A.B.P.A.

Australian Bush Poets Association
Volume 30 No. 1 February/March 2024

Frank Daniel Award Winner
Bianca Reedy

Tamworth CMF 2024

June Long Weekend

6th – 10th June 2024

Festival of Arts, Poetry and Short Story Competitions

Entries are now open for the festival's short story and verse competitions. The theme for entries this year is "Up The Country" which reflects the harsh realities and challenges faced by those who lived in rural Australia during Lawson's time.

Despite the difficulties of life in the bush, there is a yearning for home, a sense of attachment and nostalgia for the land and its rugged beauty. Despite the allure of the city, there is a pull towards home and the community that resides there.

Poetry Prize
First Prize: $1,000
Second Prize: $500

Short Story Prize
First Prize: $1,000
Second Prize: $500

Entries close **5th May 2024**

This event is proudly supported by:

More information and events at
henrylawsonfestival.com.au

President's Report

As I write this , reports are coming in about the Tamworth Country Music Festival and they are very positive. The Longyard Breakfasts are selling out and the Bush Poetry at the West Tamworth Bowling Club is being very well patronized.
Life Membership of ABPA has been awarded to the richly deserving Marion Fitzgerald for her work and as a foundation member of ABPA at Tamworth in 1987. Ray Essery will be presenting Marion with her award at the Oracles of the Bush Festival in Tenterfield.
The Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival is being held in Orange from 17 to24 February, Oracles of the Bush in Tenterfield in early April followed by The Man From Snowy River Festival incorporating the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships 11 to 14 April. It is a busy schedule and as I regularly point out our art is doing very well.
Notices have been sent to members notifying them that the Annual General Meeting of the Australian Bush Poets Association will be held on the 6th of February 2024 at 2pm AEDT via Zoom. If anyone has been missed please contact ABPA Treasurer.
Final notices for timely membership renewal have also been sent to members.
Membership entitles you to copies of the magazine and for performance poets, entitles you to access Public Liability Insurance at greatly reduced rates.

Onwards and Upwards for
Bush Poetry
Tim Sheed

ABPA Magazine Advertising Rates

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Full page $95
Half Page $55
Quarter Page or less $35

Full Colour Ads (Space limited and applicable to Printed Magazine only)

Full Page $240
Half Page $140
Quarter Page not available

Poets Calendar and Regular Events free (one or two lines only)

To help offset costs, articles regarding a festival or event would be appreciated if accompanied by a paid Ad. Send all details in plain text, Word or PDF Format to editor@abpa.org.au

All payments to be made within 14 days to

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Please put your name/club/invoice as reference so Treasurer can identify who the deposit is from.

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Next Magazine Deadline is March 27th 2024

WANDERING SPIRITS

Winning Poem W.A. Silver Quil competition 2023

Tom McILveen ©

They came when the colours of season were turning
from green to magenta and burgundy red.
They came when the sun was a demon and burning
the souls of the living and bones of the dead.

On camels and horses, they rode in formation,
abreast of each other, together as one...
in silence they shuffled, without conversation,
immersed in the haze of a merciless sun.

T'was Robert O. Burke who elected to lead them
through desert and scrub where the skies never rained,
and William J. Wills who neglected to heed them,
when camels and horses and men had complained.

"If only we'd come when The Cooper was flowing,
we might have been able to follow its course,
instead of just wandering north without knowing
its true destination or primary source."

If only they'd come at the start of September,
they may have been welcome and given respite
from summer's inferno and hell of December,
that bleaches the Spinifex grasses to white.

Perhaps they were destined for fortune and glory,
these men who had ventured to places unknown...
but history tells of a different story
of those who had died in the outback alone.

Soon others were able to venture and follow
the tracks that were laid by these brave pioneers;
as one would appear like a migrating swallow
a hero, to conquer uncharted frontiers.

When Ernest J. Henry retired as a cropper,
his future and fortune were set to unfold.
Prospecting for metals he'd come upon copper,
as perfect as jade and as precious as gold.

The town of Cloncurry arose from the rubble
of diggings by miners and back-breaking toil;
as cattle and sheep came to graze on the stubble
of grasses that sprung from the newly tilled soil.

As stations were settled and numbers expanded,
the outback had seemed to be conquered at last.
For many had come with their swags empty-handed,
to bury the bones of an uninterred past.

The women and men who had come were rewarded
with treasures more precious than metals and ore.
For those who'd remained, would be duly afforded
a freedom they'd never imagined before.

The outback is more than just wide open spaces;
it's more than just copper and cattle and sheep;
there's something still sacred in uncharted places,
where wandering spirits of yesterday sleep.

Vale

In early January we lost a genuine character and talented bush poet in the person of John Lloyd who died in Mackay Hospital.
John was an ex- Queensland and Northern Territory ringer, bull catcher and
buffalo breeder with a wealth of life experience that he brought to the bush poet's stage in his unique gravelly voice.
He had the ability to have his audience laughing at the funny side of suddenly finding yourself astride the back of a wild bull and then have that same audience in awe as he described the beauty and majesty of the outback that he knew so well.
We extend our sympathy to wife Carmel and family at this sad time.

Aaah, Neville Briggs, you meant so much to so many, but I doubt you ever really knew that. I'm so saddened at the loss of my friend and mentor, who encouraged my poetry writing, gave honest feedback and helped me to think differently about poetry. Neville was a huge part of the ABPA forum in past years. So giving in his support and encouragement, he earned the respect of everyone.

He was also a talented artist and at one time painted a scene from one of my photos taken at Shoal Bay. Neville was unassuming, modest and shy. He was also a talented and clever man and will be sorely missed. In the last few years he found love and happiness with his lovely Irish lady, Terrie.

ABPA member and award-winning poet Dot Schwenke passed away on Sunday 7th January at 8:00 am. She went peacefully with her family at her side. Dot's body will be buried with other late members of he family in the local cemetery in St George, Queensland.

A graveside funeral will be held on Friday 12th January at 10 am, conducted by Rev. Jim Cosgrove, a dear friend of Dot's, who will travel from Longreach for her interment.

There will also be a memorial service in Brisbane on Monday 15th January at 11:30 am. It will be held at the Southern Cross Catholic chapel in Scarborough with parking in Sunnyside Road.

Both St George and Southern Cross Catholic College reflect part of Dot's life and loves. It was only recently that Dot was granted affiliation into the De La Salle brotherhood at the same chapel – an amazing and very special accolade and recognition for her many years of service. This had to be approved by the Vatican – a big deal, indeed.

Join us as we celebrate an amazing "Woman of the West" and a life well lived. Her legacy will live on in her lyrics and her wonderful guidance given to students over all those years of teaching.

We will miss her terribly but we will also know that she lived her life as she knew it was right and she left it in the same way.

Our condolences to Fred, Stephen and Jenny.

Join us as we bid her farewell. May she rest in peace.

Tamworth Poets 2024

Tamworth CMF 2024 has come and gone, and what a Festival it was! In particular for all our Performance Poets!! The crowds were back to their Pre-Pandemic best and produced the biggest audiences for a few years.

The Longyard Bush Poets Breakfast had 5 bumper days out of seven with the gates needing to be closed on three of those after the 400 seat venue was filled to the rafters! Poets and Storytellers of the ilk of Marco Gliori, Murray Hartin, Ray Essery, Joey Reedy, Bill Kearns, Gery Fogarty, Alan Glover, Errol Gray and special guests Therese and Peter Proust and Jeff Brown kept the crowds in fits of laughter. And our Barrel Girl, Bianca Reedy, younger sister of Joey, really came into her own this year, not just producing wonderful performances at the Longyard, but also going across to the Frank Daniel Performance Awards and showing the experienced Poets how to do it, by walking away with First Prize!!

Performance Bush Poetry was the rock on which the ABPA was founder 30 years ago during the Tamworth Country Music Festival, and it is a testament to the popularity and resilience of the Bush Poetry Shows to this day. We have copped a bit of flack from some quarters over the years, but putting these shows together is no mean feat. Tom, Graeme and I can assure you of that.

But in the wash up, to see the people piling in and departing with grins on there faces, CDs and books in hand and a multitude of kind words, it is all worth the effort.

So the future looks brighter still and what we need now is more Performers coming through and doing their own work, especially on the comedy front, to carry on the tradition, as we have lost a lot of great artists over the years.

A lot of shows are Institutions of Tamworth, but the mechanics of presenting a different show every day over the ten days of Tamworth is near on an impossible task, but one that the Bush Poets take on every year and still increase it's popularity and attendance.

I can't thank the Longyard Hotel enough for their continued support and faith in the Bush Poets Breakfasts being one of their biggest crowd pullers and most popular shows of the Festival!

The Crew

Bianca Reedy

Neil McArthur

Therese Proust and Neil McArthur
Selfie with full house at the Longyard

2023 Betty Ollie Award

(with sincere apologies to all involved as this should have been included in the last issue of the ABPA Magazine. - Ed

THE BETTY OLLE POETRY AWARD 2023 – RESULTS

FIRST PRIZE David Judge – Kangaroo Flat VIC 'The Painting'

RUNNER-UP Val Wallace - Glendale NSW 'A Parcel from Home'

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HIGHLY COMMENDED Shelley Hansen – Maryborough QLD 'The Music of a Train'

HIGHLY COMMENDED David Judge – Kangaroo Flat VIC 'Houdini'

HIGHLY COMMENDED David Judge – Kangaroo Flat VIC 'The Snowy Mountains Surfie'

HIGHLY COMMENDED Brenda Joy – Charters Towers QLD 'My Sacred Place'

HIGHLY COMMENDED Terry Piggott – Lynwood WA 'The Coastwatchers'

……

COMMENDED Glenny Palmer – Jimboomba QLD 'The Cleaving'

COMMENDED Tom McIlveen – Port Macquarie NSW 'The Spirit of Thunderbolt'

COMMENDED Catherine Lee – Mona Vale NSW 'Blood on the Wattle'

COMMENDED Brenda Joy – Charters Towers QLD 'Carved to Memory'

COMMENDED Terry Piggott - Lynwood W.A. 'The Opal Gougers'

……

THE BETTY OLLE JUNIOR POETRY AWARD 2023 – RESULTS

FIRST PRIZE Blake Hunter - Kyabram VIC. 'Heritage's Aged'

RUNNER-UP Victoria Yarygin - Wyuna VIC. 'Just a Day in Australia'

……..

HIGHLY COMMENDED Jordan Atiga – Carindale QLD 'Hot Day'

HIGHLY COMMENDED Eric Wang – Carindale QLD 'Lights Out'

HIGHLY COMMENDED Flynn Burrows – Kyabram VIC 'Paddle Steamers'

HIGHLY COMMENDED Gabriel Harris – Carindale QLD 'On Top'

…….

COMMENDED Isabelle Henry – Carindale QLD 'Vegemite'
COMMENDED Isabelle Henry – Carindale QLD 'Sausages'
COMMENDED Lenay de Beer – Carindale QLD 'Australia'

The Painting

© David Judge

Winner 2023 Bette Ollie Award

From the painting I saw when I opened the door
to the room where the old drover sat,
he could see my surprise by the look in my eyes
when I said to him, who painted that?
The old man in the chair ran his hands through his hair
And said, *I did, it's one of my own,*
and the painting you see was a road map for me
when I travelled the outback alone.

He was ninety today and I dropped in to pay
my respects and to listen and hear,
about where he had been and the things that he'd seen
on those trips he made year after year.
The old hat that he wore was no good anymore
with a brim that was battered and frayed,
but he wore it with pride with its slouch on one side
and a badge from The Light Horse Brigade.

From his brow to his beard, his complexion was seared
after years in the saddle and sun,
which had weathered his hide to be frazzled and fried
like a steak that was well overdone.
And the scars on his cheeks were those drought-stricken creeks
that he followed through valleys he knew,
were abundant with feed and the water he'd need
to ensure that he got the mobs through.

The blue dog by his side was a brute and one-eyed
with a head like a melon with ears,
that would snarl with a growl if you ever ran foul
of the drover he'd been with for years.
And the scars on his chest, when he came second-best,
were from blows by a feisty big red,
that he'd bailed up one day and the frenzied affray
saw the 'roo emerge slightly ahead.

Over years he'd slowed down, now confined to the town
with a new role that suited him well,
which was just to be there near his mate in that chair,
who had plenty of stories to tell.
The bay mare that he rode and the one with the load
of supplies that he needed to pack,
had both died long ago and as old drovers know,
the old droving days weren't coming back.

Which is why he had kept in the room where he slept,
a reminder of what he had been,
of the things he had done, of the battles he'd won,
and the best of the bush that he'd seen.
I said, *how do you know what those images show*
from the thousands of dots I can see,
with those squiggly blue lines and those few curly signs
that mean nothing to 'gubbas' like me?

As we chatted awhile he explained with a smile
that his ancestors drew in the sand,
like a mud-map today to show others the way
with a code they could all understand.
There are sand dunes and soaks and the tough desert oaks
were all part of that country I knew,
where the spinifex thrived and the hardy survived,
which was certainly no place for you!

And despite the slight jest, I was more than impressed
at how simple the detail appears,
which continues these days in those practical ways
that has lasted for thousands of years.
He continued to tell how his life had been hell
when his droving days came to an end,
when the choppers arrived and the road trains deprived
all those drovers on whom we'd depend.

There were livelihoods lost and a cultural cost
when the drovers were suddenly gone,
but his major concern was we don't seem to learn
and society blindly moves on.
There is so much to learn and to give in return
for the drovers who gave it their all,
and how sad it would be if that all we can see
is a painting that hangs on a wall.

Kyabram Bush Verse Group president Greg McKenzie (left) presenting the Betty Olle Award to David Judge (right).

Our Poetry Kids

with Brenda Joy

This time we have successful poems from the *Silver Quill – Junior* Written Bush Poetry Competition run by the West Australian Bush Poets and Yarnspinners Association. Every year the Silver Quill has sections especially for youth. Thank you to Meg Gordon and her team for this continuing encouragement to our young writers.

All poems this month
Commended
in the 2023 *Silver Quill Junior*
(Age 10 – 11 years)

Australian Boomerang
by Lenay de Beer

Carved from wood, this special tool
is so interesting and cool.
But what was this used for? You may wonder,
on this big island down under.

The boomerang, whether big or small,
beautifully decorated and
used differently by all.
From hunting to dancing and even a toy, wherever
used, it surely brought joy.

It will certainly take some skill,
to throw a boomerang way up the hill.
If you throw it correctly, it will come back,
just be careful because it was built to attack!

Though not used so much anymore
you can still buy one in an Aussie store.
Well known in this Aussie land,
but still the world might not understand.

On Mount Coot-tha
by Lucas Han

Standing on Mount Coot-Tha,
I turn and look around.
The city's very dense and busy,
As I look down at the ground.

I look up at the mountain,
To see a lot of green.
Compare it to the city,
A metal monstrosity.

I look back at the city's past,
To see machines that rust.
They dig in dirt but never fight,
And they own our humans' trust.

I go to take a closer look,
The city's like a wicked clown.
Sitting and giving me side-looks,
I wouldn't like to look far down.

Overall, I think this mountain
Is really quite nice
Compared to the city below us
It's a little paradise.

Sausages
by Isabelle Henry

Sausages are yummy, delicious and tasty,
I will eat them all up, and I will be hasty.
Sausages sizzle on the barbecue,
I like it best when the sauce is brand new.

I can always smell it in the air,
Even if I am not anywhere near there.
The scent of sausages is really great,
It'll make you say, "Smells yummy, mate!"

When the sauce sizzles and drips,
is when I start to lick my lips.
There is always plenty to share,
but you know … I wouldn't dare.

You should definitely try it one day,
It will make you say hooray!
If you don't like them, that will be alright,
maybe you can have just one more bite!

Lenay and Isabelle also had success in the *Betty Olle Junior* written competition run by the Kyabram and District Bush Poets Association in Victoria. Mick Coventry is the co-organiser of this competition and we also thank Mick and his team for his continuing endeavours. Other winning poems from Kyabram will be in the next issue of the ABPA Magazine.

If you know of anyone who would like to enter a written competition for juniors, details and entry forms are available in *Events* on the ABPA website –

www.abpa.org.au/events.html

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA

VALE CHRIS TAYLOR

W.A. Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assn.

It is with a heavy heart that I report that Chris Taylor passed away on 9th December 2023. Circumstances were unknown for some time but the family have agreed to divulge that it was suicide. President Bill Gordon spoke to Chris just before our Toodyay Festival (as he has done on numerous occasions to stay in touch). He was doing a house sit for a mate near Bunbury at that time.

Chris was an outstanding writer and won several awards for his poetry including The Kembla Flame for his poem "No More Letters Home", a second in the Silver Quill with "The Dance" and a Highly Commended in the coveted Bronze Swagman with "Swampy".

Chris was brilliant with the way he could capture the emotion in the story, be it a serious poem such as these three or a hilarious piece such as "How To Build A Billy Cart", which won him the Original Humorous Performance in Toodyay a couple of years ago.

Chris often sought comfort in his own company as he struggled with crowds. He would only ever turn up at one of our events when he was up to it. On these occasions he was a great performer and was admired and respected by all.

Chris will be sadly missed.

The Dance

For fifty two years she had been at his side,
His wife for near fifty of those.
He'd been her white knight from that very first dance
And she had been his English rose.
He first saw her sitting alone in the crowd
And knew that he must take the chance.
With all of his courage he offered his arm
"Excuse me, may I have this dance"?

He'll always remember the shine in her eyes,
Her smile as she waltzed round the floor.
They both fell in love as he walked her on home
And kissed her goodnight at her door.
Engaged then married a child on the way,
Remembering in each circumstance.
For each of these moments he'd make sure to ask
"Excuse me, may I have this dance"?

More children all grown up and moving away
Then grandchildren filling their hearts,
Their thoughts turn at last to the rest of their lives
The day their retirement starts.
With each anniversary over those years
He leaves not a moment to chance.
He'd go to his wife and offer his arm
"Excuse me, may I have this dance"?

But time was not kind to his young English rose,
Her memory started to fade
And soon it was clear that dementia would take
Away all the plans they had made.
She finally lost sight of her shining white knight
And all of their lifetime romance,
Except when he asked as he offered his arm
"Excuse me, may I have this dance"?

Then there once again was that shine in her eyes.
Her smile as they waltzed round the floor.
They both fall in love for the first time again,
Just like fifty two years before.
Their lives all come down to that moment in time
While waltzing as though in a trance.
Her shining white knight and his young English rose,
Forever together in dance.

C.J. Taylor

Awarded second place Silver Quill 2018

No More Letters Home

(awarded 1st place in The Kembla Flame)

"Hello Mum" the letter started, just like the ones she'd read before
And she reads them once or twice a day since her son went off to war.
She doesn't get them often now because they come from far away
Still, she sits on her verandah and waits the postman every day.
Hoping with her every prayer there'll be more letters home.

To his father he's a digger and the family pride and joy
But to her he's not a soldier, he's just her handsome grown up boy
She'd pleaded with him not to go, "Please just stay and work the farm"
She knew that even with her prayers her boy might come to harm.
And then she knew there'd have to be no more letters home.

But no matter how she pleaded, she could never change his heart
And stood there watching through her tears to see her boy depart.
He had written lots of letters in those first few months away
But the time between grew more and more and he had less and less to say.
And she worried it would all too soon mean no more letters home.

This letter had come weeks ago but from where she didn't know.
He rarely told her where he was or the places he might go
But he asked after the family and the friends he left behind
And told her of the newfound mates that he'd been blessed to find
And she hoped that all these newfound friends had sent their letters home.

He promised her as always that he was fit and doing fine
And that so far all the fighting was much further down the line.
She knew of course that wasn't true, as mothers always know
But she loved him for the little lie and simply let it go.
Still praying there would always be more letters coming home.

She glanced up from her letters when the knock came on the door
And looked out through the window as she walked across the floor.
Saw the military vehicle that was parked out on the street
Her mind began to scream, her heart began a stronger beat
They had finally come to tell her there'd be no more letters home.

She paused a moment at the door as the tears began to rise
Then bravely called on all her strength and with her apron dried her eyes.
She thought about her husband and wished he could be here
Just so he could hold her and help her face the fear
Instead she'd have to tell him, why there'd be no more letters home.

She opened up that heavy door and stood there frozen into place
Saw the soldier standing there, his worn and weathered face.
He stood a little awkward on the crutch that helped him walk
But she recognised his smile as soon as he began to talk
"Hello Mum, my war is over, so there'll be no more letters home".

FOLLOW THE PATH TO MORE EFFECTIVE WRITING

_with

Irene Dalgety Timpone

The Immersion Project: Some Experts say that the best way to study anything associated with "language" is to become immersed in the required "language". At the moment, my area of study is Australian Bush Poetry. My major concern is that contemporary writers need to focus on maintaining all that is relevant and positive about the subject. Each of us needs to work at improving our skills with every poem we write. We need to learn from our mistakes. As a large and interested group, we need some 21st Century Bush Poets to carry our craft into the future. To that end, I have been immersed in reading contemporary Australian Bush Poetry and making a personal evaluation of what must be done to create and maintain high-quality poetry to sustain and improve our present reputation in our chosen genre. Forgive me if I return briefly to topics I have previously mentioned. This has not been done in the spirit of useless repetition, but in the spirit of a friendly reminder or necessary recapitulation to help eliminate repeated problems.

The poetry I have read certainly ranged from the sublime to the ridiculous. There are always those people who delight in knocking the rules of any established or traditional entity. They need to desist. At the other end of the scale, I read the work of established, award-winning contemporary Bush Poets who ruin an almost exemplary poem through careless errors. One mispronounced word used as a rhyming word in the final stanza of a poem should immediately take that poem from a competition short-list. The same should happen to a poem where confusion occurs due to ambiguity of any sort – use of unassociated pronouns and nouns; over-use of the dreaded pronoun, "it"; failure to use a name as an identifier when anonymity of the character serves no useful purpose; faulty punctuation, especially where missing commas are concerned; thoughtless use of multi-functional words like "imagined" which can be used as an adjective or as the Past Tense of a verb. One ambiguous line or stanza can ruin an entire poem.

Confusion can be caused by the faulty use of words which are noted for being used incorrectly: round/around (A blight on Enid Blyton); practice/practise; bridal/bridle; reins/ reigns; less/fewer; bought/brought; as/like; centre/middle; annoy/irritate/aggravate; there/their/they're. The list is endless.

Here is a little test for you. I found the segment in a best-selling crime novel I was reading yesterday: "Very well." the Defence Attorney stated, shooting just a tiny glance towards the Prosecutor to let him know that the Defence had picked up on yesterday's imitations.

Which word should have been used instead of 'imitations'? Limitations? Intimations?

Editing: Contemporary Writers should become self-editors. Keep a reputable Dictionary beside you at all times so you can check spelling, part of speech, pronunciation, stressed syllables and the number of syllables on the word-entry. That takes very little time, less time than an online check which might not always be correct. By the way, Grammarly cannot be trusted as that site ignores exceptions and unique instances. I have found that reading aloud enables me to pick up on errors I have made, errors that silent reading will ignore. I have a long-suffering friend who likes me to read my final drafts to him over the phone. Sometimes, he will have a query. Always, I hope, by reading aloud and with expression, I will pick up on errors the computer editor will not observe. These include the use of the same or similar words or sounds in too close proximity in a text. If you have a friendly editor on whom you can depend, good luck to you. So many of the problems I have noted in my 'immersion' could so easily have been remedied. In written competition, every serious error can be held against the writer in a detailed analysis.

FOLLOW THE PATH TO MORE EFFECTIVE WRITING

Continued.....

The use of "it" and other pedestrian words: I have written, previously, about the word, "it". In Timpone terms, "It is sh*#!". This is a classic example of Poetic Licence. Our writing will benefit greatly if we ban "it" from our writing, except on very rare occasions when no alternative can be found. Sadly, "it" and "its" are neutral pronouns and, when those functions of the word are being used correctly, the use is acceptable; BUT (note the semicolon before "but") it is not in any way acceptable to use "it" as a constructional crutch in poetry or prose. I have noticed an increase in the number of poems that have , most obviously, been written by experienced and skilled poets who are using this technique in order to manipulate unusual metric or rhyming demands in Bush Poetry. This is particularly noticeable when both internal and external rhyme are in use. Believe me, the alternatives to "it" as a convenient prop are not difficult to find, and the outcome is always positive. Another positive impact on writing standard is the elimination of pedestrian words that are grossly over-used in both speech and written genres. I refer to such words as "good, bad, nice, get, got" and, Heaven forbid, "gotten". Remember that "get, got and gotten" are words that are rotten. These silly little 'rules' worked wonders with senior secondary and even tertiary students. They are simple reminders.

Pre-writing Preparation: Many headaches can be avoided if considerable thought is given to the basic idea that suggests a new poem. This needs to be done before a title is chosen and an outline is written. Poems and Short Stories should be written towards a pre-selected title. The title should not be decided after the poem has been written. That is a recipe for disaster. I consider that a mention of the title, or close approximation, within the text of the poem is a very positive move. I have also learned that it is advantageous, when planning a poem, to write down any words that, without any doubt, will need to be used in the poem. I ran into trouble with "seventy-five", the number of miners who died in the Mount Mulligan mine disaster in 1921. When writing my poem to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the event, I dodged the use as long as I could; but, eventually, I had to use "seventy-five" which did not scan with the rhythm I had selected. If I had been a lesser person, I would have wished that the death toll had been 'eighty-five' which scanned perfectly. Of course, an adjudicator pounced on the 'seventy-five', and bloodied the words with red pen before commenting on my failure to maintain "regular metre".

In my efforts to encourage our balladists to move into 21st Century themes, I tend to harp on the need to forget about our happy bands of bushrangers. Now, "bushranger" is a word that has stuffed up the metric schemes of the best poets among us. "Pedestrian Crossing" was another failure with me, so I wrote a Short Story, instead of a poem. Other problems arise when we need to use words that do not have many suitable rhyming words to match them, "orange" and "purple", for example. I ran into trouble with "truck", a key word in one of my poems. I quickly rhymed it with "amok" since I was writing about stampeding cattle. Now, with Australian pronunciation, "amok" is fine. There is, however, an American acceptance of "amok" rhyming with "clock". The latter is the version the adjudicator used, so I was berated soundly for my faulty rhyme and advised to purchase a rhyming dictionary. This did not go down well with me. I decided to 'chuck' a fit and curse loudly with another rhyming word that immediately sprang to mind. It is a good idea to pre-prepare lists of rhyming words you realise will be handy.

Sadly, my immersion project has shown me that many poets are still submitting poems that overtly ignore the basic tenets of Bush Poetry. This needs to be rectified. On the other hand, my reading has inspired me to stop reading and start writing again. I hope I will soon have another poem for you to read and criticise. I hope 2024 is a happy and productive year for us all…

Irene Dalgety Timpone.

2024 Frank Daniel Poetry Award

This year's Frank Daniel award, held at West Tamworth's Bowlo, was again keenly competed for by poets from far and near.

Ironically it was an up and coming junior poet from somewhere NEAR, that took home the trophy, namely.....Bianca Reedy from Wallabadah, south of Tamworth. Bianca and brother Joey are well known to Tamworth audiences, having performed in recent years at Neil McArthur's Longyard Breakfast show.

2nd place went to MIchael (the living poet) Jones, 3rd to David Melville, 4th to Donna McQueen, and 5th to James THUNDERCLOUD Warren.

The winning trophy was donated by Ray Essery, with the runner up trophy donated by myself.

The ABPA sponsored the prize money which was divided amongst the first five place getters.

I would like to thank the ABPA for its support in fostering emerging Performance Poets. I'd also like to thank all fellow performing poets from our Breakfast Show who helped out in running the awards, and especially to my partner Susan Ashton who kept us all organised, and administered, co-ordinated and collated as only she can, and of course thankyou to all competitors who gave it their all and done themselves proud.

Tom Mcilveen

WEST TAMWORTH BOWLO BUSH POETS' BREAKFAST 2024;

Another one done and dusted , as once again we hit the road back to domestic normality, homeward bound. It is with mixed emotions that we leave Tamworth after a very successful festival of six consecutive Breakfast Shows, with mostly full houses each morning, leaving us a tad jaded and weary, but extremely happy and satisfied in knowing that Australian Bush Poetry is indeed still alive and kicking.

Susan Ashton and myself hosted the shows each morning, awakening at some ungodly hour to the unfamiliar jangle of a mobile alarm clock, in order to get to the Bowlo early enough to set up and test sound gear, and arrange entry door and merchandise table for performers.

We would like to thank all of our performing poets, who arrived early each morning, firstly to help out in setting up, and then to prepare for their own performances.

As usual we found that audiences truly enjoyed the variety of our shows, with the mixture of music, yarnspinning and poetry, once again proving to be the ideal blend to keep them engaged. Despite the early hour, there was never a dull moment, nor a stifled yawn or glazed eye to be seen. They sang along to the songs and laughed, smiled and even cried, through the poems and yarns, as they were taken on a nostalgic journey to long forgotten places.

Featuring some of Australia's finest...Ray Essery, Bill Kearns, Geoffrey Graham, Greg North, Paddy O'Brien, Johny Peel and David Melville, it was indeed an all star cast, and bigger than Ben- Hur.

It was wonderful to see Geoffrey Graham, one of Tamworth's stalwart, pioneering bush poets from southern climes back in town. Geoffrey always gives 120 percent and revels in the adulation of an appreciative audience.

Thankyou to all performers and to all those who came to support us. We will be back next year...bigger, better and bolder than ever !!!!

Tom Mcilveen.

Another successful ten days of the Rhymer's Roundup at the North Tamworth Bowlo during the Tamworth Country Music Festival. It was a pleasure to share the stage with Paddy O'Brien, amazing musician Andrew Clermont, John Peel, The Rhymer from Ryde - Graeme Johnson and comedian Peter Willey. Thanks to those who attended.

"THE BOGANBUNGAN PICNIC RACES."

© Peter White

An obvious sense of expectation settled on the town.
The folk in Boganbungan spoke of nothing else each day.
On everybody's calendar an event was marked down,
Boganbungan's Races on the long week-end in May.

Boganbungan is well known in this part of Australia
as the town which makes, of most events, a holy mess.
Some events that they had tried all ended up in failure.
The Picnic Race Day truly is their only great success.

The Boganbungan Show Ground fills with campers every year.
People come from miles away to patronise this Meeting.
Visitors are quite impressed at what's accomplished here.
However we all know, that fame can be quite fleeting.

None was more excited than local farmer Bert O'Dea.
In secret he'd been training up a well-developed horse
which he had named "Down Under". He trained it every day.
His two mile stretch of road from gate to house his training course.

He fancied his colt's chances and he said so to his mate.
It was known by everyone Jim Wilson liked a bet.
Jim kept the good oil to himself and settled down to wait
a week until the races. He'd make a killing yet.

Race Day came and people gathered, a great day was assured.
Jim Wilson placed a bet with every bookie on Race 8
on Bert's horse, "Down Under", so his fortune was secured.
The bookies didn't fancy it so the odds were great.

Race 8 called, ten horses settled, the race in starter's hands.
The barrier up, "Down Under", and the other horses leapt.
A roar of encouragement erupted fro the stands.
"Down Under" quickly took the lead. Nine jockeys could've wept.

Its lead increased to two lengths out, it would be hard to beat.
Ahead there was a big left turn, the home stretch then in sight.
"Down Under's" rider, Mick Maguire, just settled in his seat.
When he neared the turn, "Down Under" drifted to the right.

"Down Under" kept on tracking an undeviating line.
Pulling hard Mick tried to bring "Down Under" to the pack.
The other horses galloped left and passed him, each of nine.
In spite of all Mick's efforts, "Down Under" finished at the back.

Instead of being flush with winnings, Jim was stoney broke.
He ripped his worthless tickets which, on the ground, he threw.
In the Mounting Yard he saw Bert talking to a bloke
and shouted, "Got a moment, Bert? I'd like a word with you."

Jim fronting Bert in anger said, "Why was his form so bad?
After what you said last week, I thought he was a wonder."
Bert replied, "He's still the fastest horse I've ever had.
On a two mile run no other horse can beat "Down Under".

Jim, as yet unsatisfied, asked for an explanation.
"What the hell just happened, Bert? Where did you train him mate?"
"On my farm road," replied Old Bert. From Jim this exclamation,
"That explains his strange behaviour. Your road is dead straight!"

Dear Editor,

I felt compelled to write this letter to express the Gratitude that I feel being a member of the ABPA.

I only discovered, or maybe that is re-discovered, a love for poetry in the last few years, in particular the rhyme and meter type that typifies Australian Bush poetry.

I have especially enjoyed the journey it has taken me on as I have read, learned and even performed a few poems over the last 3 or 4 years.

I have learned so much about Australian History, its characters, historical and modern, their way of life and much more through Bush Poetry.

Those of you who know me would realise that "I'm not from around these parts" and have only lived here for "Turty Tree" years (Anniversary coming up on 31st March - Woohoo), which is incidentally more than half my life, hard to believe I hear you say.

I have also really enjoyed receiving the ABPA magazine "Hard Copy" in the post every couple of months and can't tell you how exciting that is.

It is one of the few items that arrives by snail mail nowadays that brings joy, most of the others are either Bills or Junk Mail or the copious amount of packages which arrive in various shapes and sizes, that my wife has ordered online which obviously bring her immense joy and by default bring me immense joy also – Happy wife, Happy life or so they say.

I have also recently discovered that all of the previous editions of the ABPA magazines are now available online and I must say what a truly magnificent archive that is.

I have spent countless hours over the last few months perusing all of this back catalogue and have enjoyed it immensely.

Looking back through the years has been a joy to behold but also tinged with sadness.

Sadness that I didn't discover Bush poetry many years ago when now I realise what I missed out on as lots of the greats that graced these pages and various stages (see I'm a poet, and now I know it) have sadly passed away but also great to see that some of the stalwarts featured right from the early days of this publication are still around and performing on a regular basis. I must say that I have really enjoyed following their journeys from novices or beginners to the established performers that they are today.

So, thank you ABPA for your support in keeping Bush Poetry alive in Australia, your publication has certainly inspired me to keep learning some of the classics and also the Modern and fanned the flames to put pen to paper and maybe come up with a verse or two myself.

Regards
Gerry Mannion.

St Valentines Day

©Gerry Mannion 2023

Saint Valentines day comes around once a year,
And you're bound by tradition your partner to cheer;
So are flowers, a card or Chocolates just fine?
or will it be dinner and a bottle of wine?
There was a time long ago when a card was enough,
To light up a spark in some young piece of fluff;
So you'd meet her that night and get close by degrees,
As you whispered sweet nothings she was weak at the knees;
But in spite of the weakness her knees stayed together,
As the card and words were not enough to impress her;
So you went home alone thought you'd die intestate,
And climbed into bed just to……de-toxicate.
So there you go folks if you don't do it right,
You might well be sleeping alone on this night.

So lets have a look, how this day came to be,
And what it is now, sure you may disagree;
"Valentine of Rome", a young martyr was jailed,
For he Ministered to Christians and all it entailed;
He performed wedding nuptuals too It is said,
For young Christian soldiers forbidden to wed;
And he also performed a miraculous cure,
Restoring the eyesight of a young girl demure;
The daughter of the guard of his prison warder,
The young lusty prisoner, I'm sure he adored her;
I wonder if he ever got her into his bed,
Before the Romans decided it was off with his head;
As shortly before his last supper and wine,
He Sent her a card signed "Your Valentine".

Caravans and Cupboards

© Colin Elliott

Our caravan is compact. You would not call it capacious,
And there are times when we might wish for one that was more spacious.
For there are things that will not fit in cupboards or in drawers,
No matter if we reach up high or get down on all fours.
To store the laptop in the boot would verge on sacrilege,
And, since it is built in, we can't just put things on the fridge.
Guitars are not the sorts of things you slip into a drawer,
And the drone we took on one trip couldn't stay down on the floor.
A camera, that computer, each of them should have its spot,
But in our cosy caravan, of spots we've not a lot.
So, since we're short of storage space, we turn around instead
And pile those surplus items in a heap upon the bed,
Which works extremely well until it's snoring time once more
And bed accessibility we clearly must restore.
So, everything that's on the bed gets moved onto the table
And we crawl between the sheets now that we find that we are able.
Next morning, we can't eat until that process we reverse.
It all goes back upon the bed, I think it's getting worse.
Our problems peak when someone wants to lie down for a nap
While the other needs the table to send emails to some chap.
So, we call out to our neighbour and we say, "Excuse me Fred,
Would you mind if, for a few hours, we put our stuff on your bed?"

Words on Screen:

Celebrating Australia's Poetic Vision at the 2024 Australian Poetry Film Festival

Imagine the outback's vastness rendered as shimmering pixels, a love poem whispered alongside crashing waves, or a bush ballad brought to life through the lens of a modern filmmaker. This is the essence of the 2024 Australian Poetry Film Festival, a groundbreaking event celebrating the burgeoning art form of poetry film.

Held in the picturesque town of Guyra, New South Wales, this November's festival promises a kaleidoscope of creativity. Filmmakers and poets of all ages and backgrounds are invited to submit their works, with a special focus on innovative interpretations of the rich tradition of Australian bush poetry.

Forget dusty stereotypes. This festival celebrates the dynamic fusion of verse and visuals, where every frame pulsates with emotion and every line resonates with the unique Australian spirit. It's a platform for diverse voices, a canvas for unconventional narratives, and a testament to the power of language to transcend form and ignite imaginations.

Beyond the captivating screen, the festival coincides with the "Poets on the Mountain Festival," creating a vibrant confluence of spoken word and cinematic exploration. Imagine lively workshops, engaging panels, and electrifying screenings under the starry outback sky. It's a chance to immerse yourself in a community of passionate creators, share diverse perspectives, and witness the future of storytelling unfold.

But amidst the artistic revelry, a crucial need arises: nurturing talent and recognizing excellence. This is where your support comes in. The festival organizers are launching a crowd-funding campaign to bolster the prize money for filmmakers across three categories: Best Australian Poetry Film, Best Australian Bush Poetry Film, and Best Student Poetry Film.

Every contribution, however big or small, fuels the artistic fire. It empowers filmmakers to take risks, experiment with form, and share their unique visions with the world. It ensures that the festival shines bright, a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

So, whether you're a poetry enthusiast, a film buff, or simply someone who cherishes the unique narratives born from this sun-drenched land, we invite you to join us. Contribute to the campaign, submit your film, or simply come to Guyra this November and witness the magic of words translated into moving images. Let's celebrate the Australian voice, one frame, one verse, one breathtaking story at a time.

Visit https://filmfreeway.com/AustralianPoetryFilmContest to submit your film and https://gofund.me/74b44cb4 to contribute to the crowdfunding campaign. Let's bring the poetry to life, together.

2024 BANJO PATERSON AUSTRALIAN POETRY FESTIVAL
17 to 25 February 2024

Put the dates in your diary for the 2024 Bano Paterson Festival in Orange NSW and the surrounding villages of the Cabonne Shire. The festival will start with a gala day to celebrate Banjo's birthday on Saturday 17 February and will feature walk-up opportunities for performers throughout the following week. There will be a return of our poetry performance competition as we had it before COVID and the National Championships of 2023. This includes both youth and adult sections with poets performing their own original poems. See the ABPA website for the competition details and entry form. Entries close on 12 February and the competition will be in Orange on Friday 23 February 2024. A full festival program will be available soon, but you can be sure of the day of entertainment at Yeoval, poetry Brawl at Molong, visit to historic sites, walk-ups at the Cargo Inn and a Rotary market with more being organised.

Len Banks
Rotary Club of Orange

PLEASE NOTE

We have made a couple of small changes to the rules for the poetry competition associated with the 2024 Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Festival, so attached is an amended information sheet. There is no change to the entry form. These changes have been made in response to feedback from poets. They are:
Section 6 now reads: "The maximum presentation time is 8 minutes per entry for the Open Class and 5 minutes per entry for the other classes (preamble and postscript are included in the time limit)."
Section 11 now reads: "Poems performed in previous Banjo Paterson Australian Poetry Competitions, Orange, must not be entered in this 2024 competition. Poets that have placed (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) in any poetry competition in the previous 2 years cannot perform the same winning poems in this 2024 competition, as it aims to foster original poetry and support novice or new performers in all categories - competing poets should exercise integrity in this matter."

The updated Program is currently being printed and will be on the Orange360 website in the next couple of weeks.

www.orange360.com.au

Wombat Bush Poets at the 2023 National Cherry Festival.

On a beautiful Sunday morning a big crowd turned out for the 2023 Cherry Festival Poets Breakfast in Young. Our local IGA store again provided a beaut breakfast before a good line up of poets, both junior and not so junior, strutted their stuff.
Steve Warwick and Greg Broderick opened the show and pepped the audience up with a lively rendition of our theme song, John Clark's "Gumboots".
The junior performance section, ably judged by Robyn Sykes, was hotly contested with 10 junior poets taking part. The winners were 1st, Ayah Sultan. 2nd, Annabelle Calvert. 3rd, Rohmey Seaman and Aleigha Lewis took out the encouragement award. A big thank you to teachers and parents for taking the time to support our juniors, the audience certainly appreciated it.
The seniors were Greg Broderick, Ted Webber, Jim Lamb, Robyn Sykes, John Peel, Rob Gorman, Phil McManus, Emma Cochrane and Paul Lavis. A special mention goes to Annalise and Johan Rothe for their excellent duo of the CJ Dennis poem Hist!
The morning was a big success and will be on again in 2024 as part of the National Cherry Festival, always the first week-end in December.

Jim Lamb.

John Peel

Annalise and Johan Roth
Performing C.J.Denis's Hark

Robyn Sykes with Junior Poets at the 2023 Cherry Festival

Regular Monthly Events

NSW

"Laggan Bush Poets." The Laggan Pub, Laggan NSW. The 1st Wednesday of every month, starting at 7.30pm. For furtherdde- tails contact Mike or Elaine on (02) 4837 3397

Gosford Bush Poets meet at 7pm the last Wednesday of every month at the Gosford Hotel, crn. Mann and Erina Streets Gosford. All welcome. Contact Vic Jefferies 0425252212 or Peter Mace (02)-4369356

Milton Ulladulla Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Group First Sunday Every Month at Ex Servos Club Ulladulla 2pm start visitors welcome contact John Davis 02 44552013

Binalong - A Brush with Poetry @ Cafe on Queen, 15 Queen St. In the studio by the Balgalal Creek. Last Sunday of every odd month (except January), 2-4pm Open mic. Contact Robyn Sykes 02 6227 4377

The Queanbeyan Bush Poets meet at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Old School House at Christ Church, 39 Rutledge St, Queanbeyan. Enter via Church Lane. Contact Laurie McDonald on 02 6253 9856

POETRY IN THE VINES PORT MACQUARIE...the 4th Sunday of the month at Douglas Vale Winery. 235.Oxley Highway, (next to Westport School)...Port Macquarie. Contact Tom Mcilveen Ph..0417251287

Katoomba Poets in the Pub 22nd Sunday 2pm at Blackburn's Family Hotel. All forms poetry, free entry. Contact Greg North 0425 210 083.

Singleton Bush Poets. Meet at the Albion Hotel, John StreetSingleton. 7pm on the first Tuesday of each month.
Contact Neville Briggs 02 65711398.

Wombat Bush Poets meet at 1.30 pm at the Young Hotel for poetry, music and open mic. Last Sunday of even months except December. Contact Ted Webber 0459 707 728

Australian Poetry Hall of Fame- Guyra Wednesday Words Open Mic Poetry 6:30pm every Wednesday. 144 Bradley St, Guyra Contact James Warren 0423 478 656 www.australianpoetryhalloffame.com.au (Free RV camping at the Lagoon)

QUEENSLAND

Toowoomba Bush Poets meet on the second Saturday of each month at the COBB & cO MUSEUM , 27 Lindsay Street, Toowoomba, Queensland 4350, between 10 am and 12 midday. Read..Write..Recite ..or just Listen. All welcome .Contact Peter Frazer 0401130636.

North Pine Bush Poets Group Open Mic- Visitors welcome! Pine River Men's Shed, Old Petrie Town, Dayboro Road Kurwongbah- 1st and 3rd Sundays of most months 9a.m. –12 noon. Contact Mal on 0417765226 or Howard on 0431689054.

Kuripla Poets - last Sunday of the month 2pm to 4.30pm, Croquet Hall, 91 Codelia St. Sth Brisbane. Contact Marilyn 0458 598 683

Geebung Writers - 9.30 am every 2nd Wednesday of the month at Geebung RSL. Contact Jean (07)32654349

Bundaberg Poets Society Inc.2nd Saturday of the month. For these social poetry afternoons please contact Jayson on (07) 4155 1007 or Sandy (07) 4151 4631 for venue details.

Beaudesert Bush Bards meet on the Second Friday of each month from 9.30am at the Beaudesert Arts & information Centre, Mt.Lindesay H'way, Beaudesert. Phone 07 5541 2662 or 3272 4535.

Russell Island Writers Circle - 2nd Thursday of the month at 9.30 am. St. Peters Church Hall (Next to IGA). $2 donation. Contact Trish (07)34091542

Shorncliff "Poets of the Park" meet at St Margaret's Church Hall in Sandgate, beside the primary.every 3rd Tuesday from 5-45 pm contact 042 15 14 555

Townsville Bush Poetry Mates Inc. meet monthly at the Aitkenvale Library meeting room. For information on current day & times, please phone Barry on 0487 195 156. Visitors always welcome. Come along and join our group.'

Bribie Island Bush Poets meet at 6.30 pm on the 4th Monday of each month in the Conference Room of the Blue Pacific Hotel, Woorim on Bribie Island. Contact Cay - 07 34083219

Logan Performance Bush Poets - meet 2nd Sunday of every month, 9 to 11am at the Beenleigh Historical Village. 205 Mains Road Beenleigh. All Welcome. Breakfast available Ring Gerry 0499942922..

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Victoria

Kyabram Bush Verse Group – Second Sunday of every even numbered month at the Kyabram Town Hall 199-209 Allan Street Kyabram. Enter via rear door off the Bradley Street Car Park 2pm. Contact Mick Coventry 0427 522097.

Gippsland Bush Poets meet Monthly, 7.30pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the RSL Hall in Hood St. Rosedale

Top of the Murray Poets and Bush Storytellers (TOMPABS) meet Monthly (mostly Tuesdays in Corryong) for writing work- shops, Monthly on 3rd Sunday for Music and Poetry at Maurie Foun's 'Poets' Paradise' . Contact Jan Lewis (02) 60774332

Bendigo Goldfields Bush Poets Mostly third Sundays in even numbered months except December when first Sunday. Bendigo Club, 22 Park St, Strathdale (Bendigo) 1pm to 4pm. Contact: Colin Carrington 0401 076 085.

Henry Lawson Memorial & Literary Society Inc. – Meet third Saturday each month/except January. Ross House 247-251 Flinders Lane Melbourne All Welcome. From 1-30pm till 4-00 pm. Contact: Maree Stapledon: 0408 100 896

Mansfield Bush Poets Group - Second Tuesday of the month 1pm - 3pm, Mansfield Library. Contact Val Kirley 0400 654 596

WA

Perth 1st Friday monthly 7-9.30pm The Auditorium, 26 Plantation Drive, Bentley Park. Contact Rodger 0419 666 168 or Sue 0418 941 016 Albany 4th Tuesday monthly. Contact Peter 08 9844 6606

Bunbury 1st Monday even months 7pm. Rose Hotel. Contact Alan 0400 249 243 or Ian 0408 212 636

Geraldton 2nd Tuesday monthly. Beliar Caravan Park. Contact Roger 0427 625 181

Kalgoorlie 1st Wednesday monthly. Kalgoorlie Country Club. Contact Paul Browning 0416 171 809

Boondooma Homestead Poetry Competition 26 APRIL 2024

There will be free admission to the homestead on Friday 26-04-2024 provided you have registered for this competition. Registration is free and will close on 21-04-2024, and can be booked by contacting Brian Weier on 0418 622 551 or 0428 622 551, pomes must be of Australian content, time limit will be 8 minutes including preamble.
Boondooma Homestead Museum and Heritage Complex and caravan park situated near the junction of Boondooma Creek and the Boyne River @ 8262 Mundubbera Durong Road Boondooma Qld. is the North West gateway to the South Burnett.
In 1847 the Lawson Brothers along with Robert Alexander established Boondooma Station. Traditional aboriginal inhabitants referred to the area as Boondooma, understood to mean a hole dug in the sand from which to obtain a drink. Like most of the stations during that period, sheep were pastured, making wool the main income. Hereford cattle then replaced sheep.
The homestead was built from 1850's to 1870's and added to the heritage register on 21-10-1992. This is one of the few examples of early pioneer architecture available to the public in the South Burnett. The stone store was built to store and dispense supplies to station workers. Constructed of roughly coursed random stone, it was built by German stonemason, Wilhelm Brill between 1854 and 1858.
The complex is a registered caravan park with some powered sites. There is a complex consisting of 6 cabins with share kitchen and disability shower facility. A camp kitchen is available for use by campers, except during festivals where it is utilized for camp kitchen cooking. A separate shower block if needed. 2 other toilet blocks for the publics convenience,
The association hosts 2 festivals per year. Spirit of the Bush in April emcompassing Anzac Day with an Anzac Day Parade. Scots in the Bush in August, where in 2023 a parade held in remembrance of Long Tan Day. Also observed are Australia Day and Remembrance Day.

For, many years a number of poets travelled to Bundaberg in July for the annual Bundy Bush Poetry Muster. Unfortunately, after 22 years, 2016 was the last year that this festival was held. At this year's AGM members voted to drop the 'Incorporated' from the club's name and just be known as The Bundaberg Poets' Society. In doing this the club chose four recipients to receive some of the funds held in their bank account and Boondooma Homestead was one of the lucky ones.

The aim of the Bundaberg Poets' Society was always to promote Australian bush poetry and members felt that by donating money to Boondooma Homestead this would be the perfect opportunity to do this at a place which has an historical background. Boondooma Homestead are therefore delighted to run a poetry competition at their Spirit of the Bush festival held in April each year.

The Spirit of the Bush is a fantastic festival with Australian music and what better way to complement the music with Australian bush verse. The poetry competition will be held on the verandah of the historical homestead looking out at trees planted over 100 years ago which makes it the perfect setting to recite Australian Bush Verse. Poetry competition will be for Novices and Intermediate poets.

NOVICE: For poets who have not yet won a poetry competition are therefore eligible to enter the Novice Section.

INTERMEDIATE: For poets who have won a competition in the Novice section but haven't been placed first in an Intermediate or Open category.

NOVICE SECTION:Traditional ; over 60 years.
Modern; Less than 60 years by another poet
Open; own composition written by the entrent

INTERMEDIATE SECTION; Traditional; over 60 years
Modern; Less than 60 years by another poet
Open; own composition written by the entrent.

Competition will be held on 26 April, 2024 and winners of the competition proudly sponsored by the Bundaberg Poets' Society will be announced on
on the stage in the main venue.

We look forward to seeing you at Boondooma Homestead in April 2024 for the Spirit of the Bush Festival for a week of music, poetry and friendship.

For more information on this poetry competition please contact
Brian Weier on 0418 622 551

February

© Harry Donnelly 1-2-24

Once upon a 'start of time'
lived a 'part of time' family of twelve.
No parents...just a dozen-fold,
perfect number the more you delve.

The planet 'Calender' — synonymous,
in joining time to space.
The Seconds, the Minutes, the Hours,
the Days and Weeks already in place.

The Years were waiting patiently
to put synchronicity to the test.
Twelve young Months excited now
to join in with the rest.

This last piece of the puzzle,
to meld each Week within each Year.
Wasn't as easy as first was thought,
though time was incredibly near.

You see, these Months were different sizes,
where each fitted wasn't known.
Thirty-one Days and thirty Days,
and one had not quite grown.

Father Time just couldn't function,
other groups were perfect size.
Seconds, Minutes, Hours, Days,
Weeks — all synchronised.

It was fair to say young February
was indeed the problem child.
Never knowing its number of days
in need to be somehow reconciled.

So, the rest put their heads together,
a meeting chaired by Father Time.
To sort young February out,
whose Days were out of rhyme.

An early day Poet was hired
to write a 'Day to Month' type poem.
A draw was done for order
and February had found its home.

"Thirty Days hath September"...
and so on and so on and so.
Till the poet had got to February
and the words refused to flow.

So here we are in modern day,
with a poem which loses track.
Each time it hits young February...
bad memories flooding back.

Well, Ancient Greeks were thinkers,
and quite casually hatched a plan.
To make these 'Leap-years' special,
and the Olympics came to hand.

And how these games have grown,
to cause old Father Time to smile.
How February's missing Days
had their purpose all the while.

So...when next you view each Minute
of this Global sports event.
Give a thought to darling February,
and what its missing days — have meant.

The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.

Inaugurated 1994 ARBN: 104 032 126 ABN:17 145 367 949

www.abpa.org.au

Treasurer: *Christine Middleton,* PO Box 357 PORTARLINGTON VIC 3223
Email: treasurer@abpa.org.au *Phone:* 0419 526 550

Membership Application Form 2024

You may pay via direct debit (see below for details)

☐ Renewing membership ☐ New member

Membership is for a calendar year from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024
Annual membership includes all magazines (including back issues) for the current calendar year.
Members joining after 30th September will receive the year's remaining issues as well as membership for the following calendar year.

Name: ....

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..... State……Postcode: .....

Phone: ..... Mobile: .....

Email: ....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

ABPA Membership Fees:	(AUD)	
☐ Single membership	$48	(posted magazine)
☐ Single membership	$35	(emailed magazine only)
☐ Dual family membership	$63	(one posted magazine)
☐ Dual family membership	$50	(one emailed magazine)
☐ Junior membership	$20	(under 18 years – emailed magazine)
☐ International member supplement	$25	(for postage - not for emailed magazines)
☐ Public Liability Insurance	$95	($20 million PLI cover 31/01/22- to 31/01/23)
☐ Membership badge	$10	(includes postage within Australia)

Total: ..... $

☐ Receipt please
☐ NO receipt thanks (your magazine address label will show your receipt number and membership expiry.)

Cheque Payable to: **The Australian Bush Poets Association Inc.**
Credit Card: Contact Christine direct on 0419 526 550
Or pay by direct deposit to:

Bank:	Bendigo Bank
BSB:	**633 000**
Account Number:	**154842108**
Account Name:	Australian Bush Poets Association Inc
Reference:	**Your NAME**

Please include **your NAME** as the EFT reference and send advice to ***treasurer@abpa.org.au***

Bush Poetry at the Man from Snowy River Bush Festival 2024

Thurs 11th-Sun 14th April

RETURN OF THE VICTORIAN BUSH POETRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Man from Snowy River Bush Festival 2024 (Including the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships)

The Snowy Mountains alpine region of NSW is a wonderland of rivers, mountains, ski fields caves and glacial lakes. At the base of the Kosciuszko National Park at the upper reaches of the Murray is nestled the beautiful little town of Corryong.

Every April Corryong come alive to the sound of the stockman's whip, the neighing of brumbies, the sounds of country music and the lilting rhythms of good old fashioned "Aussie" bush verse. For over a quarter of a century now Australia's best versifiers have gathered annually to ply their trade and entertain the crowds at this truly inspirational event.

In 2024 those traditions continue with the holding of the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships. Come along and test your skills in the performance sections of the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships in sections such as the Classical, Modern, Original Serious & Original Modern competitions and get creative with your written entries for the Serious and Comedy sections as well.

This year's entertainers are led by festival stalwart Geoffrey.W.Graham whose tribute shows to Banjo Paterson and the like fill the marquees each and every time he takes the stage. Not to be outdone we will also showcase the many skills of "The Rhymer from Ryde" (winner of many prestigious award such as the 'Golden Damper' as well as the Banjo Paterson, Leonard Teale and Bobby Miller Memorial Awards). He will share the stage (and the judging table) with John Peel (2 x Golden Damper winner & former runner-up Australian Champion) and Australian Bush Poetry President Tim Sheed amongst other luminaries.

Tall tales & general bulldust throwing will be the domain of Matthew Hollis (2 x times Australian Yarnspinning Champion) who will also Co-Mc the "Walk-up" Poet's Breakfasts along with the "Rhymer".

Bush Music, campfire singalongs and all things 'Australiana' will be looked after by Festival favourites Kevin McCarthy & Simon Dillon. Bring your instrument and become part of this merry band of minstrels. The 'Bonza Blokes Bush Band' will play an assortment of classics 'around the traps'. Christine Middleton also brings her consummate musicianship and beautiful playing to our musical crew as well.

But of course, the most important part of the Bush Poetry festival is YOU! Our wonderful and loyal audiences and dedicated poets who bring your own vibrant personalities and skills to share with their "Aussie" mates. So, 'Come One, Come All" to Corryong! We're waiting to welcome you back!

Don't forget that the closing date for all entries in all section is the 29th February so make sure that you get your entries in early to avoid disappointment.

Entry forms and further information is available on the following websites.
www.bushfestival.com.au, www. abpa.org.au

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