

2017 DUNEDOO BUSH POETRY FESTIVAL WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION - RESULTS

Conducted under the auspices of The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

Judge: Brenda Joy (Pritchard)

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OVERVIEW: Bush poetry is verse in a traditional rhymed form, with regular rhythm. Subjects are not limited to the outback, but include modern concerns of the bush or city, however, poems should be distinctly Australian and terminology, particularly outback, should be Australian rather than foreign. Although this competition is for written poetry, the quality of the entry should make its reading aloud enjoyable. Because entries might be read aloud in public or published in the ABPA Magazine, unless pertinent to the context, entries should not contain offensive language or material.

CATEGORY: OPEN SERIOUS

POEM No.	TITLE OF POEM	POET'S NAME	PLACE/AWARD
S20	Old Country Halls	Will Moody	1st Place
S12	Bluey	Tom Mcllveen	2 nd Place
S27	Top Camp – 'Up in the Devil's Lair'	Terry Piggott	3 rd Place
S13	A Snowy River Tale	Tom Mcllveen	Highly Commended
S28	Driftwood	Will Moody	Highly Commended
S18	The Lady of the Lakes -- 1	Terry Piggott	Highly Commended
S7	The Wild One	Tom Mcllveen	Commended
S8	Won't you Come?	Tom Mcllveen	Commended
S40	The Legend of Leichhardt	Shelley Hansen	Commended
S9	Jimmy	Tom Mcllveen	Commended

JUDGE'S SPECIFIC COMMENTS RE WRITTEN SERIOUS PLACEGETTERS

1st Place Serious

Old Country Halls by Will Moody

This is an appropriate and very good Aussie subject. The poem effectively brings into being the closeness that existed between people in semi-isolated rural communities and how the local hall was a focus for their interactions. It also highlights the wonderful work being done by volunteers who strive to keep our history alive. It is commendable the way the poet has portrayed how the 'now' is the history of the future.

2nd Place Serious

Bluey by Tom Mcllveen

This is a heart-wrenching poem for all those who love dogs. The poet has captured the canine qualities of love and loyalty and the essence of the relationship between dog and human, beautifully. A very skillful writer.

3rd Place Serious

Top Camp – 'Up in the Devil's Lair' by Terry Piggott

This well-written poem contains some beautiful (and lonely) imagery evoked by someone who can relate to, respect and love the isolation and allure of the Australian outback. The ghosts of those who wander the remote regions of our land accompany those who venture out today.

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CATEGORY : OPEN HUMOROUS

POEM No.	TITLE OF POEM	POET'S NAME	PLACE/AWARD
H14	Lost for Words	Shelley Hansen	1 st Place
H4	When Irish Hearts are Happy	Tom McIlveen	2 nd Place
H3	Love Electronically	Wendy Seddon	3 rd Place

JUDGE'S SPECIFIC COMMENTS RE WRITTEN HUMOROUS WINNING POEMS

1st Place Humorous

Lost for Words! by Shelley Hansen

This poem is not 'laugh-out-loud comedy, but it is a humorous and extremely well-written account pertaining to a modern situation. The poet's innovative skills of rhyme and metre are excellent. The research into the dilemma of Australia's disappearing vernacular is commendable. Thank you to the poet for bringing this pertinent issue into focus through poetry.

2nd Place Humorous

When Irish Hearts are Happy by Tom McIlveen

This poet demonstrates excellent understanding of both rhyme and metre. The light-hearted subject is humorously presented through a skillful blending of dialogue into the storyline. The 'larrikin' Irish (and now Australian) character is aptly conveyed.

3rd Place Humorous

Love Electronically by Wendy Seddon

This poem has both a distinctly 'Aussie' and a distinctly 'modern' flavor. Thank you for this well-written, interesting and humorous prospect of technology going feral.

Brenda Joy
Written Judge 2017

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WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION JUDGE'S REPORT

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What a privilege to be allowed to judge such wonderful poetic contributions as those received in this year's Dunedoo Bush Poetry Competition (and what a difficult task). There were poems of pathos and poems of humour, poems of the city, the country and the outback. There were poems about love and about war and so many other aspects of life for Australians in and beyond Australia. There were reminiscences from the past and experiences from the present, many touching on the wide range of diverse developmental situations and relationships which we all encounter on our path of learning.

Thanks must go to Eric Beer the Written Bush Poetry Co-ordinator for his extensive work and to the Dunedoo and District Development Group (President Lloyd Graham) for their on-going support through their annual Bush Poetry competitions. Poets are very grateful for the opportunity to share and compete. Thanks also must go to the sponsors whose generosity ensures that these festivals are able to continue and are able to include this important written component.

Not everyone can be a winner in a competition, but everyone who enters hopefully gains something to help improve their capacity to write high standard poetry.

From the Australian Bush Poets Association Assessment Sheet...
"Bush poetry is verse in a traditional rhymed form, with regular rhythm."

Rhyme and Metre are the essentials of Bush Poetry regardless of the subject matter. It is these two pillars that make our *genre* a distinctive and specific art form and one which the ABPA is dedicated to preserve and expand upon. Whilst it might be tempting for a judge to simply look at topics and select poems that appeal to his/her particular taste, this is not fulfilling the ABPA judging requirements. Therefore, in any written competition operating under the guidelines of the ABPA, to maintain standards, winning poems must conform to the parameters of these twin demands. The first step in assessing which entries are in the running for awards and which are not must be to ensure that all poems progressing forward for consideration comply with the basic selection criteria.

This does not mean that adventurous forms are not allowable. Poets these days are experimenting with subject matter and poetic structures which go beyond the limitations of the set traditional prescriptions but which, nevertheless, still comply with the essential aspect of maintaining consistency (unless deviations are obviously intentional) of both rhyme and metre throughout a poem. It is an exciting time in the evolution of Bush Poetry in both content and form.

Entries in this competition were of a fairly high standard. It was gratifying to note that over one third of the poems submitted, demonstrated good to exceptional understanding of the skills of rhyme and metre and could therefore go on to be further compared on their poetic merits of language, imagery, flow, structure, storyline, impact, etc. etc.. and, when all else proved even, on their suitability for this particular competition.

Among the other poems where the basic technical skills required more development, there were some 'gems' that could not be included in the top selection. Rather than rank all these poems individually and provide assessment sheets with repeated statements pertinent to recurring errors, I've put brief notes on the poems and combined my overall observations. I do hope that these comments will be helpful to you and be accepted in the constructive spirit in which they are offered.

Thank you for sharing your outpourings and please, no matter what your individual results, keep on writing, editing and of course entering the wide range of bush poetry written competitions on offer throughout Australia.

For the love of poetry,
Brenda Joy

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OBSERVATIONS RE METRE:-

From the ABPA Assessment Sheet

"Poets should demonstrate, whatever the pattern (or patterns) used, a clear mastery of metre..."

Types of recurring errors:-

- . complete loss of metrical accuracy (and therefore rhythm) within and across stanzas
- . lack of CONSISTENCY within and across stanzas
- . syllable count not consistent from stanza to stanza. (There can be a different number of syllables in different lines in a stanza but the pattern of syllables per line must be carried throughout the poem.)
- . first 'foot' (i.e. phrase of metre u = soft syllable and / = hard syllable) inconsistency. (The most common was where there was a mixture of u / and u u / .) Either of these line openings can be correct (and even integrated) but there must be an observable pattern to their usage.
- . beginning an occasional line with a stressed syllable (i.e. / u) or jumping from rising metre u / or u u / to falling metre / u or / u u.

OBSERVATIONS RE RHYME:-

From the ABPA Assessment Sheet

Poets should demonstrate... "a mastery of rhyme..."

Types of recurring errors:-

- . Inaccurate rhymes (matching the vowel sound only) such as –
 - . same vowel but different ending
e.g. days (z) and waits (ts)
 - . plural/singular
e.g. ground/surrounds
 - . different tense
e.g. die/died
- . Non-rhymes
 - . identical last syllable in a line therefore the same not a rhyme e.g. away/way, ago/go
 - . 'sight' rhymes (homographs) such as path/wrath,
 - . that bothering 'glitch' m/n such as time/mine, alone/home
 - . intermingling (without consistency throughout) 'masculine' (stress on last syllable) and 'feminine' (i.e. stress on 2nd or 3rd last syllable) rhymes
 - . changing the rhyming patterns of stanzas e.g. abcb to aabb or to abab, etc..

TO DO – EDIT, RE-EDIT, RE-EDIT, RE-EDIT...

- . march out the established rhythmic pattern da DAH/da DAH/da DAH... etc.
- . read your poems out loud – glitches jump out that way – and avoid becoming stumbles
- . go to the ABPA Website www.abpa.org.au and access Ellis Campbell's wonderful writing tips through clicking on to the Techniques section – and work through his program
- . attend, however/whenever possible, a workshop with one of the ABPA's established award-winning writers
- . carry the ideas from the workshop through to group sharing sessions if possible
- . read (and scan) good poetry from the past and from the present
- . strive for CONSISTENCY
- . experiment, enjoy and above all – NEVER GIVE UP.