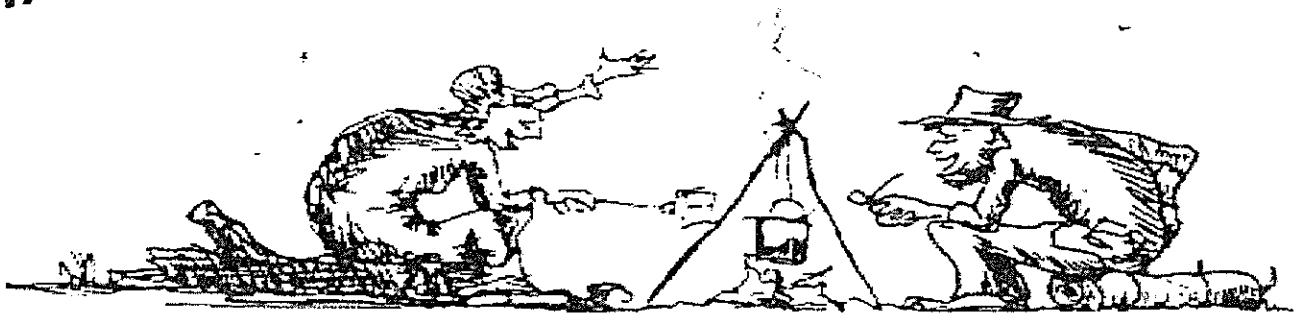


# WA BUSH POETS & YARNSPINNERS



Return Address: The Secretary, Lorelie Tacoma, 16 Gratwick Tce, Murdoch, WA 6150

Newsletter February, 2000

## **AUSTRALIA DAY CHALLENGE 2000**

**Keith Lethbridge ... "Mum's Driving Lesson"**  
Champion Bush Poet ... (Own Composition)

**Peter Capp ... "The Truffles Man"**  
Champion Yarn Spinner

**Rusty Christensen ... "In the Droving Days"**  
Champion Bush Poet ... (Other's Composition)

**Sid Hopkinson ... "Loser at the Landau Races"**  
Best Written Poem ... (Open)

**Kate Ansell ... "The Clearing"**  
Junior Sandgroper Written Champ ... Children (8 -10 Years)

**Graham Pearce ... "The Boy and The Kangaroo"**  
Senior Sandgroper Written Champ ... Children (11-13 Years)

Attend our "Come All Ye" gatherings at the Raffles Hotel  
(Upstairs in the Riverview Room)  
Every FIRST Friday of the month through 2000

## DROPPINGS FROM THE BOSS COCKY

As I write, the thoughts and impressions of the visit to W.A. by Carmel Randle are fresh in my mind. So much was achieved, not only in the techniques of writing and presenting Australian Bush Poetry, but also in the friendly atmosphere of the subsequent happenings.

The workshops were an unqualified success for both the experienced writer/performers and the raw novice and those fortunate to attend expressed their complete satisfaction with both the content and the conduct of the four sessions. Once again secretary Lorelie did a sterling job to arrange most of it before she left on her Australia Roundabout and then to pull it together on her return. "Thank You Lorelie". The City of Melville came good with the free use of the room and once again our friends, the Rotary Club of Melville, part sponsored the event with a donation of \$500 as its contribution to the Year of the Older Person. Despite some mutterings to the contrary I consider any expense to be borne by the assoc. is money well spent. Carmel appeared as guest speaker at Melville Rotary as well as sitting on the judging panel for the Second Heat with our resident Judge Garry Crierrie who told me that he had learnt from the experience. She also did a couple of spots during the evening, so we kept her busy.

Albany saw a motley assortment of Bush Poets assemble at the Stehn's place. Carmel and Rusty with hair as white as snow, also Secretary Lorelie, Joan Macneall, the daring Davey Duo (Maisie & Mike), the perennial performer Arthur Leggett, the Wanderin' Star man, Brian Gale, Geoff (Had it in me Hand) Bebb, the irrepressible V.P. (Val) Read, the Tobins and David Sears.

Friendship and hospitality were the keys to the weekend, with Carmel, Lorelie and Kay preparing a delicious meal of sweet curry, chicken and pasta, salad and sweets for 15 in total with enough left over for Sunday lunch for the stragglers -- real hospitality.

The Nook Folk Club was our host in the century-old King River Hall. The building is completely timber lined. The Baltic pine walls and ceiling and the Jarrah wooden floor made it like the sound box of a violin. The acoustics were great, as was the evening's entertainment. Carmel not only compered the evening, but also gave some exhibits of her skill in the art of Australian Bush Balladry.

Sunday morning saw the brave souls at picturesque Emu Point with it's outstanding beauty and biting breeze coming straight off the Southern Ocean. Fortunately there was a large Norfolk Island pine tree to shelter behind for various performers including some locals who showed real promise and I venture to say could be the nucleus for a local group. It was also the inaugural initiation of our compact portable Public Address system which worked well in the wild windy weather. Our deep appreciation to the Lotteries Commission for supplying the bulk of the finance for this new acquisition.

Mention must be made of the Tobins of Ardross who, although neither writers nor performers, used the weekend as an excuse for an enjoyable trip to Albany and indulge in the fellowship of the Assn and its expanding circle of friends. Speaking of friends, the weekend would not have been possible without the hard work and hospitality of Kay and Kent. On behalf of everybody in our movement, a big "THANK YOU" to you both and we hope that the seeds of friendly fellowship will sprout and grow into a health crop of performers and writers to make Albany a link in the network of Australian Bush Poetry.

The Boss Cocky

A.K.A. Rusty Christensen

**Congratulations to the promising young winners of our Children's Written Competition  
The Inaugural WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assn Sandgropers Competition**

**Senior 2000 (11-13 years)**

Winning poem "The Boy and the Kangaroo" by Graham Pearce of Lesmurdie Primary School

1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up "The Good Old Days or Were They?" by Victoria Gill (members entry)

2<sup>nd</sup> Runner Up "Hunt" by Alister Tremayne of Woodlands Primary School

**Junior 2000 (8-10 years)**

Winning Poem "The Clearing" by Kate Ansell of Woodlands Primary School

1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up "Kookaburra" by Vaninka Shay of Lesmurdie Primary School

2<sup>nd</sup> Runner Up "Galloping Spirits" by Lucinda Howard of Lesmurdie Primary School

**START OF A DROVER'S DAY**

V.P. READ © 5/10/1995

I am sitting at my campfire watching dawn o'er drought-scarred land,  
With a billy boiling in the coals, eggs spitting in the pan.  
And I'm feeling sore and weary after weeks upon the track,  
Pushing mobs of loony cattle from stations way outback.  
Jack is laughing high above me while the magpies carol sweet,  
There's a lazy, scaly blue-tongue and he's scuffling round my feet.  
And the acrid smell of gidgee trees is tainting morning air,  
While dust devils swirl and taunt me as they ruffle through my hair.  
The poor cattle moan for water 'cause the creeks are running dry,  
With a hundred miles to market over land that's tinder dry.

My two horses snicker softly from a stand of desert oak,  
There's my old pal, Mac, the brumby, and the roan that's just half-broke.  
As they strain against the hobbles, chains are tinkling high and clear,  
And I listen to their music which is pleasant on the ear.  
As I sit back on my haunches drawing deeply on a smoke  
Kookaburras in the branches share an early morning joke.  
Molten rays are just appearing o'er the ranges' jagged head,  
As the flaming sun is rising – staining rugged ridges red.  
There's a hellish day before me driving cattle to the bore,  
But these precious morning minutes prepare me for what's in store...

I sip my scalding coffee and eat greasy eggs on toast,  
And I dream of spending money at a hotel on the coast  
Where I'll soak my tortured body in a sparkling resort spa,  
And I'll wash the desert dust out in the air-conditioned bar.  
Then I'll meet a lovely lady who'll agree to be my wife,  
To forever turn my back upon the droving way of life.  
Then my thoughts are rudely shattered by the screech of grey galahs  
As they rise above the tree-tops of some drought-stricken belahs.  
Stamping out the glowing embers as old Jack still plays the clown,  
Time to get these bullocks moving on their gruelling trek to town.

## AUSTRALIA DAY CHALLENGE 2000

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2000

Report by Michelle Sorrell

The day got under way on time with a crowd of between 400-500 in attendance at the Wireless Hill reserve. We were fortunate to have a warm day with blue skies and a nice sea breeze to keep the temperature under control. The Master of Ceremonies, Peter Nettleton called the finalists up to commence proceedings.

### Open Bush Poetry Section- Original (Own) Composition Category

First up was **Peter Capp**, who performed the epic of "Eric", across this wide brown land. Glad you made it Peter, the resulting poem is fantastic as well.

**Geoff Bebb** followed next with "all the Rest is All OK", the (mostly true) tale of the woes of the intrepid folk, who worked in the desert near the Woomera Rocket Range. What perseverance and classic Aussie understatement. Superb, Geoff.

**Phil Strutt**, hot off the Rottnest Island ferry, amused us all with his tale of the adventures of the "Tasmanian Tiger" (The Thylacine), who was valiantly trying not to be extinct. Everyone was astounded by Phil's word usage in this very clever poem.

**Arthur Leggett's** nostalgic "Sunday Afternoon Stroll" at the powerhouse showed us that SNAGs aren't a new phenomenon. Arthur is a genuine sentimental bloke writing from the heart.

A very appropriately dressed **Keith Lethbridge** then entertained everyone with his entry "Mum's Driving Lesson", which had the audience in stitches. Keith's ability to produce this kind of work sets a standard for the rest of us.

Finally **Leigh Matthews** gave us his travelling tales linking the old copper and the shrinking sheep and finally cockroaches. What a genius at relating everyday events and making them extra-ordinary.

### Open Yarnspinners Section

**Peter Capp**, whose tale about the Truffles' Detector was the sheer delight of the technique of "play on words", kicked off the Yarn Spinners.

This was followed by **Kel Watkins** convoluted tale about "Merve from Elsewhere". His dilemmas on the farm and during the "Holding Your Breath " competition kept everyone intrigued till the last hydroponic sheep was mustered.

Finally **Keith Lethbridge** told us the poignant story of old Wally Bruechle whose cooking skills meant that any party where Wally was cook, "ate like kings". Keith's book is dedicated to Wally, one of these interesting bush characters who should never be forgotten.

### Junior Sandgroper Written Competition --- School Children (8-10 Years) Category

What a delight to have these talented young Australians perform our heritage, ensuring that the next generation will not lose our history after all. **Kate Ansell** presenting "The Clearing", **Vaninka Clarke** presenting "The Kookaburras" and **Lucinda Howard** presenting "Gallopings Spirits" showed us their passion for the natural environment and animals and the youthful spirit that gladdens our hearts.

.....Continued page 5

### Senior Sandgroper Written Competition --- School Children (11-13 Years) Category

The young people who performed in this category ably demonstrated the rich variety of bush poetry.

**Graham Pearce's** ballad of Billy Hardy from Coolgardie, was delivered with confidence and style and expertly read in braille.

**Victoria Gill's** ballad "The Good Old Days, or Were They?" showed a depth of sympathy and understanding for the early settlers, well beyond her years.

**Alistaire Tremayne** did indeed give us a merry story in his "Hunt" which typified all the wonderful, creative exuberance of youth.

Thank you to all the participants and organisers of this section for enabling us to see and hear young people at their creative best, with especial thanks to Joan Macneall who single handedly initiated the competition and brought it to fruition.

During the Interval the audience was kept entertained by the "**Mandogalup Bush Band**" led by **Peter Nettleton**.

It was great to see an impromptu jam session happening at the end of the show as well in true relaxed Aussie fashion.

### Open Bush Poetry --- Other Poets' Works (author to be acknowledged) Category

**Peter Capp** revisited his old hometown (Cooma) "Down There on Manaro", the coldest place on earth. Even the sounds were frozen. Coincidentally that is where I first 'landed' in Australia as a migrant child on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January, 1959.

**Rusty Christensen** gave us an ode to Patterson and horses "In the Droving Days". Delivered with great passion as always. Happy Birthday as well Rusty.

**Rod Evans** dipped his lid to CJ Dennis and Doreen in "The Intro". He did look and sound the part. We were all transported back to the 1920's.

**Rod Lee** masterfully wove a tale and 2 poems in his 7 minute segment with Bill Kearns' "Mulga Bill's Bicycle". The second poem involved the sad saga of Mulga Bill's grandson and his fixed up bike. Some generations never learn!

**Keith Lethbridge** finished the heats appropriately with Patterson's very moving, heritage poem, "The Man from Snowy River".

**Syd Hopkinson's** entry "Loser at the Landau Races" was the winner of the written competition.

With poetry and yarns we had taken a very long trip in time and space across Australia from Cooma to Kununurra and many places in between. What a wonderful Australia Day tribute.

This was by no means the end of the fun however, as the creative juices still flowed in our many club stalwarts. **Rusty, Arthur, Geoff** and **Syd** made further contributions.

**Paddy Connolly** with John Warner's "Kitty Kane" must have stirred the ladies to rectify the gender imbalance and make a contribution. Thank you **Val Reid, Connie Herbert** and **Beth Scott**, for having the confidence to speak in front of an audience of 200-500 strong. Perhaps it will spur others, even myself, to gather up the courage to contribute next time.

Heavy traffic had delayed our intrepid Mayor but she made it at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour to take part in the prize giving, thanks **Katie Mair** for fitting us in to what must have been a tight schedule.

### **OLD HABITS**

An unofficial "Come-All-Ye" was held in January for those Poetry Junkies who could not stay away from just one meet. Although a small unpublicized gathering, the night was an enjoyable one for those who drifted in.

### **NEW TALENT**

Graham Pearce, the winner of the 11 to 13 year old category of the inaugural Sandgroper Written Poetry Competition, provided a special treat for those who attended the January gathering at the Ruffs when he presented a sneak preview of his winning poem entitled "The Boy And The Kangaroo". Well done, Graham.

**LOST BANJO** We all thought Ron 'Banjo' Evans had disappeared. Until we heard he is now working full time at the abattoir (as well as doing a bit of private butchering in the spare time he now has since completing the harvest on the two properties). Some people have all the fun! ONYA Ron!

### **FOUND OPAL**

We congratulate Rusty Christensen on being presented with an O.P.A.L. Award (Older Person Active Living) by the Melville City Council in connection with the International Year of the Older Person. You're a real gem, Rusty.

### **STOP OVER**

Ted Mullins of Mackay Qld has been on the road for fourteen months. He broke his travels to be with family in Willetton for the summer. Ted enjoyed the poetry at Fairbridge Folk Festival so he decided Wireless Hill was the place to be on Australia Day 2000. He took a pocketful of coin to buy a few books of WA bush verse. Enjoy your Nullabour read, Ted.

### **SLEEP OVER**

The troupe arrived in Albany by bus, car and aeroplane, taking variously 1 hour, 6 hours and sun-up to sunset. The accommodation ranged from \*\*\*\* Hotel, Park Home, Camper Van, Guestroom, Box Room and Mattress on the floor. To describe the experience of one would not represent the others, but the one aspect of the weekend common to all was the enjoyment of sharing a common bond in poetry. Brian Gale wrote "Many thanks for the poetry weekend in Albany. I like to think the effort .... put into it was worthwhile, as it was a big undertaking that can only be accomplished by us pulling together as club members. The hospitality shown by the Albany people .... was thoroughly appreciated. I love those weekends (remember Donnelly Mill) and they should be cherished and put on at least Annually but preferably as often as possible." ANY TAKERS? If your community would enjoy a weekend of poetry fellowship, put your vision of hospitality to the committee via a letter to The Secretary Lorelie Tacoma, 15 Gratwick Tce, Murdoch, 6150.

### **CREDIT DUE**

As the Assn grows, and our members begin to present the work of other contemporary poets, it becomes apparent that we must not overlook the rights of the author. Let's always be careful to announce the name of the author, as well as the title of the poem, when using another poet's material in a live performance.

### **OVER DUE**

Our thanks to the hard-working folk dedicated to the progress of our assn. We are indebted to the "behind the scenes" and "on stage" efforts at Wireless Hill.

## THE PELICAN

At Emu Point

© Mike Davey 1999-11-24

I am a graceful Pelican,  
accompanied by my daughter.  
Flying in from off the sea,  
the trip's a little shorter.

Just then as we sweep into land,  
and put our feet down like we ought,  
she hits some bloody driftwood,  
and does a nasty somersault.

She landed in a muddled heap.  
That's not the way I taught her.  
Hope no one was watching,  
'cos her beak's now full of water.

I like to land at Emu point,  
a lovely place to be,  
though that rotten landing,  
sure did embarrass me.

For I can see bush poets,  
a sheltering from the wind.  
Do I deserve a girl like this?  
I really must have sinned.

But seeing how we've got here,  
we stop to have a look.  
Some of them knew all their words.  
Others quoted from a book.

Now Rusty he's a good poet,  
Carmel Randle too.  
The Daveys, they're a duo.  
Just to name a few.

Brian's there, he's letting go  
of Lucy, it's so sad you know.  
A New Zealand girl so full of drugs  
she mixed it with the pushing thugs.

These and other local poets,  
were making quite a racket.  
The assembled were so blessed cold,  
each wished they'd brought a jacket.

So this is Perth's best poets,  
or so they'd like to be.  
So I put myself in second gear,  
and pushed off out to sea.

contributions to the newsletter  
may now be sent directly to the  
Editor by email at

[swagmail@telstra.easymail.com.au](mailto:swagmail@telstra.easymail.com.au)

or direct your articles, poems,  
snippets, or reports by mail to  
the Secretary, Lorelie  
Tacoma, 15 Gratwick Street,  
Murdoch, 6150

### POETRY WRITING WORKSHOP 1999

A report by Lorelie (Scribe) Tacoma

Twenty members gathered at the Melville Recreation Centre in November for the ten hours of tuition on poetry writing skills conducted by Carmel Randle of Queensland.

Both the morning and afternoon groups gained a great deal of stimulation and information to assist them to improve or to start their poetry writing in a manner which will win awards and increase the appreciation and enjoyment by audiences.

Carmel proved to be a first class teacher, imparting her knowledge in an easily understood and enjoyable manner. She is certainly a champion, as shown by her many awards and publications.

Her workshop classes were interspersed by several social events including the Second Heat at the Raffles and the weekend in Albany.

Carmel's happy presence in the West did much to further our aims of conserving and promoting the Australian idiom, and encouraging the writing of "bush poetry" or more accurately "Australian poetry". We are grateful that she was able to fit in her twelve-day visit amongst her busy programme of performing, judging, and writing.

Amongst the participants were Ted and June Webber, grey nomads from Camden, N.S.W. who have made firm friends amongst the local members.

The workshops produced seven new members and we welcome them to the enjoyment of our activities.

## CALL FOR PERFORMERS

Boyup Brook Country Music Show  
3rd Weekend in February (19th & 20th).

Brian Gale is still expecting to hear from you if you wish to participate in the Boyup Brook Country Music Show. Perform with the "Poets at the Pub" on Saturday morning (9am to 1pm in the Beer Garden) to share collection. Performers at the Poets' Breakfast on Sunday morning (7.30 to 9.30am) will qualify for free entry, breakfast, and a purse of \$400 to share. Call Brian now 9757 2431 to book a spot and arrange accommodation.

## COMING EVENTS

### COME-ALL-YE Bush Poets & Yarnspinners

A MONTHLY GATHERING on the FIRST FRIDAY of Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May & June

Sit back and enjoy the entertainment or enter this non-competitive performance evening

Raffles Hotel, Canning Bridge – Upstairs in the Riverview Room

7.30pm till 10 pm

Entry for everyone \$2 at the door. No performance fee.

Bar Open - Bring your own Nibbles.

For further info and encouragement: Rusty Christensen Tel. 9364 4491

### Boyup Brook Music Festival

February 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>

Contact Brian at 25 Georgette Drive, Margaret River, 6285 telephone 9757 2431

### Saturday Evening March 11th

Hear some *REALLY SCARY STORIES* told by Alex Marshall (Fremantle Ghost Walks)

Cecily Scutt (Writer & Storyteller), Vanessa Mills (Radio Personality)

with our own Keith Lethbridge and Kel Watkins

Pt Walter Golf Course – Practice Fairway off Point Walter Road, Bicton

Picnic starts at 6.30pm – *GHOST STORIES* start at DARK

Pay at the gate: adult \$10, family \$20, child \$6

wwwwhat to expect??? 0412 488 131

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