

The Bully Tin



March, 2005

& Yarn Spinners

Monthly Muster at the Como Bowling & Recreation Club cnr Hensman & Sandgate Sts, South Perth
Next meeting: Friday 4th March, 2005 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm start.

Labour Day Holiday

7 Mar '04

A reminder to those lucky members of the WABP&YS Association who no longer need to roll up the swag and hump their bluey off to work each day and for whom this important holiday may pass unnoticed. And for those who can break from their labour and relax around the campfire with a cuppa.



Australia's on the Wallaby

*Our fathers came to search for gold,
The mine has proved a duffer;
From bankers, boss and syndicate
We always had to suffer.
They fought for freedom for themselves,
Themselves and mates to toil,
But Australia's sons are weary
And the billy's on the boil.*

*Australia's on the wallaby,
Just listen to the coo-ee;
For the kangaroo, he rolls his swag
And the emu shoulders bluey.
The boomerangs are whizzing round,
The dingo scratches gravel;
The possum, bear and bandicoot
Are all upon the travel.*

*The cuckoo calls the bats and now
The pigeon and the shag,
The mallee hen and platypus
Are rolling up their swag;
For the curlew sings a sad farewell
Beside the long lagoon,
And the brolga does his last way waltz
To the lyrebird's mocking tune.*

*There's tiger-snakes and damper, boys,
And what's that on the coals?
There's droughts and floods and ragged duds
And dried-up water holes;
There's shadeless trees and sun-scorched plains,
All asking us to toil;
But Australia's sons are weary
And the billy's on the boil.*

Anonymous

Droppings from "The Boss Cocky"



My apologies for flying off to the USA in January without depositing my droppings—a matter of mixed messages.

time and

Yes! I am back, after surviving a three week odyssey in that amazing country, where I met up and travelled with the female Waltzing Matilda and National Champion Bush Poet Melanie Hall and National male title holder Milton Taylor who is not only known to supporters of the art here but also in the US where he visits on a regular basis.

Also in our party as driver, guide, host and absorber of Milton's acerbic wit was Dick Warwick, a cowboy poet in his own right, musician, artist, Aussieophile and just about the nicest bloke you would meet in a day's march.

Elko was a wonderful experience—as one aficionado said 'in the middle of winter, in the middle of nowhere'. We performed to audiences of up to 400 as well as going to schools in the area where we were treated like celebrities, the kids were just great as were the people at the Gathering—much like our own Bush Poetry folk.

After Elko we headed north, staying at a working ranch overnight, then into Oregon state—scenery was impressive—before going on the Dick's property in Washington state which we used as a base for doing various "gigs" (funny word) and schools in and around the area.

There was plenty of snow in Elko, but in Washington state they are having a snow 'drought' - still cold. Despite all the warnings, I hardly got to use my snow gear and thermal underwear, so brought it home again.

International travel is always interesting or eventful, my journey was no exception, for the three weeks I was away, I calculated that I spent over two days in airport lounges, including a 22 hour stint in Salt Lake City—that's show biz.

Rumour has it that Australia Day on the hill was successful, and why not? I knew Tom Conway would do a good job, backed up by the rest of the team, how could it be otherwise? 'Thanks' to everyone who contributed, poets, organisers and the audience—Bush Poetry people are special. So now it's back to keeping the Bush Poetry flag flying.

BOYUP BROOK POETRY—This event gets better each year. From a modest beginning by Brian Gale performing off the back of a ute to rounded audience of about fifteen in the early 90's, to over 500 in 2004. I have been informed from a reliable source that the attendance this year was in the 700-800 area—now that is food for thought.

The outstanding show was organised by our man on the spot, Ron Evans, who did a top job of not only pulling the show together but also acting as an efficient compare for the morning. A comprehensive wrap up follows.

Rusty aka The Boss Cocky

Boyup Brook

Bush Poet's Breakfast

Again another excellent weekend at Boyup Brook. The crowd was in a great mood to be entertained and from feed back later they really enjoyed the show. Brian Gale opened the show and made the comment how pleased he was to see how well the numbers had grown in the 14 years since starting at Harvey Dickson's. Leigh Mathews was next again at his best with his yarns and poetry, a true professional. Rusty, after his overseas trip did his and our favourites. His professionalism shows through at all times. Chris Sadler left home at 3am Sunday and Farmer Don drove down while she had a nap. Her style and poetry is always a crowd pleaser, especially for the farmer's wives. A great performance, Chris. David Sears did his first show at Boyup and his shearing poems go over well with all the farming group. We hope you'll be back next year Dave.

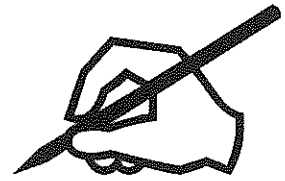
Bill Gordon, our local poet, did some of his best—*How Macdougall Topped the Score* (Thomas E Spencer) and *Turbulence* (Murray Hartin). A polished performance Bill. Peter Blyth, looked after by wife Jill, came up from Albany and did his numerous classics to the delight of the large crowd

Erica Lumsden recited some very nice poems which suited her soft voice. I got some good feed back over your performance, Erica—into her second show now and showing much more confidence. Bob Fraser is one of the character poets at Boyup and has been coming for a few years now. He always does a great job and to me is a prime example of the enjoyment of the visual effect of watching as well as hearing a good poet. Les Cheetham from Katanning, 89 years young, was once again one of the highlights of the morning with his lengthy (9 minute)

May I sincerely thank all artists for travelling such long distances to perform. The estimated numbers attending the show were around 520. The success of the morning was due to you all being reliable and confident in your performances. The Boyup Bush Poets Breakfast has a great future ahead thanks to you all.

Ron Evans

Letters to the Editor



A huge thankyou to those who responded to my appeal for more poems by Dorothea Mackellar. I was stunned and impressed by the response—Colleen Byrnes photocopying a poem, Verona Daniels & Evie Perrins hand writing two poems each and Arthur Leggett actually posting me a book of her poems. It has been wonderful reading them all and discovering more about this lovely poet and even more wonderful to know how helpful our members are and how generous they are with their time. I will reproduce as many of the poems as will fit the page. Thank you again Kerry

Colour

The lovely things that I have watched unthinking,
Unknowing, day by day,
That their soft dyes had steeped my soul in colour
That will not pass away:-

Great saffron sunset clouds, and larkspur mountains,
And fenceless miles of plain,
And hillside golden-green in that unearthly
Clear shining after rain.

And nights of blue and pearl, and long smooth beaches,
Yellow as sunburnt wheat,
Edged with a line of foam that creams and hisses,
Enticing weary feet.

And emerald, and sunset-hearted opals,
And Asian marble, veined
With scarlet flame, and cool green jade, and moonstones
Misty and azure stained;

And almond trees in bloom, and oleanders,
Or a wide purple sea,
Of plain-land gorgeous with a lovely poison,
The evil Darling pea.

If I am tired I call on these to help me
To dream—and dawn-lit skies,
Lemon and pink, or faintest, coolest lilac,
Float on my soothed eyes.

There is no night so black but you shine through it,
There is no morn so drear,
O Colour of the World, but I can find you,
Most tender, pure and clear.

Thanks be to God, Who gave this gift of colour,
Which who shall seek shall find;
Thanks be to God, Who gives me strength to hold it,
Though I were stricken blind.

☺ WABP&YS members are NOT associate members of the KSP but of the WA State Literature Centre.

Letters, articles & other submissions can be sent to:
The Bully Tin
160 Blair Road Oakford WA 6121

IN A SOUTHERN GARDEN

When the tall bamboos are clicking to the restless little breeze,
And bats begin their jerky skimming flight,
And the creamy scented blossoms of the dark pittosporum trees,
Grow sweeter with the coming of the night.

And the harbour in the distance lies beneath a purple pall,
And nearer, at the garden's lowest fringe,
Loud the water soughs and gurgles 'mid the rocks below the wall,
Dark-heaving, with a dim uncanny tinge

Of a green as pale as beryls, like the strange faint-coloured flame
That burns around the Women of the Sea:
And the strip of sky to westward which the camphor-laurels frame,
Has turned to ash-of rose and ivory —

And a chorus rises valiantly from where the crickets hide,
Close-shaded by the balsams drooping down —
It is evening in a garden by the kindly waterside,
A garden near the lights of Sydnev town!

ONCE WHEN SHE THOUGHT ALOUD

I've had all of the apple, she said,
Except the core.
All that many a woman desires —
All and more.
Children, husband, and comfort enough
And a little over.
Hungry Alice and bitter Anne
Say I'm in clover.

I've had all of the apple, she said.
— All that's good.
Whiles I feel I'd throw it away,
The wholesome food,
Crisp sweet flesh snowy-cool, and skin
Painted bright —
To have a man that I couldn't bear
Out of my sight.

SPRING ON THE PLAINS

Spring has come to the plains,
And, following close behind,
Green of the welcome rains
And spice of the first warm wind.
Beating of wings on high,
For, overhead in the blue,
Southward the brolgas fly,
The cranes and pelicans, too,
Ibis and proud black swan —
And quivering cries float clear,
After the birds are gone,
Still lingering in the ear.

Everywhere we pass
The horses tread soft and deep;
Clover and young green grass —
Hark to the grazing sheep
Cropping steady and slow —
A peaceful, satisfied sound:
Thick on the paths we go,
Gold flowers are starring the ground.
Spring, and the world's astir,
And everything gives praise,
Singing the strength of her
These lovely lengthening days.

February Monthly Muster



The Muster kicked off under the guidance of Lorelie this month. Performers and audience had to compete with a happy, noisy group from the other side of the bar but this competition left early and we settled into the evenings entertainment unaccompanied.

Lorelie allotted me the privilege (???) of being first to front the mike. It seemed prudent to perform one of Keith Lethbridge's poems *The Cast Iron Ladle* followed by one of my favourite contemporary poets, Richard Macgoffin, *From The Lanterns*.

Its always a treat when Tim Heffernan can join us. To lift my spirits all he need do is stand at the mike and smile. Sharing his clever witty poems is a bonus. This time he recited some of his earlier poems written at Church camp. They weren't exactly the stuff of Saints – *Blasphemy & The Vagabond Christian*—but who can go past that smile?

David Sears gave a great rendition of a Henry Lawson poem not often performed *Reedy River*, followed by Margaret Taylor who has become a staunch environmentalist and is recycling her poems. She has been a prolific writer producing one poem a month for two years! Well done Margaret. I don't think any of us could match that effort.

Brian Langley shared his experiences of a trip to Queensland where the weather is *perfect all the time!* He also recited one on flying fox poo, which took me back to my childhood in Grafton. Our house, with its fruit trees, was in the flight path of the flying foxes so we knew all about dodging pool!

Poor Val Reid had a tough time reading her serious poems as the mike slowly wilted downwards with Val valiantly following it. It was unfair competition. I think a minor adjustment should prevent this from happening again.

Grace Williamson made an impressive grand debut reciting one of Val's poems about cremating grandad and baking a cake with his ashes! Poets certainly pick some bizarre topics.

Silvia Rowell defaulted after her accident (refer page 7) and asked Alex Alec to read her choice for the evening by Edgar Guest *It Couldn't Be Done!*

We always know we are in for a lively time when Barry Higgins takes the mike and he didn't disappoint us this time with some yarns and *Four Aces and a King*.

Peter Drayton, who has been absent for a while, shared Barcroft Boake's tragic poem *Where The Dead Men Lie* And Tim lightened the mood leading us into the break with *The Saga of Tim Facey*—who had money in Rothwells—and *Australia Day*—which involved litigation after the fireworks set his hat on fire. And the lawyer involved was none other than Stinger!

Peter's choice of poets led me to *Jim's Whip* and then one of my favourite Paterson poems *The Story of Mongrel Grey*.

The mike stole the show again when Barry paid tribute to Connie Herbert by reciting her poem *JP Justice*. Connie was a real character in the Bush Poetry scene and she is missed by the long time attendees of the Musters.

David Sears recited Dixy Solley's poem "*When Your Pen is Full of Cobbers and You're Half a Pen Behind*" and *Blasted Crows* by Bob Magor.

Then Brian closed the evening with a few of his delightful poems written for kids and *Golf*—one of those special moments but he was dreaming.

Despite a full program the evening finished early but no one seem concerned about an early night.
Kerry

Diggers Camp takes Bush Poetry to the People

With the National Championships a fading memory Rod and Kerry have now focused on their original plan to make Diggers Camp the centre of Bush Verse and Australiana entertainment in Western Australia.

Strong interest from tour companies, social groups and caravan and motor home clubs has been very encouraging.

A tour of country venues with Pat Drummond, Karen-Lynne and Peter Blyth has had a small hiccup with the cancellation of the Kalgoorlie leg but all other venues are confirmed.

An experiment of staging midweek Seniors Concerts at Diggers Camp in April featuring our tour entertainers has attracted good bookings. If you are interested in attending book soon as there are only 100 seats available each day.

We are negotiating with popular Folk Musician, Bernard Carney, to hold combined Winter Fireside Concerts and negotiations are underway with Marco Gliori and Murray Hartin for the November Concert. Another thought was to conduct a few walk up Bush Poets breakfasts throughout the year.

If you would like more information about Diggers Camp events for 2005 please contact Rod or Kerry on 08 9397 0409.

A Walk With The Masters

George Essex Evans

1863—1909

George Essex Evans spent the first seventeen years of his life in England. His father, who was a QC in the House of Commons, died when he was only months old. He was raised and educated by his mother.

In 1881 he immigrated to Queensland with his brother and two sisters. After deciding the farming life was not for him he became a journalist working for *The Queenslander*. He then went on to become a teacher and a Public Servant, working as the district register in Toowoomba. He married and had one son.

The first book he produced was *The Repentance of Magdalene Despar*. He wrote good swinging patriotic verse and won fifty pounds for *Ode to Commonwealth Day*. His best known book of poetry was *The Secret Key and Other Verses*.

Though sensitive by nature and suffering deafness for most of his life, he was an athlete with a strong strength of character.

In 1928 *Collected Verses of G E Essex* was produced and a monument was erected to him after his death in Webb Park, Toowoomba.

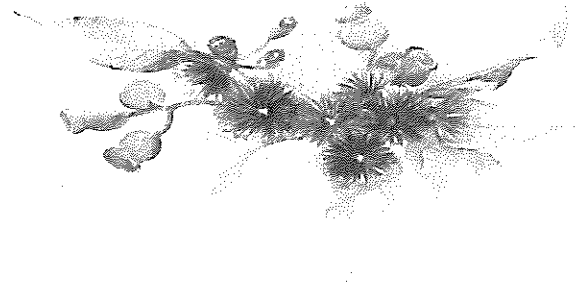
The Average Man

HIS hat looks worn, and his coat-sleeves shine,
As I see him step from his 'bus at nine;
His boots are pieced and his tie home-made,
And his trousers patched where the edge was frayed,
And his face is lined by the stress of life
Where a man must fight for his bairns an wife.
"Who's that?" I ask, as his face I scan.
And the answer comes—"O, an average man."

He has not got notes, he has not got gold,
But his homely lunch, in his handbag old;
And day by day, as the seasons go,
He follows his duty to and fro,
And shadows follow him everywhere—
Grim want, and worry, and dread are there,
For life is not on a gorgeous plan—
Far, far from it—to the average man.

The floods, the banks, and the curtailed screw,
The weekly bills, and the grasping Jew,
The servant's wage and the doctor's fee,
And the needful change by the breezy sea,
And the pent-up hours at the desk, which mean
A man's brain changed to a mere machine,
And a wife's tired eyes and the children wan,
All press like lead on the average man.

When the blood is up 'tis a simple thing
To charge where the bombs and the bullets sing.
But he is worthy a higher place
Who fronts his woes with a smiling face,
For the noblest strife in our life to-day
Is the humdrum fight in the humdrum way.
O, wealth and genius may lead the van,
But the hero is often an average man.



The Women of the West

They left the vine wreathed cottage and the mansion on the hill,
The houses in the busy street where life is never still,
The pleasure of the city and the friends they cherished best:
For love they faced the wilderness—the Women of the West.

The roar and rush and fever of the city died away,
The old time friends and faces—they were gone for many a day;
In their place the lurching coach-wheel or the creaking bullock-chains
O'er the everlasting sameness of the never-ending plain.

In the slab-built, zinc-roofed homestead of some lately-settled run,
In the tent beside the bankment of a railway just begun,
In the huts on new selections, in the camps of man's unrest,
On the frontiers of the Nation, live the Women of the West.

The red sun robs their beauty, and, in weariness and pain,
The slow years steal the nameless grace that never comes again;
And there are hours men cannot soothe, and words men cannot say—
The nearest woman's face may be a hundred miles away.

The wide bush holds the secrets of their longing and desires,
When the white stars in reverence light their holy altar-fires,
And silence, like the touch of God, sinks deep into the breast,
Perchance he hears and understands the Women of the West.

For them no trumpet sounds to call, no poet plies his arts—
They only hear the beating of their gallant loving hearts.
But they have sung with silent lives the song all songs above—
The holiness of sacrifice, the dignity of love.

Well have we held our fathers' creed. No call has passed us by.
We faced and fought the wilderness, we sent out sons to die.
And we have hearts to do and dare, and yet, o'er all the rest,
The hearts that made the Nation were the Women of the West.

Sylvia Rowell is a regular attendee at our Musters and enthusiastic supporter of the WABP&YS.

Recently Sylvia was awarded honorary membership in the Friends of RPH where she has worked as a volunteer for fifty years, retiring in June, 2001.

For 26 years she provided transport for the patients. In 1959 she helped found the Friends of RPH.

She then joined the RPH information service and became its leader.

From 1984—2001 she was editor of the Friends Newsletter.

In 1992 she received the Order of Australia.

She was the last remaining founding member when she retired in 2001.

Congratulations, Sylvia!

I always knew Sylvia was special but didn't realise how special.



We are fortunate to still have Sylvia with us. She came to the last Muster bandaged and bruised after stepping backwards into the pool and dragging a huge pot plant in on top of her. This episode prompted me to write the following little ditty -

Sylvia's Folly

She's always there at the Musters, dignified, quiet and serene;
Neatly attired, elegant. Look round— you'll know who I mean.
Her heart is as big as her handbag. She's served the community well-
Always ready and willing, never playing the swell.
And Harold sits quietly beside her, a pleasant wide smile on his face.
They make a fine looking couple but something is not quite in place.
For Sylvia came to the Muster all bandaged and battered and bruised.
Though she smiled and said it was nothing it appeared she'd been badly misused.
Has receiving her special award gone to our Sylvia's head?
Did she think she could now walk on water and sink to the bottom instead?
And why was she lifting a pot plant which weighed about 13 ton?
Is she training for the Olympics or does she just lift them for fun?
But then have a good look at Harold. He's certainly nobody's fool.
Did he do his block with Sylvia and shove her right into the pool?
Well, no matter if she has been careless. No matter if he has been mean,
They'll be back at the next Monthly Muster, dignified, quite and serene.

Lady of the Olive Branch and Dove

There's a spirit in the Dreamtime,
there's a chanting in the skies.

A corroboree of welcome
in the sharp staccato cried.

There's a geth'ring of the totem,
a meeting of the clan,

A feast to offer welcome
to a member of their band.

We grieve to see the passing
of one who cared for all,
Who touched each soul and conscience,
who rallied to the call

Of a people rich in culture,
but impoverished and weak.

She lifted up their burdens
and for them she did speak.

Her pen wrote of their beauty-
their absolute dismay.

Railed 'gainst the injustice
they are suffering today.

She shared with us the dreamings
of a culture richly blest,

And we'll all miss the poet
who fought for the oppressed.

Her words, though gently written,
touched the hearts of black and white.

They set us on a pathway
that leads from wrong to right.

Our sad farewells, dear lady
of the olive branch and dove.

Understanding life's true meaning,
you fought your war with love.



A tribute to Cath Walker by

Val Read ©

Committee Members—WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners 2004-2005

Rusty Christensen	President	9364 4491
Tom Conway	Vice-President	9339 2802
Jean Ritchie	Secretary	9450 3111
Kerry Lee	Treasurer / Editor	9397 0409
Rae Dockery	Committee	9356 7426
June Bond	Schools Coordinator	9354 5804
Edna Westall	Committee	9339 3028
Lorelie Tacoma	Immediate Past President	9310 1500
Brian Langley	Committee	9361 3770

Events Calendar

- Mar 5 Closing date Ipswich Poetry Feast \$2,600 Written Competition 07 3810 6761
Mar 10 Closing date Henry Kendall Poetry Award SSAE Central Coast Poets Box 276 Gosford NSW 2250
Mar 10 Closing date Grenfell NSW Short Story & Written Verse Comp SSAE PO Box 77 Grenfell 2810
Mar 17 Narrandera NSW John O'Brien Festival & Competition 1800 672 39
Mar 31 Bronze Swagman Written Verse closing date PO Box 120 Winton QL 4735
Apr Bewdys & the Bards Tour featuring Pat Drummond, Karen Lyn, Rod & Kerry Lee & Peter Blyth
Apr 1 Diggers Camp—Peter Capp, Dave Lee, Leigh Mathews & dancing after the show.
Apr 2 Diggers Camp—Pat Drummond, Karen-Lynne, Peter Blyth, Rod & Kerry
Apr 5-6-7 Diggers Camp—Daytime Seniors Concerts with Lunch &/or Afternoon Tea
Apr 8 Bewdy & the Bards Concert—Albany Town Hall
Apr 10 Bewdy & the Bards Concert—Marybrook Winery, Margaret River 08 9397 0409
Apr 1 Waltzing Matilda Tour—Classic Holidays 08 9316 2277
Apr 1 Closing date Katherine Country Music Muster Written Comp SSAE KCMM Stockman Award
PO Box 8211 Bargara Qld 4670
Apr 2 Dunedoo Great Dunny Classic 02 6375 1975
Apr 5 Corryong Man From Snowy River Festival
Apr 26-28 Charters Towers 2005 National ABPA Championships
SSAE PO Box 38 Charters Towers Q 4820
May 26-29 Casino Beef Week 02 6644 8285
May 27 Bush Lantern Award for written verse closing date PO Box 4281 Sth Bundaberg QL 4670
July 1-3 Bundy Bush Poetry Muster Written Comp closing date 27.05.05 (07) 4153 5397
July 29-31 Far North Queensland Bush Poetry Festival—Written Competition 07 4159 1868
Sept 10-18 Winton Bush Poetry Muster 07 4657 1296

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

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☆ SILVER ☆
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