The

May 2025

BULLY TIN

W.A. Bush Poets



Next Muster: 2nd May 2025 starting at 7.00 pm in the Auditorium,

Swan Care, Plantation Drive, Bentley

MC - Lorraine Broun 0411 877 551
Reading from the Classics - Heather Denholm
8 line poem challenge: Changes



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

President's Ramblings May 2025



Meg and I are back from a quick trip to Victoria and the Man from Snowy River Festival

in Corryong. While it meant a lot of time behind the steering wheel it was worth it to catch up with many of our Bush Poetry friends from the other side of the country and to stay at "Poet's Paradise" with Morrie Foun. Others we caught up with there and who have been to WA were Jan Lewis who has been organizing the bush poetry at Corryong for 30 years and Debby Berryman who scooped the pool in the competition. Debby's performances have come a long way since she competed at Toodyay a couple of years ago I came second (once again) in the poets brawl with a rough poem that could use a lot of tidying up. I am putting it out as a challenge to any of our members to knock it in to shape.

While we were away we received the sad news that Arthur Leggett OAM passed away (see tribute in this Bullytin). Arthur is being honored with a State Funeral on 10th May. I feel very privileged to have been able to call Arthur a friend and to have performed beside him on many occasions.

Peel Poets are progressing with planning for their poetry day on November 8. To generate local interest they are holding a gathering of poets and interested people at Belswan Lifestyle Village on Saturday 3rd May, with a meeting at 2.00 pm followed by a poetry performance at 2.30. If you know anyone in the Pinjarra or Mandurah area who might be interested don't hesitate to encourage them to come along. Belswan is where Rob and Rhonda reside, 25 Clarence Parade, Pinjarra.

This will be a busy weekend for bush poets as we have the Muster on Friday, Pinjarra on Saturday and Moondyne Festival at Toodyay on Sunday. It is not too late to put your hand up for a spot at Moondyne.

My apologies to all for the confusion regarding the May Muster. I assumed that as the Auditorium was not available for March due to the state election, that would be the case this time for the federal election as well. Such is not the case. Just goes to prove the old saying – don't assume as it only makes an ASS out of U and ME.

Until next month.....

Bill Gordon, President

4TH MAY 10am - 4pm MOONDYNE FESTIVAL, TOODYAY

Come along to enjoy the Bush Poetry, Music, Displays, Demonstrations and so much more, while reliving the story of Moondyne Joe in the main street of historic Toodyay

Dear Poets and Members of WABP

We have again been invited to perform at the Bunbury Shanty Festival, weekend Friday 4th July until Sunday 6th July

Last year we performed at a Poet's Breakfast on the Saturday at the Koombana Bay Sailing Club and then in the afternoon on Sunday at the Seafarer's Mission.

Please let Ian Farrell know if you would like to attend. Last year we received a free double pass, however, we were responsible for our own accommodation and travel expenses. Those of us who attended had a wonderful time.

Should you be interested in performing Please let Ian know Mobile 0408 212 636.

Ian runs the Bunbury branch of the Bush Poets.

as yet I have received no actual programme but if people email me at dyn2@westnet.com.au that they are interested, I will forward the programme to them as soon as I get it.

Ian Farrell, Bunbury Push Poets.

An ANZAC Trilogy

The Landing

Upon the stage that Grecian heroes strode a massive fleet assembled off the shore where Agamemnon's dark black ships once rowed – the prelude to another Trojan war. In ghostly mists ships rolled on oily swells, they carried men who fought at our behest from battleships like monstrous citadels. This war would put their courage to the test.

The men were landed on a bloodied beach, a blood soaked strand with Turks who meant to kill. They dived for cover at the shrapnel's screech and fought like hell to take a Turkish hill. For in the smog of war they knew full well the dawn would turn the chaos into hell.

The Game

An agonising, sleepless, nervous wait, long hours of training have them at their prime, a muffled conversation with a mate, a few soft words, a shaken hand - it's time. The roaring crowd, the umpire's whistle's loud, then down the players race as one; their side will soak it up in awe before the crowd; Grand Final day and there they stand with pride.

The guns and roaring crowds must sound the same, more whistles shrill, they charge into the night.

A trench, the player's race in all but name, they've soaked it up, but now they have to fight.

These young men thought that war was just a game and as they died they forged the ANZAC's name.

The Retreat

But as the awful shells and shrapnel flew men grew accustomed to the endless roar and as – from chaos – order slowly grew they learned the mad monotony of war. They lived in fragile dugouts on the hill and fought and died to orders from on high. They gained no comfort from the need to kill, for in the madness no one told them why.

The senseless war dragged on, an endless stand.
There was no meaning and no end in sight,
Until – like Troy – a bold deceit was planned
and all our troops left secretly at night.
Our forces left that they might fight again.
The legends of that ANZAC game remain.

R.I.P

An old fellow from "the Murchison" was concerned that he did not know Would HE end up in heaven, or that hot place down below All his life he'd wondered, just what would be his fate, For no-one had convinced him, who'd be on the drafting gate!

A sympathetic fellow, he decided what come what may To care for his pall bearers, on that most important day He agreed to shed some kilos, by a deed that's highly rated And nothing could be easier – ALL his organs he donated!



Life in the Murchison

Moving to the Murchison, over seventy years ago
It really did amaze me, all the things I did not know
But much help was available, from those mining & station folk
Who somehow turned me into, a fairly useful bloke.

Station life was wonderful, lots of action every day And what a treat – your neighbours, were about fifteen miles away Sporting days with other towns, brought memories and many smiles Even when you had to travel, about a hundred dusty miles.

Though times were rather rugged, in that part of our great outback There was such a friendly spirit, that it helped you stay on track As part of a community, leading such a varied life But always very willing, to help those who were in strife.

Now I miss that lovely bush life, no longer can I fix windmills For now I visit the Doctors, and swallow all sorts of pills. I'm no longer very active, and I watch a lot of telly And visiting all those pubs, is expanding my poor belly!

But there are great advantages, I've been told by my best friends It must really be an asset, when your final journey ends. Down here when we drop off the perch, according to all the stats At least we won't be eaten, by those dingoes or feral cats!

The Murchison's a lovely spot, I would like you all to know And if I could be re-cycled, I would give it another go!!

The Wake

My life was most rewarding, but for ALL of us it ends So now I say farewell to you, dear family and all my friends I have my mobile with me, so don't have a heart attack If I should ring your number, and you think I'm coming back!

It's really very peaceful here, though there's not much to see So don't be in a hurry, to keep me company! By Syd Hopkinson Rest in Peace 17th August 1924 – 3rd March 2025

Vale - Arthur Leslie Leggett, OAM



Arthur Leggett was a foundation member of WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners. Arthur was an accomplished poet with a huge repertoire. He won the yarnspinning in 2014 and was placed on several occasions. Arthur always promoted Bush Poetry and took every opportunity to recite to an appreciative audience. He was a crowd favourite at Wireless Hill, on the Crystal Swan, at Boyup Brook and at musters. Arthur was 106 when he passed on, but even after making his century his performances had lost none of their appeal.

Arthur's autobiography, "Don't Cry for Me", written in 2015, is compelling reading.

It gives an account of his life and particularly his time as a POW in Germany in WW2.

"His acceptance of the hardships he and fellow POWs were forced to endure and their ability to make the most of their circumstances shows exceptional strength of character.

Arthur was awarded Australia's highest honour, the Order of Australia Medal, for his services to the Ex-Prisoners of War Association where he was president for 29 years. He was a staunch advocate for his fellow veterans, making sure their sacrifices would be remembered for generations to come. Arthur would visit schools to educate student on the experiences of war. He had a close association with Mt Lawley Senior High School, who named their library in his honour in 2018.

It is fitting that Arthur is being honoured with a State Funeral on May 10. There will be a military-led procession from Parliament House to St George's Cathedral, where the government will officially honour the state's oldest surviving ex-prisoner of war.

Courtesy of Bill Gordon

A DECENT AUSSIE BLOKE

He's not a national treasure just because he's flamin' old; He didn't split the atom or turn gravel into gold; And he's not a living legend just because he wrote some verse; I've known half a hundred scribblers, some much better, some much worse.

Well, yes, he donned the uniform when he was just a lad, But so did many other blokes, some good-uns and some bad; And he can't take too much credit for his capture by the Hun, In a war zone these things happen; there were thousands, not just one.

No doubt he looked heroic at the victory parades, But what about John Wayne and his amazing escapades? And just because he headed home and started out again, That doesn't make him different from a thousand other men.

So why is Arthur Leggett such a credit to the nation? And why do we feel honoured by our close association? Well, I'll tell you what I reckon, and you've heard it all before: He's a little Aussie battler and he's honest to the core.

Compassionate, courageous, with a twinkle in his eye; When you listen to his stories, you just know he's dinki-di, So, whether it's a tragic tale or whether it's a joke, He's earned his reputation as a hero to the nation, He's a national inspiration; just a decent Aussie bloke!

Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge

Arthur giving Fremantle Dockers coach Justin Longmuir, "a few pointers" (April 2021). Photo courtesy of Barry Higgins



Cobber's Bangtail Muster

For those in the know, the entertainment kicked off on Saturday night at the Boyup Brook hotel. The owner, John Mathews, is a talented musician and songwriter and has encouraged live performances, including bush poetry, at the hotel since he bought it. On Saturday night he and the band regulars, Lee, Andy and Heather were joined by Jeff Swain, who is one of those horrible multi-talented people who can sing, play music, write and recite poems, tell yarns and jokes and is an all round entertainer. You could really dislike him for having more than his share of talent, if he wasn't such a decent bloke with it. The night was further enlivened by a packed house, including a crowd from the Boyup Brook rodeo, though whether participants or audience we never knew.

The actual Bangtail muster started at Cobber's Corner on the outskirts of Dinninup, around 10:30 am. Though initially only to a small crowd, the numbers (and number of performers) kept increasing right up till stumps at 1pm. Kevin and Shirley, from SA, only arrived in time to hear the last song as they got lost in Dinninup, even though they had explored the town the day before. Anyone familiar with the size of Dinninup might wonder how this was possible. They blamed their satellite navigation system for taking them on a scenic tour of the surrounding countryside. One of Cobber's first acts before kicking off the entertainment was to add to his hair collection. Everyone attending was asked to cut off a lock of hair, which he kept in a bag for later. It was a bit reminiscent of the souvenir collecting some serial killers engage in, but to the best of my knowledge everyone survived the weekend. Cobber's explanation was that it was to replicate the behaviour at a real Bangtail muster. Cattle were brought in for treatment and subsequently had their tails trimmed, to make it easy to identify those still requiring treatment. I'm not sure that being likened to sick cattle was much of an improvement, however we did not let that dampen our spirits. We were entertained for several hours, by a mixture of poetry, songs and music from performers old and new and from as far afield as Jurien Bay, Bunbury and Kojonup. I reckon around half the audience turned out to be performers.

After the Bangtail muster we had time for a spot of lunch and a chat before moving to the Dinninup Hall for Square dancing. That's dancing in squares, not dancing by squares, in case you were wondering. Cobber shared the dance calling with another Jeff, the very man who had him certified way back in the seventies, to call square dancing, that is. Then to round the afternoon off they held a couple of couples dances, accompanied by the Boyup Brook scratch band, which almost never plays with the same line up twice.







Maxine Richter



Audience members









UNKNOWN BUT LOVED

I can never claim to know him, A carpenter by trade, He volunteered to join the war, To danger unafraid.

Leaving a wife with baby son
In camp he marched and drilled.
Then posted to a far-off land
To kill or to be killed.

In the steamy heat of Burma
The Chindits were dropped down
To face the foe in jungle dense
And turn the war around.

This mobile force with furtive speed Supply routes were their prey.

But their casualties grew and grew With each successive day.

Enemy action was not all
These brave men had to fear.
Disease wrought havoc in their ranks,
Malaria cost them dear.

This the fate of our carpenter.

To India he was sent
But passed away in hospital,
Hearts of wife and children rent,

In an army grave in Bangladesh, Remembered now by few, Among the hundreds of our brave Who earned our gratitude.

And who is this man to me, Remembered every year? I can never say I knew him But to me he still is dear.

A loving father and husband Whose life was cut so short, One of the countless heroes Whose blood our freedom bought.

by David Ellis

Muster Write-up 4th April 2025

Hether Denholm, MC welcomed everyone and then lead an intro for Anzac Day memories

Heather she then entertained us with her poem 'My Inheritance" Written to honour her 3 cousins, brothers, who served in Vietnam, 2 passed away 2 years ago from Cancer. She felt that the inheritance she had from them and other members of her family was the Blood that runs through her veins, and her debt to them remains unpaid.

John Hayes 'The Singing Soldiers' by CJ Dennis. During war is was said that the troops had been heard singing on Xmas dayu, so perhaps he base his poem on that occasion.

Heather made two announcements about the door to the back toilets, that is has an alarm and also request for synopsis by all performers be sent to deb so she can get all the facts correct.

Cobber again entertained on his mouth organ while wearing his hand made dockers scarf playing "By the Banks of the Reedy Lagoon" (aka On the Banks of the Reedy Lagoon). This was apparently written by Jimmy Connors around 1890. Then followed with his poem "Crocodile". In 1967 I decided to leave the East Kimberley and have a look at the Northern Territory. Managed to pick up a job on a 40-foot, wooden hulled boat called "The Nonamie", which apparently means "no friends", in French. The name was appropriate. She was in poor repair, up for sale but with no takers. The crew was about the same, descending a further notch with my arrival. At that time, I had never worked on boats, and soon found out the reason no-one else wanted the job. It was dangerous! This poem tells the story.

Frank Heffernan talked about his 2nd book released last year. He then presented one that was included "The Super Mart Saga" when the husband goes to the shops seeking Paprika not knowing what it was. And in the struggle came home with neither the bread of the

Then his poem - Baa Baa Joe the Sheerer... Fiery Fred from Qld. And the battle of sheering head to head.

Christine Boult requested more participants for the muster roster please contact her. Bunbury bush poets the Bunbury Shanty Festival in July. May 4th Moondyne Joe festival Bill seeking performers. Caught up with Peter Blythe. Then presented "*Keith's souvenir*" about seeds from the lone pine that was brough back and then lovingly grown by his Auntie Em eight years after his return from the war. Five seeds were started four successfully grown and now more than 100 Red Turkish pines are grown in memory of the lost and the mateship of the war.

David Sears spoke of his long-term membership and of others including Syd Hopkinson. *The Illiterate Stock Man* a tale of a stockman who worked throughout the state, and how he was offered a job by the council in his latter years as the sanitary contractor for a Murchison dunny man in que.

Terry Piggot - recited his poem A Bushman's Farewell

A story about an old chap who's dying wish, was to head out favourite place in the goldfields way outback. His wife and family help him fulfill his wish.

"Beneath the brooding breakaways where stars were shining bright,

a bushman lost his battle as his spirit now took flight.

While tears were flowing freely for a man they all will miss,

A wife is quietly sibbing as she gives a farewell kiss."

Shelley Johnson—entertained us with the tale/yarn about her Auntie Dot's custard and how they resolved the riddle of who was responsible for the custard that had been sampled and what were the consequences.

Christine Boult - presented a reading from Brad Tate's book "Down and Outback". Brad was a folklore collector and interviewed Queensland poet William George (Wally) Hoole. Wally had his work published in minor magazines in the early 1900s and was a contemporary and acquaintance of Breaker Morant. Wally shared with Lawson, Ogilvie and "The Breaker" a fondness for romance and sentiment.

Christine also presented his poem "The Lachlan Side". This poem tells the story of an aristocrat who was thwarted in his desire to marry a squatter's daughter. She eloped with a stock hand assisted by a black tracker. The tracker was rewarded with good will and "Rum and Bacci".

Supper Heather advised members present to select some books for their own collection from the multiple boxes that have been donated to the library. Several members took the opportunity to add to their own book collections.

Muster Write Up cont.....

Rob spoke of his email hacked... Heather also and warned everyone to be aware.

Keith 'Cobber' – invited all to come along to the upcoming bangtail muster details have been sent out via email to most members.

Rod and Kerry Lee – Will Ogilvy was resident in Australia for a while but returned to Scotland but kept writing about Aus. 'The Hats of a Man can many???' ? That Old battered Hat

Then a poem by *Bobby Miller from Qld* the story of man forced to take his wife to bingo and how he changed his mind on playing bingo. When he was on a winning streak which made the crowd of 'grannies' very unhappy.

Kerry Lee.... Will Ogilvy – a great champion of both women and horses "The Riding of the Rebel" telling of the many that tried to ride the rebel and the trail of bodies he left behind him. Finally ridden by a youth disguised as man with a soft voice and gentle touch.

John Hayes – a poem written travelling around Adelaide hills and up to Copley and *the Quandong café*. Sitting under the verandah was an indigenous man called Kenny McKenzie, playing his guitar and singing gospel songs. He said he was a born again Christian and was recovering from a life of alcohol abuse and gambling. I though his journey had been interesting and therefore worthy of a poem.

Frank Heffernan - *A healthy diet* after being introduced to a healthy diet by his wife which trimmed him down and found other women were flirting with him which made his wife

'The common cold' how a strong country lad deals with a case of the common cold.

Deb McQuire presented two of her poems 'A Cyclone is Brewing' that speaks of the tension and stress of cyclones on families. Followed by 'What can I express in two hundred words' a writing exercise that outlines what can be expressed in a short poem.

David Sears – The Inside Story by Charlie Marshall aka Bluey the Shearer... bush surgery conducted 'old slogger' by a butcher when a fencing accident happened. Using what ever was at hand to save a life of the man injured by a chainsaw.

Bev Shorland – *Only a house wife* by Kieth Lethbridge. Talking about the life of only a housewife the varied tasks and duties of raising a family and running a household when there was little conveniences available, and how resourceful and stoic she was. The style and grace of their mum.

Terry Piggot – talk of the inspiration he has drawn from visiting ruins in the outback and how they inspired his writing as he viewed the ruins of a long abandoned mining town his mind began to wander.

The Ruins

"As I view this scene I ponder, and I let my mind now to wander

To a time when this old town was full of noise and people too.

When it dusty streets had sounded to the drum of hoofs that pounded.

As the bullock and the Camell teams were daily passing through.

Heather – presented her poem 'What's Wrong' which was written on the spur of the moment last year while attending a writing class, she was the only one writing poetry, the subject that day was What's Wrong, I thought of many silly answers, but finally decided that there was nothing like telling the truth. And has no intention for throwing in the towel and giving up.

Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge – played the tune of the last post on his mouth organ. An then recited his poem "Gallipoli" which tells of Australian troops, heading for that historic, tragic battle-ground, fighting valiantly and then returning, in various conditions ... some good, but mostly bad. I've had no personal experience in any war zone, and have never heard a shot fired in anger. To put this poem together, I read accounts from various people who had survived the Gallipoli experience.

Closed by Cobber at 9.30pm

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<u>Reminder:</u> Could everyone who performs at Musters please have a synopsis available on the night for our scribe or send one via email to deb.mcquire@bigpond.com for the Muster write up. Thank you in advance

Next Muster: 6th June 2025 at 7.00 pm, at the Auditorium, Swan Care, Plantation Drive, Bentley MC: Daniel Avery - falcolnsnest95@gmail.com - 0418 943 338

WA poets -past and present Poets bring in your books/CDs to sell

Poems for Henry Lawson's birthday (17th June)

Deadline for submissions for June's Bully Tin 27th May 2025

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 is something interesting going on for WA Writers

April

10-13 April — Man from Snowy River Bush Festival (incorporating the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships). Performance & Written Competitions. Corryong, Victoria. See 28 February Closing Date.

30 April — Closing Date — Silver Swagman (Bronze Swagman special one-off) written bush poetry award, Winton, Queensland.

<u>May</u>

4 May — Closing Date — Grenfell Henry Lawson Poetry and Short Story Prize, Grenfell, NSW.

15 May — Closing Date — Eastwood/Hills FAW Literary Competition Boree Log, Eastwood, NSW.

<u>July</u>

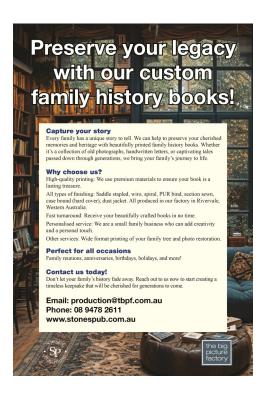
14 July — Closing Date — Brisbane EKKA Bush Poetry Competition, Brisbane, Queensland.

<u>August</u>

10 August — Brisbane EKKA Bush Poetry Competition, Brisbane, Queensland. See 14 July closing date.

31 August — Closing Date — Betty Olle Poetry Award, Kyabram, Victoria.





Committee Members - WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners 2025			
President	Bill Gordon	0428 651 098	billgordon1948@gmail.com
Vice President	Keith Lethbridge	0437 336 296	keithlethbridge@hotmail.com
Secretary	Rodger Kohn	0419 666 168	rodgershirley@bigpond.com
Treasurer	Sue Hill	0418 941 016	suzi.tonyhill@bigpond.com
Committee			
Meg Gordon	 Toodyay Festival Sec. Web Control Secretary of the ABPA ABPA Representative 	0404 075 108	meggordon4@bigpond.com
Don Gunn		0418 930 821	bigunnz@iinet.net.au
Maxine Richter		0429 339 002	maxine.richter@bigpond.com
Greg Joass		0429 345 150	gjoass@gmail.com
Heather Denholm	Peel Poets Representative	0429 052 900	h.e.deholm@gmail.com
Deb McQuire	- Bully Tin editor	0428 988 315	deb.mcquire@bigpond.com

Regular Events

WA Bush Poets: 1st Friday each month MC details see front page

- 7pm Bentley Auditorium, Bentley Park WA

Bunbury Bush Poets: 1st Monday every 'even' month Ph. Alan Aitken - 0400 249 243

- The Parade Hotel,

1 Austral Parade, East Bunbury. or Ian Farrell 0408 212 636

Ph. Ken Ball - 0419 94 3376

Goldfields Bush Poetry Group: 1st Wednesday each month.

- 7.30pm 809 Kalgoorlie Country Club,

108 Egan St. Kalgoorlie

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 or www.bushverse.com

Address correspondence for the "Bully Tin" to: Bully Tin Editor, PO Box 364, Bentley 6982 or 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

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

Please contact the Webmaster, if you would like to see your poems featured in the Members Poetry section.