

# ABPA

Australian Bush Poets Association  
Volume 30 No. 2 April/May 2024

*Happy Easter ABPA Members!*





## COME "UP THE COUNTRY"!

### ***GRENFELL GEARS UP FOR JUNE LONG WEEKEND WITH 2024 HENRY LAWSON FESTIVAL!***

**Mark your calendars for the June long weekend and come "Up the Country" for the 2024 Henry Lawson Festival of the Arts in Grenfell from 6-10th June.**

Held each year to commemorate his contribution, the Henry Lawson Festival promotes and recognises the arts in the country heartland of Central West NSW – Grenfell.

The township is now gearing up for what they believe could be the best festival yet, with the legendary street parade and authentic country street party. Visitors will enjoy market stalls, competitions, roving street entertainers, and themed stage entertainment throughout Grenfell's iconic Main Street.

The festival will also include all the favourite elements from years gone by including VIP events, a Poetry Brawl, bike rides, Poet's Breakfast, pub performances, the popular Car Show, and the not to be missed events - Caragabal Camp Oven Cook-Off and landra Castle Open Day.

### ***FESTIVAL OF ARTS, POETRY & SHORT STORY COMPETITIONS NOW OPEN!***

Every year the festival embraces a theme from one of Henry Lawson's iconic poems. This year is based around the piece 'Up the Country' which reflects Henry Lawson's deep understanding of the Australian bush and his empathy for the people who lived and worked there.

'Up the Country' was first published in *The Bulletin* magazine on 9 July 1892, under the title Borderland, and started the Bulletin Debate, a series of poems by both Lawson and Andrew Barton "Banjo" Paterson about the true nature of life in the Australian bush.

In "Up the Country", Lawson recounts his trip to the barren and gloomy Australian bush and criticises "City Bushmen" such as Banjo Paterson who tended to romanticize bush life. Entries are now open for the festival's short story and verse competitions focused on the theme and the thread within us that will always lure us home.

### ***A TRUE CELEBRATION OF LOCAL CULTURE!***

The Henry Lawson Festival is a major event for the town of Grenfell. The festival has been running for 66 years and is seen as one of the oldest rural festivals still operating in NSW.

Lawson was born on the Grenfell Goldfields in 1867. His legendary Australian stories and poetry were acclaimed throughout his life and have continued to be celebrated for more than a century since.

The festival is renowned for introducing Lawson's work to generations of fans and aims to promote aspiring artistic endeavours. The event also showcases the Grenfell region's heritage and tourist attractions bringing the community together to celebrate with entertainment for everyone.

### ***More information...***

A full festival itinerary and more information will be available as the festival organisation finalises. Competition entry forms and market stallholder applications will also be available on the website for those wanting to be part of this iconic festival. [www.henrylawsonfestival.com.au](http://www.henrylawsonfestival.com.au)

# President's Report

The Australian Bush Poets Association membership currently stands at 138 with people still paying for their subscriptions. A member of the association submitted a notice of motion to the the AGM advocating a number of changes to the organization that were discussed but not adopted at the meeting as members believed that a number of the options had been previously explored and found to be unwieldy and impractical to implement. The committee is still evaluating these ideas and are pleased that members are thinking of ways to improve how we promote bush poetry as an art form.

The committee are currently evaluating a series of rubrics for judges to use in scoring contestants in bush poetry competitions for both performance poetry and written competitions. It is hoped that this set of criteria will be valuable in providing better feedback for participants to allow them to improve performance.

The Oracles Of the Bush weekend is coming up in early April in Tenterfield and then The Man From Snowy River Festival, incorporating the Victorian Bush Poetry Competition in Corryong from the 11th to 14th of April.

Later in the year Western Australia are holding State Championships and the Victorian Bush Poets will be holding a Muster in Tolmie, more to follow.

Please use the ABPA website to remain informed of upcoming events and results of past events.

Tim Sheed  
President ABPA



Onwards and Upwards for  
Bush Poetry  
Tim Sheed

## ABPA Magazine Advertising Rates

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### **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](mailto:editor@abpa.org.au)

All payments to be made within 14 days to

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## **Next Magazine Deadline is July 27th 2024**

# Gold Rush Embers

© Sean Duffy

Winner, 2024 Blackened Billy Verse Competition, awarded in Orange, NSW.

In the southern Baw Baw foothills  
when the looming winter schemes,  
and cicada sounds fall silent  
as the sleeping summer dreams;  
when the early frost prepares to  
hunt the remnants of the heat,  
and the shades of dusk awaken  
where the light and darkness meet –  
in Walhalla's twilight spaces  
can you see their haunted faces?  
As the valley rim grows fainter  
and the sickle moon takes flight,  
with the shroud of dusk descending  
and the shapes of shadows bending  
do you see their pale forms blending  
with the velvet edge of night?

For this quaint, historic hamlet  
with its forest-scented calm  
has a beauty laced with sadness  
and a chill beneath the charm.  
Pause awhile amid the graveyard  
on Walhalla's eastern hill.  
Read the epitaphs on headstones  
in the eerie evening still.  
Though the gold rush years have drifted  
and the scourge of death has shifted  
even now the bygone perils  
leave their poignant graveyard scars.  
When the dying day grows dimmer  
do you see their ghostly shimmer  
as the last light's tender glimmer  
stirs the coals of countless stars?

In your mind's eye see them toiling  
for the gold their souls still seek,  
as their spirits intermingle  
with the mist above the creek.  
Hear the sounds of steel on rock face  
in the deep and blinding black,  
where the light of lanterns barely  
holds the crushing darkness back.  
Hope and promise fanned a flame here –  
loss and sorrow staked a claim here –  
there was wealth, though many battled,  
their existence hand to mouth.  
But for some the jobs were steady,  
willing workers always ready,  
courting danger in the eddy  
of the gold rush in the south.

Mining metal in Walhalla  
was a war against the stone,  
where the hard-won spoils were tarnished  
by the miners' blood and bone.  
Mortal man has few defences  
when the flesh and rock collide,  
or when dust – the airborne killer –  
wastes him slowly from inside.  
Fiscal gain for callous bosses  
justified the human losses  
(though the entries in the ledgers  
never counted those who died).  
For the worker, fate was fickle,  
reaping blindly with the sickle,  
till the rush became a trickle  
and the golden river dried.



While the miners knew the menace  
of the tunnel and the cave,  
merely living in Walhalla  
meant a fast burn to the grave.  
There was filth and overcrowding  
with disease and death run rife,  
when the hills were incandescent  
with the fires of gold rush life.  
This was once a place of drama  
but the ambience is calmer  
now – a century of seasons  
since the sunset of 'the rush'.  
From their haunts among the hollows  
shadows spill and nightfall follows  
as the hungry darkness swallows  
what remains of twilight's blush.

In the afterglow of sunset  
sense the presence of the dead.  
Feel the brooding, brittle tension  
as the day hangs by a thread.  
Where the graveyard trees stand sentry  
at the verge of now and then,  
does it seem, for just a moment,  
that the past might live again?  
In the stillness time is slowing  
and we share the fate of knowing  
not the manner of our passing  
to that place no mortal sees.  
Mystic veils suspend between us  
and the spirits who have been us:  
fleeting phantoms who have seen us  
at their graves among the trees.

For a while Walhalla flourished,  
but the fortune could not last.  
Now the ghosts of those who died here  
draw us back into the past.  
Feel the heartache and the anguish;  
taste the salt of bitter tears –  
painful memories now softened  
in the endless flow of years.  
Though the atmosphere grows colder  
still the gold rush embers smoulder  
as another autumn settles  
in the valley's verdant fold,  
while the sounds of death and dying  
echo sadly in the sighing  
of the trees that watch the lying  
place of men who died for gold.

# Vale

**William (Bill) Williams** wrote both Poetry and yarns, some of his yarns are still on the forum, I'm not so sure about his poetry, it may have been lost on the old forum.

He had at least one book published 'From The Humpy'. He was quite a character as a quote from the first page of his book bears out.

"Well, you may well ask a little about my history and I might not tell you the truth, but then again I might."

He goes on to say he has lived in the Northern Territory, Northern Western Australia and northern Queensland in his younger days. And was once a stockman and a pro shooter when among other things he hunted buffalo and roos. In later life Bill lived in the Canberra area.

He wrote many entertaining yarns, you can look up some that are still on the Forum or the Yarn Spinning page.

He also wrote his own unique style of poetry, and if you can find a copy of his book you will get an insight into his own special style of writing.

Terry Piggott.

Terry also wrote a short poem "A Mate Of Mine Called Bill" in the ABPA Members' Poetry page on the ABPA Forum.



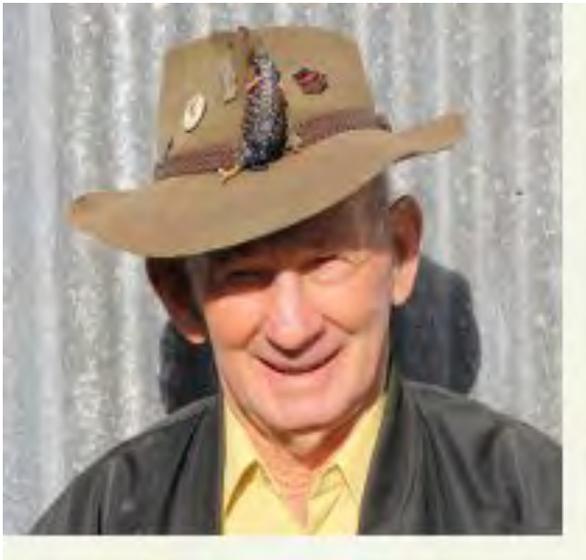
**Garry Lowe** was one of those wonderful entertainers who has experienced the hardships of life and come through the knocks to transmute his trials into performances that have brought joy to so many over many years.

Garry was one of the fortunate bush poets who was around when the late Bobby Miller was alive and Bobby and many of his compatriots had a great influence on him. Garry's own entertaining career as a bush poet really took off after he successfully auditioned for Red Faces' on Melbourne's Channel 9. He won \$500 and was featured in the television show Hey, Hey it's Saturday.

The following year he got a spot with Jim Haynes at the Longyard and following his involvement in Tamworth, he became a 'Longyard Legend' in 2009 sharing the honours that year with his good mate Milton Taylor. Another career highlight for Garry was opening the Australian Bush Laureate Award nights for two years playing the national anthem on a gum leaf. He remembers these occasions as 'spine-chilling' experiences.

As well as being a long term popular face around the ABPA Championships as both a successful competitor and as a performer/judge, Garry was runner up (to Milton Taylor) in the Winton Qantas Waltzing Matilda performance competition. He also spent seven winters entertaining the travellers at the caravan park in Blackall from 1996–2002 and a further four years in Mitchell during the flood period. He finally hung up his outback wandering boots in 2013 deciding that he no longer needed to "roam around like a mongrel dog". Although a dedicated 'cockroach' he has spent the last four years in Queensland thanks to his relationship with a special 'cane-toad' lady.

Garry passed away after ill health forced him from the Performing scene and he will be dearly missed by our Bush Poetry Family.



# THE CUCKOO'S NEST

© Trevor Shaw

Now, Paddy was a scholar and as Irish as can be,  
who had gone to university and gained a PhD;  
who had messed around with many jobs and, though this might sound queer,  
finally heard his calling and became an engineer.  
He spent his time designing streets and roads and motorways,  
bridges, footpaths, bus zones and numerous stopping bays.

He had a mate, named Shamus, who was not as bright as he,  
yet he owned a natty sportscar and a villa by the sea.  
Often times, on weekends, one could find the pair together,  
fishing, surfing, drinking – depending on the weather.  
Each had a bent for trivia, and they'd test each other out  
with quizzes, scrabble, board games – who lost, obliged to shout.

Their libraries overflowed with books of triviality:  
Readers Digests, dictionaries, tomes of poetry,  
Oz and ancient history and, of course, biographies –  
composers, authors, sports folk, and those who sailed the seas.  
Geography and science books took place beside the arts;  
iconic spots around the world; human body parts.

Usually, in the afternoons, they'd sit and watch "The Chase,"  
"Deal or No Deal," "Family Feud" or any other place  
that was beaming out a quiz show. They scanned the internet -  
storing every titbit of new knowledge they could get.  
A lightbulb moment in their lives, led them to have a go  
at making squillions. Paddy entered a popular trivia show:

"Who wants to be a Millionaire?" He gained a vacant seat  
and joined with several other folk, determined to compete,  
for the top prize of a million bucks – more dough than they could spend.  
Paddy put up Shamus, as his choice, for "Phone a Friend".  
The show began and, one by one, contestants fell away.  
Paddy found himself alone - the last one left to play.

No matter what the subject was, he got the answer right.  
The crowd was hushed in silence, as the big prize came in sight.  
The quiz compere picked up the card and, once he'd scanned the words,  
said, "Paddy, here's the question: 'I am naming you four birds –  
swallow, pigeon, cuckoo, wren: one doesn't build a nest.  
Which one? Get it correct, you'll have a motza to invest."

His eyes popped out; his throat went dry; his breathing shortened length.  
He knew a lot about a lot, but birds were not his strength.  
The compere read the words again and, at the question's end,  
Paddy muttered nervously, "I'll have to phone a friend."  
The dial tone echoed through the room, 'til Shamus said, "Hello."  
"It's Paddy here. I'm in some strife. I'll read the question slow."

Shamus took the question in and, trying not to shout,  
said, "Paddy, it's the cuckoo, of that I have no doubt."  
"Begorrah, Shamus, that was quick ... but are you really sure?  
A million dollars are at stake. I'll win it, if I score."  
"A cuckoo doesn't build a nest. I'm as sure as I can be.  
Don't even think to gamble. Lock in the answer, 'C'".

Bells and whistles filled the air, as did many strands of glitter.  
On getting the answer right on birds, Paddy felt the urge to twitter!  
When celebrations settled down, he quizzed his phone-friend out.  
"You amazed me, Shamus. Cuckoo? C? How come you had no doubt?"  
'Twas easy, Paddy." (What came next, left our winner quite in shock.)  
"Every cuckoo I have seen, was living in a clock!"



# JERRY and the ATTRICKS

Jack Drake © 25.5.2023

A retirement facility was Jerry Attricks' home.  
A peaceful, quiet amenity where he lived all alone.  
No children and no family to soothe his ageing soul.  
The only thing that kept him sane was good old Rock and Roll.

Guitar, keyboard, harmonica. Old Jerry played 'em all.  
In early days he'd backed Pink Floyd when they produced "The Wall".  
He knew show business backwards with its triumphs and its tears.  
He'd get a band together to rock out his final years.

Old Merve in number 43 could play a mean guitar.  
Max the Sax had been a jazz man who'd played in bluesy bars  
in the days when Memphis Music evolved to Roots and Soul.  
Then Bill Haley and the Comets turned it into Rock and Roll.

Dawn and Peg were singing back-up when Elvis was the King  
and no way had they lost it. Harmonised like anything.  
Got young Sidney for the drummer. He was 70 or so.  
Bill the gardener for a bass man and the band was good to go.

The sound that group came up with was candy to the ears.  
Generic rock with back beats reaching back across the years.  
Bayou blues and be-bop born today and further back  
with hints of Kris Kristofferson and shades of Fleetwood Mac.

They exploded on the music scene with film clips shown on "Rage".  
Soon Jerry and the Attricks were the idols of the age.  
All the hot new wave performers, boy bands and divas too  
were biting on their Botox and wondering who to sue.

From 50's rock and rollers to the rappers of today,  
to the poets of the 70s who had something to say.  
Old hairy hippies loved them and the hipsters did as well.  
Jerry and the Attricks centre stage and raising hell!

Drinking in the night clubs, smoking' dope and making whoopee,  
discovering Viagra to do justice to the groupies,  
pulling all the hotties dressed in leather and in lace  
and pissing off Keith Richards 'cause he couldn't stand the pace.

So Jerry and the Attricks sung their songs and rocked the world  
with some pretty deadly music and some pretty spunky girls.  
On Facebook and on Utube they scored a billion likes.  
Jerry, Merve and Max and Billy swore they'd die behind a mike.

The years kept rolling onward and the boys kept rockin' on  
covering the classic tracks, performing their own songs.  
Old time Rolling Stones stuff was all part of the act  
but half way through "Jack Flash" one night, they all had heart attacks.

Those synchronised song singers slowly sank onto the stage  
as Rock and Roll's rich history turned an unexpected page.  
A music style created there for fans and the shock Jocks.  
A genera known forever more as Geriatric Rock.

So to the crematorium the boys all went to burn.  
Their ashes packed together in a large and roomy urn.  
At festivals around the world, fans reached into the tin  
to scatter Jerry Attrick ashes out upon the wind.



# MARGOT

© Edwina Smith

The quiet dark of night  
Bids farewell to the moon  
Margot's warbling calls  
Mean daylight will come soon  
Her melody of song  
A delight for all to hear  
Welcoming the dawn  
And brings good cheer

The sun says 'Good Morning'  
In words of red and gold  
Painting hills and trees  
And a story to be told

Margot's first to start  
Then others begin to sing  
She's a skilled aviator  
Non better on the wing  
High up on her perch  
A gum tree is her seat  
From there she can see them all  
The neighbours of the street

First come the walkers  
With canine friends on leads  
Breeds of all kinds  
Some with special needs  
Schnoodles, poodles, labradoodles  
Their owners stop to chat  
Along with dear old 'Scrags'  
He's 'bit of this and that.'

Looks like the joggers  
Trotting down the street  
Dressed in trendy gear  
Fancy runners on their feet  
'A call of Nature' drops  
While they're under Margot's range  
One stops to tie a lace  
And something does feel strange!

Here comes the postman  
Delivering all the mail  
Letters, bills and parcels  
Come rain, shine or hail  
Margot's mate makes no fuss  
So she keeps 'a snooping  
Chicks hatched and fully fledged  
No more need for swooping

The garbage truck rolls by  
Its engine gives a roar  
One of the neighbours  
Forgot his 'favourite' chore  
Desperate haste with household waste  
He trips on the hose  
A breeze gently whispers  
'You forgot your clothes.'

He rights himself but the bin's upset  
Lid opened from the spill  
Then all the jars and soup tins  
Start rolling down the hill  
A meal in sight, Margot's keen  
But much to her chagrin  
A miserly load! What a toad!  
It's only the recycle bin

Everyone's gone to work  
The quiet of the street  
Margot begins her rounds  
And wonders who she'll meet

Stan tends his yard  
Shrubs, trees and flowers  
He's out there most days  
And works away for hours  
Today he's spreading compost  
Alive with wriggly worms  
Margot can't believe her luck  
And they are on good terms

Things could not get better  
But indeed they do  
He welcomes her presence  
And throws a worm or two  
Stan is delayed  
Someone's at the door  
And while he's away  
She helps herself to more

Mildred's in a tizz  
Her lawn's the worst she's seen  
It seems to be dying  
And is no longer green  
Margot hops off the fence  
And has a walk around  
Then locks onto where  
Scarab grubs are found

She tilts her head and listens  
No place for them to hide  
Then spears the little blighters  
The best insecticide!

Glen and Sue are eighty-two  
Together for sixty years  
They've worked hard all their lives  
And know the salt of tears  
Nowadays life is kind  
As they walk the garden path  
And nothing gives them greater joy  
Than Margot's morning bath!

Margot keeps on her way  
In search of more to eat  
She patrols trees and lawns  
The verges of the street  
Spiders, snails, slugs and skinks  
A variety of prey  
And she doesn't stop  
Until the close of day

The fading light at dusk  
Bids farewell to the sun  
Margot's warbling calls  
Mean her work is done  
Her melody of song  
A delight for all to hear  
Welcoming the night  
And brings good cheer

The sun says 'Good Evening'  
In words of red and gold  
Painting hills and trees  
A story has been told

**The Betty Olle Poetry Award Junior** is run annually by the Kyabram and District Bush Verse group. Thankyou to the co-ordinator, ABPA's Mick Coventry, and all concerned with providing this opportunity for young writers.

Results from 2023 --

Winner – Blake Hunter with *Heritage's Aged*

Runner up – Victoria Yarygin with *Just a Day in Australia*.

## **JUST A DAY IN AUSTRALIA** by Victoria Yarygin

Do you know the country where dingoes run free,  
Where kookaburras laugh happily with glee  
Where kangaroos leap all night, and all day  
The joyous bird songs they hear far away?

I know that country.

Do you know the place where red gums grow,  
And emus dance as if to the flow  
Where loud cockatoos fly around in the sky  
over the outback far and high?

I know that place.

Imagine spending time, or even a day,  
In such a great land. You just have to stay!  
Camping in the bush with ground that is lush  
Having a rest; there's no need to rush.

Watching the sky be splattered with colours  
Red, pink and orange, bright blue in the summers.  
As it gets dusky, the sun will go down  
The trees will disappear — in the darkness they drown.

When the moon goes up it starts getting cold,  
At least the stars glow a warming up gold.  
As dawn breaks through the sun shows its rays,  
Waking the forest as it sleepily sways.

But what is this land  
Of course, you will wonder  
About the place,  
The place called Down Under!

© 2023 Victoria Yarygin (at age 12)

AND NOW TWO POEMS FOR ANZAC DAY from the talented pupils of Knox Preparatory Grammar School, an independent Uniting Church school located in Wahroonga, Sydney.

At the Laura Literary Awards in 2022, *The Trenches* was Commended in the Primary Poetry Section (age 9 to 10) and *War* was Highly Commended in the Junior Primary Poetry Section (age 6 to 8). Both poems have been prepublished in the *Laura Literary Awards Prize Winners 2022 Anthology* by the Rocky River 'Riters.

# Our Poetry Kids

with Brenda Joy

## **THE TRENCHES** by Oliver Senini

The trenches were dirty and full of rats.  
The Anzacs ate bully beef  
and slept on mats.  
All the Anzacs missed their mum and dad,  
every day they became more sad.

They wanted the war to end  
so they could see their friends.  
The Anzacs wanted to hear a bird song.  
They thought this war would be an adventure  
but they were wrong.

They wished their family would send a letter  
to make them feel better.  
In the trenches it was dark and cold.  
On every wall there was green mould.

These soldiers fought so their country  
would be free.  
Many died without a fuss.  
They risked their lives for us.

### **LEST WE FORGET.**

© 2022 Oliver Senini (at age 9)

## **WAR** by Philip Ren

The poppies sway as the soldiers pray.  
Fear envelops them as they crouch in the trenches  
throughout the day.

Every night they are ready to fight  
as gunshots come from left and right.

They hear guns overhead, they can taste death.  
Every second they hold their breath.

The smell of smoke and ash fill the air.  
They can't get the stench of death  
out of their hair.

The siren strikes fear into their hearts every dawn.  
This useless war makes them feel like a pawn.

### **LEST WE FORGET**

© 2022 Phillip Ren (at age 8)

# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA

## W.A. Bush Poets



### BOYUP BROOK COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

This year's Country Music Festival saw a couple of changes in the poetry events. The popular Breakfast at the Tennis Club was replaced by a Poet's Lunch at the newly refurbished Boyup Brook Hotel. On Thursday night the Golf Club hosted Poetry Under The Stars and a sausage sizzle which also proved popular.



BOYUP BROOK



Rob Gunn at Boyup Brook Pub



Daniel Avery at Golf Club

Visiting poet, Gary Fogarty accompanied Bill Gordon to the two local schools for very successful workshops. This is the first year that the State School has been involved and feedback from teachers was very favourable and the students interacted enthusiastically with both writing and performance. Gary had his latest children's book available "I Wish I Was A Farmer" and he had good sales over the weekend.



Gary Fogarty at State School



Bill Gordon at St Mary's



It was a pleasure to host performing musicians during the festival.  
(l to r) Bill and Meg Gordon, Terry and Virginia Bennetts, Peter Simpson and Diane Lindsay



The lineup of poets at Boyup Brook Bush Poets Breakfast  
back row (l to r) Alan Aitken, Greg Joass, Peter Nettleton, Lesley Horne, Daniel Avery, Bill Gordon, Irene Conner, Peter Rudolf, Gary Fogarty (Qld)  
front row (l to r) Roger Cracknell, John Hayes, Julian Ilich, Heather Denholm, Bev Shorland, Rob Gunn, Cobber Lethbridge, Christine Boulton.

# "THE BUNGEWORAGA AGRICULTURAL SHOW."

© Peter White

That time of year had come again, the third week-end in May.  
It was the time for Bungeworaga's Show.  
All in town were ready and were eager for the day.  
They'd all get dressed in Sunday best and go.

The best of local produce was displayed for all to view,  
with vegetables and poultry side by side.  
With fun and rides in 'Side Show Alley', competitions too,  
it was enough to keep all satisfied.

The local Member gave the kids a holiday that week.  
On Friday schools for miles around were closed.  
All the kids trekked to the Show for pleasure they would seek.  
Each child with stringent spending rules imposed.

Dave Cullen phoned his mate to see if he was going.  
Said Danny Hicks, "That's what I intended."  
During conversation that continued to and froing,  
an offer of a lift was extended.

When the pair of mates arrived they sought the wood chop ring.  
They watched the axemen hewing through their logs.  
After watching wood chips fly and hearing axes sing,  
old Danny said, "I'd go some Dagwood Dogs."

Wandering off to find a feed and beer to wash it down -  
FOUREX or CARLTON the choice of drink.  
"It will be hard to choose," Dave said, and gave a thoughtful frown.  
Then 'Mr FOUREX' gave the pair a wink.

With thirst and hunger satisfied they went to see the cattle -  
Brangus, Charolais and Murray Greys.  
Milling beasts within the stalls made the fences rattle -  
no sign of Herefords from bygone days.

All alone within a stall a young Black Angus steer -  
a chance for all of us to guess its weight.  
Its meat would be the prize. The best prize of the year.  
A butcher would prepare it for the plate.

Having registered their guesses both then wandered out.  
Then 'Mr FOUREX' slipped another wink.  
Dave said, "Let's have another beer. Danny, it's my shout."  
Old Danny never would pass up a drink.

While they drank they chatted on the merits of the Show,  
agreeing of all Shows it was the best.  
After sinking two more beers, time for them to go.  
Both of an age to need their 'beauty rest'.

The very next day the Show Secretary came around,  
a chiller trailer towed behind his car.  
He said to Danny, "You have won. You guessed within a pound.  
Yours was the closest guess by far."

Danny rang Dave up to skite, "Hey, mate, I won the meat."  
Said Dave, "Give the other leg a pull!"  
"No, old mate, it's ridgy-didge. A trailer load to eat."  
"A trailer load! What a lot of bull!"



# FOLLOW THE PATH TO MORE EFFECTIVE WRITING

*with*  
**Irene Dalgety Timpone**



## **Taking Bush Poetry into the Twenty-First Century:**

In the late nineteenth century and beyond, Henry Lawson, Banjo Paterson, Will Ogilvie and the other early 'Masters' of Australian Bush Poetry found their subject matter in their own personal experiences, the newsworthy events of their day, the politics and politicians, the heroes and the villains and, of course, the stories and characters that caused tears as well as laughter and delight. They wrote about the people and the events of their times. Why, then, are so many of our writers still seeking inspiration and subject matter from those early days? Admittedly, there are special anniversaries as well as contemporary people and events that bring those early days to mind, and well deserve to be used again as inspiration and reminders; but there is no need to keep inventing the buggy wheel. There are massive twenty-first century vehicles on our roads and properties, and in our mines. They speak loudly and significantly of our own times; but they and so many other symbols of our contemporary lives continue to be ignored in twenty-first century Australian literature.

One of my proudest achievements as a writer was the selection of my poem, "The Station Owner's Wife" for the Henry Lawson Society of NSW Emerging Written Poet Award in 2017. An Emerging poet? I felt too old to be an emerging anything! I am proud of my bronze 'Loaded Dog' Statuette; but, most of all, I treasure the statement made at the Award presentation: "This poet has taken Bush Poetry into the twenty first century." Those words made me aware that I had, possibly unintentionally, been gradually leading up to that in my Poetry and Short Stories. I have written about relatives who fought in World War 1 – "Soldier Number Five": my Uncle Ben, a World War 2 Digger, was featured in "The Sniper" and "Consequence of War". I had three nephews who served with the Australian Defence Force in Iraq, and Afghanistan. My experiences with them led me to write "Elegy", in honour of the one who is no longer with us. Three poems, still in their early planning stages, will deal with the 'here and now' of my life.

Yes, I have truly emerged in the world of Australian poetry, twenty-first century. My aim, now, is to encourage more of the highly talented Bush Poets we have in this country to focus more strongly on the here and now, and on the possibilities for the future. I urge them to make the major focus of their Bush Poetry writing a reflection of what it was in the days of Lawson and Paterson – with the principal focus on Narrative content and Characterisation as it appears in our contemporary Australia. No, I have not forgotten to mention rhyme and metre. I am very aware of their undeniable significance as I hope to explain in the next section.

Change for the sake of change? An impending disaster?

Traditional Bush-Ballad-style rhyme and metre, by virtue of their almost subliminal constancy, can provide an extremely simple, secure and substantial framework around which a narrative and the associated characterisation can be created. This basic poem construction is almost second nature for skilled and experienced Bush Poets. Add some excellent use of appropriate language and some vivid, poetic imagery and you will have found a reliable formula for the successful writing of Bush Poetry in traditional form.

We all know how the well-established qualities of Narrative, Characterisation, Rhyme and Metre have worked together as vital components of Bush Poetry since the late nineteenth century. At that time, interest in an emerging Australian literature was kindled by the publication, in "The Bulletin", of the Short Stories and Poetry of a new wave of writers. These included, at the forefront, Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson whose differing views gave rise to a series of literary debates featuring 'the city' or 'the bush'. Consequently, the new century saw the principal writers of those times, continuing to move towards a literature that could be recognised as intrinsically Australian.

# FOLLOW THE PATH TO MORE EFFECTIVE WRITING

Continued.....

When referring to Bush Poetry, I always place the key qualities, namely Narrative, Characterisation, Rhyme and Metre, in that order because I believe that, traditionally, from an 'audience' point of view, that sequence reflects the order of appeal and importance. As a consequence of my own reading, study and writing, I find the most significant and memorable aspects of Bush Poetry to be the story and the characters. I am certain that most contemporary Bush Poets would agree with this. I have yet to find a published poem being praised solely for the constant use of iambic pentameter or the use of alternate rhyme. An audience will look for a captivating storyline and memorable characters that are woven together on a tide of rhyming words and regular rhythm that allows the overall poem to flow smoothly and naturally from beginning to end.

I was quite overwhelmed when a well-known Queensland Bush Poet described her reaction to one of my more recent poems. This extremely gifted poet and story-teller said that she had become so deeply involved in my story and characters, and so swept along by the 'current' of the action, that she had forgotten she was reading poetry and had not given a thought to the concepts of rhyme and metre. I saw that as a true measure of the success of that poem. Incidentally, during the period at the end of last year when I was deeply immersed in the reading of Bush Poetry, I was elated to find myself thinking the same thing about a few of the poems I had read. Those poems had a highly accurate and constant metre. They had an accurate, but simple, rhyme scheme; but the rhyme and metre were unobtrusive, even subliminal, yet they contributed to the overall enhancement of narrative and characterisation, and to the fluid movement of the poem as a whole.

This brings me to an expression of concern for the fact that I have sensed, within the Bush Poetry community, a not so subtle move afoot to bring about change, perhaps for the sake of change or, perhaps, because some highly talented writers are pushing towards a more 'highly literary' form of Bush Poetry which focuses very strongly on highly structured rhyme schemes that reflect the studied and stylised sonnets of Shakespeare, Spencer and other recognised poets of centuries past. Metre is being contrived, forced or manipulated to conform to the requirements of internal as well as external rhyme – at the expense of the smooth, natural flow of lines for which a majority of Bush Poets are constantly aiming.

Long stanzas are being written – 16 lines or more per stanza as opposed to the more traditional stanzas of 4,6, or 8 lines. In some cases, unusual forms of line indentation are used; in others, stanzas are centred on the page. The cleverness of the poets is not doubted: their poetic ability is definitely not in question; but some of these poems are a far-cry from the traditional Bush Poetry format that the ABPA and other interested groups have been trying desperately to preserve. There is a definite place in our literature for such structurally skilled but mechanical verse; but I firmly believe this should not be deemed acceptable in the competition category of Australian Bush Verse. This situation needs some serious thought because the qualities of originality and spontaneity, key issues with respect to the simple enjoyment of Bush Poetry, are at risk of being lost.

Good luck to you all in the enticing competitions still ahead in 2024.

\* \* \* \*

A hint for the poets who present their poems on stage:

This relates to the correct pronunciation of the ubiquitous word, "the". There are two ways to pronounce "the"; and there are two rules to apply. I illustrate my explanation with the following well-known line from children's literature:

The owl and the pussy-cat went to sea in a beautiful pea-green boat...

If the word, "the", comes before a vowel – as in "owl" – it should be pronounced as 'thuh'.

If the word, "the", comes before a consonant – as in "pussy-cat" – it should be pronounced as 'thee'.

There is a very simple explanation for the distinction – the varied pronunciations allow for a much smoother flow of words... and that is what we need in Bush Poetry.



# 'Forever Young'

Harry Donnelly 29-2-24

If you're in your middle age  
and content with how life's been.  
Let's say you've hit the sixty mark,  
with everything in-between.

How would you feel about living  
for that same amount again?  
To around a hundred and twenty...  
now I'm messing with your brain.

Projections of years to live  
for a child born of today.  
Is a hundred and fifty years,  
fifteen long decades away.

Inception of 'fountain of youth' designs  
reversing effects of age.  
Will structure the way we grow  
on that not too distant stage.

What's being produced in labs  
across this 'intelligent' globe of ours.  
Will keep our human race alive  
long after visiting hours.

One can't even imagine...  
what we'll look like as we go.  
With our full-blown body makeovers  
renovating head to toe.

Of course...if all of this eventuates,  
and the possibility's there.  
There'll be so many radical changes...  
happening everywhere.

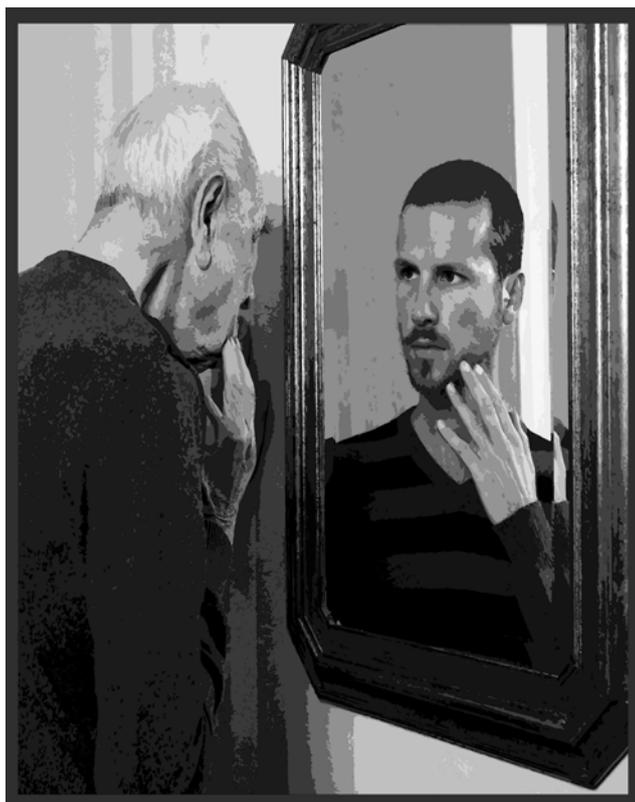
Imagine — oldies turning youngies,  
leaving youngies all confused.  
As to who was who with respect to age...  
some may not be too amused.

Maybe — if we could look the way  
we did back at our best.  
At that certain point in life  
when we seemed to pass the test.

Though, I kind of feel I've earned these wrinkles  
scattered across my brow.  
And I wonder if it would really suit  
if they disappeared somehow.

It would certainly leave a bloke like me  
in a quandary...that's for sure.  
Because I have this sort of 'lived in' look  
that looked just as crook before.

I'd have nowhere else to go in life  
but to age eternally.  
So I reckon I'll have to just go with the flow...  
and do it — gracefully!!!



# House Rules

© Ted Logan

My early days as a rural teacher,  
Round Victoria in fifty-five,  
Still wet behind the ears; packed off,  
Only resilience will survive.  
No Front Up! No Back Up! You're on your own  
With thirty eager learners; no telephone!

One problem among many was where to live?  
No flats no vacancies, no rooms,  
No kind soul to offer board –  
No dungeons or catacombs!  
Acting on a tip-off, I tried an address,  
Where accommodation might have some success.

Introducing myself, I talked long and hard  
To the kind lady – Mrs Rivett,  
I was lucky I guess as she finally said, "Yes!"  
Stern in manner, a real martinet.  
She told me, "Before you're teaching schools,  
You'll have to agree to a few of my rules."

"No visitors; lights out before ten;  
Breakfast and cut lunch each day,"  
There was a few more, I also agreed to;  
It seemed a small price to pay.  
"And one more rule," she said, quite shirty,  
"Dinner will be, prompt at six thirty!"

"I'm quite strict about that," is what she said,  
"Clearing up. Putting stuff back on shelf,  
Seven o'clock is my dead line," she said,  
"I need some free time for myself,  
I'll show you your room, it's down the hall."  
The room that she showed me was dingy and small.

The rules didn't seem so onerous  
Mrs Rivett seemed strict but fair.  
I'd agreed to her terms and conditions  
Weekly tariff, the "whens" and the "where."  
My thoughts, that beggars can't be choosers,  
Teachers needing board, can't be losers!

For a few weeks all went well.  
Then car troubles made me late for dinner.  
Mrs Rivett heard my excuses  
My Mea Culpa as a sinner.  
"Let this be a warning," she said to me  
"No more chances will there be."

Of course, it was all to happen again.  
Mealtime evidence all cleared away.  
I seethed and I stormed and went hungry  
No meal till the following day.  
From that punctuality loss in time?  
Being late such an awful crime?



A few days later Mrs Rivett transgressed –  
Being late from a meeting in town.  
Dinner was over one hour late  
When her family and I sat down  
Made aware of just what late meant –  
Apologising in a statement.

I felt the need for a final say  
How problems jell and eventuate  
To bring to an end this interlude.  
Hardships arising from being late:-  
The caring folk who make the rules  
Have no carte blanche to break the rules.

I said that, or something like that.  
It came into mind – a proverb perforce –  
That I'd read or heard somewhere,  
Or an original thought, of course.  
The caring folk who make the rules  
Have no carte blanche to break the rules!

There was silence; nothing more was said,  
But later, during that week,  
The landlady cancelled my rental,  
Different lodgings I'd have to seek.  
But I couldn't resist as I went out the door,  
Proclaiming my proverb re "Rules" once more.  
"He or she who makes the rules,  
Has no carte blanche to break the rules."

## Brumbies

© Robert Davies

In the heart of the Mountains, amidst ancient land,  
Roaming free, wild spirits, a legend truly grand.  
Brumbies, noble creatures, untamed and weathered,  
In the vast alpine wilderness, where dreams are untethered,

Legends and folklore, woven through the ages,  
Echoes of the bush, on history's turning pages.  
The man from Snowy River, a tale so revered,  
Would shake with rage, if the brumbies disappeared.

Running wild, like rivers coursing across the earth,  
Pride of Australia, symbols of untamed worth.  
Sturdy stallions with flowing manes, leading mobs,  
To free-roaming herds they are gods.

Mobs multiplying, a testament to their might,  
Bush wanderers, roam carefree in day's light.  
Untrained, unrestrained by the yoke of man,  
Steeds that defy the stockwhip's harsh command.

But now, a shadow falls, a threat to their domain,  
Government rumblings of a cull, a brutal refrain.  
Legal words like daggers, slicing through the air,  
Slaughtering their numbers, a callous affair.

Fate looms large over the brumbies' noble heads,  
Mountain legends, mobs to be torn to shreds.  
Colonial folklore, fading into the nevermore,  
As the culling hands will erase what came before.

Australia, a vast canvas of open space,  
Yet the brumbies face an unkind embrace.  
Save them from the slaughter, let them roam free,  
Relocate these icons to a better place, let them be.

Wild and free, let them gallop, let them soar,  
Preserve the spirit of the brumbies forevermore.



## Birdman of The Coorong

© Robert Davies

In the land Down Under, eucalyptus trees sway,  
A tale unfolds in a wild South Australian bay.  
A bearded Irishman, with eyes untamed and wild,  
Arrived in The Coorong, a man by fate beguiled.

The year was 1890, a time of fortune and strife,  
This stranger sought his living, a peculiar way of life.  
John Peggotty, the name he carried to the Outback,  
But soon enough, his story took a curious track.

No ordinary man, his steed not of the usual kind,  
For an escaped ostrich, he chose to closely bind.  
A creature most exotic, with feathers wild and free,  
His mount, a feathered spectacle for all the folks to see.

Bushranger by fateful choice, a path of crime he trod,  
A shirtless marauder, a highwayman of the sod.  
Stolen gold jewellery gleamed on his rugged chest,  
He embraced a moniker, a name that suited best.

"The Birdman of Coorong," his legend swiftly spread,  
A pistol in his hand, danger wherever he tread.  
Through Salt Creek, Policeman's and Jack Points he roamed,  
A notorious figure, in the Outback most well known.

Along Coorong Beach the longest in the land,  
His ostrich sped, head held high, churning up the sand,  
Disappearing into the scrub without barely a trace,  
Pursuers all exhausted would give up the futile chase.

The Birdman soared on his ostrich, swift wild and untamed,  
A phantom on feathers, in shadows he remained,  
A dozen or more hold-ups, between many a chase,  
He tainted the southern landscape, his deeds at menacing pace.

A fisherman's shot however, a moment of certain fate,  
The Birdman badly wounded, sealed his mysterious slate.  
Into the scrub he fled, like a ghost he did fade,  
Leaving behind a legacy, a tale of escapade.

Faster than any emu, they swore that he took flight,  
Details but elusive, hiding his Outback plight.  
The legend still persists, though sceptics they do scoff,  
A mythical Birdman? His existence they cast off.

In the Coorong's whispers, echoes of the past,  
A wild-eyed Irishman, a tale that will forever last.  
Was he real or just a fanciful Outback extreme?  
The Birdman of Coorong, maybe a myth or a dream.

# A Country Invitation

© Garry Lowe

I'd like to give you some advice  
And you really should believe it  
I'll only tell ya, once, not twice  
You can take it or else leave it

At the risk of sounding vulgar  
Give that city life the push  
Get yourself out to the Mulga  
And taste the freedom and the bush

In the city you've got High Rises  
Fumes from buses, trucks and cars  
Out here we've got these clear blue skies  
At night, a billion stars

And I tell ya, I'm not joking'  
Cause I ain't been on the grog  
When we're breathing we're not choking  
On some bustling city smog

Sure we get flies and heat and dust  
And we get floods and droughts  
But our utes and cars don't die from rust  
We just wear the damn things out

And we do our share of work, alright  
like fencing, shearing sheep  
And when we go to bed at night  
Our conscience gets a sleep

You've got footpaths, miles of concrete  
And that's not a pretty sight  
Where danger lurks in every street  
So you don't go out at night

Pack up and get yourself out here  
Meet people just like me  
You'll say G'day, ya like a beer?  
Or cup of Billy Tea?

Now that bloke thinks I'm a liar  
Because I love to yarn and joke  
With my mates around the campfire  
You won't get that down the Smoke

Just to hear the willows sighing  
While you're setting fishing lines  
It sure as hell beats crying about  
Your city parking fines

Of course, you might die of starvation  
But at least you'll shed some weight  
The leaders of our Nation  
Are trying hard to seal our fate

Although they think they're very wise  
One day we'll stop their rot  
We'll grab our rocks and shanghais  
And massacre the lot

Yes we got freedom, we got space  
Way out here in the scrub  
We don't have your city rat race  
But we have our little pub

Why don't you give this life a go  
And get out here and see  
What was opened up by Cobb & Co.  
And meet people just like me.



*Garry 'Lowey' Lowe was one of a kind. I met him at Tamworth back in the 90's when we both started performing at the Longyard Hotel during the Tamworth CMF.*

*Lowey's hero at the time, was the late Bobby Miller, who's poetry he continued performing on stage until his last show.*

*He was a wonderful writer of both comedy and the serious observational Poetry. Grandpa's Ride and Skinremover Hill were indeed amongst my favourites to listen to.*

*He would open our shows on Australia Day, playing the National Anthem on a Gum Leaf to the roar of the crowd. He loved the stage and to be able to tell his stories to those who came to listen, be it Festival, Pub or Campfire. In between telling how good the Roosters were, he'd always have time to say G'day and ask how you were travelling.*

*I have chosen to print Lowey's 'A Country Invitation' as a tribute to him, as it sums up everything the man was about. From playing Rugby League into his fifties, Surf Skiing into his 80's and battling depression into his twilight years as well as a host of other illnesses, Garry was the true Aussie, as Bobby Miller would say.*

*A great Poet to work alongside, a wonderful wordsmith and now a great loss to the Australian Bush Poetry Family.*

*R.I.P. Lowey.*

*Neil McArthur*

# EASTER WEEKEND

© Irne Dalgety Timpone

Winner, 2023 NSW State Championships – Humorous Section, Guyra, NSW.



One Easter break, some years ago, my brothers, Slim and Snow, did not arrive in time for Friday brunch.

Now, this was most unusual, as Easter visits go: they'd come on Thursday, stay till Tuesday lunch.

Poor Mum was quite upset by this – went into panic mode – and sent me out to see what I could find, envisioned both her precious boys capsized along the road, and almost lost her ever-loving mind.

A phone call to the Cop Shop soon put every fear at rest. We heard the pair had ended up in jail, and there they'd stay till Tuesday when, in court, they could attest, and be released if they were granted bail.

Meanwhile, the local lock-up would keep both the lads confined, or so the worthy Sergeant seemed to think. He'd charged them both with drunkenness. They hadn't seemed to mind, perhaps because they'd had too much to drink.

Then Sarge explained conditions to prevail the next few days – no outside food, no visitors could call. Mum's boys, alone, might contemplate their sad and sorry ways, while tucked up tight for five long days, in all.

Sarge felt that he was justified in locking up that pair: they'd slipped between the cracks ten times, before. He couldn't see the high-fives and the wicked winks they'd share. He chuckled as he slammed the prison door.

The lock-up there, at Gilberton, was built the outback style – the cell on posts a metre from the ground. The lads surveyed surroundings with a calculated guile, saw bars to keep all inmates safe and sound.

The time has come to tell you that, while locked up, once before, the boys had hatched a very clever plan. By rendering 'removeable' a section of the floor, they'd made an exit for a skinny man.

On Thursday night, the Sergeant brought a healthy meal for two, with milk to quench their ever-present thirst; but, strangely, they refused to eat. Now, that was something new: "We're hunger-striking, Sarge – bet that's a first!"

The poor man took the meals away: he felt a sense of dread, guessed they'd devised a very cunning plot. A stupid five-day hunger-strike would hardly leave them dead; but he would cop all blame, as sure as not.

The lights went out at ten to nine. Snow chose the bottom bunk, and said he'd take a very welcome nap. In darkness, Slim then raised loose boards, and heard a muffled thump, while making room to slide down through the gap.

Slim used the bright, full Easter Moon while dodging, tree to tree, and ended up outside the Pub's back door. His mate, the cook, expecting him – yes, that was plain to see – provided him with food and drink, galore.

The precious load was carried back with watchfulness and care. Slim passed the bundles, through the hole, to Snow. They spent the night imbibing well, and eating their fair share, then bundling all the rubbish, set to go.

By daylight, Slim had hidden all the evidence away: he'd stashed the refuse deep in nearby bins, except for all the bottles which, to make the poor man's day, he'd tossed in Sarge's garden, for his sins.

And so began the ritual that ended Monday night. The prisoners grew weaker, day by day, or so it seemed to Sarge, poor chap, beside himself with fright, expecting Slim, perhaps, might pass away.

The end of their incarceration clearly seemed in sight. The Judge, as was his habit, gave them bail. The Sergeant said: "You two, clear off!" as was their legal right, then hurried back to disinfect the jail.

That night, Sarge visited the pub. He thought he'd celebrate the victory he felt he'd squarely won. He knew that there were questions he must still investigate; but he'd soon find the answers, and be done.

He downed a few, with friends of his, and spoke with hearty voice: "I volunteer to pay this evening's bill!" He knew it was his turn to shout – he really had no choice – so sauntered down towards the hotel till.

The Publican held back a grin: "You're heading home then, Sarge? I need to give you this before you go – the Hotel's detailed invoice. There's a quite extensive charge for five days food and drink for Slim and Snow.

I didn't charge delivery. That didn't seem quite fair. You'd run up such a generous amount. I guessed you had a sentimental soft spot for that pair, and took your Easter cheer into account!"

Well, Sarge propped like a startled steer, and shook his woolly head: he couldn't take in what he had just heard. "I'll kill that pair!" he muttered, "They are both as good as dead!" He hurried off without another word. . .

He must have found them hard to catch – or so it seems to me. They certainly did live to tell the tale, and though the Sergeant tried, for weeks, to work out what transpired, he never found the weakness in his jail.

# Autumnal Time

© Robert Davis

Autumn's clime beckons, a refreshing time,  
Summer gradually gathers in; conditions are sublime.  
Warm winds now turning cooler and brisk,  
Morning dew, underfoot, is chilled and crisp.

Butterflies flutter by, before bidding goodbye,  
Amid swirling leaves, with a twirling sigh.  
Through misty mornings, the sun's gentle kiss,  
Awakening the world to autumnal bliss.

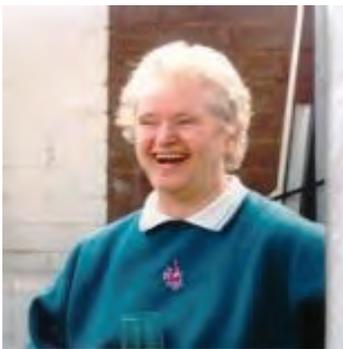
Birds chirp in the fresh cool air,  
Adding, to nature's symphony beyond compare,  
A rich tapestry of carpeting leaves,  
Crackle and crunch underfoot, as they interweave.

Amidst the swirls of autumn's leaves,  
And the fresh cool breeze,  
We find a world of joyous wonder,  
Captured in nature's glorious splendour.

A riotous blaze of colour to behold,  
Russet, reds, yellows, orange, amber, and gold.  
An intense palette of rich autumn colour,  
Migrates gently from tree-tops to groundcover.

A collage spiced with verdant leaves of green,  
Evergreen foliage amid the autumnal scene.  
Poplars, maples, oaks, cedars, and liquid ambers abound,  
Will slowly lay bare as their leaves drift to ground.

Amid the changes, there is a certain grace,  
A beauty in transition, a familiar embrace.  
For Autumn's time is not just an end,  
But a reminder that life continues to contend.



The aim of the Betty Olle Poetry Award is to provide an opportunity for poets to share their work, to encourage the writing of new work, to acknowledge the skills of our junior poets, and to keep the spirit of Bush Poetry alive.

## THE 'BETTY OLLE' POETRY AWARD

- For traditional Australian rhyming poetry with an Australian theme.
- Open and Junior (12 years and under) sections.
- Open section - First Prize \$500 plus trophy.  
Runner-up \$200 plus certificate.
- Junior section - First Prize \$100 plus trophy.  
Runner-up \$50 plus certificate.
- Entry fee - Open \$15 per entry form (2 poems)
- Entry fee - Junior section - free.
- Closing date - 31st August 2024.
- Entry forms and conditions of entry available from the ABPA website - events and results page.
- Conducted by the Kyabram Bush Verse Group in memory of foundation member Betty Olle.

# *Hervey Bay Bush Poetry Group off and running!*

A group of poets and poetry lovers met recently to enjoy some fabulous comradery and bush poetry. Shared experiences and a love of bush poetry were the theme for the meeting. Election day was probably not a good day to schedule it but the attendees had a good time. The three "apologies" vowed to attend next time which will be the 27th of April at South Springs Road Nickenbah, signs will show the way.

The meetings are not just for performers, if you like bush poetry you are welcome. This is not a snobby group, it's mostly about having fun as we share yarns and poetry. If you would like to improve your writing there will be time to explore this as well.

We will explore some Anzac Day themed poetry as well as inviting everyone to have a go at sharing what they have written or the work of other poets. Nothing is "off the table" so take the plunge, be brave and come along from 9 am on Saturday the 27th of April. More details on

0421514555 or email [ozbushpoet@gmail.com](mailto:ozbushpoet@gmail.com) Mick Martin

This poem is a tongue in cheek love poem, arguably the worst poem ever

## The Eulo love poem

They met one night near Eulo Creek  
T'was kismet you might say  
They met that night by pale moonlight  
They could not meet by day

She waited there to find her match  
A maiden in full bloom  
He shone his light in search as well  
To split romantic gloom

Some say they were forever bound  
No need for chance or luck ..  
For she was a Brahman heifer  
And he was a Kenworth truck

Mick Martin (with apologies)



*from left to right; Neal Woolard, Jan Woolard, Mick Martin, Rob Hare*

# 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 encompassing 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 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

# The 53rd BRONZE SWAGMAN AWARD 2024

Worldwide Competition for Written  
BUSH VERSE, since 1972



**Winner: Bronze Statuette of the Swagman**  
Designed and Sculptured by Daphne Mayo  
**Plus \$1500 prizemoney**

**Runner Up: Trophy, plus \$700 prizemoney**

**Third prize:**

**Jean O'Connell Memorial Award: Trophy, plus \$350 prizemoney**

**Highly Commended: Certificate, plus \$100 prizemoney**

**Tim Borthwick Memorial Award: Trophy, plus \$100 prizemoney**

A proud initiative of  
Winton Business & Tourism Assoc. Inc.  
in association with other Sponsors

## ENTRY FORM

### THE 53rd BRONZE SWAGMAN AWARD FOR BUSH VERSE 2024

Entry fee: \$25 (AUD) per entry form.  
Limit three entries per entry form.

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

Email: .....

Phone: ( ) .....

Title of Entries:

1.....

2.....

3.....

I declare that the attached poem(s) are my own work, and not assisted by AI.  
*I agree to notify the Bronze Swagman Committee immediately if my poem(s)  
become invalid, due to any of the Competition Rules,  
prior to the announcement of the results.*

I therefore agree to the Conditions and Rules and accept the Judges' decision as final.

Yes, I am eligible to be considered for the Tim Borthwick Award, and confirm that I am a NEW contributor to the Bronze Swagman Award.

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

Direct Deposit of \$25 (AUD) made on ...../...../.....  
paid to Winton Business & Tourism Assoc. BSB: 034-228 Account: 10-6325  
or  Cheque for \$25 (AUD) attached.

Please email poem(s), completed entry form and deposit confirmation to  
[bronzeswagmancompetiton@gmail.com](mailto:bronzeswagmancompetiton@gmail.com)

Or: post all completed documents and monies to:  
Bronze Swagman Award, PO Box 44, Winton, Qld. Australia. 4735.

# Cloncurry Prize Poetry Competition

## \$10,000 First Prize!!

The Cloncurry Prize is one of Australia's richest poetry competitions with a cash prize of \$10,000. The competition aims to showcase the essence of outback Australia. The Cloncurry Prize has a \$30 entry fee and is open to Australian Citizens, living in Australia with all entries to be assessed by a select panel of judges.

The theme of the 2024 Cloncurry Prize Poetry Competition is 'Standing on the Shoulders of Giants', through the lens of Outback Australia.

The inaugural Cloncurry Prize launched in 2020 to commemorate the 155th Birthday of Dame Mary Gilmore DBE, who returned to Cloncurry and was laid to rest with her husband in December 1962. The national competition pays tribute to Dame Mary, an Australian writer and journalist known for her prolific contributions to Australian literature and the broader national discourse. She is featured on the Australian \$10 note.

The competition launches on 21 March 2024. The winner will be announced at the Cloncurry Prize Poetry Competition Award Evening held in Cloncurry on 21 June 2024.

<https://www.cloncurry.qld.gov.au/cloncurryprize>

## Regular Monthly Events

### NSW

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

**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 Street Singleton. 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](http://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.

**Kuripia 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..

### 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 Friday of the month 1.30pm-4.00pm, 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

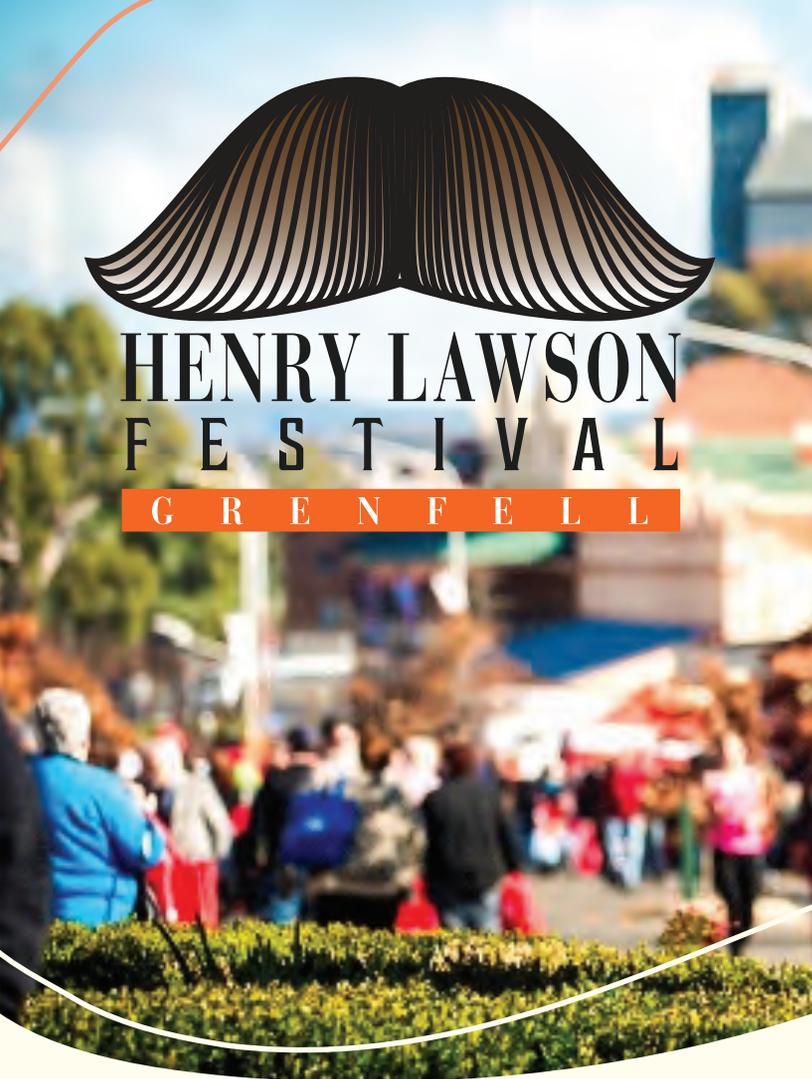
**Geraldton** 2nd Tuesday monthly. Beliar Caravan Park. Contact Roger 0427 625 181

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



# HENRY LAWSON FESTIVAL

G R E N F E L L



June Long Weekend

**6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> 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 **5<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



This event is proudly supported by:



More information and events at  
[henrylawsonfestival.com.au](http://henrylawsonfestival.com.au)