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# WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners



R. SUTCLIFFE

Newsletter : October 2003

**Beware**

**The Heats are Coming**

**Beware**

poets

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poets

**"Come All Ye" at Como Bowling & Recreation Club  
Cnr of Hensman and Sandgate Sts. South Perth  
Next Meeting Friday 3/10/2003 at 7.30pm**

## **A Word From The Boss Cocky**

Good day to you all in Bush Poetry Land!

I wish to place on record my appreciation for the response from members to my Call to Arms to assist with the initial planning stage for the national Championships 2004.

From the very first meeting for the Como Camp, where some fifteen members turned up, we got things rolling and I am delighted with the hard core group which has emerged.

The prospect of working with these enthusiastic people is in itself exciting.

Some hard discussions have been taken. They appear elsewhere in this issue. They were taken in the best interests of our association and have paved the way for ALL of us to make 2004 a stand out year in which Bush Poetry comes of age in Western Australia – indeed Australia - with the first National Championships being held in a capital city. It is a golden opportunity to promote our art to the wider community.

New faces at the table, June Bond, Jean Richie and Edna Westall, along with secretary Rod, treasurer Kerry and vice-president Peter Nettleton give us a nucleus of clear thinking, sound people to build on then the pressure goes on next year. There will be opportunity for ALL to share the load.

In the meantime keep supporting and clapping but above all, HAVE FUN and watch this space.

Cheers            Boss Cocky.

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## **Michelle's Musings**

G'day, Salut, Bongiori, Guten, tag. From Switzerland.

I'm glad I don't have to write poetry here in three or four languages (as on all the signs).

Geoff and I are having a wonderful time. It has been crazy summer weather here as it has been in England and Africa.

Geoff has perfected a new poem on this trip – started just before our travels.

Poetry has also featured in a set of English poetry books Geoff was given as a parting gift from his company. Nothing compares to Aussie Bush Poetry though in being able to tell a terrific story in rhyme and rhythm. We realise as we travel the true uniqueness of Australian poetry.

Hope your poetry is flowing in for the Wireless Hill written competition. Thanks to Wayne for sending us some of your poetry. It's great to hear from home.

See you all soon. Bye, A bientot, Ciao, Auf wiederschen.

Michelle

## Grandpa's Cup of Tea

Grandma found a packet of tea bags  
Though utterly ruined with time  
Unwilling was she to discard them  
For waste she declared was a crime.  
She had heard they make great firelighters  
When soaked in household kerosene,  
So without more to-dos she had done it,  
For Action and thrift was her scene.  
When grandpa came home from the tavern  
Around about quarter past ten  
He needed a cup of black coffee-  
It happened like this now and then.  
He could not lay his hands on the coffee,  
Just where it was, who could tell?  
So he reasoned a cup of black tea  
Would probably work just as well.

He discovered a jar full of tea bags-  
But why they were under the sink  
A body befuddled as Grandpa  
Was in no condition to think.  
Then grandma came into the kitchen,  
Exclaiming, "And just what is this?"  
Grandpa just looked a bit silly  
And asked if she wanted a kiss.  
Then Grandma recoiled from his presence,  
"What have you been drinking?" said she.  
But grandpa could honestly tell her,  
"It was only a cup of black tea."  
Though one day he says he will ask her  
If indeed she would care to explain  
Why she has chosen to never  
Buy those great tea bags again.



From "Grandpa's Deeds" by ©Peg Vickers

I have had a special request for more Grandpa poems from a member who loves reading them to his granddaughter. This page combines grandpa and grandma poems. Twice as much fun. Peg and Arthur, thank you both.

## Sports Car

I have this little motor car  
Which I am told resembles me.  
Of sporty lines and full of dash  
As anyone can see.

It roars out of the driveway  
And tears off down the street,  
Shouting at the neighbours  
Calling out "Beep! Beep!"

It glides up to the corners  
Changes down and moves away,  
Its motor joyfully singing.  
I'm a true blue sports coupe.

I took a close look at my car.  
I felt I really must.  
I noticed in those 'sporty lines'  
There's quite a lot of rust.

The shock absorbers don't absorb  
The shocks the way they used to do,  
It labours going up a hill  
And, sometimes, breaks askew.

It needs a valve grind or new head,  
A replacement petrol gauge,  
And the clutch is slowly slipping,  
But I guess that's old age.

So, when friends say my sporty car  
Closely resembles me,  
I thoughtfully just nod my head  
And ruefully agree.

© Arthur Leggett

## To New Grandparents

Now new life reaches out its hand  
And grasps with tiny fingers  
Your hand to seek security;  
And oh! The magic lingers.

Not your child but your children's child  
Yet, there is this bond,  
Life from you has been passed on  
Beyond – Beyond - Beyond.

From "A Book of Poems".  
© Arthur Leggett

## The Safe Bull

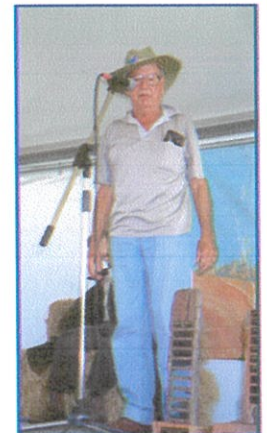
Grandma and grandpa had been for a walk  
But now they were late in the returning  
Grandpa's legs were beginning to ache  
While grandma's feet were a burning

They decided to take a shortcut home  
But neither had used any sense  
When without assessing the state of affairs  
They climbed through the farmer's fence.

The farmer was there at a distant gate  
They hoped he would let them pass  
When a giant Saint Gertrudis Bull  
Rose up from out the grass.

They called to the farmer from where he stood  
"Your bull can surely see us,  
Tell us if he is completely safe  
For he does look a bit fierce."

"of course my bull is completely safe,"  
He answered right and true,  
"And unless you run like Sebastian Coe  
He's a whole lot safer than you."



© Peg Vickers



## THE HOUSE THAT BILL BUILT (with Marg, and Paul, and Don and Gavin)

To build out in the country is a challenge. This we knew  
 But we had bought our block and longed to live there with that view.  
 We started out with grand ideas but couldn't meet the cost  
 So bit-by-bit we trimmed them down, and not too much was lost.  
 The tradesmen we employed were for the concrete, pipes and wiring.  
 The rest of it we built (with friends). Exciting! Also tiring!!

The frame was steel. A pile of lengths arrived and was offloaded,  
 A puzzle for my clever Bill as they weren't colour-coded  
 But soon he had two walls laid out and bolted them alright,  
 Then raised them in position where they balanced overnight.

He had to go to Queanbeyan to hire a special tool.  
 This suited me, as on the way he dropped the girls at school.  
 I tidied up the caravan. That didn't take too long.  
 Then, peering through a window, I could see that things were wrong.  
 A wind rushed up the gully and that frame began to sway.  
 I thought our house's skeleton was going to blow away!

I nursed my tiny baby and I hugged my little Tim.  
 Oh, where was my dear William? What on earth was keeping him?  
 Eventually I heard his car and rushed to meet him, calling.  
 With timber struts to prop it up we saved that frame from falling.

Our friends came at the weekend and they helped construct the roof.  
 A perfect job they did. It was completely waterproof.  
 The walls we clad with Hardiplank - a type of weatherboard  
 In ten-foot lengths. Our eldest daughter merits an award  
 For cooking, washing dishes, tucking young ones in at night  
 While Bill and I, on scaffolding, were working by moonlight.

When making all our plans we'd gone to quite a lot of trouble  
 To choose the safest things. Well.....later on amongst the rubble  
 We found a piece of Hardiplank. Here's something we would learn.  
 We tossed it in the fireplace. Wow! You should have seen it bum!!

Our lounge room measured forty feet, so when we got the chance  
 We invited several neighbours in so we could all square dance -  
 A mixture:- the shopkeeper, scientists, public servant too,  
 Pig farmer, grader driver and Vice-Chancellor ANU.  
 Then, gathered round the fireplace with a drink to end the night  
 We promised that the next time we would get those dance steps right.

We never did get carpet, but we did enjoy the view,  
 Ten thousand seedlings planted. Then it's off to somewhere new!!  
 We went back once to see it and we know it stands there still  
 And should for many years, that house we built up on the hill.

© Margaret Taylor

Margaret always writes her poetry from personal experience. She says she cannot write any other way. Margaret recited this poem beautifully at the August CAY. She has now started to enter written competitions - with several in the pipeline. We wish her the best in that endeavour.

Michelle



## August 2003 Come All Ye

What a great night we had! Numbers were well down but we suspect that might have been because of the footie. But those who had their focus in the right place ie Poetry were well rewarded (I hope).

We were also down on performers which meant those who were there were put under pressure to come up with extra items. As Michelle often highlights, a theme developed and the night turned into a comedy night.

The first half of the night was well under way when someone commented to me that with Michelle absent was someone recording the performances? Oops! I started scribing after that but can only give you a list of performers without poems.

It was great to have **Barry Higgins** present and performing. He is always entertaining and gave us a variety of humorous verse, including some of **Syd Hopkins'**. That was a real treat as **Syd**, himself, was present, which meant we had a double dose of his classic humour.

Then **Leigh Mathews** entertained us with several poems including a very topical one about playing footy in the under eights.

**Peter Nettleton** gave us several renditions in his special style. Some poems, I feel, are especially his to perform, like **The Day MacArthur Farted**, which is always well received. Must be the classic way he delivers it.

We were pleased to have **Trish Joyce** up in front of the mike and doing extremely well too.

And we are learning a lot about **Margaret Taylor's** family through the delightful poems she writes and presents.

We had a special visitor from Boyup Brook, **Bill Gordon**, who is an accomplished performer and who was able to assure us that Ron Evans is alive and well.

And **Rod and Kerry Lee** strutted their stuff as usual but I have nothing to say about those two!

Thanks to all who popped in a donation for the tea and coffee. Having this available has proved very popular and we would like it to be on going. Any surplus funds from the honour jar will go into the Club's account to help fund the Australian Championships. But don't forget to patronise the bar occasionally as I am sure the Bowling Club appreciate any extra income they can receive.

Kerry Lee

## Name Change!

It was suggested at the last meeting to table the idea of changing the name of our regular meetings from "Come All Ye" as it sounds very English, to something more in keeping with the Aussie style.

No-one was sure how the name evolved so if there is a good reason for retaining it please let us know.

If not, put your thinking caps on and come up with some suggestions and we can vote on it.

My bid is to steal from the "Bangtail Muster" and came up with "Poet's Muster" or "Bushie's Muster".

I'm sure someone can do better than that!

## Profiles of 2003-2004 Committee of WABP&YSA



**Rusty Christensen:** President Founder and inaugural President of WABPA 1995. Busily "retired", he promotes Bush Poetry and "Keeping the Aussie Tradition Alive" at every opportunity throughout his community, in the country and overseas. "Citizen of The Year" in 2001. In his 'spare time' he does therapeutic massage in his home clinic. His business card reads Bush Poet, Balladeer and Story Teller. Rusty started the Pioneer Lakes Environmental Education Centre about 1995 as well. W A Ambassador for "The Year of the Outback 2002".



**Peter Nettleton:** Vice President Past President 2000-2001. Peter is a lawyer in his day job. He has many interests outside of this demanding work. Doing a BA (Theatre/Drama) and an MA (Laws) is just some of these. Peter has been in the Association for 6 yrs. Peter loves and promotes the arts generally. He is a guitarist, singer, actor and member of a number of theatre and arts groups.



**Rod Lee:** Secretary and Association Member since 2000. Rod is the owner/manager of the family's furniture business. He also assists Kerry on the farm (though he may deny this for literary purposes). Rod came second in the "others competition" Wireless Hill" 2000. Rod also writes his own poetry, and recites with gusto and passion. Rod and Kerry love the bush and camping. Rod came 4<sup>th</sup> in the men's National Bush Poetry Championships in 2003.



**Kerry Lee:** Treasurer and Association Member since 2000. Kerry is the accountant for the Lees' family furniture business. Kerry writes and promotes Bush poetry in the community and schools. She also runs a hobby farm on the outskirts of Perth, which is a rich source of her written material. The family is also very involved in their local church where they recite their poetry. Kerry is the current female National Bush Poetry Champion for 2003.



**Michelle Sorrell:** Editor member of the editorial team 2000-2001 and past secretary. Part-time teacher and graphic designer. Michelle combines her newly discovered computer skills and artistic tendencies with information gathered from members to produce the Newsletter. She currently assists her partner Bush Poet, Geoff Bebb with marketing his new database for Nurseries as well as co-authoring a novel with him.



**Rae Dockery:** Committee Member . Rae became a committee member last year.

Rae has nurtured her love of poetry since a child, when her mother used to read poetry to her. Rae is still working part time as a medical receptionist. Rae likes all forms of the arts, theatre and music. Especially Jazz - she bops to Trad Jazz at Hyde Park. Rae is presently busy in the hills with time trials for Rally Australia - something she has been doing for sixteen years - since 1988.



**June Bond:** New Committee Member

June is soon to be retired from a busy bookkeeping business, and ready to smell the roses. She has three married daughters and four grandchildren with whom she loves spending time. Her hobbies include reading, painting and needlework. June is also a keen Eagles supporter.

**Jean Ritchie:** New Committee Member.

Jean joined the association about three years ago because she just loves listening to the Bush Poets. Jean has considerable people skills as she has been an interviewer for the Australian Bureau of Statistics - a tough job. She is also a member of the Penguin Club and says public speaking is a snack in comparison to getting up and reciting poetry - but she is really looking forward to taking part in the 2003-2004 challenges. In her spare time Jean loves, reading, crosswords and has just recently taken up golf.

The Members of the Editorial Sub-Committee  
Would like to thank all those,  
who contributed to this Edition of The Newsletter.

Without their support and enthusiasm,  
a Newsletter like this would not be possible.

Many Thanks

The Editor

## WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc

### Coming Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Co-ordinator</b>
27thSept-4 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2003	Royal Show (1;30 – 2:00 daily)	Rod Lee – 9397 0409
12 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2003	Veterans Athletics – with poets at Burswood	Wayne Pantall – 9362 3715
19 <sup>th</sup> October 2003	<u>Dardanup Festival</u> Poets and Audience welcome- (Val Lishman Health Research Foundation Fundraiser)	Cath Chandler – 08 9780 7742 (For more general details as well as poets registration of interest)

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