

The

November 2025

BULLY TIN

W.A. Bush Poets



& Yarnspinners Assn.

Next Muster: 14th Nov 2025 at 7.00 pm, Swan Centre off Aide Court. Bentley
MC: Robert Gunn 0417 099 676 gunnpoet@hotmail.com
Deadline for submissions for December's Bully Tin 23rd November 2025



Founding members able to be present at the 30th Anniversary celebrations — Geoff Swain, Maxine Richter, Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge and David Sears



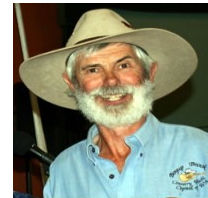
Happy 95th Maxine



The wonderful performers at the 30th Anniversary Celebrations (named on next page)

This Bully Tin has been printed and postage provided with the generous assistance of the office of KATE DOUST MLC

President's Ramblings November 2025



What a memorable night we had at the last muster. By far the largest gathering we have had in years and a great way to show the support we have for Bush Poetry in WA. Our 30th year celebrations featured 16 poets, two birthday cakes (it was also Maxine's birthday that day) and an excellent selection of poems from members and older WA poets.

Our attendance at the Perth Royal Show was appreciated by the RAS and patrons. Greg Joass, Meg and myself were on for the first three days of the show while Rob Gunn, Heather Denholm and Daniel Avery did the last day. All poets agreed that it was worthwhile and would like to be included if we get invited again. A bonus was having Kate Forrester from ABC radio in the audience one day. She recorded some of the show and interviewed us afterwards. This was broadcast on the Country hour later in the week.

By the time you read this Mt Trio will be done and dusted. This Country Music Muster is now in its third year and Bush Poets have become a favourite part of the program with a one hour show each morning. The camp kitchen is an ideal venue for us to get up close to the audience.

Peel Bush Poets are hosting the Pinjarra Bush Poetry, Yarnspinning and Country Music show featuring Terry Bennetts and Warwick Trant. This will take place on 8th November in the Pinjarra Community Hall with a dinner the night before at Pinjarra RSL club. Huge thank you to Rob Gunn for doing a power of work planning and promoting this event. Contact Rob if you intend to go to the dinner so he can give the caterers accurate numbers attending.

The following Wednesday, 12th November, is Have a Go Day at Burswood. We have been supporting the Seniors Recreation Council for many years at this event. It affords us a good opportunity to promote WABPYS and Bush Poetry in general. We have a spot on the main stage as well as several spots on the dance floor beside our site.

As the Pinjarra Bush Poetry show clashes with our regular muster night we have postponed the muster to the second Friday in November. As the auditorium is already booked that night we will be meeting in the Swan Centre off Aide Court.

Bill Gordon, President

**From page 1 group picture of performers at
30th Anniversary Celebration evening
(please note not in order)**

**Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge, Adrian Egan, Robert 'Gunny' Gunn, Fil Allen, Meg Gordon,
Lorraine Broun, Daniel Avery, David Sears, Brian Langley, Bev Shorland,
Roger Cracknell, Irene Connor, Greg Pastoll, Heather Denholm,
Tim Heffernan, Meg Gordon, Geoff Swain and MC- Bill Gordon.**

Hi Folks,

A reminder to come join in the fun, with some additional information, a slight change to the line for the One minute poem competition and details for the evening gathering to be held 7th Nov.

***** The WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners (Peel Division) *****
Would like to again invite you to their free Poetry Day on November 8th
Commencing at 2pm through to 9pm
Pinjarra Main Hall, Pinjarra Road (near the library)
There'll be poetry both Traditional and Modern plus Yarnspinning
Lots of great entertainment including music to be presented by
Terry Bennetts and Warwick Trant.

Other special items

One Minute Poem Competition (details below)

Line "This is my first time..."

Entry fees go into a pool, winner takes all.

Poems can be read or recited on the day, and must be presented in 'One Minute'

A Yarnspinning Competition. Time: max 7mins.

Fundraisers on the day will include a Money Wheel, Money Board and Raffle

Lots of Poetry, Music and perhaps some dancing.

Come and enjoy this free event.

Please note: Cash please for food, raffles etc. (no eft facilities)

Please note: The Lions Club will be there, with food and refreshments available for sale during the event.

Reminder for members: As you probably already know the November Muster, at the usual venue in Bently, has been moved to 14th November, so that people can attend both the Pinjarra gathering and the regular muster.

Peter Rudolf has kindly opened his block up to members for independent camping i.e. vans.

On the 7th November we will dine at the RSL hall at 5.30 pm.

The Ode is at 6pm after which we will perform an hour of poetry.

A two-course dinner is \$20.00 and Rob Gunn needs to know you are coming to assist with the catering.

Can you please let Rob know if you will be attending on the 7th Ph: 0417 099 676

Looking forward to seeing you there

Rob Gunn, Peel Poets and the WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners

Filling the Gaps – in Jurien Bay

The Jurien Bay CWA recently hosted the regional CWA Parker- Halse competition. While the judges were busy doing their judging, the audience were kept entertained with bush poetry by local bush poets Irene Conner and Corin Linch, as well as music by the local recorder group – led by CWA member Clair Scharff.

The day was enjoyed by all.



Pat Freebairn (CWA Vice president), Corin Linch, Irene Conner

WABP Performers at 2025 Perth Royal Show

Extract from Presidents ramblings - Greg Joass, Meg and myself were on for the first three days of the show while Rob Gunn, Heather Denholm and Daniel Avery did the last day. All poets agreed that it was worthwhile and would like to be included if we get invited again.

Some details of the poems presented on the final day included:-

* 'My Australia', Arthur Leggett's 'A Summer Idyll' and 'The Train that goes to Morrow' performed by Robert 'Gunny' Gunn.

* 'The Man From Snowy River', Snoopy the Retired Sheep Dog and 'The Avid Aussie Quilter' performed by Heather Denholm.

* Daniel Avery (pictures to the right) excelled with his 'Motley Mates' poem

Sadly no pictures of Heather or Gunny performing.

But it was reported that a good crowd enjoyed the well delivered entrainment, while sheltering from the rain later on the final day's performance.



The Silence of the Guns

With shards of shrapnel shrieking from the sky,
this futile, senseless war persists – but why?
How often will this hill be won or lost,
then won again, no matter what the cost?

*Men live in fear on this grim, deathly hill.
They fear huge guns that keep on roaring still –
the monster guns that keep on roaring still.*

In disbelief they hear this war will end.
An armistice, what does the word portend?
Is it too soon to hear the anthems sung,
to see the victor's flags and pennants hung?

*For even while the celebrations thrill,
the distant guns stay rumbling, faintly, still.
The guns remain and rumble, faintly, still.*

But then – although the bells of peacetime toll –
the monster guns resume their roaring role.
The world explodes in thunder, blood and flame.
The howling hounds of hell rejoin the game.

*Then like a final, roaring codicil
the thundering of guns grows louder still.
How can this be? The guns grow louder still.*

Can this be peace? These are the sounds of war.
The shrieking roar a concert metaphor.
Does crashed crescendo by the guns decree
grim climax to this thundered symphony?

*Like pounding drums whose sounds surround until,
great cymbals crash! Then hush! The guns grow still.
The howling hell-hounds hush. The guns grow still.*

Then – from the shattered air – hushed calm descends.
Men whisper in soft, fearful talk with friends.
In disbelief and shock – a vacant stare.
What next? They do not know, nor do they care.

*Mind numbing calm pervades the trenches' chill.
A nervous silence reigns. The guns lie still.
Men sit there dazed – confused. The guns lie still.*

We see no joyful celebration here.
Those who survive still live in constant fear,
for them, the present does not yet exist –
the future – just a meaningless dark mist.

*They sit there stunned, still fearing death's dark drill.
Still numb, they wonder that the guns are still.
Perplexed, they wonder that the guns are still.*

The strain of mindless months of mortal stress –
would they survive? They dared not try to guess.
For now, the awful silence brings more pain
with thoughts of mates they'll never see again.

*They see their rough wood crosses on the hill
and can't believe the monstrous guns stop still.
Incredulous – and yet – the guns stop still.*

So, where we stand today was once their hell.
Now poppies grow where Aussie heroes fell.
We shed a tear at haunting bugle tones
and seek their hallowed names on marble stones.

*For here the ghosts of all our heroes will
in death, find peace. The silent guns stay still.
We must ensure for them – those guns stay still.*

By Peter O'Shaunessy

**It is not generally known, but there are several reports that the fighting did not stop in all sectors at 11 o'clock, as required by the armistice. Both sides seemed determined to expend all their remaining ammunition in the final minutes and many men fell after 11 o'clock on that final day. Many men in the trenches could not believe the war had ended.*

BROLGA DREAMING

© V.P. Read

Winner, 2008 Bronze Swagman Award, Winton Queensland.

An urban Aboriginal who's never seen the bush;
I grew up in the city with its endless strife and push.
I do not know my heritage, or of my totem lore;
My parents can't remember tribal stories any more.
Yet, in my soul are yearnings that will never be denied;
My heart is ever haunted by a Dreamtime locked inside.
At night I dream of places where in life I've never been,
And dance the ancient dances that before I've never seen.

I sit and watch our children playing in a city street
With traffic fumes around them, and hot tar beneath their feet.
There's hopelessness within me. There is something I must do;
The Spirits never tell me, so I haven't got a clue.
Somehow, some way, it urges, all these children must go home;
Back to the womb that bore them; places where the ancients roam.
Back to the Brolga Dreaming, and the secret, sacred caves;
Back to their tribal totems, and the Elders' lonely graves.

I've done the white man's dreaming, and I've tried to live their ways,
But mateship's not extended, and I'm rarely given praise.
My home's supplied by welfare, who don't care it's falling down;
I drive a clapped-out Falcon on my forays into town.
I've tried to rise above it, black despair and grim defeat;
The overwhelming sadness in my people when we meet
In parklands near our ghetto, where we talk and laugh and play;
Forgetting for an instant that we live the white man's way.

The Nursing Home

The nursing home was a knockout, with gardens of delight
They even had a café where one could get a bite
And enjoy a red-hot coffee with your favourite family member,
The home was open every day from January to December

So, we had a coffee with Jack that day and put the world aright
With scintillating conversation calculated to excite
We sat there for an hour or so before the weather cooled
Then headed to the loungeroom and found that chaos ruled

Andre Rieu was playing his violin, the TV wasn't overloud
With singers and dancers aplenty and an enthusiastic crowd
Kate and I sat near the door, Jack was on the couch
Jack, so mild mannered but his companion such a grouch

Kate and I began the crossword, the big one from the "West"
It would take us several hours and on we worked, hard pressed
All at once, another resident, a woman with a walking frame
Sidled past taking my handbag and laying out her claim

"Excuse me Madam" I ventured, "I think you'll find that's mine"
So, she set it down once more and gave a look I could not define
She did a loop around the couch, she set off at such a rate
I thought that she was sure to fall, though she had a steady gait

Then Jack's voice became quite strident, and his mate was now so loud
It wasn't exactly physical but neither were unbowed
And Andre kept on playing, as violinists do
While the kitchen staff were serving tea, at 3pm on cue

Then across the room a chair came flying, the driver had one goal
To skirt around the central sofa and take it for a stroll
I admired her dexterity, such dignity and flair
Until she headed for my foot, I began to tear my hair

Twice she ran over my left foot and was looking to reverse
But changed her mind abruptly when I commenced to curse
She gave a hearty cackle and flashed Kate and me a grin
She'd probably made her daily quota for broken bones and skin!

And Jane continued every few minutes picking up my bag
Her pace was getting quicker and she never seemed to flag
Then a dodderly gent walked to the corner where the call bell attached to the wall
He repeatedly pressed the button and the nurse sailed in from the hall

And while he stood there tapping, he knocked on the wall as well
With his nose pressed close he continued, never stopping for a spell
Kate and I were distracted by the chaos, with the crossword dead on my lap
While we pondered the madness around us and raised our hands to clap

Such rare and unique entertainment was not to be outdone
And Andre's music pursued us...the melody lingered on.

Lorraine Broun

Muster Writeup 3rd Oct 2025 by Deb McQuire (Please note: this is not a full transcript of all that was related during the evening as my shorthand skills are now lost in the mist of time. So, I have in parts summarised the sentiments expressed, it was one of those evening when 'for those not there in the moment' it is hard to relate in full, after the event.)

Bill Gordon, our MC for the evening, welcomed all presented remarking on the large crowd gathered for the 30th Anniversary celebration evening. Our first performer for the evening, Bill noted, was the first competition winner at Wireless Hill 30 years ago, so a very fitting person to start the evening's entertainment.

Paraphrasing Bill's ongoing informative history of the group and members during the evening, between the performers, recalling the names of foundation members and many others who have played such an important part with WABP and form a strong history of relating and sharing their joy for and skills with writing and performing. This included but not limited to John and Anne Hayes who were unable to attend due to problems with John's back; also speaking of those who are no longer here such as Peter Nettleton, Peg Vickers, Authur Leggett and Sid Hopkins. Several of the evening's performers presenting just some of the many wonderful items to celebrate their work. Most performers speaking of their fond memories and favourite moments working with or sharing the work of so many.

Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge

After playing 'Cherry Pink & Apple Blossom White' on the mouth-organ (with bones back-up) Cobber recited
Riding the Crest of a Slump by Peter ("Pedro") Blyth.

This tells the true yarn, in verse, of how he arrived in Australia with very little, and worked his way up to having 'bugger all'. But he did it in true Pedro spirit, facing tough circumstances with good humour and hard work.

Adrian Egan *Darcy of the FIFO* by Adrian Egan

Telling of the endeavours of a FIFO worker and how that compares to other work options such as a he changed his choice of work as a teacher, from his perspective as a teacher.

Robert 'Gunny' Gunn *Summer Idly* by Authur Leggett

This poem tells the story of the first grasshopper of the season and his final fate after falling into a swimming pool despite some assistance being rendered, did not live much longer.

Under the Weather by Sid Hopkinson

Recounts the tale from a young, up and coming 'radio announcer' with the ABC and the challenge of working through the weather report giving location details of locations in WA that were quite a comic, tongue twisting marvel.

Fil Allen *Dodgy Sam* presented for a friend, poet unnamed

Relating the exploits and dealings of rather dodgy realtor.

**Bill noted that this was Fil's first time at the mic, so she was duly acknowledged by Meg and all present.

Meg Gordon *Brolga Dreaming* by Val Reid

Tells of an Aboriginal who's has never seen the bush and how the ancient songs call from dreams to the home place they belong.

Lorraine Broun *The Banks are moving In* by Val Reid

The sad story of the plight of a long-time farming family while trying to fight back.

Followed by

The Nursing Home Lorraine Broun

Dementia takes an awful toll on the patient, family and friends, but sometimes there are moments of great hilarity.

Geoff Swain *Harry Halliday* by Geoff Swain

A tale of a want-to-be boxer and some of his encounters including one with a Scottish boxer 'it's not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog.'

Daniel Avery *Daniel* by Daniel Avery

It's his own story about wobbling, and how he navigates his way through life with Cerebral Palsy

Muster Writeup cont...

David Sears *Old Man's Muster* *by Allen Simmons*

An old man's memories of past days sitting by a campfire surrounded by the next generation undertaking the muster, tuning through in his mind are thoughts of their activities and antics.

Brian Langley *Old Hector* *by Brian Langley*

In the 1960's when Brian and his family lived in Wyndham, there was an old aboriginal man who was spending his twilight years sitting on the footpath. This is the story about his life in his younger days, now but a distant memory as he sits on the footpath, gazing up at the mountainside as people walk on by without paying him any heed.

Supper & Cake

Bill again spoke of foundation members some who were present, including Maxine Richter who along with celebrating the 30th Anniversary with the group is also celebrating her 95th birthday. The cakes were cut by Maxine and everyone enjoyed the break with cuppas, cake and other nibbles.

Brian Langley took the opportunity to present the WA Bush Poets library with a USB memory stick containing over 3,000 poems by Dry Blower Murphy and others that he has transcribed and added historic references to, extracted from old WA newspapers back just after Federation. This will be currently held by Deb McQuire to be available by group members.

Irene Connor *Aged Care* *by Irene Connor*

This poem describes the different faces and bodies of people who now may appear frail and sunken but whose reliance through life challenges has left a record on their features.

Morning Gallop *by Will Ogilvie*

As a lover of horses, for Irene this poem describes the importance of having something to do that fills your life.

Bev Shorland *The Local Elder's Man* *by Victoria Brown*

A Farmers wife is really busy, day in day out doing a variety of tasks about the farmhouse and gardens. Often alone she sometimes succumbs to fits of rage or even gay abandon when doing some of the chores about the place. But she has learnt to be a little more cautious because you can never tell when you might get caught out by an unexpected visit from your Local Elders Man.

Roger Cracknell *Growing Old* *by Roger Cracknell*

Roger wrote this poem one day when he was sitting down feeling sorry for himself as you do from time to time, noticing the face in mirror didn't seem to belong to him

Greg Pastoll *Fooflefoz* *by Greg Pastoll*

A rhyming about a man who was disillusioned about human society and yearned to be accepted by animals. He tried being an ape, a condor and a dolphin, all with disastrous results. So, he made up his mind to quit this pursuit. However, his subconscious mind startled him with a tempting thought of another animal he might mimic. That got his pulse racing. Essentially the story shows how difficult it is to break free of an obsession.

Heather Denholm *The Flying Dogma Kieth 'Cobber' Lethbridge*

This poem Heather calls a classic, relating the activities of an 80 year old (or so) flying priest travelling around the WA outback, an encounter in 1988 while flying through out his parish his passenger was forced to take control of the single engine Cessna, flying toward Wiluna while the priest had a rest, but this turned into a bit of nightmare when he thought the priest had passed away and he would have to land the plane.

Tim Heffernan *The Saga of Tim Facey* *by Tim Heffernan*

This is a parody poem of Albert Facey, who grew up in my home town of Wickpin, and his amazing book A Fortunate Life. Two generations on, young Tim Facey discovers that life still has its ups and downs.

Meg Gordon *What could she want, now she's 90* *by Peter Blythe*

Written by Peter, a great friend of Peg Vickers, both residing in the Elleker area and sharing a love of bush poetry, as a gift for Peg on her 90th Birthday

Muster Writeup cont...

Robert 'Gunny' Gunn

Sinbad Smith

by Dixie Solly

The story of a farmer Sinbad Smith from Flyspeck Flat who came the show with a bulging wallet, was set upon by an ambitious sales man, but chaos followed when Sinbad accidentally started the tractor (but not having ever learnt to drive, carved a destructive path through the displays and events at the show.

Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge

The Mountain Duck

by Peg Vickers.

This tells about the male Mountain Duck, who arrives first each year, with the first rains, then waits patiently for his little mate to arrive. Will she make it safely? Yes, she does! And then both of them are overjoyed, as they set to work with nest to build and eggs to lay. A beautiful story from Peg.

MC closing Bill Gordon felt it was very appropriate that Cobber was our closing performers for the night as he opened as the first winner back at Wireless Hill and the winner at last years Toodyay Festival. He again spoke of the many wonderful bush poets that have been a part of WA Bush Poets and Yarnspinners over the past 30 years. This evening's get-together brought out many to perform, so many that each one was limited to one or two poems in order to get through the long list of people wanting to present their favourites.

Bill reminded everyone of the upcoming gathering at Pinjarra on 8th Nov organised by the Peel Poets and following that the 'Have A Go' day on the 12th Nov with our regular muster reschedule to the 14th Nov. in the alternative building as our usual venue will be busy on that night. (Details front page of the Bully Tin) Inviting everyone to come along and support the performers and enjoy the events. Thanking everyone for coming along to the celebration of the 30th Anniversary.

No Muster: 2nd Jan 2026

Next Muster: 6th Feb 2026 at 7pm Plantation Drive, Swan Centre, Bentley

MC: Brian Coogan 0417 171 092 briancoogan@briancoogan.com

Reading from the classics—TBA

Banjo Paterson's birthday

Recite a poem for Banjo during the first half of the muster.

**Reminder: Could everyone who performs at Musters please have a synopsis available on the night for our scribe or send one via email to deb.mcquire@bigpond.com for the Muster Write Up.
Thank you in advance**

COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS AROUND AUSTRALIA

WRITTEN EVENTS are in PURPLE

For more details and entry forms please go to the ABPA website www.abpa.org.au and www.writingwa.org

Why not check out Writing WA
<info@writingwa.org>
Always something interesting
going on for WA Writers

November

1 November — Closing Date — ABPA National Bush Poetry Championships, performance, Bathurst NSW.

6-9 November — ABPA National Bush Poetry Championships - performance and **written**, Bathurst NSW. See 18 October closing date for **written**. See 1 November closing date for performance.

8th November - The WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners (Peel Division) free Poetry Day Commencing at 2pm through to 9pm Pinjarra Main Hall, Pinjarra Road (near the library)

February 2026

27 February — Closing Date — Man from Snowy River Bush Festival (incorporating the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships), Corryong, Victoria. **Written competition**

April 2026

16-19 April — Man from Snowy River Bush Festival (incorporating the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships), Corryong, Victoria. Performance & **Written competitions**. See 27 February closing date.



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