**WA Bush Poets** 

# The Bully Tin



July, 2005 & Yarn Spinners

Monthly Muster at the Como Bowling & Recreation Club cnr Hensman & Sandgate Sts, South Perth Next meeting: Friday 1st July, 2005 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm start.

www.wabushpoets.com



## The Winter Season

has arrived with long dark nights & cold grey days – and the RAIN!

A time to welcome Nature's Gift as the brown turns to green and the dams and tanks begin to fill.



#### The Melody of Rain

There's sweet music in the falling of the raindrops when they're calling With their patter on the gables of an iron roof at night.

I can hear the distant drumming of the downpipes softly humming; There's sweet music in the raindrops on an outback roof at night.

With a whisper of the breeze as it murmurs through the trees Comes the chorus of the bullfrogs as they come to life again, And the melody that's ringing from those thousand voices singing Is a hymn of praise to Heaven for the steady soaking rain.

There's a musky scent of moisture from the parched and blackened pasture

As the cracked and beaten paddocks feel the freshness of the rain; There's the chorus of the crickets from the oleander thickets As they play the background music to the bullfrogs' glad refrain.

In the brief but brilliant brightening from the intermittent lightning There's the pale and ghostly glimmer of the water on the ground. As I stand and gaze in wonder I hear rolling cracks of thunder And the power of Nature echoes in the vastness of the sound.

Now the drought is broken and these lines are but a token Of the measure of my pleasure at the coming of the Wet; It's a joy that's shared by others of my western grazing brothers And we'll all take up new courage for the squaring of the debt.

When the Mitchell grass is growing and the inland rivers flowing, When they're swollen with the run-off from the great monsoonal rain, When the Flinders grass is seeding and the stock are fat and feeding, We'll forget about the hardships and we'll praise this land again!

Yes, those mystic notes enthralling of the raindrops softly calling Are the rhapsody of Nature that's the grazier's delight.
As I hear the rhythmic drumming of the downpipes softly humming, I give thanks to God and Nature for an outback home tonight.

Richard Magoffin ©

# Droppings from "The Boss Cocky"



It was great to see the number of performers queuing up at the Muster last month. Compare Brian Langley had to fit 16 various bards into a two hour total performance evening - no mean feat. When there is a situation like that the M. C. must give way to the ones with their hands up to perform.

As the performers are turning up in numbers it tells us one thing, the message is going out that Bush Poetry is alive and well. As we approach the Association's 10th Birthday we can feel comfortable that the movement is consolidating and moving on.

Thanks to a grant from the City of Melville, Schools Co-ordinator, June Bond, has been knocking on doors and, from her efforts, members of the Association have visited seven schools in the city resulting in enthusiastic responses from all concerned. June is putting together a plan to include the schools visited in a junior written competition with a cash incentive for the best entries. If we are going to make an impression and think out of the square, this is where we must start - it won't be easy.

The "late" Ron Evans and yours truly are off to the Kimberley for a couple of weeks to show the flag; plus catch up with Cobber in Halls Creek and Derby. They are keen on their Bush Verse up there and get big crowds to their Poet's Breakfasts, especially in Derby - 300 the last two years.

Don't forget the AGM on 5th August, 2005, 6.30pm at the Como Camp. Think about joining the merry band at the committee table (it can be fun, which is what we are all about). The sits. Vacant include Treasurer (not an onerous task) and Editor for the Bully Tin - this job can be as much or as little as the editor thinks, it ain't the Reader's Digest.

Have you ever seen such a well organised mob as Edna Westall and her team in the Kitchen at the Como Camp on Muster nights? What a top job they do. On behalf of all the customers 'Thanks Edna and the girls'.

While handing out the plaudits, I must bring your attention to our very efficient secretary, Jean Ritchie. Not only is Jean a most competent secretary, an efficient money girl at the door, an excellent member of the committee, but like all achievers, she contributes her energy, time and wisdom to the Penguin movement - for the uninformed, it is a public speaking organisation for women, as well, what can't this girl do? Jean was recently awarded the highest honour in the Penguin movement, the Pat Shears Award for continuous service to Penguins (and she can't swim). From everybody in Bush Poetry - CONGRATULATIONS, Jean. A quiet achiever.

That's about all for now folks, see you at the A.G.M. In the meantime, keep writin' and recitin', it's real exciting' - and it is good for you.

The Boss Cocky. Rusty C.

## WA Bush Poetry Championshipsl

Time for the Writers to be Writing and the Spruikers to be Spruiking.

Written Competition

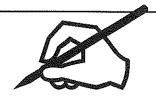
While details have not been finalised there will be Junior and Open Sections in the Written Competition.

Entry Forms are available by sending a SAE to: The Secretary

5A Bruning Road Manning WA 6152

Closing date: 30th July 2005

**Performance Competition** 



#### Congratulations, Vall

Our talented writer has been awarded another Highly Commended from the Katherine Music Muster.

Well done, Val. You do the West proud!. When the weather is more amendable we look forward to seeing you once again at the Musters.

#### City of Melville Grant

community grants for which organisations can apply. The WABP&YS successfully applied for funding to introduce bush poetry to children in the City of Melville.

This has provided us with an exciting and rewarding opportunity to share our art form with the next generation.

While some schools actively promote the popular works of the likes of Paterson, Lawson and Dorothea Mackellar, etc, other schools tend to overlook this important part of our heritage.

We felt privileged to go into schools around the Melville precinct performing the popular works in a way the children can understand and enjoy.

Feed back from the schools has been very positive and appreciative.

From the response we have received WABP&YS will be invited back to these schools in the future.

It has been heart warming to work with so many cooperative, bright and enthusiastic children.



#### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Members please note-

#### AGM

5th August 2005 6.30pm

All positions open Treasurer & Newsletter Editor required

NOTICE OF MOTIONS for Committee positions must be received by the Secretary by 15th July, 2005.

#### **Positions Vacant**

As Rusty stated in his report, the position of Treasurer is not an onerous one, requiring only a few hours each month. I have the records set up on MYOB and will pass a disc on to the new Treasurer or, if you are more comfortable, a manual ledger can be used.

The position as Editor, however, requires a lot more time and dedication. When I undertook this job my focus was to enhance the club through the magazine. There are no guidelines to follow so Member feedback has set the format. From phone calls, letters and comments I have been gratified to find Members have joined after reading the newsletter or have become members even though it is not possible to attend Musters.

Previous to becoming Editor I did not appreciate the time and effort Michelle, the retiring editor, put in to producing The City of Melville is to be congratulated for providing her version of the magazine. It was certainly a huge learning curve for me. While I initially found the undertaking daunting it has also been very rewarding. As well as enrolling in a Publishing Course I have gained much from reading, researching poets and articles and venturing into the rather scary world of the Internet!

Rusty thanked Edna for effort she puts in at the Musters attending to the supper break, but the effort she and her friend, Joan, put in behind the scenes ensuring you all receive your copy of the magazine is huge.

After Snap have printed out the required copies I deliver these to Edna. She and Joan then spend several hours folding copies into envelopes before posting them out. So, the production of the Bully Tin is a team effort. I am extremely grateful for this support. Thank you Edna and Joan!

I am always appreciative for letters and submissions from the Members as these make the magazine more interesting and the task of compiling less daunting. It also truly makes it your magazine. And debates like that stirred up by Val in past editions adds a new dimension of excitement and fun.

Rod and I have been members of the club for seven years now and have tried to give back what it has given us. It has been a wonderful journey which is by no means complete, but life at the moment is placing extra demands on my time and energy and I need to prioritise these as best I can. Anyway, change is good. It is about time other enthusiastic members are given the chance to take up the reins.

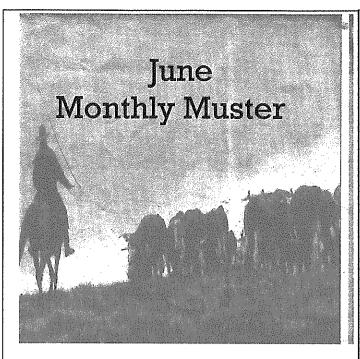
#### Kerry

#### Help!

I have received a request for a copy of the poem

The Day Macarthur Farted.

Do any of our more cultured Members have a copy they can spare?



**Brian** Langley took control as our MC tonight. It was good to be back after missing a few Musters.

First to take the mike was Rod Lee with his rendition of Will Ogilvie's nostalgic poem My Old Battered Hat. Ogilvie is one of my favourite poets. Combine that with a hat, which can become a very personal and essential part of its owner, and I was hooked. This poem is not often recited so it was amazing to discover Arthur had been rehearsing it for the Muster as well! Trish Joyce entertained us with one of her funny ditties Be Wary! Drivers beware! Trish is just back from an extended trip over east. On her final leg returning home she drove 1200kls in one day! That is an admiral effort, especially on ones own. Good to see you back safe and sound and as perky as ever. David Sears is also back with us after helping out crop planting at Narrabeen. I missed the name of his poem but it was a funny story of a shearer who takes on a job in the city as a hairdresser, and determines to use the same methods and techniques he used on the sheep!

I then thought it was time to dust the cobwebs off another Will Ogilvie poem, *The Riding of the Rebel*. I needed to dust a few cobwebs off my brain as I muffed up one verse. Wasn't the only one, but not my proudest effort.

Brian then treated us to one of his own poems Singing Aussie Songs. I liked the bit about "I can rhyme and sing but cannot playa that guitar thing!"

John Hayes took the mike next, despite having some quite serious back trouble. He shared a poem with us that he chose to read as he kept changing it to get it right. I know how confusing that can be and it is easy to drift into the old format. It was a lovely poem *Brother's Mate"*- of the friendship between two brothers.

Arthur Leggett is always busy, this time working on an ex POW Memorial. He chose to forgo his rendition of Ogilvie's My Old Battered Hat" and shared instead Henry Kendall's Song of the Cattle Hunters.

I missed the title and author of **Ron Ingham's** poem. Sometimes it is a bit noisy on the other side of the bar. But it was a great poem about the fatal ride when John Trewlarry chose to ride a motor bike instead of a horse.

Ron Evans and Rusty are off up north to Derby. Rusty also chose to read his poem (Shock! Horror! But understandable in the circumstances). It was from the Book "Voice of the North" to which Sam Lovell holds copyright. It told the story of Cecil James Kelly, a drover in the 40's & 50's, who rode a pushbike from Queensland to Perth. Ouch! Imagine how sore his

Nether regions would be after trip like that!

Henry Lawson then got an airing from **Grace Williamson** with a very sensitive delivery of *Since Then*. Well done Grace. We were privileged to be entertained by **Taffy** from Dardanup. Taffy has a slot on Harvey Community Radio—"Getting Your Wordsworth!"

He shared some stories of his misspent youth—Clunk Go The Shears"

(on wide comb shears), BT (before American TV) and Memo to Whoever Destroys the World Regarding My Brother John". And that delightful note we went into the break and enjoyed a much anticipated cuppa.

Satiated after the break Margaret Taylor shared one of her poetic stories from the early days—The House That Bill Built. She lived with her family in a caravan on 75 acres while the house was being built. The poem took us through the trials of house construction (including the trip to the outside loo) and the planting of 10,000 seedlings before moving! Fortunately Margaret is blessed with a good sense of humour.

Barry Higgins also claimed he was going to recite that HAT poem, but with Barry you can never be quite sure when he is pulling your leg??? He then shared some more of Syd's quirky poems with us

Rose the Barmaid & Whoppa the Donkey.—both a bit on the rude side but clever and funny.

I stuck with the hat theme reciting Henry Lawson's *Black Bonnets* before **Bob Chambers** lowered the tone again with a story of chocolate milk. Don't ask! Okay, the baby on the white boob wanted chocolate milk like the baby on the brown boob!

John Hayes then shared (in rhyme, naturally) a very interesting story of an aborigine he heard playing a guitar and singing gospel songs at the Quandong Café. Before being saved and becoming a Christian he had been an alcoholic and gambler. You know it is going to be light and funny when Trish Joyce takes the mike. Did I hear right when you said you have eight kids Trish?!?

Her poem was *Quizzical* with a funny twist a the end. The mike was then handed back to **Arthur** who touched on his time as a POW in Poland and recited two of his own poems *Julia's Friendly Corner*" and *Motor Car* - how his car resembled him.

**Hadley Provis** also chose to break the rules and read a poem he wrote for a competition cleverly written about and titled, of course, *If.* 

I might be married to him but I thought **Rod** did an extremely moving rendition of Barcroft Boake's *Wings of the Yard*. The rhyming pattern used here matches the excitement and movement in the poem. One of Boake's best.

It is a special moment when Sylvia Rowell takes the might. She and Harold had a wonderful trip to Queensland on the A B Paterson Tour which was advertised in the Bully Tin. The travelled 120 kilometre from Winton to see that Billabong only to find it dry and brown from drought. Sylvia shared a few stories before launching in *The Man From Snowy River* - the shortened version. Made us all sit up and take notice with that, Sylvia!

And that brought to a close another varied and entertaining Muster. Thankyou performers, members and helpers. **Kerry** 



#### **BUSH POETS BREAKFASTS**

The Bush Poets Breakfast is the order of the day at most country festivals in the eastern states but, in Western Australian, we have had limited success in establishing annual events. Apart from Boyup Brook and Derby (a bit far away) other venues have faded away. This may be about to change.

#### Pinjarra Festival

Kerry and I were invited to perform at the Pinjarra Festival and recommended a Bush Poet's Breakfast. The organisers took up our suggestion and it was programmed for Monday morning, Foundation Day Long Weekend. Even though we advertised locally and in the Bully Tin no other poets joined us so the audience of forty were entertained by Kerry and myself for two hours. The larger proportion of the audience had not heard Bush Poetry before and went away fully converted. The organisers were thrilled with the event and will stage it again next year. As with Brian Gale and Boyup Brook it is a small start but next year more poets will be needed.

#### **Albany Show**

But that's not all. Peter Blyth has been asked by the Albany Show organisers to put on a Poet's Breakfast on Saturday 12th November, 2005. This could also develop into an annual event if it proves popular. Boyup Brook is a good event because it features different poets, mostly country poets which give it a unique flavour. Albany also has the opportunity to develop a uniqueness with poets like Peter, Tim Heffernan and Wayne Pantell. Peter would like to hear from any other interested poets. This could be a good weekend to go to Albany.

Lets hope these events grow and develop. **Rod** 

## Way out back of Perth!

Hallelujah! That much looked forward day on my calendar has been and gone - the *shortest day!* I love to be outside but Winter is not generous with her daylight hours and, at times, delights in making those few miserable hours she gives us so gloomy, cold and wet that even I am forced back indoors. But, while I eagerly anticipate the return of the longer days Rod is not always so keen for, as the daylight lengthens so does the time between when his breakfast and dinner appear on the table. No wonder he has become expert at barbeques!

And then there is Elmo! He does not like to lie in, winter or summer, and registers this fact at first light every morning. At least we can sleep in in the winter. But, have you ever tried to sleep through a donkey braying? Impossible without earplugs. Actually, I've just bought myself a set of those squishy, mould to the ear kind of plugs—not to block out Elmo's braying but to block out Rod's snoring. He is a very accomplished snorer with an amazing repertoire of sounds. He can snore in any position, lying down, sitting up and even when he is awake .....Every time! give him a loving little elbow to the ribs or an affectionate knee in the buttocks he grumbles he is wide awake trying not to snore and can't get a wink of sleep. Poor dear!

Of course, the logical answer is to snuggle into another bed but every spare bed in our house lately has had a grandchild sleeping in it and it requires a lot more than squishy ear plugs to slumber on if you wake one of them up! It seems that no sooner do you wave the last child goodbye and pause to enjoy the peace and quiet then they are back again, with kids of their own... and we love it.

They bring back memories of pleasures passed - playing hide and seek in the supermarket, crawling under seats and between legs in the cinema searching for lost dummies and teddies (or just seeking a little time out) or jumping in puddles in the rain. And there lies the magic of childhood - moments out of time. Next time you see a big sploshy puddle forget you aren't three years old anymore and jump in it! I can highly recommend it.

Kerry

P.S. If you want to jump in some huge puddles or would just like to spend a cosy day why not come to one of our Fireside Concerts? We'd love to see you.



Hi! Escape the WINTER BLUES & join us in the Old Shearing Shed for a winter WARM UP.



Let us take you on a journey through the Classics

to our venture into Bush Poetry. Join in the Sing-a-longs. We'd love to see you.

5

## A Walk With The Masters



## Harry Breaker Morant 1864 - 1902

#### Hero, Scapegoat or Rogue?

Born in England, Morant arrived in Townsville, Queensland at the age of 19. Polished and well educated he soon made his mark as a horseman, fighter, thief, bush troubadour, poet, liar, loyal friend and courageous soldier. A flamboyant, hard-drinking dare-devil, his talent for breaking horses soon earned him the name of The Breaker.

Shortly after meeting Daisy Bates they were married at Charters Towers. The marriage did not last long. After failing to pay for the wedding and being caught stealing a few pigs and a saddle, his young wife kicked him out.

Over the next 15 years he 'worked' around Queensland and NSW. Some of his poetry and ballads were published under the pen-name of The Breaker. Amongst his friends were Will Ogilvie, Henry Lawson and Banjo Peterson.

In the late 1890s he enlisted with the South Australian Mounted Rifles to fight in the Boer War in South Africa. Along with P. J. Handcock he was court-martialled for executing several Boer prisoners and a German missionary. Found guilty he was executed by firing squad on 27th February, 1903. The story of his trial and execution was told in the 1979 film, "Breaker Morant".

#### WHO'S RIDING OLD HARLEQUIN NOW?

Harry Morant ("The Breaker")

THEY are mustering cattle on Brigalow Vale
Where the stock-horses whinny and stamp,
And where long Andy Ferguson, you may go bail,
Is yet boss on a cutting-out camp.
Half the duffers I met would not know a fat steer
From a blessed old Alderney cow;
Whilst they're mustering there I am wondering here—
Who is riding brown Harlequin now?

Are the pikers as wild and the scrubs just as dense
In the brigalow country as when
There was never a homestead and never a fence
Between Brigalow Vale and The Glen?
Do they yard the big micks 'neath the light of the moon?
Do the yard-wings re-echo the row
Of stockwhips and hoof-beats? And what sort of coon
Is there riding old Harlequin now?

There was buckjumping blood in the brown gelding's veins, But, lean-headed, with iron-like pins, Of Pyrrhus and Panic he'd plentiful strains, All their virtues, and some of their sins.

'Twas pity, some said, that so shapely a colt Fate should with such temper endow; He would kick and would strike, he would buck and would bolt—Ah! who's riding brown Harlequin now?

A demon to handle! a devil to ride! Small wonder the surcingle burst; You'd have thought that he'd buck himself out of his hide On the morning we saddled him first. I can mind how he cow-kicked the spur on my boot, And though that's long ago, still I vow If they're wheeling a piker no new-chum galoot Is a-riding old Hatlequin now!

I remember the boss—how he chuckled and laughed When they yarded the brown colt for me: "He'll be steady enough when we finish the graft And have cleaned up the scrubs of Glen Leigh!" I am wondering today if the brown horse yet live, For the fellow who broke him, I trow, A long lease of soul-ease would willingly give To be riding brown Harlequin now!

"Do you think you can hold him?" old Ferguson said—He was mounted on Hornet, the grey; I think Harlequin heard him—he shook his lean head, And he needed no holding that day.

Not a prick from a spur, nor a sting from a whip As he raced among deadwood and bough

While I sat fairly quiet and just let him rip—But who's riding old Harlequin now?

I could hear 'cm a-crashing the gidgee in front
As the Bryan colt streaked to the lead
Whilst the boss and the niggers were out of the hunt,
For their horses lacked Harlequin's speed;
The pikers were yarded and skies growing dim
When old Fergie was fain to allow:
"The colt's track through the scrub was a knocker" to him—
But who's riding brown Harlequin now?

From starlight to starlight—all day in between The foam-flakes might fly from his bit, But whatever the pace of the day's work had been, The brown gelding was eager and fit. On the packhorse's back they are fixing a load Where the path climbs the hill's gloomy brow; They are mustering bullocks to send on the road, But—who's riding old Harlequin now?

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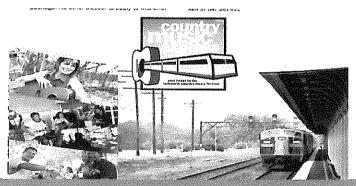
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**DEPOSIT:** A non refundable deposit of \$500 per person is required to confirm your booking

FINAL TICKETING DATE: All passengers are to be paid in full by 29th October, 2005

REFUNDS: Refunds will be paid as follows for cancellations: Between 15 October, 2005 and 14 November, 2005... less 33.33% Between 15 November, 2005 and 14 December, 2005... less 66.66% Between 15 December, 2005 and departure date... NO REFUND

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

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

<u>Members please note</u> Please contact any of the above committee members if you have any queries or issues which you feel require attention.

#### **Events Calendar**

July	/ 1	WABP&YS	Assoc Monthl	v Muster Con	no Bowling Club	Rusty 9364 4491
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July 1-3 Bundy Bush Poetry Muster Written Comp closing date 27.05.05 (07) 4153 5397

July 19 20 21 Winter Fireside Concerts Diggers Camp 11.30-3.00pm 9397 0409

July 29-31 Far North Queensland Bush Poetry Festival—Written Competition 07 4159 1868

- July 30 WA Bush Poetry Championships Written Competition closing date (refer p2)
- Aug 5 WABP&YS Assoc AGM & Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491
- Sept 2 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Traditional Night Rusty 9364 4491
- Sept 10-18 Winton Bush Poetry Muster 07 4657 1296
- Oct 7 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491
- Oct 22-23 WA Bush Poetry Championships and Country City Bush Poetry Challenge Tumblegum Farm for details refer Page 3
- Nov 4 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491
- Dec 2 WABP&YS Assoc Monthly Muster Como Bowling Club 7.30pm Rusty 9364 4491

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