

The Bully Tin



July 2004

& Yarn Spinners

Monthly Muster at the Como Bowling & Recreation Club cnr Hensman & Sandgate Sts, South Perth
Next meeting: Friday 2nd July, 2004 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm start.



Arthur Leggett is generally considered one of the WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners Associations treasures. He is a special man with a motivation and zest for life which is inspirational. We have been privileged on many occasions to be entertained with presentations of his own and others poetry.

But Arthur is more than a poet. An ex-POW now in his eighties he is an athlete who won gold at the Seniors Games for kayaking and is a keen canoeist and cyclist. He is also an active member of the community working as a Senior Volunteer at Morley High School and State President of the Ex-Prisoners of War Association. He is also a humble man with an excellent sense of humour.

One of my favourite stories Arthur has shared with me is when he decided to enter the Avon Decent. Anyone familiar with this event would know it is not for the faint hearted so Arthur's family were not overly thrilled with his decision. Well, he entered the race but soon found himself dumped into the icy waters of the Avon River. He was pulled from the water suffering mild hyperthermia. Two lovely young ambulance officers stripped him off, rugged him up and gave him hot drinks and rubbed his hands and feet to restore circulation. Arthur was in heaven! The cunning sod then decided next year he would forget the canoe and just jump in the water and wait for the lovely young ladies to rescue him again!

Arthur will receive his **OAM Medal** at Government House on 10th September, 2004.

He has produced a small book of his poetry – small in size but not in content. The poems are an insight into some of the many facets of this remarkable man, not the least being how he manages to fit so many poems into such a little book!

The book opens with the following thought provoking poem -

*They tell me, now "tis Autumn-time!"
As if I didn't know
The heat of Summer's long since gone;
And Spring, where did it go?*

*I recollect The Joys of Spring.
Life's growth stirring – new.
The blossoming of youthful dreams
When all things said were true.*

*Summer's heat once held its sway.
Then all was "Effort" and "Persist!"
As I reached out beyond The Edge
Seeking Substance in the Mist.*

*But now 'tis Autumn! Summer's Torch
I strive to hold up high,
Knowing Time's Hands rest upon my years.
I glide — but cannot fly!*

Arthur Leggett ©

Droppings from "The Boss Cocky"



G'Day you friendly folk.

I am writing this off in haste as I do last minute jobs before leaving for a trip to Winton and Bundaberg, Queensland.

This will be my fourth trip to Winton for the Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry competition. The first was in 1997 when I went as a chaperone to Cobber who had won the trip courtesy of Qantas and the Rotary Club of Melville. He performed creditably but shocked the locals by not wearing shoes on the stage. *That's Cobber!*

We made some initial contacts then which have blossomed and expanded with many lasting friendships with fellow poets established. This will be exhibited in late October at the Nationals here in Perth.

Speaking of friendships, I couldn't help but be impressed at the June Muster by the friendly atmosphere which prevailed there. The regulars and friends certainly enjoyed the evening's activities as evidenced by the reluctance to leave as they gathered in groups chatting and when politely requested to vacate the premises (the man wanted to go home too) continued their animated conversations in the car park! *Friendship in action* – Bush Poetry style!

I will miss the July Muster. See you August 6th, 2004. Also hope to see you at the AGM followed by a special night of nostalgia, humour and lots of fellowship. The date – 20th August, 2004 from 6.00pm.

Rusty C.

Way Out Back - of Perth!

"Bali"

"Barley"

"Baa-Lee"

A holiday, a cereal cropbut, what in the world is a *Baa-Lee*??? Well, you can thank Rod for this piece of creativity. He has claimed exclusive naming rights to the latest addition to the Lee family. You wouldn't need to be Einstein to guess that *Baa-Lee* is a sheep, a very little sheep - a three week old orphan lamb, in fact. And I have our new daughter-in-law to thank for this acquisition, along with formula mixing and bottle feeding and other associated baby stuff! Dave & Di are definitely well matched here. Last time they went away they presented me with a tiny euro (wallaby, for the uninitiated). While this little fur-baby was heart meltingly cute and appealing the prospect of round the clock feeding and care wasn't. Feeling unequal to the challenge I reluctantly passed her on to more experienced hands. I know Dave & Di were disappointed with me but hey, they weren't offering to do the night feeds!

And *Baa-Lee* came with a catch too. With a million and one sheep locally do you think she could have been one of those? No way. Di found her down at Mt Barker, which wasn't a problem until she explained that we'd have to come and fetch her as Di was working down there and the hospitality of the motel proprietors didn't extend to accommodating sheep. So, if you passed an odd looking couple boring along the Albany Highway with a sheep sitting beside them, that was us.

She is adorable and cute and cuddly and is convinced she is a dog, which is great as we hope to train her to be a *sheep-sheep*. Both our dogs are dismal failures as *sheep-dogs* so we are setting great store on *Baa-Lee* successfully fulfilling this role and rounding up our flock of three motley and totally useless sheep for shearing. I have developed a huge respect for sheep dogs and their working abilities after our miserable and exhausting efforts to convince Ted, Titch and Ellie-May to be penned ready for their annual pedicure, drench and hair cut. "Please" just doesn't suffice with sheep. Anyway, I will keep you posted on the unlikely success of this venture.

Kerry

Letters to the Editor

Dear Bully Tin

Many old bush poets would be very irate to read that urbanites can be regarded as "bushies"

Never the twain shall meet!

The Old Rules

Traditional Australian Poetry – Colonial/ Old days.

Traditional Australian Bush Poetry Serious & Humorous- Bush theme.

Australian Poetry – usually general content.

Written mainly by Australians.

Serious and humorous.

Regards,

Valerie Read

The Editor

The great poetic debate of the early 1890's, between Paterson and Lawson, will pale into insignificance as Val Read and Rod Lee, and anyone else who would like to join in, debate the joys or otherwise of our Australian landscape.

Reply From "Out the Back of Perth"

You call it a bloody miracle?

Well Val, you move out here.

I need some help on the ride on

About this time of year.

You talk about the sun and rain

And all their wondrous deeds.

Well, all I see for miles around

Is a pile of bloody weeds!

And I hate those mongrel squawking birds

That start up with the dawning.

I'd like to get a bit of sleep

But they're stuffing up me morning.

And, on those pretty fragrant flowers –

Don't let them deceive yer.

One little sniff to get the scent

Will set off your hay fever.

I can't wait for summer sun

To scorch dead every weed.

And squawking birds – they'll rack off

When they can't find a feed.

And I won't have to mow the lawn

It'll be stubble brown and stumpy.

Then I'll laze around about the place

Hot, miserable and grumpy!

Rod

Inspired by Kerry's article in June Newsletter

We say there's no more miracles in this great day and age
Or is it that we haven't time to survey Nature's stage-
To see the transformation of our dry and dusty land
When rain has come, at last! At last! To touch with loving
hand?

The first green shoots begin to grow o'er paddocks burnt and brown,
And soon the grass is flourishing on farming land and town.
A kaleidoscope of hues appears, so lovely to behold,
Of Patterson's bright purple shade and Cape Weed's brilliant gold.

Bright orange of Cape Tulip flowers and paddy melon vines,
The breeze is perfumed by a scent as heady as sweet wines.
The songs of birds are sweeter now. They sing their joyous
praise
Of all the miracles they see in Springtime's lovely haze.

V Read 01/06/2004



John Putland is one of our country poets hailing from Darkan.

John has been writing poetry, on and off, for many years and enjoys the works of the Old Masters.

He is a retired mechanic trying to find the time to restore old tractors and machinery, and rebuild furniture.

His poem is set in the 1950's when mustering was done with horses and when the railway was operating as far north as Meekatharra.

Thanks for sharing your works with us John.

The Cattle Drive

The Spinifex is flowering, and we've had a bumper year.
The muster was successful, and we're checking all our gear.
We've shod our string of horses and ready for the road,
With five hundred head of bullocks, and a tidy wagonload.

We are headed for the railhead, that's three hundred miles away;
But there's ample feed and water on the stock route, so they say.
We have a couple of ringers, a horse tailer and a cook,
And we all work together in the task we've undertook.

It took some time to move the mob and head them down the road.
They were loath to leave the river, but the stockwhip was the goad.

We had some anxious moments, in settling them that night;
But then, they never rushed at all, although we thought they might.

We took turns at riding round them, singing softly all the while-
A lullaby for bullocks, that would make a sailor smile.
We saw kangaroos and Emus, and Dingos howled at night,
Which made the bullocks restless, and gave the cook a fright.

As we got near Meekatharra I rode quickly on ahead,
To make contact with the agent there, before he sought his bed.

"The market's good at Midland" he said that he was told;
I reckoned to ride the rattler down, and see these bullocks sold.

When the trucks were nearly loaded, I rode back to the pub,
To have my first hot bath in weeks, and give myself a scrub.
I found my comb and razor, and cleaned my boots and belt;
Donned clean clothes from my kitbag, and how wonderful I felt.

I know my Stetson's dusty, and it's sweat stained round the band,
But I like the way it fits me ...like a glove upon the hand.
I gave the boys their pay cheques, with "Go easy on the booze,
They'll need you at the station, so you've got no time to lose."

I sent back my stock whip and saddle, and packed my spurs away.
I reckoned I won't be needing them. Where I am going to stay.
I guess my saddle's softer than the seat that I have now,
And it's noisy, rough and smelly, but I'll survive somehow.

We had a stop at Magnet, and another one at Cue.
Now I see a racecourse as we're passing through Yalgoo.
I wish we were at Midland, but this train is mighty slow,
For we've only got to Pindar, where the wreath flowers grow.

Elizabeth Stevens is a wonderful, inspiring woman with a strong Christian ethic who writes beautiful poetry about life and the family.

She has produced a lovely book of her poetry – "Seems to me – Reflections in Rhyme" which is well worth reading. Most of the proceeds from the sale of these books goes to charity.

Several years ago tragedy struck the family when the husband of her granddaughter was killed in a car accident. Three small children were left without a dad. One, in particular, could not cope with the loss and Betty (Elizabeth) wrote this poem as a comfort for her.

Due to requests for copies Betty has now produced a beautiful card with the poem on it and a place for a photo of Mummy or Daddy. The poem is changed according to the circumstances. If you feel this could help someone you know copies can be acquired by contacting Kerry Lee (9397 0409).

Copies are \$5.00 each.

My Daddy's Gone to Heaven

My Daddy's gone to Heaven. He's not here in the house.
He went away so suddenly and quiet as a mouse.

I think he's gone to Heaven 'cause Jesus wants him there
And Heaven is a beautiful place with lovely things to share

My Daddy used to play with me and I miss him, yes I do,
But there will be children in Heaven and now he can play with them too.

I can talk to my Daddy like you do on a telephone;
I send him my love, by the angels and tell him how much I've grown.

I love Mummy very much and I know that Daddy does too,
So I will help her as much as I can; That's what he would want me to

At night time, when I look at the sky, he's up there I can see.
God has made him into a star and he's smiling down at me.

Elizabeth Stevens ©

R.I.P



The members of the WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners Association extend their deepest sympathy to Christine and Kingsley Smith and family – Lisa, Wade and Candice -on the tragic loss of their son, Brodie. (1982 -2004)



Words are inadequate.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you.



Christine, supported by Kingsley, has been a tireless and enthusiastic worker promoting Bush Poetry in Dandaragan and surrounding areas.

Possessing a strong community spirit she has integrated the Bush Poetry into her successful efforts to restore and preserve the cottage and property at Dandaragan known as *Aggie's Farm*.

Editor's Report

Since Kerry and I joined the WA Bush Poets we have come to know many members who we now have the privilege of calling friends. Foremost among these friends are Christine and Kingsley Smith.

We have shared many times together which have been notable because they have been such happy, laid back occasions.

To understand the pain these wonderful people are now suffering is beyond my comprehension, and I feel inadequate that I cannot find the words to express my support for them.

Only to say, we love them and share their grief.

In Memory of Brodie

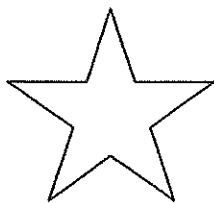
I still recall that impish grin –
An angel in disguise.
That happy, youthful, smiling face
With devil in his eyes.
No, not that dreaded demon
Full of hate and sin
But a bloke folks loved to love-
A happy Aussie larrikin.

He leaves behind a mum and dad
Much apart of who he was;
And a brother and a sister
Who loved him just because...
And a partner who had formed a bond
And given him her heart,
And a strong and close community,
Stronger for his part.

Now he's joined a growing band
Of young Australian men
Who have left us way ahead of time.
Lets all remember them.
Boys who opened up our land
Or fought to save our shores;
Boys who flirted folly
Or stood up for our laws.

And they'll all be there to meet him;
Welcomed to their fold
Of strong and straight young Aussie men.
"THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD"

Rod Lee



Special Coming Events

The following are events which you can all be a part of, from writing and competing to coming along and enjoying yourselves.

Australian Bush Poetry Championship Fund Raiser Comedy, Traditional & Music Night



Friday 20th August 2004 7.30pm – 10.00pm
Como Bowling Club

Entry Fee \$10.00 – supper supplied

Your favourite poets performing your favourite poems.
\$5.00 to nominate a poet and poem

Raffles, Auction & other Novelties

Professionally presented with stage, set and lighting.

Support the Australian National Championships by inviting a guest.

National Championships Update

***** Competitors – Please note *****

Entry forms are now available for the Written and Performance Competitions.

Please submit these as early as possible.

Closing date for entries – 15th September, 2004

Forms available from Event Co-ordinator – R Lee

160 Blair Road, Oakford WA 6121

Ph: (08) 9397 0409

Another very busy month. We will be glad when the Championships are over so we can resume normal life, whatever that is!

I did a presentation for Kalamunda National Seniors which proved very successful. There was an audience of over ninety and most were keen for more information about the Championship events. Lorelie provided me with contacts for all the National Senior's groups in Western Australia and I have managed to make appointments to talk to seven groups. National Seniors Head Office is going to advertise our event in their news letter. They also alerted me to the fact that our week for the WA Festival of Bush Verse (including the Championships) is also WA Seniors Week. They have put me onto the government department handling this and they are going to include our event in their advertising.

The Kenwick Rotary Club is becoming very active and I meet with them once a week to monitor progress. I find their involvement very comforting and encouraging.

On the negative side we failed in our request for Arts Council funding and our search for sponsors is not going far. Neither of these set backs are a problem. It just means that we need to work harder in other areas.

June Monthly Muster

This must surely rate as one of the best Musters we have had for a long time. The number of performers is increasing and we welcomed another missing member back to the fold – Trish Mathews. She has been tripping around the country for several months and arrived back in great form and treated us to *The Ballad of Rosie McGee*. An epic poem which she delivered in style.

I must admit Beryl Sylvester caught me on the back foot with her recitation of *Heroine Addict* as I was expecting a poem about drug addicts – heroin. Draat the English language!

The evening was made special by the presence of Elise Rosenberg and Tim Chambers. Elise is now our State Junior Champion and Tim is the State Novice Own Recital Champion. Both were presented with their trophies and recited their poems for us.

I had a late call from Anne Hayes extending their apologies for not attending. Poor John has been quite ill. We wish him well and hope he is fighting fit again.

Rod involved us all with his *sing-a-long*. For July's Muster he is conducting a *recite-a-long* (Where does he find these words? The computer certainly doesn't acknowledge them!) Anyway, you all have homework here. The selected poem is featured below for you to practice. There are many ways to have fun with poetry.

There was a great variety of types and styles of poems and the performance level is excellent. Along with regulars Rusty, Rod, Barry, Margaret and myself, we were entertained by Beryl, Peter Drayton, Brian Langley, Anne Tracey and, of course, Trish.

As Rusty commented we were having such a good time poor Tom had to boot us out the door. I am looking forward to the next Muster. See you then.

Kerry

"Recite-a-Long Poem"

Mulga Bill's Bicycle

'Twas Mulga Bill from Eaglehawk who caught the cycling craze;
He turned away the good old horse that served him many days;
He dressed himself in cycling clothes, resplendent to be seen;
He hurried off to town and bought a shining new machine;
And as he wheeled it through the door, with air of lordly pride,
The grinning shop assistant said, "Excuse me, can you ride?"

"See here, young man," said Mulga Bill, "From Walgett to the sea,
From Conroy's Gap to Castlereagh, there's none can ride like me.
I'm good all round at everything, as everybody knows,
Although I'm not the one to talk – I hate a man that blows.
But riding is my special gift, my chiefest, sole delight;
Just ask a wild duck can it swim, a wildcat can it fight
There's nothing clothed in hair or hide, or built of flesh or steel,
There's nothing walks or jumps or runs, on axle, hoof or wheel,
But what I'll sit, while hide will hold and girths and straps are tight
I'll ride this here two-wheeled concern right straight away at sight."

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that sought his own abode,
That perched above the Dead Man's Creek, beside the mountain
road.
He turned the cycle down the hill and mounted for the fray,
But ere he'd gone a dozen yards it bolted clean away.
It left the track, and through the trees, just like a silver streak,
It whistled down the awful slope towards the Dead Man's Creek.

It shaved a stump by half an inch, it dodged a big white-box:
The very wallaroos in fright went scrambling up the rocks,
The wombats hiding in their caves dug deeper underground,
As Mulga Bill, as white as chalk, sat tight to every bound.
It struck a stone and gave a spring that cleared a fallen tree,
It raced beside a precipice as close as close could be:
And then as Mulga Bill let out one last despairing shriek
It made a leap of twenty feet into the Dead Man's Creek.

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eagle Hawk, that slowly swam ashore:
He said, "I've had some narrer shaves and lively rides before:
I've rode a wild bull round a yard to win a five-pound bet,
But this was the most awful ride that I've encountered yet.
I'll give that two-wheeled outlaw best, it's shaken all my nerve
To feel it whistle through the air and plunge and buck and swerve.
It's safe at rest in Dead Man's Creek, we'll leave it lying still;
A horse's back is good enough henceforth for Mulga Bill."

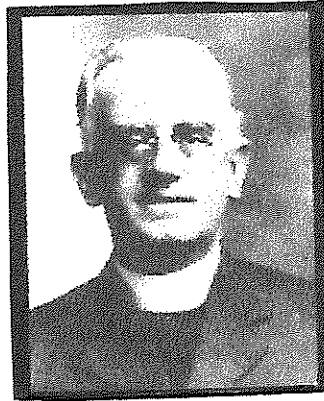
Banjo Paterson



"A walk with the Masters"

John O'Brien

1878 – 1952



John O'Brien was the pen name of Father Patrick Joseph Hartigan born in Australia to Irish parents. He became the parish priest at Narrandera, NSW, for 27 years, where the annual John O'Brien Bush Festival is now held.

He assumed the pseudonym of "John O'Brien", the name of the local milk man who was suspected of watering down his milk deliveries. Hartigan said his jingles were no better than the watered down milk! Many fine judges disagree. He held a kindly, humorous understanding of the lives of the men and women around him. His home life was full of affection and true piety.

His best known works are *Round the Boree Log* and *Said Hanrahan*.

Tangmalangaloo

The bishop sat in lordly state and purple cap sublime,
And galvanized the old bush church at Confirmation time;
And all the kids were mustered up from fifty miles around,
With Sunday clothes, and staring eyes, and ignorance profound.

Now was it fate, or was it grace, whereby they yarded too
An overgrown two-storey lad from Tangmalangaloo?

A heffy con of virgin soil, where nature has her fling,
And grows the trefoil three feet high and mats it in the spring;
Where mighty hills uplift their heads to pierce the welkin's rim,
And trees sprout up a hundred feet before they shoot a limb;
There everything is big and grand, and men are giants too-
But Christian Knowledge wilts, alas, at Tangmalangaloo.

The bishop summed the youngsters up, as bishops only can;
He cast a searching glance around, then fixed upon his man.
But glum and dumb and undismayed through every bout he sat;

The bishop gave a scornful look, as bishops sometimes do,
And glared right through the pagan in from Tangmalangaloo.

He seemed to think that he was there, but wasn't sure of that.
"Come, tell me boy," his lordship said in crushing tones severe,

"Come, tell me why is Christmas Day the greatest of the year?

How is it that around the world we celebrate that day
And send a name upon a card to those who're far away?
Why is it wandering ones return with smiles and greetings,
too?"

A squall of knowledge hit the lad from Tangmalangaloo.

He gave a lurch which set a-shake the vases on the shelf,
He knocked the benches all askew, up-ending of himself.
And oh, how pleased his lordship was, and how he smiled to say,

"That's good, my boy. Come, tell me now: and what is Christmas Day?"

The ready answer bared a fact no bishop ever knew –
"It's the day before the races out at Tangmalangaloo!"

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Banjo Paterson

Junior Poetry Section

poems from

Winthrop Baptist School

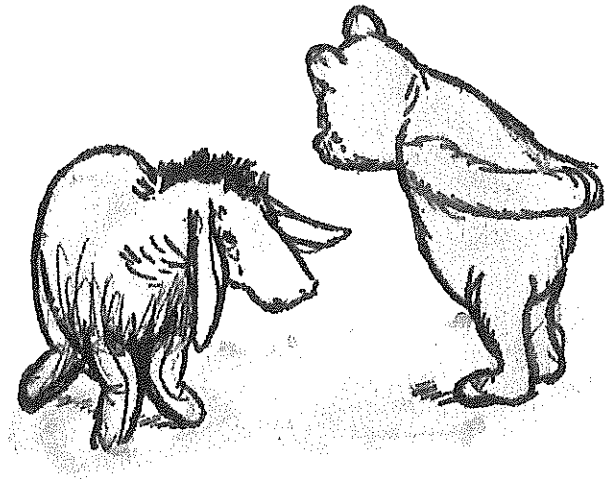
Homework!

Homework really is a pain.
They give us way too much.
You'll see it drive us all insane-
English, maths and such.

We can hear the people snoring
All around the room.
School is really way too boring.
Some days we feel like doom!

Mates

I learnt that nothing is too difficult to do
From a caring friend like you.
You've shown me that I should never stop
Until I reach the very top.



The Snail

Gary was a little snail
He liked to say "meow".
One day he went to a farm
And was eaten by a cow.

The Verse of Ogden Nash

The Hippopotamus

Behold the hippopotamus!
We laugh at how he looks to us,
And yet in moments dank and grim
I wonder how we look to him.
Peace, peace, thou hippopotamus!
We really look alright to us,
As you no doubt delight the eye
Of other hippopotami!

The Fly

God in his wisdom made the fly
And then forgot to tell us why.

The Termite

Some primal termite knocked on wood
And tasted it and found it good,
And that is why your Cousin May
Fell through the parlour floor today

It is exciting to receive these poetic works from the Juniors. It would appear there is no shortage of aspiring poets out there. If you have any children, grandchild or friends penning verse and would like to see their works presented in the newsletter please forward them on to the Editor.

And keep in mind the Australian Bush Poetry Championships in October, 2004. There is a Performance category – Junior Original and Junior Others - and a Written category – Junior under 13yo & Junior 13-17yo.

We will be making a special effort, mostly through the schools, to encourage the young people to compete

Committee Members – WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners 2003-2004

Rusty Christensen	President	9364 4491
Peter Nettleton	Vice-President	9417 8663
Jean Ritchie	Minutes Secretary	9450 3111
Kerry Lee	Treasurer	9397 0409
Rod Lee	Editor-Newsletter	9397 0409
Rae Dockery	Committee	9356 7426
June Bond	Committee	9354 5804
Edna Westall	Committee	9339 3028
Lorelie Tacoma	Immediate Past President	9310 1500

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Collins Craft & School Supplies

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Diggers Camp

160 Blair Road

Oakford

Ph: 9397 0409

See Justine for a complete range of craft supplies and wonderful friendly service & Crafty tips.

Rod, Kerry & Dave Lee will entertain you with Australian Bush Verse & Song at your venue or ours.

Important Notice!

Due to my usual incompetence I forgot to change the address on the Membership Renewal forms. Please send renewals to –

**Diggers Camp
160 Blair Road
Oakford WA 6121**

If you have already sent your renewal to the South Perth address don't worry. Michelle is very kindly holding them until we can collect them.

Kerry

Don't forget the AGM

◆
Friday 20th August, 2004

Come Bowling Club

6.00pm

◆
Please bring a plate

◆
Then stay and be entertained at our Fund Raiser night with
Comedy & Traditional Poetry & Music.