

Volume 17

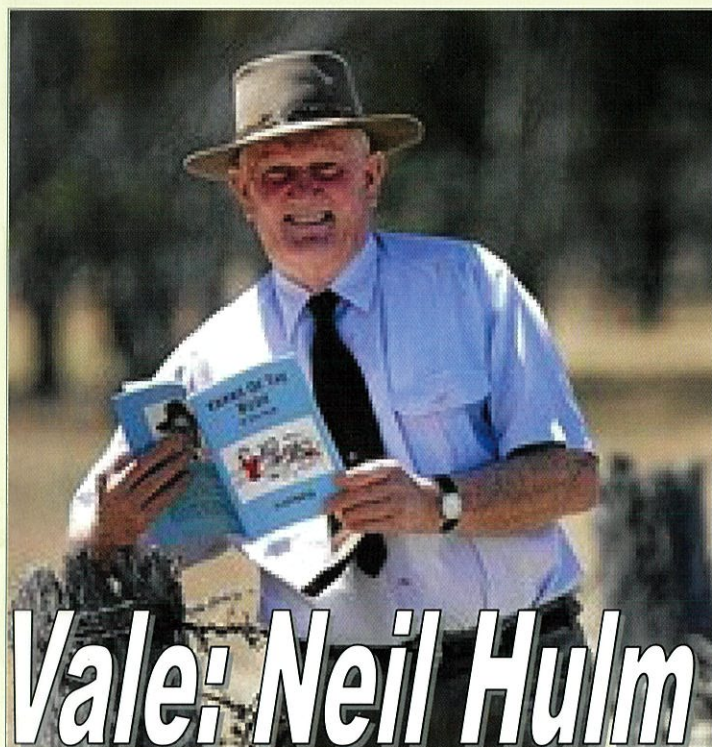
No. 2.
APR - MAY
2010

A.B.P.A.

The Australian Bush Poets
Association Inc.

Profile's:

*Neil and Colleen McArthur
and Neville Briggs*

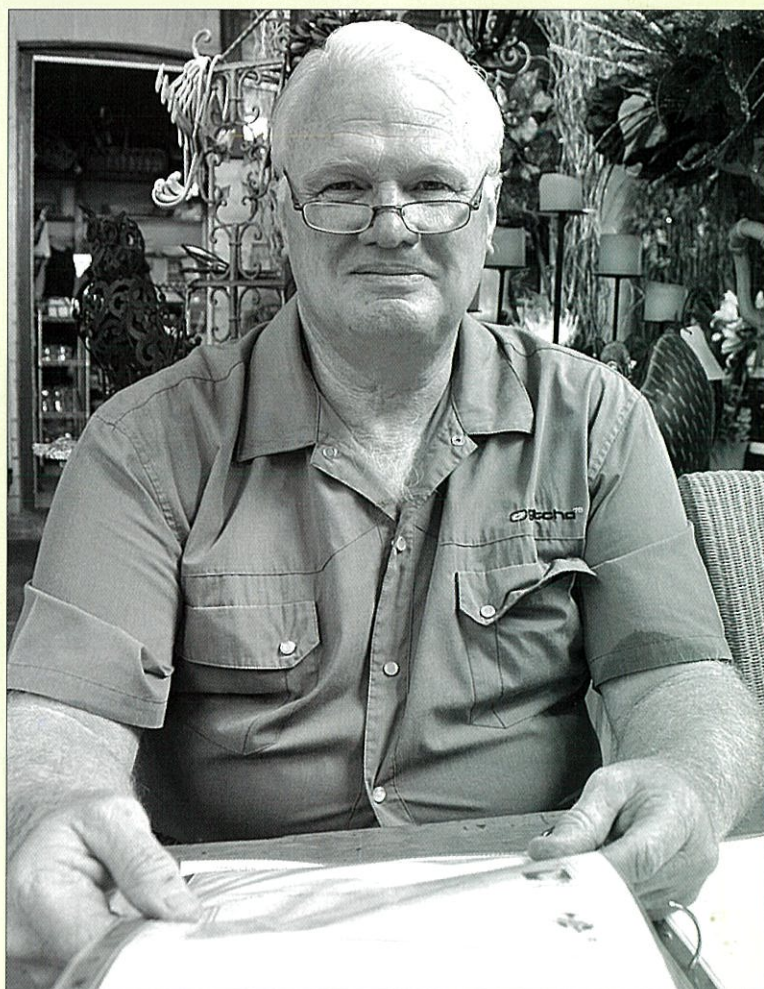


Vale: Neil Hulm



In this issue the return of the
ANZAC Tributes

Pages 6 - 7 - 16 - 17 - 21- 23



THE TIDES AND THE TURNS (of Crowdy Bay)

To sounds of laughing jackass we can rise to greet the sea
where pines and melaleuca intertwine.
Majestic gums outstretch to skies where 'brahminies' soar free
from land reserved for Nature to design.



The azure coastal landscape basking warmly in the sun,
can make the troubled world seem far away.
Its beauty capturing my heart entices everyone
to ride the tides and turns of Crowdy Bay.

Enfolded safe by shoreline's curve, a close community
is pulsing to the ocean's rhythmic sounds.
Embraced and cooled by breeze off-shore and nurtured by the sea,
serenity and harmony abounds.

Within the mangrove reaches where the swift-wing corm'rant dive
we fish for need like black-skinned man of old;
share space in dolphined waters where unspoken dreams survive -
in tune with realms where miracles unfold.

The challenging perspective of Pacific's wide expanse
will call to those who quest to journey out
beyond the calm, to seek the depths where space and scope entrance -
to sense the freedom coastal life's about.

When windswept far from millpond shore, at whim of ocean's force,
with hazy shapes in distance marking land,
the rising swell of surging seas pits strength to keep on course -
awareness comes that life's in Nature's hand.

Acacias and natives fold, then lorikeets will cease
their reverie to nectar of the trees
as natur'l shapes are silhouetted, bare in moonlight peace,
while curlew cries upon caressing breeze.

From dawn to dusk the ebb and flow enthrals me with its charm -
kaleidoscopic, ever-changing view.
The trauma of cyclonic force, tranquillity of calm -
the juxtaposing contrast of the two.

This coastal stretch we call our own where Nature reigns supreme
is part of our great country's eastern shore.
Preserving what we have, together, we can share the dream
and keep it in our hearts forever more.

BRENDA JOY

From a diverse background as a teacher, a singer/songwriter, an author, an artist, a wife and a mother, three years ago Brenda Joy discovered that there were modern day bush poets, when Melanie Hall and Milton Taylor visited Charters Towers to perform at a Boree Log. She was immediately hooked on becoming a part of this uniquely Australian art form.

So began the addiction that has taken her poor retired husband from a peaceful rural life in North Queensland in the winter months and an equally peaceful island life on Coochiemudlo Island, South East Queensland in the summer months, to the demanding role of chauffer, listener, patron and itinerant traveller to poetry events and festivals, whilst his wife serves her apprenticeship as a performer of bush verse and yarns.

Then, even when at home, his duties are ever increasing as she neglects the basic elements of wifedom whilst, inspired and guided by the master-craftsman, Ellis Campbell, she develops her skills as a written poet in this all-consuming and exacting genre.



Hal Pritchard and Brenda Joy

I WONDER an excerpt from Denis Kevans

Could Homer walk this hill and hear,
The song of cannon, high and clear,
The roar of caissons jolting past,
The hiss of bullets, and the blast
Of shrapnel over yonder trees,
I wonder would he sing of these ?

Could Homer walk this field and spy
The walking wounded reeling by,
With wet, red wounds and faces grey,
Each helping each along the way,
If he could see these broken men,
I wonder would he sing again ?

The blessings for both Brenda Joy and hubby Hal are the wonderful troupe of performers, writers and supporters, who have accepted them into the very special clan of bush poetry sharing and fellowship.

Brenda Joy's winning poem from the Harrington Surfing the Verse Festival is published herewith. Her winning poem from the NSW State Championships at Dunedoo 'Forgotten Children - Childhood Lost' can be found on page 12

Presidents Report



Thank you to the membership for your confidence and support and congratulations to all the new (and older) Committee Members. We have an exciting and energetic executive committee. Collectively we will strive to grow the ABPA well beyond our tenure.

H e a r t y
congratulations to all the entrants in all competitions across the country. It takes great courage to present their work (and that of others) for public consumption and enjoyment. The standard of performance and written poetry grows every year and shows a true commitment to our craft. Attendances at many of the venues across Tamworth were reportedly down but Push Poets performed well to full houses. Well done Poets!

I believe it is important that the ABPA committee should meet as often as is necessary and engage in robust debate about the issues confronting our organisation. We also need to implement strategies that would see the ABPA endure twenty - even fifty years from now. To do this we need to talk and plan. Opportunities for meetings have been constrained to the annual Tamworth pilgrimage and emails.

On the 23rd February this year the new executive of the ABPA held their first Committee Meeting. This was held via Skype, a VOIP (Voice Over Internet) communication software. Using available technology makes the "tyranny of distance" pale into a mere 'challenge of familiarisation' of a new computer programme.

On the agenda were

ABPA Website Forum issues

Membership building

Schools

ABPA Funding

The meeting went for one and a half hours with good debate and excellent input where issues were discussed and resolutions made.

MEMBERSHIP

From the meeting we're looking at increasing our membership. Many participating poets are not members of the ABPA. You may see an increased ABPA presence at upcoming festivals. Ellis Campbell has kindly let the ABPA print his "Poetry Writing Tips" to use as an incentive for new members.

SCHOOLS

Primary Schools enjoy outside professionals delivering material appropriate to their subjects. Secondary schools

Please Call Me Mate

(c) Manfred Vijars

Here in this country a bloke is a bloke
and a girl is a Sheila, fair dinkum, no joke
and here is one more thing I'm telling you straight
I'm an Australian, so please call me "Mate"

All over the world there are names for one's own
terms that are normal and not overblown
Not sure what they call friends up there in Kuwait
but here in Australia – just call me "Mate"

In Europe you may be an 'amigo', 'senior'
a 'comrade', 'ami' - there's these terms and more
But since you're out here, I'll reiterate
I'm an Australian, so please call me "Mate"

In England they have their formality and grace
so lordship and duchess and sir have their place.
to make me a Pommy - I'm no candidate
I'm an Australian, so please call me "Mate"

I like the Yanks and their cowboy lifestyle
share a campfire and sit for a while
But calling me "Buddy" will get me irate
'Cause I'm an Australian, so please call me "Mate"

Those imported cultures, I won't tolerate
if they push their agendas to invalidate
my pride for my culture, is not up for debate
I'm an Australian, so please call me "Mate"

(English and History faculties) also appreciate material presented professionally. The ABPA has among its membership a number of poets who currently present to schools. We have also received a number of enquiries on how to go about presenting to schools. Each State has differing legislation regarding the requirements for interacting with children; to that end the specific State requirements will be posted on the ABPA Forum in the next few weeks. We would like to have a register of qualifying poets who are able to perform to schools across Australia. We will keep you posted on the progress of that one.

FUNDING

Funding is an ongoing issue and we are looking at a number of major sponsors.

Thank you once again for your support.

Cheers,

Manfred.



Hullo everyone,

I feel I would like to reply to the comments being made about written competitions and about the poems published in our magazine.

Firstly, regardless of whether the comments are right or not, I feel a little indignant about people who criticise others who are doing their best to contribute to the world of Bush Poetry. When is the last time the critics won a competition? Or contributed a poem to the magazine? Or stood for office or offered their services in a positive way? 'Riders in the Stand' eh, Banjo.

Let's get facts rights, too. I certainly don't believe those on the judges list 'just ask' to be put on it and hey presto, it happens. As far as I am aware, those on the writing judges list have regularly won and placed in many written competitions over recent years. OK, they *also* had to express a willingness to be available to judge as requested.

Now I may have only been a poetry judge for a few years, but I have been a highly qualified judge of 'subjective' competitions for over thirty years and one thing that is obvious is this: you can only judge the best (in your opinion), of what is placed before you. I may want to give it to a gorgeous Thoroughbred but if I only get donkeys turn up, then there's no choice. Same for wanting to award a 'Valencia Orange' but only getting 'lemons'.

I recently judged a written bush poetry competition which was quite separate from the A.B.P.A. and although

advertised nationally, was not advertised in any A.B.P.A. poets' circles. The entries, I'm afraid, were of quite poor standard and even the best one was far from acceptable by our criteria.

I anguished that should my name be published, as the judge, against the winning entry, the vultures would pounce and I would be up for criticism. So be it. My point is, one should always be aware of all entries before making judging assessments.

Another issue worth throwing into the pot is that I have also judged many entries over recent years that were technically correct but boringly forgettable!

Ellis Campbell and I recently discussed a 'degree of difficulty' component. It is easy to be pedantic about structure and to be quite perfect if one only writes in simplistic iambic pentameter. When writers venture into literary circles with more complex patterns of meter and rhyme and less 'suburban' basic language, surely this is more open to minor hitches and if done appropriately and well, deserving of greater praise.

The important issue I feel, though, is the *target* of any criticism (justified or not) of the competition winners. The organiser and judge seem to be protected in anonymity while the poor poet is publicly crucified. Too many competition organisers cut costs or know no better and give the judging job to someone who knows even less! One time, an organiser has even had the audacity to *tell* the qualified judge how to judge!

There have been, in recent times, some very high profile poems that have won valuable or prestigious awards in the public domain (and from many hundreds of entries) that could have holes shot through them by qualified writing judges.

Who picked the judges? And why are they anonymous even after the event?

There are three poems published in the Dec/Jan issue that were winners in competitions judged by me and I'm not saying they are perfect and I'm *certainly* not saying I am perfect but I will stand by these pieces and although you may not agree with me, I always have reasons and am always willing to explain those reasons.

Last but not least, our magazine, as I understand it, is for ALL our members. All members are encouraged to support it and to contribute to it. If Joe Bloggs wants to send in a poem, who says it is the Editor's job to ensure it is structured perfectly? Provided it is not offensive in any way, I don't feel it should be precluded.

If I had been subjected to the ridicule and hurt that I know has been suffered by the writer of the poem that started this furore, I well may have 'chucked it in'.

Instead I was lucky enough to have caring, compassionate and GENUINELY interested poets such as Glenny Palmer, Ellis Campbell and Milton Taylor share their expertise and love of poetry with me.

I do hope all of us are willing to do the same for others.

Carol Heuchan

Poets By The Sea - 'Surfin' the Verse'

Harrington is a small unspoiled paradise on the NSW coast, the perfect setting for the 2nd Poets By the Sea Festival held in the last weekend of January. The weekend kicked off swimmingly with a 'Bait the Poets' evening. Bill Kearns, John Lloyd, Melanie Hall, Carmel Lloyd and Susie Carcary kept the fishy lines and dodgy rhymes coming all evening.

Three poets brekkies, three poets lunches and a Saturday evening concert provided heaps of entertainment over the weekend.

The competition was terrific in both original and non-original sections. Congratulations to Heather Searles who

won the Toohey's 1000 open division and to Isabella Bailey who took first place in the non-original section.

Congratulations also to Brenda Joy Pritchard who won first place in the written 'coastal life' section and to Trish Paterson for her first place written entry in the humorous section.

'Surfin' the Verse' included again this year a church service in verse on Sunday morning. This non-denominational service is a highlight of the Harrington weekend and it was great to hear Bill Kearns get out his guitar and sing his beautiful song "Thief on a Cross".

Thanks to Bill and Del Dennis and their team of hardworking volunteers

who made the whole event possible.

They must be keen because they have dates for next year already - 28 -30 January 2011 - put those dates into your diary and get along to Harrington Poets

Isabella Bailey & Heather Searles



Boyup Brook

Country Music Festival Bush Poetry Report

18th – 21st February 2010

With a great line-up of poets headed by Dave Proust, Susan Carcary and Melanie Hall, bush poetry again received huge support from the festival organizers and patrons alike. A crowd in excess of 1300 thoroughly enjoyed the Sunday morning Bush Poets Breakfast, with the "big three" being capably supported by several WA poets.

In all, bush poets ran four events, three breakfasts and a lunchtime concert on the "Village Green". Dave, Susan and Melanie performed during the breaks at Pixie Jenkins' Brekky on Friday morning. This made a total of ten hours of poetry, with the audience crying out for more.

Susan and Melanie ran excellent workshops on writing and performing. These were well attended and very informative for the participants. Dave Proust put on a show at each of the primary schools and these were very popular with staff and students alike.

WA poets who performed on Sunday morning were Brian Gale, Rob Gunn, Wayne Pantall, Irene Conner, Brian Langley, Barry Higgins, Peg Vickers, and Bill Gordon.

It was very heartening to see Bush Poetry being recognized by the organizing committee. Poetry is now a major part of the festival program, and not confined to the role of something to fill the gaps. Thank you to the Boyup Brook Country Music Club for their support, and to all the poets who contributed to the best weekend yet. A new innovation last year was the written competition, and the results for 2010 can be found on page 20.

Boyup Brook Written Competition Judges comments

Once again, there were two categories in this competition, Open and "Emerging" (Novice). In the open competition, the general standard was very high and almost all entries would, in different company, find themselves getting a place.

The subject matter was quite varied, and unlike last year was not predominantly "reminiscence" poems. In order to pick a winner, it was necessary for me to "pick nits" for many had only one or two very minor mistakes.

Consequently I did pick just one winner, but was unable to separate 2 highly commendeds and 3 commendeds - the remainder were not very far behind.

The Novice Competition however was a different story, poems ranged from excellent to disqualified - the disqualifications were a couple of poems in free verse. The rules clearly said, very good and consistent rhyme and rhythm. Entering free verse poems in a Bush Poetry contest is like entering a pie in a cake competition - Of the remainder, very few had good metre. There was the odd mis-rhyme and obviously missing punctuation, also a couple that did not seem to have continuity of their story, but consistency of metre was the feature that most did not seem able to achieve.

I would strongly suggest that all novices intending to enter Bush Poetry Written Competitions familiarise themselves with the many hints and suggestions for writing, presented on the ABPA website as well as in many other places.

Three poems did stand out however as they fulfilled all of the criteria of the competition. There were enough minor errors in these to discriminate between them.

WA Novice Performance Championships

With lack of sufficient interest over the past few years to hold a WA State Performance Championship, the WA Bush Poets Committee decided to run just the Novice sections as we have several emerging writers and performers who had never experienced competition.

In addition to the normal "Novice Original" and "Novice - others" sections, a third category was added. This was as a result of the current President's (Brian Langley) decision a few years back to encourage non performers to be actively involved in the Monthly Musters.

It had been noted that we were hearing many repeats of only a very small selection of Classical poems and he suggested that we might broaden the presented material by having a monthly feature "Readings from the Classics" where poems not usually performed would be presented, along with a short bio of their author. This has proved to be a very successful feature of each month's programme and has seen some "readers" now progress to memorising their presentations.

As we have had readers of all capabilities, it was decided to include this as a category in the Novice

Competition. The competition was run as part of the programme of two musters, November 09 and February 10.

Judging in all categories was along the guidelines of the ABPA Results page 20.

Bungendore

Since its inaugural 1994 poets breakfast at the Lighthouse Cottage, thence at 'Elmsleigh' Homestead and now the Bowling club, the Bungendore NSW bush poets turnout has never failed to draw a large crowd for the two mornings of poetry on the first weekend of February; all part of the annual Country Music Muster.

The bush poetry is of course complimented by the Bungendore Country Muster which is the only festival celebrating all Australian Bush Ballads and Country Music in Australia. The weekend provides non stop music and the event flows into the town with busking in the street, two bush poet's breakfasts and entertainment at various venues.

Visiting the muster you can sample Australian village life, first class motel accommodation and meals and of course enjoy the cream of Australian traditional country music performed by Australia's finest bush balladeers and bush poets. Poets travelling from the NSW south coast included John Davis and Chris Woodlands whilst others such as Janet Moppit from Thirlemere and three Canberra/Queanbeyan ladies were loudly recognised for their first time efforts. Canberra and the local area supplied many of the performers who more than delighted the 300 strong audience each day. Compere was former local Frank Daniel making his big comeback after a lengthy period of illness. Things are going good for the old bloke it seems.

Thanks also to Greg North, Barry Martin, Pamela Lawson Kerr, Dave Meyers, Laurie MacDonald, Lorraine McCrimmon and Bill Williams to mention only those few known to the writer, and hearty congratulations to the many who keep making Bungendore the success it has been for so long; all well deserved of a mention.

**BUNGENDORE -
FIRST WEEKEND
FEBRUARY 2011**

Phone 02 63 441477



Northern Tablelands Irish Association

The Celtic & Chinese Tin Miners Revue was held at Deepwater on Saturday 13th March.

The Poets Breakfast at the Cafe Blue Belle was attended by the Hon. Mr. Tony Windsor, Federal Member for New England and his wife Lyn, who arrived by helicopter.

Patrons and visitors were entertained by excellent performances from bush poets reciting poems, spinning camp-fire yarns etc. which was very much appreciated by those present.

The Performance Poetry competition at the Commercial Hotel was well supported with each poet required to deliver two poems, one with a mining theme and the other of their own choice. Cash prizes totalled \$1,000.00 and sashes with Paddy O'Brien being the most successful performer. (see results page 21)

Judges were Jim Brown from Inverell, Ron 'Boulia' Bates from Gatton and Bob McPhee from Torrington.

Chairman of the association, Mr. Bob McPhee advised that this competition is intended to be an annual event on the bush poets calendar with planning and fund-raising already started. 'Being a regional association,' he said, 'the Association is prepared to receive requests to hold this competition in any city, town or village in the Northern Tablelands.'

The written bush verse sections of the competition saw an exceptionally high quality of entries flowing in from Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. (see p. 21)

Remembering the ANZACS

OLD SOLDIER

© 1999 Tom Stonham,
Nambucca Heads NSW

Dim jungle dawn, a crouching run,
hot on my hip, an Owen gun ...
Cold, clammy sweat as I was torn
from brash boyhood ... and woke, reborn.

For nineteen years I never knew
what Freedom costs but now I do ...
You know, or not, it can't be told -
New-born at dawn and now I'm old.

The ignorance of youth was lost.
Life's line of no-return was crossed.
Delusion's dead, I've shed its husk ...
**OLD SOLDIER IN THE GRIM, RED
DUSK.**



Preparations are well in hand for the 6th Annual Bush Poetry Evening in Denman to be held Friday 30 April.

From humble beginnings the event has become so popular that it is a 'sell out' within hours of the tickets being on sale. It is held in the old Denman Memorial Hall, an ideal venue with soup and Damper the order of the day.

Poets and musicians combine for much frivolity and fun.

Beneficiaries of any surplus funds from the evening in the past have been the four Primary schools, Childcare Centre, Aged Care and this year will be the Scout Group.

Potential attendees are eagerly

anticipating welcoming Milton Taylor for the first time, as well as Graeme Johnson and Sally Mitchell. Tickets went on sale from Tuesday 30 March, so best of luck, don't delay. Phone 0427 472290

Denman is home to some of the best wine producing vineyards in the world. Sample a variety of wines including Semillon, Chardonnay and Cabernets from the numerous cellar doors. Spend a day exploring the delights of the wineries and take in some spectacular locations.

Pictured: Graeme Johnson - Sally Mitchell and Milton Taylor.



INTRODUCING...

'DALGETY SNOWY RIVER CELEBRATION'

on the banks of the Snowy River...30/31st October, 2010.

We are thrilled to announce our new event celebrating the best of Banjos beloved 'High Country' including:

- * Two days of Jam packed Bush Poetry and Music
 - * Horse events
 - * Snowy Mountains Regional Food Fair
 - * Dog Trials/Auction/High Jump
 - * Bush Dance with full Bush Band (Sat. Night)
 - * Heritage Display
 - * Canoeing on the river
 - * Sheep shearing display and competition (using hand clippers)
 - * Novelty events/petting paddock
- ...and great country hospitality!!!

Snowy Mountains Poet Lee Taylor-Friend will M.C. and our headline poet is the fabulous Carol Heuchan!!!

There will be a written competition, Walk-up comp, open mic, performances by local and visiting poets plus the all new 'Recite-a-Banjo' competition with plenty of cash and prizes up for grabs!!!

More info in the June/July edition of the ABPA magazine!!!

By Peter J Crawford -
Fitzroy Crossing NT

A rowdy black colt at the bar turns and calls
"I see you my uncle", then staggers and falls.
"I know you young Billy, I know all too well
from child to a man, your descent into hell.

You sit down young Billy, its high time we talk
of you and your life and the path you now walk;
young children deserted, life lived in a daze,
a home on the street in an alcohol haze.

Your mother was auntie to every sick child,
protector for all whether good, bad or wild.
If she were here now do you think she would see
the man that she prayed you would grow up to be.

Your mother a lady through heartbreak and death.
Your father stood tall till his last dying breath,
a core ironwood hard, a man tough, a man strong.
You do them no honour, you do them great wrong.

Your father the stockman I never would be,
his drink only black, only straight "Billy Tea".
He made your name Billy so you'd understand
what you must become to inherit your land.

Now stand up young Billy, stand solid, stand straight.
Don't pour more deep shame on my brother, my mate.
Stop humbugging drunks for a hair of the dog,
your death slow and sure in the grip of the grog.

You stand up young Billy above the low crowd.
You stand up young Billy, you're black tall and proud
You're better than humbug, abuse and the hurt,
The drugs and the gambling, the begging, the dirt.

You think you've been wronged, and learnt how to hate.
For all of your people, that just has to wait.
They need no hot anger, revenge and despair,
but strong new young leaders to start the repair.

Repair all the white men for what they have done.
Repair the dead heart of a people with none.
Repair your lost people, no longer complete,
no hope and no future, ground down by defeat.

Repair all your people, they need your help more
than feeding your own deep, dark, festering sore.
Repair your heart Billy, it's brimming with hate.
Repair your soul Billy, before it's too late.

Repair your old people, insulted and used.
Repair your young children, assaulted, abused.
Repair broken hearts, and repair battered wives.
Repair your whole nation, repair broken lives.

When black men like you hear your people's loud call
you draw a straight line in the sand and stand tall;
when black men like you hear your children's loud cry,
at peace in the dreamtime your fathers will lie.

You stand up young Billy, you take up the fight,
and lead all your brothers into God's morning light.
A strong man, a black man, you must make a stand,
and lead your proud people into their promised land".



GOLD CITY BUSH POETS INC GOLD NUGGET AWARD

FOR
WRITTEN BUSH POETRY COMPETITION
ENTRIES CLOSE 31st MAY 2010

16 & 17 years: \$5 or 3 poems for \$10

Open: \$10 or 3 for \$20

Enquiries to: Gwenda

jimgwenda@bigpond.com

Remembering the ANZACS

SMOKEY

© Ross Magnay - Alice Springs NT 1.9.91

Every town has got one, or at least they 'proably had,
A hero just like this one, he may even be your Dad.
But our town's got old Smokey, a hero so they say,
And they reckon but for Smokey, there'd be less of us today.

And though his legs are weakened, and he walks inside a frame,
His heart and spirit still intact, his mind is still the same.
Though the years creep up on Smokey, on this hardened little bloke,
When 'ere you talk to Smokey, you will always get a joke.

But Smokey wears no medals, and he makes no claim to fame,
And if he makes one hundred, he'll still be just the same.
But I often think of Smokey, just what goes through his mind,
About the Burma railway, and the blokes he left behind.

The blokes that he came home with, the blokes so frail and sick,
That's why I reckon Smokey, is such a good old stick.
So listen you do-gooders that knock blokes who went to war,
For we will never really know, the things they did or saw.

They went and fought for us you know, and we should really care,
That because of blokes like Smokey,
we can breathe AUSTRALIAN air!

NSW State Championships



NSW State Champions Greg North and Gabby Colquhoun with the major sponsor Peter Fallon of Personal Wealth Management Pty Ltd

A Meet and Greet at the Caravan Park on Thursday evening started the four day activities with more people than ever before thirsting in anticipation, and they were not disappointed.

After the Bus Tour on Friday, the Yarns competition kicked off at 7pm at the Golf Club and there was standing room only. Once again, more people than ever, heard the eleven Yarns Spinners capture the Australian way of life and I was pleased I was not a judge. However, Milton Taylor, Carol Heuchan and local Tony Yeo, all agreed that Lois Sanders' 'Battle of the Bulge' was the winning yarn.

The performance competition started 8am Saturday 6th March, at the Central School Hall and did not conclude till 5-30pm with 78 poems and thirty one poets. Judges, ABPA president Noel Stallard, Milton Taylor and Carol Heuchan worked tirelessly all this time, with rank order being used by the **Invidulators** to determine the winners. The evening session performed to over 400 visitors, poets and locals with rave reports of the outstanAging quality. Staunch poetry supporter, Olive Shooter won one of the seven raffle prizes.

Paddy and Glori O'Brien entertained the residents of the local Aged Hostel on Friday for which they were very grateful

And we thank Paddy and Glori for this. Dunedoo committee member, Clive Bristow made the five magnificent wooden book trophies which the champions received.

On Sunday morning, the Poets Brawl was moved to the Golf Club. Twenty Brawl contestants entertained another large audience as the beautiful rain cascaded down, and another hour of poetry as heard as no-one could leave. We thank the generosity of these poets for their time and talent given so generously.

The weekend was huge success and the ability of all poets never fails to amaze the organisers and visitors, some who could not find the appropriate words to convey this message.

Dunedoo, (837 Population) is a small rural community in the Central West of NSW on the Golden and Castlereagh highways. This festival is now a

NO ENJOYMENT IN UNEMPLOYMENT

© Neil McArthur 2009

There's certainly no enjoyment
In the grip of unemployment
As your working hands lie dormant
In a state of atrophy
But I've been right through Australia
With my Kingswood and my trailer
But every turns a failure
It's a bloody tragedy

I couldn't make a bob in Iron Knob
Not a dollar bill in Broken Hill
Couldn't earn a cent in Millicent
My pockets were all bare
I could not even earn a zac
In any town in the old outback
They laughed me off the Birdsville Track
Hey, but who would want to live there

I tried my luck to make a buck
From Echuca through to Tooleybuc
Then my funds ran out and I got stuck
And had to sell the car
So I rambled on to Wollongong
But they told me all the work had gone
It seemed no one would take me on
And their excuses were bizarre

Like, the sheep aren't growing wool this year
Or, this pub doesn't serve no beer
And the cows are all milking themselves this year
Yep, I heard every excuse
Bricklayers laboured for themselves
The shops all had self-stacking shelves
Or the lawns are mowed by Santa's elves
They must reckon I'm a goose

'Cause as I said earlier on
Wherever I go the works all gone
It makes me down and real forlorn
And leaves me with an empty feelin'
So I think I'll jump straight on the phone
And organise a plane back home
'Cause there's just no work wherever I roam
For a Sheep Farmer from New Zealand

signature event for the town and is seen as one of the main events in the Warrumbungle Shire.

Sue Stoddart - Festival Organiser
(Results page 21)

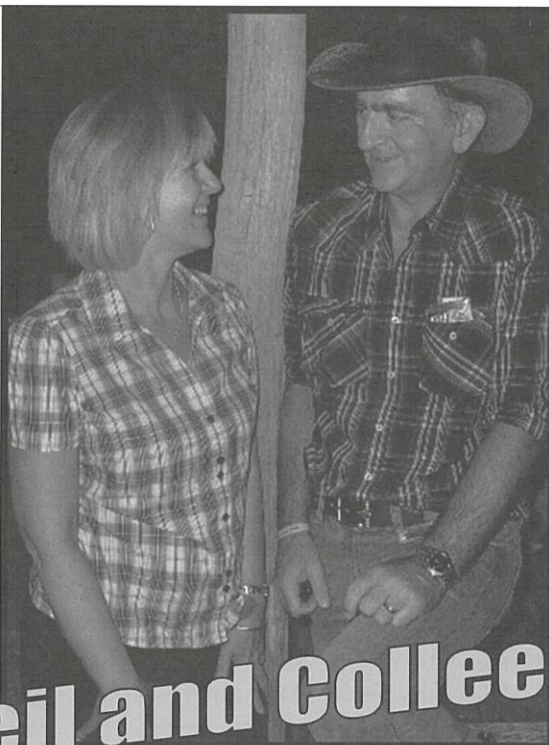
Neil & Colleen McArthur were born and bred in Ballarat, Victoria, where they met in a Psychiatric Hospital (No! They were working there!). With their sights set on raising a family and living a normal life, they brought three sons into the world. Luke, Shannon and Joel. After retiring from Psychiatric Nursing they decided to move to their beloved Holiday destination, Queensland, and set up home in the beach-side town of Bagara.

Neil worked as a labourer and freelance journalist until his editor requested that he go and take a refresher course in punctuation. That drew him to the Bundaberg Writers Club where he discovered an offshoot called the Bundy Mob, a keen group of Bush Poets led by Col & Bette Sheils. It was then he was coaxed into writing his first Bush Poem 'Mulligan's Missus', a poem still recited by poets to this day.

It was soon after that he caught the eye of his future mentor and good friend Charlee Marshall who advised him in the art of writing and performing. Although Neil was no stranger to performing, having been an accomplished guitarist since a young age and played lead guitar and written many songs in the bands he had played in, this new hobby was a lot different, as he explained in his own words, "You ain't got no bloody guitar to hide behind!!"

Meanwhile Colleen was working as a Home Childcare Worker as well as raising three sons who preferred the Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles to their Dad's Poetry.

His first major Poetry outing was at the Carnival Of Flowers at Toowoomba in 1996, where he made it to the finals against a field of nearly 80 poets which included his future friends, such as the late



Neil and Colleen McArthur

Bobby Miller, Ray Essery, Frank Daniels, Gary Fogarty and Marco Gliori, etc.

From there he became a strong member of the Bundy Mob and was on the original Committee which formed and ran the very first two Bundy Musters.

After moving back to Victoria for family reasons, Neil & Colleen set about continuing Bush Poetry as not just a hobby, but as a life style. Despite a life-long battle with severe Bi-polar illness, Neil fulfilled an invitation to attend the Longyard Hotel at Tamworth, and after a standing ovation his first appearance, he quickly found himself as a guest on the Jim Haynes Big Breaky Show. His comedy style of poetry, based on tragic reflections of Aussie life and characters was quickly endeared by Australian audiences and he soon found himself at the Gympie Muster, the Woodford Folk Festival, Port Fairy and quickly advanced to compering and judging at State and National Bush Poetry Competitions.

Life already converted, then you can be assured that they will be there, either watching, performing or organising new venues where poets can perform in the future.

"It's a legacy that our generation must pass on", says Neil "People have worked so hard in reviving Bush Poetry as an entertainment Media, and taking it back to where it belongs, as a memorable and entertaining way of Aussie yarn spinning, both serious and comical. We must leave behind a history of our times, just as Henry, Banjo & co. did with their poetry".

As well as Poetry, Neil still writes songs, plays guitar and works hard at supporting Beyond Blue in ridding Depression of it's social stigma. He also Dabbles in Technical Support for Apple Computers and software.

After 2 CDs and 3 books, he is heading back into the studio to produce his 3rd Album and has been booked to perform as a singer/guitarist at Clubs in the new year, another foray into the unknown, given the years he has been performing spoken word for audiences, but is looking forward to presenting his original works of country/blues fusion.

Married for over 27 years now, Neil & Colleen continue to travel with a passion and commitment to Bush Poetry almost as strong as their commitment to each other, and hope that this is just the start of the next chapter in their lives.

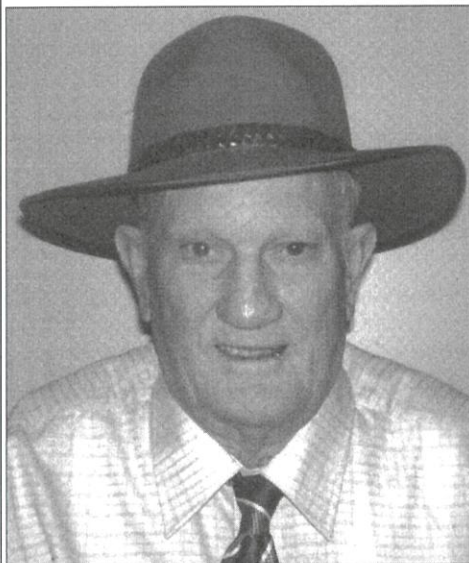
they have made, and those they have lost. With two of their own sons getting married next year, they continue travelling and taking poetry to new audiences all over Australia.

Together they now run the Bush Poets Breakfasts at the Longyard Hotel Tamworth, as well as twelve days of Poets Breakfasts at the Mildura Country Music Festival. They recently kicked off the 'Ravin' At Ravenswood' Festival, which hosted the Queensland Championships. Neil was also a founding member of the Victorian Bush Poets Association. They continue to travel to the Gympie Muster each year and spend time away from the Victorian Winter by performing for tourists at Caravan Parks, being resident at Birdsville for two months last year and at Charters Towers for two and a half months in 2009.

From St. Arnaud, Colac and Horsham, to the 53rd floor of Melbourne's Rialto Building, through to Birdsville, Tamworth and Lord Howe Island, you never know where Neil & Colleen will pop up next, but you can guarantee that if there is an opportunity to promote Bush Poetry to the uninitiated or the



VALE: Neil Hulm



The ABPA mourns the loss of one of its greatest stalwarts in Neil Hulm of Albury NSW.

"I'll be off to visit St Peter soon, I know he'll send me BACK TO THE HILLS!!!"

With those few words Albury's most prominent author and bush poet Neil Hulm signed off his final poem, a story of his life.

Mr Hulm died in the palliative care section of Albury's Mercy hospital on Tuesday, 16.3.2010 nearly two months after penning that 24-stanza tale. He was diagnosed with inoperable lung cancer last June.

Despite failing health, Mr Hulm continued to write and sign books and he marked his 80th birthday on February 25 with a party attracting 100 guests.

Among them was Canberra bush poet Jim Weatherstone, who read Mr Hulm's 'Back to the Hills', and trumpeted his friend of 20 years.

"He knew the bush and he knew what he was talking about, he had been there and done that," Mr Weatherstone said, *"he had written about the stuff that people think they know about, but only imagine."*

Mr Hulm self-published 13 books, with his daughter Ronelle Jones saying he had sold more than

50,000 since becoming an author in 1984.

Mr Hulm grew up in the Tumbarumba district after being born in Wagga Wagga on the 25th February 1930. Of his many achievements apart from sheep, cattle and horses, Neil was one of the country's top buckjump riders in the 1950's, following up as a rodeo judge for a further fourteen years. He played polocrosse and captained the successful Tumbarumba team which took out the NSW state title in 1958.

He moved to Albury in 1972 and became a racehorse trainer through to 1984, with, in his own words, *'A few winners, and a lot of losers!'*, before embarking on a writing career which he told The Albury Border Mail last year that he should have begun 30 years

earlier. Since then he has spent his time recording in prose and verse the events and memories of the past. This work, acclaimed by many, has now made Neil Australia's most successful living poet. His first publication, "Where the Snow Grass Grows", went into a fourth print inside twelve months; his next book, "Aussie Bush Yarns" (went into a sixth print) was followed by "The Pub and The Scrub", "Aussie Style Mate", "Tales of the Bush", "Aussie Ettamogah Pubs", "The Rivers Roar No More", "Country Comedy", "Yams Around the Camp Fire", "Aussie Bush Comedy", "Bush Humour", "Yams Of The Bush" and now "Aussie Country Comedy No. 2".

In recent years he was a familiar site at Albury book shops, setting up a card table and peddling his books.

"He was a good sort of country Australian, he would chat away to anyone about anything," the proprietor of Albury's Collins Booksellers Judith Hudson said. His family will continue selling his books through a website.

Mr Hulm is survived by his wife of 56 years Jill and children Garry Hulm, Terry Hulm, Alanna Hulm and Ronelle Jones.

A funeral service was held at the City Central Church in Albury. Rest in Peace old mate!

THE CALL OF THE MOUNTAINS

© Neil Hulm, 7.2.2002

Autumn has spread through the mountains,
Snow grass has turned grey from the frost;
Black cockatoos are migrating,
Wild flowers are wilted and lost.

Winter is set in her silence,
The air has turned thirty below,
Snow gums are standing like statues,
The land covered deeply in snow.

Springtime the creek beds are flooding;
Currawongs call out to the rains;
Wild flowers peep through the grasses,
The bogongs migrate from the plains.

The warmth of the summer is magic,
Cicadas call down from their trees;
Dingos howl out from their ridges;
The swallows flit 'round in the breeze.

High above rock covered mountains
The wedge-tails there circle the sky,
Watching, alert for a movement;
The scattered white clouds rolling by.

Down in the gurgling waters
The wild duck and trout are at play;
The swift and snipe ever stalking,
So silent and searching for prey.

Mist from a small pool is rising
To vanish away through the run;
Kangaroos feed in the distance,
The wallabies laze in the sun.

The land, there's no land to beat it,
Where water runs clear as could be,
The pale moon peers through the tree tops;
The stars dance the dance of the free.

Grazing has closed to the mountains,
The mustering stockmen will rest,
No more they'll ride 'neath the snow clouds,
Nor feel the soft wind from the west.

The hut, the broken down stockyards,
The stock route, an old packhorse track;
Mem'ries as sweet as the manna,
Forever, they're calling me back.

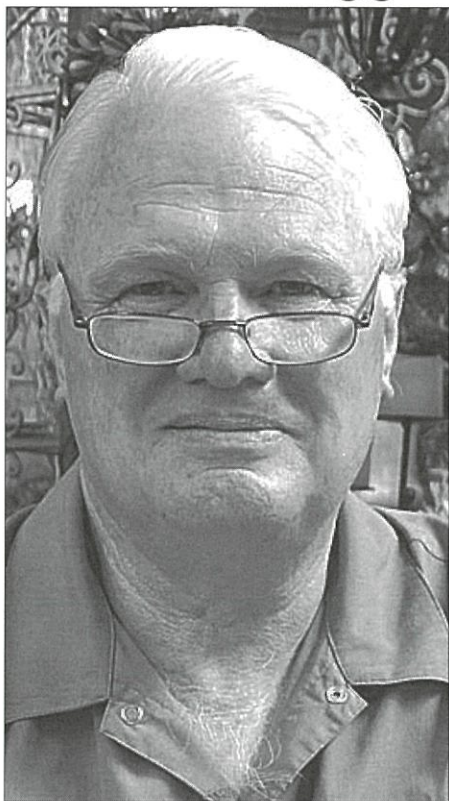
To walk the valleys and bush land,
Where brumbies race over the hill;
Where night owls call in the moonlight;
I want to go back, and I will.

Grazing leases in the Snowy Mountains of NSW were open from 1st December to 31st May, allowing for a six month grazing period. By 1960 grazing in the high country was banned.

In most years there is a light fall of snow about Easter, which melts away in a few days. Occasionally and not rare, a fall of snow would be very heavy and remain until the end of winter.

Members of the Hulm family, then living on the Mannus, via Tumbarumba, experienced their sheep being caught in the snow on two occasions.

Hunter Poet - Neville Briggs



Retired Police Inspector Neville Briggs spends his time these days juggling his love of poetry and painting. But as the newly elected President of the Singleton Bush Poets and Writers Group he is making poetry his number one priority and is on a mission to bring more members to the group.

Mr. Briggs, who has been a member of the Singleton poetry group for more than four years said he had no plans to be president, but now given the role, he will try to broaden the outlook for the group.

Bush poetry brings to mind classics such as Mulga Bill's Bicycle, Clancy of the Overflow and How M'Dougall Topped the Score with writers and poets such as 'Banjo' Paterson, Henry Lawson, Henry Kendall and Dorothea Mackellar instantly springing to mind.

And while these poets will always be a staple for the group, Mr. Briggs would like to see more contemporary poets such as Gregory North featuring more strongly, and also more original compositions.

He said some of the members simply like to recite or perform, while others are more interested in writing their own poetry.

"Whatever people want to do is OK,"

said Mr. Briggs. "Some are more interested in performing, some want to write; but I am trying to open it up for all poetry lovers."

After spending thirty years in the Police Force reaching the position of Upper Hunter area inspector, Neville Briggs has plenty of life's experiences to draw on and currently has fifty-three original poems in his collection. 'The Sausage Sandwich', 'Recession Buster', 'Chocaholics' and the 'The Traffic Tickets' are some of his latest offerings along with 'A Ruddy Duddy Dactyle' (a Kevin Rudd send up.)

A Ruddy Duddy Dactyle

*Flimmery flummery
Kevin 07 Rudd
Wants to fix taxes to
Clean up the air
Pastoral flatulence'
Antipathetic 'ly'
fouls up the atmosphere
ruffling his hair.*

With his apologies to poet William Blake, Neville has reworked the classic with sports hero Tiger Woods firmly in his sights.

*Tiger Tiger burning bright
Where were you the other night?
Now you've hit a bogey mate!
Bunker down and cogitate.
Tiger Tiger burning bright
In the boudoir of the night
What immortal hand or eye
Can save you when her missiles fly?*

"I would like to match our experience to poetry, give it a more contemporary appeal." "My idea is to encourage anyone with a love of poetry to come along and do any sort of poetry, not necessarily the bush poetry format of the metre and rhyme," he said.

He is hoping to introduce a small teaching/workshop segment to the monthly meeting where everyone has the opportunity to broaden their outlook.

Neville has also been a member of the Singleton Monday Art Group for more than twelve years and an amateur painter for around thirty years.

Every Wednesday he helps out with painting classes for an intellectually disabled group at the Ryder Cheshire House. It is something he has been doing for the last four years and he said he loves the spontaneity, warmth and enthusiasm of the students.

Mr Briggs said he often feels torn between his love of painting and poetry but this year both interests will have to

co-exist, because he is not planning on stopping either.

The Singleton Bush Poets and Writers association meetings are open to anyone interested in coming along; to share their work, to perform, or simply to listen.

Mr Briggs said it was an informal, friendly style of gathering and there was no pressure on anyone to perform.

The group meets the first Wednesday of the month at the Singleton Heights RSC at 7pm; with the next meeting scheduled for April. Anyone interested can call Neville on 6571 1398.

Mr Briggs is also an active member of the Baptist Church.



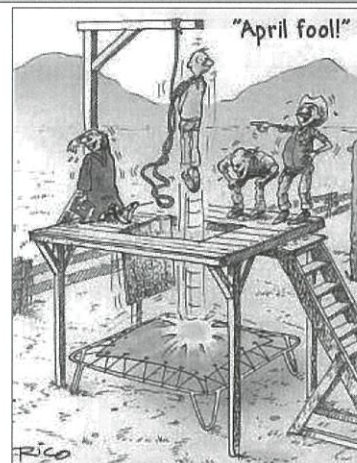
Grenfell's Henry Lawson Festival of Arts will be held on the June Long-weekend from 11th to 14th June 2010 emphasising 'Poetry on the Boards' and the 'Poetry Slam'.

'Poetry on the Boards' on the Saturday morning is a chance for traditional bush poetry recitation by people from the audience. It's not a competition, just a chance to recite in a receptive environment.

On Saturday afternoon the Poetry Slam will be an opportunity for more diverse expression through verse, where less traditional poetry will be performed. It will be judged by members of the audience and a small prize will be awarded for the winner. The slam will be hosted by Miles Merrill. There is no cost to participants.

Contact the coordinator on 02 6343 1248 or visit the website www.grenfell.org.au/henrylawsonfestival for more details

**Henry Lawson
Festival of Arts
June 11-14 2010
(see p. 19)**



Port Fairy

Folk Festival 2010

The Port Fairy (Vic) Folk Festival once again lived up to its high standard of entertainment and spoken word. It was a great success. In recent times Jim Haynes, the director of the spoken word component of the festival, has chosen a theme for the festival. Two years ago it was Henry Lawson. Last year it was 'Banjo' Paterson. This year it was "Dad and Dave".

Guest artists appearing with Jim were highly accomplished poet and writer Peter Mace and Paddy Ryan, a star of Tamworth's Longyard Hotel from when he was seven years old and West's Leagues Club where he performs with Grant Luhrs and 'The Best of the Bush Show'. Paddy is still an absolute revelation to folks who have never encountered him; his dry laconic wit and humorous presentations will be long remembered.

The three Poets' Breakfasts held in the Shebeen were very well attended, and hugely successful. Smaller spoken word events were also held in the Lecture Hall, and St Pat's Hall.

Jim convened a workshop on the "Land Selection Acts". The purpose of the session was to provide some solid historical background to the "Dad and Dave" books, at the same time as providing entertainment. In addition to Jim, Peter, Paddy, and Dennis O'Keefe sang a number of songs, ably assisted by Dennis Taberner on banjo.

Jim launched his new "Big Book of Verse for Aussie Kids", published by Allen & Unwin, which included a number of poems by Stephen Whiteside. Stephen also contributed to the book launch with a number of his poems.

The annual Pat Glover Storytelling Competition was won by Terry Rooney of Sydney with the award presented by three times award winner Jackie Kerin.

Stephen Whiteside presented a 'Dad and Dave' poem written only the day before and also gave a talk about the Toolangi Festival coming up in October.

WINNING POEM – WRITTEN SECTION NSW STATE TITLES DUNEDOO 2010

In November last year, the Federal Government issued an official apology to all children raised in homes and orphanages in Australia during the twentieth century.*

In February this year this was followed by an apology by the British Government, for amongst these children were young migrants sent here from Britain, under a state-approved scheme aimed to relieve the burden of unwanted poor and to expand population of the colonies.**

These children were promised a better life. Some gained this.

This is the story of the many who did not.

Told from a daughter's viewpoint I call it -

FORGOTTEN CHILDREN – CHILDHOOD LOST

No sadness filled our childhood days; my parents did their best to raise their offspring in an atmosphere of care.

We knew they both were English born, transported from a life forlorn, dislodged into an orphanage austere -

a phase they'd wanted to disown, so till this day we had not known what they and other migrants had to bear.

A quest by some for recompense meant steps to closure could commence, with governments and people more aware.

For tribulations of the past, 'Apologies' have come at last to victims whom society deprived.

Forgotten once they'd left their moor - this progeny of nation's poor - no follow up to see how they'd survived;

no int'rest in these youngsters' plight - put out of mind when out of sight - the salve of greener pastures well connived.

Two problems solved by their deport. To help expand, the British wrought a plan approved and cleverly contrived.

For fam'lies struggling to survive - no alms to keep their young alive - this offer seemed the answer to their prayer.

They signed their children to the scheme, surrendering to lure of dream - "They'll 'ave a better chance at life down there."

One hundred thousand crossed the sea, away from home and family - entrapped into the destiny they'd share:

for once they'd gone, then they were lost - just cast aside like refuse tossed - and those who tried to reach them faced despair.

Survival became way of life; these children forced to suffer strife developed codes of comradeship to bond.

The sense of mateship lent reprieve - just meagre comfort to relieve the burden of *façade* that each had donned:

for banishment to south of Earth convinced them that they had no worth - brought doubts and fears too raw to rise beyond.

Their stoic actions aimed to hide emotions buried deep inside - the need for love, with no-one to respond.

The traumas of the nights alone - away from all that they had known - afraid and isolated, set apart;

while through the days of constant toil at dairy chores and tilling soil, exhausted children battled from the start.

What sins had brought abandonment? No news from kin or letters sent - as mail was screened for wrongs it might impart.

Unpaid-for labour, profit based, saw basic schooling soon erased - forgotten, like the pain within the heart.

The stories that were never heard – abuse by punishment and word – the rod of iron used to keep control by guardians but poorly taught, reacting to their fear, distraught - misplaced, and quite unsuited to their role. Sadistic deprivation reigned, through brutal measures unexplained to kids bereft of dignity. Some stole the remnants of their self-respect with acts more harmful than neglect - perverted sex that wracked the very soul.

Too long kept covered, hidden ills, with dread and guilt such crime instils – denials – victims scared, remaining dumb. Now finally the silence breaks; acknowledgement of past mistakes, revealing scandals unbelievably by some. Alas, my Dad's no longer here. Those years of hardship and of fear had caused his mind and body to succumb. But Mum is standing by my side; she's spoken out, restored some pride - she's shown the courage that can overcome.

To say we're sorry's just a start to soothe disturbance of the heart – no word, or deed, or fund can compensate for lack of home and fam'ly rights, for work-filled days and fear-filled nights - this token is too little come too late. And yet my mother feels at last, through recognition of the past - compunction for the shame that was their fate - that wounds now purged and opened wide, not left to fester deep inside, may mean her tortured nightmares can abate.

Forgotten children - childhood lost, still scarred and hurt - traumatic cost - forsaken, exiled, and by all reviled. To move ahead's their only course, on past regret and deep remorse - the horrors of their youth must now be filed. Injustice has been brought to light. My mother's prayer is that this might prevent the suffering of some future child. Perhaps contrition, harshly earned, may mean that lessons have been learned - and with this hope in heart, my mother smiled.

** Apology to the 'forgotten Australians' made by the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd in Canberra on 16th November, 2009, followed by an apology to the "child migrants" by the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown on 24th February, 2010.*

© Brenda Joy, Charters Towers, Queensland, 2010

Burke and Wills update

The Bendigo Goldfields Bush Poets have finalised prize money and conditions for their poetry and short story competitions based on the ill-fated Burke and Wills Expedition.

There is more than \$700 at stake. Those placed in either genre will be published in a professionally printed anthology that will be a unique tribute to Burke and Wills.

Section prize money is identical, 1st \$200, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$50. All entrants placed will receive a copy of the anthology.

One important change has been made to what was originally planned for the poetry conditions. The maximum line limit has been reduced to 100 lines.

Entry forms with full conditions are on the ABPA website.

Co-ordinator Colin Carrington, though pleased with the interest shown so far in the competitions hopes a reasonable number of entries will be received in both sections.

It's not just the money to be won – there's the prestige of being published. Part of the celebrations of Burke and Will's Camp 6 at Mia Mia on 28th August, include two performance competitions. One is restricted to novice and intermediate poets.

The BGBP recognises the need to provide opportunities for poets at all levels. Also taking advantage of every opportunity to increase the profile of bush poetry in Victoria. (See advertisement page 20)

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT

(c) 2007 Manfred Vijars

I'm writing in sheer desperation
dear Fluffy is missing you see
I've searched high and low and can't find her
I'm certain she's no escapee.

The kids sit distraught and are crying
they consider her much more like kin
She's quiet and shy and so cuddly
now missing much to our chagrin.

The letter received said, "Dear Madam,
in keeping with our Feral Code,
your cat has been moved to Port Headland
to the Feline Detention Abode.

She's already made application
to the Department for Feral Affairs
Her forms were all processed adroitly
by marsupials working in pairs.

She's on trial for stalking the natives
with hungry intent in her eye -
to remain here in permanent status,
I'm afraid she won't qualify.

She's terrorised our smaller creatures
and their numbers are in rapid decline
our bilbies and woylies and boodies
are all sport for this evil feline.

Our fauna is not to be eaten
and is strictly off limits as food
'cept what's on our National emblem
we'll let people have some latitude.

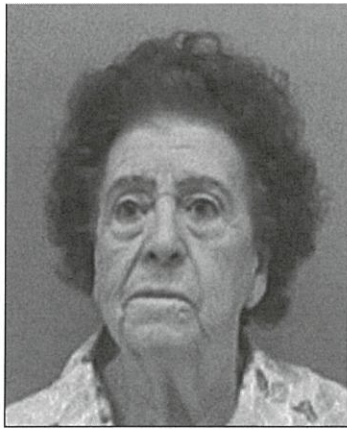
It's been found out through DNA testing
her ancestors hailed from the Nile
Now those with such mid eastern backgrounds
have turned all the locals hostile

Her kind are feral boat mammals
illegal and banned refugees
It's feared that they'll soon take us over.
Don't weaken or fall for their pleas.

We've found that no matter what training
or culture correction she gets
this feline Fluffy Bin Laden
has shown not one ounce of regret

As she has no Patriotic commitment
to keeping the natives from harm
so, Fluffy will be decommissioned
tell the kids that she's "gone to the farm".

A couple hadn't been getting along for years, so the husband thought he'd buy his wife a cemetery plot for her birthday. You can imagine her disappointment. The next year, her birthday rolls around again and this time he doesn't buy her anything. She asked "Why?" He replies, "You didn't use what I got you last year!"



When Grandma Goes to Court

Lawyers should never ask a Mississippi grandma a question if they aren't prepared for the answer.

In a trial, a Southern small-town prosecuting attorney called his first witness, a grandmotherly, elderly woman to the stand. He approached her and asked, Mrs. Jones, do you know me?

She responded, 'Why, yes, I do know you, Mr. Williams. I've known you since you were a boy, and frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, and you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realize you'll never amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you.'

The lawyer was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know the defence attorney?'

She again replied, 'Why yes, I do. I've known Mr. Bradley since he was a youngster, too. He's lazy, bigoted, and he has a drinking problem. He can't build a normal relationship with anyone, and his law practice is one of the worst in the entire state. Not to mention he cheated on his wife with three different women. One of them was your wife. Yes, I know him.'

The defence attorney nearly died. The judge asked both counsellors to approach the bench and, in a very quiet voice, said, 'If either of you idiots asks her if she knows me, I'll send you both to the electric chair.'



Here's a poem by Dot Schwenke to let other poets know that they are not the only ones who struggle.

REALISTIS APPRAISAL by Dot Schwenke

I'm just propping up the winners, so you may not know my name.
For without the *Bloody* losers, there's no winner in a game.
Yes, I'm starting at the bottom, that's where most performers start,
Can't you see my knees are shaking. Oh, but you should feel my heart.

My brain is filled with cotton wool and my throat is feeling dry.
While the audience is dozing, though for you they laugh and cry.
The winner's walking round outside rehearsing every line.
Now my brain is working overtime. If it stays with me it's fine.

I'm up here backing Murphy's Law – All that can, will sure go wrong.
I'd not do this for a fortune, yet I do it for a song.
Do you think the judges noticed that I tripped onto the stage?
Or the paper glued inside my palm? It's less than half a page.

You'd think that they'd appreciate if I'm not the brightest star.
I'm just propping up a winner – though I'm not a real galah.
Yes, I'm propping up a winner, and they owe a lot to me.
If it wasn't for us also rans, no winners there could be.

If losers didn't drop the mike or stammer on that line,
Or if I wrote a better verse, that trophy would be mine.
If I could reproduce the show that my dog sees me do,
The audience would all sit up and you would listen too.

Till then I'll prop a winner up. But you can all take note –
I won't stay on the bottom rung – I won't remain the goat.
So smile and take the trophy. You're good as we all know.
But sneak a peek behind you – we're all climbing here below.

HEADLINE NEWS FROM NORTH PINE BUSH POETS GROUP Great chance for Novice Writers

North Pine Bush Poets Group are introducing an innovative new section to the written competition in the Camp Oven Festival in 2010.

Remember the Camp Oven Festival? It's what we had before we went National. This year, for the first time in living memory, we will have a written competition for all those people who have never won, or been placed in a written competition. This is to give a chance for those of us who are a little intimidated by people called Max and Ellis and Grahame and Ron and Kym. . . well, the list goes on. So, come on all ye writers, like me, who feel that they have something to offer – put pen to paper and let us see something great from us mere mortals. You can now compete in a competition that will give you a real chance of winning a place or a Commendation Certificate. The judges have promised to

critique each poem. Entry forms are available from Dot Schwenke, 12 Herbert Street Scarborough, 4020 or on the ABPA website.

Closing date for entries in both the Novice and Open Written Competition is 9th July, 2010.

The Upper Lachlan

WOOL WAGON AWARDS

Coming again on

**19th and 20th
NOVEMBER**

CROOKWELL NSW

Look for more information next issue

'Spud' and Denielle Murphy

Ph. 02 4832 1004



Hunter Bush Poets

Annual Bush Poetry Festival!

15 – 17 October, 2010

Morrisset Showground, NSW

Friday pm, Sing around the Campfire, Brawl topics and Walk Up
Open Yarn-spinning

Saturday Comp.- Intermediate, Women's Classical, Men's Classical,
Women's Modern, Men's Modern, Women's Original Serious, Men's
Original Serious, Women's Original Humorous, Men's Original Humorous
Social night, Dance and Presentation. Sunday am. Brekky and Brawl
Even more Prizemoney and fun than last year!!

Camping available at showground. Enquiries Bill (02) 49 430141 or Carol 49 773210

Written – Open Serious and Open Humorous

Forms & Details on ABPA or Hunter Bush Poets website soon - or ph Trevor 49 56 5543



SINGLETON BUSH POETS AND WRITERS ASSOCIATION

Bush Poetry Workshop with GLENNY PALMER *Writing and Performance Techniques*

\$50 per Person - BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL!

Singleton Heights RSC - Baronia Room

8am to 3pm

Dorsman Drive, Singleton Heights

Saturday 5th June 2010

*** * * Saturday Night - *Poetry at the Pavillion* * * ***

BYO Basket Supper & Drinks

\$20.00 per Person (Workshop Attendees Free)

A GREAT Night of Aussie Bush Humour With . . .

Glenny Palmer & The Singleton Bush Poets with Special Guests TBA

Contact Details: John and Isabella Bailey
Bailey Electrical Specialists
35 Church Street
Singleton NSW 2330

Phone: Work 02 6571 2669 Home 02 6573 3873 Mob 0408 007 238

Fax: 02 6571 1037 Email: bailey.electrical@hunterlink.net.au

HORSES IN WAR

The origins of the Waler date back to 1840 and during the Boer War and World War I the Australian Horse received

worldwide recognition through the success of the Australian Light Horse regiments, a quite significant achievement for horses in Australia's history. The Waler was considered to be

the finest cavalry horse in the world, winning International acclaim for its endurance, reliability and hardiness during the Indian Mutiny, the Boer War and the First World War. In the Boer War, the Waler served in such regiments as the Lancers, Commonwealth Horse, Mounted Rifles and Bushmen's Troop.

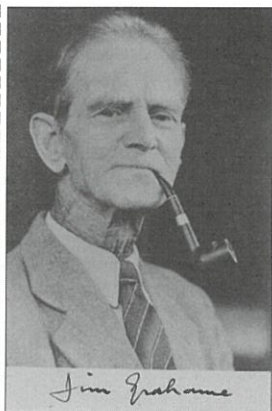
Around 160,000 Australian horses served in World War I. The majority of horses in the Corps were Walers and there is no doubt that these hardy Australian horses make the finest cavalry mounts in the world...." to p. 21

"UNDER WIDE SKIES"

LIMITED EDITION REPRINT COLLECTED VERSE OF

JIM GRAHAME

Limited edition reprint of the collected verse of Jim Grahame, one of Australia's great but almost forgotten poets is being organized by his descendants.



The print will be limited to the number of people who would like to obtain a copy and will be approx 300 pages and priced under \$20 plus postage and handling

Interested persons are invited to contact

PHILLIPA HOLLENKAMP Ph/fax. 02 44557999.
mob 0409 564 100 Email: getwet@shoalhaven.net.au

OR

JOHN DAVIS Ph 02 44552013 mob 0425 299 829 Email:
jda76436@bigpond.net.au

Old Farts

It's not a bad thing to be called an 'old fart' as you will see.

Old Farts are easy to spot at sporting events; during the playing of the National Anthem, Old Farts remove their caps and stand at attention and sing without embarrassment. They know the words and believe in them.

Old Farts remember World War II, Pearl Harbor, Normandy, Hitler, Rabaul and Kokoda. They remember the Atomic Age, the Korean War, The Cold War, the Jet Age and the Moon Landing. They remember the 50 plus Peacekeeping Missions from 1945 to 2005, not to mention Vietnam ..

If you bump into an Old Fart on the footpath he will apologize. If you pass an Old Fart on the street, he will nod or tip his cap to a lady.

Old Farts trust strangers and are courtly to women.

Old Farts hold the door for the next person and always, when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection.

Old Farts get embarrassed if someone curses in front of women and children And they don't like any filth or dirty language on TV or in movies.

Old Farts have moral courage and personal integrity. They seldom brag unless it's about their children or grandchildren.

It's the Old Farts who know our great country is protected, not by politician's, but by the young men and women in the military serving their country.

This country needs Old Farts with their work ethic, sense of responsibility, Pride in their country and decent values.

We need them now more than ever. Thank God for Old Farts!

I was taught to respect my elders. It's just getting harder to find them.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MULGA

To the "Bulleteen",
Dear Sirs,— I feel I want a change,
So I am coming down,
And I will want a place to camp
While I am in the town.
I think I'll bring my tent and things
That I used on the track,
And wonder now if you'd object
If I camped round the back.

I'm also taking down my dog—
I've reared him from a pup—
But if there's poison laid about
I'll have to chain him up.
I think you'll find he's pretty good
When strangers are about,
And he'll watch that you're not robbed
When everyone is out.

My tent is only six by eight—
It won't be in the way;
And one of you could camp with me
If you should care to stay.
And I would yarn about the bush;
The change would do you good.
(I s'pose there's water handy there
And I can find some wood).

I trust there is a store close by—
A general store I mean—
Where I can deal while I am camped
Behind the Bulleteen;
And I suppose that I can get
Some bread each second day—
I'll cut out baking while I'm there;
The fire might get away.

You'll find I'm not a lazy bloke;
I'll always lend a hand
To chop the wood or feed the horse—
The jobs I understand.
I'll see that people shut the gate
Throughout the night and day;
I'll feed the fowls and gather eggs
If you should be away.

But if you think by camping there
I'd make your neighbours scoff,
Or if their women-folk might talk—
Well, then, the trip is off.
So let me know to stay or go
(I won't get on the spree),
And, shine or rain, I will remain
Yours ever faithfulee,

—Jim Grahame.

REMEMBER THE HORSES TOO

© Kym Eitel

The men who went to war for us, and died so far away,
are honoured and remembered well, each touching Anzac Day.
Our soldiers fought with hero strength, but let us not forget -
who helped them through those horrid times of bomb and bayonet?

The Remounts Section¹ sourced the best -
Australia's finest Walers²
were led aboard a hundred steam ships - patient equine sailors.
Oblivious to war ahead, they crossed the angry waves.
Not all of them survived the trip, some sleep in ocean graves.

The Brigadier's prancing mount, the trooper's sturdy steed,
the half-legs³ pulling water carts, gave strength, endurance, speed.
Through dust storms, scorching temperatures,
and shifting sand and hills
they proved that they had hearts of gold,
with courage, nerve and will.

The Waler took the trumpeter to call at Palestine.
The heavy horse pulled medic carts behind the firing line.
The gun horse⁴ hauled artillery to arm the troopers' fight,
while sections⁵ rode reconnaissance each dark and restless night.

The horses saw the desperate times, when death was all around.
They galloped through the screaming injured,
thrashing on the ground.
They were shot at, strafed by German planes,
felt shrapnel each grenade.
The wounded, frightened horses fell,
as Turk machine guns sprayed.

All did their job, and did it well, with little hope of rest.
The saddle taken off at night, was thanks they got at best.
A pat, and "Thanks, good on 'ya mate," a nosebag with some corn,
a quick lay down, a few hours sleep, then back to war at dawn.

So many stories have been told - heroic acts of horses
who double-backed the injured men
and dashed through Turkish forces.
And when the war was finished,
all the troopers clapped and cheered,
but what about the horses, that they loved and so revered?

Their horse was friend and comrade,
through the thick of war and thin.
The Aussie politicians wouldn't let them come back in.
They said, "Because of quarantine, and massive costs involved,
you'll have to leave your mounts behind".
The troopers' cheers dissolved.

The war was done.
The men could leave that nightmare combat zone,
but first, they had to take the lives, of those who'd saved their own!
The younger mounts were volunteered to India's command.
Those over four, were shot and left, to perish in the sand.

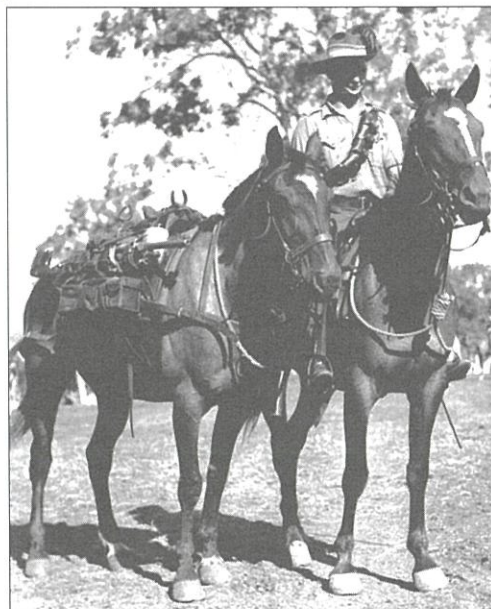
The horses of the 3rd Brigade, were killed in Tripoli.
They lined them up in olive groves, then shot them. Tears ran free.
Each marksman fired,
and wished the horse had died while serving war,
to lay the blame on enemy - instead his own heart tore.

The horses' frightened screaming rose above the gunshot rattle,
and left the men with lifelong scars, of killing after battle.
A thankless way to thank each horse for service in the sand,
and fearless dedication shown to save our precious land.

One hundred and eighty thousand horses,
gave their blood and lives⁷,
to help return our troopers to their children and their wives.
They gave their all, and still found more, brave gallantry to give.
They'd never see green fields again, or come back home to live.

We're grateful for the Anzacs, and their sacrifice as well.
We know the wars were brutal, and the soldiers went through Hell.
So honour fallen loved ones, and the friends we never knew,
but I ask you, every Anzac Day ... remember the horses, too ...

- 1 - The Remounts Section sourced and bought horses to send overseas. Banjo Paterson was one of these men.
- 2 - The Waler was not a breed of horse, but they were an Australian-bred horse, from a range of breeds or cross breeds. They were bred to be extremely hardy and of good nature. Only blacks, bays and brown horses were used. It was in 1846 that the term "Waler" was coined by the British, because Australian horses were originally sourced in New South Wales, but by the mid-1800's, all Australian horses were referred to as Walers. The most famous feat of the Walers, was the Light Horse charge on Beersheeba in 1917, to claim the water wells.
- 3 - "Half-legs" were a Clydesdale-cross, bred for endurance, speed and strength.
- 4 - "Gun horses" were the heavy horses that pulled "18 pounders" (a gun that shot shells weighing 18 pounds). Each gun and limber, which carried ammunition, were hitched together behind a team of six horses. The horses were arranged as three pairs, and each pair had a postillion rider on the near side horse. If any of the horses was injured, the rider could cut the traces and release the horse, so the rest of the team could keep going.
- 5 - "Sections" were groups of four horses and riders that went on scouting rides to look out for advancing enemy at night.
- 6 - A particularly interesting story can be found on page 111 of the book, "From the Saddlebags at War", by Joan Starr - "... one night, (Major Mick) Shanahan found four Australians who had lost their horses in the thick of combat. He took two on his horse, and with the other two clinging to his stirrups, he dashed safely through the Turks in the darkness."
- 7 - The only horse to return to Australia was Sandy, the mount of Major General Sir William Throsby Bridges, who was the highest ranking Australian officer killed at Gallipoli. He was given a state funeral, and the horse was shipped back to Australia to take part in the funeral parade.



PM'S

© Jim Cosgrove. Thorneside Qld.

As Aussies it would be a shame if we could not recall the names

Of those who'd been the PM's of Australia
How good it is for you and me to understand our history
For lessons learned reduce the risk of failure

So Edmund Barton was the first – A Sydney man, in law well versed

And leader of the cause for Federation
He went as Judge to the High Court which saw young Alfred Deakin brought
Into the seat as leader of the Nation

This job for 6 months he retained and when John Watson took the reins

Was followed very closely by George Reid
But Alfred Deakin was not done, his party the election won
And twice more as PM he did succeed

Between these times you'll be informed was Andrew Fisher,
Scottish born
Who also served three times as number One.
He followed Deakin once again then Joseph Cook became the Man
And Fisher took the seat with War begun.

Then Billy Hughes the country led, a union member born and bred
But lost two referenda on Conscription
And Stanley Bruce of Anzac fame Australia's 12th PM became
He'd fought at Anzac Cove with great distinction.

Next in the Seat Jim Scullin sat, a Labour man from Ballarat
And Joseph Lyons replaced him on the Stage
For two years with his party's vision and then five more in Coalition
He died in Office replaced by Earl Page.

When Page retired then Menzies came and every Aussie knows his name
But in this troubled year of '41
Arthur Fadden took the lead – the budget could not be agreed
Which saw John Curtin move to Number One.

Now Curtin led us through the War and with a firm resolve he saw
Australian troops return to guard our land
His health was poor and also died in Office and the country cried
And Francis Forde for just a week did stand.

And then Ben Chifley came at last – a railway driver in the past
He led the land till 1949
From there we saw the great return of Robert Menzies who did earn
The world's respect for leadership so fine.

As PM's he's our greatest one, with seven straight elections won
And led our land for two and sixteen years
Then Harold Holt the country led but soon we learned the PM's dead
A mystery – the PM disappears

When Holt swam off to meet his maker John McEwen became Caretaker
Through Christmas and the New Year '68
John Gorton left his Senate seat and in Elections did compete
In War and Politics this man was great

John Gorton lead the country till his party leadership did spill
Which brought a man called Billy to the fore
McMahon had served since '49 in Parliament and now his time
Had come to be PM for two years more.

And then Gough Whitlam hit the scene for years the ALP had been
Endeavouring to win this greatest prize
He led the country till John Kerr as Governor General did concur
To sack the government in '75.

The sacking brought forth Malcolm Fraser to fill the gap and so this grazier
Did lead the land till 1983
And then Bob Hawke led Parliament he'd learned the ropes as President
Of Union Movements and the ALP

He led for four successive terms but then the ALP confirms Paul Keating as new leader of the Party
He led through harsh financial times as interest rates and 'jobless' climbs
Our nation's strength was less than hale and hearty

Election loss in '96 brought Howard in to try to fix
The nation that had floundered in recession
John Howard after many years would finally receive the cheers
As 25th Prime Minister in succession

Four election wins have reckoned Howard as PM is second
Only to Bob Menzies length of service
Perhaps it was the GST that led to new prosperity
But then a man named Kevin made him nervous.

'07 saw him taste defeat and even saw him lose his seat
And only Stanley Bruce had done the same
And Kevin Rudd now leads the land through crisis times of world demand
And where survival is the greatest Aim

Our PMs have served you and me for longer than a century
Through times of great success and times of failure
I pray that we all understand the greatness of our Southern land
And greatness of these men who've served Australia.

Grenfell Henry Lawson

Festival of Arts



11th June - 14th June 2010

Come along on the June long weekend for a Henry Lawson Experience and enjoy the street procession, poetry in the boards recitations, poetry slam with Miles Merrill, fine food, street stalls, street entertainers, live Jazz music and busking, dancers, guineapig racing, car show and children's rides.

Experience the works of local and national artists in the fields of art, photography, verse, short story and television with exhibitions open every day. There will also be historical activities like bush poetry and billy tea and damper baked on camp fires.

Grenfell birthplace of Henry Lawson

For more information call (02) 6343 2855 or visit www.grenfell.org.au/henrylawsonfestival

BESSIE & FRANK GET THEIR OBE's

Yes, they're both 'over bloody eighty' now and we congratulate them on their long involvement with the ABPA and U3A.

Following suit is bush poet Mary Kemp of Kempsey, what a vintage year 1930 was for good sorts, good sports and versifiers. Life began again at eighty for all of them but would you believe that both Bessie and Mary fell sick on the planned combined celebration day.

Bessie got sick the week before following a big 'do' with family members and Mary was collared by her family for another big party in Kempsey.

There have been several more parties, here, there and elsewhere, to include family members who were busy giving birth to babies - or arriving from overseas - and to include U3A friends. The celebrations will continue, as they are treating themselves to a cruise in April.

PALMA ROSA TO BE SOLD

With heavy heart, Trisha Anderson informed us that the English Speaking Union has made the decision to sell PALMA ROSA.

Trisha has been a member of the English Speaking Union since 1972 and successfully ran the Palma Rosa Poets since July 1996, when the first poets to appear with Trisha were Glenny Palmer, Robert Raftery and Trevor Kuchel.

An invitation to former performers was sent out for a 'Farewell to Palma Rosa' concert on Tuesday 30th March. More news next issue.



The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

(Established 1994)

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The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc Newsletter is set-up, published and posted direct to subscribers bi-monthly by the ABPA Inc.

Deadline for copy - 20th of month preceding the month of issue.

Note: Every endeavour is made to inform readers, poets, competitors etc., of functions, written and performance competitions and so on. Space does not provide to print competition entry terms and conditions, or details beyond the closing dates and dates of such event. Further information can be obtained from the organizers by sending an SSAE (stamped self-addressed envelope) to the addresses supplied.

ADVERTISING RATES

1/3 Column \$10.00

2/3 Column \$15.00

Full Column \$20.00

Half Page \$40.00

Book Shelf \$ 5.00

Poet's Calendar and Regular Events free.

(One line only) - Poets Calendar Booklet

free. (Deadlines Apr 30 and Oct 30)

To allay costs, copy regarding a festival or event would be appreciated if accompanied by a paid advertisement.

Terms strictly C.O.D. with ad.

Send details in plain text along with payment to: The Editor.

4 Short Street Canowindra NSW 2804

email: editor@abpa.org.au

Ph. 02 6344 1477

CASINO BEEF WEEK

2010

Cecil Hotel Casino

Four days of bush verse from

27th May to 30th May

All poets welcome

Jack Axford Bush Poetry

Competition on Sunday morning

11am

Guest Poets

John Lloyd and Gary Fogarty

Babblers

readings and poetic songs

In the Park with the Rotunda
Cadell St, centre of Goolwa S.A.

Saturday 24th April, 2010

2pm to 3pm

a free concert

featuring the poetry and poetic songs of

Max & Jacqui Merckenschlager

award-winning S.A. writers

traditional rhyming and freeform verse songs from their musicals

50 'Reconciliation' handout CDs containing Sorry Day Song & 2006 national championship winning bush poem 'Men Of Skins'

A National Poetry Festival event.

Bushmans Heritage & Camp Oven Festival 13 - 15 August 2010

Recitations

Poets Breakfast

Workshop

Amateur Poets Competition

Poets Brawl and more.

Check out our website for more details

www.casinovillage.com.au

Casino Village RV Resort, 69 Light

Street, Casino 2470 Ph: 02 6662 1069



\$ 700.00

150th Anniversary
Adult Open
Poetry and
Short Story
Competitions

Prizes each section

1st \$200 - 2nd \$100 - 3rd \$50

plus publication in a quality book.

All placed receive a copy of this unique tribute to Burke and Wills..

Note Revised Poetry line limit
Maximum 100 lines

ENTRIES CLOSE 7th JUNE

Conducted by Central Goldfields Bush Poets.

Info: PO Box 1152,

Bendigo 3552 email

col@mulgabill.net.au

COMPETITION RESULTS

BOYUP BROOK WA

Open Written Category

1st 'On Rafferty's Run'

Arthur Green. Warana. Qld.

Highly Commended

'The Other Side of Paradise'

Terry Piggott. Canning Vale WA

'Heart of the Grey'

Arthur Green. Warana. Qld.

Commended

'The Blooming'

Glenny Palmer Wimbledon Q

Faith - Glenny Palmer.

Wimbledon. Qld

'The Saddle in the Yard'

Zondrae King. Corrimal.

NSW

Emerging Poet Category

Winner - 'Lost'

Val Wallace. Glendale. NSW

High Commended

'Where Barty Played'

Manfred Vijars. Morningside.

Qld

Commended

'Aboriginal Dreaming'

Val Wallace. Glendale. NSW

'Two Bobs'

Leonie Parker. Brassall. QLD

WA NOVICE

PERFORMANCE

CHAMPIONSHIPS

Novice - Original

1st Irene Conner

'The Old Timer'

2nd Michael Trevor

'Cup Punters'

3rd Chris Preece

'The Journey'

Novice - Other Poet's work

1st Grace Williamson

'The Women of the West'

(G.E. Evans)

2nd Ron Ingham

'The Boss of the Admiral

Lynch' (A.B. Paterson)

3rd Marjory Cobb

'Ballad of the Drover'

(H. Lawson)

Novice -

Readings from the Classics

1st Dot Langley

'Scotty's Wild Stuff Stew'

(B.H. Brown)

2nd Grace Williamson

'Jim's Whip' (B. Boake)

3rd Chris Preece

'The Australian Sunrise'

(J.L. Cuthbertson)

DUNEDOO

NSW State Titles

Overall Female Champion

Gabby Colquhoun

2nd. Kathy Edwards

3rd. Brenda Joy

Overall Male Champion

Greg North

2nd Ellis Campbell

3rd. Graeme Johnson

Open Original Section

1st Greg North

2nd. Jenny Markwell

3rd. Gabby Colquhoun

Encouragement

Geoff Singleton

Classical section

1st Greg North

2nd. Ellis Campbell

3rd. Dulcie McLean

Encouragement

Bernie Keleher

Contemporary

1st. Greg North

2nd. Barry Ellem

3rd. Gabby Colquhoun

Encouragement

Tony Parry

Novice Performance Section

1st Terry Moore

2nd. Darryl Lawrence

3rd. Will Stanfield

Poets Brawl

Kathy Edwards

NSW Yarns Champion

Lois Sanders with 'The Battle of the Bulge'

Written Competition

1st. *Forgotten Children -*

Children Lost

Brenda Joy - Charters Towers

2nd *The Blooming*

Glenny Palmer - Kooralbyn Q

3rd. *Poets at the Royal*

Ron Stevens - Dubbo

Most Humorous Poem

(to encourage humorous writing)

Ma from Snowy River

Glenny Palmer

Junior Written Section

1st. *Batten Down the Hatches*

Renee Cotter - Sandy Hollow

2nd. *Widower*

Abe Elliott - Eumungerie

3rd. *Horse With No Name*

Renee Cotter - Sandy Hollow

NORTHERN

TABLELANDS IRISH ASSOCIATION.

Celtic and Chinese Tin Miners Revue.

Performance Poetry

1st Paddy O'Brien

2nd Tony Kelly

3rd Ellis Campbell

4th Ron Selby

WRITTEN SECTION

(Tin Mining Theme)

1st 'Cycles'

Ron Stevens

2nd 'The Miners Way'

Ellis Campbell

3rd 'A Tale of Torrington'

Valerie P Read

Highly Commended

'Into the furnace of Hell'

Terry Piggott

'They Tried Their Luck'

Bernie Keleher

(Mysterious Australia theme)

1st 'Black Dingo Gorge'

Catherine Clarke - Singapore

2nd 'William Blake and the Black Brumby Mare'

Ron Selby - Toowoomba Qld

3rd 'Beware of the Bunyip'

Don Adams - New Zealand

Highly Commended

'Parable of the Purple Peace'

Ron Stevens - Dubbo NSW

'The Emmaville Panthers'

Valerie P Read - Bicton WA

NARRANDERA NSW

John O'Brien Performance

Stan Gray Victoria

with 'Cooneys Daughter'

Open Performance Section

1st Barry Ellem Brisbane

2nd Cay Ellem

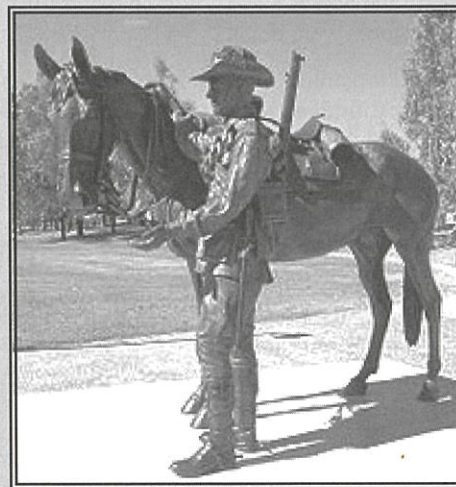
Equal 3rd

Bill Allit and Brenda Joy

Jim Angel Award

Brenda Joy - Charters Towers

HORSES AT WAR.



A poem by "Trooper Bluegum" sums up the men's sentiment:

*I don't think I could stand the thought of my old fancy hack
Just crawling round old Cairo with a 'Gyppo on his back.
Perhaps some English tourist out in Palestine may find
My broken-hearted Waler with a wooden plough behind.*

No: I think I'd better shoot him and tell a little lie:--

*"He floundered in a wombat hole and then lay down to die."
May be I'll get court-martialled; but I'm damned if I'm inclined
To go back to Australia and leave my horse behind.*

From *Australia in Palestine*, 1919



JUST A SMALL RED CATTLE PUP

Author unknown. Can anyone help?

Just a small red cattle pup
Still unsteady on her feet
Left by a passing drover
Making my young life complete.

Together we were happy
This young pup and shy bush child
Although my parents scolded
I suspect they often smiled.

Her tail was rather stumpy
On her face a constant grin
A little ball of mischief
And I chose to call her Lyn.

The years went by so swiftly
And our playtime turned to chores
Yet still our friendship deepened
Like a song that gently soars.

Each day when work was ended
At the setting of the sun
She'd often guard the horses
When her daily chores were done.

She formed a sort of pattern
And each night we'd find her there
A self-appointed minder
Of my father's big bay mare.

She loved that horse with passion
Even under threat of strife
A lasting fascination
That would later, cost her life.

It happened late one evening
As the sinking sun grew pale
We went to catch our horses
To collect the weekly mail.

The horse I chose to bridle
Was a flighty chestnut mare
Still young, just barely broken
How I wish I'd left her there.

As I approached the filly
She began to prance about
Lyn came to watch proceedings
Feeling curious, no doubt.

All over in an instant
Like a sudden blinding flash
Lyn crushed beneath the filly
As she made a reckless dash.

So many hearts were broken
As her life ebbed to an end
Much more than just a work dog
She'd become a family friend.

If dogs do have a heaven
Please God, handle her with care
I have no reservations
That my little friend is there.

I see her racing gamely
As she rounds the cattle up
Off somewhere in the distance
Just a small red cattle pup.

THE WRITERS' DINNER

© Don Lloyd – Pillar Valley NSW 5.10.1997



*(Winner
Inaugural Bards
of Bowra Bush
Poetry
Performance
Competition)**

These writers put on a posh dinner,
they said they were launching a book.
Now I've always been interested in culture,
so I thought 'why not take a look!'

The track pants I wore were new ones
a Tee shirt was pulled over my head,
but as they were having this do in a club,
I left my thongs and wore joggers instead.

I wasn't sure how writers might do things
probably get drunk and sing a few songs
and hopefully if they're gonna do speeches
they'll be ones that aren't very long.

As for food I know all about entrees.
That's little snags and sauce in a tub
served with a big glass of cold beer
like happy hour down at the pub.

I was dead keen for a go at the tucker
and reckoned they were leaving it late
then thought 'Shit! they're serving up road-kill'
when I saw what they'd put on my plate.

For a long time I looked at it in horror
and thought what the heck is this muck?
I thought perhaps it's a blue octopus
having been run down by a truck.

I swear the thing was eating my spud
my first thought was 'The mongrel's not dead'
so I tried to finish it off with my shiny fork
but couldn't tell where was it's head.

Well that put me right off me tucker
and I thought 'So much for culture old mate'
There was some toilet paper folded up fancy
so I used that to cover my plate.

Still that meal gave me some respect for authors
because if they regularly graze on that stuff
then I can assure you there's no wimps among
them
No! Those bloody writers are tough!

PERISHER'S INAUGURAL 2009 MUSIC FESTIVAL RETURNS TO THE SNOWIES IN 2010

Australia's premier music festival in the snow - **The Perisher Snowy Mountains of Music** - is back! The festival was a huge success last year - with a pumping 3,000 strong audience, 120 amazing artists over 4 days with the very seductive **Tex Perkins** and smooth sounds of **The Audreys** taking centre stage. With Winter just around the corner the festival team are now busy creating a festival which is bigger, bolder and better.

With a total of **9 venues** the **2010 line-up** will see Perisher and Smiggins pumping with the rhythms and sounds of new and old - from high energy world to gypsy punk, sultry blues, bent bluegrass and honky-tonk piano,

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* A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

The Inaugural 'Back to Bowra' Bush Poetry Festival was held in the beer garden of the Royal Hotel, Bowraville on 24th August 1997. Fourteen poets led by 'The Bayldon Bard', George New kept the crowd of over eighty people amused and entertained for over three hours.

Maureen Garner (Stonham) of Nambucca Heads wrote to the ABPA acknowledging the associations assistance to the festival organizers.

Reid Begg of Forster won the Traditional Section with Don Lloyd taking out the Original Section with the accompanying poem. The judges on this occasion were Jo Smyth, Brian Bell and Warren 'Arch' Bishop. Fond memories indeed.

Remembering the ANZACS

note

This unfortunately is a true story and one I am sure most Vietnam Veterans have encountered at some time.

- Vic Jefferies

Unanswered Questions

© Vic Jefferies

For reasons better left unsaid, This year I didn't march,
I chose to go and stand instead beside the cenotaph,
And there beside me on the footpath, stood an old man and his wife,
The lines engraved upon their faces betraying a sadness in their life.
I thought of sons or daughters, of brothers, perhaps a mate,
Of a burden grown so heavy it had bent them with its weight,
But when the old man reached across and took his lady by her hand
And they turned to speak to me, I began to understand.

The old man's voice was tired, worn through years of pain,
As he said, "Please excuse me son, but could you tell us,
Would you do it all again? You see, Mum and I
Recognise those medals that you wear,
For on our lounge room wall there hangs a similar pair.
The army sent them to us with a lovely telegram,
Instead of sending back our son from that war in Vietnam.
Oh, we know we're old and foolish and it was long ago,
But we think perhaps it might ease our pain
If somehow we could know, what the men like yourself,
Think about that war today, and was it worth our Jimmy's life
And the price we've had to pay?"

Silently, I cursed the politicians and I cursed their evil kind,
I cursed their precious Jimmy for the pain he'd left behind,
I cursed the Vietnam War for robbing me of youth (and God forgive me)
I cursed these poor old wretches now asking for the truth.
Thoughts and sounds and faces came racing to my mind
as I struggled with their question to find an answer that was kind.
How many times had I heard this question
sought the answer night and day?
But now the look within their eyes told me what I had to say!

So I mouthed those words I'd often heard fools pronounce before,
About sacrifice and courage and the glory to be found in war,
I told them how their Jimmy now slept in a hero's grave,
Because he'd offered up his life so freedom he might save!
To those of you who hold the truth sacred in your heart
I'd ask you to reflect upon the pain truth can impart,
For I've no doubt they knew the truth perhaps better than did I,
But they had decided long ago to seek sanctuary in a lie.

Then the old man shook my hand and his wife's smile was sweet
As I watched them shuffle off on their old and weary feet,
But when I saw them stop another veteran, my heart nearly burst with pain,
As I heard the old man saying, "Please excuse us son,
but could you tell us, Would you do it all again?"



Vic Jefferies
Vietnam veteran.

CYCLES © Ron Stevens - Dubbo NSW
(1st Prize Northern Tablelands Irish Assoc. Bush Poetry competition 2010)

This aqueduct at Queensland's Stonyville is not yet overgrown, its structure still intact, although the Palmer River fields had petered out, been scoured of golden yields before the nineteenth century was through, the miners gone, with other sites in view. A thousand metres long, a metre wide, it tells of Chinese patience, workman's pride.

And speaks of guile, genetic willingness to push the odds and make a reasoned guess. Yet here beyond the thrill of *pak a pu* and bamboo *fan tan* counters screened from view, I doubt their swags had room for *mahjong stones*, though friendly spirits followed clacking bones. No friendly spirits midst the jagged shale, but constant animus beyond the pale:

hostility from less-efficient Whites competing at the crowded mining sites: from local tribes. reputed cannibals. and the stand-over-man in these locales, the legendary Christie Palmerstone who saw this territory as his own. - A pound *protection* fee on each despised *Celestial* was harshly exercised.

How many losers' bones were left to bleach? A lucky few *Gold Mountain Men* would reach their families and promised brides in old Quandong, their money belts weighed down with gold. Remaining hundreds trickled off to vie for wealth at other diggings or to try less risky occupations far from here (perhaps a market-gardening career).

Our taunts and racist insults little changed their channeling, for like these rocks arranged to guide the water into sand, then gold, the bonds of village, clan and kin would hold. Perhaps the Chinese mason/miners shared a farewell pipe beside this wall, despaired for softer times and yarned of distant scents, of seasons, water cycles, providence.

The aqueduct is dry, as is my throat. My radio's reporting news, remote yet relevant: an anti-migrant brawl; police link *Triads* with a drug-bust haul. I picture Lambing Flat¹ and - further back - the colony's 'Protector' hard on track to aid drug-pushing Mother England's war². The cycle turns and Beijing's keeping score.

As China scoops our landscape, Taking tonnes of coal and iron ore, The ghosts at Palmer River Sluice for gold, more hopeful than before.

1. Lambing Flat, NSW, scene of a riot against Chinese miners.
2. The Boxer Rebellion, to which we dispatched 'Protector' an iron-clad monitor.



Cast of 'The Best of the Bush Show' in Tamworth 2010 - - Daly Stephenson, Greg North, Grant Luhrs, "Brade", Paddy Ryan and Peter Mace.

The Tamworth Festival 2010 saw the introduction of a revamped Bush Poetry Breakfast at Wests Leagues Club.

Previous years had seen the breakfast in Blazes auditorium with various poets performing each morning.

This year the breakfast was moved to the more intimate "Outback Bar" with the same poets/singers performing each morning.

MC was Grant Luhrs, with Paddy Ryan, Peter Mace and Greg North as resident poets and Daly Stephenson and the girl duo "Brade", not only providing some wonderful songs but reducing the average age of the cast considerably.

The show was sold out for three mornings and attracted good crowds throughout the festival.

The Tamworth Poetry Competition heats, held in the Outback Bar after the "Best of the Bush" show also had the

room packed to the rafters.

All augers well for the future of our craft.

Pictured left: Harrington NSW 'Surfin' the Verse' winners and grinners.

Paddy O'Brien, Isabel Bailey, Heather Searles, Kathy Edwards and Gabby Colquhoun.



25th APRIL

ANZAC DAY
Lest We Forget



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