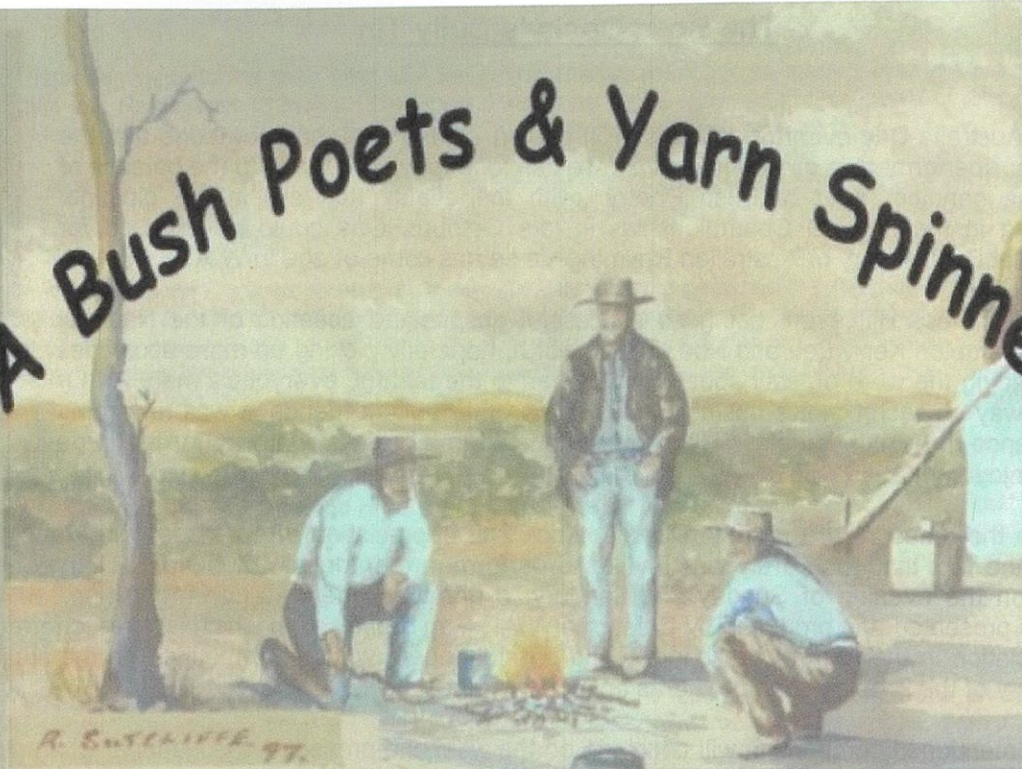


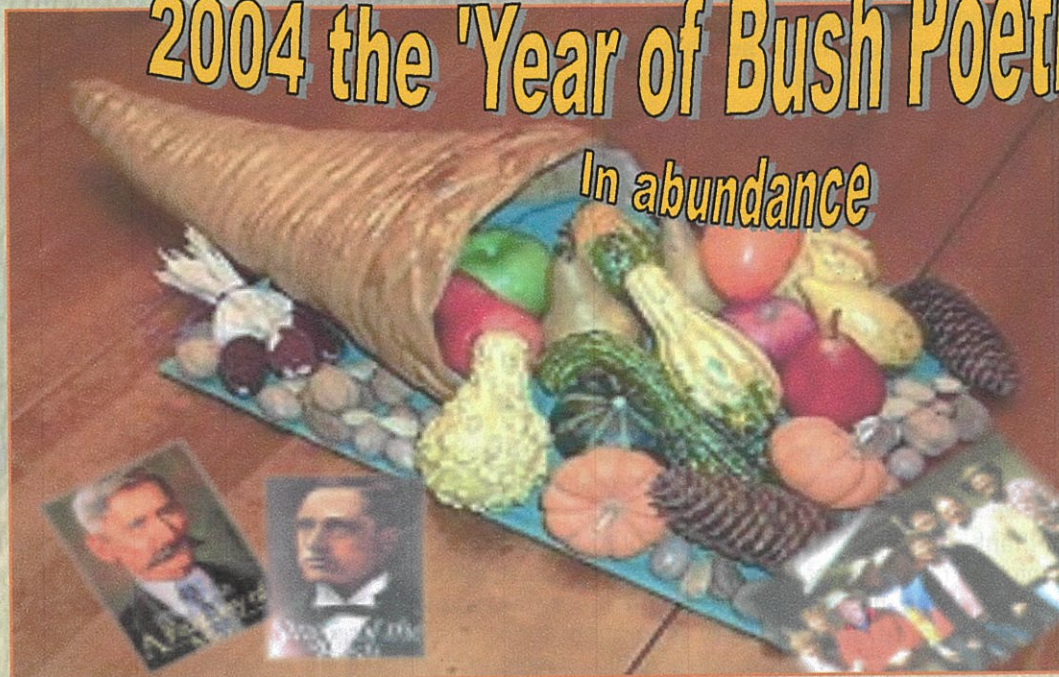
# WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners



Newsletter : February 2004

## 2004 the 'Year of Bush Poetry'

*In abundance*

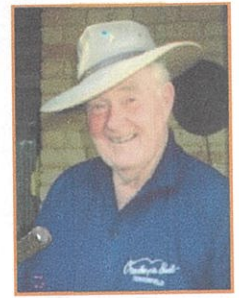


**"Monthly Muster" at Como Bowling & Recreation Club  
Cnr of Hensman and Sandgate Sts. South Perth  
Next Meeting Friday 6/2/2004 at 7.30pm**



## The Boss Cocky's Bully Tin

With the Australia Day event on Wireless Hill behind us and with the knowledge that the depth of our performers is greatly improved, we can look forward eagerly to the balance of 2004 as a genuine 'Year of Bush Poetry'; with the events that are in the pipeline, culminating in the national Championships in late October. One could be excused for thinking that Bush Poetry or Australian Rhyming Verse has come of age in W.A.



With the Wireless Hill event being so successful despite the absence of the National Female Champion Kerry Lee and Rod, in Tamworth, hopefully picking up more accolades plus spreading the word of 'stay sober' till October to the faithful, everyone's mate Arthur Leggett away on secret men's business, plus some other absent friends, it was rewarding to experience the eighth Wireless Hill show conducted in a professional way for the large crowd's enjoyment.

I suppose the measure of the general acceptance and appreciation of our endeavours and. I might say, art form? Is the fact that yours truly was invited to perform in the annual OZ CONCERT in Government House gardens on the evening of Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January; a great experience and birthday present – nuff sed. The concert is presented and produced by Celebrate W.A. – an organisation which is keen to form an alliance with our association in the form of a schools – and possibly open- written competition on the subject of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Proclamation of WA as an independent state.

The aforementioned competition will conclude on the weekend preceding the National Championships and will herald the start of 'Bush Poetry Week' in Western Australia. Mark the week in your diary, as there will be much 'movement at the station', in the city, in the suburbs and towns, once 'the word has got around.'

Before closing I must reiterate our appreciation of the ongoing support and cooperation of the City of Melville and Mayor Katherine Jackson. From day one, way back in 1995. Also the Rotary Clubs of Attadale and Melville, who have got their act together in supplying a quality breakie to help get a good start to celebrate an – Australian Day on Australia Day, on Wireless Hill.

**The Boss Cocky ----- Rusty Christensen**



## Michelle Monthly Musings

Dear readers,

I do hope that the readers who went to Wireless Hill enjoyed it as much as Geoff and I have in previous years. I hadn't even known about this secret little hill with the fabulous poetic view till we joined the poets in 1999. I hope to have a report of the day out to you with photos in the next issue of the newsletter.

I'd like to thank every one who has contributed to this issue. I was inundated in fact. Some stories will have to overflow into the next issue. Most of the offerings came by email *hooray!* Rusty also assures me they are getting a new computer and he will be able to do the same soon. It's a brave thing to embrace this 'new fangled technology' – it can, at times be very frustrating during the learning curve but it does open up possibilities of world communication. Geoff and I are actually launching a website for his new business. When I first saw the 'preview site' I was blown away as I was when I first spoke to my son in Switzerland *via the computer*. Imagine the WA Bush Poets communicating with poets in Outer Mongolia or Patagonia at a touch of a button – it's now all-possible.

Any way, having *your* poetry spread throughout Australia via *this* newsletter is enough for me at present. You will find two of our best poets featured this month – the winner of the "2003 WA Bush Poetry Written Competition" and another entrant in our competition - 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner of the "2003 Dusty Swag Award". Next month I will feature more winners of prestigious poetry writing competitions as well as poetry produced by our poets who just enjoy writing for the sake of it.

As I will be down South on business for the February "Monthly Muster" could I ask for a volunteer to write up the night's proceedings, please? Ph: Michelle on 9367 4963.

Happy Poeting till next month.

**Michelle Sorrell**



## January 2004 Come All Ye

I was expecting a quiet beginning to the New Year with the poets; after all most people haven't even got over the hangovers and hole in the pocket yet. Remind me to make a New Year Resolution not to make judgements. Was I wrong. Although the audience numbers were a little down on normal, the standard of poetry was definitely right up there.

The audience was regaled with some of the most beautiful descriptions of Australians' *feeling* for their country; it's landscapes/seascapes, and the country culture that I've ever heard by our poets. Thank you **Lorelle Tacoma** for being our premier MC of the year at very short notice, presiding over such a good night.

**Rusty Christensen** must have set the tone by reminding us again about what good, even **great** bush poetry is all about – a genuinely good story set to a consistent rhythm and rhyme, that does not take shortcuts with the second best words for speed of execution. After that salutary lesson Rusty proceeded to give us some Paterson and Lawson. "The Bush Christening" was fun as always - love the Irish accent. We could hear the rhythm of the train running down the tracks and the bitterness in Lawson's psyche as he recited "Second Class Wait Here." Still as relevant today as ever, even if the signs have been removed.

**David Sears** – sporting a new beard and bushman's hat fresh from the wheat harvest, recited a Dixie Solly poem about the mateship and the hardships of shearing. He recalls reunions with 'the blokes you love to hate'; shearing mates of old and the Shearing Memorabilia Centre at the Ravenswood Hotel in the Gascoyne for those who wish never to forget that white Australia was built on 'the sheep's back'. Thinking of White Australia Peter Nettleton raised the question one day of where are the Aboriginal poets? Are there indigenous poets who can translate their culture and experience into English rhyming poetry? I guess it would be a difficult but interesting task.

In my view **John Hayes** succeeds admirably in that translation of sentiment about his native land (looking from the viewpoint of an aboriginal lost as a child) rediscovering his beloved "Kimberley". The land and the boy become indistinguishable from one another in the imagery of the poem; as one body, with arteries, sinews, a recognisable footprint and an echo of a voice. "Longing for my Homeland" was equally poignant. "Fishing in the Kimberley" was much lighter in tone, even if 'the missus' did suffer at the hands of a delusional husband head locking a nightmare crocodile.

**Rod Lee's** rendition of Barcroft Boake's old cowhand reminiscing about his days in the saddle was equally moving. The imagery, as well as the rhyming rhythm was exemplary. Totally flowing like the old man's memory. The depth of thought required to write and recite both the above poems earmarks them as poems, which will endure.

**Rod and Kerry Lee** both then lightened the evening with their 'one minute poem' rehearsals. Go for it in Tamworth, hit these 70,00 people with your pizzazz! This inimitable duo stands a good chance of coming back with some booty. A thousand bucks would be grand. **Kerry's** own true tale of trying to crack a stockwhip was hilarious - from the realignment of her backbone (and ours doubled in our seats) to the parting of Rod's hair. Are you sure that these things didn't really happen while trying some of those other contortions highlighted in your internet search? (Some things are best left untold!).

I'll say bon voyage to **Brian Gale** also. This time I think he really is going. He's bought the ticket to Vancouver and he has his Indian Brave on his belt. He told us of some of his adventures with his Sioux Sitting Bull relations and recited "Yesterdays Warriors" the reminiscences of an old brave who, like the cowhand, and ourselves, often ponders life changes and how quickly time goes by. The old warrior returned to the past in his memory. A past when he was free and the spirit of his people was amongst them. We shall have a memory of Brian for his work down at Boyup Brook for 15 years with the festival, his love of the bush, Indian Braves and Jim Thorpe the Olympian for whom he penned many a poem. Bon Voyage dear friend in poetry. May the braves and the winters be kind to you in Calgary.

Unlike her usual fun and often risqué style of poetry **Trish Joyce** delivered us her own very serious poem "Relative Strangers". She was saying goodbye to a mother and hello to a long lost brother whilst laying down a family ghost. This was very appropriate when we have just had Christmas, which often highlights family issues and New Year, which makes us conscious of the passing of time, the past and the future.

Thinking of family and continuity just about then a mobile rang and **Val Read** dashed out the door before her poetry recitation, giving us the news that a brand new granddaughter had arrived a little earlier than expected for the New Year. She obviously did not want to miss too much of 2004. **Congratulations Val on a new addition to the family.**

As I said it was a rather serious and momentous meeting. Time for a little lightness of being. **Arthur Leggett** stepped in for Val and just happened to have a very appropriate little poem "New Grandparents" from his little book according to Arthur. He then regaled us with more exquisite little gems about a mix up with a cute barmaid and little memos he sent round the office as a purchasing officer, before his retirement. Finishing with a lovely little vignette of a holiday, post retirement, at "Geraldton" and its beautiful scenery which 'God gave us for nothing'.

Lovely Australian scenery set **Peter Capp** in a holiday mood too, in his bright blue frangipani Hawaiian shirt. In fact he set us back on track to what holidays are all about. Fun! His holiday destination was a little further south in "Jurien Bay", His Irish quirky chemist, fat fish pictures, wind that blow pricks off the barbed wire fence, remind us all that life cannot be serious all the time. In fact for Peter we wonder if it is serious *any* of the time. His other poem for the night "Inking Tom" the tattooed man, who has a serious disease that makes his 42 tats fly off his skin, pour out into bios, fill ink cartridges and fly across the Nullarbor with bats has us seriously wondering how we can bottle such a novel, comic-genius brain, that sees quirky word/picture links in *all of life*, serious and not so. Then 'Down with the Banks' he says (and so do we all) in his last poem where he leaves his bank a sympathy card instead of cash.

**Bill Elkes**, a new member, recited one of his own poems. "Windy Yer' Right". He was sitting in close proximity to Peter so I think it rubs off somehow. Bill delivered a strange and amusing tale of the cowboy whose three dogs were taken by a wedge-tailed eagle. At the end of the tale; in a really funny twist he wonders how this could happen and laments on why on earth the eagle has left his wife behind.



4  
**Winner of the 2003 WA Bush Poets Written Poetry Competition**

**ONE DAY IN PARADISE**

By woollybutt and blood wood gum,  
My tent is pitched to face the sun.  
So I can witness with my eyes,  
The glory as the starlight dies.

Amid the boughs the morning sings;  
Up rose the sun on gilded wings.  
To pierce my eyes with wondrous light,  
While casting off the cloak of night.

In distance now the sound was fleet—  
The rivers dance on stony feet;  
The music of each rippling note  
From rapids white serenely float.

A butcherbird's full-throated song  
Is heard across the billabong,  
Till cockatoos descend in force  
Upon the rambling watercourse.

The hills of fire are now unmasked,  
And there among the Mitchell grass,  
Are nature's monuments of clay,  
Those anthills with their faces grey.

Tall paper barks reflect beyond  
The lotus lilies in the pond,  
Not yet awakened from their dream,  
By sunlight, on the dormant stream.

Awaits the day with bated breath,  
To span the bridge, to life from death;  
While melodies in chorus rise  
To greet the dawn of summer skies.

I watch and wait while listening to  
Those vibrant sounds of life anew;  
I breathe the air so fresh and sweet  
And transformation is complete.

And then thought such mystery,  
The origin of all I see—  
Of water, earth, of air and fire.  
How could from nothing this transpire?

From zenith now the sun looked down  
Upon the scene where every crown.  
Was muted while the lifeless breeze,  
Slept among the languid leaves.

While nature's breath was now unstirred.  
And only silence could be heard.  
Down in the glen where shadows hide,  
Came sunlight for an hour to bide.

An eagle soared in thermal flow  
Surveying all the earth below,  
In cloudless sky his kingdom free  
Was farther than our eyes could see.

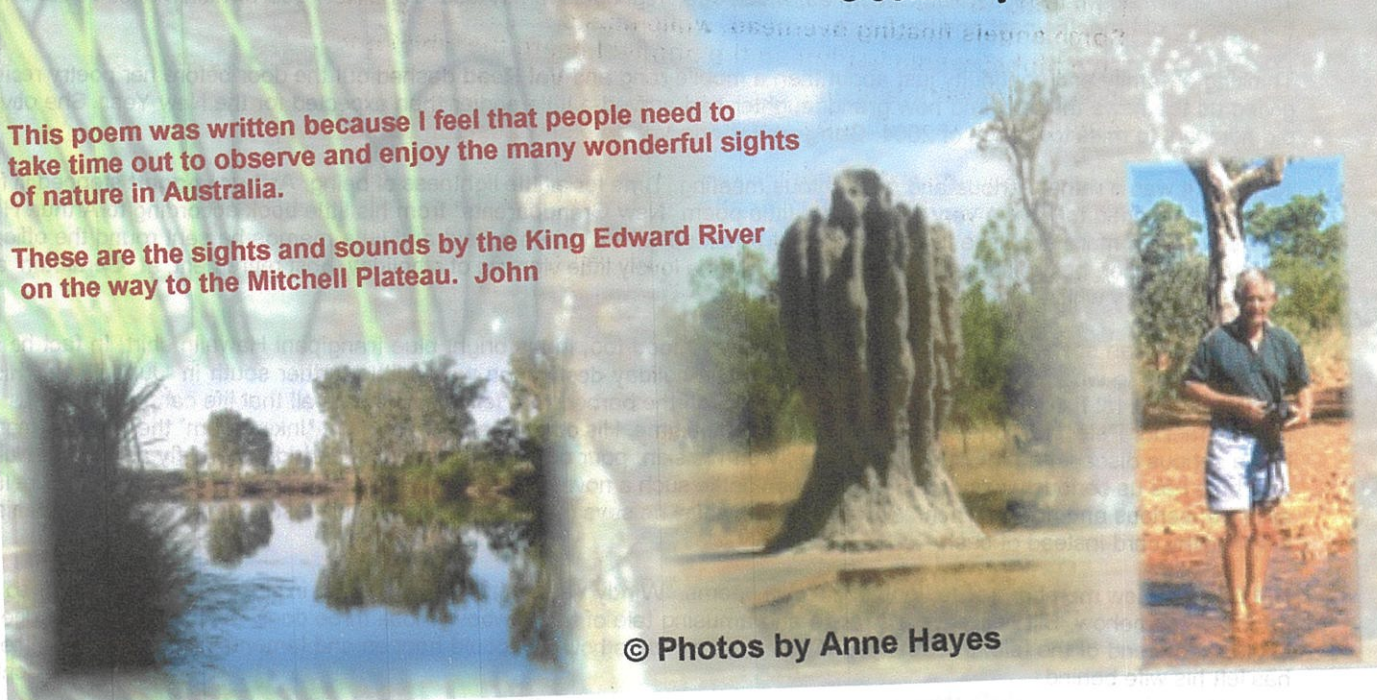
The light of life surrendered to  
The day's glad end, with violet hue,  
Now blending with the deep twilight,  
As prelude to the birth of night.

I close my eyes for day is done  
And dream of time when everyone,  
Can see and hear the grand display  
Of life on earth – for just one day.

© John Hayes

**This poem was written because I feel that people need to take time out to observe and enjoy the many wonderful sights of nature in Australia.**

**These are the sights and sounds by the King Edward River on the way to the Mitchell Plateau. John**



© Photos by Anne Hayes



## SNAKE IN THE TOODYAY TAVERN.

I'd visited the Toodyay pub to see the Melbourne Cup,  
When sudden shrieks of terror made the customers look up.  
I looked around with bleary eyes, then heard a piercing shout,  
"Be careful, mate! Get on your stool! A big brown's hereabout."  
All sorts of things went through my head. A big brown flamin' what?  
I knew by all the frenzy round, that harmless it was not.

And then I looked down at my boots, my blood near turned to ice,  
A monstrous snake glared up at me. I stood there in a vice.  
I knew then how a rabbit feels when it is mesmerised,  
I couldn't move a finger, mate. It had me hypnotised.  
A metre long it must have bin, or maybe even more,  
I tell you all I've never seen a snake like that before.

My whole life passed before my eyes. I knew I ought to pray,  
'Cause I have been a sinner, mate, and I had lots to say.  
And then I thought: "This is a joke. It's someone's cruel jest.  
A bloody farmer thought it fun to bring this scary pest."  
I'd read about this joke before, a python it must be,  
This was my chance to prove that there was no one brave as me.

I picked it up with great aplomb, 'twas harmless I was sure,  
Me mates yelled out: "You're crazy, Ray!" and headed for the door.  
And then I felt its fangs sink in, and chucked it in the air,  
Then pandemonium broke out, girls scattered everywhere.  
My head was spinning, I felt faint, and then I toppled down,  
I never had a doubt just then, it really was a brown.

I had some vague perceptions of men jumping round like fools,  
The shielas, with their skirts hiked up, were perching on the stools.  
The wireless blaring out the names of horses in the Cup,  
Of thinking, "Lad, you've cashed your chips, your life is nearly up."  
I felt the poison in my veins. As hot as lead it ran,  
And knew that when it hit my brain I'd ended my life's span.

Then Smithy marched in to the bar and thought there was a blue,  
Until he saw the dreaded snake and grabbed hold of a cue.  
He gave it one almighty whack around its flamin' head,  
Then picked it up to chuck it out, but it bit him instead.  
So there we were, John Smith and me, both facing death for sure,  
When some bloke brought a shovel in and slammed it on the floor.

I woke up in the hospital; my gills were vivid green,  
I tell you, no one would believe the things that I have seen.  
Some angels floating overhead, while music sweet did play,  
Two blokes were chatting on the phone; I heard the white one say:  
"We do not want this sinner here, I'll send him down to you,"  
And then across the intercom: "Do that, and I'll shoot through."

I've got my share of troubles, mate, I don't want any more,  
Ray Vesperman can stay with you, or I'll walk off the floor."  
The angel turned to me and sighed. "Son, I must send you back.  
You've got to mend your ways, my lad, our qualities you lack.  
With thunder ringing in my ears, I landed back in bed,  
With Smithy staring at me, his eyes bulging from his head.

Reporters from The West rushed in to give us interviews,  
They brought the stone dead adder in 'cause it would make good news  
The snake was in two pieces, and its head was chopped off clean,  
Its beady eyes stared at me, still malevolent and mean,  
I shuddered as the cameras flashed, then suddenly sat up,  
And started yelling loud and long: "Who won the Melbourne Cup?"



Val wrote this poem from the inspiration of a true, "Snake Bites Man" story, written up in the *West Australian Newspaper* last year.

It won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the 'Dusty Swag Award' 2003





## 6 CAY Continued from P3

Just when we thought the fun had ended along came **Margaret Taylor**, with her font of endless new poetry about the joys, and funny-but-true, moments on her (and Bill's) prune farm near Young. This one called "The Quince Caper", is about a series of 'boggings' of *all* the family vehicles in search of the elusive quince on a neighbour's farm.

Thanks Peter, Bill and Margaret, I think we need more gentle humour in this world as the stars predict a very difficult year. A little humour and harmless anarchy will do a lot to make us feel better. A remembrance of the natural beauty of our country, families, and friends depicted in lovingly crafted poetry will soothe our soul in order to face whatever 2004 brings.

This CAY report was a little longer than usual but, I thought, really worthy of the extra space. I Hope you will all enjoy the same quality poetry at Wireless Hill. If we are to keep up this standard of poetry recitals we need to keep the Association healthy financially, so please dig deep for a good cause which gives pleasure to hundreds of people a month, every month of the year.

### Correction from last issue's CAY

The publication mentioned by Evie for the RSPCA is printed by **Avocado Press** not Avoca Press.

Ed.

## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Boyup Brook Country Music Festival Weekend 13-15<sup>th</sup> February

Remember this long running festival as advertised in your December newsletter  
Contact Ron Evans on 9761 7006 as Brian Gale is in Canada

Dear Editor,

As the old year disappears and we venture into the new perhaps we should reflect upon what has been achieved and furthermore what we would like to achieve as bush poets and yarn spinners.

The past three or four years have seen our club growing steadily from its very humble beginnings and we have developed a group of people who are talented and entertaining. However, I wonder if entertainment is the prime object of our association or should we do more to encourage and nurture our writing skills.

There is within our club a nucleus of writers who I know are willing to share their skills with others and help to develop writers who could perhaps take up the pen and record some of our Australian history before it is lost in the mist of time.

It is wonderful to hear the classics of Lawson, Paterson, John O'Brien and C.J. Dennis but I think that we have a duty to record what has in the past fifty years and indeed, our current and future events in an ever-changing world.

How many more years can we flog the horses, steam engines and camel trains, and those who drove them or rode them? Shouldn't we be encouraging people to write events of the modern era that would have reference and connection with the younger advanced generation?

Thereby, our today becoming the history of tomorrow.

I am sure if we put our heads together we could find a hero or villain of today that would be of interest. And there are many events and people that are worthy of mention.

Should we and could we form a writers group that could learn from each other?  
I for one would be only too happy to assist anyone who craves to write.

Looking forward to moving forward.

Yours truly, **John Hayes**

*Thank you John for the 'Food for thought' for 2004. No sooner said then done. See below, as well as phoning John on Ph 9377 1238 if you are interested in other ventures into poetry writing. .Ed*

## MINI LITERATURE WEEKEND

**POETS' BREAKFAST**

**WORKSHOP FOR ADULTS**  
**AND JUNIOR BUSH POETRY WRITERS**



**Poetry  
Writers'  
Workshop**

Poet in residence: Glenny Palmer from Queensland  
Performers: Rod & Kerry Lee and others who'd like to perform

**SUNDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2004**  
**8 A.M. TO 12 NOON**

**HEATHCOTE CENTRE, APPLECROSS**

**SPONSORED BY THE MELVILLE CITY COUNCIL AND W.A. BUSH POETS & YARNSPINNERS ASSN.**

**ENROLMENTS: 9397.0409**

**EMAIL: [diggerscamp@yahoo](mailto:diggerscamp@yahoo)**

**Cost: Gold Coin Donation**



## Rod & Kerry Lee's "Diggers Camp Entertainment"

We've had a busy start to 2004. The following events may interest WABP&YS Assoc members.

### Sat 14.02.04 - Kenwick Rotary Club Fund Raiser

featuring Rod & Kerry, Peter Capp & Greg Hastings, an international Australian Folk Musician. Tickets are \$19.80 each and all funds raised will go to assist with providing wheelchairs for disabled people, computers to disadvantaged children and to support an orphanage in Vietnam. Ticket price includes door prize and several raffles during the evening. Diggers Camp picnic and camping facilities at no extra charge. For tickets contact Rod or Kerry.



### Sat 06.03.04 - Sun 07.03.04 - Wolba Wolba Beer Festival

(Home Brew Competition) at Dandaragan. Featuring Dave, Rod & Kerry.

The weekend will commence at 2pm Saturday and will include a sausage sizzle, entertainment, Poet's Breakfast & Bush Poetry writing workshop. Cost will be \$15.00 per head. Free camping is available in Dandaragan. The event will be held at Aggie's Farm, a heritage building situated a short distance from town.

### Sunday 14.03.04 8am to Midday - Melville City Council Mini Literature Weekend,

See advert Page 6

### Saturday 27.03.04 - Diggers Camp Concert featuring Glenny Palmer, Dave, Rod & Kerry and entertainers yet to be finalised.

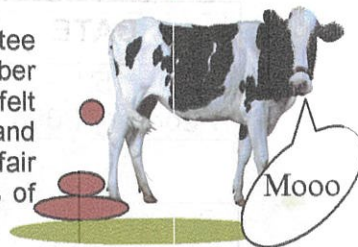
This is one of our usual concerts. Tickets for concert \$10.00 per head. All facilities available, including camp sites. Powered sites \$6.00. Poet's Breakfast at no extra cost.

**Rod and Kerry Lee**

### The New Come All Ye Name

Thank you everyone who offered a multitude of creative names. I took them to the committee meeting for discussion. Rusty waxed lyrical about the 'Bangalore Muster' that he and Cobber attended. Rod had fond memories of 'musters' in his Air Force days and every one else felt that 'muster' conjured up a fine gathering of one sort or another and was very short and catchy. There certainly is merit in these feelings. Thus I was democratically outnumbered, fair and square. So despite the fact that 'Monthly Muster', for me, still conjures up visions of Menstruating Mooies (Must be PMT) I concede defeat:-**"The Monthly Muster" it is!**

Michelle's revenge or (silly moo!)



*Sylvia and Harold Rowell*  
*Congratulations on your Diamond Wedding*  
*Anniversary 13th January 2004*



### WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners Assoc. Inc. 2004

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Rod Lee	Secretary	160 Blair Road Oakford WA 6113	9397 0409	diggers_camp@yahoo.com.au
Kerry Lee	Treasurer	160 Blair Road Oakford WA 6113	9397 0409	" " " " "
Rachel Dockery	Committee	124 Hollis Road Wilson WA 6107	9356 7426	
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Jean Ritchie	Committee	5A Bruning Rd Manning W.A. 6152	9450 3111	
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**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**

All contributions to The Editor: [msorrell@iinet.net.au](mailto:msorrell@iinet.net.au)  
Unit 1 / 8 Hill Street, South Perth 6151 WA

**WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Assoc. Inc Coming Events**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>CO-ORDINATOR</b>
13 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2004	Boyup Brook Country Music Festival	Ron Evans: 08 9761 7006
	See inside for Diggers Camp Events	Rod and Kerry Lee: 9497 0409
Sun.14 <sup>th</sup> March 2004	Mini Literature Weekend Heathcote Centre Applecross	Rod and Kerry Lee: As above
14-16 <sup>th</sup> May 2004	WA Bush Poetry Championships	TBA

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