

# Festival folk gather around



All the bards had gathered for the fray.

After a traumatic year for the Upper Murray following the 2019-20 bushfires and a global pandemic, the support for the 2021 Man From Snowy River Bush Festival has been an important fillip for the community.

The festival attendance had been capped at 5000 under its Covid-safe plan and that figure was easily reached with the local golf course packed with campers and all events being well patronised.

"The event was well organised and the crowds at the events were well behaved," said Sgt Liam McMahon of Corryong police.

## Polished poets

By Jan Lewis  
(Poetry Co-ordinator)

At our Covid-safe 25th anniversary festival it was necessary to have an 'in' door and an 'out' door. Usually we erect the staging at one end, blocking off the door but swinging the stage around to the side wall turned out to be a nice surprise and

we were able to adapt the décor fairly easily.

The new look was popular with most and a good decision acoustically.

Our featured performers were Greg North, Geoffrey Graham, The Rhymer from Ryde, Christine Middleton and most states of Australia were represented.

Our new Banjo's stage was christened by new performers receiving our traditional standing ovation, thanks to our dear friends and poets in Western Australia.

There was plenty of opportunity for beginners to polished performers to honour performers past and present, many of them anxious about performing for the first time in a year or more. So many stories!

We put on small concerts for Corryong Hostel residents and visitors to the Day Activity Group to include them in our festival - very satisfying for everyone. At times it was chilly, but there was a lot of time spent around the campfire, yarning, singing well into

the night, munching on damper or roast mutton - thanks to our cooks Bruce Chandler and Phil McManus.

There was competition though - the important Recital of Banjo's famous poem, signature of the festival 'The Man from Snowy River', which was won by local Maurie Foun, who had been chasing the trophy for years.

The Jack Riley Heritage Award for the best original poem, yarn or song was won by Rhonda Tallnash in the female section and Seamus Foley in the men's. An extra award was presented to Seamus for the higher score. That re-purposed trophy was won by Jim Angel in 2001 and donated back to the festival by his family.

A very emotional section of the program was a tribute to Carol Reffold, our first festival since she passed away. Several performers honoured Carol with their poems and music and the Carol Reffold Memorial One Minute Poem was won

by Lisa Ride - another popular choice, by the audience. Tintalra's Betty Walton was also honoured by the poets.

Encouragement awards

went to James Thomas who won the Lawrie Sheridan Award, Margaret Ryan won the Senior award and Heather Casey the Jan Lewis Award.

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