

The

June 2023

W.A. Bush Poets

# BULLY TIN



Next Muster- 2nd June 2023 at 7pm at Bentley Auditorium, Bentley Park

MC: Meg Gordon 0404 075 108 meggordon4@bigpond.com Reader from the Classics: Ray Jackson

## The Uncultured Rhymer To His Cultured Critics

Fight through ignorance, want, and care —  
 Through the griefs that crush the spirit;  
 Push your way to a fortune fair,  
 And the smiles of the world you'll merit.  
 Long, as a boy, for the chance to learn —  
 For the chance that Fate denies you;  
 Win degrees where the Life-lights burn,  
 And scores will teach and advise you.

My cultured friends! you have come too late  
 With your bypath nicely graded;  
 I've fought thus far on my track of Fate,  
 And I'll follow the rest unaided.  
 Must I be stopped by a college gate  
 On the track of Life encroaching?  
 Be dumb to Love, and be dumb to Hate,  
 For the lack of a college coaching?

You grope for Truth in a language dead —  
 In the dust 'neath tower and steeple!  
 What know you of the tracks we tread?  
 And what know you of our people?  
 'I must read this, and that, and the rest,'  
 And write as the cult expects me? —  
 I'll read the book that may please me best,  
 And write as my heart directs me!

You were quick to pick on a faulty line  
 That I strove to put my soul in:  
 Your eyes were keen for a 'dash' of mine  
 In the place of a semi-colon —  
 And blind to the rest. And is it for such  
 As you I must brook restriction?  
 'I was taught too little?' I learnt too much  
 To care for a pedant's diction!

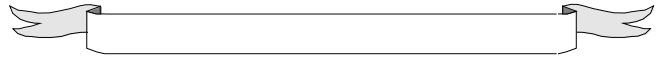
Must I turn aside from my destined way  
 For a task your Joss would find me?  
 I come with strength of the living day,  
 And with half the world behind me;  
 I leave you alone in your cultured halls  
 To drivel and croak and cavil:  
 Till your voice goes further than college walls,  
 Keep out of the tracks we travel!

Henry Lawson



*Henry Lawson's Birthday*

*17th June 1867*



## The Stringy-Bark Tree

There's the whitebox and pine on the ridges afar,  
 Where the iron-bark, blue-gum, and peppermint are;  
 There is many another, but dearest to me,  
 And the king of them all was the stringy-bark tree.  
 Then of stringy-bark slabs were the walls of the hut,  
 And from stringy-bark saplings the rafters were cut;  
 And the roof that long sheltered my brothers and me  
 Was of broad sheets of bark from the stringy-bark tree.

And when sawn-timber homes were built out in the West,  
 Then for walls and for ceilings its wood was the best;  
 And for shingles and palings to last while men be,  
 There was nothing on earth like the stringy-bark tree.

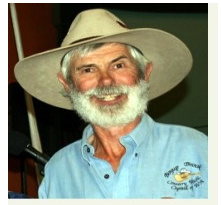
Far up the long gullies the timber-trucks went,  
 Over tracks that seemed hopeless, by bark hut and tent;  
 And the gaunt timber-finder, who rode at his ease,  
 Led them on to a gully of stringy-bark trees.

Now still from the ridges, by ways that are dark,  
 Come the shingles and palings they call stringy-bark;  
 Though you ride through long gullies a twelve months you'll see  
 But the old whitened stumps of the stringy-bark tree.

Henry Lawson

This Bully Tin has been printed and postage provided with the generous assistance of the office of KATE DOUST MLC

## President's Preamble June 2023



Moondyne Joe Festival at Toodyay was another successful PR exercise for WA Bush Poets with six poets reciting and our good friends Warwick Trant and Sarah Broome providing the musical accompaniment for the day. We first met these two at the inaugural Nambung Country Music Muster in 2016. They shared the walk-up awards that year and became regular performers thereafter. Rob Gunn and Peter Rudolf came up from Pinjarra with a bus load of their “Groupies”. Christine Boulton, Greg Joass, Meg and myself made up the complement of poets. (What do you call a group of bush poets?) We succumbed to the competition from generators among the food vendors and retreated to the relative solitude of the Anglican Church. It was a much friendlier environment to perform and we were able to attract quite an audience. The ladies on the Anglican White elephant stall were very appreciative of our entertainment and want us to be beside them next year. Thanks Greg for the photos.

Greg and Heather and I performed again with Greenbushes Acoustic at the Annual Pink Fun Run where over 200 people competed in a 10Km run, a mountain bike ride or a 5Km walk or run to raise money for breast and prostate cancer research. We provided welcome entertainment while the athletes were slogging it out on the track. Heather has difficulty making the connection between the words “fun” and “run”. She suggested that the two words do not fit together in the same sentence. Despite that, everyone had a great morning and no doubt will do it all again next year.

It was a much less challenging performance environment than that I experienced earlier that weekend. Dick Warwick, an American Cowboy Poet, once told me “Bush Poetry ain’t background music!” I was invited to recite at Broomhill at their Heritage and Antique Fair. Turned out it was no more than a lot of market stalls set up in their Town Hall. I was on the stage and fortunately had my PA operating. But my “audience” was walking around checking for bargains and talking to all and sundry while I provided what turned out to be “background music”. Still, it was character building and an opportunity to practice my poetry before heading north next month.

We have formed a reciprocal affiliation with the Wanneroo Folk Club. Our members are welcome to recite at their monthly meetings. They meet on the second Friday each month. Contact me or Stinger for more details.

Colin Tyler is on the sick list and is currently confined to St John’s at Subiaco. I’m sure he would welcome contact from any of our members.

Bill Gordon, President



**Reminder to WA poets to bring in your books and CDs to sell at June’s Muster**



**Roger Cracknell reciting his poem at the  
ANZAC Service in Boyup Brook.**

**AN OLD MAN'S MEMORIES**

On the twenty fifth of April  
Our streets echo with applause  
As we pay tribute to our soldiers  
Who fought so many wars.  
And one old man attracted me  
As he proudly marched out there,  
What thoughts were going through his mind  
What sadness, what despair

The old man had joined the marchers  
And as they made their solemn way  
The dawn's rays lit the cenotaph  
On another ANZAC Day.  
The pipes and drums played mournfully  
As he walked a measured pace  
And the teardrops of remembrance  
Rolled down his weathered face.

He saw the proud old diggers  
And asked himself "what was it for"  
Why were so many sacrificed  
In the crucible of war?  
Then it was a great adventure  
A wondrous chance to roam  
But when thrown on the Kaiser's battlefield  
He thought longingly of home.

His thoughts went back so many years  
To the mates who'd fought that war  
Who now lay in bloody disarray  
Upon that foreign shore.  
The guns, the barbed wire barricades;  
The cries he remembered well  
The agony of his dying mates  
Was like a scene from hell.

He thought of that small foxhole  
Where he crouched and said a prayer  
As the German hordes drew nearer  
In that freezing morning air.  
He prepared to die for King and country  
And he was damned if he would yield  
As he charged to meet the charging bayonets  
Across that hellish battlefield.

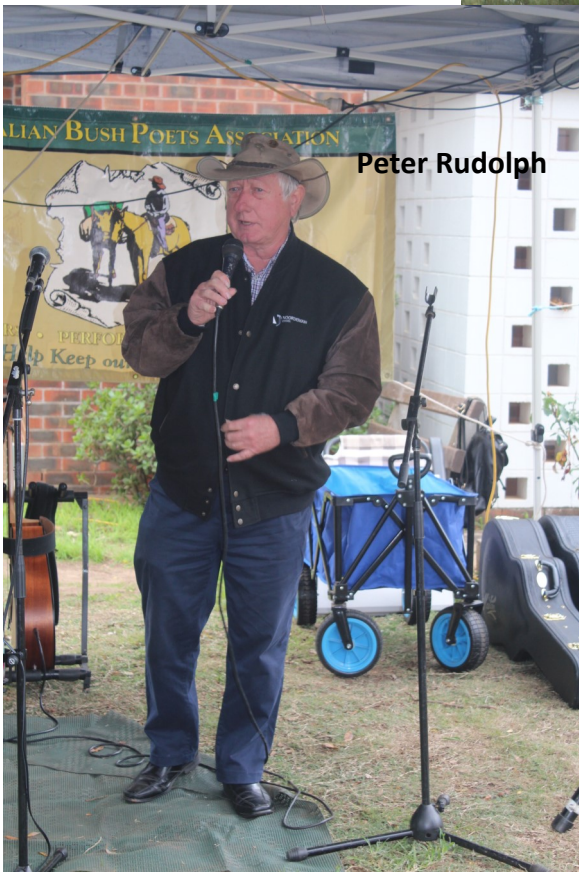
The unceasing sound of gunfire  
The fields churned to mud  
Trenches deep in water  
Mixed with a soldier's blood.  
The dreaded space that was no man's land  
Where machine guns reigned supreme;  
Bodies ripped to bloody shreds  
With that last inhuman scream.

And then Repatriation  
As war reached it's bloody end  
And a chance for mind and body  
To try to heal, try to mend.  
But how do you block the nightmare  
Of the war to end all wars.  
As the Generals proudly tell you  
You fought a noble cause.

What cause? The old man asked himself  
Is worthy of so much death  
That the lifeblood of a nation  
Chokes on it's dying breath  
Pain borne by those who were left behind  
Whose wait was all in vain  
They'll neither voice nor footsteps  
Of loved ones coming home again

The service was now over  
And the crowds had gone away  
But the old man sat with memories  
Of his mates on ANZAC Day  
He looked up at the flag pole  
Remembering all those who were lost  
Then proudly came to attention  
And saluted the Southern Cross.

*Roger Cracknell*



Peter Rudolph



Rob Gunn



Greg Joass



Christine Boulton



Bill Gordon

Snap Shots of some of the Performers  
at Toodyay's  
Moondyne Festival

## VALE, BULLOCKY JOHN

By Pete (Stinger) Nettleton.

Born in Yorkshire UK on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1940, John Watkinson emigrated to Australia with wife and children as '10-Pound Poms' in February 1969. They settled in the South West, eventually retiring at Dinninup Downs, Quaeleup where John indulged his great passions for his team of working bullocks, among other beasts, and reciting bush poetry. John's wife of 56 years, Jill, died of cancer 5 years ago.

'Bullocky John', as he came to be branded, was well-known to some of us as a regular performer at Cobber's Corner in Dinninup and as one of the organisers of the RFD fundraisers in Quaeleup. John and Janet Wells were among his many close friends. I gave him a copy of the classic bush poem 'Holy Dan' which I felt would suit his style. He subsequently included it in his vast repertoire.

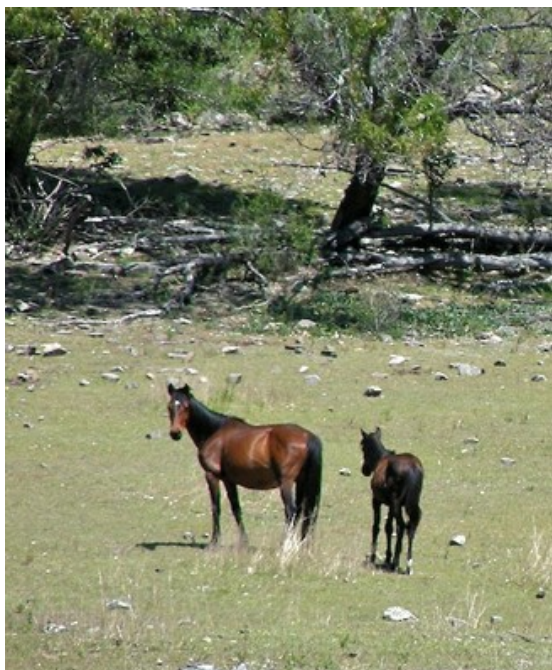
Last winter he invited me to take part in a fundraiser for cancer support at Kojonup, and as I had not been long diagnosed myself, I accepted. The event happened on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 (clashing with the final Nambung muster) and featured 'local' bush poets Ron (the late) Evans, Keith (Cobber) Lethbridge and myself, plus a couple of musical acts. (See pics herewith).

Last time I saw Bullocky was with his partner Judy on the occasion of the baptism of my revamped verandah at the 'Blue Bungalow' in Boyup Brook on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2022. At that time, he was hale and hearty and in high spirits, although he declined my request for a rendition of 'Holy Dan'.

John passed away last month from kidney failure. President Bill Gordon mentioned his passing in last month's Bully Tin and his daughter Jane wrote a moving eulogy which was published in the May edition of the Boyup Brook Gazette.

*Rest in Peace, John (Bullocky) Watkinson.*





**'One Last Glimpse'**

©T.E. Piggott

Dusk was creeping in below where haunting snow-capped peaks abound,  
 in what seemed a world of silence - there was not the slightest sound,  
 as I slowly made my way back to the car a mile away,  
 seeing autumn colours painting leaves in fading light that day

There's a sense of peaceful solitude here in this pristine place,  
 once the home of Brumbies, sadly now you'll rarely find a trace.  
 But with hope in heart, I peer into the fading alpine light,  
 as the seasons change to herald soon the coming winter night.

Friends had warned me that my hopeful quest would be a waste of time,  
 Brumbies were now long gone, hardly worth an arduous steep climb.  
 Yet I'd come in hope of one last glimpse of Brumbies in the wild -  
 nothing would deter me, be the weather freezing cold or mild,

As I wander on, fresh snowflakes kiss the earth and coat the trees,  
 though despite the beauty there's a sadness - guess I'm hard to please.  
 For there's something missing from this special place I used to know,  
 yet even I appreciate the magic of the falling snow.

Then a movement catches my attention in the misty grey,  
 as emerging from the gloom two Brumbies slowly make their way.  
 It's a mare and foal, their hoof-steps muffled by the recent fall,  
 I am frozen to the spot and trying not to breathe at all.

I then watch them mesmerised, as they slowly fade into night,  
 they're such lovely animals it's sad to think about their plight.  
 In the distance there I see the Ski Resort light's shining bright,  
 sadly, that's the future, not a single Brumby left in sight.

**That Old Lazy Wind**

We don't mind the sun and the dust and the flies  
 We don't mind the rain and the snow  
 But that old lazy wind blows right through your bones  
 And freezes your marrow to stone

The life of a farmer is a life full of hardships  
 A series of highs and of lows  
 We know that the good times are made up of bad times  
 Depending which way the wind blows

I shall not cease to wonder how those city newsreaders  
 How do they live without brains?  
 A cyclones destructive and sometimes eruptive  
 But they also bring drought breaking rains

I find amusing when they are abusing  
 A day that's not sunny and fine  
 There's nothing more tragic than a weekend that's  
 stormy  
 That dares to upset their good time

Oh! We don't mind the sun and the dust and the flies  
 We don't mind the rain and the snow  
 But that old lazy wind blows right through your bones  
 And freezes your marrow to stone

Jack Bock

From Jack's book *Time Flies, Mud Flies & Bloody Blow Flies*  
 All proceeds from sales go to Cystic Fibrosis WA



## WA Bush Poets Muster Friday cont...

**John Hayes**

*'The talking Sheep'*

Hearing voices while shearing alone, it sounded like the sheep was saying to take care and not hurt him. I thought it was time to give up droving and shearing.

**Daniel Avery**

*'Three Turns and a Gallop'*

About barrel racing at the rodeo and what a thrill it is.

**Peter Nettleton**

*'Holy Dan'*

During a drought, three bullock teams are stranded at a poison well. One of the drivers seems to have divine protection, however his prayers eventually go unanswered and he breaks down and curses at the Almighty, resulting in swift and fatal celestial retribution.

**Heather Denholm**

*Reading from the Classics Adam Lindsay Gordon*

Adam Lindsay Gordon was a British-Australian poet, horseman, police officer and politician. He was the first Australian poet to gain considerable recognition overseas, and according to his contemporary, writer Marcus Clarke, Gordon's work represented "the beginnings of a national school of Australian poetry".

*'No Name'*

There is a headstone on her grave with no name, written by Adam Lindsay Gordon to and about the young woman he loved.

**Bev. Shorland**

*Kelly Dixon*

*'Teamster's Women'*

About the women who travelled with their teamster men, cooking, washing, rearing the kids, never complaining. A difficult and thankless life.

**Bill Gordon**

*Bruce Simpson*

*'Brodiess Ghost'*

Droving a mob of scrub cattle, settled for the night camped by Brodiess grave, the mob is spooked and begins to scatter. Racing to gather and settle them back again, it is the ghostly pale figure of Brodiess Ghost that helps to bring them back..... or was it the naked jackaroo on old Blue.

**Meg Gordon**

*Peg Vickers*

*'The Survey'*

A farmers wife is surveyed about the 'real' work she has done.

**Rob Gunn**

*Mick Collis*

*'Mothers Day'*

A Father tells his son to love and respect his mother, because of all the things she is and does.

**Keith Lethbridge**

*'Home'*

They pulled the old house down, cleared it all away, The memories of living in that old house when we were kids. We moved away, what does it take to make a house a home.

**Bill Gordon**

*'The Super Stirer'*

After a long dry spell a sudden downpour washes all the sheep droppings into the dam.

The farmer thinks the best way to aerate the dam is to set the boat beside the dam with the motor slowly running. Unexpected consequences ... Well it seemed like a good idea at the time....

Muster Closed at 9.30

**Next Muster: MC - 7th July 23 Peter Nettleton 0407 770 053 stinger@iinet.net.au  
No reading from the classics**

**Reminder: Could everyone who performs at Musters please have a synopsis available on the night or send one via email to shorland@iinet.net.au for the Muster write up. Thanks in advance Bev**



## COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS AROUND AUSTRALIA

### **WRITTEN EVENTS are in PURPLE**

For more details and entry forms please go to the ABPA website

**www.abpa.org.au** and **www.writingwa.org**

Why not check out Writing WA  
<[info@writingwa.org](mailto:info@writingwa.org)>  
Always something interesting  
going on for WA Writers

### JUNE 2023

14 June — Bronze Swagman Award Ceremony, 5:30-6:30 pm Royal Theatre, Winton Queensland.  
See 30 April closing date.

### JULY 2023

30 JULY — Closing Date — Nandewar Poetry Competition, Narrabri NSW.

### AUGUST 2023

31 August — Closing Date — King of the Ranges written bush poetry competition, Murrurundi, NSW.

### SEPTEMBER 2023

16 September — Closing Date — King of the Ranges yarnspinning competition, Murrurundi, NSW.

22-24 September — King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge with poets' breakfast and yarnspinning competition (see 16 September closing date) and **written competition** (see 31 August closing date), Murrurundi, NSW.

### OCTOBER 2023

2 October — Closing Date — Silver Quill Written Competition, Toodyay, WA.

### NOVEMBER 2023

1 November — Closing Date — WA State Championships for bush poetry performance.

\*\* See 2 October closing date for **Silver Quill written** and 1 November closing date for performance.

3-5 November — WA State Championships of bush poetry, performance and **Silver Quill written**, Toodyay, WA.



**GREENBUSHES  
ACOUSTIC  
SESSIONS**

**Live Performances**  
Folk, Bluegrass,  
Yarns & Bush Poetry  
**18 June, 16 July and  
20 August 2023**  
at Greenbushes RSL Hall  
1:30-3:30pm



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## Committee Members—WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners 2023

<b>President</b>	Bill Gordon	0428 651 098	billgordon1948@gmail.com
<b>Vice President</b>	Peter “Stinger” Nettleton	0407 7700 53	stinger@iinet.net.au
<b>Secretary</b>	Rodger Kohn - <i>Bully Tin Mail Out</i>	0419 666 168	rodgershirley@bigpond.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sue Hill	0418 941 016	suzi.tonyhill@bigpond.com
<b>Committee</b>			
Meg Gordon	- <i>Toodyay Festival Sec.</i> - <i>Web Control</i> - <i>Secretary of the ABPA</i>	0404 075 108	meggordon4@bigpond.com
Bev Shorland		0487 764 897	shorland@iinet.net.au
Jem Shorland		0487 764 897	shorland@iinet.net.au
Anne Hayes		0428 542 418	hayseed1@optusnet.com.au
Don Gunn		0418 930 821	bigunnz@iinet.net.au
Deb McQuire	- <i>Bully Tin editor</i>	0428 988 315	deb.mcquire@bigpond.com
Irene Conner	- <i>State Rep APBA</i>	0429 652 155	iconner21@wn.com.au

## Regular Events

<b>WA Bush Poets:</b>	<b>1st Friday each month</b> <i>MC details see front page</i> - 7pm Bentley Auditorium, Bentley Park WA	
<b>Albany Bush Poetry group:</b>	<b>Last Tuesday each month</b> - 7.30pm 1426 Lower Denmark Rd, Elleker	<b>Ph. Peter Blyth - 9844 6606</b>
<b>Bunbury Bush Poets:</b>	<b>1st Monday every ‘even’ month</b> - The Parade Hotel, 1 Austral Parade, East Bunbury.or Ian Farrell	<b>Ph. Alan Aitken - 0400 249 243</b> <b>0408 212 636</b>
<b>Goldfields Bush Poetry Group:</b>	<b>1st Wednesday each month.</b> - 7.30pm 809 Kalgoorlie Country Club, 108 Egan St. Kalgoorlie	<b>Ph. Ken Ball - 0419 94 3376</b>
<b>Peel Bush Poetry Group</b>	<b>1st Tuesday each month</b> - 6pm. Ravenswood Hotel, Pinjarra	<b>Ph. Rob Gunn - 0417 099 676</b>

If you would like to be part of a forum—post your poetry, see what other contemporary bush poets are writing, keep up to date with poetry events throughout Australia—visit [www.abpa.org.au](http://www.abpa.org.au) or [www.bushverse.com](http://www.bushverse.com)

Address correspondence for the “Bully Tin” to: Bully Tin Editor, PO Box 364, Bentley 6982 or [deb.mcquire@bigpond.com](mailto:deb.mcquire@bigpond.com)  
Address correspondence for the Secretary to: WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assoc, PO Box 364 Bentley 6982  
Correspondence re monetary payments for Treasurer to: WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assoc, PO Box 364 Bentley 6982  
Bank Transfer: Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000 A/C#158764837  
Please notify treasurer of payment : [treasurer@wabushpoets.asn.au](mailto:treasurer@wabushpoets.asn.au)

Members—Do you have poetic products for sale? If so please let the editor know so you can be added to this list  
Members can contact the poets via the Assn. Secretary or visit website - Go to the “Performance Poets” page  
**Don’t forget our website [www.wabushpoets.asn.au](http://www.wabushpoets.asn.au)**  
Please contact the Webmaster, if you would like to see your poems featured in the Members Poetry section.