

The 2021 Golden Wattle Bush Poetry Awards and Queensland State Championship for Written Bush Poetry

Almost 100 entries were received from across Australia for this competition conducted by the North Pine Bush Poets club giving the committee plenty of development opportunities in the arts of collating, organising, categorising and printing. While it was disappointing that the planned awards presentation event had to be cancelled due to a sudden Covid lockdown in Brisbane, we managed to stick with the promised date of 4th July by using that greatly-valued pandemic alternative, Zoom. Thanks to the technical support of the Fellowship of Australian Writers Queensland and the wry humour of Mick Martin who hosted the 'meeting', it all went pretty smoothly. It was also a good way to meet and find out about bush poets from many parts of the country and one participant joining in from Delhi, India.

Three highly experienced judges made the selection of award winners in serious, humorous and junior categories with novice awards in the serious and humorous sections. All the judging was done blind and independently; that is, the poems were anonymous so the judges had no idea who the authors were and they applied very strict criteria as laid down by the APBA relating to style as well as literary merit. Our very sincere thanks go to those judges for their hard work and expertise.

Also, due to very generous sponsorships, a total prize pool of over \$1600 was distributed to the winners – 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the open categories and 1st place in the novice and junior categories. So, huge thanks to the generous sponsors of the competition:

- Australian Bush Poets Association
- Bendigo Bank
- the Fellowship of Australian Writers, Queensland.
- AimLab
- members of the North Pine Poets club

The awards for the 2021 bush poetry written competition, then, are as follows:

- **State Champion (Graham Fredriksen Trophy) and Open Serious section 1st place: Peter O'Shaughnessy for 'Kadaitcha'.**
- Open Serious 2nd place: **David Judge** for 'Henry'.
- Open Serious 3rd place: **Irene Timpone** for 'The Debutante'.
- Open Humorous 1st place: **Veronica Weal** for 'Breakfast by the Creek'.
- Open Humorous 2nd place: **Peter O'Shaughnessy** for 'In the Clean Bar'.
- Open Humorous 3rd place: **Veronica Weal** for 'I spied a Spider'.
- Novice Serious: **Howard Kennedy** for 'Pandemic Protocols'.
- Novice Humorous: **Howard Kennedy** for 'The Theatre of a Sale'.
- Junior: **Devmika Bogahapitiya** for 'The Silence Beauty'.

Highly commended:

- Open Serious: **Veronica Weal** for 'Daisies and Snail Shells'.
- Open Humorous: **Peter O'Shaughnessy** for 'An Ancient Tiger'.

Commended:

- Open Serious: **Shelley Hansen** for 'The Trial of Harry Redford'.
- and **Peter O'Shaughnessy** for 'The Landing'.
- Open Humorous: **David Judge** for 'The Outback Surfie'.
- and **Peter O'Shaughnessy** for 'Shanghaied'.

On behalf of the club, huge congratulations to all our winners and thank you to all the wonderful poets who entered their work. Keep on creating and keeping the spirit of bush poetry alive!

Doc Bland (President, North Pine Bush Poets)