

# WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners

\$2.50

Newsletter : May 2003

LEST WE  
FORGET



ANZAC  
DAY

ST ANDREW'S  
CHURCH  
WINDOW  
CAMBRIDGE

\*This is the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
last meeting at  
the Raffles  
See page 5 for  
details

**"Come All Ye" at the Raffles Hotel**  
cnr Canning Highway and Canning Beach Rd Applecross  
(Upstairs in The River Room)

**Next Meeting Friday 2/5/2003 at 7:30pm**

## Lorelie's Letters



It seems to me, and I may be wrong, that our Association is at the crossroads.

We are faced with forming a new general committee on 4<sup>th</sup> July and an organising committee for the conduct of the A.B.P.A. Championships in late October 2004 and 2005.

We have solved one situation, that of a new venue (because of the demolition of the Raffles), and have arranged to go to the COMO BOWLING CLUB, corner Hensman and Sandgate Streets, South Perth, behind the South Perth Civic Centre. They are happy to have us on the first Friday of each month, there are two suitable rooms, with a bar and it will not cost us very much. The location is central and quiet. The committee hopes you will enjoy yourselves there and we can start there on 4<sup>th</sup> July, our Annual General Meeting and Paterson-Lawson night.

For several months now the committee members and I have been approaching likely members to offer themselves for either of the two committees with only minimal success. We have had offers to help with specific tasks but members are not willing to commit themselves to serving on a committee and without the formal structure of a committee events are difficult to organise. A chairman needs to know who is responsible and for what.

Rusty and I have been on the committee for seven years and some months ago, before the granting of the Championships, indicated that we would be standing down at the A.G.M. It is time for a new crew to run the ship. Please let us hear from you or we will be forced to consider the alternative.

Lorelie.

## Michelle's Musings



To follow on from Lorelie's letter; It is indeed sad to see such a magnificent opportunity to host the 2004 Championships go by. Especially when we already have the venue, the finances (\$3,500 gift from the Convention Bureau + \$500 advertising) and about a third of the organization already started. It has been handed to us on a plate. Not to mention some brilliant poets from both sides of the country who are going to be mightily disappointed.

On a more positive note I have received some wonderful poetry from several sources. Peg Vickers sent me in a whole book. Thanks Peg. The ANZAC tribute is really authentic this year with poems straight from the front lines, by the combatants themselves. Thanks, Rusty, Joan and Lynn.

I have to say here that to make the best of these poems they really need to be sent to me **before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month**. I encourage you to find someone who has email to **type the poem directly to me as a document**. Poems or articles sent a day before printing make my job difficult to say the least. I do not have time to retype them and they end up being "thrown in" without any ability to correct errors, format nicely, resize or colour. You can see the difference between page 4 and 6 in this issue. So if you wish to continue receiving a high quality newsletter please start thinking about sending your work as soon as the CAY finishes for the next newsletter – especially if it is for a special commemorative issue.

Anyone got any ideas for making a really great farewell to the Raffles at the June CAY and/or the AGM Paterson/Lawson Night at our new venue? Give us a call to have your ideas aired in your newsletter.

Cheers,

Michelle

## Come All Ye April 2003

**Rod Lee** was our MC tonight as he invited two of the "Naked Poets" **Ray Essery** and **Shirley Friend** to feature at our CAY this month. We had a good crowd of about 80 people. Some of our best poets supported the show and most had a fun night. Rod began by reversing the sad country music tape for the night and turned it into a barrel of laughs.

The 'rugged' **Leigh Matthews** kicked the evening off with a WW II poem and message to George Bush and his Fox Tell war and all the 'crazy buggers who sent the men to Iraq'. We may have a bigger arsenal than cardboard bayonets and rifles but the principal is the same and so are the outcomes.

Themes seemed to run in pairs this evening. **Rusty Christensen** had a similar message with a yarn about soldiers being run over by a truck as they were arguing about the best method of telling the enemy apart from the 'good guys'. He then launched into the Keith Lethbridge classic football war "Legend of Mother McCue." Perhaps we can send her to Iraq, she'd fix them all.

**Tim Heffernan** - is getting a reputation in the bush. He'd fix that pervert too at "Rod and Kerry's Meeting ". Great to see a new talent Tim. Tim the gentle giant socks it to us with a very witty and clever poem.

**Peter Nettleton** recited his complaint about "Bloody Sheilas" who 'bloody' swear when they don't like how they're 'bloody' romanced by a 'bloody' Aussie. They'd (the bloody sheilas) probably shock the pants off the Iraqis as well. Send them all in says Bush and Howard.

Next came **Geoff Bebb** after along absence from the stage. He reintroduced our 'dear old Ron' and resurrected his planting in the scrub in full black suit. "Ron Evan's Funeral" thank heavens, was a case of mistaken identity. An opportunity too good to miss for a poem.

Our resident poetess **Val Read** recited her own "Emus round the Fence". A very poignant piece about the plight of the animals caught in the draught. Beautifully written Val.

**Phil Strutt** from Rottneest continued the animal theme with his hilarious "Pink and Grey Galah" caught in a small cage in a yuppie household. Phil always manages to imbue animals with the quirkiest aspects of human behaviour – resulting in very unique poetry.

Our friend from the Murchison **Syd Hopkinson** also seems to share that same inventive streak. His problems with a pet chimpanzee and "Dennis the Menace" always leave the audience laughing. I wonder what would emanate from a poetry jam session between Phil and Syd?????



**The 'Galorschempu' poem by PhilSyd HopStrutt ? Dare you two to weave a poem about it. Together perhaps?**

Our poetry ladies **Kerry Lee** and **Beth Scott** also share a penchant for older liberated ladies. We listened gleefully to "The Second Time Around" from Kerry. A saga of the differences between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage honeymoons. I think you get the picture when I say that the bride's contraceptives gave way to hormone creams, champagne to plum wine and sexy silk negligees to flannelette. Beth's "Grandma's Lament" deals with poor old 90 year old grandma who 's desires kill off grandpa with fright. She then searches for a toy boy; ends up in heaven with grandpa and a viagra pill. Success at last? No she's too tired by then. Ain't it always the way?

In fact **Shirley Friend** and the girls must have colluded beforehand. Shirley didn't so much as give us individual poems but a medley of seamless entertainment, where she involved herself with the audience totally for the entire 30-minute slot. At times I was laughing so much I forgot to write my notes. This ensemble included general repartee, yarns, some poems and jokes that flowed without a pause. The underlying theme was 'women'; coping with life's stages and changes. She was not afraid to bring up the touchier subjects and expose them through humour. Beginning with baby feeding from the breast (from baby's point of view) leading on to bed wetting, then to gran's incontinence when "the bladder gives way when I laugh". It's not only gran either; Shirley was so graphic I nearly gave way myself.

However I must say, to balance the ledger that some of our older members were offended by some of the material which was a little too risqué, especially when we also had a young granddaughter there. Should we perhaps give our shows a rating (like at the movies perhaps) to avoid offence in the future?. It is a real problem; which is at times hard to control because we do not know the exact nature of the material beforehand. We have had coordinators in the past to vet and organise the performers and their material before the night. Geoff set that up two years ago but a number of people thought that was 'too organised' and it's fallen by the wayside. It comes back to what is 'acceptable' 'responsible' and what is 'Bush Poetry'? If you have any views and answers to this vexing question please write to me. I'll air the debate in the newsletter.

Shirley continues with the struggle to get the ample female flesh into "high tensile bathers and g-string leotards in a large 10 needing revision to a small 24." Life then continues (or is it begins?) at 50. It gets really interesting: with a hilarious look at a beau's foreplay techniques which include getting a whipper snipper out to trim her moustache; ending up in disaster when he castrates the cat. She even has a 'religious' poem in case some of the audience were thinking this was getting over the top. "The Angel" comes to collect her and she bargains to take hubby instead until the day passes from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> and she is saved. A controversial poet indeed is Shirley. Continued...p7

**Michelle**

The following poem was written by Signaler Tom Theyhill of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion A.I.F. , on May the 3<sup>rd</sup> 1915, on Gallipoli after the landing on April 25<sup>th</sup>

### Fallen Comrades

Halt comrades, halt as you pass by  
As you are now, so once was I,  
As I am now, so will you be,  
So comrades halt, be prepared to follow me.

Halt, thy head is on heroes graves  
Australian lads lie sleeping below,  
Rough wooden crosses at their heads  
To let their comrades know  
They sleep no better for marble slabs  
Or monuments so grand  
They lay content now their day is done  
In that far off Turkish land.

The wild flowers are growing o'er them  
The wild heath blooms close by  
The crickets' chirp around them  
Above the free birds fly,  
Wild poppies thrive besides them  
Their bloom is scarlet born  
Red poppies, sleep flowers emblems  
Of that blood red April morn.

The blue sea seems a sighing  
In the morning air so clear  
As though grieving o'er the fallen  
Who never knew a fear  
A lonesome pine stands nearby  
A grim sentinel it stands  
As though guarding the last resting place  
Of that gallant little band.

I've often passed those little mounds  
And heard the bullets 'meow'  
When the air was full of shrapnel  
It's called 'Shrapnel gully' now,  
Whilst coming from the trenches  
And glancing over there  
I've often seen many a khaki form  
Kneeling in silent prayer.

Kneeling over fallen comrades  
Perhaps their boyhood chum  
Felled by the shrieking shrapnel  
Or the deadly sniper's gun  
They were only rough Australians  
Friends in the bayonet rush  
But there were their fallen comrades  
As they kneel in the evening hush.

Their backs turned to the trenches  
The first time to the foe  
Their heads bent low in sorrow  
Down their cheeks their salt tears flow  
Who knows what silent prayer –  
Their hearts speak – who can tell?  
With hands laid on the rough graves  
They say their last farewell.

The Sikh and the Punjabi  
With their pack mules oft pass by  
And when they see those kneeling forms  
E'en their cheeks are not quite dry.  
I've rushed back to the trenches  
Cursing the Turkish foe  
Then gazing on my sleeping comrades  
Wondering who next will go.

There's many a heartbroken Mother  
Home in Australia dear  
Who is thinking broken hearted  
Of her loved son's distant bier  
There's many a true Australian girl  
Stricken with sudden pain  
Mourning over her dead sweetheart  
Whom she'll never see again.

They know not where he's lying  
Or how their loved ones fell  
That's why thee lines are written  
The simple truth to tell.  
Their graves are on Gallipoli  
U in the very heights  
Scenes of the first great fight  
Shrapnel gully is on their right.


'Courtney's Post' at their head  
The Mediterranean at their feet  
And the blue sky overhead  
Their burial march was the big gun's roar  
Their great coat their winding sheet.  
Their head is to the firing line  
And the ocean at their feet.

Officers and privates who fell  
In that first fierce rush of fame  
They fell there, comrade by comrade  
Their rank is now the same,  
The city boy from his ledger  
And the country boy from his plough,  
They trained together in Egypt  
And they sleep together now.

Sleep on dear fallen comrades  
You'll ne'er be forgotten by-  
The boys who fought besides you-  
The boys who saw you die.  
Your graves may be neglected –  
But fond memories will remain  
The story of how you lived and died  
Will ease the grief and pain.

That we know your kin are feeling  
Over there across the foam  
And we will tell the story of your deeds  
Should we ever reach 'Home Sweet Home'.

**Tom Theyhill**



**In memory of John (Murphy) Simpson Kirkpatrick who aided wounded soldiers by leading a donkey on the cliff paths of Gallipoli. Painting by Horace M. Moore-Jones.**

This poem was presented by Rusty Christensen.

"It was discovered in my late mother's autograph book and had been written in it by A. Raymond on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1917. My nephew has the original book. The poem captures the atmosphere and mood of the soldiers of the day – it projects a strong image and has some gripping passages and expressions. I have made minimal changes to the original text." Rusty (Copyright reserved with Christensen Family)

## Report from Around the Digger's Camp by Rod and Kerry Lee

Just a quick run down on the weekend at Digger's Camp. A special thanks to all who helped out, especially to our intrepid gate keeper, **Maxine**. No-one was sneaking past her! We felt very blessed with the weather which, combined with a group of people set on having a good time, led to an extremely enjoyable weekend. As we took off for the Raffles Friday evening it was great to see a variety of campers already set up under the trees.



By Saturday afternoon the block was covered in campers. The evening kicked off with another exciting display of Natural Horsemanship by Sue Poole. We couldn't be treated to any free style riding this time as Sue has a bub on the way.

After a barbecue tea the concert began. **Peter Capp** did a fantastic job as MC, keeping the laughs coming. There were a few cameo performances from our local talent and a lively musical session from **Dave Lee** before **Shirley Friend** and **Rae Essery** took the stage. They both proved to be very entertaining in their different ways. I think the participants in the Poet's Breakfast the next morning were hoping to make it into the Guinness Book of Records for the longest running breakfast. No-one seemed interested in going home and it ran well into lunch time. The morning was also enjoyed by the dogs and chooks who were all keen to help clean up the brekky plates!

All comments to date indicate this was the best concert we have hosted so far. Thanks to all who came. Hope to see you in November.

The following weekend **Rod, Dave** and I put on a show with **Shirley and Rae** at **Harvey Dickson's** in Boyup Brook. What a fantastic venue! It was a huge learning curve for us to be able to work with professionals. Unfortunately the weather was unkind. It was wet and very cold so attendance was down but we all enjoyed ourselves and got to know some of the locals over a few ports and beers around the pot belly. Another great weekend!



### **ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS! - NEW VENUE, FOR W A BUSH POETS CAY'S, NEW VENUE**

As you may be aware the Raffles is rebuilding. They have given us until June to continue our meetings in the River Room. The committee has been looking for alternative venues close to the Raffles to hold our CAY's, so as not to inconvenience our members. We have found one.

**As from the 4<sup>th</sup> July – our AGM and Traditional Paterson / Lawson Night will be held at:**

**The Como Bowling and Recreation Club Inc**

**99 Hensman Street, South Perth WA**

**Ph: 9367 3923**

Although the Raffles has been very good to us over a number of years with free accommodation and bar these new premises appear to have some advantages which will be really handy for our members.

It is on one level for easy access and there's NO NOISE from bands or cigarette smoke. There is plenty of parking at the side, front and rear of the premises. The President of the Club **Mr Bryan Bailey** has made us feel very welcome already. We had a preliminary site visit with Lorelie, Joan, Rusty and I. All are welcome to go and have a look.

To avail ourselves of the bar facilities (by the way, drinks are very well priced). We (The Association) have to nominate about 50 – 60 of our members' names to join a special Social Members category to satisfy the Liquor Licence Act. **This is at no cost to yourselves; the association will pay the membership fees.** The remaining members would be eligible to attend as guests of the nominated members. We will pick the members who are regular performers and/or attendees for this list. **If you object, for any reason, to being included in that list please give me a call.** No other moneys, apply at meetings.

Their Club Rooms also has a pool table, dance floor (which is being renovated), coffee/tea making facilities, outdoor area and the chance to learn to bowl, for your further entertainment. If we require any special types of drinks we are to let their president know beforehand. I'm sure that these two clubs can benefit each other in many ways. **Michelle**

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COILING ALL CARS!

I didn't really want to go, but this is what I thought,  
A chance to see the wife again, and drivers are so short.  
So I "packs me gear" and fills with gas, and soon I'm on my way.  
I head's the bus to travel west, the first call's out the Bay.  
We speed along at sixty, touch sixty five, then more.  
And very soon I catch a glimpse, of the breakers on the shore.  
But dash it all, the bus has stopped, I wonder what's the matter?  
And I lifts aloft the bonnett, with the usual din and clatter.  
Strike my pink, I've done a coil, I wonder what to do,  
Umpteen miles from anywhere, I sure am "in the blue".  
So I does a'bit er thinkin', and I use my common sense,  
And I grabs a hunk of wire from off a cockey's fence.  
Then winds it round a bit of stick, and soon I have a coil,  
And then the motor sings again, her song of useful toil.  
Well, I reach the coast and dumps my load, then heads for old Gin Gin,  
But wait a tick, I think I've done, the other coil right in.  
I looks around, no fences here, it looks as though I'm stuck,  
When I gets a bright idea, yes, and what a bit of luck.  
I see's a long fierce tiger snake, a'crawling on the track,  
I up with my big spanner, and cops him in the back.  
Then winds him round and round about another piece of stick  
Ah! it's good to hear the engine, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick.  
Well I soon arrived in goodly time, into the great big city,  
Never before had I seen, old Perth look so dashed pretty.  
I spent the night with wifey dear, and I want you to believe it,  
I nearly did my back in, a trying to relieve it.  
Next day I'm off and heading back, the road's in good condition,  
But very soon I've stopped again, oh damn the dashed ignition.  
What can I do, there's not a soul, to help me in distress,  
Fifty miles from nowhere, and in a plurry mess.  
Hurrah I hear a cheerful sound, a car approaching near,  
A bunch of motor bikes and things, all bringing up the rear.  
I stood fast with my arm up, and stopped the small convoy.  
And who should clamber out, but Gen. Blamey, Oh Boy!  
"What's wrong my man", he says to me, "What holds you up like this?"  
(And I tell you frankly chappies, my heart a beat did miss).  
"Well Sir, you see I've 'did' a coil, perhaps you'll help me out,  
Seeing that I'm stranded, and there's on one else about."  
"Why sure my boy, my driver there, you coil there give to this chappie,  
And we'll just postpone our visit, to New Guinea and the Jappie."  
"Why thank you Sir" I meekly said, he stopped me with a smile,  
"I've tons of time, don't mind waiting, here a little while."  
And beleive it or bleive it not, he gave my twenty pounds,  
For to enjoy my coming leave, to do the Hotel rounds.  
I know you think my story, may not be quite so true  
So I took the good precaution, that he signed on my G 2.

H. LESLIE.  
28th Infantry Battalion  
(Darwin bombing and New Guinea)

Joan Macneall sent me this poem via Lynn Watt. It has really travelled since being written by H. Leslie of the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion during the bombing of Darwin. It only arrived on my computer on Saturday so I haven't had time to retype it so please forgive its condition (It's had a rough trip). Michelle

## CAY Continued

Ray Essery's performance was equally smooth and seamless (despite the feigned stutter for extra emphasis) and gave us little respite from laughing all night. In fact he preceded Shirley but the order didn't matter, the techniques were similar. You can see these performers are professional and work together often, probably feeding and growing off each other's experiences. I wonder what would have happened if the 4 naked poets had come over?



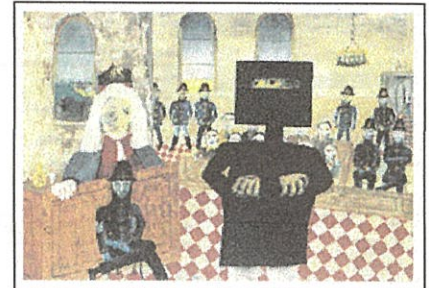
RAY ESSERY

Ray's themes were mainly drawn from the dairy farms and countryside of Northern NSW.

He started from his earliest experiences milking the "bald faced brindled heifer" at Booree Creek before the school day. He proceeds with the schoolboy antics visited on the poor, hapless relief teacher. (I have to sympathise with her on this one as I spend many of my days trying to outwit mischievous boys as a relief teacher). Misfortune continues with setting the farm on fire and rolling huge boulders down the hill, creating great havoc. Then "Five miles from Gundagai when the original Dog (shat in his) Tuckerbox. Married life with the battle and strife doesn't run smoothly either. Trying to get the warm spot in bed with the aid of spurs is a trifle difficult.



Ray gets serious with a beautiful poem (based on fact). The subject is a feisty black stallion ridden to the death by Darcy Powell. He fought gamely for 10 hours not to be broken, right into the sea at the mouth of the Sanden River. This horse is a descendent of the horses from WW1 who were let out in the Yamba National Park. He finishes with an excellent poem from Charley Marshall: Very topical at the moment as the subject is Ned Kelly. The poem depicts Ned's last days in Melbourne goal before being hung.



See you next Come All Ye. Cheers Michelle

### Please Nominate for the next committee (2003-2004) with the form below

#### W.A. BUSH POETS & YARN SPINNERS ASSN. INC.

#### COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Hereby Nominate \_\_\_\_\_

For the position of \_\_\_\_\_ in the W.A.B.P. & Y.S.A.

#### SIGNED:

NOMINATOR \_\_\_\_\_

SECONDER \_\_\_\_\_

NOMINEE \_\_\_\_\_

**Hon Sec. Joan Macnaell**  
**14 Arbour Place,**  
**Kelmscott 6111 WA**

**Before 6<sup>th</sup> June 2003**

### End of Financial Year Coming Up

Please remember that the end of the financial year as far as **membership subscription** is also coming up, so people who have not already rejoined for 2003 –2004 will need to save their pennies for the **end of June** so as not to miss out on their newsletters and and cheaper entrance fees.

**The Members of the Editorial Sub-Committee  
Would like to thank all those,  
who contributed to this Edition of The Newsletter.**

**Without their support and enthusiasm,  
a Newsletter like this would not be possible.**

**Many Thanks**

**The Editor**

## **WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc**

### **Coming Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Co-ordinator</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> June 2003	Last CAY meeting at the Raffles	TBA
4 <sup>th</sup> July 2003	AGM and Paterson and Lawson Night At Como Bowling and Recreation Club	Committee

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