

The Australian Bush Poet's Association Inc.

Monthly Newsletter

No. 5 Volume 4. May 1997

WINTON DOES US PROUD

Perfect weather, big crowds, a new venue, nearly two hundred junior bush poets, some of the old and a number of new faces put the cream on the cake at the Qantas Waltzing Matilda Australian Bush Poetry Championships in Winton Qld. on the Anzac weekend in April.

Carmel Randle cracked the whip to keep the thirteen sections of enthusiastic youngsters in order and the unenviable task of drafting them out in the biggest ever Junior Bush Poetry Competition in Australia went to chief judge Bobby Miller.

Individual and group performance poetry was presented by all year levels from one to twelve, the quality of which would put some professionals to shame.

A debt of gratitude must go to Carmel Randle for her dedication in time and effort to co-ordinate such an outstanding event. Carmel travelled to schools in the area for many months prior to this day, inspiring our young poets to write and perform as they did.

John Major and Milton Taylor performed to as many classes as possible during the preceeding days encouraging all and sundry to do their best.

Winton school student Jodie Coupland was a credible winner in the Primary section of the Clover Nolan Performance Poetry with Carmel Dunn of Warwick rising to the challenge in the Secondary schools section.

Mulga Bill's marquee was the new scene for the main competitions and the Novice Female and Male heats kicked the program off to a good start on the Anzac day afternoon.

All competitions were based on a three go-round with compulsory verse from the Bronze Swagman Books of Verse in round one; verse from

A.B.(Banjo) Paterson in two, and poetry of the competitors choice in the Finals.

Appreciative audiences packed the marquee for every session, and although a number of repeat performances of the same poems came about, the overall standard was very high,

There were no losers in Winton. Bush Poetry was the winner. Everyone went away with so much admiration for the Poets. The poetry presented had left them with a very high opinion of what Bush Poetry is all about. More Winton news inside and next month. (Results page 4.)

NOPA, Longreach, over the Labor Day weekend, was another happy event. The weather was glorious. Friday night's entertainment was held under a canopy of stars with the Hall of Fame making a magnificent backdrop and creating perfect acoustics, and the Hale Bop comet hovering in the last of the sunset. As always, a big welcome was extended to familiar faces and newcomers, and a growing number of local performers.

One worthy of a special mention is Fred Matheson who performed at NOPA in the very early years. At 89, he was returning on his honeymoon!

Poet's Breakfasts, Poets in the Park, and Poets on the River culminated in a delightfully light-hearted Dinner Verse and Song on the Sunday night. No-one was disappointed when young Bill Hay carried off the Poet's Cup, and Jim Haynes performed his duties as guest MC with his usual charm, wit and humour!

It was a grand weekend. Thank you from NOPA to all the poets for travelling so far and sharing their talents and camaradarie . . till next year! Aye!

Australian Bush Poet's Association Inc.

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Fireside Festival

**- LONGYARD HOTEL -
TAMWORTH NSW
May 30 - June 1 - 1997**

Poets Brawls - Breakfasts - Workshops

Galah Awards Night

**The Best of the Bush
with
JIM HAYNES**

**Geoffrey Graham
Presents**

'Ratbags and Romantics'

A light hearted look at some unique
Australian characters

**WEDNESDAY 30TH. JULY 1997
PALMA ROSA**

9 Queens Rd. Hamilton Brisbane.

Booking essential

Phone Trisha Anderson

(07) 3268 3624 or (07) 3262 3769

THE BUNDABERG POET'S SOCIETY INC.

PRESENTS

THE BUNDY MOB'S 1997 BUSH POETS MUSTER

4th - 5th - 6th JULY

Across the Waves Sports Club
Miller Street Bundaberg.

PERFORMANCE POETRY COMPETITIONS

(Entries close 20th. June)

Juniors - Novice and Open Traditional and Original Classes

OVERALL CHAMPION

NON - COMPETITIVE SECTIONS

Friday night Free for All concert - Saturday night Concert.

Written Competition

(Entries close 31st. May)

Send SSAE to: The Bundy Mob's Bush Poets Muster
8 Hawaii Court Bargara Qld 4670

CLONCURRY BUSH FESTIVAL

AND

Mary Kathleen Reunion

Queens Birthday Weekend

Thur 5th to Mon 9th. June 1997

Written and Performance Poetry Challenge

Country Music Talent Quest

Inaugural Australasian

Performance Poetry Championship

Lynne Darby Memorial Award - \$1,000

Free admittance to all major events

SSAE to Cloncurry Telecentre

P.O. Box 455 Cloncurry Q. 4824

Convener: Michael Darby

Ph. 077 422 366 - Fax 422 199

FESTIVAL of the FLEECE MERRIWA NSW

JUNE 6 - 9 1997

WORLD WIDE SHEARING COMPETITION

WOODCHOPPING — YARD DOG TRIALS

WOOLSHED DANCE — RODEO

CHILDRENS RIDES AND AMUSEMENTS

AND

BUSH POETRY

Compered by GARRY LOWE

Featuring

Arch Bishop — Bob Skelton —

Tim McLoughlin — Tony Parry — Rex Hockey

Contact: Ros Stair (The Girl From Gungal)

(065) 476 075

From our Secretary. . . .

Dear Members,

My name is Olive Shooter. I am a housewife and a farmer. I look forward to a happy association with all members. Please feel free to contact me when you need to on any matter regarding the Association.

As requested at the Annual General meeting I rang the Department of Consumer Affairs about the legality of proxy votes at annual general meetings. I was informed that there is nothing to prevent an association accepting proxy votes.

Where the model rules that form our Constitution are silent on any matter, it is then left to form a policy. It should be noted that the proxy votes made no difference to the result of the election, each elected Officer gaining a majority of the votes from members present.

It has been difficult to form an accurate list of member due to the pro-rata system that has operated so I have written to members whose membership expires through the year asking them to update their subscriptions to take their memberships to the end of the year. All subs will fall due on the 1st. January and will be \$25 per year.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in Tamworth in January, 1998 and only financial members will be eligible to vote. The voting strength will be determined before any vote is taken at the Annual meeting.

Membership is around 250 at the moment.

Best Wishes,

Olive Shooter.

AUSTRALIAN BUSH FESTIVAL 6 — 9 JUNE 1997

An authentic Australian Bush Festival
showcasing aspects of Bush Life and Culture
Australian Bush Music — Poetry — Dancing
Australian Bush Band Showcase
Traditional Bush Cooking
Art and Craft Stalls — Displays and Workshops
Children's Activities
THE BUSHWACKER'S BAND
at the
NEW ROCKHAMPTON HERITAGE
VILLAGE
Ph. 079 981 137

1897 — 1997 CENTENARY

BUSH BROTHERS OF AUSTRALIA



The first Australian Bush Brotherhood of St. Andrew was founded in Longreach, Queensland on 14th. September 1897.

This was the first of several Bush Brotherhoods to be established around Australia.

The Brothers were young Anglican priests, usually from England, who gave up all that was familiar to take the Gospel to the "far out bush".

They travelled, usually by buggy, across a vast area of the outback from the centres of Longreach, Barcaldine and Winton.

Undoubtedly the most famous of the Bush Brothers was the Reverend Frederick Hulton-Sams — The Fighting Parson — who would don the boxing gloves with anyone — provided they attended a service!

In September 1997 the Anglican Parish of Longreach will commemorate the contribution of the Bush Brothers to Outback Queensland.

Anyone who has stories, memories, yarns, or poems are asked to send them to the **Secretary, National Outback Performing Arts, P.O. Box 518 Longreach Q. 4730 — before June 30th. 1997.**

These will be collected and compiled into a performance and publication Celebrating 100 Years in Longreach in September, 1997.

All Enquiries to Fr. Alan Lamb
Phone and Fax number 076 582 116.

**BEEF WEEK — CASINO
MAY 29 — JUNE 1
BUSH POETRY AND MORE
BOBBY MILLER — RAY ESSERY
JOYE AND JOHN MAJOR
Butchers Breakfasts — Bull-yarn competitions
Contact: Thomas George — Cecil Hotel
Phone. 066 62 1047**

GYMPIE GOLDEN PEN

Organisers of the inaugural Gympie Golden Pen Written Poetry Competition are more than pleased with the number of entries received. It was a great success, with over 290 poems submitted.

The Golden Pen for the outright winner went to Marguerite River of Gympie Q.

Other winners and placegetter were as follows:

Open Bush Verse — 1. Carolyn White, Rockhampton. 2. Alec Raymer, Trinity Beach. 3. Greg Young, Coolumb Beach and Ellis Campbell Dubbo NSW.

Romantic verse. 1. Pamela Cannon, Buderim. 2. Deanne Wetton, Buddina. 3. Phillip Morrison, Gympie.

Humorous. 1st and 2nd. Frank Daniel, Canowindra. 3. Johnny Johannson, Yarrowonga V.

Serious verse. 1. Lynette Day Bomaderry NSW. 2. Marguerite River, Gympie.

3. Johnny Johannson, Yarrowonga.

Under 10 years. 1. Sarah Hutch. 2. Michael Harris. 3. Emma Naylor. All of Gympie.

10 - 16 years. Romantic. 1. Angela Kraft. Bris.

Humorous. 1. Carmel Dunn Warwick. 2. Yasmin Taylor, Bli Bli. 3. Janine Rielly, Cooroy.

Serious. 1. Carmel Dunn. 2. Kirsty-Lee Horsewood, Gympie. 3. Dion Read, Gympie, and Andrew Rye, Gympie.

Bush Verse. 1. Carmel Dunn. 2. Carmel Dunn. 3. Carmel Dunn and Yasmin Taylor.

Co-ordinator of the Golden Pen Competition, Elizabeth Esprester of Eumundi Q. also presents on FM 103.3 Noosa Community Radio every Sunday a program of International Music and Poetry. Elizabeth would like to hear from poets and writers who are interested in having their work reproduced during her show. Ph. 07 54 491 991.

WINTON — RESULTS

The **Junior** section of the Festival saw 122 youngsters get up, individually, and perform Bush Poems ... and 13 groups of children present well-known Bush Verse, too!

In all, over 180 children took part this year, making it the biggest Junior Australian Bush Poetry Performance in Australia.

Medal-winners became Finalists in the Clover Nolan Awards for Performed Poetry. And the results?

Secondary: Winner... Carmel Dunn, Scotts/P.G.C., Warwick Q. Runner-up: Christie Murphy, Winton State School.

Primary: Winner. Jodie Coupland, Winton Primary School. Runner-up: Samantha Green, St. Patricks School, Winton.

The Bronze Swagman: (for written Bush Poetry) was won this year by: Bob Magor, Myponga S.A.

Qantas - Waltzing Matilda

Australian Bush Poetry Championships.

The **Open** Performance Sections drew large crowds to "Mulga-Bills" marquee set up on the site of the soon-to-be-built Waltzing Matilda Centre in the main street. Results:

Open Male: Winner. Mark Kleinschmidt, Longreach. Qld. runner-up: Milton Taylor, Portland NSW.

Open Female: Helen Avery, Longreach Qld. Runner-up: Glenney Palmer, Cedarvale Qld.

Christina McPherson Awards.

Novice Male: Winner. Danny Blunt, Longreach. Runner-up. Colin Bentley, Charleville, Qld.

Novice Female: Louise Dean, Virginia. Qld. Runner-up. Karen Emmott, Longreach. Qld.

Little Swaggies Awards (Written Bush Poetry)

Secondary: 1st. Carissa Kelly, 14yrs. Grammar School, Townsville. Qld. 'Sunrise to Sunset'.

2nd. Madeline Reardon, 14yrs. Mt. Erin College, Wagga Wagga NSW. 'Yarri'.

Equal 3rd: Kylie Teakle, 16yrs. Concordia College. Toowoomba. Qld. 'From Heaven'.

Kathleen Jennings, 16yrs. Concordia College, Toowoomba. 'The Storm Horses'.

Carmel Dunn, 13yrs. Scotts/P.G.C. Warwick Qld. 'The One Who Watches'.

Primary: 1st. Adam Krause, 10yrs. Concordia Primary School, Toowoomba Qld. 'The Swaggie'.

2nd. Zoe Kim Reeves, 13yrs. St. Saviours' Primary, Toowoomba Qld. 'The Glory of the Bush'.

Equal 3rd: Jonathan Harper. 9yrs. Christian Outreach College. Mansfield, Brisbane Q. 'In the Bush'.

Louise O'Neill, 10yrs. Christian Outreach College, Mansfield, Brisbane Q. 'The Aussie Scenery'.

Alison Barter, 11yrs. Sacre Couer College, Melbourne V. 'My Australia, Ashton'.

Gabrielle Picar-Garcia, 11yrs. St. Saviour's Primary, Toowoomba Q. 'The Swagman's Tall Tale'.

(C.R.)

FROM NEW ZEALAND

The discovery of gold in Otago brought a great influx of people from all over the world, including the 'forty-niners' from California. They had already reached this side of the world, lured by the goldfields in Australia. Following them came the bank-robbers, gamblers, dance-hall girls and all the rabble that lived off them.

The gunfights and the brawls so beloved of the writers of westerns had their counterparts in the Clutha valley. But because no one has been able to capture the same romantic atmosphere for a novel set in New Zealand, it has all been forgotten.

All but one little tragedy, remembered by two little tomb-stones on a hill above the Clutha.

I'M NOT SCHIZOPHRENIC. AM I ?!!!

Gemini, the twin sign.

Split personalities.

One part of the mind thinks this.

The other disagrees.

Gemini's are travellers.

The trouble is, to where?

One Gemini says: "Let's go here."

One says: "Why not there?"

No wonder they are so confused,
and hard to understand.

They finish every statement with:
"On the other hand."

(May 21 — Jun 21) 'Blue the Shearer'

PENSIONER POET COPS THE HEAT TREATMENT

Popular Tamworth reciter John Philipson — the 'Angry Anderson' of Bush Poetry — is currently undergoing Radiation Therapy in Sydney's Prince of Wales Hospital.

J.P. was admitted on 4th. May and expects to be home about mid June.

At time of writing he said that he was doing well, felt good, was full of confidence, and admitted feeling guilty for being in there.

He said not to worry about him too much as he still had a lot of people left to annoy before he thinks of going anywhere else.

Well-wishers can call the 'old fulla' on 02 9382 2222 — extension 22092. He's in room 46 in the old nurses quarters.

'Old nurses'? Does he mean aged nurses or does he mean former nurses quarters? Address: Coulter House — Prince of Wales Hospital High St Randwick 2031

SOMEBODY'S DARLING

© Joe Charles

You have heard all the tales of the rough mining days,
Of men like the Kellys and bad Billy Hayes;
You have heard all the stories in song and in verse
Of murder and violence and robbery and worse.
But I'll tell you a tale of a kindly old man,
Who worked in the river with a shovel and pan,
Who lived all alone in the rough barren land,
Seeking his fortune in the river's rich sand,
Seeking a fortune of adequate worth
To return him in comfort to the land of his birth.
One day by the river he chanced to spy,
Washed up by the flood, on a bank high and dry,
A handsome young man and he in his prime,
Just lately sailed here from England's fair clime,
As though he were sleeping on a feather bed lain,
With no sign of violence or sickness or pain.
The kindly old miner went down on his knee,
Said, 'Somebody's Darling! Oh, who can he be?
Here Somebody's Darling must ever remain!
Somebody's mother is waiting in vain,
Somebody's sweetheart, who never will wed,
And they don't even know their darling is dead!
So he carried him up and he laid him away
On a hill 'neath a stone with the words that do say,
'Somebody's Darling is buried below',
Somebody's Darling that no one did know!
Oh! The years have been many, the years have been long,
Here's the end to my story, the end to my song.
On that lonely hill is another neat stone,
For Somebody's Darling does not slumber alone.
The kindly old miner is sleeping there too,
Close to the friend that he never quite knew.

LIMERICK CORNER.

There was a young fella named Sydney
Who drank till he ruined his kidney.
It shrivelled and shrank
As he sat there and drank
But he had a good time doin' it, didn' 'e.

**FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS NSW INC.
HASTINGS REGIONAL 1997 LITERARY COMPETITION**

Section 1. **SAILS RESORT AWARD** —SHORT STORY — Max 3000 words Fiction — Open theme

Section 2. **PORT MACQUARIE NEWS AWARDS** — ARTICLE — Max. 1200 words —

Categories: a. Researched Article b. Human Interest (Non-fictional) Article.

Section 3. **POETRY**

- a. **GLAD STANFORD AWARD.** Traditional Rhyming Verse to 40 lines
- b. **LYN PORTER AWARD.** Contemporary Free Form Verse to 60 lines
- c. **GILBERT MANT AWARD.** Traditional Australian Rhyming Bush Verse to 80 Lines

CLOSING DATE 28TH. JULY 1997

Entry fee \$3.00 per each entry. SSAE for results — RESULTS ANNOUNCED 27TH SEPTEMBER
No entry form required. Cheques to be made out to F.A.W. Hastings Regional (Not to Secretary)

Mail entries to: **Gloria Paviour-Smith — Competition Secretary**
P.O. Box 1693 Port MacQuarie 2443 Ph. 065 841 163

**1997 POETRY COMPETITION
MACFIE CLAN SOCIETY
AUSTRALIA**

Written Compositions - \$ 5.00 per entry.
Entries close 23rd. June 1997.

1. John Dunmore Lang Poetry Prize
(Entries to reflect a Celtic-Australian Theme)

2. Will Ogilvie Poetry Prize
(for Bush Verse)

Recital Events (Free entry)
Entries close 26th. July 1997

3. Open Will Ogilvie Poetry Recital
(Poem to be composed by Will Ogilvie)

**4. Open Traditional or Established
Bush Verse.**

5. Open Original Bush Verse.

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST 1997

**Royal Mail Hotel
HUNGERFORD QLD.**

**Entry forms from
Bob McPhee**

**8 Jahn Drive Glenore Grove Qld. 4342
(07) 5466 5269**

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

©Sharon Anderson
Ocean Grove Vic.

He's bent at the shoulder
Which makes him look older —
His face etched with worry and pain.
He was cut to the quick,
When they gave him the 'flick',
After twenty-six years in the game.

Though his body was weak,
And the future looked bleak —
He still had his kids and the wife.
But they up and they went,
So he drank up the rent —
Now one room is the whole of his life.

Orange walls are ingrained,
Deeply nicotine stained —
From sixty a day now, for years.
And the smile in his eyes,
Hides the doubt it belies —
And the horrible truth that he fears.

For his breathing is short,
And his tired lungs caught —
His walks to the pub are a sham.
He can't give smokes away,
Cos' they help fill the day —
When nobody else gives a damn.

So, defiant, he 'cheers'
As he downs a few beers —
On his own, quietly harps out the blues.
Then he drinks till he's blind,
By a table that's lined —
With yesterday's racing news.

New Release

'Eye Of The Beholder'

by

ELLIS CAMPBELL

A selection Prize Winning Poems, ranging from
humorous Bush Verse and Ballads to more serious
style Contemporary Poetry —
entertaining and thought provoking.

\$12.00pp

Ellis Campbell 1 Lawson St Dubbo 2830

Profile....Mark Kleinschmidt Australian Champion Bush Poet - 1997

Mark Kleinschmidt was born third in a family of ten at Longreach, western Queensland, in 1957.

After five years in the tiny Outback town of Stonehenge, Mark moved with his family to Bundaberg where his father left the police-force in favour of the rural life of his origins.

The Kleinschmidts clan returned to the west in 1971. They settled 120 miles south-west of Longreach on 140,000 acres of 'God's own' straddling the watershed between the Cooper Creek and Diamantina river systems. That was where Mark's passion and empathy for the land became all-consuming.

During his school years he had been exposed to the rhythm and romance of 'Banjo' Paterson's classics. This, coupled with his love of language, is what started Mark writing bush poetry. His formal schooling included State, correspondence and private boarding school, yet he believes his real education began when he left school at the age of fifteen to work on the land.

Twenty-five years of working on stations in the Stonehenge area has not only enhanced his deep philosophical and emotional links to the bush but proved a fertile source of inspiration for his verse.

After marrying Delia, a school teacher, he bought 20,000 acres of rough cattle country that no one else wanted. They still breed Brahman-cross cattle in the mulga and gidyea scrub then fatten them in the Thomson River channels.

At the inaugural National Outback Performing Arts Festival in 1990, Mark began sharing his poetry with the general public. Positive feedback encouraged him to devote more time to putting his thoughts, feelings and experiences into verse. As the current President of the National Outback Performing Arts, he works towards giving others the same performance opportunities that N.O.P.A. provided for him.

He and his wife spent 1993 on an exchange teaching program in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada, central California, where he had the time to write numerous poems and two children's novels.

In the middle of 1995 he began entertaining tourists with his poetry of the west around a campfire at a local caravan park. This proved popular enough to prompt him to publish 46 of his

poems in an anthology called "*Westering*". He has also released "The Ringer's Note" an audio cassette.

Mark describes himself as a romantic who loves the earth, history, livestock, hand-yman work and writing, as well as his wife and two sons.

He now lives in Longreach with his family and between reciting to Outback tourists, writing and renovating, works a nine to five job.

On weekends he maintains the links to his rural roots by mending fences and mustering cattle on his Stonehenge district property.

Mark won the men's section of the Qantas Waltzing Matilda Australian Bush Poetry Championships at Winton in April.

BOB MAGOR —

Bronze Swaggie Winner

G'day from S.A. For those members I haven't ran into over the last few years my name is Bob Magor and I'm an impoverished sheep and cattle farmer from Myponga on the south coast, below Adelaide.

Undoubtedly the highlight of my journey into bush poetry is winning the Bronze Swagman at Winton.

I've had a love affair with the Cooper Creek system around the Innamincka area for about 20 years and last year on my way to the Winton Festival I kept crossing the Barcoo and the Thomson Rivers and realised I was in the headwaters of the Cooper. On my way home I began tracing the course of the flow and the poem began to evolve in my head. Strange where ideas come from.

At the Winton Festival there were a number of travel-writers from other States including S.A.

Before I returned home my win had featured in a six-inch swathe across the Arts pages of the Adelaide Advertiser with a photo and a few verses.

I thought to myself — take that all you toffy-nosed academics with your Arts Council cranks who say bush poetry is old hat and has no appeal these days. Another victory for bush poetry.

The S.A. scene is humming along nicely. Fellow poet Jeff Cook and myself criss-cross the state on a regular basis performing wherever people gather, sometimes teaming up together.

A new boy on the block, Tom Penna from Victor Harbour is making his mark. (cont. p 8)

(From P. 7) As in the eastern states work includes festivals, dinners, seminars and corporate work.

Over the last eighteen months schools are becoming interested and a lot of work is coming from that source.

I'm hoping next year to get a written competition in the S.A. schools. It was great to see so many kids involved in Winton. It made me think we were dragging the chain in S.A.

With the school children taking an interest we must make more opportunities for them to get involved. They are our future.

If any Mexican or NSW poets are interested they are invited to the Annual Barmera Country Music Festival and Awards in the Riverland, with Jim Haynes, Kelly Dixon and myself from June 3rd to 6th.

Let's keep the tradition alive,

Keep writing, *Bob Magor*

Bush Verse

BOOKS BY BOB MAGOR

BLASTED CROWS

BLOOD ON THE BOARD

SNAKES ALIVE

\$11.00 ea. pp. — all three for \$28.00 pp.

Bob Magor.

Post Office Myponga SA. 5202

GOLDEN GUMLEAF BUSH LAUREATE AWARDS — 1998

The Bush Laureate Awards for Australian Rhymed Verse are presented annually at the Tamworth Contry Music Festival.

These awards are intended to encourage the publishing and recording of Australian Rhymed Verse, to improve the standard of published and recorded Australian Rhymed Verse and to focus media attention on such work.

The 1998 Bush Laureate Awards will contain four sections; 1. Published Original Australian Rhymed Verse in book form.

2. Recorded Album of Australian Rhymed Verse — on commercially produced cassette tape or C.D. These albums must contain at least eighty per. cent. spoken word, not songs.

3. Recorded performance of a particular piece of Australian Rhymed Verse — a single or a single

track from any album released between the dates specified.

4. Heritage Award — for a publication in book form with an emphasis on Australian Heritage; historical, geographical or social, which includes a reasonable amount of original verse.

To be eligible for the Bush Laureate Awards product must be published or released between November 1st. 1996 and November 1st. 1997. Closing date for entries is November 3rd. 1997.

Judges will be drawn from the media, publishing and recording industries and they will be given the following guidelines for judging; 1. Quality of verse. 2. Entertainment value. 3. Presentation and production quality. 4. The 'Australianness' of the verse. 5. Variety of styles and moods.

6. Quality and appropriateness of of illustrations, photos and or artwork.

(5 and 6 does not apply to category 3).

Finalists will be selected for all sections and will be advised in writing and announced in the media during December.

Winners will be announced and awards presented at a special function during Country Music Week in Tamworth.

Four copies of each book or recording are required regardless of how many categories are entered or how many entries are made.

Hope Galvan is a great grand-mother from Cootamundra in NSW and has been writing poetry for many years. Hope enjoys writing bush verse, 'especially the humorous stuff' and has had numerous poems published.

This talented woman gained third place in the 1997 Blackened Billy Verse Competition with 'A Little Bit of Scotland' printed here with her permission.

Pssst! — Wanna buy a book?

'A Few Quiet Words'

A SELECTION OF POEMS

by Murray Hartin

Including 'Fishin' for Cod' and 'The Big Mouth Awards'
Can't read eh? Well have a listen to a good cassette

'Bush Poetry.... You're Kiddin'!

by the same fulla.

Ten bucks for the book — Fifteen for the tape or cop the
lot for only \$20.00 pp.

**MURRAY HARTIN c/- 7 Mayo Plce
Killarney Heights 2087 (014) 496 758**

A LITTLE BIT OF SCOTLAND

by Hope Galvan ©

Jock sailed out from bonny Scotland, to create a way of life
In the outback of Australia, bringing Jenny as his wife
They were young, their dreams untainted by events of future years
Where emotion ran the gamut, happiness, regret and tears.

Thirty years of long hot summers, thirty years of cold and rain
Thirty years of missing Scotland, with a gnawing, aching pain,
Fields of heather, softly blooming, misty veil on rocky tor
Water glistening in the sunshine, forming puddles on the moor.

He surveyed the rolling paddocks, three white crosses on the hill
Grazing sheep and lowing cattle, bales of lucerne by the mill
He recalled his hopes and planning when he bought his farming plot
Years when harsh Australian climate, had decided feed or not.

Timeless nights in dark seclusion, as he stripped the golden grain
Later harrowing and planting, anxious watch for clouds again
How he cleared dense brush and timber to construct their little home
Jenny singing as she laboured, planting garden in the loam.

Over years, four little babies, two to live and two to die
Jenny's singing growing lesser, hurt and pain in Jenny's eyes
Many years they shared together, bringing comfort when the need
Till an illness took his partner, from her lonely lifestyle freed.

Sons and he then worked the farmland, sons as bonny as you'd find
Till the fever of the goldrush when they left the farm behind
Jock in sorrow contemplated, heading back across the sea
To his home amid the heather, with his kith and kin to be.

Yet he could not leave his Jenny, or his tiny sleeping bairns
Who to tend if he deserted, scarlet rose by rocky cairns
Time grew shorter, Jock grew weaker, errant sons returned to find
Their father talking to his Jenny, weak in body, weak in mind.

"Take me to the high north paddock, overlooking Gemma's creek
Let me see soft rippling water, hear the sounds of nature speak
I have longed to see my homeland, for I cannot break the tie
Yet I also love this country, distance vast, relentless sky
When I reach my final days, I beg you, lay me there with pride
In this little piece of Scotland, in Australian countryside.

DEADLINE FOR MONTHLY PUBLICATION: 15th. day of the month of issue.

Send copy to Frank Daniel, Editor, P.O. Box 16 Canowindra NSW 2804 or Fax. (063) 441 962

**Want an audience of 12,000 listeners? Send recorded work to Maureen Garner Producer/Presenter
The Folk Show — 2BBB FM. 2 Salamander Parade NAMBUCCA HEADS 2448 — (065) 685 269**

Thank you to the following contributors to this month's Newsletter: Anon — Hope Galvan — Carmel Randle
Corrie de Haas — Olive Shooter — Ray Essery — Judith Hosier — Sharon Anderson — Joe Charles
Bob Magor — Merv Webster — Bob Miller. NOTE: There was enough material left over to cover
another five pages. Trimming down on some of the news items was necessary however, as a lot of the offerings
were too close to the deadline. It is hard to get it all in place in less than three days. Readers may not be aware
that I have already started on the June, July and August issues and beyond. So please be early. — Joe.

THE COOPER COMING DOWN

© BOB MAGOR MYPONGA SA.

The thunderheads had bunched up in the North-West now for days
And the Blackall farmers shook their heads in doubt.
Then the news came in from Longreach of monsoonal soaking rain
And rejoicing at the breaking of the drought.
*From the blacksoil cracks it's spilling,
This is it, if God be willing,
As each watercourse is filling,
Coming down.*

And the deluge, unabated, swept the western Queensland plains
With the Thompson and the Barcoo on the rise.
Till they mingled near Windorah to become the Cooper Creek
Slowly spreading like an ocean in its size.
*The land's dusty pores are flushing,
Down the Channel Country rushing,
Like an avalanche it's gushing,
Coming down.*

Then for weeks the swamps kept filling as the Cooper flexed her might,
Ever onward till Lake Yamma flushed with pride.
And at Durham Downs the cattle saw mirages shimmer real
With a spread of thirty kilometres wide.
*Oh, the bluebush plains are drinking
As the coolabahs are sinking
And the land is slowly shrinking
Coming down.*

And this floating tide of debris slowly journeyed on its course.
Nappa Merrie, past the ghosts of Bourke and Wills.
It funnelled forth its fury down the Cullyamurra Choke,
Progress noted by the haunting ironstone hills.
*The bush telegraph is ringing,
And the whistling kites are singing
Oh what joy the Cooper's bringing,
Coming down.*

Then it reached an intersection at the Innamincka ford
Where the locals check the levels day by day.
And the wedgetails soar the thermals and the pelicans ride high
As the North Arm lures the Cooper on its way.
*Where the lignum clumps are bending
From this life blood nature's sending
With the Cooper never ending,
Coming down.*

Soon Coongie Lakes are brimming like a vibrant inland sea
And corellas in the red gums screech with pride.
All rejoicing at the cleansing of this jewel in their domain
And the bounty once the countryside has dried.
*There'll be grateful cattle lowing
On the native clover growing,
Cooper's verdant passage showing
Coming down.*

Still the Cooper, unrelenting, banks up higher at the ford
 Till she shimmers down the dry Strzelecki Creek.
 But onward, ever onward, on her course toward Lake Eyre,
 Proud and rampant slowly rising to her peak.
*Down at Moomba, they're berating,
 With the gasfields inundating,
 There's some problems she's creating
 Coming down.*

Some three months from Innamincka sees her cut the Birdsville Track
 But she's run her race, she ends her proud display.
 Lake Eyre may see her next time as she spreads to north and south
 For a labyrinth of sandhills bar her way.
*So her journey now has ended
 Over half a year she wended
 Vast expanses she befriended
 Coming down.*

So the Cooper, mighty Cooper, breathes new life upon the land
 As the country blooms from passing of her flood.
 To this ancient land — this fragile land — she's like a living pulse
 She's its heart and soul — an artery of blood.
*She's the country's main life giver,
 To the outback she'll deliver
 Not a creek — but mighty river
 Coming down.*

QUARTPOT GATHERING MOVES TO NEW VENUE

Wanganui River Gardens at Yeronga in Brisbane hosted its first Quartpot Gathering on Wednesday 19th. February.

Buckleys Chance launced the show with spirited performances of early colonial songs and bush peots Bob Miller, Ray Esssery and Gary Fogarty kept the audience laughing throughout the evening.

Immediately before the show the organiser and poets paid tribute to Gaby Hamdad, proprietor of the New Farm Park Kiosk, where all preceeding Quartpot Gatherings had been held. In 1992 Gaby provided the venue free of charge and donated the cost associated with staffing and catering for the evenings. Without his generous support the Quartpot Gatherings would not have succeeded.

Bob Miller wrote a special poem for the occasion expressing gratitude to Gaby for all he has done.

Audience members were delighted with the tranquil surroundings at Wanganui River Gardens and are looking forward to the next show on

Wednesday 21st May. Mark Gliori, Tim McLoughlin, Phil Hodgkinson, John and Joye Major and the musical Minstrel Duo will be appearing.

The third and last gathering for 1997 will be Wednesday 12th. November.

ABPA and Snowy Mountains Bush Poetry Club member, Neil Hulm of Lavington NSW, twice winner of the Old Time Rough Riders Bush Poetry Championships and winner of the Man from Snowy River Heritage Award for Bush Poetry has announced his retirement from competition poetry.

Neil will however continue to write and will be available as a judge where necessary.

Ph. (060) 253 845. Fax (060) 253 847

TERSE VERSE

Two fools had cars they thought perfection,
 They met one day at an interseciton,
 Tooted their horns and made connection,
 A Police car came and made inspection,
 An Ambulance came and made collection,
 All that is left is a recollection,
 And two voters less in the next election.

POET'S CALENDAR. EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS.

- May 30 - **Fireside Festival — Longyard Hotel — Tamworth.**
- June 1 Best of the Bush with Jim Haynes.
Friday 6pm. Poets in the Pub — Saturday. Poets Breakfast, Poets Brawl, Yarns and Tall Tales. Galah Concert 7 PM. Wall of Renown Inductees.
Sunday. Poets Breakfast and grand Farewell.
- June 1st. **Inaugural Twin Towns Bush Poetry Society.** 9.00am Breakfast.
Followed by come-one-come-all bush poetry and music gathering.
Palm Beach and Currumbin Bowls Club.
Enquiries - Lorraine Richards 07 5590 9395
- June 5 - 9 **Cloncurry Bush Festival and Mary Kathleen Reunion**
Convener Michael Darby. Ph. (077) 422 366 Fax (077) 422 199
- June 6 - 9 Wongawilli Colonial Dance Club Inc presents — **Australian Folk Festival — Kiama NSW**
A celebration of songs, dance, poetry, yarn-spinning, and heritage. Concerts — Breakfasts.
Enquiries: Bev. (042) 360 701 Fax. 571 787
- June 6 - 9 **Australian Bush Festival — Music — Poetry — Dance — The Bushwackers**
New Rockhampton Heritage Village. Phone John Major 079 081 137
- June 6 - 9 **Merriwa NSW. Festival of the Fleece.** See advert Page 2.
- June 6 - 9 **Henry Lawson Society of NSW Inc. Gulgong NSW**
Enquiries to P.O. Box 235 Gulgong NSW 2852 (063) 742 049 — 741 668.
- June 6 - 9 **The 40th. Annual Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts Inc. (NSW)**
Co-ordinator: June Lal 02 9625 8577 Festival enquiries: (063) 431 003
- June 13 **Central Queensland Bush Poetry Championships — Rockhampton Qld.**
Performance Poetry only. Enq. Kath Ireland. 409 Peterson Ave. Rockhampton Qld 4701
- June 22nd. Twilight performance at **Palma Rosa.** 5.00pm. With the **N.O.P.A. Performance Poets.**
Palma Rosa. 9 Queens Rd. Hamilton Brisbane. Q. Enq. (07) 3268 3624 — 3262 3769
- July. 30. **Palma Rosa. "Ratbags and Romantics"** with Geoffrey Graham 7.00pm. Enq. as above.
- July **The Bundy Mob's Bush Poets Muster and Concert** Across the Waves Sports Club.
4 - 5 - 6 **Presented by the Bundaberg Poets Society Inc.**
Enq. Merv Webster Secretary. 8 Hawaii Court Bargara Qld. (071) 563 178
- July 28 Closing date for entries. **F.A.W. — Hastings Regional 1997 Literary Competition.**
Short story and verse writing. See advert this issue. Enq. Gloria Paviour-Smith.
Competition Secretary. P.O. Box 1693 Port MacQuarie NSW 2443 (065) 841 163
- August 16 Hervey Bay Festival. Heather Gilleatt.
- August. **The Cobb & Co. Battered Bugle Bush Verse Competition. Surat Qld.**
16 - 17 In conjunction with the opening of the Cobb & Co Change Station. More news later.
- Aug. 26 **Gympie Muster — Amamoor Park Gympie Qld. Bookings ph.**
Sept. 1 Bush Poetry - ABC Album Launch — Competitions - Country Music
- October **"Bards of Bowra Bush Poetry Competition"**
4 - 6 Open and Junior written poetry competitions. Closing date 1.9.97
Performance poetry competitions. Traditional and Original. Closing date 20.9.97
SSAE to Maureen Garner 2/8 Salamander Parade, Nambucca Heads. 2448 P/fax 065685369
- October **North Pine Bush Poets Group — Camp Oven Bush Poetry Festival**
4 - 5 Pioneer Village Country Music Hall North Pine Country Park Dayboro Rd. Petrie Qld.
Enquiries to Patti Coutts (07) 3886 1552 Louise Dean (07) 3260 5506
- 1st. **Poets Get-together—** Traders Restaurant - Mt. Coolum Qld. (074) 491 991
- Sunday **Bundanoon Hotel** Bundanoon NSW Jennifer Compton (048) 836 005
- of month Twin Towns Bush Poetry — Palm Beach and Currumbin Bowls Club — 07 5590 9395
- 1st. Monday of month **Aroma's Restaurant & Coffee Shop. Toowoomba Q.** Ron Selby (076) 301 106
- Second Sunday of Month **'Interludes' Ashfield Civic Centre —** Joye Dempsey 02 9797 7575
- Third Thursdays. **Queanbeyan Bush Poets NSW.**
- Third Friday of Month. **Poetic Folk — Rooty Hill School Of Arts.** Arch Bishop (02) 9625 7245

Profile...Helen Clare Avery

Australian Ladies Champion Bush Poet - 1997

Helen's parents established a sheep property in the S.W. corner of Western Australia after the war, but came east to Queensland with their young family in the mid 1950's.

Helen had been born in 1952. She grew up with her three brothers on a dairy farm not far from the rainforest covered border ranges of the Lamington National Park in S.E. Queensland. It was always her dream to marry a Park Ranger and live in the middle of the mountains.

In her twenties, she studied, worked, travelled and eventually went to Longreach as a governess/teacher to three children on a station west of the river. There is an old belief that once someone crosses the Thomson River, they always return. It was not long before Helen developed a passionate affinity with the dry open spaces of the Outback.

In 1979 she married and Longreach became her home. She now has four children aged between ten and sixteen years. With her husband, Archer, she helps run 'Nogo', 68,000 acres of grazing country stocked with merino sheep and beef cattle.

Helen has always been an avid reader and often collected thoughts in verse. It was a visiting workshop by some women community arts workers which really stimulated her to begin to express herself publicly. Luckily this coincided with the growing independence of her young family.

Since 1990 Helen has become involved in public presentations of her own works and those of traditional Australian Poets through performance at numerous local events and venues. She has been involved with National Outback Performing Arts since its inception. This is an organisation dedicated to the preservation and nurturing of traditional forms of entertainment. In 1996 she toured Western Queensland schools as a PCAP artist. Priority Country Area Program aims to provide isolated students with the stimulation and variety that their peers in the more populated areas take for granted. She has recently successfully extended her writing into the field of prose.

Performance and writing are balanced with her commitment to her children, maintenance of a large, rambling station homestead and garden, and being 'on call' as her husband's offsider when station work demands.

While Helen appreciates enormously the great classic poets of Australia, she writes very much as a contemporary woman. Her lifestyle and the land she loves are her inspiration.

As winner of the Ladies section of the Qantas Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry Competition in Winton in April, Helen, along with Mark Kleinschmidt, will be guest of the American Cowboy Poet's Association in Elko, Nevada in January next year.

BOWRA'S REVVIN' IN '97

Bowraville, with a population of around 1,000 people is located in the Nambucca Valley, NSW, mid-way between Sydney and Brisbane.

This sleepy little town comes alive annually during the long week-end in October, when the colourful 'Back To Bowra Festival' is staged.

Known as the 'Verandah Post Town' because of the many historic buildings with verandah posts found along the main street, Bowraville will feature as part of this year's festival activities, the inaugural 'Bards Of Bowra' Bush Poetry Competition, which should prove a crowd pleaser with the many thousands of visitors attracted to the town during festival week-end.

The Performance Bush Poetry Competition and Poets Brunch will be held in the Bowling and Recreation Club on Sunday 5th. October, from 10am. This will be Australian entertainment at its best, featuring Bush Poets from the Nambucca Valley and surrounding areas and visiting poets from the Sydney region.

Entries are invited for the competitions and early replies would be appreciated. Send A4 size SSAE to Maureen Garner for entry forms. See Calendar opposite page.

Wongawilli Colonial Dance Club Inc. presents the AUSTRALIAN FOLK FESTIVAL KIAMA NSW

Friday 6th to Monday 9th, June 1997
A celebration of Australian folk music, dance,
culture & heritage.

Performers include Pat Drummond, Harvest Moon,
Guy Hall, Claire, Dennis O'Keefe, Dave Benuik,
Pamela Drysdale, Gerard Cafe, Wongawilli, Frank Daniel,
'Blue the Shearer', Graeme Johnson.

Pre festival tickets only \$20 til May 31.

Contact Bev (042) 360 701

TENTERFIELD — HIT BY SIX OF THE BEST

Organisers of the Tenterfield 'Oracles of the bush' festival on the 18th, 19th and 20th. of April were rapt after the outstanding success of this years event. Six of our top performing poets in the guise of Mark Giori, Murray Hartin, Ray Essery, Gary Fogarty, Glenny Palmer and Bob Miller wowed the assembled crowds at two breakfast shows and two night concerts.

Talk about crowds . . . organisers were forced to shut the gates on Saturday night as three hundred people jammed into the Tenterfield School of Arts hall for what can only be described as a 'memorable' performance. Murray Hartins appearance as the 'Naked Poet' gained him front page on the local paper and his return in a super, slinky black number brought the house down, not to mention a rush of phone calls from organisers of the Sydney Mardi-Gras.

Gary Fogarty did an excellent job of compering the 'Sunday Breakfast in the Park' which included thirty eight entries in the poets brawl, now an established crowd favorite.

Marco's brilliant poem about the Mungar Maggot (Bobby Miller) chewing his way through the Tenterfield apple crop was just pipped at the post by local entry Tony Kelly — proving that it only takes 4,000 cheering locals to bring a tall poppy down.

On the Sunday Bob Miller, Ray Essery and Gary Fogarty held a writing and performance workshop. Ray Essery only had to be woken up four times during the afternoon but his lecture on 'How To Wroten A Poem' was well received. Fifteen 'students' attended the workshop — but it is still a

wonder just who learned the most about what from whom

Bob Miller was commissioned to write a poem about Tenterfield entity, John Williams (Tenterfield Jack) a local shearing legend, honoured as this year's 'Oracle of the Bush'. At the presentation of a framed copy of the poem, 'Jack' was almost brought to tears. In accepting, 'Jack' spoke of the mateship in the shearing sheds and how the modern day bush poets are preserving the legends and traditions of our heritage and in his words ' . . . doing a bloody good job'.

A surprise spot during the concert was Glenny Palmer singing her heart out accompanied by Denis 'Dingo' Dryden. Denis is to be commended for his performances of Aussie verse and song during the two concerts. Thanks mate!

The organisers are full of praise for the 'Oracles of the Bush' weekend, it was an outstanding success and plans are already under way for 1998. (BM)

Ed. note: 'Tenterfield Jack', the poem, by Bobby Miller will be published in the June Newsletter.

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SPECIAL EVENT

The Maryborough (Qld) City Council has commissioned Bob Miller to write a special Maryborough Sesqui-Centenay poem for the cities celebrations this year.

Bob will be conducting a junior written poetry competition for residents of Maryborough with cash prizes. An open section will also be included.

The big day is Wednesday, June 4th. and winning entries will be placed in a time capsule to be opened in 100 years.

Great work from Bob Miller and the Maryborough City Council in supporting and encouraging up and coming bush poets.

BUSH LAUREATE AWARDS 1998

For work produced from Nov 1 1996 to Nov 1 1997

- FOUR SECTIONS: 1. Book of the Year — Published Original Australian Rhymed Verse
2. Recorded Album of Australian Rhymed Verse (on commercially produced cassette tape or C.D)
3. Recorded Performance of the Year (A single, or a single track from any album)
4. Heritage Award. (Publication in book form emphasising Australian Heritage; historical, geographical or social — Including a reasonable amount of original verse.)

Fee \$10 per entry — ENTRIES CLOSE 3rd. NOVEMBER 1997

Entry forms available — send SSAE to GOLDEN GUMLEAF ENTERPRISES

112 Crescent Road, Hamilton Qld. 4007

Microsoft
Publisher



THE STRANGEST ORACLE

© Corrie de Haas.

At times I read it in your eyes —
Your face a puzzled frown —
'What is this woman doing here
When the poets come to town?
Does she belong amongst us,
When her background's overseas?
Her accent places her abroad . . .
Can someone tell us, please?'

Yet, I bravely face the 'Lion's Den'
Where Australia's poets stroll,
And try to lend my foreign voice
To the music in my soul.
For I have lived here many years
No longer will I roam,
As none could love this country more . . .
This country, I call home.

So lead me to a park somewhere
And let me drink the view
Of poplars in their autumn gowns
That hearten me anew.
And let me weep a silent tear
When I hear 'My Country' sung
In remnants of an Irish brogue
And lilt of native tongue.

And let me marvel at a sky —
When day comes to an end —
Aflame upon a western hill,
Where sunset-colours blend.
My eyes then write a thousand lines
That numerous books could fill,
But I don't need their words at all
When writing with their quill.

Lend me your ear and let me sing
Like bards are wont to do;
Though early foot-steps lie abroad
My words will ring so true.
Then my soul awash with rhyming verse
Can take a little spell
For restless is a poet's pen
Where pure emotions dwell.

I play only such a little part
In the theatre of this land.
And stake the tiniest of claims
Where weathered gum-trees stand.
And the songs that linger in my heart
Will be my legacy . . .
So they, who follow come to know
The one that's truly me.

But take heart, my valued friends,
Soon, perhaps in 1999
I'll then recite my poetry
In pure Australian strine!

ORACLES OF THE BUSH

Perfect weather and wonderful entertainment was the order of the weekend at Tenterfield for the 'Oracles of the Bush' festival.

Gary Fogarty of Millmerrin Q. was the compere and performing poets included Mark Gliori, Glenny Palmer, Bobby Miller, Gary Fogarty, Ray Essery, Colin Newsome, Campbell Irving, Murray Hartin, Corrie de Haas, Jack Drake and many others.

A lot of local Tenterfield talent and new reciters from further afield added another great bonus to the event.

Twelve poets entered in the poets brawl producing another stroke of genius from each and every one, typical of many a 'brawl'.

'And the tucker was simply grand'.

Catering facilities in the park were superb, scoring

big compliments in all of the reports sent in.

Special mention must go to the ladies who prepared the magnificent 'Wedding Breakfast' for Banjo and his bride in the re-enactment.

The above poem, revealing some of her impressions of the festival, was written by Corrie de Haas after returning home to Helensvale Q. from 'The Oracles of the Bush' at Tenterfield.

In a letter to the Secretary, Corrie said that Tenterfield was wall to wall with poets, non-stop poetry and a lot of great company. Corrie, of Dutch origin, loves Australian Bush Verse and a lot of her poems describe the country as she sees it.

Like many readers Corrie was most impressed with Murray Hartin's poem 'Colours' printed in last month's newsletter, and performed at Tenterfield by Murray.

Good on ya' Corrie!

PAT GLOVER AWARD TO THE MULLUMBIMBY BLOKE

The Mullumbimby Bloke, Ray Essery, swept all competitors aside to win the prestigious Pat Glover Story Telling Award at the Port Fairy Folk Festival in March. This competition is held annually and is a highlight of the Festival.

Pat Glover was born in Melbourne and raised in the bush along the Murray River and in the Western Districts. In 1939 his parents bought the Killarney Hotel, situated near Port Fairy. Around the hotel and particularly in the bar, Pat was spellbound by the amazing stories and yarns exchanged between the potato diggers, onion pickers and local farmers who were usually referred to as 'Galahs'. Questions about this title revealed that a 'galah' was a sort of small cocky.

After the second world war Pat and his wife settled in Port Fairy where they still live today. Pat became a member of the Hospital Board of Management and they organised and ran an annual Christmas Carnival which in 1977 became the Port Fairy Folk Festival.

Pat's nickname was 'The Shanakee' which is Irish for 'teller of stories', a reputation which he has lived up to. Keeping these traditions alive and well, audience members now participate in the annual story telling competition which fits perfectly with the morning sessions of bush poetry.

Pat takes a great interest in each competition, attends all the heats and finals and presents the award to the winner on one of the main stages.

Ray Essery, Jim Haynes and Shirley Friend were on stage every morning for the Bush Poets Breakfasts and so successful were these shows that the audiences overflowed and spilled out of the marquee.

Local poets were invited to compete in a one minute poem competition and the standard was so high that judges Des and Doris Lee of Tenterfield had great difficulty selecting a winner. Victorians Frances Hynes and Shannon Ebeling were awarded equal first with South Australians Ian Pedler and Des Barry. Each pair presented a most unusual poetry duet.

On the opening night of the Festival the children from the Port Fairy Primary School recited poems and sang songs they had written at the Jim Haynes workshops during the preceding week. Their performance received a wild applause and Jim has been urged to return again next year.

Profile... Ray Essery. 'The Mullumbimby Bloke'

Where to start? With the Mullumbimby Bloke it is hard to know just where to begin. With such a full life as a lad on his father's dairy farm, a long stint in the Royal Australian Navy, marriage and a family, a term as a shop-keeper, owning a dairy farm, driving trotters, two near-death accidents, and conducting an excavation business, to bush poetry. There is so much to say.

Ray's first appearance at the The Imperial Hotel Competition, Tamworth, in January 1993, was an experience never to be forgotten by organisers, judges and audience alike. His style was so unique, all were left speechless. Offers of help with his rhyming came forth from willing hands, but the Essery style has never changed and for the better, Ray is without doubt one of the most sought after performers today. Audiences just can't get enough of him.

Unless one has experienced the Mullumbimby Bloke, then a true appreciation of his work is very hard to assess. What he writes, and how he performs it, is something that no other performer today has ever been able to emulate. It is a style whereby his supposed 'lack of writing skills', as some would say, are polished, perfected and rounded off in his reciting, as some of the most amusing and entertaining poems of the present day. Not only is the poem entertaining, but so is the character himself, and more than anything, the unsuspected and sometimes long awaited rhyme.

Ray has no great delusions of his own performances but as a pure and simple guideline to new-comers he has just a few small points of advice. 1. Make sure you know your material.

2. It's far better to recite a poem for no more than four minutes than to try to bumble your way through a long poem that ends up boring to everyone concerned. 3. When performing your work, try to paint a picture to your audience. In other words, visualise your poem in your own mind then try to relate that image to the audience. 4. Remember after all performances, to go straight to the organisers, whether it be a festival or show and thank them for their hard work.

5. Don't winge.

Buy Ray's cassette if you dare! Details on next page.

THE CANE-CUTTER'S WEDDING

Wedding bells of joy were ringing,
A choir was quietly singing,
The whole town was all aglow,
For Big Norm from Dungarubba,
A cane-cutter and a booza,
Was marrying the pretty Flowers girl from Bangalow.

The two clans gathered in the top pub,
As they came out of the scrub,
Catholics and Protestants alike,
There were cane-cutters and banana farmers,
Timber-getters and dairy farmers,
And the town drunk who turned up on a push-bike.

Boisterous laughter arose from the bars,
As the groomsmen sucked huge cigars,
As the clans devoured keg after keg,
But the noise soon fell to a whisper,
When a Catholic's dog by the name of whisker,
Latched on to a Protestants leg.

Well the Proddo let out one mighty wail,
As he grabbed the now squealing dog by the tail,
And let him sail out through the door,
And when the dog's Catholic owner
Complained in a drunken coma,
Bang! He found himself flat on the floor.

The Publican pushed in,
He was as white as sin,
He had urgency on his mind,
But was felled by a king-hit merchant,
By the name of Harry Marchant,
Who dropped a hay-maker on him from behind.

Then the whole bar erupted in grunts and growls,
And long painful howls,
As two clans now stood toe to toe,
There were clings and clangs,
From the idiots who threw cans,
As the town drunk ducked blow after blow after blow.

© Ray Essery. 'The Mullumbimby Bloke'.

A petite barmaid name Nell,
Left the bar for the fight to quell,
She fully intended to become a star,
But a big cane-cutter latched onto her dress,
And she ended up in a screaming mess,
When he tossed her back behind the bar.

Well the locals went to ground,
As they closed the town down.
While the kids and dogs headed for the scrub,
The Police called for re-inforcements,
To put a halt to these infringements
For the boys were now wrecking the pub.

When the old Sergeant appeared on the scene,
The town drunk bellowed 'Where have you been?
I'm finding it hard round here to get a beer!
And if you can't put an end to this strife,
I'm going back home to my wife,
And I'll black-ban this pub for a year!'

The old Sergeant soon put an end to the squallin',
Besides the boys had had enough of the brawlin',
For they sobered up during the altercation,
So they straightened their top hat and bow ties,
And with ice-packs over their black eyes,
Left the rest of the confrontation until the reception.

And when all the boys filed into the church,
Old Mrs. Smith left her pew perch,
And gave the lads a hell of a tongue-lashing.
At the same time the town drunk's wife,
Coaxed him away from the brawling' and strife,
And dragged him home for a thrashing.

So once more the bells started ringing,
The choir broke into full singing,
As two lovers now stood toe to toe,
And with the boys now all completely soba,
The cane-cutter from Dungarubba,
Married the pretty Flowers girl from Bangalow.

THE MULLUMBIMBY BLOKE POEMS AND STORIES OF THE NORTH COAST RAY ESSERY

BOOK \$12.00 PP — CASSETTE \$15.00 PP
270 Manse Rd. Mullumbimby 2482
066 843 817

TWIN TOWNS BUSH POETRY SOCIETY

A brand new venue for travelling poets is the the above society's Poets Breakfast and Show to be held each month starting on June 1st. at the Palm Beach and Currumbin Bowls Club and thence every first Sunday. Starts 9.00am. Call Lorraine Richards on 07 5590 9395. More news next month.

CURLY BARK

© Olive Shooter Allora Q.

Australia still provides our needs, no matter how simple they be
One thing is given freely and it's under the old gum tree.
How many people have picked it up where the trees stand tall and stark
What fun it is to gather up, that good old curly bark.

It falls away from trunk and limb and curls 'til it is round
Big straps of it come falling down and cover up the ground.
In the days of the old wood stove, one thing would help the spark
You'd have no trouble lighting it with good old curly bark!

As a child she gathered curly bark for her mum to light the stove
She knew the likely trees where in search of it she rove.
Then as a bride she'd look for it where the song of the magpie lark
Came clear to her as she went to get the good old curly bark.

Sometimes she wouldn't go alone — her husband would be there.
He'd recite to her a poem or two — they were a happy pair.
And they'd dream about their future, not go home 'til nearly dark
They formed some lasting memories as they gathered curly bark.

Then, all of a sudden, or so it seemed, two little boys were there.
They'd run and chatter around her — and they didn't have a care.
They'd look at the different places, she'd point out a good landmark,
And taught her youngsters bushcraft as she gathered curly bark.

Later on the wheel has turned and again she goes alone.
She is old, but she's not tired — and youth from her has flown.
The hill's a little steeper now — and on a log she'll park,
She is thinking now of other times, when she gathered curly bark.

When we go out walking in the bush or round the place,
She is quick to see it there — and it brightens up her face.
As soon as it comes into view you can bet she will remark
'It's a pity no one wants it — that good old curly bark!'

It's great-grandson who hops the fence on Great-granma's orders
To get the bark she cannot reach from round the grassy borders.
She loves the children round her and about her there's a spark —
But nothing makes her eyes light up like good old curly bark!

"Just The Way It Is"

A Book of

Australian Rhyming Poetry

by

Graeme Johnson

(1996 John Dunmore Lang Poetry Prize Winner)

released by Silvereve Publications

Available now for \$10.00 post paid.

Write to 1133 Victoria Rd. West Ryde 2114

BULL SECTION

In 1954, Charlie Smithers took his fifteen kids to the Sydney Show. He asked for a discount on the admission fee to see an imported Brahman Bull touring the country as a side-show exhibit.

"Discount!" cried the showman eyeing off Charlie and his troupe.

"Discount! Crikey!"

He shoved his hat back on his head in amazement and said "You just wait right there mate, and I'll bring the bull out to see you!"

President's Letter....

Dear ABPA Members,

On behalf of the Bush Poets Association I would like to convey our heartiest congratulations to Helen Avery and Mark Klienschmidt, both of Longreach Qld. for their excellent performances at the Qantas Waltzing Matilda Australian Bush Poetry Championships held in Winton in April.

These two Australian Champions will make wonderful ambassadors to the Cowboy Poets Gathering in Elko, Nevada in January next year.

From all reports Winton was very successful and plans for the new cultural centre are well under way, with completion due before next years festival.

Congratulations also to the hard working organisers and members of the Winton Tourism Promotion Association. Bush Poetry has certainly had a great boost this year.

I would like to thank those many members who have taken the time to call or write giving the thumbs up to the new format of the newsletter.

Only one complaint so far — it won't stand up on the bookshelf on its own. More news and more poetry is the real aim as well as keeping you up to date with the calendar and results of festivals.

News and items for the newsletter are more than welcome and, as it is your newsletter, it is up to you the reader, the poet, the organiser or the performer to submit items for sharing with other members. Please send all copy to the Canowindra address. Please do not leave it till the last minute.

Unfortunately all of the items submitted cannot be published, however I will do my best.

Although restricted by costs we have, with good management, increased the size of the magazine considerably in order to cover more, but unfortunately we still cannot accommodate all the articles submitted.

Prize-winning poems will be published as soon as possible after competition results come to hand. It is hoped that readers will gain much enjoyment from these poems, learn a few tips, perhaps find ways to improve their own work.

I was particularly impressed with Bob Magor's winning entry in the Bronze Swagman Competition. Good on ya Bob! We haven't heard from you for a long time.

(Where else in the world, but here in

Australia, would one find two rivers conjoining to form a creek.)

Poets wishing to advertise product are asked to write in advising *post-paid prices* for their work, a little bit of news about themselves, and a copy of one of their poems. (Not too long)

Also, black and white head-shot photo-graphs would be appreciated. I am working on a new system of scanning some photos into the letter, and our printer in Cowra, Mrs. Helen Mann, is only too keen to help.

Best of luck to John Philipson who is presently undergoing treatment in Sydney. I was a bit crammed for space J.P., so please excuse me for putting your news alongside a poem about two blokes dying. Write us a few poems while your doing nothing — instead of watching Kerry-Anne.

Best wishes for now,

Frank Daniel

I REMEMBER

Anon.

I remember the cheese of my childhood
And the bread that we cut with a knife
When the children all helped with the housework
And the men went out to work — not the wife.

I remember the milk from the billy
With the yummy rich cream on the top
When the dinner came hot from the oven
And not from the frig at the shop.

The kids were not bored ... but contented
They didn't need money for 'kicks'
Just a game with their mates in the paddock
And sometimes the Saturday flicks.

I recall when the loo was the 'dunny'
And the pan man came in the night
It wasn't so terribly funny
Going out to the 'back' with no light.

I remember the slap on the backside
And the taste of the soap when I swore
Anorexia and diets were unheard of
And we had little choice what we wore.

I don't think our ego was bruised much
Or our initiative quelled or destroyed
We just ate what was put on the table
And I think life was better enjoyed.

As Time Goes By — By the time a man gets
to greener pastures he can't climb the fence.

By the time a man has money to burn, the fire has
gone out.

Into life the male child comes,
Short on hair and long on gums.
Out of life he goes when youthless
In the same shape — bald and toothless.

A lady was very annoyed when the school teacher
announced that her son was illiterate. She said it
was a dirty lie, she had married his father a week
before he was born.

A baby-sitter is a teenager who behaves like a
grown-up while the grown-ups are out behaving like
teen-agers.

Discretion is when you are sure you are right, but
still ask your wife.

— The Book Shelf —

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