

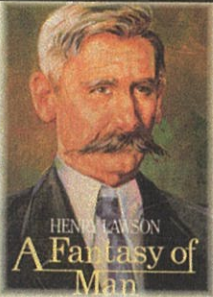
\$2.50

# WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners



ABN: 22 594 556 961

## Newsletter : June 2001



**AGM - Paterson and Lawson Night 6<sup>th</sup> July 2001**  
**AGM at 6:00pm Paterson-Lawson 7:30pm**



This is the most important night of the year. We have received a few nominations for office bearers and committee members, however we would like **more** so that the Association has a strong guiding hand in its future direction.

***We will be providing a light buffet for those that attend the AGM. Please also give Michelle a call, if you wish to attend the AGM part of the night as she has to organise catering with the Raffles as soon as possible.***

For the Paterson / Lawson part of the evening, remember to call Barry if you wish to be a performer. He has a number of people booked up already (11 I believe) so it promises to be a very entertaining and varied evening.

If you can manage it, please dress up in clothes of the era (whether as a performer or audience) as this would really add colour to the evening. Please call any member of the committee if you have any unusual ideas for adding to the general atmosphere of yesteryear. Raffles will be sprucing up the River Room with a new coat of paint before the occasion.

PH 9367 4963: Michelle Sorrell re AGM.

PH 9407 5311: Barry Higgins for performers.

## "Come All Ye" at the Raffles Hotel

cnr Canning Highway and Canning Beach Rd, Applecross

### (Upstairs in The River Room)

## Next Meeting Friday 1/06/2001 at 7:30pm



## AROUND THE TRAPS with the Top Dog

Of the many small distractions that keep me from spending all my time on matters poetic and spinniferous, perhaps the most diverting is my brace of small daughters, KJ and Dolly. While both are yet too young really to appreciate the importance of our living art form to the culture they will inherit and hopefully contribute to,



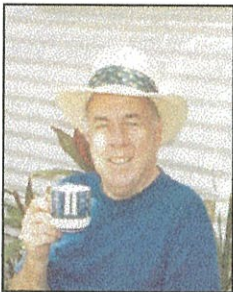
I do from time to time regale them with my favourite bits of doggerel, as much to get even for all the Disney and McDonalds I passively ingest as to engender in them a taste for the finer dinkum Aussie things.

In 1993 for her 4<sup>th</sup> Chrissie, KJ received a gift book entitled 'The Australian Children's Omnibus'. It is a delightful collection of yarns and poems about bush characters and animals, beautifully illustrated by Yvonne Perrin and featuring the writings of Dan Vallely, Mary Gilmore and CJ Dennis. We spent many bedtimes sharing the adventures of Wally Wombat, Ed Galah and Peter Possum and trying to get our tongues around the 'Triantiwontigongolope'.

As time passes however, the 'Omnibus' went out of favour and was relegated to an archive box in a shed somewhere, along with a number of other tomes too precious to recycle. Recently though, I had occasion to go to that box after 'In search of Henry Lawson' by Manning Clark, and found that the bottom had been eaten out by white ants! Thankfully, it was mainly old textbooks that suffered, but the 'Omnibus' was immediately returned to pride of place in the main bookcase.

That is, until it was discovered there recently by 6 year-old Dolly, itching to try out her newly-acquired reading skills, attracted by the pictures and trapped by the funny stories. So it's back to bedtimes with Billy Platypus and Big Red Kangaroo, not to forget the old 'Triantiwontigongolope', and I'm thinking we should have a special concert sometime to showcase works written by well-known poets but aimed particularly at kids. What say?

Arf - Stinger



G'Day everyone.

As our year draws to a close, maybe it's time to reflect a bit on what has happened to the Association and to this publication. The year has seen a healthy growth in membership and a massive increase in the number of people attending the "Come All Ye" meetings at the Raffles. Our revenue from these evening has more than doubled on the previous year. This is due to an upsurge in community interest in Bush Poetry, the continued diligent marketing from our roving Poets and the regularity of the Newsletter, which serves as a constant reminder to our Members of date of the next meeting.

Michelle and I get a lot of written, emailed and verbal encouragement for the quality of the Newsletter, for which feedback, we are truly thankful. Of course the technicolour newsletter (as we often hear it called) comes at a price. Although the cost of the newsletter has been easily offset by the increase in revenue from the CAY meetings, speaking with the Treasurer's hat on, I think it would be folly to rely on this income, for it is income we cannot control and *maybe* just a momentary fad.

Accordingly, I have recommended to the Committee that the Membership Fees be increased from \$10 to \$15 per member. Quite correctly, the Committee has taken the view that the only way Membership fees can be increased is by resolution at the AGM. So at the next AGM, I will be moving that the fees be increased. If you disagree with this thinking – be there and make sure your voice is heard.

Elsewhere, you will see that you can circumvent the price increase by paying your dues before 31/6/2001.

Geoff Bebb

### Come All Ye Report – May 4<sup>th</sup> 2001

As with most CAY nights this one started taking on a life of its own very early. MC **Peter Nettleton** led proceedings very smartly in his business suit and bright tie. That's about where the decorum ended. (Not in a nasty way I hasten to add)

It has become a bit of a challenge to me, to discover the spontaneous themes that arise during the evening as I sit down the next day to write to you all. This evening led down memory lanes with unusual endings ..... many leading down the back to the dunny door and Kel's pig farm.

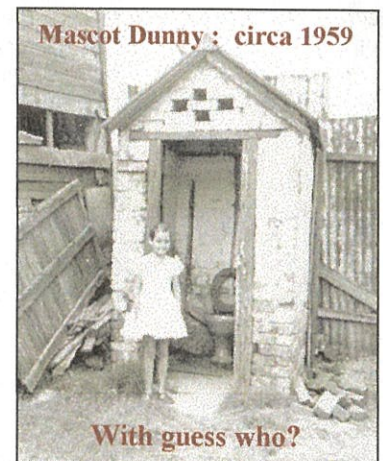
The Pig Theme was led by **Kel Watkins'** yarn about pig farming when he was a lad in Meredin, this tale was about the 2 celebrated boars J. Famechon and Lionel Rose and Kel's misadventures at the stock sales trying to avoid tax and GST. As well as a poem by Rob Charlton about the stereotypical Aussie male whose every 2<sup>nd</sup> word is "bloody". From then on there were pig jokes and tales galore, even three legged pigs came into the act. All clean but hilariously funny.

The Loo Theme was started by **Rod Lee** with his new poem/tale of "Mulachy Mick" and his urine sample taken at the pub. **David Sears** joined in with Bob Maygor's "Blasted Crows" who met an untimely death through dynamite, flying over the loo roof. **Barry Higgins** reparteed with "Tender Loving Care" and the night soil carter's lunch after a Syd Hopkinson "GST" poem about the busker who swallowed a coin.

**Geoff Bebb** then got carted away too "singing" a song created by 2UE staff in the 1950's, immediately after a prolonged strike by the dunny men. It was called "Oh! Mr Pan Man". Don't give up your Day Job Geoff!!

I'll leave you with my own contribution to the dunny debate with this picture, circa : 1959 of our back yard dunny. This picture was sent, with pride, back to Switzerland, to relatives, after our recent arrival to Australia. This was to show that the Romans may have invented indoor plumbing and WCs about 200BC but Australians, just pre 2000 AD, were well on their way too.

Well, that was just a diversion. Before I end up completely in the poo with our more discerning readers I'll get on to the rest of the evening's entertainment.



Because Anzac Day is still fresh in our minds, the more serious side of Aussie reminiscence also became a theme. **Rusty Christensen** recited a beautiful Anzac Poem called "Mates" by Duncan Butler, about the crucial part the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels played in saving Aussie heroes. **Constance Herbert** also gave us "Uncle Theo's War" about a Gallipoli vet. enlisting the 2<sup>nd</sup> time round to a very different, yet disquietingly familiar WWII. **Joan Macneall** "Remembered when..." her war experiences, through her parents in England. Joan followed with a modern "war" poem about the destruction of our environment, from our native faunas' points of view called "Wipe The Blood".

**Trish Matthews** 'put the shoe on the other foot' as she 'pulled our leg' about her risky confrontation with a large male lion on a South African reservation. It's great to see a lady do a yarn so well, a rare occurrence.

**Rod and Kerry Lee** brought us more poems about the fair dinkum blokes and sheilas of Australia, namely themselves, on their selection, with "My Man" by Kerry and Rod's touching rejoinder tale of his "Bestest Mate - Kezza". Kerry followed with what we need most right now "The Melody of the Rain".

This took us back to the country at its best with more Paterson and Lawson practice for July. Some examples were; "The Ballad of the Drover" by **Constance Herbert**, who first recited it at the Luxor Theatre in Perth when she was just 10 years old. Another was from **Ron Evans** with the ever-humorous "Saltbush Bill's 2<sup>nd</sup> Fight". Then he went further along the Castlereagh with Frank Hudson's "Pioneers".

**Geoff Bebb** took us to banjo's country races with "Mulligan's Mare". More horses followed with the immortal "Man from Snowy River" from **Rusty Christensen** as we wish him "Bon Voyage " to the US. Hope you take your Banjo with you Rusty.

If you are hapless enough to consider a bicycle in the bush instead of a horse, then you would have enjoyed our New Face for the evening **Bob Thwaites** who expertly recited "Mulga Bill's Bicycle". **Wendy Walton**, another recent new face did not forget the ladies of the CWA with her late husband's "Baking Competition" a poem/tale with a twist at the end. That brought the smile back to our faces. So did **David Sears'** "The Lonely Bushman" from T.S. Marshall. A near fatal tale, also with a twist, of 'Slogger' the superhuman bushman.

*Continued p7*

## From The Beginning

Courageous they came to this unknown land: courageous, determined, afraid.  
The trees nodded out to welcome them and the grass on the near-shore swayed.  
With the rhythm of life, the rustle of hope and the promise of good rich soil,  
Which would give them a life of abundance and ease, if they were prepared to toil.  
So they stepped ashore, still clutching their fear looked to the trees beyond,  
Caught a fleeting glimpse of a strange black face and a strangely curving wand.  
The captain assembled then round in a ring and his ship, with its sails neat, furled  
Was a distant backdrop as with sonorous voice, he gave them their "Brave new World".

"In the eyes of God and the name of the king, our beloved George the Fourth,  
I claim this west coast of New South Wales, to the farthest corners north."  
In silence they heard the captain out and their fear built an instant bond  
For still in the nodding trees, they could see that strangely curving wand.  
"And I charge you all to uphold the laws, the laws that made Britain great.  
So take up the challenge, go forward now; build here a lasting estate."  
Then with sails unfurled and the hatches down, the captain sailed away  
And they turned inshore to the small tent-town, teased by the wind-blown spray.

He left them alone on that lonely shore with its sunsets, crimson and gold  
And phantom shapes of the myriad trees in this strange new land, so old.  
Daily they scanned, with narrowed eyes, the vastness of empty sea  
For a billowing sail, an albatross, some sign that soon there would be  
Others to join them, to bring them news from the lands they had left behind  
But daily the far horizon drew down a clear, blue blind.

The years slipped by and the flimsy tents were folded and tucked away  
The nodding trees were felled and planed, homes rose, sturdy and gay.  
The swaying grass in surprise was stripped by a shimmering, scathing blade.  
Land was needed to till and plough and produce was needed for trade.  
Their northern skins had lost their bloom by a sun-kissed land suntanned  
A tougher skin was needed now 'mid the flies and the heat and the sand.

The old Queen died (she had reigned too long) and wrists and ankles were shown  
As shoulder to shoulder the women and men worked for a land of their own.  
Weaker the ties with the old lands now and stronger the fellowship grew:  
Old ways, old habits and old ideas had no place in this world of the new.  
It was time to stand and time to speak: let the resonant voice ring out.  
"Our parents came with courage and fear and died with a present doubt  
That they had taken the wisest way, had made the wisest choice,  
So let us assure them beyond the grave. Let them hear our triumphant voice."

Murmurings came from eastern shores and exploded on western plains:  
"This country is one. Why be separate? Why fritter and waste our gains?  
The land is too big, the people too few, we are scattered, yet one in heart  
We must federate – or perish. We cannot survive apart."  
The Australian Commonwealth was born, but the West hid her talents well  
Until probing fingers of iron and steel poked through the outer shell.  
As the earth was gouged and the forest giants died with a cry of despair  
Great buildings arose and the factory stacks polluted the fresh, clean air

The air that was filled with the sounds of growth exciting, vibrant, bold.  
Our cities now matched their counterparts in those countries crowded and old  
Like an eager child with the urge to grow, to be big, to do "grown-up" things  
We hurtled along in the maelstrom made by the flapping of Progress' wings.  
"but you can't stop progress," we hear the plea; it hangs like a hawk on high.  
"Our wealth must be shared with all the world; we must export and trade – or die."

Platitudes lurk on "Be Tidy" bins, on hoardings and posters and walls:  
Have we sold our soul for a pot of gold or the pawnbroker's three brass balls?  
"No, no we haven't. All we have done is follow the guidelines set  
By older lands that spawned our race but sadly – with some regret –  
We see what was lost in the passage of time: see now what might have been,  
But also we see what we have achieved. And look! There's a patch of green  
And a forest giant (in a concrete tub) by that ornamental pond.  
And look at that figure so life-like and black with its strangely curving wand

Courageous they came to this unknown land: courageous, determined, afraid.  
Would they laud us now for the things we have done? Would they like what we have  
made?

©Constance Herbert



## Constance Herbert

Constance was born in WA of Irish parents. She has been writing poetry since she was 10 years old, first publishing in the "Fremantle Advocate" at age 14. In addition to poetry she has written short stories and a serialised novel, most of which have been published here and overseas. Connie's works have appeared in a number of anthologies including "Bronze Swagman". She has won competitions including "Bronze Quill" in 1992 and the inaugural "Yarn Spinning" prize in the WA Bush Poets "Australia Day Challenge" in 1996.

She is a Life Member and former Federal President of the Society of Women Writers, and is the co-founder of the Jolly Jotting Company of Writers.

Connie loves travelling and even worked her passage from England to Australia as a Children's Hostess aboard the migrant ship "Orcades". She can often be found pottering about the yard with her black cat.

## Coming Events and General News

### Royal Show 2001

Peter Nettleton is at present negotiating our part in this event. Last year's performers certainly enjoyed having such a large, varied, and appreciative audience. Judging from the last photo even the horse enjoyed the show. This year there is a possibility of cash rewards as well. The Royal Show people are really keen for our participation. Michelle will be receiving more information for the association via the Show CEO. Please call Michelle if you wish to perform at this event. **Ph: 9367 4963 or Email: michelle@iinet.net.au**

### Do YOU Need a Lift to the CAY's

It has come to the Committee's attention that there may be a number of our members who would love to come to CAY's and other events but are restricted because of lack of transport. As many of our regular attendees are scattered all around Perth, some members may be driving quite close to another member in need of a lift. We'd like to link these people up if possible. To start the ball rolling **could anyone who needs a lift for CAY's give Michelle a ring** so that she begin this linking process

**PH 9367 4963 : Michelle Sorrell re lift to CAY's**

### "Celebrations" Book

Unfortunately, we did not receive enough entries for this publication to be realised. Thank you to the people who did respond. We are disappointed that this will not go ahead at this stage. If anyone has another suggestion for further publications in the future please give Michelle Sorrell or Geoff Bebb a call.

"A Welter of Horse and Racing Poems" netted the association \$90 with the poets being very pleasantly surprised with their royalties which varied according to the number of poems published, but in all amounted to \$180. Thank you to all the people who took part in the making, selling and buying of this unique association fund raiser.

### Fundraising Policy

At the last Committee Meeting, it was generally agreed that if an event has been coordinated by or assisted by the WABP&YSA then 10% of the funds received by the event would go back to the association as a commission, that way the performers and association both benefit fairly.

### Bush Poetry Writer's Workshop held 24/05/2001

The WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners Association held its first Bush Poetry Writing Workshop for 2001 at Geoff and Michelle's home in South Perth. Geoff Bebb and John Hayes were the facilitators for what we hope, will become an annual event.

Geoff and John, who are passionate about their art, have many combined years of experience between them. By combining their talents, enthusiasm and very different methods of creating poetry they brought a strong partnership to inspire this very rewarding workshop.

The workshop attracted members and non-members alike, who enjoyed 6 hours of inspiration (as well as a pleasant lunch amongst literary friends) to enable them to produce some truly creative and polished works. It was a delight to see the creative energy flow around the room (and even into the kitchen where a feast was being prepared by Anne and Michelle). The supportive and emotionally safe atmosphere allowed everyone (even the beginners) to share their works. We're sure the gales of laughter and spontaneous clapping could be heard down the end of the street as funny anecdotal poems were emerging and being encouraged by everyone.

We look forward to hearing more wonderful embryonic poetry, from these workshop members in the coming months. As a few people missed out this time we hope to hold more workshops in the near future, perhaps during the evening. **Call Geoff on 9367 4963 to register your interest.**

# Poetry Page

## Tender Loving Care

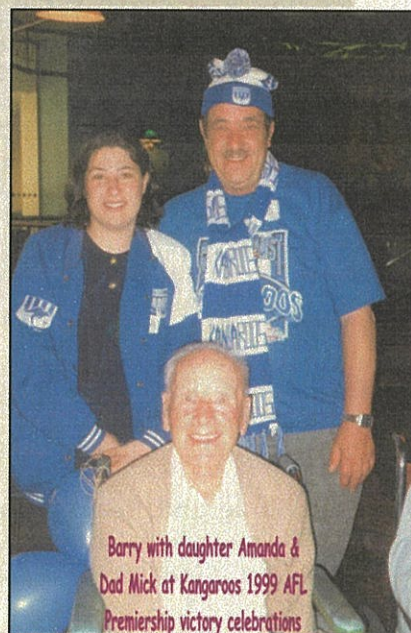
Now let's not beat about the bush, for there are many dangers  
Living in this crazy world, with all its social changes.  
We're always being brain washed about women's liberation,  
When it's MEN who really suffer – and here's the illustration!

Chatting to some visitors in the hospital corridor,  
The Matron watched in horror, as from the ward next door  
An old bloke, without his trousers, came sprinting madly past,  
Followed by a trainee nurse, travelling just as fast.

Pursuing this old codger, seemed a little bit extreme,  
For the bucket she was holding, was blowing clouds of steam.  
"My God!" the Matron shouted, in a sudden state of shock  
Trying hard to keep her cool and not to do her block.

"Please escort that patient, nurse, directly back to bed,  
You've got it all mixed up again, 'prick his boil' was what I said!"

©Syd Hopkinson



Barry with daughter Amanda &  
Dad Mick at Kangaroos 1999 AFL  
Premiership victory celebrations

## Profile on Barry Higgins

Barry is a 5<sup>th</sup> generation Australian; 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation North Melbourne Football Club supporter, father of three 4<sup>th</sup> Generation supporters and grandfather of five 5<sup>th</sup> Generation supporter including twin granddaughters. He even played a couple of games for the Mighty Kangas himself. (*But we won't hold that against him. Ed.*)

Recently retired, he has been a Truck Driver, Private Investigator and Sergeant of Police. He is heavily involved in his local community, being on the committee of a dozen groups, including being President of the Two Rocks Yancheep Residents' Association.

Barry has always taken a close interest in Australian Literature, particularly short stories and yarns and of course Bush Poetry. Favourite authors include the Late Great Frank Hardy (of "Power Without Glory" fame) and naturally our own Syd Hopkinson.

"I love yarns and poems that get a message across with humour, but have a 'sting in the tale'," Barry said. "Syd Hopkinson is a brilliant exponent of that craft." Barry can be heard at most "Come All Ye" nights at the Raffles, reciting one or more of Syd's great poems.

Having attended every WABP & YSA Australia Day extravaganza at Wireless Hill, Barry became a member in 1997, joining the Committee in 1999. "Our Association has an amazing array of talent, which is continually growing and improving," he said. "We also have a strong and dedicated Committee leading our Association from strength to strength; but like any organisation, fresh faces and ideas are welcome."

Barry concluded, "There are even more exciting times ahead and I urge all members to consider being more involved. You can nominate yourself for a Committee Position through the back page of this Newsletter. or at the AGM at Raffles at 6pm on 6<sup>th</sup> Julv 2001."

### May CAY Meeting Continued

Next month the CAY meeting date coincides with my mum's 77<sup>th</sup> birthday so I see it as perfectly fitting to invite her to her **first ever** Bush Poetry meeting. I think she 's old enough to handle it by now, don't you? And more pertinently, after 30 years as a naturalised Aussie, she *should* be initiated to Aussie Kulta whether she can understand it or not. So guys please keep it clean for 'me mum'. After all you wouldn't like to see me grounded for keeping naughty company would you?

On the other hand it's nice to be old enough to be a bit risqué and have some "bl\*\*\*\*dy loovly fun". So do come back next month and we'll all be "as happy as pigs in ..... er clover". (I hope 'me Swiss mum' survives this 'ere Bush Poetry!)

**Cheers - Michelle**

### Calendar of Events for WA Bush Poets Association

This section is a to help WA Bush Poets plan their activities for the coming months. The table below will show events that the committee knows about, whether or not they have a fixed date.

We will try to keep this table updated so that if you are interested, you may enter the events or just attend.

Date	Event	Co-ordinator
29 June – 2 July 2001	Australian Bush Poetry Championships Winton Qld.	P.O. Box 84 Hughenden Qld 4821
6 <sup>th</sup> July 2001	AGM of BPYSA and <b>Paterson and Lawson</b> Night. We need committed available Committee Members!!	Michelle Sorrell Ph: 9367 4963
8 <sup>th</sup> July	Derby Boab Festival	P.O. Box 87 Derby WA 6728 PH. 08 9193 1065
Sept 2001	Spring in the Valley – in the Swan Valley Poets wanted	Michelle Sorrell Ph: 9367 4963
Sept 2001	Royal Show – Poets wanted for Breakfast	Michelle Sorrell Ph: 9367 4963

#### Avoid the Price Rise - Pay your Membership fees Early

The AGM has a proposal to increase the membership fees from \$10 to \$15 per member. You can avoid this increase by paying your fees ***before*** 30/12/2001.

Post your cheque for \$10 to the Treasurer  
Unit 1, 8 Hill St  
South Perth WA 6151

#### **Committee Contacts 2000-2001**

Name	Address	Position	Phone	Email
Peter Nettleton	3 Ashwood Pl South Lake, WA 6164	President	(04) 0777 0053	stinger@iinet.net.au
Lorelie Tacoma	16 Gratwick Terrace Murdoch, WA 6150	Vice-President	9310 1500	
Rusty Christensen	51 Coogee Road Ardross, WA 6153	Past-President	9364 4491	
Trevor Cooksley	PO Box 679 South Perth, WA 6151	Past-Treasurer	9474 2344	
Michelle Sorrell	Unit 1, 8 Hill St South Perth, WA 6151	Secretary	9367 4963	msorrell@iinet.net.au
Geoff Bebb	Unit 1, 8 Hill St South Perth, WA 6151	Treasurer	9367 4963	geoff@surpac.com
Phyllis Tobin	8 Fionn Court Ardross, WA 6153	Committee	9364 4323	tobins@iinet.net.au
Kay Stehn	5 Bell Court Bayonet Head, WA 6330	Committee	9844 1656	swagmail@telstra.easymail.com.au
Joan Macneall	23 Streatham Street Beckenham, WA 6107	Committee	9451 6008	macneall1@iinet.net.au
Barry Higgins	140 Bernard Road Carabooda, WA 6033	Committee	9407 5311	

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

Geoff Bebb - Editor

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

**COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM**

I, Edna Westall Hereby Nominate \_\_\_\_\_

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

SIGNED:

NOMINATOR \_\_\_\_\_

SECONDER \_\_\_\_\_

NOMINEE \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return form to Hon. Secretary,  
Unit 1, 8 Hill St,  
South Perth 6151 - by 22nd June 2001*

**Return Address**

The Hon Secretary  
WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Assoc.  
Unit 1, 8 Hill St  
South Perth WA 6151

Postage Paid

Australia

**PP No: 607 742 100 42**

Edna Westall

2/10 McKimmie Road  
**PALMYRA WA 6157**