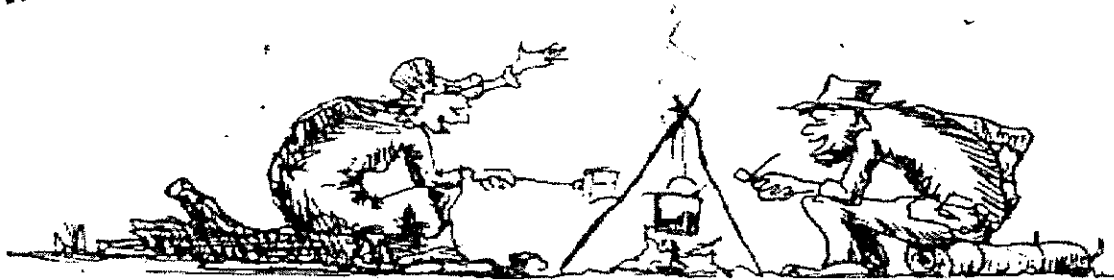


# WA BUSH POETS & YARNSPINNERS



Return Address: The Secretary, Lorelie Tacoma, 16 Gratwick Tce, Murdoch, WA 6150

Newsletter April, 1998

**Annual General Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1998**  
7.30 pm at the Raffles Hotel, Canning Bridge  
upstairs in the Riverview Room  
**ALL members are encouraged to attend**

**If you wish to support the association by offering your services to a committee position,  
then your written submission should be in the hands of the Secretary  
by 11<sup>th</sup> June (four weeks prior to the AGM)  
PLEASE USE THE FORM PROVIDED ON p5 THIS MAILOUT**

## **HISTORICALLY SPEAKING ..... RETROSPECTIVELY**

Interested in the history of our performing poets and yarners?

Along with our inaugural (1998) winners of the Melville City Perpetual Trophy, the names of our past champions have now also been inscribed on the 'Fencepost and the Firewood', as prior winners of the WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinnners Australia Day Challenge. The inscription on each trophy now reads

**CHAMPION YARNSPINNER**

**96 CONSTANCE HERBERT**

**97 JEFF SWAIN**

**98 KEITH LETHBRIDGE**

**CHAMPION POET**

**96 KEITH LETHBRIDGE**

**97 KEITH LETHBRIDGE**

**98 CHRISTINE SADLER**

The trophies, so inscribed, lie in the Heritage Office of the City of Melville of Melville Council. Our pre-history must also include that on October 15<sup>th</sup> 1995, in a trial run, Bill Park performed the best yarn at Wireless Hill, and Peter Capp performed the best bush poem at this unofficial (but 'first') occasion.

**\$10 SUBS DUE 9<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

**How time flies. We have been facing our own publishing costs for the bi-monthly newsletter since our '97 AGM. It is now time to send in your \$10 if you wish to continue to receive the mailout 'til June 99  
PLEASE USE THE FORM PROVIDED ON p6 THIS MAILOUT**

## ***KEL WATKINS' YARNS ARE GOING ON CD!***

***Be part of a live audience!***

***See coming events calendar for details!***

### **DROPPINGS FROM THE BOSS COCKY**

Now that the dust has settled from our monumental month of January which included not only winning that prestigious award, but also holding yet another final of Bush poetry and yarning up on "the Hill", our group has come back to earth and is moving on.

A big "Thanks" to Joan Macneall for organizing the Sunset and Stars evening on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Despite a low attendance, it was a quality family event where novices were encouraged. Even our 'Scribe' Lorelie Tacoma made her maiden performance.

Our editor, Kay Stehn has now shifted to southern climes. We wish her and Kent the very best in their new environment. With the aid of modern technology Kay is happy to continue with the excellent job she has been doing – so keep those cards and letters rolling in and we will send them on.

A letter to hand from our South Australian friend and roving bush poet extraordinaire, Bob Magor, tells us that not only has he initiated a schools' written poetry camp, but, as he put, it "Done a Rusty" and has pulled together some 28 bush poets, aspiring bush poets plus some also-rans – but all as keen as the proverbial – with the intent of following our example to form a state association. It will be great to have some equally loopy friends across the border – watch this space! Bob is off to Qld again – Winton and Longreach – via about a dozen other engagements in Western Qld, country NSW and outback SA & NT. He expects to be about 200k from Derby fishing when their Boab Festival is on (Weekend July 18-19<sup>th</sup>) but will "go for the show" as he says that he likes the place. It would be great to catch up with Bob and his wife Beryl. Bob's fourth book of bush verse is almost ready for the printer. Included will be 'The Bachelor's Lament', the one that I was involved with him during a visit to the residence-cum-workshop that was owned by Allan Blunt. Allan is a well known character in Longreach Qld.

Speaking of new publications, our own Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge is set to send his third offering to the printer. Its title is 'Wild Camel Stew and Even Worse Verse'. Buoyed with the success of his last effort Keith has thrown caution to the winds and is having a thousand quality books produced – "Good luck Keith! It will be a winner."

Keep in mind the Bush Poetry Workshop being organised by Keith out at the popular Bicentennial Shed, Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup> (see events calendar for details). There is also movement at the station re a three-performance weekend early October being organised by 'Cobber' taking in Wongan Hills, Ballidu and Calingari. Interested members should contact Keith by phoning him on 9339 5270.

The Derby Boab Festival is beginning to loom large on the horizon, the organizers are keen to have a bush poetry presence. Any member contemplating trekking north in July should keep it in mind. Once again Cobber has plans, so why not get together a caravan (as in travelling together for safety, etc).

The Paterson & Lawson night at the Raffles Hotel Friday April 3<sup>rd</sup> was an outstanding success, some 70-fold turned out to witness some of the best traditional bush poetry this side of the black stump. New faces in Pat O'Leary, David Sears, Ron Evans and Phil Grey complimented the likes of Peter Capp, Constance Herbert, Peter Nettleton, John Hayes and even Yours Truly. Capably compered by Kel Watkins, the evening was thoroughly enjoyed by those lucky enough to attend and there are rumblings that we want more of the same.

It was good to see (and hear) John Hayes who has been off the scene for some time. John has had a most forgettable year – three various types of surgery in one year – but not enough to keep a good bush poet down. Great to see you firing again John.

Our first Bush Poet's Workshop is dated for Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 10am – 3pm at the Bicentennial Shed, 2 Gladstone Road, Armadale to be conducted by our mate Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge. This will be an interesting day for both established and aspiring poets and yarnspinners. There will be a \$10 fee ---- (\$5 to the local hospice fund, \$5 to WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assoc.) Morning and afternoon tea will be supplied, but you will need to bring your own lunch, and book early!. Rusty Christensen

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

7<sup>TH</sup> MAY 7.30 SHARP UPSTAIRS IN THE RIVERVIEW ROOM AT THE RAFFLES HOTEL

## SAVING AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

I've got a tale ter tell yers 'cause the facts yers oughta know,  
'Bout our biggest Aussie poet who has quite a verbose flow.  
'E stands there on the dais – upholds folklore tradition  
With tales of 'is prowess at drinkin', sex and fishin'.  
'E's a healthy-lookin' fella and yer wouldn't lip 'im twice,  
'Cause 'e's built like a steamroller. E'd squash yer in a trice.

'E should be a National treasure – we won't see 'is like again,  
No-one's fit ter tie the laces of our poet, Jeffrey Swain.  
With 'is bushy beard aflowin', 'e spins the tallest yarns,  
And if no-one believe 'em, 'e doesn't give a darn.  
'E's the hero, 'e's the villain, 'e's the lover, 'e's the tramp,  
'E's the fighter, 'e's the drinker, 'e's the best bloke in the camp.

'E's written down 'is memoirs – put them down in black an' white,  
'Is brave and gallant efforts when the other blokes took flight.  
'E should go down in 'istory, the Longreach 'All o' Fame,  
'E's the Aussie Lawson wrote of. 'E's plucky an' 'e's game.  
Well known to the old Banjo were 'is red-bearded kin,  
'Is grandfather rode the Snowy, and 'is father dammed it in.

But there's somethin' 'e ain't told yers – it's personal, I know,  
But if 'e keeps carousin' e'll turn up 'is calloused toe.  
Down ter the fiery furnace, (every bush bard's destiny),  
If 'e don't give up livin' so wild and fancy free.  
'E may look like a mallee bull, an' look as fit ter boot,  
But I'm warnin' yers, we'll lose our mate if we don't give a hoot.

Now, it's nothin' that's so serious, but 'e's got ter watch 'is step,  
'E's got ter watch 'is diet if 'e wants ter keep 'is pep.  
'E may rail and rant about it, may tell yers it's okay  
Ter eat big Mac's, Kentucky Fried, and drink ten cans a day,  
But I am quite determined to protect endangered blokes,  
Who brighten up Australia with their poetry and jokes.

So I met with the Destroyer. ('Cause I've got the same disease),  
An' we've made up a menu. (Our Jeff isn't very pleased).  
Lots of vegies, lots of water, skinless chicken, boiled fish,  
No more piles of bread and butter near 'is over-laden dish.  
No more cigarettes and drinkin' – just one beer after tea,  
Is the reason, fellow poets, why Jeff's browned off with me.

'E can moan and groan and carry on, 'e can throw a dit or two,  
'E can rant and rave, and spit the dum, but we'll see it through.  
I've bought 'im patches ter stick on, and 'ired a hypnotist,  
Ter get 'im off the cigarettes, an' wean 'im off the piss.  
I reckon that the likes of 'im are few and far between,  
So don't take any notice when 'e tell yers that I'm mean.

© V.P. READ

*This one's a little late to hit the press, Jeff should've been on the diet for 3 months now.  
So if you don't see him, run around the other side, he may be standing sideways.....Ed*

## THE FENCEPOST AND THE FIREWOOD

One afternoon early in the summer, Rusty and Lorelie were invited to attend on the Mayor of the fair City of Melville. They felt full of anticipation! They were not disappointed. Praises galore were bestowed on our young and virile organisation. The Australia Day Committee was impressed with our progress. The City of Melville was impressed with our progress and offered us a 'home'. The Mayor asked, "How can the City help?" The Boss Cocky and his Scribe pondered for half a second, remembering that the City had already been most helpful in providing administrative facilities in the early days, and particularly with assistance at Wireless Hill on the past two events. We hoped the City would help us again this year. And indeed, the Mayor agreed, they would! A large marquee and chairs would be provided, a stage would be provided, a sound system would be provided. What more could we ask for? Well, the Mayor offered "A CITY OF MELVILLE PERPETUAL TROPHY"! We could organise the trophy ourselves, but the limit was \$150. The minds of the Boss Cocky and the Scribe went wild. That much to spend, how should it look, how can we make it 'appropriate', who will make it, can it be made in time for Australia Day?

Boss Cocky and Scribe put their heads together and Boss Cocky sent Scribe to the new Southlands Shopping Centre to seek out a store that held 'suitable' trophies. Alas, Scribe could find no such store, and feeling rather stupid, told Boss Cocky. Ah, Boss Cocky meant Bull Creek shopping centre. Off Scribe went and found a fantastic shop just full, really full, of all the imaginable pieces of craft work, bush men, bush houses, gum nut, all cleverly made of clay, all suitable to adorn a Bush Poet's or Yarnspinner's trophy.

Now came the question, on what do we place this crafty little piece? It's got to be timber, old and rough, just like a bush man. Where do we get such a piece of timber? Boss Cocky has got lots of old timber but Scribe should have a look too. One very hot Saturday morning Scribe shot off to Soils Ain't Soils and explained her quest to the fellow in charge. "Well, luv, we're short of staff today, but you're welcome to look around." Scribe searched among the moss granite, the limestone ornaments, the gardener's soil, the loamy soil, the sandy soil, until she came to the Firewood heap, all charred and rugged. There she found a piece, not too big, not too split, reasonable shape, bark on two sides, should rub up well enough for a base. She queued up in the sun at the 'check out' for some time (remember they were short of staff that day), and finally said, "I'd like this piece of firewood." The expression on the face of the youngish woman at the till seemed to say, 'Now what would a middle aged woman in a clean pair of white slacks want with one dirty, black piece of firewood in the middle of summer?' Instead, she said, "I have to charge you something, so it will be 50c."

In the meantime, Boss Cocky happened to mention the quest to the Ardross Assassin. As a result, a four foot piece of fence post complete with wire holes, which had seen many summers in the earth, sun and sea, nicely weathered and grooved, with lichens and all appeared on the Boss Cocky' doorstep. This had been picked up on the Assassin's In-laws' farm down Albany way where his wife had been visiting her family.

The 16<sup>th</sup> January rolled up, when an honourable trophy maker in Myaree returned from holidays and awaited our request. Now, how can we turn a piece of blackened firewood and an old fence post into a trophy suitable to bear the name of the CITY OF MELVILLE? Boss Cocky, Scribe and Trophymaker scratched their heads. Luckily, it dawned on them that we would really need TWO trophies, one for the Champion Bush Poet and one for the Champion Yarnspinner. After much deliberating, it was decided to slice the firewood in two across the base, cut the two rough ends off the fence post (about 30 cm each) and attach them to each base at an angle to the side and leaning back a bit, but not too much, then smooth off the front surface to hold a dozen little plaques to receive the names of the Champions for the next twelve years. The front surface of the base would also be smoothed off just enough to hold a plate bearing

"THE CITY OF MELVILLE PERPETUAL TROPHY  
W.A. BUSH POETS' & YARNSPINNERS ASSOCIATION, Inc.

Presented to the  
[CHAMPION BUSH POET (OR YARNSPINNER)]"

Trophymaker suggested that most of the rough be left on the timbers and they just be sealed with a space-age polyurethane which would preserve them and prevent the charcoal and bark from marking the coffee tables, and all that for just exactly \$150!

So ends the tale of two pieces of old and weathered wood, which became four pieces, which became two trophies presented by the Mayor of the City of Melville to two champions on Australia Day 1998. The question remains, "What do we do after twelve years?"  
Lorelie 'Scribe' Tacoma

WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assn  
***NOMINATION OF A COMMITTEE MEMBER***

(full name).....

nominates to stand for the 98/99 committee

.....  
(If you wish, please identify the position, or portfolio of interest)

(signature).....

(seconder).....  
(may be seconded by a committee member at the meeting)

(Return Address: The Hon. Secretary Loralie Tacoma,  
WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assn, 16 Gratwick Tce, Murdoch, WA 6150

Cut here...  .....

***REGISTRATION FOR COBBER'S WORKSHOP ON BUSH VERSE***  
*(to be received no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May)*

Name.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone .....

*Please do not send cash in the mail. Cheque or postal order only*  
*Return Address: Keith Lethbridge, 24 Gladstone Rd, Armadale, 6112.*

*W.A. BUSH POETS & YARN SPINNERS ASSOCIATION INC.*

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

FULL NAME.....

ADDRESS.....POST CODE.....

TEL. (H).....(W).....(FAX).....

DATE..... SIGNATURE.....

AREAS OF INTEREST: Please indicate by ticking the appropriate boxes below.

BUSH POETRY [ ] URBAN POETRY [ ] YARN SPINNING [ ]

I am interested in being involved in the Association: As a performer [ ] To assist with general organisation [ ]  
As a committee member [ ]

GENERAL COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS.....

.....  
*PLEASE RETURN WITH \$10 SUBSCRIPTION FEE (SINGLE) OR \$20 (FAMILY) TO :  
THE SECRETARY, W.A. BUSH POETS & YARN SPINNERS ASSN. INC.  
16 GRATWICK TERRACE, MURDOCH. W.A. 6150  
(TEL. OR FAX. 9310.1500)*

Cut here........

*W.A. BUSH POETS & YARN SPINNERS ASSOCIATION INC.*

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

FULL NAME.....

ADDRESS.....POST CODE.....

TEL. (H).....(W).....(FAX).....

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(TEL. OR FAX. 9310.1500)*

## COMING EVENTS

FAIRBRIDGE FESTIVAL 17<sup>TH</sup> – 19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners at Fairbridge

Performers include Bob Rummery, Roger Montgomery, Joan Macneall, Frank Harrison, Chris Sadler,  
Leigh Matthews, Peter Nettleton.

For more info, contact Peter Nettleton (ph 9335 3303)

Friday Night 1<sup>ST</sup> May 8pm start

We are going NORTH to Mt. Lawley for an EVENING OF BUSH POETRY  
with the Sportsmen's Assn. of Australia (W.A. Division)  
Inglewood Sportsmen's Centre, Stancliffe Street, Mt. Lawley (off Central Ave)

ALL WELCOME

Entry cost is a donation.

Contact Rusty the Boss Cocky (ph 9364 4491)

Saturday night 16<sup>th</sup> May

ALL THE ELSEWHERE STORIES and A HOST OF BALLADS by KEL WATKINS  
BE AMONGST THE AUDIENCE FOR A LIVE CD RECORDING

7pm SHARP (to avoid lock out)

\$5 pay at the door

HOMEBASE CENTRE

Cnr Salvardo Rd & Harbourne St, Wembley

Invitation to order the CD on the night for \$15 pre-release price.

Sunday Lunchtime 31<sup>st</sup> May

POET'S ROAST

Noon 'til Three at the Fremantle Club, Bannister Street, Freo

For a get-together and a good feed, contact Peter Nettleton to book a seat (ph 9335 3303)

\$10 per head (limited tickets)

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 10am to 3pm

COBBER'S WORKSHOP ON BUSH VERSE

*Registration and fee must be with Keith (24 Gladstone Road, Armadale 6112) no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May.  
(find mailing slip to accompany payment on p5 this mailout)*

At the Bi-centennial Shed, 24 Gladstone Road, Armadale

Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge will be leading discussion on Australian bush verse, how to plan and  
construct your rhyme, what to avoid, options on rhyming patterns, rhythm,  
techniques used by the "old masters"

You'll not be put under pressure, and the workshop should be of interest to both the newest writer and  
the most experienced bush bard. This workshop is simply to help us all towards better bush verse.

Your ideas will be welcome.

Please bring your own bush rhymes, either completed or "under construction" and writing gear.

Morning and afternoon tea will be supplied. Please bring your own lunch.

Workshop Registration Adults \$10 each, Children \$5 each

(Funds to be split 50/50 between WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Assn and the Silver Chain Hospice)

Derby Boab Festival

18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> July

for info catch the Boss Cocky

or contact Cheryle Holmes of the Derby Country Music Club (Inc.)

Post Office Box 87, Derby 6728..... ph 08 9193 1065

## ANNUAL BOYUP BROOK COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

The poets at Boyup Brook over the Feb. 13-14-15 weekend were received better than ever.

We had 3-4 hours in The Hotel on Saturday morning (Poet's in The Pub) and The Poet's Breakfast Sunday morning from 8 to 9.45am. We are slowly getting recognized and the Poet's Breakfast is becoming popular. I've watched it grow for the last seven years and am quite happy with the progress.

I was lucky to obtain support from Jeff Swain, Peter Capp, Claudette Mountjoy, Ron Evans and Brett Gale who has put his works into music and sang a few for the crowd. Ron Evans is a Banjo recitist and does it well. Claudette gave her usual good performance and the two Fremantle lads (or Larrikins) delighted the audience with their style of humour.

From reports, I think they were also happy with my effort as compere and recitation with some of my later poems tried out on the audience for the first time.

All in all, a good weekend, and look forward to next year with an **open invitation** for poets to come and join us.

Thanks once again, thanks for the support given. All the Best, keep smiling and writing. Brian Gale

Eddie Brookes is an old friend of the Boss Cocky from East Fremantle. He copied these two short poems from the wall of a derelict building which appeared to be a hotel, about 60k north of Coolgarlie (maybe at Goongarrie). It was about 20 years ago, on a trip with his elder brother on the way north to his claims near Agnew on the Weebo station in the breakaway country.

Deserted now, no more you're stirred by those in search for gold.  
Alas you're but a memory blurred of what you were of old.  
What though the town in silence sleeps except for song of birds.  
There's history in your silent heaps more eloquent than words. Jules Raeside

Were you ever out in the great alone when the moon was awful clear  
And the barren mountains hemmed you in with a silence you could almost hear?  
With only the howl of the dingo pack as you camped there in the cold.  
A half-starved thing in a stark dead world, clean mad for the muck called gold. Jules Raeside