

A.B.P.A.



**Australian Bush Poets Association
Volume 27 No. 1 Feb/March 2021**



Oii!!
You
Remembered To
Renew Ya ABPA
Membership
Yet?

Welcome To 2021!

Poets' Breakfast

King of the Ranges
Murrurundi NSW

Hosted by Carol Heuchan
With 'Dubby' Doubleday
Saturday 25th September

8am - Poetry & Tucker Tent
Walk-ups welcome!



50th BRONZE SWAGMAN AWARD

FOR BUSH VERSE

2021

ENTRY NOW OPEN

Be part of history. Pen a verse or two or three
and enter the 2021 competition.



Entries close 30th April 2021

See www.bronzeswagman.info
or contact

Jeff Close, Hon Co-ordinator
closeandmoller@gmail.com

2021 INVITATION

You are cordially invited to attend the
celebrations for the
50- Bronze Swagman Award For Bush Verse

to be held in Winton on
Monday 20th September 2021
at Windemere Station, just out of town.

You may be interested in also taking in:

- Thursday 16th September 2021 – children's Bush Poetry Performance Festival at Winton Shire Hall. Free entry
- Saturday 18th September 2021 – proposed North Gregory Race Club meeting
- Monday 20th September 2021 – 50th Bronze Swagman Event which will also be our Welcome to the Outback Festival
- Tuesday 21st September to Saturday 25th September – Winton's Outback Festival.

Plan early to be part of the fun and celebrations.
Contact: Jeff Close, Hon Bronze Swagman
co-ordinator at closeandmoller@gmail.com

Website: bronzeswagman.info

From The Editor

A call out to all Members to make sure your Membership has been renewed for 2021 and also your Insurance if applicable.

Membership Renewal Forms were included in the previous issue but are also available online at our website

www.abpa.org.au

A big thanks to those who have already renewed and may 2021 be kinder to all our members than 2020.

Neil McArthur

ABPA Committee Members 2020

Executive:

President	– Tim Sheed	president@abpa.org.au
Vice-President	– Ray Essery	essery56rm@bigpond.com
Secretary	– Meg Gordon	meggordon4@bigpond.com
Treasurer	– Christine Middleton	treasurer@abpa.org.au

Members on Committee:

Manfred Vijars		manfred@rocketfrog.com.au
Tom McLveen		thepoetofoz@gmail.com

State Reps

Peter Frazer (Qld)
Bill Kearns (NSW)
Jan Lewis (Vic)
Irene Conner (WA)

Non Committee Positions

Webmaster	Gregory North	web@abpa.org.au
Magazine Editor	Neil McArthur	editor@abpa.org.au
Facebook Editor	Jan Lewis	janlewis1@hotmail.com



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Quarter Page not available

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, Word or PDF Format to editor@abpa.org.au
All payments to be made within 14 days to

The Treasurer - Christine Middleton

P.O. Box 357 Portarlington
Victoria 3223

treasurer@abpa.org.au

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.

Next Magazine Deadline is March 27th 2021

For Magazine Submissions can you all please note.

Articles, Poems, Stories, etc. need to be submitted in either Word (.doc or .docx) format or PDF (.pdf) format. Old Publisher files and .odt and .windat files can not be used due to being outdated.

For Photos, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE send Pics that are of a high quality and most importantly IN FOCUS! A lot of readers tell me 'That photo was a bit blurry!'. But when receiving one photo from an event which has not been captured well, it does not matter what programs, filters etc. you put it through, it cannot miraculously be put in focus.

I appreciate all efforts of those members submitting to the magazine, so they are just a couple of important hints to help me publish your articles and poems with the respect that they deserve.

Send Submissions to editor@abpa.org.au

President's Report

Welcome everyone to the new year, that hopefully, with the rollout of the vaccine, will be very different to 2020. As a nation we have paid a small price for the lockdowns, compared to those countries that didn't react in a timely way.

As mentioned in previous reports, 2020 was a terrible year for live performance entertainment of all kinds and our group of professional poets and storytellers suffered along with the rest.

I urge all our members to get out and support and promote live shows as and when they start up again.

Further to previous reports, the organization has had a very successful year membership wise with members numbers almost doubling due to hard work by our Treasurer.

The AGM was held on the twentieth of January via Zoom and all office bearers have been returned, which is a good thing for the stability of the organization.

I thank the committee for their diligence and support during the past year.

The new committee are as follows:

President, Tim Sheed

Vice President, Ray Essery

Secretary, Meg Gordon

Treasurer, Christine Middleton

Committee Members, Tom McIlveen and Manfred Vijars

State Representatives,

NSW, Bill Kearns

Victoria, Jan Lewis

Queensland, Peter Frazer

Western Australia, Irene Conon

Last year was a good one for the organization and it was a pleasure to be part of.

I look forward with eager anticipation to an even better 2021.



Tim Sheed
President ABPA



Visit Our Website www.abpa.org.au

My "Singing Garden"

© Shelley Hansen 2020

Winner (Marian Mayne Prize) – Adult Open Poetry – The Toolangi CJ Dennis Poetry Competition 2020

I have seen the "Singing Garden" in the verdant hills at Arden where the poet C.J. Dennis spent a myriad of days till, surrounded by the story of the seasons in their glory, he was moved by inspiration to create poetic praise.

There the greenness fills the senses as the early cool condenses and each dewy leaf bends gently in the filtered light of dawn. All the forest birds assemble in a song that makes me tremble as they join in endless harmony to usher in the morn.

From the rhododendrons' splendour to the raindrops, soft and tender, I have shared the spell of silence in a deep cocoon of peace, while the copper beech stands counting off the years, its girth amounting to a summary of sunsets as the dusk brings sweet release.

Coming home, the contrast shakes me as reality awakes me to my arid native landscape, so affected by the drought. Here the smoke haze sets me coughing, and no rain is in the offing to allay the smell of dust-filled air that drifts from further out.

I refrain from planting flowers, as the chronic lack of showers has decreed that water-hungry plants could never hope to thrive, but, surrounded by the crackle of the greying grass, they shackle all their energy in wilting leaves to simply stay alive.

It would seem to be depressing when I contemplate distressing scenes of dryness that combine with shades of bushfire's aftermath, till I hear the birdsong ringing, and I know my garden's singing just the same as I recall while walking Arden's forest path.

Early dawn begins by clocking up the kookaburras mocking as they commentate from vantage points perched high above the world. Then the magpies warble gently as they search the ground intently for a scant and dewless breakfast worm that may have been unfurled.

On the hottest days I swelter, and the butcher birds take shelter in the shade of my verandah when the sun is at its crest. There they sing in perfect tandem songs they seem to choose at random – rendered languid by the noontime as they take their hour of rest.

In the birdbath wings are splashing, with a dozen species clashing as they jostle one another for a cooling dip and dive. Taught by parent birds' example, fledglings tentatively sample liquid life – replenished daily just to help them to survive.

When the western shadows lengthen, pink and grey galahs will strengthen their resources in a bold display of acrobatic grace, while their raucous calls remind me not to let my sadness blind me to the elements of beauty that are present in this place.

When the moon is full, the plover roams the paddock to discover just a few nocturnal insects that are active in the light, while its eerie "clacking" echoes with the "clicking" of the geckos that emerge from daytime camouflage to scamper through the night.

In this land of contradictions, there are thousands of depictions of survival through the ravages of climate's fickle heart. Tiny birds emerge undaunted when the thunderstorms have flaunted all the strength that they can summon up to tear the earth apart.

Through the turning of the seasons I discover ample reasons to applaud the bold resilience of birds I call my friends, as succeeding generations lay their permanent foundations with the instinct of eternity, whose wisdom never ends.

So when troubles make me weary, and the endless days grow dreary, I will seek my "Singing Garden" just as Dennis used to do. There, in quiet contemplation I will let my admiration of the enigmatic songbirds furnish strength to see me through.



SOUNDS OF THE DESERT NIGHT

© Peter O'Shaughnessy

Winner, 2020 Dusty Swag Awards, Adult Bush Poetry Section, Portarlington, Victoria.

Our deserts are vast, lonely, silent lands.
The sounds out here fade in the burning sands.
Dust devils briefly stir and hiss around
then just as quickly die. They leave no sound
but whispers in the heated desert air –
hot hints of breathless breezes linger there.

But as the velvet shades of night-time fall
the silver songs of desert dark-times call.
Soft sounds and muffled whisperings replace
the silence of this peaceful dreaming place
and noises of the day fade with the light.
So hush – be still and listen to the night.

The desert night has sounds we rarely hear,
soft scratchings as small animals draw near.
Small creatures that you never see by day
the spirits of the dark come out to play –
faint flutterings as tiny birds arrive,
the whispered sounds that bring the night alive.

You'll hear the murmur of the desert breeze –
the softened, sighing, wind's song in the trees.
The squeaks when desert mice sneak up to see
who's there and then – with frantic swish – they flee.
You'll hear the click of crickets in the heat,
the sounds of tiny creatures near your feet.

The night will bring strange beings on the prowl.
You'll fear a distant dingo's lonely howl.
You'll hear the startling crack of cooling rock –
the startled thump of wallabies in shock –
and in the creaking mulga by the lakes,
the ghostly wail the desert curlew makes.

With mournful moan the mopoke's warning stills
his world. It's listening – the silence chills.
And then the silent killer's deadly swoop,
that's when you hear the owl, his ghostly whoop.
A squeal – another tiny life has gone –
a moment's peace then night-time's sounds go on.

But if you listen for the desert's sounds
they're all around and every sound surrounds.
The songs of darkness tell us all is well.
The silences are where the dangers dwell.
With fearful stealth and frightened soft reply
the silent times are where the warnings lie.

Then as the first, faint shades of grey seduce
the dark and every sound night can produce,
that's when the secret sounds of night succumb
to morning's songs proclaiming – day will come.
The world grows still – the calm before the dawn

(The poem... We all love ' the glory of the everlasting stars' but, have you ever camped, alone, out in the mulga and paused to listen to the sounds of a desert night.

Many of you may not have had the opportunity, so I hope this little poem will take you to a wonderful and mysterious place")



A genuine Wilunatic, Peter was born and bred in the outback (Wiluna WA). He grew up in a typical bush pub on a diet of Banjo Patterson, Henry Lawson and the like, days when wool was king, cattle were still coming down the Canning Stock Route to Wiluna and bush pubs were still full of those wonderful characters that appear so often in our bush poetry.

His poems cover a wide range of topics and are authentic recollections of an era that will soon only exist in our yarns and verse.

A published author, his books include several collections of his Australian Bush Poetry, illustrated with paintings and drawings taken from several of his public exhibitions. He has won numerous awards for both bush and contemporary written poetry. His work also appears in numerous books and anthologies. A member of the Bunbury branch of the WA Bush Poets and Yarn-spinners since 2016, he is mainly a writer but has been known to perform his own poetry occasionally.

THE 1891 GREAT SHEARERS' STRIKE

By Tony Hammill.

The 1891 Great Shearers' Strike was a pivotal event in Australian history, one which impacts our way of life and standard of living today. It was also a period in which Queensland became a powder keg, to the point where it is widely acknowledged that we came perilously close to civil war.

The 1880's was a time when workers began to realise the benefits of forming unions and engaging in collective bargaining to further their goals of achieving decent wages and working conditions. The Queensland Shearers' Union was established in 1887, and the Queensland Labourers' Union in 1888. One of their goals was to unionise the workplace, as free or 'scab' labour undermined their efforts to achieve wage justice. Employers, of course, saw unions as a threat to their power and profits, and pushed for 'freedom of contract' whereby each man negotiated wages and conditions with his employer - in effect, the weak bargaining with the strong. And conservative, unrepresentative colonial governments backed the employers.

Matters came to a head Australia-wide in the 1890's, a decade of drought, poverty, bank crashes, strikes and widespread unemployment. A maritime black ban on wool shorn by non-unionists at Jondaryan Station on the Darling Downs in 1890 was successful and spread to Sydney, but mounted police drove back unionists trying to block wool wagons reaching the docks. The Maritime Strike of 1890 in Melbourne was a result of the Steamship Owners' Association refusing to negotiate with the Marine Officers' Association until they disaffiliated with the Trades Hall Council. The strike spread to seamen, wharf labourers and Newcastle and Broken Hill miners, involved 50 000 men, but failed after three months. A mass meeting of 60 000 people in Melbourne prompted the Victorian government to invoke the Unlawful Assemblies Act and call out the military, and Colonel Tom Price threatened deadly force.

In Queensland, the Shearers' Strike was precipitated by George Fairbairn junior, whose company controlled more than 20% of the Queensland pastoral industry. At his Logan Downs station near Clermont on 5 January 1891, his associates presented the shearers with a non-negotiable contract organised through the United Pastoralists Association. This was simply a union-busting manoeuvre and made no pretence at being even 'free contract'. The unionists refused to sign, and the strike was on.

Space does not permit lengthy details of the course of the strike. Strike camps were established and a strike committee formed at Barcardine (meetings were probably never held under the so-called 'Tree of Knowledge'). Fairbairn shipped in scab workers lured by pay well above going rates, whom unionists tried to convert through 'moral suasion'. The Queensland government sent 2000 soldiers and police, including the 'specials' to hotspots. The unionists drilled with sticks in military style and stockpiled rifles. Incidents such as the 'Clermont riot' occurred and unionists arrested. Unionists were dispersed at the point of the bayonet or sword. The Eureka flag was prominently displayed in some camps, five woolsheds burnt down, telegraph lines cut, large grassfires lit, and scabs or blacklegs and wool wagons protected by armed troops. Henry Lawson wrote 'Freedom on the Wallaby' in support of the shearers.

Altogether 245 unionists were jailed on the slightest pretext, and 12 (the St Helena 12) sentenced to 3 years by Judge George Harding in Rockhampton on the catch-all charge of conspiracy. The strike was called off in June, another followed with no better success in 1894, but a revolution did indeed occur. The strike propelled labour into politics, and in 1899 Anderson (Andrew) Dawson formed the world's first Labor government in Queensland, if only for a week. In 1904 John Watson became Australia's and the world's first Labor Prime Minister.

My full article is in issue 20 of History Queensland Magazine (Boolarong press Brisbane).



Celebrating 38 years at Young

1982 – 2020

NATIONAL CHERRY FESTIVAL WRITING COMPETITION FOR 2020

RESULT SHEET 2020

ADULT POETRY SECTION.

FIRST PLACE:	FEEDING TIME.	DAVID CAMPBELL	Airey's Inlet	Victoria
SECOND PLACE:	EPITAPH TO DEMOCRACY	ROBERT WINSTON	Mitchell's Island	NSW
HIGHLY COMMENDED:	BETWEEN TWO WARS	COLIN CAMPBELL	Holt	ACT
	THE GREAT UNRAVELLING	PIPPA KAY	Hunters Hill	NSW
	PLATFORM ONE	JOHN EGAN	Ashfield	NSW
COMMENDED:	SALTWATER PEOPLE	CATHERINE LEE	Mona Vale	NSW
	BESET BY DIRE STRAIT	TERRY NORWOOD	Bowral	NSW
	ANOTHER DAWN	BRENDA JOY	Charters Towers	Queensland

From the co ordinator : The Cherry Festival Presentation this year was the same as other festivals throughout the country. Cancelled. But cherry harvest functions took place. We, the Lambing Flat FAW pushed on and held our National Writing competition to promote our great town of Young. We hoped that, everyone who had to stay in isolation at home, would have time to write for us.... Well, write you did !!!

We had 168 short stories and 228 poems submitted from every state (with the exception of the NT) from 185 towns to make this year a record of almost 400 adult entries.

Our 10 judges had a really difficult task to pick the winners. So many entries needed to just edit a little more and tighten the focus of the work. Keep trying and we hope to see you again next year. Keep in mind that your entry fee supports our school competition prizes.

Thanks must go to Ted Webber for his persistence in spreading our entry form far and wide across Australia and to all of the writers who took the time to enter.

Thankyou so much for your support and enthusiasm.

Joan Dwyer

Never feel your Bush Poetry is either too good or too bad to share. Never doubt nor underestimate yourself, nor place too much self-importance on yourself.

We write our Bush Poetry as a means to share our stories and experiences. This is what our Readers and Audiences want. That is why Bush Poetry has always had such a staunch following.

Poems hidden away in drawers from lack of confidence, or because they are only written for monetary prizes or Awards are the Poems that almost no one ever get to hear.

Please send your work to the Magazine to share with other Bush Poetry lovers, Never underestimate nor overestimate the worth of your words!

The Editor



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA



W.A. Bush Poets



Alan Aitken on the Crystal Swan

PERTH .

THE PICTURES TELL THE STORY



Cobber Lethbridge, Arthur Leggett and Bill Gordon with 2 ladies in the appreciative audience on board the Crystal Swan Event Cruiser during the Fringe Festival held in Perth.

Cobber introduced Arthur for his bracket with a poem that he had written to commemorate Arthur turning 100 in 2018

(above l to r) Greg Joass, Stinger Nettleton, and Rob Gunn ("The Pied Piper" who bought a bus load of people from Mandurah for the Saturday night show)

A DECENT AUSSIE BLOKE

He's not a national treasure just because he's flamin' old;
 He didn't split the atom or turn gravel into gold;
 And he's not a living legend just because he wrote some verse;
 I've known half a hundred scribblers, some much better, some much worse.

Well, yes, he donned the uniform when he was just a lad,
 But so did many other blokes, some good-uns and some bad;
 He can't take too much credit for his capture by the Hun,
 In war zones these things happen; there were thousands, not just one.

No doubt he looked heroic at the victory parades,
 But what about John Wayne and his amazing escapades?
 And just because he came back home and started out again,
 That doesn't make him different from a thousand other men.

So why is Arthur Leggett such a credit to the nation?
 And why do we feel honoured by our close association?
 Well, I'll tell you what I reckon, and you've heard it all before:
 He's a little Aussie battler and he's honest to the core.

Compassionate, courageous, with a twinkle in his eye;
 When you listen to his stories, you just know he's dinki-di,
 And whether it's a tragic tale or whether it's a joke,
 He's earned his reputation as a hero of the nation,
 He's a living inspiration; just a decent Aussie bloke!

Keith (Cobber) Lethbridge 06 September 2018



Poets at the finale singing Waltzing Matilda with Terry Bennetts. (l to r) Bill Gordon, MC Rob Gunn, Cobber Lethbridge, Stinger Nettleton, Roger Cracknell, John Hayes, Christine Boulton

(below) part of the crowd in the beautiful shady grounds of Wireless Hill (Ardross)



**Winning poems from the 2020
Dusty Swag Awards**
co-ordinated by ABPA Treasurer
Christine Middleton

Our Poetry Kids



with **Brenda Joy**

Congratulations to all the young writers who entered this great competition.

JUNIOR (Primary) POETRY

Age 7-9 Years



AUSTRALIAN BUSH

by Umaima Qureshi
(Tarnet, VICTORIA)

The beautiful Australian bush.
Animals are all around.
But it is more than just a bush!
Flowers sprouting from the ground.
Kangaroos hopping and hopping
from its hind legs.

The long, green trees covering the sunlight,
Animals and creatures resting in the shade.

But the sunlight is so bright!

Little drops of water fall from the sky.

Flying creatures go by.

On the ground,
puddles start to appear.

All of them are round.

But all of a sudden,
the water dried.

And the animals took pride
to protect their home land.

Finally, all the animals are free to come out.

Do you see that nature is a beautiful thing?

And we must take care of it!

The Australian bush!

© 2020 Umaima Qureshi (at age 9)

JUNIOR (Primary) POETRY

Age 10 – 12 Years



THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK

by Bella Cunningham
(Coogee, NSW)

I'm the drought and the flood
I'm the Dreamtime ever loved
I'm the breezes always blowing
I'm where the small shrubs are growing
I am the Bush

I'm where the Kangaroos lie

I'm where the Kookaburras fly

I'm where the mangos grow

I'm where the river banks flow

I am the Bush

I'm the dust from outback trails
I'm where the Snakes glide with their scales

I'm where the Wombats crawl

I'm where the Lizards sprawl

I am the Bush

I'm where Boomerangs zoom

I'm where the Bottlebrush bloom

I'm where the trees blow

I'm where the Koalas are slow

I am the Bush

© 2020 Bella Cunningham (at age 11)



AUSTRALIA

by Max Colvin
(Mosman Park WA)

Sandy beaches
Open air
Amazing places
Everywhere.

The trees in shade
The sand in sun
All will not fade.
Australia's not done.

Magnificent scenery
Amazing creatures

This is my home
*pneumatophores — roots of mangrove trees - in this context, the lateral
With incredible features. (breathing/oxygen-seeking) roots which grow upward

© 2020 Max Colvin (at age 10)



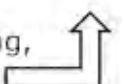
BY THE BEACH

by Ehan Ali
(Waitara, NSW)

Leave your worries by the shoreline,
And run your bare feet through the sand,
Let the water be your bed,
When you can't bear to stand.

Make friends with the flying seagulls,
And hold the sun up on your palm,
Before you duck beneath the water,
Where your world is mute and calm.

Tell the fish all your problems,
As they all come swimming past,
Do bursting,
Swim above the waves and gasp.



Our Poetry Kids

continued

Let the water hold your sadness,
And wash it right out to the sea,
So like a message in a bottle,
All your worries are set free.

And the sea might make you feel alone,
But the world has troubles too,
For how else do you suppose,
that the ocean got so blue?

© 2020 Ehan Ali (at age 10)

SENIOR (Secondary) POETRY

ONCE THERE WAS A TIME

by Rehan Qaium

(Clayton South, VICTORIA)

Once there was a time,
My grandfather once said.

The land was covered in blue, green and red.
The oceans were the bluest of blue,
and nature had no clue.

But when people's vessels docked,
Australia's fate was locked.

But what do you mean grandfather?
Without people there would be nothing.
No buildings, no buses.

No technology, no trains.

No power, no planes.

No, you and no me.

But listen boy,

once there was a time.

Life was harsh but simple to behold,
it reminds me of my time
in the green and the gold.

Surrounded by the giant Gum trees,
encasing me like a light breeze
on midsummer's eve.

The occasional laughter of the kookaburras,
and the grunt of the wombat.

The sublime scent of the dry grass,
and the rainbow of wildflowers
as fragile as glass.

The blissful bush, the saline marshes,
and the blatant beaches,
all fit together like jigsaw pieces.

Once there was a time,
where there was no deforestation,
no frustration.

No climate change, no loss and pain.

No over-hunting, no sadness and suffering.

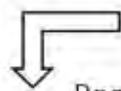
No polluting, and nature's saluting.

No wars, no never healing wounds.

Now I understand,

People hurt,

People torment,



People burn,
People kill.

People caused agony, anguish and anxiety.
People caused sadness, shock and suffering.
But remember once there was a time,
when there were no people.

© 2020, Rehan Qaium (at age 15)



BLACK RAIN FALLING

by Tessa Quinlan

(West Wodonga, VICTORIA)

The flash of a second sun blinds all
as the fireball climbs upwards
Into the dense morass.

The land is motionless
As the wind softly whispers
The first warning.

Ghost gums shiver
As the dust rises
From low on the horizon.

Night cremates dusk
As thunder echoes
Upon Emu Field.

Death is greeted
As all life surrenders
At the eclipse.

The cloud swallows Country
As the black rain starts falling
In big, greasy drops.

The welcoming arms of the willow
recoil from the sky
As the sludge scars the bark upon their trunks
Eating... always eating.

The heavens close upon them
As they press their bodies upon their children
And take their last breath.

Soldiers would find the bodies later
As they patrolled for signs of life
Their skin coated in a strange black dust.

And the other mothers would weep
As they gave birth to dead babies
With no arms, lungs, eyes...

The frail refused to wake
As they trekked away from the rain
Into foreign country.

Today, the glass glints in the sunlight
As the black rain keeps falling
Upon a charred landscape.

© 2020 Tessa Quinlan (at age 16)



IN A MANGROVE WORLD

© Brenda Joy

Winner 2020 Muddy River written competition, Logan, Queensland

By light of dawn
the rays of morn
come creeping, seeping, sweeping.
Amid the saline sediment I thrive.
My swampy habitat becomes alive.
with pops and squelches signalling the day's
awakening. Diverse crustaceans graze.
Pneumatophores* out-reach from sand surrounds.
Within this eco-system life abounds —
soft touched by light of dawn.

The rushing sea,
infinity,
astounding, sounding, pounding,
secured by clinging fingers I retard
the cyclic tidal movement. Strong, I guard
my tropic coastal realm against the surge
of energetic waves. Around the verge
of continent and island shores I give
a sheltered refuge where my wards can live
beside the rushing sea.

With reach of sun
new day's begun,
defining, shining, twining,
highlighting hidden feed beds. I remit
intruding kingfishers that blithely flit
among my canopy of citrus green,
and honeyeaters darting in between
my gnarled and wrinkled branches scarred by age.
Ah yes! I've witnessed much on Nature's stage —
revealed with reach of sun.

In noon-time's light
I view the blight,
ensnaring, staring, glaring.
Across the bay my system's been reclaimed;
marinas for estates rise unashamed.
The distant blare of raucous, Man-made world
disturbs my peace — development's unfurled
pollutant refuse. When the tide abates,
unsightly, washed-up debris infiltrates
exposed in noon-time's light.

As dusk descends
and night extends,
embalming, charming, calming,
the gentle breeze that rustles through my leaves
stirs memories as dreamtime inter-weaves
with fragile hopes that peace of seasons past
will be regained and Mangrove realms will last.
I've witnessed through the ages, now I pray
that Man may find a less destructive way
to live — as dusk descends.



Winton

In the year of

Waltzing Matilda

1895-6

Gregory North

New Book

*"Come for a walk that Banjo walked
in Winton in 1895."*

Jeff Close OAM, Chair, Waltzing Matilda Centre Ltd.

What did the newspapers have to say when solicitor and poet Andrew Barton "Banjo" Paterson visited Winton 125 years ago? During his visit, he and Christina Macpherson created what became Australia's best-known song – Waltzing Matilda. Through contemporary newspaper reports, the book paints a picture of the Winton that "Banjo" visited in 1895-6.

Winton in the year of *Waltzing Matilda*
A5-size, 360 pages \$35 posted.

Combine with *Winton's Wisp of Banjo Paterson*
double CD \$50 posted.

Also available

Rhyming Verse of Denis Kevans
hard-cover book, 600 poems \$60 posted.

www.gregorynorth.com.au

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MILTON SHOW SOCIETY BUSH POETRY

8AM POETS BREAKFAST WITH WALK UPS WITH A DIFFERENCE. PRIZE'S

\$100 1ST \$60 2ND \$40 3RD ENTRANTS MAY RECITE OR SING A SONG UNACCOMPANIED (WITHOUT MUSIC)

OPEN PERFORMANCE COMPETITION TO START AT 11AM

TO BE HELD AT THE MILTON SHOW

IN THE JNA THOMPSON PAVILION

SAT 6TH MARCH 2021

Sadly The Milton Show 2021 has been Cancelled

MAXIMUM OF 15 PERFORMERS ACCEPTED ON FIRST IN FIRST SERVED BASIS

Entries postmarked no later than 5th FEBRUARY 2021 Entry fee \$15

Entries to Poetry Coordinator John Davis 37 George Avenue Kings Point NSW
2539

POEM CAN BE SERIOUS OR LIGHT HEARTED AND CLASSICAL, CONTEMPORARY OR ORIGINAL
COMPLIMENTARY TEA & COFFEE WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE VENUE.

DOWNLOAD ENTRY FORMS FROM ABPA WEBSITE OR www.showdayonline.com and follow the prompts

OR Contact John Davis 37 George Avenue Kings Point NSW 2539

Ph 02 44552013 email jda76436@bigpond.net.au

REMEMBERING BILL THE BASTARD

© Irene Dalgety Timpone

Two pencil pines, like sentinels, in far Gallipoli,
stand guard beside a lonely grave that rouses poignancy.
There's sympathy for one long-gone, though few might know of Bill,
Australia's greatest war-horse, one of solid iron will;
but Bill the Bastard looms above all others of his kind,
and represents the thousands left so cruelly behind.
Bill symbolises, too, the bond between a man and horse
when Light Horse troops and Walers followed war's most deadly course.

Beyond Bill's grave, atop each ridge, the fallen Anzacs lie,
the headstones bearing epitaphs exposed to foreign sky:
and, sad to say, so many there, are nameless, where they fell –
like Bill, who saw them come and go, they had grim tales to tell.
The massive, chestnut Waler, one whose fame had known no bounds,
at War's end - new assignment - travelled back to Anzac grounds.
Bill's headstone gives his name and 'rank', a full identity,
inspiring countless visitors to seek his history...

Bill gained attention readily throughout 'enlistment' days,
impressing with gigantic size and wily, strong-willed ways.
He bucked off all would-be recruits, then gave a taunting sneer
which earned the 'Bastard' accolade that tended to endear
the roguish rascal to the hearts of horsemen, far and wide,
inspiring 'Bill the Bastard' yarns the troops would tell with pride.
Bill's legend grew, his exploits told by men of rank and fame –
before long, he knew men of note whose mateship he could claim.

En route to war, aboard the ship, Bill made one special friend,
Horse-Master, Banjo Paterson, his mate till battles' end.
Now, Banjo had an old-school pal, Lieutenant H. Chauvel
who came to be amazed by Bill, in one forsaken hell –
Bill caught his eye, so many times, at work, Gallipoli:
with hefty loads, while under fire, he strode on steadily.
He bore John Simpson from the field – one quickly raised to fame:
John and his donkey, heroes both, became a household name.

Lieutenant Michael Shanahan, best horseman, Allied Force,
soon noticed Bill, reputedly the strongest, fittest horse.
He watched him lugging giant packs up-hill, where duty led,
then plunging down the deep descents with bodies newly dead.
He witnessed, too, Bill's famous run along the Suvla trail,
in sight of Turkish sniper fire, delivering the mail;
then, riderless, twice shot, distressed, he aced the five-mile task,
a champion, without a doubt – what more could Light Horse ask?

In sick-bay, vets attended Bill, with Shanahan as well:
he'd seen Bill flinch and thought they'd find two bullet-holes to tell
that Bill had raced on, injured, knowing what he had to do.
The soldier yearned to ride that horse – and into battle, too.
Unlike so many, both survived, and left Gallipoli,
evacuated from the Cove – to Egypt – secretly,
and Shanahan was there for Bill, to care, caress, cajole,
to win his heart with gentleness and claim his very soul.

Four months of war inaction let the pair combine as 'one',
and Shanahan, now Major, felt the hard work had been done,
that Bill was battle-ready, and that he could trust his mount
in time of fierce action when each move would surely count.
The Oghratina massacre set both of them a test
when Bill, by saving others, proved he was the very best.
When leading out the column, he stopped dead, displayed his fear –
his rider's reconnoitre showed a deep ravine, too near.



Bill The Bastard.....Continued

Bill showed he was intuitive, alert both day and night, protecting well his rider and equipped to stand and fight. Thus, reassured, the Major, was prepared to lead his men to battle at Romani – and it didn't matter when. The 'Bastard' and the Major made an awe-inspiring team that shared, with all the Light Horse men, the Anzac troopers' dream of mighty charges that destroyed the dreaded enemy, avenging all the Anzacs lost at grim Gallipoli.

By 1.00am, on August 4th, the battle had begun. Sheer force of greater numbers meant the Turks could over-run the front lines of the Light Horse; but they kept to Chauvel's plan to fight from horseback when they could, and not fight man to man. The Light Horse staged a planned retreat while noise of battle raged as mounted troopers, Anzacs all, a mighty struggle waged against the savage Ottoman who'd crossed the Sinai sand to take the Suez, Egypt too – they had it all 'in hand'.

Beside a blood-soaked dune, the Major found four Light Horse men: their Walers dead, they needed mounts so they could fight again. By sliding back his booted feet he left the stirrups free. "Get up on Bill! Get up!" he cried, while Bill stood steadily. "Here, one each stirrup, two with me." He gave his mount the rein. Strong tension in the neck revealed the horse was feeling strain. Bill's knees were almost sagging from excessive, jostling weight: he struggled to stand upright and escape before too late.

With bulging eyes and nostrils flared, Bill gagged and gasped for air, then felt the Major's gentle stroke, the touch of loving care. Advancing foes began to fire. Bill's passengers did, too. A guiding hand, a gentle voice, and Bill knew what to do. That horse had strength and fortitude, great loyalty and pride – he groaned to match each painful step; but settled into stride. He carried five men and their gear two miles that fateful night, a measure of his courage and his super-equine might.

For Shanahan and his mate, Bill, their work would not be done until the dawn when help would come – Romani would be won! The mighty team fought six long hours against prolonged attack, inspiring fellow Light Horse men to fight while edging back. The Major, gravely wounded, slumped straight forward on his steed: with no commands, no signal-touch, Bill sensed his rider's need. The Major was unconscious; but Bill understood the case – with level canter, smooth and safe, he took him back to base.

With light of day, fresh Anzacs fought, and tide of battle turned. The enemy were parched with thirst: the sand and sun both burned. The Turks' attack had been repelled. They scurried in retreat; but other battles would be fought before their next defeat. A left-leg amputation took the Major from the war, and Bill became a packhorse, just as he had been before. No guiding hand upon his neck, no Major on his back, Bill galloped on for glory, guns and bullets in his pack...

In Harden - Murrumburrah, Bill the Bastard strides once more, a hero resurrected and retrieved from tales of yore: skilled hands of Carl Valerius revived Bill's claim to fame with focus on his history, his near-forgotten name. The statue is a work of Art, its stark reality a credit to the sculptor's craft and his integrity. There, borne upon Bill's huge, bronzed frame, four Light Horse men to save, and Shanahan, the Major, always selfless, strong and brave.

Bonds forged in heat of wartime never break and cannot fray – the greatest horseman, strongest horse, they live again, today. They symbolise the iron bonds once wrought in fires of war: between a trooper and his horse, they last for ever more. United, in their finest hour, but deepest agony, they fought, as one, for freedom and for our democracy. The massive, classic cenotaph fills patriots with awe, reminds them all of wars long-gone, what we were fighting for...



Great Aussie Reads

With Jack Drake



For quite a few years, I have been interested and enthusiastic about sustainable and regenerative agriculture and grazing. I have read of free thinking operators who have thought outside the square and pulled their degraded country back from the brink of total ruin by endless use of chemicals and artificial fertilizer.

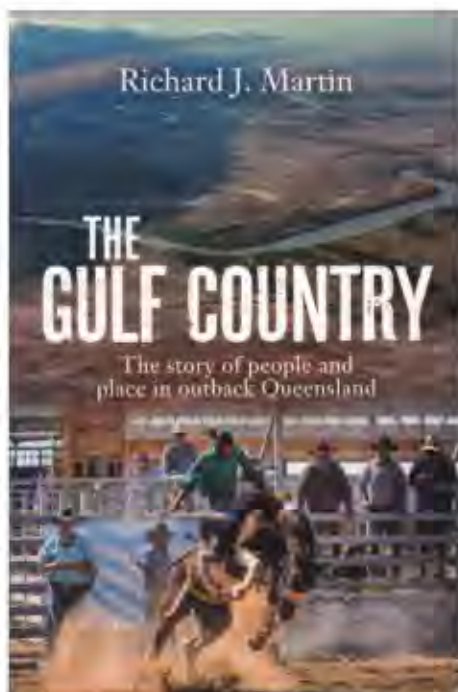
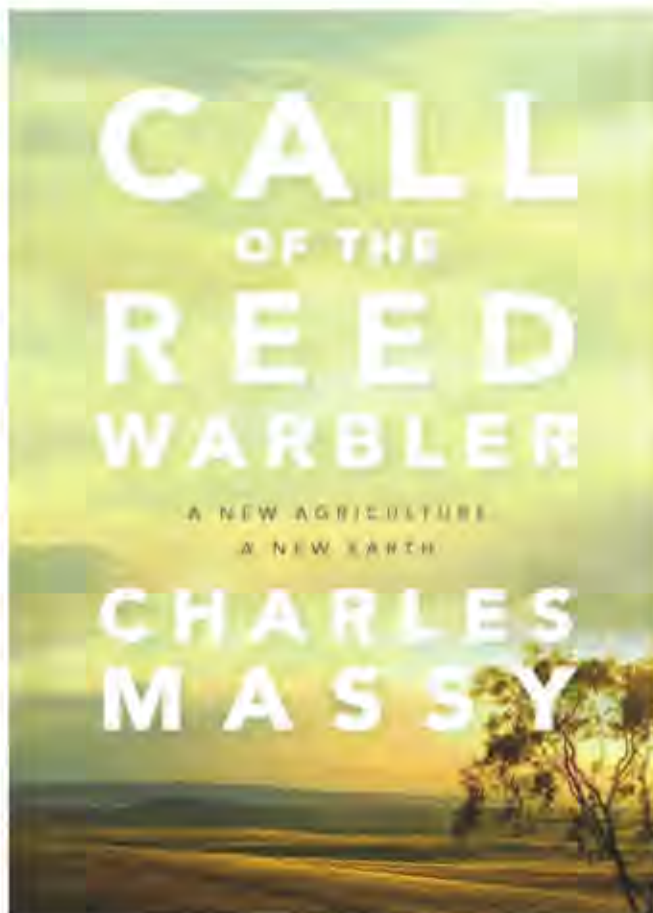
My wife Stella and I were sharing a good bottle of red with our neighbour Karen, a week ago and she lent us a book.

Call of the Reed Warbler by Charles Massy (University of Queensland Press 2017) puts this entire revolution in land healing and common sense, practical and profitable farming practice into an easily understood perspective.

Massy has travelled Australia and the world seeking out enlightened individuals who are not prepared to accept the status quo shoved down our necks by the marketers of chemicals and fertilizers and their minions.

Massy tells of Allan Savory, a South African who observed the way game migrations sustained and improved the African Veldt, and of Colin Seis a Gulgong farmer who was left with no options and no money in the wake of a bush fire and came up with a revolutionary option fuelled by the fact he had very little left to lose. Also many others who realised they could not heal themselves and their finances until they healed their land.

This is a book that every person who cares about the health of the land and the planet, should read and re-read. I have already ordered my own copy and a few extra for Christmas presents. Call of the Reed Warbler by Charles Massy. Get a hold of it. It's great.



There has always been a "Last Frontier" feel to Queensland's Gulf Country. The history of this fascinating piece of Australia is brought vividly to light in Richard J. Martin's work *The Gulf Country. The Story of People and Place in Outback Queensland*. (Allen and Unwin 2019).

From the first days of European settlement that has been dubbed "The wild time", when a very young Burketown was described as "a fight every half hour, horse racing on the plain or in the street and strong rum for everyone", through to the present time, Martin tells the Gulf story.

The dispossession of indigenous people, the establishment of pastoral properties right through to the mining era and today's campaign for equal rights and native title, the story of a wild land is there to enjoy.

The Gulf Country is a very well researched work. I enjoyed it immensely. Give it a go. You won't regret it.

More great Aussie reads at www.outbackbooks.info

WELCOME TO THE 2021 BANJO PATERSON AUSTRALIAN POETRY FESTIVAL

The Community of Orange, NSW, is pleased to provide a small program of events celebrate the birth and life of Andrew Barton (Banjo) Paterson in the Orange region. COVID-19 restrictions this year have prevented us from holding national events so we are focusing on events that can be held within COVID rules while showcasing the wonderful entertainment of Australian Bush Poetry - made famous by Banjo Paterson.

This is the eighth Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival since we celebrated Banjo's 150th birthday in 2014 and this one will be marked by the unveiling of a magnificent 3m tall bronze sculpture of Major Andrew Barton Paterson at Yoeval, where he lived as a young boy.

Involving young people in the appreciation of Australian Bush Poetry is one of the aims of our festival and again we will be sponsoring school workshops 'immerse in Verse' with Bush Poet Greg North as well as holding a youth Bush Poetry Competition for the young poets to recite their own original poem.

While in the region, enjoy the rest that the region has to offer - scenery, wineries, museums, galleries, villages, restaurants, cafes, sporting facilities and shopping.

For more information about the Festival and a full list of the Events Program go to

www.orange360.com.au

Join us @orange360 on Social Media
to share your Banjo moments with us

[f](https://www.facebook.com/orange360) [i](https://www.instagram.com/orange360) [t](https://www.tiktok.com/@orange360) /orange360 #banjopatersonfestival



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS:

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:



THE ORANGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MOLONG HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BANJO: MORE THAN A POET MUSEUM



List of Demands

© Long John Best 2021

You're a bloody tennis player, not a neuro surgeon, mate,
You've no grounds to go demanding, cos your status isn't great,
You just belt a hairy ball Cobs, back and forward cross a net,
Bet them Nobel Prize assessors haven't rated your job yet.

It's apparent that you're brilliant, at this Tennis game you play,
In your field you are an expert, precious, that's where you should stay,
For you're just an entertainer, after all is said and done.
You're another tennis player, and though rated number one

As a super fit obsessive, you have powered to the top,
But come on young man; demanding, this delusion has to stop.
What you're good at is a game mate, it has brought you fame and wealth
Belting balls is what you do mate, so lay off our Nation's Health.



CONFRONTING FEARS

© Maureen Stahl

She was undergoing chemo, she knew her hair would go;
she thought that her young grandchild sometime soon would have to know.
She said, "My dear there's something I must tell you all about.
I'm taking medication that will make my hair fall out"

"Why do you take it Nan?" her grandchild asked in some dismay.
"Because I have a cancer; it will make it go away."
The little girl was silent for a while and then she said,
"Dad said my Mummy had a cancer; now my Mummy's dead."

Nan thought about this problem; and how scared the child must feel.
Then she had inspiration on how with it she could deal.
She said "Remember Hairy Maclary, the book we read
last time that you were here before I tucked you into bed.

There were so many types of dogs some tall and others small
a lot of them were shaggy some had not much fur at all.
Some ears were cute and pointy others long and hanging down.
Some dogs had smiley faces while some seemed to wear a frown

We called all of them dogs though they were breeds of many kinds;
well cancers are all different we must keep that in our minds.
Mine's not the same as Mummy's so remember, if you will,
though cancer's not a nice disease it doesn't always kill."

"I still don't like it though," Nan heard her solemnly declare,
"because you won't look pretty if you haven't any hair."
Nan continued with her treatment and soon she was quite bald.
She wore a scarf or beanie, but a wig when people called.

The child once held a piece of hair to see how it would feel,
she tugged and said, "This won't hurt will it, 'cos it isn't real?"
"That's true," said Nan. "So shall I take it off so you can see?"
"No! No!" the child cried fearfully, so Nan just let it be.

Another day the child was there, a friend had called in too.
It had been raining so they found some inside things to do.
The sun came out, Nan said, "I think we should go for a walk.
I'll go and change my jumper while you two stay here and talk."

The jumper pulled the wig off leaving Nan's bald head exposed
just as the child ran in. She halted at the door and froze.
The look of horror on her face almost brought Nan to tears.
The friend knew she must do something to quell the young girl's fears.

She squatted down beside the child and in a voice so bright
said, "Nan looks strange without her hair; she's quite a funny sight.
But she is still the Nan we know." She chuckled as she spoke,
"Her head feels funny too; come here and you can have a stroke."

Nan watched and was relieved to see the fearful look subside.
Amusement crept across the face then came a smile so wide.
The child began to giggle and then as she stroked she said,
"Oh Nan you look like Pa now for you both have a bald head."

This fear had been confronted and now was overcome.
She'd been a child of barely two when she had lost her Mum
but she had known it was to do with this most frightful word.
It made her shrink a bit inside whenever it was heard.

The chemo did its job, thank God, and Nan's now well again.
Her hair grew back as long and thick as it had been back when
she heard the dreaded word that through her body sent a chill,
that word that we all fear, but cancer doesn't always kill.



Charlee Marshall

I found this poem by the late Charlee amongst my collection of hand written notes, but it had no title. I dare say Charlee was looking into the future a bit with this one! Ed

I am a plain and simple cow with large and hairy ears,
The source of milk and butter now for nigh a thousand years;
But scientists at Mittagong imply that I have sinned
And done the world enormous wrong by simply passing wind,
Which, for a cow, has always been a natural reaction....
In fact, when oats are nice and green, tremendous satisfaction.

To load the fault on other backs, that's how this mob are made;
It wasn't me who swung the axe to chop down all the shade;
But now, it seems, the bovine race is condemned en masse
For shooting holes in outer space with deadly methane gas.
Though how I could be blamed escapes my poor detection;
No wind I ever passed was aimed in that obscure direction.

Oh yes, I know it's not polite, but cows are only human,
We can't screw our face up tight with bubbles in our rumen;
And anyway, a messy bail is not our pick of places,
Why should we have to jam the tail and practise social graces?
It's not like dining at the Ritz.....I bet you folks would shudder
With icy fingers on your tits and cold hands up your udder!

Why are we prime suspects? Why should we head the table?
Have you ever heard the sound effects at daylight in the stable?
The horse has had the best of feeds – molasses, oats and hay
Since knights of yore primed up their steeds to dart into the fray.....
But no, they blame the poor old moo, so modest, uncomplaining,
We'll always end up in the poo while there's a cow remaining,

I've kept it bottled up inside – a passive sort of minion;
No more kow-towing... ..I decide to give them my opinion.
I think I'll go and ferret out where Parliament is meeting
And tell them what I care about the ozone overheating;
I'll back right up against the rail while they make laws below.
I'll arch my back and swish my tail.....and really let one go!



"The Adventures Of Bawwy McKenna."

Stawwing Bawwy Quokka.

© Peter White, Eagleby, 2021

On Wottnest Island lived the McKennas, a wespected family of quokkas,
Whose eldest son was known to all as Bawwy.
The McKennas hoped for a Finals win for their team, "Fwemantle Dockers".
But gweater was their hope for their son to mawwy.

Now Bawwy was a handsome lad much favoured by the women.
And Bawwy was quite fond of them as well.
But mawwiage wasn't on his mind, he'd wather spend time swimmin'
And catch a wave and body surf the swell.

Now don't get me wong, he liked the occasional 'hanky-panky'
And was often seen heading for "Lovers' Hollow".
Last Fwiday Shirley saw him and delibewately dwopped her hanky,
A sign to Bawwy he was meant to follow.

A pleasant hour was spent by both caught up in womantic glow.
They parted then and homewards made their way.
To the other quokkas, Bawwy's wumped fur would show
That Bawwy McKenna again had had his way.

To be fair to Bawwy he was more than fond of Shirley,
Of all womances Shirley topped his list.
To find a better partner, he would have to get up early.
When alone 'twas Shirley Bawwy missed.

Bawwy's Mum and Dad were forever dwopping hints
That he should leave the home and take a wife.
That Fwiday Bawwy's father said, "Bawwy you're our Pwince,
But for heaven's sake, go and get a life!"

Bawwy called on Shirley and he offered her his hand.
Shirley feigned surprwise and answered, "Yes!"
Bawwy puffed his chest out pwoclaming, "Ain't love gwand!"
Little did he know he'd dodged a mess.

Shirley said, "I'm pwegnant. In a month I will give birth"
Bawwy, without thought, asked, "Who's the dad?"
Saying that, Bawwy wished he'd be swallowed by the earth.
He'd never seen his Shirley look so sad.

"It's you, of course," said Shirley, "you uncawing little sod!
Who else would it be, if not you?
You may think to we women that you're a gift fwom God.
But you'd better think about what you will do!"

"Of course I know the joey's mine," Bawwy finally stated.
"I'm sowwy that I didn't think before.
Our joey's birth is weally vewy gladly anticipated."
And so our Bawwy played the field no more!

WINNERS OF THE DUSTY SWAG AWARDS POETRY & SHORT STORY WRITTEN COMPETITION 2020

Category 1: Adult Poetry

Peter O'Shaughnessy, First Prize, "Sounds of the Desert Night"
Irene Timpone, Second Prize, "Consequence of War"
Tom McIlveen, Highly Commended, "Old Man Drought"

Category 2: Adult Short Story

Irene Timpone, First Prize, "For Auld Lang Syne"
Brian Howley, Second Prize, "Rain Dreaming"
Diane Kolomeitz, Highly Commended, "A Matter of Time"

Category 3: Junior (Primary 7-9 yrs) Poetry

Umaima Qureshi, First Prize, "Australian Bush"
Max Colvin, Second Prize, "Australia"
Sriarush Madtav Sastram, Highly Commended, "Harmony with Nature"

Category 4: Junior (Primary 7-9 yrs) Short Story

Eleanor O'Brien, First Prize, "Skip"
Matilda Rose Boaden, Second Prize, "Blowie Sandwich"
Samual Jordan, Highly Commended, "The Race"

Category 5: Junior (Primary 10-12 yrs) Poetry

Bella Cunningham, First Prize, "The Australian Outback"
Ehan Ali, Second Prize, "By the Beach"
Ehan Ali, Highly Commended, "Blue"

Category 6: Junior (Primary 10-12 yrs) Short Story

April Rose, First Prize, "Unforgiving Red"
Juliette Phillips, Second Prize, "Orange Flames"
Ratin Poursaeed, Highly Commended, "The Fires"

Category 7: Senior (Secondary) Poetry

Rehan Qaium, First Place, "Once There Was a Time"
Tessa Quinlan, Second Place, "Black Rain Falling"
Devrika Bogahapitiya, Highly Commended,
"The Golden Treasure"

Category 8: Senior (Secondary) Short Story

Ananya Nair, First Place, "Suburbia"



MATTHEW & ELIZABETH

© Bessie Jennings, nee Everingham, 13-5-16

(the story of my grandfather George Everingham's grandparents, First Fleet convict Matthew Everingham and his Second Fleet convict bride, Elizabeth Rimes.)

When George the Third was on the throne (the king they said was mad) the Thames was just a sewer then, and London's air was bad. The gaols were bursting at the seams through petty theft and crime, with convicts crammed in rotting hulks amid the river's slime.

The year that Matthew turned fifteen – 1785 – they sent him there, with older men. He managed to survive two years or more, till Captain Phillip helped to clear the gaols. He sailed with those unwanted scum to far-off New South Wales.

In January '88 they landed on our shore – Botany Bay – such wilderness they'd never seen before. Young Matthew's crime was: unemployed, he'd tried to sell some books belonging to his ex-employer. So, with other crooks

His sentence was 'for seven years'. But most of them would learn their exile would be permanent; they never could return. His parentage we do not know. He'd learnt to read and write, and though he had no farming skills his future could be bright.

But meanwhile, back in London's slums a girl named Lizzie Rimes shared one small room with boyfriend Tom (so common, in those times). While he was looking for a job, she took a linen sheet and then a blanket from their bed, and pawned them down the street.

The landlord had the pair arrested. Both of them were tried. "I meant to give them back", she said. Her plea, though, was denied. They let Tom off; but not the girl. They needed females then as breeders for this colony, with all those single men.

And so that young Elizabeth came out to Sydney Town, a convict on the 'Second Fleet'. Then Matthew settled down. At twenty he was married, with Elizabeth his bride and granted land where Ryde is now, in farming countryside.

Then later, on the Hawkesbury, a part called Freeman's Reach, they farmed and raised ten sons and daughters (that is, five of each.) When Matthew met his death by drowning in the river there, Elizabeth his widow didn't fall into despair.

She farmed the place; her children helped; it worked just like a charm. For many years the place was called 'Elizabeth Everingham Farm'. Her grandkids grew and prospered. Most were farmers; one a nurse; some laboured building roads and bridges; one wrote rhyming versel

Some fathered politicians; some were dentists; one was black, and one of them my grandad George; I've visited his shack. He died when I was only ten; I don't recall his face, but since he wrote of 'comradeship, that's something I embrace.



COMARADESHIP*

By George Everingham.

There is the loneliness of crumbling friendship;
Loneliness in cities where the strange folk go;
And in the silence – that once rang with laughter
By an ash-strewn fireplace where the embers glow.

But there is friendship in the wiend's* cool fingers,
Fellowship with little things like bees and butterflies.
And there is comradeship in wild birds' voices
And in the mystery of a dog's deep eyes.

There is companionship with strong trees, towering
Up to the dream world where the Dawns go by;
And in the solitude and silence of the starlight,
Underneath the great vault of the friendly sky.

**spelling unchanged from the author's original.*

BJ

*(George Richard Everingham, my father's father,
was the grandfather I never knew.)*



You are invited to be part of the 2021 Blackened Billy Verse Competition

The 31st Annual Competition continues the legacy of Tamworth Poetry Reading Group (TPRG).

Since 1991, thousands of entries have been submitted, recording many aspects of Australian country and character. Past Award winners provide exemplary guidance for writers seeking rhyme and metre mastery.

"The Blackened Billy Verse competition has encouraged writers to put pen to paper to produce the most incredible range of rhyming verse, over the years honing their skills to now produce some of the best bush poetry ever written, as good as, if not better than Paterson or Lawson." - Jan Morris, on behalf of the Tamworth Poetry Reading Group (November 2019).

Competition Founder Jan remains a guiding force. The 2021 Billy is in the kiln. Made in the hills of Moonbi, by two blokes who play with clay above where the fibreglass chook is perched to attract tourists and draw attention to the poultry industry. Ian and Fred have been crafting the unique and hard-won Billy trophy annually since 1991.

The Billy plaque will be custom-curved and engraved in Tamworth – as it has always been. The winner's trophy plaque will be engraved and attached in the community hosting the awards ceremony. The minor question is where will that ceremony be? The more inviting question is 'Will your name make it onto the Trophy Plaque?'

The 2020 Awards Ceremony was celebrated as part of the Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival. It is anticipated the Awards for the 31st Billy will be announcing during the 2021 Festival, currently estimated to run from 13-20 February. Covid times add question, and Festival organisers will not decide for some time yet about happenings. Late October at earliest. In the interim, entrants should submit the BB2021 entries prior to the 30 November closing date.

In 2020, the Blackened Billy Verse Writing Competition was warmly welcomed by locals, poets and media, with newspaper and television tuning in to capture and share advice of the winners. The success of previous poetry events in Orange has lured an Australian Performance Poetry Championship to Orange for 2021. Excited to see what opportunities are realised, as the Covid-19 saga unfolds.

Entrants for the 2021 Blackened Billy Verse Competition may submit entries via postal or electronic means. Publication of future Tribute Books containing Blackened Billy Winners is likely. Will you be in it?

\$1000 Prize Pool



First Prize	\$500 plus Trophy and Certificate
Second Prize	\$250 plus Certificate
Third Prize	\$150 plus Certificate
Highly Commended	5 x \$20 plus Certificate
Commended	5 x Certificate

The 2021 Winton Outback Writers Festival 22-24 June 2020

The 2021 Outback Writers Festival will be held in Winton, Outback Queensland, from Tuesday 22nd of June until Thursday, 24th of June. The venue will be the iconic Waltzing Matilda Centre.

Each year, including COVID YEAR 2020, we have conducted a short story Competition and 2021 entries close on 30th April. 3000 words max. To celebrate QANTAS' first board meeting in Winton in 1921, a special prize will be awarded by the Judge to a writer who also incorporates the acronym QANTAS into their story. The judge will also select entries to be included in the 2021 book. Books 1-5 will be available at the Festival.



Further details from our website www.outbackwritersfestival.com.au

Happy Writing,
Jeff Close



THE NORTH PINE BUSH POETS GROUP PRESENTS THE QUEENSLAND STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR WRITTEN AUSTRALIAN BUSH POETRY

Poems must be written with good rhyme and meter and be about Australia, Australians or the Australian way of life.

This competition will be conducted under the auspices of the Australian Bush Poetry Association and in association with the Moreton Bay Readers and Writers Festival and the Fellowship of Australian Writers (Qld).

Entries are welcome from Interstate and overseas.

Open for entries: 30th April 2021. **Closing date:** 28 May 2021. **Results:** 4 July 2021

Classes:

- Open, Novice and Junior sections

Prizes

- **Overall Champion** (from the open class winners):
\$350 plus Graham Fredriksen Trophy.
- Open
 - Serious – 1st Prize \$350 – 2nd Prize \$100 – 3rd prize \$50
 - Humorous – 1st Prize \$350 – 2nd Prize \$100 – 3rd prize \$50
- Novice
 - Serious - \$100
 - Humorous - \$100
- Junior - 1st prize \$75 – 2nd prize \$25

Details will appear on <https://northpinebushpoets.com/> and the Australian Bush Poets Association website <http://abpa.org.au/events.html>

About Graham Fredriksen:

Graham was a very talented bush poet from the Kilcoy region who died in a tragic farming accident in 2010. His family has lived on "The Ten Mile" for generations. Graham was only the second poet to win the Bronze Swagman Award 3 times. He was a founding member of North Pine Bush Poets. His poetry lives beyond him.

The organisers are very grateful to the Championships Sponsors:



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Regular Monthly Events

NSW

Illawarra Breakfast Poets meet every Wednesday at 7am at Marco Polo facility at Woonona. Ample parking, everyone welcome.

"Laggan Bush Poets." 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 Bush Poetry Group meets fortnightly 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 1pm in the Pioneer Room, Senior Citizens centre south end of Gunster St, Port Macquarie. Contact Bill Yates 6583 3360, Barbara 6584 0208 or Bessie 6583 5255.

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 @ Cafe on Queen, 15 Queen St. In the studio by the Balgalal Creek. 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 Old School House at Christ Church, 39 Rutledge St, Queanbeyan. Enter via Church Lane. 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 6571 1398.

Wombat Bush Poets meet at 1.30 pm at the Young Hotel for poetry, music and open mic. Last Sunday of even months except December. Contact Ted Webber 0459 707 728

QUEENSLAND

North Pine Bush Poets Group meet at the rear of Coutts Cottage, Old Petrie Town, Dayboro Road Kurwongbah, on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month from nine a.m. to twelve noon. Contact the President Ian on 0427212461 or the Secretary Mal on 0417765226.

Kuripia 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 Jayson (07) 4155 1007 Edna 0428 574 651 or Sandy (07) 41514631.

Beaudesert Bush Bards meet on the **Second** 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.

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

Shorncliff "Poets of the Park" "Poets of the Park" meet at St Margaret's Church Hall in Sandgate, beside the primary. every 3rd Tuesday from 5-45 pm contact 042 15 14 555

Townsville Bush Poetry Mates Inc meet every the first Saturday of every month at 1pm at Aitkenvale Library Meeting Room at 7:00pm. Loads of fun. All welcome. Contact Barry on 0487 195 156

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

Logan Performance Bush Poets - meet 2nd Sunday of every month, 9 to 11am at the Beenleigh Historical Village. 205 Mains Road Beenleigh. All Welcome. Breakfast available Ring Gerry 0499942922..

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. Bendigo Club, 22 Park St, Strathdale (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

Mansfield Bush Poets Group - Second Tuesday of the month 1pm - 3pm, Mansfield Library. Contact Val Kirley 0400 654 596

WA

Perth 1st Friday monthly 7-9.30pm The Auditorium, 26 Plantation Drive, Bentley Park. Contact Rodger 0419 666 168 or Sue 0418 941 016

Albany 4th Tuesday monthly. Contact Peter 08 9844 6606

Bunbury 1st Monday even months 7pm. Rose Hotel. Contact Alan 0400 249 243 or Ian 0408 212 636

Geraldton 2nd Tuesday monthly. Beliar Caravan Park. Contact Roger 0427 625 181

Kalgoorlie 1st Wednesday monthly. Kalgoorlie Country Club. Contact Paul Browning 0416 171 809