

WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners

\$2.50



Newsletter : August 2003

August 1

Horses Birthday

And Swiss National Day

**"Come All Ye" at Como Bowling & Recreation Club
Cnr of Hensman and Sandgate Sts. South Perth
Next Meeting Friday 1/8/2003 at 8pm**

A Word or Two from the Boss Cocky



I look forward to eagerly again to being President of our now well-established association.

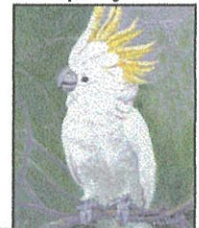
As founder and inaugural President for three years and being on the committee since, I have watched the association grow from it's small beginning to reach the point where we have been given the responsibility and privilege to present in 2004, the first National Championship in a capital city of Australia.

My predecessor Lorelie has played no small part both as competent secretary then patient president over a period of some 6 -7 years to bring us to this a point and I publicly thank her on your behalf for a selfless contribution to what I consider a worthwhile cause – the conserving and bringing to the public domain, out unique heritage – Bush Poetry, aka Australian rhyming verse.

I would also like to express our sincere appreciation of Joan Macneall another long-standing member of our association. Her sterling efforts, stepping in at a critical time, to fill the complex position of Secretary (when our previous one left prematurely), last year, is appreciated. "Thank you Joan", we look forward to your continued support.

To all our members and supporters, be you a writer, performer, MC or a good listener (the world is short of good listeners!). Your support over the years is greatly appreciated and I hope you feel part of the Bush Poetry revival and network.

Important message from Rusty continued on page 5



Rusty Christensen

Michelle's Musings



Dear Readers,

Thank you every one for your kind words about the newsletter, mentioned at the AGM, and generally throughout the year. I feel really proud and happy to continue bringing the Association news and poetry to you all for another year. Who said that the computer would kill newspapers – especially ones with good news?

The computer has *enabled* writers to communicate as never before and express all manner of views. I certainly know that if I had to write and set these mere eight pages by hand then it just wouldn't happen in my busy lifetime.

I especially love the variety of poetry that comes my way from you all. I'd love to see more opinion though, and funny happenings - anecdotes - indeed any manner of things, so please keep emailing in. There were 20 plus people at the AGM – more than any before – which shows that you want to know what's happening and hopefully have an opinion about issues affecting Bush Poetry in general and our association – lets hear it from you.

I'd like to publish a monthly report on 'the movement at the station'... for the 2004 express as well as Wireless Hill this year - both looming fast.

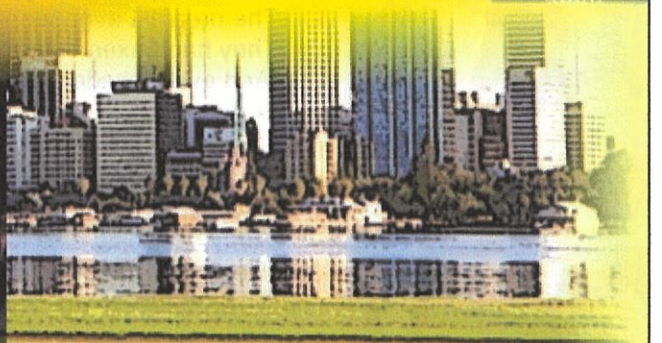
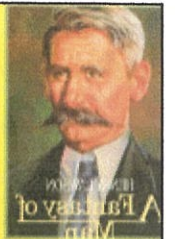
Cheers, Michelle Sorrell



Paterson



Lawson

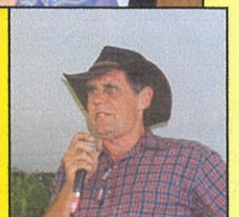
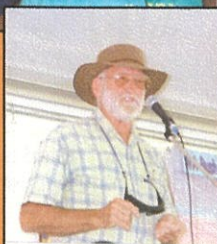
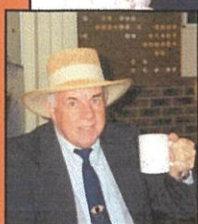


It was a wet night and the car park was a swimming pool yet 78 people braved the elements to go back to the 1800's for our Paterson and Lawson night. Even more remarkable was the fact that over 20 people turned up to the AGM beforehand – this was our biggest turn out ever. **Katherine and Gary Jackson**, back from their honeymoon, also attended before returning to Mayoral responsibilities. Thank you all for taking the time to come out on such a blustery evening. We were made welcome by **Andrew Coad** the President of the Como Bowling and Recreation Club.

Firstly, a huge thank you to **Lorelie Tacoma** for going to a great deal of trouble to provide huge platters of beautifully decorated sandwiches. Lorelie and **Ilsa Tacoma** turned up at 6pm to prepare the food and lay out all of the tables as well. More ladies then joined them to serve teas and clean up afterwards. **Tom Helm** the barman had to eventually take the tea towel out of Lorelie's hand at 10pm as she was still cleaning up (without a union ticket) – this is our outgoing president all over – not a token 'figurehead' - not afraid to do *any* job right to the end.

Our joint MC **Peter Nettleton** and **Phil Strutt** provided a racy, repartee throughout the night, including excerpts from the famous Paterson/Lawson 'Battle' for the Bush and the City' published in the Bulletin over many months. We could really appreciate the tremendous amount of collaborative work that you must have done to achieve this night.

Thanks also to all our poets;- **David Sears, Geoff Bebb, Evie Perrins, Ron Ingham, John Hayes, Trish Joyce, Rod Lee, Kerry Lee, Frank Harrison, Peter Capp** who, at times, recited some really difficult and *long* poems for the occasion. Your very real work is much appreciated. Thanks to all the people who dressed up too it really added to the occasion. **Michelle**



The Shearer's Dream

I dreamt I shore in a shearin' shed ,
And it was a dream of joy,
For every one of the roustabouts,
Was a girl dressed up as a boy-
Dressed up like a page in a pantomime,
The prettiest ever seen-
They had flaxen hair, they had coal black hair,
And every shade in between.

The shed was cooled by electric fans,
That was one over every shoot.
The pens was a polished ma-ho-gany,
And everything else to suit.
The huts had springs in the mattresses,
And the tucker was something grand,
And every night by the billabong
We danced to a German band.

Our pay was the wool off the jumbuck's back,
So we shore till all was blue-
The sheep was washed afore they were shore,
(And the rams was scented too);
And all of us wept when the shed cut out,
In spite of the long hot days,
For every hour them girls waltzed in
With whiskey and beer on trays!

There was three of them girls to every chap,
And as jealous as they could be -
There was three of them girls to every chap,
And six of 'em picked on me;
We was drafting them out for the homeward track,
And sharin' 'em round like steam,
When I woke with my head in the blazin' sun
To find t'was a shearer's dream.

Henry Lawson

Side Note

It is interesting to see that Henry Lawson uses abbreviated words with an apostrophe but our modern poets are sometimes penalised for doing this, in written competitions.

One of our poet's works was marked down recently (by a point each time she abbreviated with an apostrophe) by one judge and marked down for **not** abbreviating (and therefore losing the rhythm) by another judge! Seems to me the rhythm is more important. What do readers think?

- and perhaps some consistency of judging.

Whilst thinking of judges -

Keith Lethbridge

has agreed to judge our Adult Writer's Competition at Wireless Hill this year. (Rusty twisted his arm).

Closing date for entries
20/12/03

More about this in later issues as well as Ron Evans and Rusty's recent Northern Safari to see 'Cobber' Lethbridge and attend the Halls Creek Annual Bush Poets Breakfast.

David Sears recited this poem beautifully at our recent Paterson / Lawson Night. According to David it has been reproduced in song form. Thanks David for sending it to me (via e-mail too - I love you!). There is also a Shearer's Dream story in Lawson's anthology. Pretty popular topic - many bloke's dream I fancy. It is interesting to read such a whimsical poem from Lawson.



Thanks to the West Australian for a little humour from Paterson this week too. Pity about the spelling! (Glad to know I'm not the only one who makes typos). Please send in many / any witty or interesting cartoons like this pertaining to poetry, as well as any comments you may have about favourite pieces / poems you'd like to see included in the newsletter.

Michelle

Continued from P2 editorial SPECIAL MEETING

We have an interesting, challenging and enjoyable task ahead of us. With your support and the administrative team - with an emphasis on TEAM - I am confident that we will put a memorable event together in October 2004, which will set a bench mark for others to aspire to, plus attending to all of the other duties and events which demand attention in a growing movement such as ours. The most important decision we must consider is the scale of the event. There are scant precedents and guidelines to follow. Here are two options:-

- a) do we run a low key, low budget, low input show- (using our small members pool) or
- b) do we aim for a high profile, high budget, high demand show -
(requiring many members plus outside supporters.)

There are cases for and against both scenarios and it is therefore **the** most pressing decision to be made before we move on. The executive feels it should be discussed and decided by a broad cross section of the members as possible. To resolve this and establish a plan for further action

A SPECIAL MEETING at the 'Como Camp' (Bowling Club) on **Wednesday the 13th August at 7:00 pm .**
ALL WELCOME

Secretary **Rod Lee** will be looking for expressions of interest at the Come All Ye on **August 1**, or you can phone him on 9397 0409

Young Person's Written Verse Competition

This facet of the Australian Rhyming verse revival has unfortunately slipped off the radar screen. Last year a small-dedicated subcommittee tried to continue the previous success in having children enter our Wireless Hill, - They contacted about 60 schools in and around the metropolitan area. To no avail.

Perhaps we tried to cast too wide a net. My thinking is that suitably inspired and enthusiastic members could select one or two or three (whatever they are comfortable with) schools within their area of influence and contact teachers (those preferably, who already have an interest in Australian Rhyming Verse. The member's purpose would be to encourage the teachers to in turn encourage their students to write in rhyming verse.

As the school term has started, it is imperative we get cracking on this. There could be members/ supporters liaising with schools in various parts of the metro and country areas. There is no need to appear too technical, leave that to the teachers, - that is what they are trained to do. I'm sure that if you need backup there would be members only too pleased to help out if asked.

Some members have already started doing this (and I commend them) so there are guidelines. There will be a **WORTHWHILE PRIZE** (yet to be determined) as well as exposure at Wireless Hill and the National Championships next year for the winners. So employ a bit of lateral thinking. What schools are close by? Who do you know at the school? Do you have the time and enthusiasm to take on what could be a rewarding challenge (sounds like an old cliché) but this time a real and tangible possibility.

The Boss Cocky

As an experienced school teacher I'd like to add a little notice here - please take the time before approaching a school to phone the Bush Poets and find out who has already done this in the past and what are some of their tried and tested methods that work (as well as the ones that don't work) in approaching schools. Perhaps our experienced 'in schools' poets who would like to help others get started in this area could also contact us if they would be happy to be consulted. I'd be happy to publish a list in the newsletter. Ed. Michelle

My Trip to Winton in Queensland for the Qantas Bush Poets and Yarnspinners Competitions.

It was so nice of Billy Hay long time bush poet and yarnspinner from Queensland to approach me in Boyup Brook and suggest I travel to Winton and compete in the Qantas Competition. I took him up on it and travelled there as part of a trip over east to visit my sister in Canberra. The whole trip was an adventure for me and I loved every minute of it. The plane and bus rides were exciting and staying at the old Tatts hotel in Winton was something I will never forget.

I was welcomed by the locals and became a familiar figure at the Tatts bar (Billy's influence) and we talked, laughed and shared bush poems and yarns. The children's competitions on the Thursday and Friday in the town hall were very enlightening - the kids are just right into it, and loved reciting their well learned bush poems. They all did so well and it was just great to see real Aussie kids loving such an Aussie tradition. Our adult competition was on Saturday, Sunday and Monday - so boy I really was bush poeted and yarn spinned out by the end of it. The styles and types of presentations were all so different and I learnt so much about different ways of going about presenting poems and yarns. No place for me but the happiest time was when all my presentations were done and I really hadn't messed up on any of them. No lines forgotten, no complete blanks came over me - so I really did as well as I could and was so happy about that. I just loved those bronze swagman trophies though and how I would have loved to have been in the receiving line of one of those!

Continued P7

The Great Dream

I had a dream the other night that I was in THE RACE,
In Pharlap's silks I led the pack at an almighty pace.
The crowd went wild and screamed my name, (And Pharlap's, too, of course).
We were the best in all the world. Me and that great horse.

I couldn't tell you how I felt, my blood was rushing hot,
I knew the Melbourne cup was mine, that we had won the pot.
The big horse pounded down the track. I tell you all, we flew,
I never had to use the whip 'cause all the tricks he knew.

And Gunsynd, too, was in the race, but never had a chance,
We left the field a mile behind. It was a merry dance.
With jockeys straining ev'ry nerve to keep me in their view,
While I just shouted: "Come on, boy! Let's show what we can do!"

Of course, we won the Melbourne Cup. Oh, what a day that was!
Gai Waterhouse was all het up, and Cummings looked at loss.
I eat the same meal every night. I want that dream again,
I have to ride that mighty horse; to feel the joy and pain.

He's stuffed, of course, in some museum, his great heart in a jar,
'Cause in Australia's history no other is his par.
I'll be at Flemington next week and see, in my mind's eye,
The ghost of Pharlap on the course as he goes racing by.



© V.P. Read



Sonny

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE HORSES

"I'm sorry for your loss" said the words upon the card.
"I know you loved him dearly. To lose him must be hard.
So here's a little keepsake - for comfort, not for pain."
And lying on the card was a lock of chestnut mane.

As I gently stroked the shiny strands I drifted back in time
To see a tall young thoroughbred, quite stunning, in his prime.
We fell in love with you that day. It must have been ordained.
And joyfully we brought you home - red coat and chestnut mane.

You were my daughter's pride and joy at pony club and shows.
Though we couldn't call you "lion heart" you won her many bows.
I'd little cause to worry as you sped across the plain
With her perched upon your large broad back,
hands wrapped in chestnut mane.

A gentle, patient giant, you taught her well until
She bought a bolder partner to match her growing skill.
But we couldn't sell you onwards. With us you would remain.
For you've earned your place amongst us
with brown eyes and chestnut mane

Dependable and constant, your life took another course
As you soon increase in value to become companion horse.
And rounding up the sheep no more sent us all insane
For they meekly followed on behind
your flowing tail and chestnut mane.

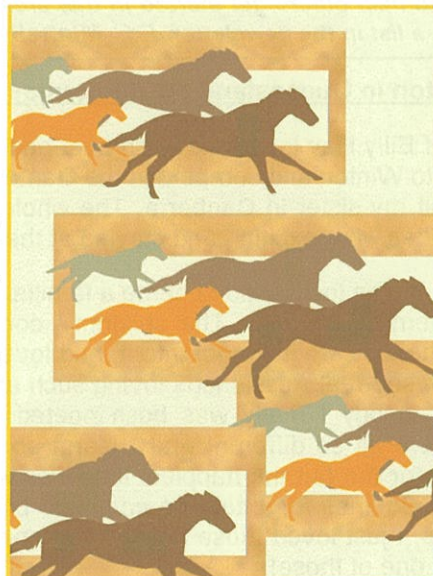
When my dreams turned into nightmares. When I was too scared to ride,
I timidly teamed up with you. You soon restored my pride.
You gently led me through my fears till confident again
I proudly rode you out at shows -white socks and chestnut mane.

Then in service faithful to those lost and in distress
We joined in many searches with the mounted SES.
Through scrub and brush and gullies in the cold and driving rain
You carried on regardless with your soaking chestnut mane.

You delighted in retirement. It was your goal in life
To graze and dream and play cocooned from toil and strife.
When you were badly injured I tried to ease your pain
And gently stroked your matted coat
and tangled chestnut mane.

The end was quick and painless while frolicking at play,
And I'm feeling mighty grateful your passing came this way.
You were loved and you were cherished.
In my heart you will remain.
Yet still I miss your soft warm breath
and shiny chestnut mane.

But life is not eternal, for God has planned it so.
Your life was long and happy. It was your time to go.
So I cannot mourn your parting nor wish you back again
For you have earned eternal rest,
red coat and chestnut mane.



Sonny
(Cardup Son)
23.08.1975-
06.04.2002

Family friend for
14 years.

© Kerry Lee

Continued from P5 My Trip to Winton....

First and second place getters in the females were perfectionists in performance, and their poems were so emotional that both presenter and audience were in tears. It was very different from the type of bush poetry I have become accustomed to – I obviously have a lot more to learn. I felt I was up there with a chance though, and with the many positive comments from the audience I really found the whole experience just wonderful. I look forward to talking more to you about it in person at the next Come All Ye. I do try to get to them – it just depends on what other trips are happening around that time.

I have been doing bush poetry for Senior Cits homes, tourist buses to town, as a meeting guest speaker and other luncheons and dinners. I am approached for suggestions of poems for funerals, weddings and other occasions. It really does open a different world to you of new friends and new experiences. I hope everyone is enjoying it all as much as me.

Cheers, Chris Sadler

She's Done it Again and Again and Again!

Val Read has *really* been busy writing this year, as always. Val tells me her office is a mess – I gather it's from all the certificates and prizes accumulated. Here's the list:-

- Highly Commended - twice, in the Grenfell Competition. (She only came in a comma's breath of winning) that's a story too.
- Certificate of Appreciation in the Cecil Plains Homestead Competition
- Highly commended in the "Scribblers" of Mandurah Writer's Competition
- Highly Commended in the Charlie Marshall Bush Poetry Competition
- Commended – twice, in the Beau Desert Country and Horse Festival
- 2nd Prize in the Drover's Camp Association of Camooweal

Congratulations Val!

October Newsletter Advanced Notice

Geoff has sold his 24-year-old software business. He has been asked to do a round-the-world to all the offices trip to say farewell to all his staff. Geoff and the staff have asked me to attend as well so I will be unavailable to do the next two newsletters. In previous such events over the last 4 1/2 years we have been able to ask Geoff's daughter Rachel to step in the breach and finish, print, staple and send the newsletter out but she is unavailable this time as she has now got full time work commitments. I am calling for people who could do sections or all of this job this time round... I need:-

- Someone who could take down notes of the Sept and Oct CAYs and email them to the 'printer person'.
- Someone who could gather, arrange and print the final pages i.e. pages 3 CAY, 5 and 7. (I would print the poetry pages and do the graphics as well as the front pages and back pages in advance.
- Members who could collect, collate and staple the pages and post them. Phone Michelle 9367 4963

Committee Members - WA Bush Poets and Yarnspinnners 2003 -2004

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WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Assoc Inc**Receipt****[00398]****Received from Edna Westall**

**the sum of Fifteen Dollars
being Members' Subscriptions of
WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Assoc Inc
Until 30/6/2004**

\$15Donnell**WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc****Coming Events**

Date	Event	Co-ordinator
	Annual Subscription Fees Now due	
19 th October 2003	<u>Dardanup Festival</u> Poets and Audience welcome- (Val Lishman Health Research Foundation Fundraiser)	Cath Chandler – 08 9780 7742 (For more general details as well as poets registration of interest)

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