

ABPA

Australian Bush Poets Association
Volume 30 No. 3 June/July 2024



Farewell Tenterfield!

***New ABPA Life
Member
Marion Fitzgerald***



Jack Drake's Latest Historical Book Now Available

Jack is proud to announce his 6th book is now available – an historical book about one of Australia's greatest prospectors whom history has mostly forgotten. "The Stringybark Fox – John Dickie"

The Stringybark Fox: The Story of a Great Prospector

Stories of gold rushes, rich lodes and lost gold fields have fascinated Australians since gold first changed the face of the population and economy back in the mid nineteenth century. From Edward Hargraves who stole the credit for our first major find, to Lassiter's Lost Reef that may or may not exist, the search for yellow metal has enthralled many and consumed the lives of some.

One of the great men of mineral exploration has almost been forgotten by history but thanks to 50 years of dedicated research by one man, he is now rescued from oblivion.

John Dickie 1848 - 1924 was a Scotsman who migrated to Queensland about 1866. He first tried his hand at agriculture taking up sugar country near Mackay. Romance entered his life but disapproval by his wife's influential family caused a move northward. In jungle country north of Cardwell, his wife sickened and died causing his daughter to be taken into foster care. Heartbroken, he took to the bush spending the rest of his life seeking and finding mineral wealth on Cape York, Central Australia, the Kimberleys and Western Australia's eastern goldfields.

This remarkable man found three major goldfields as well as wolfram and antimony deposits and one reefing field he discovered and lost again remains undiscovered in the ranges to this day. He crossed Australia coast to coast from east to west and west to east. His second crossing took him through the dead heart with three Australian Waler horses across deserts that turned back explorers using camels. This could easily be the most exceptional piece of non-indigenous bushmanship Australia has ever seen.

North Queenslander, Jim McJannett spent over 50 years researching Dickie who became known as "The Stringybark Fox". Sadly Jim passed on without writing the full story and his mate Jack Drake was asked to complete the work by his widow.

The book is now in print published by Spur N Eight Publishing and available from Outback Books on line, or from Rhonda's Refits, 100 Taylor Street, Toowoomba, Qld 4350. If ordering on-line go to www.Outbackbooks.info and go to the Mining Section. \$49 + p/p. Ph 07 46378933

It will be officially released at the 9th Annual Outback Writers Festival at Winton in June, 2024. Details are on www.outbackwritersfestival.com.au and copies will be available there.

Jack Drake Ph 0427 037 169
stellaandjack@jackdrake.com.au

.....GOLD.....GOLD.....GOLD.....GOLD.....

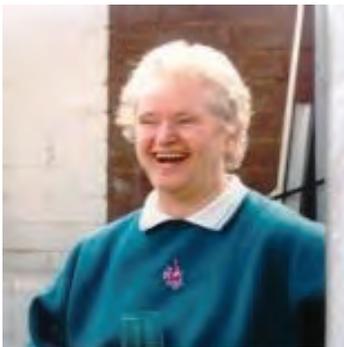
Just Released!

THE STORY OF ONE OF
AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST
PROSPECTORS
JOHN DICKIE
50 YEARS OF RESEARCH
HAS FOUND HIM AGAIN

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The story of Goldfields he found plus one he lost due to Cyclone Mahina.
Written by Jack Drake Researched by Jim McJannett.

Jack Drake



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 - 31th 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.

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 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 ABPA awarded a life membership to Marion Fitzgerald at the Oracles of the Bush Festival in Tenterfield, see report elsewhere. The festival was tinged with sadness as that was the last time it will be held.

The Man From Snowy River Festival was held in Corryong in April and was again a success with the overall winners being Seamus Foley and Lyn Frederick. Particular thanks to The Rhymer From Ryde (Graeme Johnston) for organizing the Bush Poetry Competition, a mighty task and a huge thanks to the many volunteers

Later in the year Western Australia are holding State Championships and the Victorian Bush Poets and Musicians will be holding a Muster in Tolmie with Greg Champion as special guest for the Saturday Night Concert. Stay up to date on the VBPMFA facebook page.

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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Black and White Ads

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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Next Magazine Deadline is July 27th 2024

Farewell Tenterfield Oracles Of The Bush!



A bittersweet Tenterfield Oracles Of The Bush 2024. Sell out crowds and their biggest ever lineup, was soured by the fact that after twenty seven years, they were pulling up stumps.

A remarkable run by a purely boutique Bush Poetry Festival, and leaving behind a wonderful lineup of past winners of the Looming Legends Performance Competition as well as a Who's Who of local inductees into the Oracles Legends Hall Of Fame.

Sadly weather came to thwart to weekend and the traditional opening, the Bush Poets Breakfast, was moved from Bruxner Park to the Showgrounds Pavilion, as was the Friday Night Campfire Yarns and the Sunday Breakfast in the Park. All other events went ahead as scheduled.

The Bush Poetry fraternity and the town of Tenterfield should be extremely proud of what they have achieved for Bush Poetry in those twenty seven years, and the Oracles were the first Bush Poetry Festival to reemerge after the Covid days and put Poets back on the stage after a couple of years absence. And all through the tireless work of the Yellow Shirts, Tenterfield's Volunteer Brigade!

The work put in by this group over the years has been phenomenal and to have events in Paul Petrie's barn one more, took the memories back a long way.

With the Bush Poetry Troupe of Gary Fogarty, Marco Gliori, Ray Essery, Mel & Susie, Bill Kearns, Greg North, Kylie Castle and myself, it was great to see sold out concerts, Lunches and Breakfasts.

It started with the Welcome Diner at the Museum on the Thursday Night, where a wonderful dinner was complemented by performances by Kylie Castle. That was quickly followed by a 'Two Minute' Poetry Challenge, where each of the Invited Poets battled it out to be the biggest suck-up to The Oracles Poem! Melanie Hall took the prize, Marco Gliori won the crowd with his intentional overtime tribute to Mr & Mrs Bling (Robyn and David Kennedy who were ALSO the judges!).

Friday Morning was the Lion's Club Brekkie In The Park, where each Poet ran riot with tales of Australia at it's weirdest and whackiest, intermingled with a bit of serious nonsense!

The Children's Concert and Competition were again a hugely popular event with a packed audience and both Primary and Secondary students plying their craft like professionals. Secondary School winner, Archie George, performed his winning version of Mulga Bills Bicycle by A.B. Paterson, at the Saturday Night Concert to great applause.

Then the first Heats of the Looming Legends.

The Friday Night Campfire Yarns was unfortunately (or fortunately, I suppose) held indoors where the Poets and Kylie put together a two hour entertainment spectacular, as I saw it. Some more spectacular than others!

Saturday Morning we had Poets Breakfasts at the Tenterfield Golf Club, The Tenterfield Motor Inn and at Paul Petrie's Barn, all sell outs.

Saturday lunch time saw shows at Paul's Barn once again, Arajay Downs Paddock to Plate and the Ivy Chapel Long Lunch, all full to the brim, as was the Tenterfield Transport Museum Lunch.

Next up are the second Heats of the Looming Legends, and then into the major event, The Saturday Night Poet's Concert, a night of laughter, tears, reminiscing and catching up.

Sunday Morning Poetry In The Park was again moved indoors due to torrential rain, and for the last time, the Walk-Up Poets battled it out in the One Minute Cup, fighting for this years Trophy, a metal Rain-Gauge (Relevant but strongly empty) (which was handmade and donated by Paul Petrie.

This years winner was 92 year old Melba Austin, from the Ab Fab Group, who just made it into sixty seconds after a time adjustment for equipment failure and judge's safety. Melba ironically wrote her poem on toilet paper.

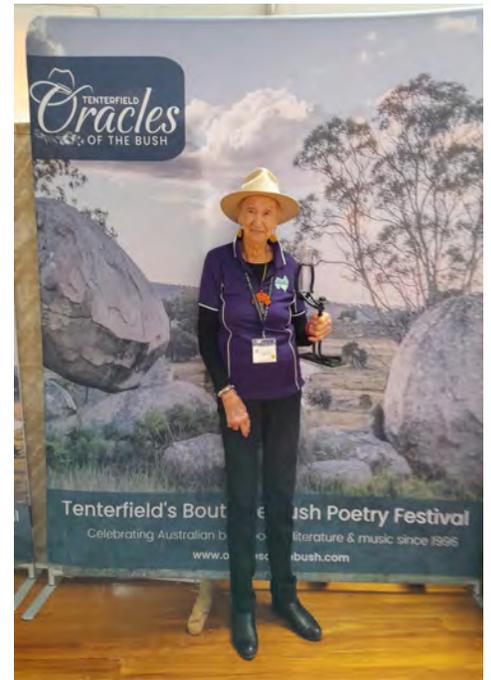
The Looming Legends Competition was one of the most closely fought yet, but it was the Ladies triumphing, with local, Lara Flanagan, taking out both sections. She defeated Claire Reynolds in the Previously Published Section and Debby Berryman in the Original Section.

Debby Berryman also took out the Audience Award for most popular performance of the Oracles with here rendition of Milton Taylor's 'The Saga Of Cecil'.

So sadly, another era comes to a close, but the memories left behind by the Oracles of the bush, has forever put Tenterfield into the heart of Australian Bush Poetry.



The Invited Poets, Bill, Neil, Mel, Marco, Susie, Gary, Kylie, Greg and Ray



1 Min Winner - 92yo Melba Austin



APBA Life Member, Marion Fitzgerald at the Children's Concert



Mattinee at Paul Petrie's Barn

Oracles Of The Bush - Tenterfield

Many, many years ago I made the statement that Tenterfield's Oracles of the Bush was the best 'stand alone' Bush Poetry Event in Australia. This statement has often been repeated since, both by poets fortunate enough to be offered a spot at Oracles and by members of the Oracles committee in promoting their event. Now after 27 years I still believe it to be true.

A dynamic and focused committee forged a spot for themselves in the entertainment environment by engaging only the very best of performance poets, targeted advertising, and an ability to draw an audience of people for whom Oracles was their annual feast of Bush Poetry. The committee has remained successful and relevant despite losing some key people down through the years. They knew what they wanted to achieve and were not afraid to stand their ground on the poets and singers they deemed suitable for their event to be successful.

Myself, and Marco Gliori, were fortunate to be invited to the very first 'Oracles' and felt privileged to be at the 27th and final Oracles. Yes, sadly this very successful event has come to an end due solely to a lack of volunteers to run it any longer. Unfortunately, the problem of diminishing volunteers is becoming a familiar problem in many areas and there are numerous other festivals and events struggling with this issue.

The committee decided that they wanted this Festival to end on a high, rather than have it fade into something less than it had been, and I for one agreed with their logic. Plans were put in place and three extra poets were booked, bringing the entertainers team to 7 poets and a singer. Gary Fogarty, Ray Essery, Neil McArthur, Bill Kearns, Greg North, Marco Gliori, and Mel & Susie and singer Kylie Castle

The advertising alerted everyone that this was to be the 27th and last Oracles Of The Bush and every single ticketed show at the Festival was fully sold out weeks before the event. There were record entries in the Children's Competitions, and strong entries in the adult sections as well. The standard was high with virtually no tail.

The wet weather did not dampen the spirits at all, with the "Yellow Shirts" (Oracles Committee) having made provision for bad weather that allowed them to pivot to alternate venues seamlessly.

It is difficult to imagine a stronger line-up of poets and they certainly did not disappoint. I was proud to share the stage with them all. Audience members were continually expressing their enjoyment and the enthusiastic standing ovation following the Saturday Night show was in tribute to both the entertainers and the 'Yellow Shirts' who joined in to finish the night with a heartfelt rendition of "True Blue".

It was interesting that the greater part of the record audience were at Oracles for the first time, and many also indicated that this was their very first Bush Poetry event. I think this is exciting as it indicates that there are still untapped audiences that can be converted to 'Bush Poetry'. By putting good performers in front of new audiences it is possible to increase the size of our audience Australia wide.

Gary Fogarty



Left - The 'Yellow Shirt Brigade'

Above - Gary Fogarty with two of the Yellow Shirts, Carolyn Newmann and Lara Flanagan

Oracles of the Bush 2024- Competition Results

Written Section Adults

Section 1: Humorous Poem

David Stanley, Windradyn, NSW,
The Man from Lightning Ridge goes to the Gym

Section 2: Theme of Thank you for the Memories

Jim Kent, Port Fairy, VIC,
Thank You For The Memories

Performance Section Adults

People's Choice: Debby Berryman with The Saga Of Cecil

Section 3: Novice: prize of \$100: Gordon Edmonds with Train to Morrow

Section 4: Original work

1st prize Lara Flanagan
2nd prize Debby Berryman

Finalists:

Debby Berryman, James Warren, David Stanley, Ken Reimers,
Peter Frazer, Andrew Pulsford, Lara Flanagan, David Melville.

Section 5: Pre-published work

1st prize Lara Flanagan
2nd prize Claire Reynolds

Finalists:

Marion Dryer, David Stanley, Will Stanfield, Debby Berryman,
Gerry Mannion, Lara Flanagan, Andrew Pulsford, Claire Reynolds.

Written Section: Students

Section 6: Infants

1st prize Amir Ward / My Birthday Party / Drake Public School
2nd prize Jorjah Snitch / Family Holidays / Drake Public School

Section 7: Lower Primary 9 years and under

1st prize Xavier Vlody-Rose / Mighty Tightly / Drake Public School
2nd prize of Dorothy McDonald / The Creek / Sir Henry Parkes
Memorial Public School

Section 8: Upper Primary: 10 years and over

1st prize Ethan Daly / The Big Barra / Sir Henry Parkes
Memorial Public School
2nd prize of Alexis Smith / The Tenterfield Day /
Drake Public School;

Performance Section: Students

Section 10: Infant Children

1st prize Amir Ward: Drake Public School
2nd prize Jorjah Snitch: Drake Public School

Section 11: Primary Children 9 years and under

1st prize Kristy Brierley: The Dunny out the Back: St Josephs
2nd prize: Evie Ebbert: A Sunday Roast: St Josephs

Section 12: Primary Children 10 years and over

1st prize:: Sanuki Wijesekara: Sir Henry Parkes
2nd prize:: Imogen Hay: St Josephs

Section 12a: Small Group Performances: 2 – 4 people

1st prize: Grace Julius & Lotte Cunningham: St Josephs
2nd prize: Elle Tarrant & Evie Ebbert: St Josephs

Section 12b: Large Group Performances: 5 or more people

1st prize: Group Performance Years 3 & 4: St Josephs
2nd prize: Group Performance Year 5: St Josephs

Section 13: Secondary Children

1st prize of Archie George: St Josephs Stanthorpe



David Stanley with Neil McArthur



Lara Flanagan with past Legend, Perry Condrick



Crowd Favorite Award, Debbie Berryman



Secondary School Section winner, Archie George, performing at Saturday Night Concert

THANK YOU FOR THE MEMORIES....

© Jim Kent

Winner Serious Section Tenterfield Oracles of the Bush 2024

Thank you for the memories, dad – your lasting legacy,
to see the path, to walk with strength through life's long odyssey,
the bonds of mateship firmly tied to never come apart,
you gave me hope and courage too, but also gave your heart.

*Carried on your shoulders broad and listening to your talk,
shared the saddle of your horse before I learned to walk,
sitting with you on the porch to watch the rising sun,
hearing nature's message as another day's begun.*

Thank you for the memories, dad – you taught me all you knew,
shared your knowledge of the land, your love of nature true,
to hear the music in the trees when soft the breezes blow,
the symphony of magic from the river's steady flow.

*Camping on the river's bank, our canopy the sky,
listening to the chatter of the water bubbling by.
Fishing lines on springers set, we always fished that way,
watching in the dancing shadows platypus at play.*

Thank you for the memories, dad – remembered well with pride,
the support you gave, the mateship shared, my mentor and my guide
at school and play and sport, you taught me to stand alone,
I shared your dream and you shared mine, decisions though my own.

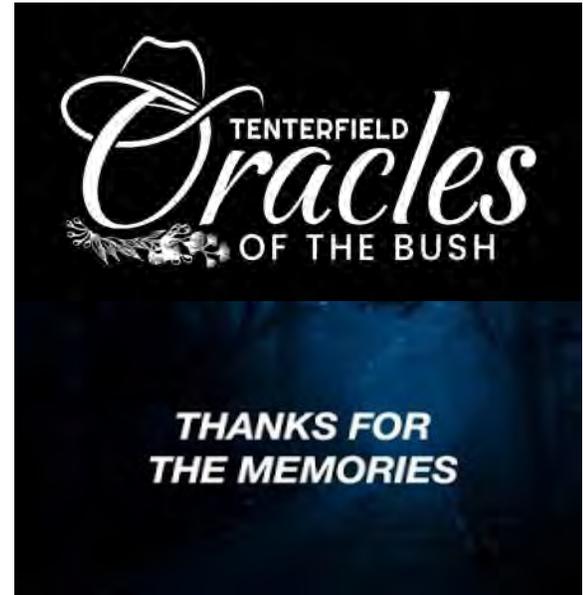
*Playing cricket, teaching me to always watch the ball,
giving up was not the way when off my bike I'd fall.
Showing how to play the game with fortitude and grace,
winning not important, rather how I ran the race.*

Thank you for the memories, dad – our days along the track,
in that land of lots of time and rarely looking back,
the road we shared together, faced the challenges of life,
we always sought the rainbow's end in better times and strife.

*Herding stock and mustering, we shared the weary toil,
growing crops of golden grain in nature's virgin soil,
facing Fate's adversities, her arduous demand
proving that together we were always in command.*

Thank you for the memories, dad – you've earned your lasting rest,
your spirit though remains my guide, my mentor surely bless't,
You knew the way and shared the way, though hurdles set were high,
we always beat the barriers and passed those hurdles by.

*Knowing joys of growing up, your shoulders broad and strong,
making sure the future seen to which I would belong,
sharing mateship never shaken since I was a lad,
lasting visions never fading – thanks for the memories, dad.*



Our Poetry Kids

with Brenda Joy



Unveiling the Hidden Marvels Continued...

This time we have more poems from the pupils of Citipointe Christian College, Carindale, Brisbane, and a lovely poem from Hannah Wilson of Port Macquarie who was referred to us from the 2024 *Molong Poetry Brawl* at the Banjo Paterson Festival. Thank you to the judge, ABPA's Robyn Sykes.

Unveiling the Hidden Marvels by Hannah Wilson

In a world full of wonder where adventures await
Sometimes we're told, "Of course
there isn't much to see," but wait!
For beyond the surface where eyes may not perceive,
Lies a realm of magic and beauty, ready to be believed.

In the vast night sky, where stars twinkle and gleam
We dream of galaxies far, like a cosmic daydream.
Of course there isn't much to see with naked eyes,
But with a telescope in hand, we uncover celestial ties.

Beneath the ocean's surface, where mysteries reside,
Of course there isn't much to see, we're often denied,
But dive deeper my friend where coral reefs
come alive,
A vibrant world of colours
where marine creatures thrive.

In the quiet corners of a library,
shelves filled with books,
Of course there isn't much to see at first looks,
But open those pages and let your imagination soar
To lands unknown where tales of wonder
forever endure.

In the bustling city streets
where buildings reach the sky,
Of course there isn't much to see as people hurry by.
But take a moment, pause and observe
the details around,
Hidden art and stories waiting to be found.

In the quiet countryside where Nature takes its course,
Of course there isn't much to see,
or so we may endorse,
Yet within the fields and forests, a symphony unfolds,
Whispering winds and chirping birds,
tales waiting to be told.

In the depths of our own hearts,
where dreams and passions reside,
Of course, there isn't much to see,
it's a world we often hide,
But delve within, with courage and self-belief
And you'll uncover treasures beyond anyone's belief.



So my friend, let's embrace the unknown
with open hearts and minds
For in the ordinary, extraordinary wonders we find.
Of course there isn't much to see at a casual glance,
But with curiosity and exploration,
life becomes a dance.

© Hannah Wilson 2024 (at age 13)

Thunderstorm by Daphne Tsang

Rumble, rumble goes the thunder.
Splash, splash goes the rain.
Shiver, shiver go the people.
Dribble, dribble down the drain.

Drip drop goes the rain.
Splish, splash down the lane.
I **splashed** into the muddy puddle.
Then I slipped in such a muddle.

© Daphne Tsang, 2023
Commended – 2023 *Betty Olle* Junior Competition,
Years 1-3, Kyabram, Victoria

Vegemite by Isabelle Henry

Let me tell you of a great Aussie snack,
when you try it once, you'll never go back.
It's called Vegemite and you can have it on toast.
Of its unique flavour I will boast.

You can find it on the shelf in every Aussie store,
whenever I eat it I always want more.
Vegemite is very high in Vitamin B,
it's amazing for your body, can't you see?

You can find it in many things these days.
You can find it in many recipes
that I'm sure will amaze.
You can have it on cookies, biscuits and shapes,
a delicious snack it always makes.

If you don't like it I'm sure it's okay,
maybe you can try it another day.

© Isabelle Henry, 2023 (at age 9) HC, 2023 Lambing Flat
FAW Jnr. Years 1-3, Young NSW.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WA



May is **MOONDYNE JOE FESTIVAL** month for WA Bush Poets. This event is an annual event for Toodyay and it is held in recognition of the famous local bush ranger **Moondyne Joe** and our poetry contribution was in the capable hands of our committee member Bev Shorland. She organized a lineup of poets to keep the passing parade entertained in perfect autumn weather at Toodyay a historic town east of Perth.

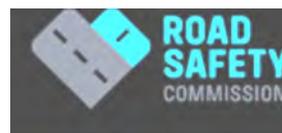
W.A. Bush Poets



With a backdrop of the re enactment of the capture of their local hero, poets Cobber Lethbridge (with his usual musical accompaniment) Greg Joass, Rob Gunn, Daniel Avery, Julian Ilich as well as Bev took turns to perform a variety of poems.

Our annual **SILVER QUILL WRITTEN VERSE COMPETITION** is now under way with entry form and conditions on ABPA website or wabushpoets.asn.au

A new addition to our **ROAD SAFETY COMMISSION poetry challenge** this year is the addition of physical prizes relating to items of road safety. For instance children and youth winners have the chance to win bike helmets or protective gear and adults could gain items of safety for cars ie; reflective speedometers. Details for this competition are also on the above websites.



The WA Bullytin editor (Deb Mcquire) has been busy putting together a book of WA poets work as well as a set of guidelines for teachers interested in encouraging more students to take up the art of Bush Poetry. It is almost ready for publication and she has had the help of teachers and writer's group to make it simple and entertaining and informative for addressing techniques and styles of verse writing.

While our committee is busy keeping our events going in the west, WA President Bill Gordon and wife Meg are travelling in Queensland, visiting Meg's family for a significant birthday as well as catching up with eastern states friends that we have met over the years.

A visit to Jack and Stella Drake was first on our list. Jack is pictured right.



In Towoomba we caught up with Qld Rep Peter Fazer and his group of poets who regularly meet at the local Museum.



Next we had the pleasure of staying with Noel and Anne Stallard where much reminiscing about past poetry experiences kept us talking well into the evening.

Next morning we joined the North Pines gathering of poets and surprised Manfred Vijars and his group with our unexpected appearance.

Next week we will join Noel in his charity event Verse For Vinnies.



(above) Toowoomba Bush Poets

(left) Suzanne Honour North Pines

(right) Noel Stallard

(far right) Barry Ellem



CLEARING SALE

Jack Drake © 25.5.2023

On the upper side of 60, old Mick had to sell the farm.
With a dodgy hip and ticker and arthritis in his arm
he simply couldn't run it now despite his loyal wife.
His boys made more in the city than he had in his life.

I was at the clearing sale when his gear was auctioned off
where the patter of the auctioneer made punters laugh and scoff.
But an underlying sadness spread around Mick's place that day
as the trappings of a lifetime were sold and hauled away.

His McCormick-Deering tractor took its last trip down the road
on a dealer's Hino flat deck with a plough to make a load.
It had some hours up on it. Mick had owned it 40 years
But the dealer had a buyer who collected antique gear.

His Yamaha four wheeler was about to follow suit
as it's brand new owner strapped it to a battered Hilux ute.
Mick wasn't going to miss that. Just a damn machine of course.
He only bought it when his hip had kept him off a horse.

Cultivator, discs and harrows, the seed drill and the jeep,
workshop tools and water pumps. There wasn't much he'd keep.
The chainsaw and the wedges that he'd used for splitting logs,
but it really tore my heart out when they sold his working dogs.

Two Borders and a kelpie tied on chains along the fence.
The auctioneer praised their worth, endurance and stock-sense.
With barest nods and finger waves the bids ran forth and back
'till finally the hammer dropped on Blue and Maid and Mac.

The tears were welling in my eyes. Mick's face was wan and grey
as chains were untied from the fence and dogs were led away.
Mick's countenance was awful as if he'd just seen a ghost
but you cannot keep three farm dogs in a unit on the coast.

Mustering mates who go like that rip out a stockman's life.
Perhaps he'll get a Terrier or a Poodle for his wife.
Perhaps he'll get to like that pup down there by the seaside
but he'll never watch a pet, toy dog go casting free and wide.

Never see it hold mad wethers with a steely staring eye
or keep the lead together as the mob goes filing by.
Never see it load a woolshed running over jumbucks' backs
or watch it stop a frizzy bullock squarely in its tracks.

Now salt air and sea breezes mask the eucalyptus smell.
To him the farm he ran and loved is now an empty shell.
Hot dry days and misty mornings have followed down the track.
The life he'd lived was over and its never coming back.



FOLLOW THE PATH TO MORE EFFECTIVE WRITING

with
Irene Dalgety Timpone



SELF-EDITING – AN ESSENTIAL SKILL

SELF-EDITING was already in the pipeline for my June-July submission when I received, in the letter box, my copy of the April-May Magazine. How fortuitous! As always, I checked my article, hoping not to find any errors and I found an absolute beauty! SHOCK! HORROR! I could not believe my eyes. I was incredulous. I had made an error in the last few lines, an error that involved a rule I had devised in Grade 4 to help fellow class-members learn whether to pronounce “the” as “thee” or “thuh”. I would have uttered that rule thousands of times, especially to my debaters and public speakers – and I wrote them back to front in this instance. What had happened to my self-editing skills? I was so used to writing the rule, I did not bother to check properly. My fault! My shame! My apologies to readers and the Editor. Here is the correct version of the rule. For Performance Poetry, this is one of the most important rules to follow –totally.

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” – the pronunciation is THEE.

If the word, “the”, comes before a consonant – as in “pussy-cat” –the pronunciation is THUH.

There is a simple explanation for the distinction. The varied pronunciations allow for a much smoother flow of words, and that is what we try to achieve in Bush Poetry. Far too many TV presenters and stage performers always pronounce “the” as THUH. The outcome is unpleasant to the ear: it also destroys the natural flow of the words.

Near enough is not good enough. Writers and speakers should strive for complete accuracy, and the only effective way to achieve that is to read your work aloud, not once, but many times, until you have done the very best you can. It is of great benefit to have someone else prepared to read your work or listen to it. I know, from experience, how easily I can read over a glaring error and not notice the problem because I know what should be there. Spelling errors fall into this category. Simple typos and spacing problems are often missed by the writer; but will most probably be picked up by a competition judge. My best advice is to respond to any feeling that ‘something might be wrong here’. Ignore the doubt and the critic will find the problem, for sure.

What does self-editing involve?

Self-editing is the process of checking, yourself, every aspect of your writing. This means that, however much help you receive from others, or from books and technical devices, you take the final responsibility yourself. Self-editing starts with pre-planning any piece of writing. This is where the writer first comes clearly to terms with the requirements and conditions of a work to be done. For purposes of this discussion, I will use, as an example, an original Bush Poem with no set theme or title. The first step is to have a basic story line – introduction, body, conclusion – with easy-to-discriminate characters, a message or theme you hope to put across well, a firm idea of the length and structure of the poem – perhaps twelve 8-line stanzas. These features do not need to be set in cement. There is room for some change; but there are also some necessary constancies such as metre and rhyme that must be firmly established right at the start.

Once I have done the pre-planning – probably scribbled on a sheet of scrap paper, I focus on coming up with a broad outline of the first stanza – 8 lines. I will also do any research that is necessary. I then work on the first two lines. When I am happy with them, I have established my metre, usually iambic, and a couplet or alternate line rhyme scheme, and I am now committed to a certain stanza structure to be maintained throughout the poem. I will make no further moves until I have perfected that all-important first stanza, until I feel certain that I will have captured the interest of the reader. Stanza by stanza, I will follow through until the final punctuation mark.

FOLLOW THE PATH TO MORE EFFECTIVE WRITING

Continued.....

This is the point at which the editing really begins. The established metre needs to be constantly checked, as does the rhyme scheme. Say the lines aloud and with feeling, to keep the metre running smoothly. Seek for the best rhyming words to fit your requirements and check each line until each couplet or quatrain says exactly what needs to be said – and within the guiding parameters of your chosen rhyme scheme and metre. Never lose track of the fact that your narrative and characterisation are the crux of your poem, not some technically challenging rhyme-scheme or unnatural rhythm. At the same time, the writer needs to be constantly aware of the writing technicalities – spelling, demands of grammar and syntax, punctuation and pronunciation, word choices that create imagery, techniques that create mood, emotion, humour and pathos – whatever the subjective side of the poem demands.

When the poem is finally complete in that the story has been told, the writer is reasonably happy with the characters, the message is clear, the purpose has been met, the lines flow quite well, and the rhymes are sufficiently varied, sound-wise, and there are a few reasonable images and a smattering of alliteration, the real editing is about to begin. This requires the writer to go through all the component part of the poem, one at a time, for a thorough checking and changing, where necessary.

This is a very repetitive, but necessary, process. It is not enough, at this point, to read right through the poem a couple of times, looking for stand-out errors, giving a quick fix and being satisfied that THE END can be written. It is absolutely impossible to check everything at once. **One aspect at a time is the key to real success.** A rational order of operation is required. Clarity of story-line is a primary consideration, and so is clear delineation of the characters. To this end, check that every pronoun has a direct noun of reference that has been mentioned previously – there must be no ambiguity as to which character is in play at any time. Check also that adjectives, adverbs, phrases and clauses are placed as close as possible in a sentence to the key word to which they refer. At this point the writer should have read through the complete poem at least five times. At every reading, rhyme and metre should be a secondary consideration. After every change made to wording, the metre of the relevant line must be checked. Consciously look at word choices and make changes that 'sound' better or 'feel' better. Be on the lookout for the use, in close proximity, of words that are similar or the same. Check, also for ineffective repetition and for lines that, in actual fact, make no positive impact. Finally, go through the punctuation with a fine-toothed comb. Punctuation is the writer's most effective tool and this needs to be checked thoroughly to make the most of the potential offered.

When the writer is convinced there is nothing more to be done, the poem should be read aloud a few times for final endorsement and then shared with someone else for approval. There does come a time when a line needs to be drawn, and no further changes made. Good luck with that!

Seek help from a Dictionary:

It is absolutely necessary to refer to a reliable dictionary – The Macquarie Concise is my literary Bible – instead of relying on your computer. We need to become fully self-reliant. Grammarly, for example, is not as accurate as it claims to be – not even in the examples that are publicised as a selling-point. Grammarly tends to overlook the countless exceptions to every grammatical, spelling and pronunciation rule in the English language. I have not yet found an online site I would trust implicitly.

Inbuilt computer editors are certainly not infallible as I discovered when I edited a 536-page autobiography – not mine! That task became a gigantic nightmare. Over 500 uses of the adverb, 'very', were automatically replaced by the adjective, 'pretty', and that was a serious error. That was one of countless similar glitches in that system. A very common on-line editor constantly mixes up "their' and 'there'. Believe me, you cannot rely on the quick-fixes that are so readily available. WORD editor is quite good, but not good enough without self-editing as well – even if a score of 100% is obtained.

Why do I recommend use of a Dictionary?

Consider any single-word dictionary entry of your choice. Since I can refer to the 'Key to Structure of Entries' in the front section of the Dictionary, I can learn, from a very brief entry, the correct spelling, part of speech, concise meaning, pronunciation, number of syllables, discrimination between stressed and unstressed syllables and common usage. The etymology can be seen, as also can cross-references and the identification of colloquial words. Abbreviations and hyphen usage are also included, where relevant. Common variations or alternatives of a word are given. What else could I need? For every word, there is a minefield of information that can be found under the one entry.

In the distant past, when I was in Year 12, the External Senior English exam always contained a short paragraph of English to be transcribed using the phonetic alphabet symbols – for 10 marks. I doubt those symbols are taught any more. To assist with pronunciation, there will be a relevant list of symbols at the front of every dictionary. They are worth referring to when needed, or, even better, they can be learnt.

Quick quiz: How do you pronounce the words, "ophthalmologist", "anaesthetist" and "diphthong"? We should all be familiar with those words. The answers can be found in your Dictionary. Remember that 'ph' is often pronounced as an 'f'.

Happy writing, and Good Luck in the Competitions.



'putting off'

© Harry Donnelly 18-4-24

Well, I've learned a valuable lesson,
the Harry Donnelly way.
Not to put off 'til tomorrow,
what I could very well do today.

A job of maybe minutes,
and a relaxing attitude.
Had consequences reeling
as the storms of darkness brewed.

A time-frame...only minutes,
grew from weeks to months then years.
In a blink of an eye...the outcome,
had an old bloke next to tears.

Call it lazy or forgetful,
the end result, the same.
This dancing with the devil
became a most regretful game.

The loss of something special,
irreplaceable in ways.
Had this thoughtless mind in overdrive,
to revisit better days.

Yes...we live, we learn — move onward,
and pray the lesson never lost.
No repeat of that one outcome,
no matter what the cost.

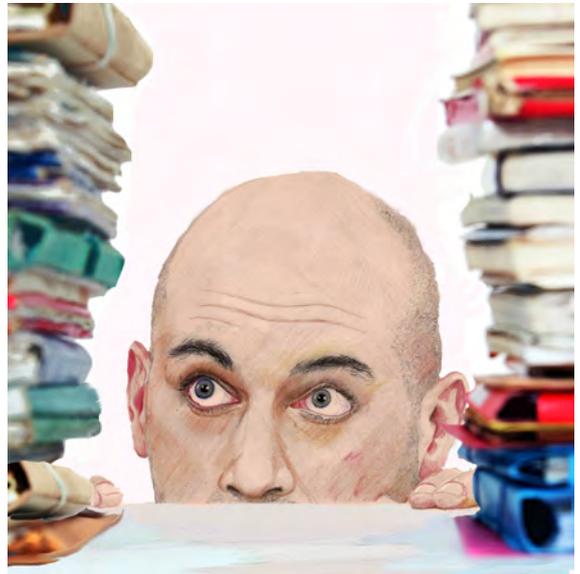
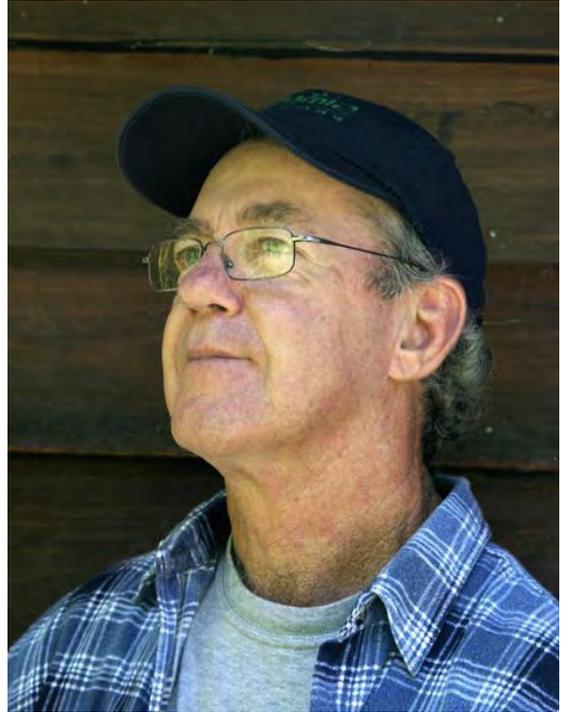
Then, perspective joins the fray,
toward a sober thought indeed.
As delays and put-offs accumulate,
another's health declines with speed.

Immediate action taken,
time the essence — absolute.
Unimportance in the corner,
no end of time is found...to boot.

We can blame our busy lives,
or countless other things.
But importance needs attention,
away from what inaction brings.

Because life will always move,
in our times of standing still.
Putting off and catching up,
can be a never-ending hill.

So think of what's important,
to make your life a better ride.
Taking time to brace your future,
a simple and most essential...guide.



"THE RETIREMENT VILLAGE REVUE."

© Peter White

The time was drawing near for that special time of year when the residents put on their famed revue. All who were involved were determined and resolved to demonstrate the best that they could do.

New acts the Director seeks. They've rehearsed for weeks to show variety's the spice of life. The Director, in despair, when he saw who turned up there. It was Bert Smith's very untalented wife.

Annually she'd appear to make the cut that year. The Director's answer always, "Thanks, but no!" With only three weeks left and of newer acts bereft, he said, "OK, Maudie, have a go."

"What would you like to do for our village revue?" he asked Maud, dreading her reply. "I can sing and dance. My magic tricks entrance. My juggling skills superb, I'll not deny."

"I'm prepared to do four different acts for you to demonstrate my entertainment skill. And I'm willing to bet your choice you'll not regret." In his mind he thought, "I bet I will."

Revue night came around. To the Hall their way they found. The residents settled in for fun. The lights began to dim. On stage was emcee Jim. Their revue had finally begun.

The emcee read his page. "The first to take the stage is Maud smith," he said. "She'll sing a song." Well Maudie sang a note that the songsmith never wrote, every note thereafter also wrong.

The crowd just clapped and cheered. Not one person jeered. The Director was perplexed by this event. Others followed Maud. The people would applaud. That's how the evening's entertainment went.

Maud's turn now to dance. Her high kick split her pants. This act, by other dancers, hard to top. Her dance added dash and a little flash. But embarrassment caused our Maud to stop.

Other acts ensued with skill and imbued, the audience expressed their approbation. Said Jim, the emcee, "Now Maudie we will see display her skills of prestidigitation."

What followed was an act, so bad it was in fact, that not a trick performed turned out all right. Her deck of cards she dropped. At memory skills she flopped and in the hat the rabbit was stuck tight.



But in spite of it, her act was still a hit. The Director thought. "They're just being kind." He didn't realise that Maudie was the prize. She was the act he thought he'd never find.

Other items passed. The final act at last. Time for Maudie smith to juggle fruit. One orange in the air, she dropped a Packham pear. An apple and a lemon followed suit.

The crowd laughed and roared and loudly called for Maud. They voted her comedian of the night. Then our Maudie spoke, "I didn't tell one joke. Your award to me could not be right."

The night finally ended. Our Maudie now offended. "How dare you think my acts were cause for fun. I'll ignore your pleas when you are on your knees, begging me to do another one."

The Director's great belief was quite beyond belief. Then he saw our Maudie shed a tear. Although our Maud was sad, the Director sure was glad For she'd not come around again next year.

BATTLEFIELD BLUNDERS - BALACLAVA AND THE NEK

© Noel Stallard OAM December 2020

There's an eerie resemblance existing, between two Battle Charges that failed, and their ghosts would be scathing of generals, for the blundering orders they gave. In both Charges Light Horsemen were victims, of incompetence, judgements inept, though their leaders refused to acknowledge, their decisions were flawed, incorrect. When they could have made changes, they didn't. Brigade Major's command was, "Push on!" and like Caesar, courageous light horsemen, would be sent, to cross their Rubicon.

In Both Charges there's more correlations, for not only were both cavalry, but they both were made up of six hundred, all were brave and displayed chivalry. No one baulked, no one shirked at their going, though they knew it would be their Amen, and the wounded and dead of the vanquished, would be half of these twelve hundred men. Now The Charge of the Light Brigade's legend, with the poem that Tennyson wrote, And his, "someone has blundered" fits aptly, something each of these soldiers would quote.

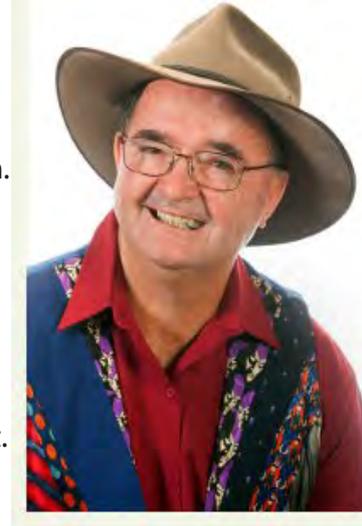
And Gallipoli trailed Balaclava, sixty years for the generals to learn, there's no shame in reversing decisions, that some others might better discern. But it seems sixty years taught them nothing, since The Light Brigade's murderous rout, when six hundred were sent straight at batteries, Russian cannons that blew their lives out. And The Nek, on Gallipoli's hillsides, where six hundred Light Horsemen, it's said. Were sent charging at Turkish machine guns, an impregnable volley of lead.

So then what caused these battlefield blunders, that saw one-sided carnage that day? Incorrectly dispatched information, saw the Light Brigade charge go astray. For instead of the causeway defences, they were sent further on a full mile, and this mile had artillery waiting, on both sides and in front, all hostile. They should not have been sent down this valley, such stupidity baffled the foe, for the Russians thought drunks were on horsebacks, and 'twas certain to Death they would go.

Then Gallipoli followed this pattern, of incompetence from the top brass, but this time our Australian Commanders, were the culprits of this tragic farce. Turkish trenches on Hill 700, stretched across narrow ridge called The Nek, and these trenches would have to be captured, for 'twas here Turks held Aussies in check. From 3rd Light Horse Battalion were chosen, two brave regiments for this attack they'd be sent with just bay'nets, no bullets, with the order, "There's No Coming Back."

Without horses, four waves of light horsemen, and each wave had one fifty in line, were to charge sixty yards to Turk trenches, through barbwire still left untwine. To precede this dawn charge came bombardment, heavy shells from our ships moored off shore. This bombardment's intent was to scatter, Turkish gunners from trenches of war. For the Turks had those Maxim Machine Guns, that each minute spat six hundred shells, and men charging would have no protection, they'd be facing their final farewells.

August 7, at precisely 4.30, was when Charge at The Nek was to go, but at 4.23 shells stopped falling. Why they halted, nobody does know. Seven minutes seem inconsequential, but that time allowed Turks to reform. Their machine guns went back in their trenches, and a massacre they would perform. Some six hundred had charged towards trenches, most of these became wounded or dead, while their generals sat safe in headquarters, checking maps for some battle ahead.



The Music of a Train

© Shelley Hansen

Winner, 2024 ABPA Victorian Bush Poetry Championship and Silver Brumby Award
– Man from Snowy River Festival, Corryong, Victoria.

It begins in Perth. The rolling hills absorb its silhouette,
and the pipeline to Kalgoorlie leads the way.
Can you feel the locomotion
locked in endless rolling motion?
Can you sense the soothing sameness of its sway?

It proceeds through Avon Valley slopes. An eastward course is set,
while the sun's red orb is sinking in the west.
Can you see the country changing,
growing arid, rearranging
its appearance at the scanty rain's behest?

Golden wheatfields wave a welcome in a stately minuet
as the fall of dusk spreads blushes on the blue.
Can you sense the calm air cooling,
as the night is overruling
sunset's last remaining efforts to shine through?

Moonrise swirls across the desert, an ethereal soubrette,
casting filmy veils to clothe the naked ground.
Can you hear the train's rendition
of percussive repetition
that accompanies her dance with haunting sound?

Sparks ignite with metal friction from the spinning wheels' roulette
as the lights of goldfield towns recede and fade.
Can you sense the darkness thicken?
Can you feel the tempo quicken
on the straightest stretch of rail track ever made?

There's a wedge-tailed eagle standing like a chiselled statuette
as the darkness dissipates across the plain.
Can you see the dawn arising –
pastel-painted, mesmerising,
while he overlooks the breadth of his domain?

Sunrise splits the far horizon with a blazing coronet,
and the limestone land absorbs the spreading glow.
Can you see the saltbush clinging
to the bedrock outcrops, springing
from the surface of a place where no trees grow?

You will reach your destination, but you know you won't forget
all the sights and sounds imprinted on your mind.
Night by night they'll keep repeating
as your dreams are filled with fleeting
phantom images you cannot leave behind.

Time and circumstance may tinge the days ahead with some regret,
for you cannot see the future through a glass.
But as sands of life keep flowing
you'll traverse them, always knowing
that the thunder of each turbulence will pass.

When your eyes grow dim and weary, in your heart you'll hear it yet –
as a siren voice that soars in sweet refrain.
When the shroud of night is falling
you'll discern the desert calling,
and the song will be the music of a train.



Boondooma Homestead Bush Poets

Boondooma Homestead, Queensland, held their Spirit of the Bush Festival in late April. Amongst some of the more beautiful landscapes of Queensland, the week was dedicated to both Walk-Up Artists and Professional Artists.

On the Bush Poetry side, the invited Poets were organised by Bush Poetry stalwart Brian Weir, who this year invited Gary Fogarty, Jennifer Bell, Suzanne Honour and Neil McArthur. With Breakfasts held over the Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings, it was great to see so many first timers turn up to watch the Bush Poetry and they weren't disappointed, with three different shows.

The Friday also saw the Bush Poets Competition, which was well attended and produced some wonderful performances, with a great influx of Poets from North Pine, Toowoomba, and Bunderberg, along with those who came down from other areas just to get their fill of Bush Poetry.

John Bidgood was a worthy winner in a couple of the Intermediate sections, while Gerry Minnion and Andrew Ryan were also amongst those to put in great showings.

What a wonderful weekend of Music and storytelling! If you are in the area next year, try not to miss The Spirit Of The Bush Festival.



Peter Fraser & Gerry Mannion



Howard Kennedy



Competitors, Judges, Timekeepers with Organiser Brian Weir and special guest, Sandy Lees



NOVICE			INTERMEDIATE		
Traditional	1st	Howard Kennedy	Traditional	1st	John Bidgood
	2nd	Sam Greer		2nd	Andrew Ryan
	3rd	Janet Munro		3rd	Janet Munro
Modern	1st	Howard Kennedy	Modern	1st	John Bidgood
	2nd	Wendy Mathews		2nd	Gerry Ryan
	3rd	Sam Greer		3rd	Jo Stubing
Original	1st	Wendy Mathews	Original	1st	Gerry Marion
	2nd	Howard Kenndey		2nd	Andrew Ryan
	3rd	Janet Munro		3rd	John Bidgood

Encouragement Awards: May Vincent, Sam Greer, Wendy Mathews

Vale (Shot by Jake) Jake Lindsay

Very sad news filtered through of the passing of one of our great friends and unofficial 'Bush Poets Gang' member in Jake Lindsay. Jake was a very gifted photographer who a lot of us met years back at Tamworth. Jake had set up a Photography Business there and cleverly called it 'Shot By Jake'.

Many a Tamworth the Bush Poets would drop by to catch up with Jake and many a Poet's face was captured by Jake for prosperity in one of his many books (concentrated mainly on unique Hats and the characters wearing them) or otherwise on the wall of his studio.

He captured many a famous face in the Country Music and Bush Poetry circuit, and helped to promote both genres.

Documenting life in the bush has been the passion of Shot by Jake (aka Jake Lindsay) for over 30 years. Armed with his trusty Nikons and one old black jeep, this is one country journo who could never get enough! From shooting country characters, old bush pubs, farmers and graziers, festivals and anything that catches his well-trained eye, Jake was country to the core.

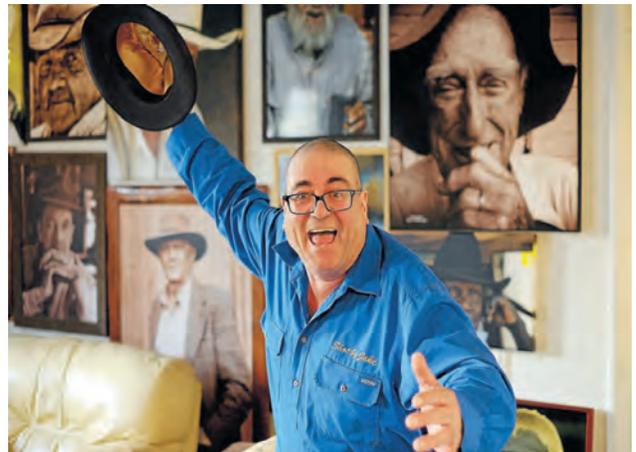
He did what he liked and loved what he did! Let me introduce myself. He has been photographing country people and rural enterprises all his life. After a glorious seven years with The Land Newspaper and The Australian Poll Hereford Society, he travelled abroad, discovering life and developing his photographic style. About five years ago he became the principal photographer for the New England Country Living magazine and in 2013 became the chief writer and photographer for the Central West Lifestyle magazine.

It was dream job that allows him to document people's lives from all over rural NSW. He loved returning home after weeks on the road to go through thousands of images and hopefully unearth a few immortals!

He loved shooting stunning family portraits of folk in their natural settings. He called it a "Day in the Life of" series, and traditionally results in beautiful coffee-table books, canvas prints and digital files.

Photographic heaven, for Jake, however, involves shooting the old bushies with well-worn faces and hats, who have spent a lifetime on the land. For Jake that was gold with their story etched on their face!

As Jake said himself, "Life is beautiful but we are not here forever. Don't wait. Get Shot by Jake!"



Sadly lost a great friend last Saturday. Roderick Lindsay, known by most as Jake, suffered a heart attack at home in Coonabarabran. He'd just turned 62. Jake was an excellent wordsmith and brilliant behind the lens. He could draw out a story from a reluctant subject and make it sing on a page, backed up by incredible photos. But most of all, Jake was a character. Larger than life. Big voice, big laugh, big opinions and not a lot of filter. He called it as he saw it and there was no sugar-coating. I first met him at a Rodney Rude concert in Tamworth (very appropriate) and then on the 1993 Tamworth on Parade tour around Australia. We teamed up to do a book on The Royal Easter Show in 1996 and in the meantime his Shot By Jake Tamworth studio was a great hang for The Naked Poets (and everyone else who came to Tamworth) every CM Festival. More recently I'd pop in and see him and his beautiful mum Maureen at Coonabarabran whenever I headed south. Hot roast dinner and then a few obligatory rums out the back at Jake's bar – and plenty of laughs.

Lots of stories to share when we all get together.

In an ever-changing world Jake never changed.

Farewell old mate.

Murray Hartin

Shot by Jake

© Marco Giori

With a yarn in his pocket, a camera as his guide, and his childlike curiosity stirring deep inside, he saddled up his talent, dipped his lid, and setting sail, created with compassion, priceless moments to inhale.

A look, a gaze, a passing thought, the pride, those hidden fears, now locked in eyes that follow us across the room for years, to hang there as we celebrate, to haunt us when we wake, reflections captured, precious, and gladly Shot by Jake.

The Shooter, what a larrikin, his campfire lit the stars, his studio's warm welcome, like a thousand minibars encouraged flawed emotion, unveiled the next big name, their very souls revealed, preserved forever, in a frame.

Now mingling here beside us, roughing up our cool façades, his Spirit laughs and whispers to the sentimental bards, who browse the glossy pages as our lifestyles takes a break, reminding us of Mateship, and how we were Shot by Jake.

ABPA Life Member Award - Marion Fitzgerald

My heartfelt appreciation to the President, Tim Sheed, and to the Committee for honouring me as a Life Member of the ABPA.

I vividly recall the day, thirty years ago, when discussions to form an Association of Bush Poets was instigated by Merv 'Bluey' Bostock. It was a typically stifling day for the *Tamworth Country Music Festival* and as ecstatic poets gathered after another very successful *Bush Poets Breakfast* at the Longyard Hotel, run by Jim Haynes, enthusiasm was spiraling to form a pact to keep 'connected', and to 'connect' other interested people in this art form. At an inaugural meeting that afternoon on 28th January 1994, after the finals of the popular *Imperial Hotel Bush Poetry Competition*, Bluey Bostock outlined his vision of a unifying representative association for Bush Poets, and the ABPA was born.



ABPA Life Member presentation to Marion Fitzgerald by Committee Member, Ray Essery – Tenterfield, April 2024 .

It was to be a significant meeting which I would be absent from after being whisked away for an interview with ABC Radio, and some other performers found themselves in the same situation. Newspaper, magazine, TV and radio reporters were quickly becoming aware of the popularity of this new wave of raw, rollicking and heart-wrenching form of bush entertainment that the country music crowds were flocking to.

Seven years earlier, performance Bush Poetry had made its entry into the *Tamworth Country Music Festival* with a modest competition organized by the newly formed *Tamworth Poetry Group* and staged on the back of a truck at the Longyard Hotel. Murray 'Muz' Hartin, a young journalist for the local paper, *The Northern Daily Leader*, and formerly of Moree, won the Original Section and John Philipson, from Tamworth, won the Traditional Section.

The *Tamworth Poetry Group* was so passionate about making Bush Poetry succeed in the Country Music arena, that next year they pulled out all stops and engaged up and coming *Star Maker* winner, James Blundell, to compere the three-day Bush Poetry Competition (and yes, his repertoire of Bush Poetry was as impressive as his music). The venue was the car park of mid-city Kentucky Fried Chicken. Crowds packed every day to capacity despite the 50°C generated from the hot asphalt.

I was fortunate to win the Original Section of the Competition that year in 1988, and the same the following year at the new venue, the Imperial Hotel beer garden, where crowd attendance continued growing. It was the beginning of a revival of Bush Poetry which didn't just 'evolve', but rather, took off with a **BANG** in the late 1980's and early 1990's, and I was privileged to partake in the journey.



My 1988 winnings comprised of a certificate and a free meal at Kentucky Fried Chicken. In 1989 my winnings comprised of an envelope containing \$5. But my poetic ‘rewards’ from both those competitions went far beyond my expectations. Firstly, the progressive cotton town of Moree, where I had just started work in agricultural accounting, enthusiastically engaged, promoted and sponsored me any way it could. Secondly, scouts from the *Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame* had seen my success and in January 1990 invited me to join five other bush balladeer and poets on a promotional tour to the USA. The two-weeks of back-to-back shows extended from the *Gene Autrey Museum* in Los Angeles to the *Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering* in Nevada and onto the *Cowboy Hall of Fame* in Oklahoma.

1988 Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition
 L – R: Poets John Philipson, Gertrude Skinner,
 Compere James Blundell. Front: Marion Fitz.

In November of that year, the *Stockman’s Hall of Fame* at Longreach hosted the inaugural *Drover’s Reunion* and our USA group of entertainers were invited to perform, along with the 1990 winner of the *Imperial Hotel Bush Poetry Competition* – Mark Gliori (‘Marco’). It was evident that Bush Poetry was destined for a promising future.



In the following years, the Imperial Competitions continued to produce ‘gems’ (too many to mention) both in writing and performing. Across the country more Competitions and Shows were being staged, and festival organizers were keen to be involved. So, was it any wonder that the formation of an Association was essential to ensure the growth and longevity of our unique Australian art form? Well done ABPA, on your 30 years of “connectivity”!

1990 USA L-R: Bruce Simpson, Reynold Chandler
 (Stockmans Hall of Fame), Marion Fitzgerald, Hal Cannon
 (our US host), Nerys Evans, Ted Egan, Bill Gunn.

During the Covid years I jumped at the opportunity, when asked by the ABPA Committee, to digitally preserve all the newsletters produced since its inception, and with expert presentation from our webmaster, Gregory North, these newsletters can now be viewed on the ABPA website. Take a look, learn more about the ABPA story and be enthralled, as I have, at all the amazing people, the memories and the opportunities Bush Poetry has enriched our lives with and will continue to do so for Banjos to come!

LOGAN PERFORMANCE BUSH POETS

Just to let you know we are still here and growing and we still have our annual competition on 21st of September 2024. This year it's a one day event at the Beenleigh show and we are hoping that visitors will join us at the Beenleigh Tavern afterwards.

Many of the group were sad to see the Oracles finish, it was the major competitions for many of us.

Still we are continuing with our much smaller competition, although surprising we do fill our entries pretty fast and we always seem to get a few from interstate. Get entries in as we only have 10 places available in each event.

This year we decided to spread our wings a little and to keep our politicians happy, we've included a SLAM and/or Rap event in our day.

Slam has an extremely large following amongst the young with some excellent prize money, and of course Rap many of you would be much more familiar with. Rap is closer to Bush Poetry as it has a distinct rhythm and rhyme it originated in Americas deep South. This event is open to all of you if you want to have a go!

The bush poetry purists may be a little upset, but just think of it as an opportunity to get some young people into bush poetry (MAYBE!) or at least doing something creative. Not all young people are out on the street.

Anyway if you are around S.E. Qld we meet on the last Sunday of the month between 9.30 and 12pm. Ring/text 049994292 or email kgeraldine 450@gmail.com to be on our mailing list as our program of events throughout the year is pretty full. Our competition entry form for this year is on the ABPA website or contact me and I'll email you one.

Gerry King (For Logan Poets)

Hervey Bay Bush Poets

The Bay Bush Poets have hit the ground running with lots of fantastic poetry, yarn spinning and words from our own resident Banjo Paterson expert.

He even has an original, hand written open verse poem by Banjo, A B Paterson, of his own!

The morning was even more exciting with Bill and Meg Gordon sharing their own and other writers work.

Jan Facey was fabulous as she always is. Jan stayed on to share writing and performing tips with new, inexperienced Poets as well as sharing her own rivetting, sometimes hilarious poems. After some considerable persuasion Jan shared to fact that she had won "Bronze swagman" poetry competition and many other bush poetry milestones. Even with her health issues Jan was keen to help as well as perform. She said that she was very impressed by the group and the fact that so many write their own poetry.

One of the attendees is a ridgey didge retired stockman who spent most of his life working out West of Burke as a ringer. His stories are fabulous. Another of the group is a horse woman who tutors riders and writes heartfelt poetry about this and other experiences.

The group is very fortunate to have 5 poetry lovers that want to attend so that they can hear the poetry but not perform it. This is beaut because many groups are caught up in performing bush poetry exclusively to bush poets.

There was a certain inexplicable feeling of "I've found my tribe" which was expressed by almost all if those who attended. It seems that the Bay Bush Poets are bound for success and that they are yet another new group in Queensland. Bush poetry is far from dead it is alive and thriving! The group will meet again at the Hervey Bay library on the 22nd of June , 9.15 am, all are welcome. For more information please call Mick Martin 042 15 14 555 or email Ozbushpoet@gmail.com



HENRY LAWSON FESTIVAL PROGRAM OUT NOW!

GET YOUR JUNE LONG WEEKEND IN GRENFELL LOCKED IN...

Dust off your boots, hats and fake moustaches because the official 2024 Henry Lawson Festival of the Arts Program is out NOW! The June long weekend is set to come alive in Grenfell with visitors coming "Up the Country" from far and wide from 6-10th June.

One of the festival's most devoted fans and participants, Australian poet Geoffrey Graham from Dinkum Oz Entertainment, is looking forward to another year of celebrating the Australian icon.



"Everyone is excited the program is officially out and I am delighted to confirm I will again be attending this year," Geoffrey outlined.

Geoffrey has strong links with Henry's birthplace of Grenfell spanning four generations. Geoffrey's great-grandfather grew the first wheat for sale in the area. He first performed in Grenfell in the mid-70s and now impersonates Henry himself to the delight of festival goers.

"Over the weekend there will be a variety of entertainment involving songs as well as Australian poems, and of course emphasising the amazing works of Henry Lawson," Geoffrey said.

"I'm looking forward to attending the **Poetry by Firelight** on the Wednesday evening which is a wonderful opportunity to read an Australian poem to a small audience or just sit back and listen in the delightful Rose Street Little Theatre.

"I will also feature along with poets/singers galore at the popular **Poets Breakfast** on the Saturday of the festival in the Salvation Army Hall. This is great entertainment where I will comper a poets' gathering where songs and verse abound with an opportunity for anyone to jump up and have a go.

"Festival visitors should take the opportunity to have **Afternoon Tea With "Henry"**, aka me! Enjoy a delightful cuppa and cake in the Salvation Army Hall followed by a poetry performance on Saturday afternoon.

"True poetry fans will also be as delighted as I am to return for the **Poetry by the Obelisk with Damper** featuring John Hetherington and I on the Sunday morning of the festival."

BE PART OF THE FESTIVAL!

Don't miss the opportunity to be part of the festival yourself. Join the fun and enter a float in the official parade to be held on Saturday at 1pm with entertainment planned for the entire day.

Regular Monthly Events

NSW

"Laggan Bush Poets." The Laggan Pub, Laggan NSW. The 1st Wednesday of every month (except January), starting at 7pm. 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 (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 Manfred 0411160510 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 workshops, 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. – St Augustine's Church Library, 631 Bourke St Melbourne. It is a short walk from Southern Cross railway station. 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