

# The Bully Tin

November, 2005



& Yarn Spinners

Monthly Muster at the Como Bowling & Recreation Club cnr Hensman & Sandgate Sts, South Perth  
Next meeting: Friday 4th November 2005 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm start.  
[www.wabushpoets.com](http://www.wabushpoets.com)

## State Championships



**1st**

**Keith Lethbridge**

**2nd**

**Brian Langley  
Peter Blyth**



**Written**

**Brian Langley**



**Country / City Challenge**

**City!**

**-by a whisker**

# Droppings from "The Boss Cocky"



G'day to all our mates in Bush Poetry.

In particularly the ones who turned up at Tumbulgum last weekend. What a great time was had by all at that impressive facility perched on the escarpment with the sweeping view out over Rockingham to the ocean.

Much has already been said in the final wrap up of the merits of the occasion, but as President, and at the risk of repetition, on behalf of not only the lucky ones in attendance, but for all members of our Association, I must again thank and praise the effort put in by Brian Langley for his tireless contribution, not only in co-ordinating the event but for the efficient and smooth running of it over the two days. Judy and self were at a concert since which, by interval and only six acts, was already half an hour behind schedule. I remarked that they could use our Brian - but he ain't available.

The state champs were not not only of a high standard, the City V Country concept worked well and created some friendly rivalry, which in turn generated great fellowship with so many practicing poets [play on words] together at one time. It was also heartening to see the numbers in the yarn spinning. This has been a part of our aims since day one, but has had an erratic history since. Cobber's yarn about his old mate Wally, was not only well done, it was true, and a wonderful example of the art of yarn spinning. It is hoped that we keep that ball rolling.

Having been around and involved with the highs and lows of our unique Australian art form since inception, I will venture to state that the happenings over the weekend mark a watershed for Bush Poetry here in WA. It is now established in the fabric and minds of the community at large. As has been stated before, our management committee is extremely competent, the judging panel has an air of consistency and reliability. The members are loyal and supportive. With the prospect of bringing a Cowboy poet out early next year, with the support of the US consul here in Perth, we can look forward eagerly, and with confidence to the future.

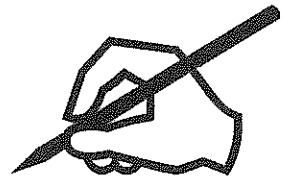
My congratulations go, not only to the winners and place getters in the comp, but to every single poetic person who stood on the stage at Tumbulgum and 'HAD A GO 'to make the occasion the success that it surely was.

That's all for now, but, keep writin', recitin' and above all, ' HAVE A GO '.

Rusty C. The Boss Cocky.

**The greatest calamity is not to have failed but  
To have failed to try.**

# Letters to the Editor



The weekend at Tumbulgum was an exciting fun time, one of the highlights being catching up with fellow poets from the country. It was encouraging for me to hear their comments on the Bully Tin as it is not often I receive feed back. This concerns me as it is your magazine and I want to produce one you all enjoy reading. Tumbulgum Farm was the perfect spot for the Challenge and the Championships from the rammed earth hall to the shop full of Australian products. Munching on hamburger prepared by the Lions Club while watching the sun set over the ocean and chatting to friends I thought "How special is this?". It was a pity more people didn't support the Bush Dance that evening as it was great fun—and highlighted how unfit I am!. I dragged Arthur up for one dance which he did with his usual cunning joining in the clappy bits but staying firmly fixed to the spot while I did the skippy-do bits. With age comes cunning.  
Kerry

## Whoops!

## Addition error

An unfortunate error in additions was discovered after the places had been announced and prizes awarded.

This moved Brian Langley up to equal second with Peter Blyth in the overall Championship results.

Keith Lethbridge retains the title of State Champion.

## WA State Championships Category Results

Category	1st	2nd	3rd
<b>Junior Original</b>	<b>Elise Rosenberg</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Junior - Others</b>	<b>Isabel Cullen</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Novice original</b>	<b>Brian Langley</b> The Reason that I'm Here	<b>Brian Gale</b> We Need Another Hero	<b>Wayne Pantall</b> The Town of Accoladia
<b>Novice - Others</b>	<b>Barry Higgins</b> The Illiterate Stockman (Syd Hopkinson)	<b>Bob Fraser</b> The Nark (C J Dennis)	<b>Erica Lumsden</b> The Cattle King (R Rafferty)
<b>Yarn Spinning</b>	<b>Keith Lethbridge</b> A Tribute to Wally	<b>Bill Park</b> Make Mine Beer	<b>Phil Strutt</b> The Search for Mt Mickelberg
<b>Contemporary</b>	<b>Rusty Christensen</b> Broome Dreaming (Bob Magor)	<b>Keith Lethbridge</b> Too Flamin' Old	<b>Barry Higgins</b> Bush Justice
<b>Original - Humorous</b>	<b>Peter Blyth</b>	<b>Keith Lethbridge</b>	<b>Tim Heffernan</b>
<b>Original - Serious</b>	<b>Keith Lethbridge</b>	<b>Peter Blyth</b>	<b>Arthur Leggett</b>
<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Keith Lethbridge</b>	<b>Rusty Christensen</b>	<b>Brian Langley</b>
<b>Written</b>	<b>Brian Langley</b>	<b>Val Read</b>	<b>Keith Lethbridge</b>

# September Monthly Muster



When I arrived at the Bowling Club I thought "Wow! Half of Perth is here to celebrate the WABP&YS 10th Birthday!" But, no. It was a gathering of the Orchid Society. Not that attendance at the Muster was down. The numbers were still great. Rod was the MC for the night kicking the evening off with an example of a One Minute Poem *Billabong*.

Rusty gave us a short history of the WABP&YS Association before reciting A B Paterson's *Bush Christening*.

It was good to see John Hayes back at the mike. As he was unable to attend the Traditional Night he presented the poem he had learnt for that evening—Lawson's answer to Paterson which was published in the Bulletin in August 1892. A great effort too. Christine (sorry, I didn't catch the surname), a visitor and member of the Araluen Folk Club gave a terrific rendition of Col Wilson's *Whing'in Club*, followed by the rather heart wrenching poem *Scotts of the Riverina* by Lawson.

Grace William's was in fine style with *A Morning Song* by C J Dennis. Your repertoire must be quite considerable by now, Grace. October is Grace's month, and no wonder, as she married in October and has a child and grandchild born in the same month.

Another visitor then took the mike, Lavonia Scott, reading two beautiful love poem's written by her Father, Hector, who was also in the audience. She was justifiably very proud of her dad. I then read two poems Jean Little wanted to share but did not wish to read. One poem *Windows of Gold* took me back to my Sunday School Days when I first heard the story. The other poem *Those Were The Days* looked like being a little rude until my reputation was saved by the twist at the end. I will print these poems in the Bully Tin as space allows.

Then a bit of nostalgia as Margaret Taylor told the story of *The Old Singer*. The treadle sewing machines are a collectors item now. I vividly remember trying out my Grandma's machine and sewing my finger while trying to work out the treadle action!

And then the Break! Oh, dear. What a disaster! We had planned to have a birthday cake but, without Edna to organise us, not only was there no cake, there was no biscuits as well!

Fortunately we averted a riot and commenced the second session with a presentation by Tom Conway of Ten Year Certificates to Rusty and Lorelie. They are the only foundation members of the WABP&YS still in the club. Lorelie has just stepped down from the committee after ten years of service but is still an active member.

Then it was over to Syd to liven up the night with a series of his funny poems. I love the little twists Syd comes up with and his great sense of the ridiculous. It's always fun to have Syd in front of the mike!

Then, all the way from Cornwall in England, David Ellis with *Job For The Last Twenty Years*, selling fruit and veg.

Bob recited *Recognition and Identification*, and was followed by Arthur with *The Bush School*. Arthur is certainly a class act and his reminiscences of his old school and the story of his father's false teeth were worth hearing.

Brian Langley entertained us with his poem *Our National Food*. And what else would that be but Vegemite!

Then it was time for a song from Wal, *Raising Up William Ryllie*. Not quite Bush Poetry but still enjoyed.

Barry Higgins had us laughing again. I didn't catch the title of the poem. There was a lot of noise from the bar to contend with.

I wasn't sure whether to perform a serious or funny poem but a request from the audience saw me peddling out Billy Kearne's *Peddling Pete*. It was a bit late in the night for all that exercise but fun never the less.

Then Rod closed the evening with that wonderful poem from Australia's top poet, Milton Taylor—*Memory Lane*.

This certainly was an evening for variety and it was great to have some new faces at the mike.

Kerry

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## Windows of Gold

There is a legend that's often been told  
Of the boy who searched for the windows of gold,  
The beautiful windows he saw far away  
When he looked in the valley at sunrise each day.  
And he yearned to go down to the valley below  
But he lived on a mountain that was covered with snow  
And he knew it would be a difficult trek  
But that was a journey he wanted to make.  
So he planned by day and he dreamed by night  
Of how he could reach the great shining light.  
And one golden morning when dawn broke through  
And the valley sparkled with diamonds of dew  
He started to climb down the mountain side  
With the windows of gold as his goal and his guide.  
He travelled all day and weary and worn,  
With bleeding feet and clothes that were torn  
He entered the peaceful valley town  
Just as the golden sun went down.  
But he seemed to have lost his "golden light".  
The windows were dark that had once been bright.  
And hungry and tired and lonely he cried.  
"Won't you show me the windows of gold?" he sighed.  
And a kind hand touched him and said "Behold!  
High in the mountains are the windows of gold."  
For the sun going down in a great golden ball  
Had burnished the windows of his cabin so small.  
And the Kingdom of Gold with its great shining light  
Lit the golden windows that shone so bright.  
It's not a far distant place somewhere.  
It's as close to you as a silent prayer.

Author: Unknown

This is a gentle reminder not to under value or discard what you have to seek what you perceive as desirable for you may look back in regret, realising what you had was what you wanted all along.

# Way out back of Perth!

"Oh the Spring Time it brings on the shearing....." and so on the old song goes but personally I don't know why anyone feels that is something to sing about! At Diggers Camp it is always a time of tension and strife. We have a herd of three sheep—Ted, a 15yo Leicester ewe, Ellie-May, a black and white merino, and Baa-Lee, a Texel who you have met before.

For eleven months of the year they are no problem, quietly getting on with the job of chewing down the grass and weeds and the occasional shrub or tree we have just planted. But then comes Spring! And this has been a shy, capricious Spring. The sun comes out, along with the blowies and I immediately panic - Fly strike! They must be shorn without delay! Next day it's wet and cold and I can't risk poor old Ted catching a chill. Finally we bite the bullet and ring the shearer only to be informed he has retired. Drats! No customer loyalty there! He refers us to another shearer. Rod rings and leaves a message. He doesn't ring back. We find another number. Ring and leave a message. The first shearer rings back. He is coming, but doesn't. Second shearer will come when he can. Finally, Saturday morning the shearer is coming! I'm so confused now I can't remember if it is the first or the second shearer but the important thing is he is coming. All we need to do now is round the sheep up and pen them. How hard can that be?

It has been a breeze shifting Ellie-May and Ted since Baa-Lee joined the flock as she walks on a lead and they happily follow behind her. Every single time ....except today when the shearer is coming. Baa-Lee decides to collapse. Desperately I drag her along on her side, shaking a bucket, but the other two aren't deceived and bid a quick retreat to the furthest corner of the paddock. After moving on to Plan B, C & D they finally pen themselves after we revise Plan A. By this time we are ready for a reviving cup of tea and a scotch or two. Marital harmony has disintegrated as Rod fails to see the humour in running fruitlessly over ten acres pursuing two woolly rumps.

Just as we collapse in a heap the shearer arrives. Again I am anxious. I have had shearers remove as much flesh as they do wool. One lopped half an ear off Ted, intentionally I must add. Ted had a cancer on her ear and while I was discussing the logistics of taking her to the vet to have it removed he sliced the offending ear off. I collapsed in a heap but neither Ted or the shearer were fussed about it all. The retired shearer would rarely cause a nick. Would the new shearer be his equal?

Well, fortunately for the sheep this one is a gem. Not only does he give them all a stylish cut he also finishes off with some pretty blue stripes on their backs and shoves a delicious drench down their throats! And while he works he shares stories with us of shearing in the outback. We were enthralled. This is the stuff good old Aussie yarns are made of. I wished we had three dozen sheep, not three, so he would keep talking.

One yarn, in particular, is worth sharing.

The year was 1971 and he was part of a shearing team being trucked up to a station. It was a three day trip and the team were perched on the back of a truck with all their gear. After the 9G tractor trek we could imagine how much fun that would be! They drove through a town but the boss wasn't stopping. The town had a pub and he knew from experience if his team could disembark he would lose them all to the pub for a day or two or three. He remained deaf to the pleas from the back of the truck until told he would have to stop as one of the swags had *accidentally* fallen off.

"No way" he cried. "Whoever's lost their swag will have to make do without one".

"That's okay by us, Boss" came the reply. "It was your swag that hit the dirt".

The Boss immediately stopped and the men vanished into the pub!

A great little yarn.

Kerry



# Poems from the Championships

## Old Hector

He'd be sitting on the footpath as I walked by each day.  
His skin that once was shiny black now seemed a mottled grey.  
Beneath the Poinciana tree, the sunlight's dappled shade,  
Hid disfigurements that the sun and time had made.

A pair of faded, once black shorts, was all Old Hector wore;  
With reading glasses on his head, though I don't know what for.  
I never saw him read a book, I'm told he knew not how,  
But he knew well, the book of life. On that I'd take a vow.

For I'd been told that in his day, he'd been a man of worth,  
Known for his special skills, from Wyndham down to Perth.  
For he could read the signs he saw, like footprints in the sand  
He could always find fresh water in this dusty arid land.

He'd track the flight of finches, and watch the eagles soar  
And see the trees along the creek from fifteen miles or more  
And food, he'd find, enough for all, when there was none to see.  
A kangaroo, deep in the shade, beneath a stunted tree.

The old explorers knew him well, his skills they'd often use.  
A young man then, his name unsung, he didn't make the news;  
For he was black, and if at all, his presence got a note;  
"Accompanied by a black tracker" was all the papers wrote.

But had he not been with them, The chances are today  
The history that we learned at school, would read a different way.  
For the names that fill the journals, of travels far and wide  
Would be like Burke and Wills are known. Just known for how they die

The tribal scars that on his chest, he'd once displayed with pride  
Some people now, within the town, insisted that he hide.  
But Hector took no notice, he owned no shirt and tie,  
He sat bare-chested on the path, as people walked on by

Some turn away as they walk past, as if he wasn't there.  
A few cross to the other side, and some, they stop and stare.  
But one or two, including me, we'd nod and say G'day  
He'd raise a hand, (he rarely spoke), and we'd go on our way.

And he would sit with tired eyes, beneath his silver hair  
A swarm of flies around his face, he didn't seem to care.  
He'd gaze up at the mountain-side, a smile upon his lips.  
Perhaps he was remembering, those past exploring trips.

I don't know much about him, there's very few that do.  
I'm told he had a family once, but they died from the flu.  
I'd heard he used to help police, to find folks who were lost;  
That he could ride a wild horse, and rarely, he'd get tossed.

But who can know what is the truth, it's all too long ago.  
He's sat upon the footpath here, for twenty years or so.  
How old is he? I've no idea, perhaps he's eighty five.  
The folks who knew him in his youth, there's few of them alive.

The district nurse looks after him, makes sure that he is fed.  
He's got a room around the back, It's where he has his bed.  
There's some who say, he shouldn't be, allowed to sit and stare,  
The footpath is no place for him, that he should be in care.

But I believe that where he sits, is where he wants to be;  
In the dappled shade beneath the Poinciana tree.  
I know, one day, he wont be there. His life will pass away.  
But I'll still see Old Hector there, and I'll still say, G'day.

Brian Langley

## DUSKY ANGEL

By a wilga tree at Yandi stands a battered wooden cross,  
With the white paint cracked and peeling and the faded letters lost.  
One or two might know the story of that long forgotten grave,  
But it holds a deeper secret where the wilga branches wave,  
A deeper, darker secret where the wilga branches wave.

Her skin was dusky velvet and her dark hair soft and long,  
Her features carved in ebony, both delicate and strong,  
Her eyes, alive with passion, as wise as any sage,  
Her body warm and supple, just fourteen years of age,  
The body of a woman, just fourteen years of age.

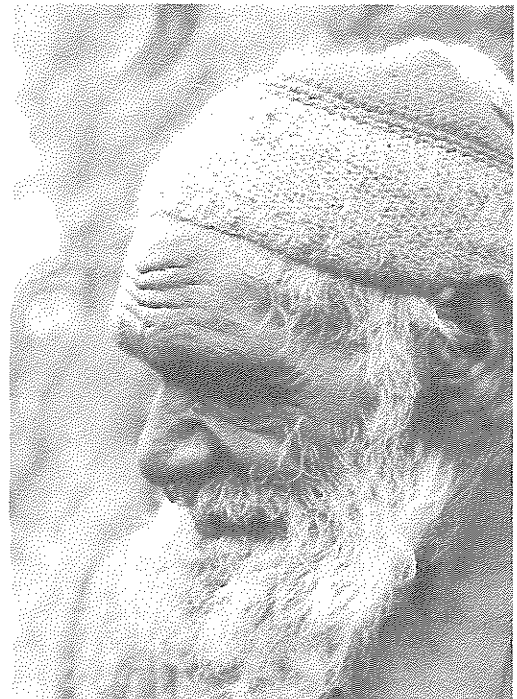
Then came a foolish vagabond of barely twenty one,  
With no consideration but to do what could be done,  
To run his fingers through her hair, to kiss her tender face,  
To hold that supple body in a passionate embrace,  
That willing, loving body in a passionate embrace.

And so he left his station camp and as the years rolled by,  
He dreamt about that night of love beneath the moonlit sky,  
Only to find those faded words along the Yandi run,  
The legend: "Died in labour, the mother and the son".  
May God protect and bless them both, the mother and the son.

By a wilga tree at Yandi, after thirty seven years,  
He stands beside that wooden cross and wipes away his tears,  
And still they haunt his troubled mind, though many years have flown,  
And still he dreams about the girl he loved and left alone,  
That peaceful, dusky angel and the son he might have known.

Keith Lethbridge

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# Poems from the Championships

## Junior Entry

### SARDINES

A culinary tour-de-force  
Is sardines and tomato sauce,  
And once upon a time I was fan.  
In point of fact I thought it wise  
To stock emergency supplies,  
So into the Nissan toolbox went a can.

For many months I drove about  
And never had the toolbox out;  
Without a hitch I travelled near and far,  
But then, it couldn't be denied  
That something horrible had died,  
And not along the road, but in the car !

I searched the Nissan high and low,  
Wherever wounded snakes might go,  
Or where a rat could crawl away to die,  
Until at last, in sheer despair,  
I saw that toolbox lying there,  
So thought I'd better give it one last try.

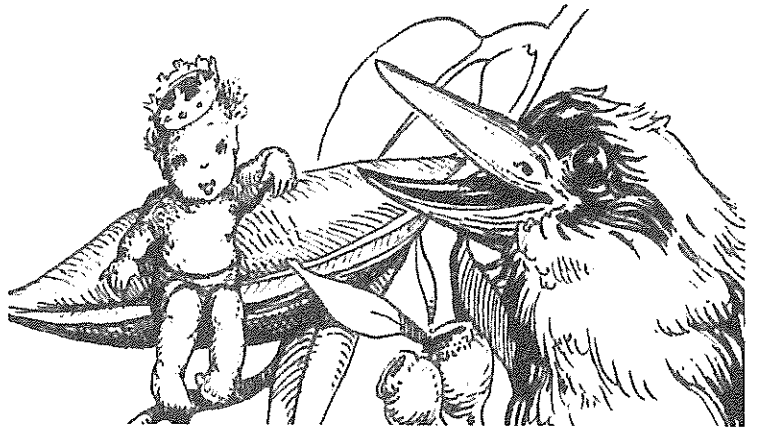
I opened up the metal lid  
And nearly fainted when I did,  
Beneath that pestilential Devil's brew;  
An odious, malignant smell,  
Straight from the rotting bowels of Hell.  
(It hit me like a lump of four-by-two.)

That sardine can that I forgot,  
Was opened up and left to rot;  
Punctured by a sharpened tool somehow,  
And though I tried to scrub it well,  
I couldn't wash away that smell;  
It lingers in the Nissan even now.

\* \* \*

So if we meet along the track,  
And should you offer me a snack,  
I'd gladly share a plate of ham and beans,  
Sinkers and jam, bushman's stew,  
Or even pan-fried cockatoo,  
But please, don't try to tempt me with sardines !

Keith Lethbridge



### A New Aussie

She was the loveliest teacher I'd ever met,  
With a radiant smile and air,  
She went off pregnant during the second term,  
And left right then and there.

All the holidays I wondered,  
Whether it would be a girl or a boy,  
I knew whatever it would be,  
It would be her bundle of joy.

On the second week she gave birth,  
I was in Melbourne at the time,  
When I came to know of the wonderful news,  
It really was sublime!

She turned out in the end to be,  
More precious than a pearl,  
My favourite teacher of all time had given birth,  
To a beautiful baby girl.

Elise Rosenberg

**Committee Members – WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners 2004-2005**

<b>Rusty Christensen</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>9364 4491</b>
<b>Tom Conway</b>	<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>9339 2802</b>
<b>Jean Ritchie</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>9450 3111</b>
<b>Kerry Lee</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>9397 0409</b>
<b>June Bond</b>	<b>Treasurer /Schools Co-ord.</b>	<b>9354 5804</b>
<b>Edna Westall</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>9339 3028</b>
<b>Brian Langley</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>9361 3770</b>

**Members please note** Please contact any of the above committee members if you have any queries or issues which you feel require attention.

**Events Calendar**

- Nov 4 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491**
- Nov 12 Glenn Innes "Land of the Beardies Festival" N Campbell 02 6732 2663**
- Dec 2 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491**
- January Tamworth Bush Poetry Competition & Blackened Billy Written Competition  
SSAE Jan Morris PO Box W1 West Tamworth 2340**
- Jan 6 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491**
- Feb 4 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491**
- Feb 24 Closing date Dunedoo NSW Written Competition Sue Stoddart 02 6375 1975**
- Feb 28 Closing date Midlands Literary Competition SSAE PO Box 1563 Ballarat Vic 3354**
- Mar 4 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491**
- Mar 5 Closing date Ipswich Poetry Feast—\$2,600 Written Competition 07 3810 6761**
- Mar 10 Closing date Grenfell NSW Short Story & Verse Written competitions SSAE PO Box 77 Grenfell 2810**
- Mar 10 Closing date Henry Kendall Poetry Award SSAE Central Coast Poets PO Box 276 Gosford 2250**
- Mar 15-19 Narrandera NSW John O'Brien Bush Festival & Competition 1800 672 392**

**If you are aware of any events which may be of interest to poets or poetry lovers which are not listed above please advise me by phoning 08 9397 0409 or posting to 160 Blair Road, Oakford WA 6121**