours of the night.

"I'd get ten bloody quid for that hide in NZ!!" but 22's are not an option in Oz so the trap had to be set. "The trap" being my gorgeous but fragile antique ornate bird cage. (Has the man no soul?) The planning was sublime. A dead banana inside my treasured cage... placed one foot from the living room sliding door; a peg on the cage's open entry door... and sit... and wait... Enter stage left.....a bloody mouse! Frantic sniffing & trying to will the dead banana through the bars.....boing!!....one gargantuan leap onto the side of the cage. Precariously so balanced, he manages a morsel, when....Enter stage right....Joey-poss... Exit....with due care...and lightning speed, one kleptomaniac mouse.

Grossly obese Joey circles the cage... three times. Peers into the living room at two idiots trying to remain "hidden" under 300 watts. Another circle around the cage and a sniff through the bars... and... Eureka!! in goes the 30 cm girth of possum power through an entry designed for a bloody canary. Pandemonium!!! croc legs, croc arms, flailing wildly to get the (rollerless) sliding door open... and a well aimed kick from a German Army boot....releases the peg on the entry door... which flies straight into my nose. "Gotcha!! ya little bastard!!!" "Righto missus, grab the torch & come with me." "Missus" is full of the flu and not keen on a midnight wildlife safari, with ten kilos of disgruntled possum power hissing at her, and says... 'In ya dreams King Kong!'

Joey-poss is not happy, but nonetheless gets carted off to an abandoned building three kilometres away. Croc guile is then required to assess how to (potentially) avoid ten kilos of possum swinging off his nose, while balancing an ornate antique bird cage in one hand, a stick to "poke up his furry arse" in the other, and a torch in his teeth....er tooth....and how to open the door of my antique ornate bird cage? Croc guile reigns. Joey-poss has a new tenancy agreement. "Missus" is in bed with a migraine, the Vicks and a hot water bottle. The treasured antique ornate bird cage is....a little more antique....relations are strained.... compromise prevails.....undisturbed sleep is blissfully anticipated.....when.....Joey-poss's cousin checks out the newly vacated penthouse. And THAT is another, more chaotic story. (Wanna hear that one too?.....)

A MOTHERS PRAYER

© The Poet's Wife 2016

There are those in this great country, who stand out in a crowd
And overcome adversity, to make our nation proud
So I guess it had to happen, but with the thought I'd never toyed
When I found out on that fateful day, that you had been deployed

I remember well when you were born, and your tiny form I nursed
Though I loved the ones that followed, you will always be the first
You faced so many heart breaks that pierced you to the core
But I always saw the way ahead, for I'd been down that road before

You served in far off places, not always in the news
Trading the latest fashion, for boots and DPU's
When I see the photographs, it fills my soul with pride
I hope you'll gain some comfort, knowing my spirit is by your side

You never took a backward step, as you blazed a pioneer's trail
Hardships tried to bar your path, but I knew you'd never fail
There must have been some heartache, when you flew across the foam
For though you had a duty, you left your husband and son at home

With the help of comrades, you'll never be alone
For distance can be a curse, when you are on your own
A heavenly force will care for you, watching from above
Till the day when you return, to the ones that you love

You tell me not to worry, but it's my maternal right
For there's no other option, when loved ones are out of sight
I know your faith will keep you strong, for the time you're serving there
So I give to you this special gift, it's called a Mothers Prayer



Competition Results

MILTON SHOW POETRY COMPETITIONS REPORT

On Saturday, 5 March two poetry performance competitions were run at the Milton show in the marquee at the JNA Thomson Tavern.

The first was for school-age children and had 10 competitors eight local children and two children who had recently moved to Sydney. The performances by all children was outstanding and ranged from poems by CJ Dennis to original work written and performed by a local lass. Anyone who saw these children perform on stage could not help but be impressed by their confidence and performances. I have been organising poetry both written and performance competitions for primary school children annually for the past 10 years and have never failed to be impressed by the quality that come from many of these children but as an over all group I feel that this group of kids would have to be probably the very best we have had so far.

The results are as follows,

1st Duncan Myers 2nd Lucas MacDonald 3rd Tillie Gravenor 4th Sarah Peck 5th Emily Stein 6th Cody Peck.

Every child that performed was awarded a complimentary ribbon and book prize.

The second competition was an open performance competition for adults and had entrants from the Hunter Valley, Bathurst, Young, Tumut, Wollongong, Normanton in far north Queensland, Kangaroo Valley, Canberra, Bungendore as well as a strong local contingent. Each performer recited two poems and the standard was very high and ranged from works by iconic authors such as Banjo Patterson, CJ Dennis, George Essex Evans as well as works by contemporary poets such as Milton Taylor, Bruce Forbes Simpson, Murray Hartin and a good mix of original work written by some of the performers.

These original poems were of a very high standard and in fact the poem that won the competition was a very heartfelt piece of writing that was composed by the person who performed it.

The results are as follows

1st Sue Pearce 2nd Neil Jones 3rd Ralph Scrivens

Highly commended awards went to

Alan Stone, Mark Thompson, John Travers.

At this stage it is envisaged that both these competitions will be run again next year and it is hoped that it will become an annual event. There is no doubt that if this quality of performance continues to be produced it will be a very successful addition to the Milton show.



Bush Poets at Boyup Brook

Bill Kearns and Jack Drake are two well-known poets on the East coast, and proved to be extremely popular with their distinctive poetic styles and presentations. They headed up an impressive line-up of Bush Poets at the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival last weekend. They were supported by fourteen local poets including Peter Blyth and Christine Boulton, both previous winners of the WA State Championship.

Bush Poetry continues to be a significant part of the program at the festival, with events held at different venues on all four days, culminating in WA's biggest Bush Poets Breakfast at the music park on Sunday morning. Bill and Jack also performed at Harvey Dickson's Country Music Centre on Friday morning. Audiences were slightly smaller on Thursday and Friday, with many not coming until the weekend. However, the Bowling Club had a capacity crowd on Saturday morning, and Sunday was well attended.

Writing and performance workshops were again held at the Bowling Club on Thursday, with 25 people attending each. It was pleasing to see several new faces among the participants. The benefit of these workshops can be clearly seen in the improved performances of the local poets over the years. We each have our own individual way of writing, learning and presenting our poetry. It is always interesting to learn what works for the modern day masters of our craft.

Having Bill and Jack this year has greatly enhanced our Bush Poetry program. It is due to the support of our sponsors that we are able to bring these Bush Poets from the east side, and I would like to thank Boyup Brook Farm Supplies, John Rich Real Estate, Primaries Wool, CSBP, and Elders for their continued assistance this year.



Roger Craknell launches his new book
Bulldust On The Track

Bill Gordon
Bush Poetry Co-ordinator

More Results Can be found on our Website www.abpa.org.au

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VENUE: CWA HALL, BETTINGTON ST
DATE: SUNDAY 12TH JUNE 9-11AM



One of the great Saltwater Musters in Australia is from Snake Island to the mainland in southern Victoria. A good mate, horseman and bush poet, the late Colin Shiels often talked about riding in these musters as a young man and always spoke with pride about the black mare he always rode.

Crossing the Snake

© Lynden Baxter

Let me tell you a story; I'll sing you a song
That blows in from the ocean when west winds blow wrong.
When the winter moon silvers and holds back the tide
And the sea birds cry danger; the Snake horsemen ride.

And tonight they are crossing the Snake
And they ride by the light of the moon
And a blood brother oath they all take
Washed down with rough red from the 'goon
Snake oil is the joke that they make
But they ride by the grace of the gods.

Have you heard of the Snake; winter pastures so green.
It's a cattleman's island; land-bridge in-between.
Five miles through the shallows, the tides held at bay.
It's a prize worth the danger; a risk worth the pay.

But the death of a horseman; a crossing gone wrong
Is now etched in her story, blows sad in her song
And the youngster, young Trigger, he'll ride lead tonight
On the black mare, his father's, a Snake horseman's right.

Yes, the horsemen have come; they are wild Gippsland boys.
With their best, gamest horses; their prides and their joys.
Come to muster their bullocks; the season is done.
Soon the window will close for a safe mainland run.

And their bullocks unruly, grown sleeker, roam free
On the wide acres fenced by the wild southern sea.
And they seek out old Judas; he'll lead the mob home
Shaggy coat, pearly horns, fearless in the foam.

Long, hard days in the saddle, the rogues brought to heel.
Longer nights round the campfire where southern stars wheel.
They must wait time and tide for the ocean's retreat.
And there danger drums always; her song bitter sweet.

But tonight, they must ride; there are storms in the west
The ebb tide's at its lowest; the moon at its best.
Now the stockwhips crack loud as they leave the safe ground
And their horsemanship's tested; the leader is found.

"Come on, Judas" Trig calls him; the moon lights the track.
Five miles to the headland; there's no turning back
And the ebony mare with the light in her eyes
She will moon dance tonight to the seabirds' wild cries.

And tonight they are crossing the Snake
And they ride by the light of the moon
And a blood brother oath they all take
Washed down with rough red from the 'goon
Snake oil is the joke that they make
But they ride by the grace of the gods.

Now they're out on the sea; it's a primeval place.
He must read the path carefully; not slacken the pace.
But the storm clouds come quickly and steal the moonlight
And the tide, too, is turning; the wind whips the night.

Now the waves crash around him; lightning tears the sky
And he loses the pathway; disaster's close by.
Fear pulls at the reins; the mare tosses her head.
The boy calls in the night to his father, long dead.

Though the wide ocean marks his dark watery grave.
Still, their blood brother bond rides the crest of the wave.
It was real, not imagined, a hand on the rein.
A voice blown on the wild wind; his voice, clear and plain.

"Do not fear the dark, trust the mare, hold her light
For the magic is hers from the moon glow, tonight.
"Let old Judas come close; let him comb the mare's tail
I am right by your side; trust the mare, you'll not fail"

Now the black mare steps out in the dark stormy sea.
Bullocks splashing, horns clashing, "Come on, follow me"
And they danced with the Devil out there on the brine.
Lady luck rides the wing on her chance horse, so fine.

Oh, the lights on the headland shone warm and shone bright
As they reached the home shore; a rough crossing tonight
And the Snake horsemen knew they'd been given a chance.
They had ridden, they knew, through the land of romance.

Sure, old Judas no more leads the Snake Island mob
And it's Queensland for Trigger; a bridge building job.
But these stories live on and are sung round the fire
When the seabirds cry danger, the moon rises higher.

And tonight they are crossing the Snake
And they ride by the light of the moon
And a blood brother oath they all take
Washed down with rough red from the 'goon
Snake oil is the joke that they make
But they ride by the grace of the gods.



The Ballad of Beryl and Ned

© Hugh Allan

When Beryl and Ned cantered into the town
their object was far from a good look around.
They reined in beside a veranda and rail,
a wooden bank building, unpainted and frail.

They entered the bank, tried to look debonair,
and Beryl discreetly shook dust from her hair.
She strode to the teller, revealed a long knife,
but he pulled a shotgun: she ran for her life.

And Ned followed frantically out of the bank,
along a dirt road and around by the tank.
Their pockets were empty, their horses had fled,
a sad situation for Beryl and Ned

The police sergeant, Bluey, who heard the alarm,
relieved that the banker had come to no harm,
said, 'Anyone see what their features were like?'
The teller said, 'Dirty, and both the same height.'

The pair crossed a hill to a vale and a creek,
where emus were grazing along with some sheep.
A handful of horses stood cropping the grass,
and Beryl said, 'Beauty! We need one that's fast!'

The sergeant had gathered some menfolk and mounts,
to see what to do, how to settle accounts.
The job needed thinking before going far;
they thought it out drinking in old Billy's bar.

A plan they arrived at and all were agreed,
the sergeant and seven would do the good deed:
they'd ride out and round up those two layabouts,
but only when all of them finished their shouts.

Said Beryl to Ned as he chewed on some hay,
'Run down to the paddock and find us a grey.'
'No worries,' he said, 'I'll just go'n have a look,'
and brought back an emu, an overgrown chook.

The hooves of pursuers came thundering, 'til
they breasted the crest of the 'forementioned hill.
They looked down the valley; stopped dead in their tracks;
then broke out in laughter all flat on their backs.

They saw Beryl riding her two-legged steed
away from the creek at a decent old speed,
while Ned running after them, legs all a-flail,
fell head over heels in the dust of the trail.

They circled, returning, did Beryl and Ned,
to buy some new horses (the emu had fled).
Then Ned paid the man with a cheque folded tight,
'Give this to the banker and he'll see you right.'

The horse-seller went to the bank on the run,
presented the cheque and looked straight at a gun.
The banker said, 'This has just settled your fate,'
and showed him the 'cheque,' which read 'Stick 'em up mate.'



TOUGH LOVE

© Martin J Mulholland

One Friday evening in winter time
The family had gathered for a meal
I was seeking ideas for a poem to write
Or maybe find some words that could appeal

You should write about so and so the kids had suggested
Or the time when such and such occurred
Oah what about the day when this or that happened
And then mum finally got in a word

You should write me a love poem dear
You've not yet done one of those
Its nice to hear romantic words
Or to read them in verse or in prose

A love poem me write a love poem
Write a love poem for my wife
Oah piece of cake dear i told the missis
But those words soon got me in strife

She said If I thought it's a piece of cake
I could make a good start that night
well I wasn't thinking when I said ok
Just leave it to me she'll be right

I'd forgotten the footy was live on the telly
And due to start at any time
I had planned on watching the game with the boys
Not composing some romantic rhyme

Now the girls had been talking about late night shopping
I soon found myself encouraging them to go
Well that's when my lady knew I'd changed the subject
She then asked when I'll have words to show

I said I'll get that happening tonight my dear
As I handed her her purse
And when you and the girls return from shopping
I'll have some words of love in verse

Well just as soon as the door closed behind them
I headed straight for the couch
Within seconds I'd forgotten the previous minutes
I was comfy as a Joey in a pouch

Now the game turned out to be close all night
With our team scraping over the line
When the final whistle blew we were back in the race
Everything was going just fine

Until I thought to myself
O oh I'm sure I've got something to do
It had to be done before the girls get home
And it was really important too

Oah no I remarked just as soon as I remembered
Whats wrong dad? Replied the young bloke
I said I've gotta write your mum a love poem tonight
Well he just laughed I said it's not a joke

He said everyone knows how to write a love poem
Surely you must know that too
Why don't you write it in the usual way
With roses are red and violets are blue

Well there I was pondering the thought
But I soon found there's no time for dreams
I had better write down a few relevant words
The only drama was what words it seems

He said everyone knows how to write a love poem
Surely you must know that too
Why don't you write it in the usual way
With roses are red and violets are blue

Well there I was pondering the thought
But I soon found there's no time for dreams
I had better write down a few relevant words
The only drama was what words it seems

Do I write of the attraction from when we first met
Or the friendship that's developed since then
Do I mention the bond that we share as a pair
Or the good times from time and time again

Do I talk of her strength to overcome rough seas
Or her softness I can't help but admire
Do I tell her how I feel from the pleasure of her touch
Or jot down all about her that I desire

When the girls returned home I hadn't written a word
Just couldn't write what I had in my head
My lady was talking of some top she had seen
When I just came out and said

Roses are red violets are blue
Words just can't describe
The love that I have for you

Well she bought it.....the top that is
It was on special and looked alright
Oh, and the subject of a love poem was then put on hold
And never mentioned for the rest of that night.

Marcia 2015

© Olive Dorey

The warnings were heeded, so no lives were lost
Though the Capricorn Coast is still counting the cost.
From inside our homes, we watched nature's force
And hoped that the creeks would run within course.

Some old homes imploded, reduced to just junk.
Wind gusts turned boats over; folk saw vessels sunk.
While brittle aged trees, wrenched from the ground
Flattened fences and sheds! We remember the sound.

With awareness and care, we ventured outside
To witness the carnage, sabotage far and wide.
The level four cyclone had tried very hard
To bury the space that once was our yard.

When cyclones are coming, bush birds disappear.
Do they soar to escape the terror they fear?
Do they ride the updrafts and on reaching the eye
Float calm and serene so high in the sky?

Damaged roads and town streets now seem twice as wide,
With destruction of trees, no shade from roadside.
Though emergency workers have all left the scene
We witness with gratitude where they have been.

When I walk on the beach, round dunes are no more.
Great chunks have been moved to sandbanks off shore.
Few she oaks remain, Marcia tore them to shreds.
But in time young oaks will show their green heads.

Though we felt the big blow, we were well prepared,
Our community cared, our problems were shared.
Twelve months have now passed, though some issues remain
We know how to survive, should it happens again.

Orange Celebrates Banjo's Birthday

Banjo Paterson was born on February 17 1864 and the town of Orange celebrates his birthday in style with an annual festival

The highlight of the festival this year was the inclusion of 'Dead Men Talking', a play about Banjo and Henry written and performed by Max Cullen and Warren Fahey. The play was sold out, some audience members having seen it 2 or 3 times. Max revels in Henry's wit and perfectly captures a sense of Henry's physicality, frailty and love of the booze. Warren, with squeeze-box in hand, provided the musical highlights and a wonderful portrait of Banjo. Together they portray the depth of friendship and rivalry between these two towering figures. The play is a must see and is touring throughout 2016.

Brand Orange and the Rotary Club combine their efforts to present a week of bush poetry events. The week began in style with a full day of poetry from Mel and Susie, Robyn Sykes and walk up poets at the Yeoval Community Day outside the Banjo Paterson Museum. Alf and Sharon Cantrell did a marvellous job organising the event and promoting poetry in the local schools.

Mel and Susie performed at the Banjo Paterson Birthday Dinner and managed to get up every day for the Bush Poetry Brekkies. They also judged the competition, along with Robyn Sykes, held for its second successful year. In the novice section: Celia Kershaw (1st); Les Smith aged 96 (2nd) and Ross Carlton (3rd). In the open section: Celia Kershaw (1st), Ralph Scrivens (2nd) and John Warner (3rd). Congratulations to all the competition winners.


An innovative highlight of the week was the poetry competition between 3 regional mayors. John Davis (Mayor of Orange), Matthew Dickerson (Mayor of Dubbo) and Gary Rush (Mayor of Bathurst) wrote and performed poems to the crowds delight. They were brilliant. Gary Rush made a special effort and not only wore his mayoral robes, included 2 young dancers to mime his poem, but found a loophole against the 'reading from paper' rule - he read from his ipad! This event was very popular and heaps of fun.

Buskers performed in the streets of Orange. A night market attracted thousands to eat, drink, listen to Jason and Chloe Roweth, Mel and Susie and walk up poets. A Sunday afternoon market at Emmaville Cottage again provide a walk up stage as well as local craft and produce and was well attended locals and visitors

The local historical society provided tours, talks and a special birthday brekkie. Canobolas State School students dressed in period costume and presented three fabulous pieces at a bush poet brekkie. Mel and Susie presented concerts in local schools. All in all it was a really great week, thanks so much to local rotarians who took on a swag of events and to Rhonda Sear from Brand Orange. This festival is in its infancy but we can see it become a regular event for bush poetry fans, competitors and history buffs - mark it in next years' calendar - Banjo's Birthday in Orange!

By Susan Carcary

Touring info for Dead Men Talking: <http://www.warrenfahey.com/performance/dead-men-talking-stage-play/> and facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/deadmentalkingshow/>




TASTE
COLEAMBALLY
FOOD AND FARM
FESTIVAL

FRI 21 - SUN 23 OCT 2016

Learn how farmers grow food for Australia and the world sustainably. See one of the most water efficient farming areas in Australia where one farm feeds an amazing 4,500 people every year of full water entitlement.

The Best of Coleambally's Food and Farming Heritage



Locally Grown
CULTURE

FREE CLIMBING | HOME HOSTING
MOTORHOMES & CARAVANS WELCOME

www.farm2food.net

Learn about agricultural food production and the importance of water to grow food and fibre. Associate locally grown commodities with the array of universally recognised brands commonly purchased at the supermarket. Embrace sustainable living using local produce in cooking. Enjoy arts and cultural workshops and entertainment for kids and adults.

Proposed Program...

FRI 21 OCT
Evening: Cocktail Party | Opening Art Exhibition

SAT 22 OCT
All Day: Art Exhibition | Farm Tours & Coffee Drive | Poker Run
Morning: Fun Run | Evening: 50 Mile Meal

MAIN STREET FESTIVAL SUN 23 OCT
7.30am: Poets Breakfast
9am-1pm: Festival Trail

Pioneer Heritage Centre - Paddock to Plate Present - Snack Shack with Coffee & Home-baked Mince - Guest Foodie - Railway Diner - Natural Fibre Showcase - Farm Yard - Biodiversity Centre - Walking Hole - Entertainment & Street Performers - General Market Stalls - Children's Activities - Cycleable Card Tables - Art Precinct - Indigenous Welcome Dance, Cultural Workshops and Dance Classes - Indigenous Bush Tucker Expo - Art Exhibition and Competition - Meet the Makers - Obtaine jewellery artists and metalworkers and their creations - Play Up Poetry Recitations and Buskers - Kids and Adults Art Workshops

12.30pm: Food N Fibre Regatta
Locals & visitors are encouraged to enter this quirky event to eat around an obstacle course carrying their team's home-bull-bait featuring Australian and local food packaging.


3pm-4pm: Coby Cook Off
Cooking competition for kids and adults using local ingredients.

Guest Foodie - Rodney Dunn
Meet and eat with Rodney Dunn, food writer and chef. Rodney is passionately showing his love of strong home-grown local ingredients in producing delicious meals. Rodney was the food editor at Australian Geographic Traveller and now runs the successful Agrivore Fitzcarrald cooking school in Tasmania.

Treasurers are invited to stay for a whole nation and after the festival.

VENUE INFORMATION: www.farm2food.net
Email: info@farm2food.net

FESTIVAL COORDINATOR: Lisa DeBarto 0428 823 429
ASST COORDINATOR: Paula Clarke 0428 866 426
SECRETARY: Penny Sheppard 02 6364 9527



Poet's Breakfast

Local Bush Poetry Writer & Performer
CAROLINE TOUHEY

With Special Guest Performer:
Award Winning Bush Poet
JOHN PEEL

Come to the festival and enjoy a relaxing & entertaining morning of bush poetry. If you've never recited, here's a wonderful opportunity to experience the joy of having a go in an informal and supportive atmosphere.

If you're a seasoned pro, we can't wait to be entertained by you!

Poets' Breakfast enquiries can be made to
Caroline Touhey
M: 0428 675 743
E: carolinetouhey@daisylodge.com.au

2016 CAMOOWEAL DROVERS' CAMP FESTIVAL
26th - 28th August, 2016

www.drovercamp.com.au email info@drovercamp.com.au

**DROVER'S CAMP
TALENT AWARD 2016**

10.00 a.m. Sunday 28th August

The three performance categories of Bush Poems, Yarns and Ballads are judged and awarded prizes separately (\$100 each), and the best of any two categories will receive the DCTA Trophy.

*Junior section 1st = \$25
all junior entrants receive DCTA certificates.*

For information or entry form contact Brenda Joy,
PO BOX 1727, CHARTERS
TOWERS Q. 4820
email halenda@live.com.au
phone 04 3812 1074

ENTRY FORMS CAN ALSO BE
DOWNLOADED FROM
ABPA WEBSITE
abpa.org.au – Events



**DROVER'S CAMP
POETS'**

BREAKFAST

7.30 a.m. Sunday
28th August

with

*John Lloyd
Brenda Joy
Carmel Lloyd*

and more.

All walk-up
performers
welcome.

*M.C. - ABC's
John Nutting*

**THE POST OFFICE HOTEL
BRONZE SPUR
AWARD 2016**

for written bush verse.

*First prize = handcrafted
Bronze Spur trophy + \$300
2nd \$150 and ribbon,
3rd \$75 and ribbon*

CLOSING DATE

29th July, 2016

For entry form and
conditions of entry
contact Ellen Finlay
Written Poetry Coordinator,
46 DIANE STREET,
MOUNT ISA Q.4825
phone (07)4743 5070
0427 127 864

ENTRY FORMS CAN ALSO BE
DOWNLOADED FROM
ABPA WEBSITE
abpa.org.au – Events

NEW WRITTEN COMPETITION

"THE BETTY OLLE POETRY AWARD"



- For traditional Australian rhyming poetry with an Australian theme.
- Open and Junior (12 years and under) sections.
- Open section - First Prize \$500 plus trophy.
Runner-up \$200 plus certificate.
- Junior section - First Prize \$100 plus trophy.
Runner-up \$50 plus certificate.
- Entry fee - Open \$10 per entry form (maximum of 2 poems)
- Entry fee - Junior section - free.
- Closing date - 15th August 2016.
- Entry forms and conditions of entry available from the ABPA website - events and results page.
- Conducted by the Kyabram Bush Verse Group in memory of foundation member Betty Olle.

The aim of the Betty Olle Poetry Award is to provide an opportunity for poets to share their work, to encourage the writing of new work, to acknowledge the skills of our junior poets, and to keep the spirit of Bush Poetry alive.

Yass Show Poetry

featuring a just-for-the-fun-of-it

Poets' Breakfast

8.30 - 10.30am

Sunday April 10, 2016

at the

Shearing Pavilion, Yass Showground.

Junior Competition – best presented poem and encouragement award for reading/performing own poem.

Entries taken on the day.

For more information contact Robyn Sykes

robynsykespoet@gmail.com, PO Box 100, Binalong NSW 2584 (02) 6227 4377

Come along – just for the fun of it!

BINALONG BUSH POETRY PRIZE



Hosting the 2016 ABPA NSW Bush Poetry Championships

The program is designed for maximum enjoyment and to include poets at all ages and stages.

The festival opens on Friday 9 September at 7pm, and kicks off with novice and intermediate poetry competitions, and 'walk-ups'—for non-competitive poets and yarn-spinners.

The Saturday and Sunday programs include: Binalong Bush Poetry Prize competitions, which are weighted toward humour.

The program also includes, non-competitive activities such as music, time to relax and an opportunity to explore the township of Binalong.

Saturday night will feature our '*Celebrate Australia Concert*'.

The event has four competitive sections

- Written
- Open Performance: Classical, Modern, Original
- Intermediate and Novice Performance
- Junior Written and Performance

OVER \$5,500 IN PRIZE MONEY

Entry forms available at:

www.abpa.org.au or www.binalongartsgroup.org.au

E: robynsykespoet@gmail.com or P: 02 6227 4377

**CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES MON 1 AUGUST, 2016.
POST TO: THE COMPETITION CO-ORDINATOR,
PO BOX 100 BINALONG NSW 2584.**

(No late entries will be accepted).

9-11 SEPTEMBER

Regular Monthly Events

NSW

Illawarra Breakfast Poets meet every Wednesday at 7am at Coniston Community Hall, next to Coniston Railway Station. Ample parking, no steps, everyone welcome.

"Bush Poetry In The Upper Lachlan." The Laggan Pub, Laggan NSW. The 1st Wednesday of every month, starting at 7.30pm. For further details contact Mike or Elaine on (02) 4837 3397

Gosford Bush Poets meet at 7pm the last Wednesday of every month at the Gosford Hotel, crn. Mann and Erina Streets Gosford. All welcome. Contact Vic Jefferies 0425252212 or Peter Mace (02)-4369356

Port Macquarie (Hastings-Macleay) Poetry Group now meets 2nd Sunday afternoon 1pm to 4pm, Port Macquarie Senior Citizens Club (Pioneer Room), south end of Munster St, Port Macquarie. Contact Rod, Janice, Ian, Tom or Bessie 6584 5425

Milton Ulladulla Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Group First Sunday Every Month at Ex Servos Club Ulladulla 2pm start visitors welcome contact John Davis 02 44552013

Binalong - A Brush with Poetry @ Black Swan Wine Bar and Gallery. last Sunday of every odd month (except January), 2-4pm Open mic. Contact Robyn Sykes 02 6227 4377

The Queanbeyan Bush Poets meet at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Casuarina Room at the RB Smith Community Centre, Crawford Street, (opposite the Council Chambers). Contact Laurie McDonald on 02 6253 9856

Port Macquarie Minstrels , Poets and Balladeers meet fortnightly; 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 1pm in the Pioneer Room, Senior Citizens Hall south end of Munster St, Port Macquarie . Contact Tom McIlveen 0417 251287

2nd Sunday - 2:00 pm Poetry at the Pub Katoomba Blackburn's Family Hotel. All forms poetry, free entry. Contact Denis Rice 02 4782 6623 tdrice3@southernphone.com.au

SINGLETON BUSH POETS. Meet at the Albion Hotel, John Street Singleton. 7pm on the first Tuesday of each month. Contact Neville Briggs 02 65711398.

QUEENSLAND

North Pine Bush Poet Group meet from 9am on 1st and 3rd Sunday of every month at The Distillery - North Pine Hotel, Old Petrie Town, Dayboro Rd. Petrie Contact :- Manfred - 0411 160510 or Cay - 07 34083219.

Kurilpa Poets - last Sunday of the month 2pm to 4.30pm, Croquet Hall, 91 Codelia St. Sth Brisbane. Contact Marilyn 0458 598 683

Geebung Writers - 9.30 am every 2nd Wednesday of the month at Geebung RSL. Contact Jean (07)32654349

Bundaberg Poets Society Inc. 2nd Saturday of the month. Rum City Silver Band Hall, Targo Street. Contact Edna 0428 574 651; Jayson (07) 41550778 or Sandy (07) 41514631.

Beaudesert Bush Bards meet on the 3rd Friday of each month from 9.30am at the Beaudesert Arts & information Centre, Mt. Lindesay H'way, Beaudesert. Phone 07 5541 2662 or 3272 4535.

Redcliffe Peninsular Poets - 1st Tuesday of the month, 7pm to 9pm. Winton Room, Redcliffe Cultural Centre, Downs Street, Redcliffe. Contact Janice Ebrington 0421941494

Russell Island Writers Circle - 2nd Thursday of the month at 9.30 am. St. Peters Church Hall (Next to IGA). \$2 donation. Contact Trish (07)34091542

Shorncliffe Cafe On The Park - 3rd Monday of the month from 6pm, 6 Park Pde, Shorncliffe. Contact Kevin Dean (07) 38810986

Townsville Bush Poetry Mates Inc meet every first Tuesday of the month at Aitkenvale Library Meeting Room at 7:00pm. They also meet at Bellevue Hotel, Allen Street, South Townsville, every third Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm for 'Pub Grub' and 7:00pm for 'Walk-Up' poetry. Loads of fun. All welcome.

Bribie Island Bush Poets meet at 6.30 pm on the 4th Monday of each month in the Conference Room of the Blue Pacific Hotel, Woorim on Bribie Island. Contact Cay - 07 34083219.

Victoria

Kyabram Bush Verse Group- First Monday, every second month, namely Feb, April, June, Aug, Oct, Dec. at the Kyabram Baptist Church meeting room, crn Fenaughty Street and Lake Road Kyabram 7.30pm. Contact Mick Coventry 0427-522097

Gippsland Bush Poets meet Monthly, 7.30pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the RSL Hall in Hood St. Rosedale

Top of the Murray Poets and Bush Storytellers (TOMPABS) meet Monthly (mostly Tuesdays in Corryong) for writing workshops, Monthly on 3rd Sunday for Music and Poetry at Maurie Foun's 'Poets Paradise'. Contact Jan Lewis (02) 60774332

Bendigo Goldfields Bush Poets - Third Sunday even numbered months, except December when second Sunday. Newmarket Hotel, cnr Nolan St & Strickland Rd, Bendigo 1.30pm to 4.30pm. Contacts: Geoffrey Graham 03 5446 7104 or Ken Jones 03 5441 5121

Henry Lawson Memorial & Literary Society Inc. - Meet third Saturday each month/except January. Monastery Hall St. rear St. Francis Church, Lonsdale street. Melbourne. All Welcome. From 1-30pm till 4-00 pm. Contact: Maree Stapledon; 0408 100 896

WA

Albany Bush Poets Group 4th Tuesday of each month. Contact Peter 98446606

Perth monthly muster, 1st Friday of each month 7pm - 9.30pm at The Auditorium, 26 Plantation Drive Bentley Park 6102 Contact Dave 0438341256 or Terry 0894588887.

AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETS

If you wish to find out more about the Australian Bush Poets Association, or if you are not already a member of the ABPA and wish to become one, please go to the our Website www.abpa.org.au to download a membership form, or contact the Secretary secretary@abpa.org.au