

The Bully Tin



February, 2005

& Yarn Spinners

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



Australia Day Concert

Wireless Hill

Another wonderful showcase of Bush Poetry keenly supported by the WABP&YS members. The weather was perfect and the venue superb.

There was some pre-show promotion which no doubt helped boost numbers. Rod performed the night before in the Oz Concert at Government House, Brian had a surprise radio interview Tuesday evening from Graham Marbury and I had a morning interview on Community Radio at Wireless Hill.

Once again we were grateful to the Melville Council for providing the marquee, seating, stage and sound system.

Tom Conway was our MC and he did a great job of organising the performers and setting the program. Keith Lethbridge was our Showcase poet for the afternoon and had the honour of opening and closing the show, keeping the mood light and funny with his great yarns and a few lively tunes on his mouth organ.

It is always a privilege to listen to Arthur recite his quality poems. He set a serious thoughtful theme, as did Val and myself. I have featured the author of one of my poems, Dorothea Mackellar, in the *Walk With the Masters* section of the *Bully Tin*.

We had a mixture of moods with the presentations given by David Seares, Brian Langley and John

Hayes. There was an entertaining mixture of classics, contemporary and original.

As to be expected, Leigh Mathews, Barry Higgins, Beth Scott, Ron Evans and Syd Hopkins had the audience in stitches with their yarns and poems. It is always refreshing to hear Beth and I doubt if anyone can perform CJ Dennis at the level Ron does. Barry and Syd gave us an entertaining duet—verse, not song.

There was a good balance of poems presented and I'm sure that, individually, the members of the audience would have gone away well satisfied. A quick head count and I believe there were around 200 people gathered in the shade of the marquee and the surrounding trees. The early sea breeze was a bonus, even if it did rearrange some of our stage props. My early experiences of Wireless Hill Australia Days have been of intense heat and hot still air. Nature has been extremely kind to us over the last few years.

The Mayor of Melville, Katherine Jackson, presented Keith with his trophy for winning the National Written Competition and brought the afternoon to a conclusion.

A thankyou should go to the Melville Rotary for their signage on Canning Highway promoting the afternoon and for keeping the inner-man satisfied with their sausage sizzle.

And thank you performers for your time and effort.

Droppings from "The Boss Cocky"



The Boss Cocky has flown the coop to America and hasn't left us with any dropping!

Val's reply to Phil Strutt—highly placed in two prestigious Eastern States competition—one being CJ Dennis Literary Competition

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

I saw 'er at the movies,
me 'cart turned a million times,
The girl that I had dreamed uv,
all the songs an' all the rhymes.
As pretty as a picture,
golden 'air an' big blue eyes,
I vowed that I would win 'er,
'cause she really wuz a prize.

I up an' goes ter meet 'er
with some Jaffas in me 'and,
She looks at me, quite snobbish,
though she was a lady grand.
"A lolly, luv?" I arst 'er,
"or an ice-cream, or a drink?"
'Er look wuz condescendin'.
It near drove me ter the brink.

An' then 'er eyes were twinklin'.
so I 'ad another go.
"I'm Jack Mackay," I told 'er,
"from the Isa rodeo.
I've bin around Australia,
an' I've won a prize or two,
But none of 'em, me darlin',
are a better prize than you.

"Come on an' sit beside me
an' we'll watch the picture show.
Yer a real bonzer sheila,
one I'd like ter get ter know.
Now, I'm not much ter look at,
but there's nothin' I won't do
Ter show yer that I'm dinkum,
an' I'm crazy over you."

An' then she laughed. Like water,
runnin' softly in a stream,
An' said: "Well Jack Mackay, lad,
I've been wond'ring where you've been.
You don't wear shining armour,
but I guess you'll have to do,
Because my heart starts racing,
ev'ry time I look at you.

Love At First Sight... Cont.

I flew ter seventh 'eaven,
an' me world began ter sway.
Me 'cart wuz really thumpin'
Gor, it really made me day.
I shook right ter me toenails
when I took 'er by the 'and,
This overwhelmin' feelin'
I just couldn't understand.

I'd ridden bulls at Isa,
never 'ad a twinge uv fear,
I'd done the time on 'orses
that 'ad nivver 'ad a peer
On circuits round the country,
that 'ad done some riders in,
Yet, 'ere I wuz, like jelly,
from a little sheila's grin.

We sat beside each other,
an' it drove me fairly mad,
I put me arm around 'er
when the movie got quite sad.
I can't describe the feelin',
but it surely changed me life,
'There'd be no more carousin',
an' I'd get in no more strife.

"Want walkin' 'ome?" I arst 'er,
an' she answered: "Yes, you can
The moon wuz nivver brighter
as it shone upon the land.
The stars were up there twinklin',
an' the breeze wuz soft an' swe
I tell yers, I wuz dancin'
'bout ten foot above the street.

I fin'ly up an' told 'er:
"Gor! I luv yer, Maggie, dear,"
She stared at me a minute,
an' then wiped away a tear.
I saw that she wuz bawlin',
an' I thought I'd moved too fast,
But when she said: "I love you, too,"
I knew the die was cast.

Love At First Sight... Cont.

We sat on the verandah
an' we chatted till the dawn.
Holdin' tight ter one another
as a brand new day wuz born.
Both knowin' that forever
we'd be 'usband an' 'is wife,
That we'd build a little 'omestead,
an' live a 'appy life.

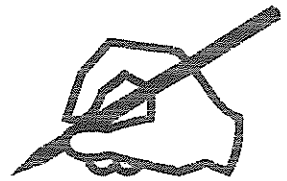
I gladly gave up ridin',
though I knew I'd miss the thrill
Uv ridin' the 'ell raisers
that were 'igh up on the bill,
I'd miss the great excitement,
an' the good mates all around,
But knew that she wuz worth it,
this bright jewel that I'd found.

We married six months later,
an' then little Johnny came,
Elizabeth an' Samson,
then Michelle an' Sarah Jane.
We 'ad a rundown station,
an' we worked around the clock
Ter get it operatin',
an' ter buy some breedin' stock.

We're as 'appy with each other
as the day when first we met.
A woman like me Maggie
sure is pretty 'ard ter get.
I luv this little sheila
just like it wuz yesterday
When we met at the movies,
an' she took me breath away.

V.P. READ. © 1772/2003

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor

In our May newsletter which featured war poems re Anzac Day, I have articles on the Flag and the importance of keeping our heritage in this regard.

I felt you would be interested and could keep the information in our records for any future reference.

I am a member of the Flag Association and am passionate for it to be retained and, knowing you too, I hoped this would be of interest to you as well.

Best wishes and I enjoy *The Bully Tin* very much, as well as the meetings.

Norma Johnson

Thanks for the information Norma. It was carefully filed away and I feel this is an appropriate time to share the submissions from yourself and Bert in *The Bully Tin*.

Perhaps other members would like to share their thoughts and feeling on the flag and any appropriate poems they have on the issue.

Space constraints do not allow me to reproduce all the information supplied but you will find a presentation on the Flag on page 7.

Dear Editor

I was handed a copy of the December '04 edition of *The Bully Tin* by Norma Johnston who suggested that I contact you on the off chance that you would be interested in printing some information about the Australian National Flag.

As President of the above Association I follow up on every lead I get with a view to getting the word out about our beautiful Flag, which is under a considerable amount of threat from a whole lot of groups and individuals who seek to destroy it and/ or change it to something which could never reflect our proud history or heritage.

If my enclosure is not suitable for publication in your newsletter then I would understand. I have also enclosed the poem *Keep the Flag* by Robin Northover which may be acceptable for your use.

Keep up the good work, Kerry. If ever your group require a 30 minute burst on the Australian National Flag—I am at your disposal.

Bert Lane

Would members be interested in inviting Bert to one of our Monthly Musters?

Dear Editor

I am sending in a copy of this poem I wrote about Kath Walker. I thought you might be interested when I read *A Walk With the Masters* in the January issue. Herald will be doing an article on me as well as H O F Longreach who told me they think I'm one of Australia's best bush poets. Quite a coup! My head is as big as a watermelon. They know my work quite well in the Eastern States and have always been very supportive.

Whistling Foxes has done really well so far, with no advertising at all. People have ordered 2 or more and their comments are fantastic. Absolutely rave interviews from everyone. My book is also in America and Canada (sent by customers) for Christmas, and they love it. It's really a thrill to have it such a success. Next book is on the way..

Well done Val and thanks for sharing this with us. I will print your poem on Kath Walker in the March issue. Your book deserves to do well and you deserve to feel proud of it.

Val is an extremely talented writer dedicated to preserving the integrity of Bush Poetry.

Dear Editor

I have been approached by organisers of events to raise funds for the Tsunami disaster. They wish to include both a poetry and art competition prior to a concert organised for Sunday 13th March, 2005.

The competition will be divided into several age groups including primary and secondary students and possibly adults. The poetry will, in some way, reflect the tsunami disaster. There would be an entry fee and prizes, with winners reading their work at the concert.

There is also the possibility of an anthology to be sold on the night.

We urgently require a member to *adopt* this event, liaise with the organisers, help run the event on the day, etc. This is obviously a worthwhile cause and we want KSP to be a part of it.

If you are interested in becoming involved please ring Ramona at KSP asap 9294 1872

WABP&YS members are associate members of the KSP Writers Centre

Letters, articles & other submissions can be sent to:

The Bully Tin
160 Blair Road Oakford WA 6121

January Monthly Muster



Rusty called the meeting to order before handing over to June to be our MC for the evening. As a first-timer she chose to wear a "L Plate" but I personally feel she could have gone straight onto a "P Plate".

The evening opened with a selection of verse and music by Cobber (alias Keith Lethbridge). Keith, who has just earned himself the title of JP, now resides in Halls Creek. This being so we don't see or hear much of him these days so it was great to have him back at the mike. He treated us to "The Incredible Talking Dog", "The Legend of Mother McQ" and a toe-tapping item on his mouth organ.

Bill Elkes then took centre stage with his poem "Oh, Not the Beach", relating the woes of sandflies, stingers and other joys of the beach and finishing with preferring to stay home under the sprinkler.

This theme was carried on by Margaret Taylor with her poem about why we love Australia so much. You had to wonder as she listed the woes of flies, ants, mozzies, sunburn, dead kangaroos and loud campers.

It was great to have Peter Drayton back in our midst giving an excellent rendition of "Swagman's Rest". Brian Langley followed on from Peter reciting the poem which earned him a Highly Commended in the National Written Competition—"Moore River Blues". A beautiful, well written poem. He also shared a poem about New Years Resolutions which turned out to be exactly the same as last years. I think we can all relate to that!

I brought the topic back to creepy crawlies with my story about an encounter with a snake on our property. Not my proudest moment—or should I say *hour*?

John Hayes recited Banjo Paterson's beautiful poem "Song of the Wheat", with Barry Higgins dramatically changing the mood with Bob Magor's "Tickleberry Farm", a playful reflection on *parking & making out* in the good old days!

Then Trish Joyce gave us a very interesting history lesson in verse on "The Miracle of New Norcia". It was amazing to think that the New Norcia we know to day grew from the courage and spirit of two monks rising up from the ashes of a series of disasters. Well done, Trish.

Beth Scott shared a beautiful poem she had written on the tsunami disaster before reciting a funny one entitled "Hen's Night Out".

Cobber led us into the break with "Mildew's Introduction", "Mum's Driving Lesson" and the poem which won him the written section "Mates". He was also presented with his trophy, a beautiful ceramic scroll and pen mounted on a wooden base. There is quite an interesting and funny story relating to its construction but time constraints did not allow Rod to share it with you all.

David Seares kicked off after the break with "The Shooting of Dangerous Dan McGrew" by Robert Service. Val Read followed reminiscing on Mateship and returning to old values.

I think Bob Philpot takes the prize for the longest introduction of the night as he introduced the characters and set the scene for his funny poem "Rocket Fire", developed from "The Man From Snowy River".

The Brian gave us "Moore River Blues", followed by Bruce Iillum's poem "The Old Shaft" set in Kalgoorlie. I know it was a funny poem but my sympathies were with the poor goat!

Still on the outback, Ann Tracy performed "Our Corrugated Tank". I could relate to that as I have experienced the despair of an empty tank, though not under such adverse conditions.

Cobber took the mike again with his beautiful poem "The Old Wongoondy Hall". The old hall which inspired this poem still stands between Three Springs and Mullawa. Then he finished off on a light note with "Digger Takes a Bride", before Rust closed the night with "Mates"

Kerry

Way out back

of Perth!

The hen house used to be a place of harmony, four contented little brown hens and two pretty *Swedish Blue* ducks. We called the ducks Geraldine and Alice after the Vicar of Dibly and her ditsy friend. Then Alice unexpectedly went to Heaven and Geraldine was alone. She didn't seem too lonely, busily quacking away and swimming in her pond but I felt she needed another friend, another little Alice—definitely not a drake! If the hens and ducks were to breed I know, under Murphy's Law, I would end up with a pen full of roosters and drakes. This would be a disaster as neither Rod or I are capable of doing the practical thing and, anyway, I just can't eat my dinner if I've known it alive unless, of course, it is an apple or a pea. But, I couldn't find a matching mate so bought Griselda—so named because I thought her the ugliest duck I had ever seen. Griselda went into shock on arrival at her new home and promptly stood like a statue for the next few months. She ignored the world and Geraldine ignored her.



So, while I was contemplating another friend for Geraldine the phone rang. A call which was to shatter the harmony of the hen house. It was from one of the lovely lady members of the WABP&YS who shall remain anonymous. (psst...her first name is Maxine!) Now, M had a sad story to tell. Her grandson had raised two lovely little ducks from eggs but, now they were grown up, they no longer suited the suburban back yard. "They are beautiful," she assured me. "Plucka, the male (uh, oh! I didn't want a drake remember?) was sooky, cuddly and white and Guinness pretty and brown black." The situation was desperate, I'm a sucker for a sad story and am also very fond of M, so I uttered that fateful word "Yeeees!" and set the ball in motion.

The first surprise was when *Grandson* arrived with the ducks—we were expecting a cute little boy, not a grown up man! Guinness was indeed a very pretty little lady but Plucka! At first sighting he looked around five foot tall and my initial instincts were to run like crazy, not to cuddle him! But he had a certain appeal and into the hen house they both went. Well, Griselda immediately fell in love with Plucka and Geraldine just fell—dead that is. (The coroner has yet to submit his report). And it has been down hill ever since. Neither Griselda or Guinness wish to share Plucka. Obviously he is quite a catch in the duck world! A jealous duck is a scary sight—charging and hissing with head extended!

Plucka is oblivious to these carry ons being more interested in following me around when he has his afternoon stroll. That causes me some consternation, especially when my legs are bare. He has a hook on the end of his beak which I know, from experience, can inflict great pain. It is rather cute the way he taps on the window when he sees me in the house but I find his "whoopsys" a tad unpleasant and most visitors are terrified of him. I can find no practical use for him and he eats more than all the others put together but I must admit he is working his charm on me and I am becoming quite fond of him. Oh, and I'm still very fond of M too.

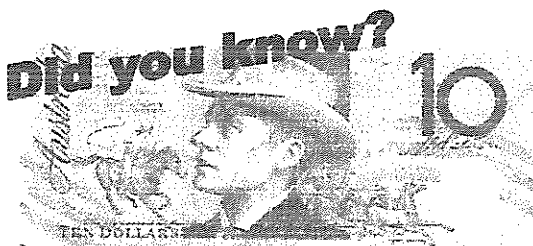
Member's Contributions

Boxing Day 2004

Christmas Day has been and gone.
Much merriment was had.
Too much food and too much wine.
Next day some felt quite bad.
Then shockwaves filtered round the world
As a disaster came to pass-
Tsunamis of destruction
Made Christmas Day a farce.
Lives destroyed and taken
Our problems seem unreal.
For our thoughts turn to our neighbours
And the heartache they must feel.

Homes destroyed in minutes -
Livelihoods in doubt.
Injured by the thousands
They all felt Nature's clout.
We dig into our pockets
And bow our heads in prayer
But we still feel sad and helpless
For those poor souls over there.
So lets hope God is watching
And sends a little cheer
To the folks who've lost their loved ones
And make this a better year.

Beth Scott



Paterson's portrait, jaunty in a wide-brimmed hat, graces the ten dollar note. In a poetic touch, the words to *The Man From Snowy River* - all 104 lines of it—are engraved in microprint round the image of Paterson's face.

A Walk With The Masters

Dorothea Mackellar

1885 - 1968

Dorothea Mackellar was born at her family home overlooking Rose Bay on Sydney Harbour. Her father was Sir Charles Kinnaird Mackellar, a renowned physician and Parliamentarian. The young Dorothea received tutoring in painting, fencing and languages, speaking French, German, Italian and Spanish fluently.

She was blessed with a keen sense of humour and lively personality. As her parents owned several properties in the Gunnedah area she had a privileged life divided between the sophistication of the city and the simplicity of the country. She was a skilled horse woman rightfully proud of her ability to ride side-saddle, particularly through the bush.

She never married though she did fall in love with an English poet, Patrick Chalmers, whilst living in England. On returning to Australia just before World War 1 she wrote to let him know her father approved their marriage. Sadly, the letter never reached Patrick who eventually married someone else. From this time, nursing a broken heart, her poetry became more serious, sometimes tragic.

She wrote and travelled extensively, with her work being published *Spectator* (London), *Harper's Magazine* (America) and *Bulletin* (Sydney). Four volumes of her verse were published, *The Closed Door*, *The Witchmaid*, *Dreamharbour* and *Fancy Dress*.

The Australian countryside was her continual source of inspiration. Her writing ceased with failing health in later life. Her contribution to Australian literature was recognised in the 1968 New Year Honours list and she was made an Officer of the British Empire two weeks before she died. Her favourite poem *Colour* was read at her funeral. She felt this poem was the closest she came to writing real poetry. Many would disagree, especially those who love her poem *My Country*. She wrote the original in England whilst succumbing to homesickness but, never quite satisfied with it, she rewrote it several times after returning to Australia.

A memorial depicting her as a young woman, gazing in the direction of her beloved family property of *Kurrumbede*, now graces ANZAC Park in Gunnedah. In 1983 the Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society was formed by Mrs M Maas OAM PHF. Funds were raised for a bronze statue of Dorothea sitting side-saddle on her horse and a junior poetry competition was started to which grows in entrants each year.

It seems appropriate to present *My Country* in this edition of the *Bully Tin*.



I have been unable to source any others of Dorothea Mackellar's poems.

If anyone has copies of them, Particularly "Colour" perhaps they would like to share them with us.

My Country

The love of field and coppice,
Of green and shaded lanes.
Of ordered woods and gardens
Is running in your veins.
Strong love of grey blue distance,
Brown streams and soft dim skies.
I know but cannot share it,
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains.
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror -
The wide brown land for me!

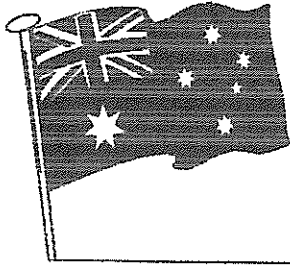
A stark white ring-barked forest
All tragic to the moon,
The sapphire-misted mountains,
The hot gold hush of noon.
Green tangle of the bushes
Where lithe lianas coil,
And orchids deck the tree-tops
And ferns the warm dark soil.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless blue sky.
When sick at heart, around us,
We see the cattle die -
But then the grey clouds gather,
And we can bless again
The drumming of an army,
The steady, soaking rain.

Core of my heart, my country!
Land of the Rainbow Gold.
For flood and fire and famine
She pays us back three fold-
Over the thirsty paddocks
Watch, after many days,
A filmy veil of greenness
That thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country,
A wilful, lavish land.
All you who have not loved her
You will not understand.
Though earth holds many splendours,
Wherever I may die
I know to what brown country
My homing thoughts will fly.

Keep our Flag flying!



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG ASSOCIATION ~ WESTERN AUSTRALIA (IN

ABN 63 126 525 850

RAINE SQUARE, BALCONY LEVEL, CNR WILLIAM & MURRAY STREETS, PERTH, WA.
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TELEPHONE (08) 9321 7406 FACSIMILE (08) 9321 7007
WEBSITE www.australianflag.org.au

The Australian National Flag identifies a free and democratic people in a nation united in purpose. Our National Flag belongs equally to all Australians whatever their origins. Each of the symbols on the Flag has a special meaning for Australians whatever their origins. Each of the symbols on the Flag has a special meaning for Australians. The stars of the Southern Cross represent our geographic position in the Southern Hemisphere; the Commonwealth Star our Federation of States and Territories, and the crosses represent the principles on which our nation is based namely, Parliamentary Democracy, Rule of Law and Freedom of Speech.

IT IS THE RIGHT AND PRIVILEGE OF EVERY AUSTRALIAN TO FLY THE NATIONAL FLAG.

Spiritual Symbols of our Australian National Flag

The five identical designs chosen from 32,823 in 1901 can only be described as divine intervention for a young Independent and Democratic Australian Nation.

The Southern Cross shows Australia's position under the Universe and God, and also brings in the Aboriginal spirituality of the Dream Time Story's of Mululu and his four daughters and how they rose to the Heavens. Jarramunguy's tribal women in WA were also chased into the heavens after wasting water in a watering hole. The Southern Cross is the heavenly symbol of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

The Union Jack in Hebrew represents the Union of Jacob, the patriarchal father of Israel.

Cross of St George, England—red horizontal & vertical cross on white background— A sign of mercy & justice and a symbol of Light & Life.

Cross of St Andrew, Scotland—red diagonal on white background— signifies God's blessings, increase & abundance.

Cross of St Patrick, Ireland—red diagonal on white background—signifies the breaking of the Second Covenant by God with the Children of Israel. Isaiah 49:12 "Surely these shall come from afar. Look those from the North and West and from Terra Australis." Jerome's Latin Translation

Keep the Flag by Robin Northover

Our flag bears the stars that blaze at night
In our Southern sky of blue,
And a little old flag in the corner
That's part of our heritage too.

It's for the English, the Scots and the Irish
Who were sent to the ends of the earth,
The rogues and the schemers, the doers and dreamers
Who gave modern Australia birth.

And you, who are shouting to change it,
You don't seem to understand,
It's the flag of our law and our language,
Not the flag of a faraway land.

(Though there are plenty of people who'll tell you
How, when Europe was plunged into night
That little old flag in the corner
Was their symbol of freedom and light.)

It doesn't mean we owe allegiance
To a forgotten imperial dream.
We've the stars to show where we're going
And the old flag to show where we've been.

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	Committee	9354 5804
Edna Westall	Committee	9339 3028
Lorelie Tacoma	Immediate Past President	9310 1500
Brian Langley	Committee	9361 3770

Events Calendar

- Feb 19-20 Boyup Brook Music festival featuring Jim Haynes' Poets Breakfast
Feb 20 Closing date Dunedoo NSW Written Competition 02 6375 1975
Feb 28 Closing date Midlands Literary Competition SSAE PO Box 1563 Ballarat Vic 3354
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 30—Apr 10 Bewdys & the Bards Tour featuring Pat Drummond, Karen Lyn, Rod & Kerry Lee & Peter
Blyth **Mar 30** Kalgoorlie **Apr 1/2** (evening), 5,6,7 (daytime) Diggers Camp Perth
Apr 8 Albany Apr 10 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 5 Corryong Man From Snowy River Festival
Apr 5-6-7 Seniors Day time Concerts—Diggers Camp 08 9397 0409
Apr 26-28 Charters Towers 2005 National ABPA Championships
SSAE PO Box 38 Charters Towers Q 4820
May 1 Written Competition—Katherine Country Music Muster PO Box 8211 Bargara Qld 4670
July 29-31 Far North Queensland Bush Poetry Festival—Written Competition 07 4159 1868

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