

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2001

WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners

Friday 6th July

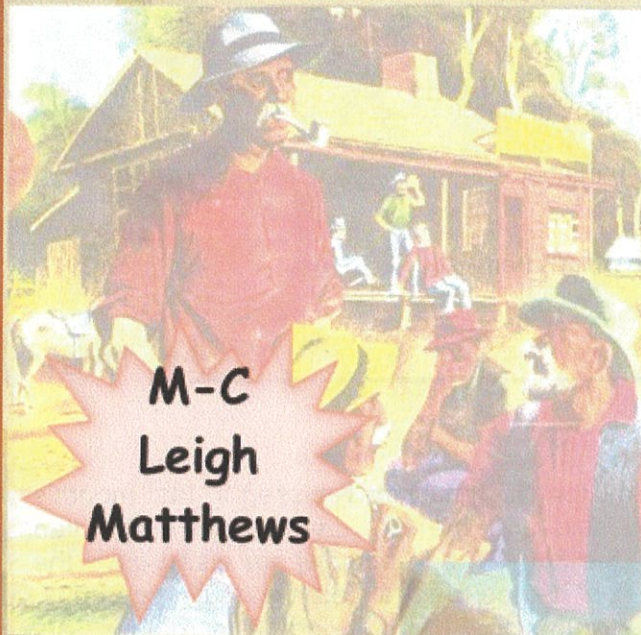
7:30PM

Raffles Hotel

(River Room upstairs)

Banjo Paterson - Henry Lawson

Bring
a
Friend



M-C
Leigh
Matthews

The Droving Days

Black Bonnet

Mongrel Grey

The Outback

Faces In The Street

The Ballad Of The Drover

Fire At Ross's Farm

The Man from Snowy River

Clancy of the Overflow

The Geebung Polo Club

Saltbush Bill

The Man from Ironbark

Bush Christening

Johnson's Antidote

Defence of the Bush

Door
Prizes

Hear WA's Finest Poets

Recite the Bush Classics



AROUND THE TRAPS with the Top Dog



Well,
The year has rolled around and here we are
About to rule the line and start anew
With poetry and tales from near and far,
While very entertaining, few are true

They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks
They say that every dog must have his day,
But I've managed to get in my share of licks
And I've had my chance to have a decent spray

I've tried to help us broaden our horizons,
With regional heats and affirmative action
I've been to uni, tried to get 'enwisened'
In order to take on the 'fogie faction'

They say our art form isn't very clever
It's 'doggerel verse', you cannot call it 'art'
but ask the audiences what they come for
At least it's got some soul and lots of heart

So now I'll pack my karma and my dogma
Lawyers, like sleeping dogs, can never lie
I've very much enjoyed my presidency
And that's the truth, cross heart and hope to die

While at writing poems, I am strictly amateur
To me it is a living form of art
At least I write in iambic pentameter
And I still know all the words to "McArthur's Fart"!

© Peter Nettleton 01/07/01

Arf - Stinger



G'Day everyone.

Firstly, let me once again apologise for the typo that I missed in last month's Newsletter, where in one place I said that the last day for the discounted Membership dues was 31/6/2001 (the 31st??) and somewhere else I gave the date as 31/12/2001(dear me!!). Well of course the real date was 30th June 2001, but as I screwed up, then it is my responsibility to put it right. Accordingly, I am extending the deadline for the discounted Membership Subs of \$10 to Thursday 5th July 2001. Remember, they could go up after the AGM to \$15.

This month's CAY promises to be a cracker with 25 Paterson and Lawson poems being performed by our most experienced Poets. I do hope that everyone can participate in dressing up idea as well – as this greatly helps with the atmosphere. If you can't dress up – still come along anyway. We are aiming to have the largest CAY crown on record (the record currently stands at 87). To help achieve this, show the front cover of this issue of the Newsletter to a friend.

Plans for this year's Royal Show and "Spring in the Valley", are starting to come together. The Royal Agricultural Society have confirmed in writing their interest for a repeat performance of last year's event and the Chapel Farm Restaurant in Middle Swan have confirmed their interest in having our Poets perform during the "Spring in the Valley" weekend in October. To this end, they have invited us to perform at a Prelude Event on Sunday 5th August. If they like us and we like them, then we will be booked for the main "Spring in the Valley" show.

Both of these events could become annual occurrences and would be a boon to the Association.

Come All Ye Meeting June 1st 2001



The evening was chilly and damp with about 40-50 brave souls daring to come out to the evening's performance. Thank you to those loyal fans, it was not a lovely night to be out. However the atmosphere soon warmed up with **David Sears** in charge of proceedings.

Kel Watkins began with a really complicated yarn, within a yarn so to speak. He brought his magic string from the 70's and wove a tale (figuratively and literally) in front of our very eyes about a very clever wide mouth frog. Kel was amazing, combining word and hand dexterity simultaneously to enthral his audience. Now there's a bloke who can use his right *and* left-brain together to keep an audience mesmerised. He also set the theme for the evening, which was wondrous ANIMALS.



Others took up the animal theme. It never ceases to amaze me how that happens without planning. Presenters come with set poems without prior consultation and still a common theme stands out. **Rod Lee** warmed up with a story about **Kerry** (his other half) who was attending a most amazing "horse and man endurance trial" called the "Quilty". This is an equestrian event, which has taken place annually for 35 years. This led to an equestrian yarn concerning Kerry, which Rod made up on the spot. I genuinely think that Rod and Kerry have so much talent and flare for these improvised yarns about their life in 'Outback Perth' that they should consider writing a book of their adventures. It would sell like hot cakes. Keith Lethbridge wasn't forgotten in these animal antics either as Rod recited his wonderful "Talking Dog".

Geoff Bebb recited his hot-off-the presses true dog poem "Lady" about his favourite canine pet; a truly intelligent and sensitive animal who will always be in his heart. Geoff and his family shed many tears at her passing and the poem evoked the same feelings more than 10 years on. A lovely poem Geoff. Geoff's second poem "The Wall", which was even more personal, also evoked huge sentiment and nods of understanding from the audience.



Rusty Christensen followed with a true story about his daring exploits fishing in a croc. infested lake in Queensland when he was a bridge carpenter in the 1950's. He followed that with an even riskier episode from Bob Maygor's "Catastrophe" (sic) tomcat with more than 9 lives. My mum who *loves* cats was absolutely beside herself with laughter at that one. More mayhem followed with Paterson's "Man from Ironbark"

David Sears' animal poem "Retribution" came from Martin in Albany. It was a grim tale of revenge and murder in the cabbage patch after a chicken infestation. The murderer being the neighbouring farmer – his weapon being his bullock team.



Ron Ingham continued animal fun combined with cricket in T. Spencer's "How MacDougal Topped The Score". I think it should be "Pincher" the dog, who should be the hero in this one. He made the score possible. "Bobbie of Tobruk" was in a totally different, serious vein with its doggie hero, Bobbie during WWII. A human war hero followed - "Dear Mum" by LC Moresby. Wonderfully relaxed and confident reciting Ron. Thank you.

Barry Higgins started his Syd Hopkinson bracket with the Fremantle Docker's dilemma, much in the news lately. "Dockers and Insects Match" had an animal theme with the mighty centipede as the hero of the game. Barry's follow up poems "Funny Dunny" and "Love Your Dentist", made us wince and laugh about our human foibles.

John Hayes introduced a new one from a Bruce Rock teenager he has taught Called "Going Hunting" a funny but sad poem from the fox's point of view, who ended up a mat for the front door. The reality is that not all animals are welcome. Human stupidity has certainly introduced some very unwelcome customers to Australia. Perhaps we should drink to that one with "Nat's Home Brew", John's very potent 2nd poem on the perils of brewing your own.

John's "Kayini Land" shows what a good researcher and historian John is. Maybe this trip coming he will find out about the aboriginal people that used to live in this Hammersley area as well as bringing us back a new poem about the last camel train. Bon Voyage Anne and John.

Our lady poets were very individual tonight and decided to comment on the strange ways of the two-legged human animal. When I reflect on human behaviour I wonder how we ever ended up at the top of the food chain. Intelligence, you say, humbug! I think I'll reincarnate as a beloved pet.



Connie Herbert demonstrated my point exactly with a poem called "True Justice" based on a true occurrence, Two country JP's had a stouch at week's end in the pub. They "tried" each other on the Monday, with dire results. Recited with Connie's usual flair. Thanks Connie

Poetry Page

Profile of Ron Evans

Ron's love of the Australian Bush and all that goes with it, started at an early age, on holidays at a relative's farm at Burracoppin in the wheatbelt. He learnt "The Play" by CJ Dennis in 1958 for an Easter tournament.

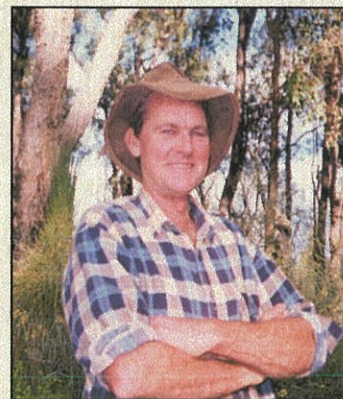
He really became hooked on Bush Poetry in Australia house in London in 1964, where he found a copy of A.B. Paterson's "The Man From Snowy River and other Verses". He has found great pleasure in the CAY's at the Raffles and meeting with other poets. Ron is the proud father of two daughters and is "Pop" to two girls and a boy. He looks forward to passing on the traditional works to them. As of September, Ron and his partner Pam will be moving to Mayanup (Boyup Brook area) and will become active down there when the Country & Western Festival is on, as well as catching up with Brian Gale.

Those Names

The shearers sat in the firelight, hearty and hale and strong,
 After a hard day's shearing, passing the joke along:
 The "ringer" that shored a hundred, as they never were shorn before,
 And the novice, who toiling bravely, had tommy-hawked half a score,
 The tar boy, the cook and the slushy, the sweeper that swept the board,
 The picker upper and the penner, with the rest of the shearing horde.
 These were the men from the inland station where the skies like a furnace glow,
 And the men from the Snowy River, the land of the frozen snow;

There were swarthy Queensland drovers who reckoned all land by miles,
 The farmer's son from the Murray, where many a vineyard smiles.
 They started at telling stories when they wearied of cards and games,
 And to give these stories flavour they threw in some local names,
 Then a man from the bleak Monaro, away on the tableland,
 He fixed his eyes on the ceiling and he started to play his hand.
 He told them of Adjintoombong, where the pine clad mountains freeze,
 And the weight of snow in summer breaks branches off the trees,
 And, as he warmed to the business, he let them have it strong-
 Nimitybell, Conargo, Wheeo, Bongongolong;
 He lingered over them fondly, because they recalled to mind
 A thought of the old bush homestead, and the girl that he left behind.

Then the shearers all sat silent as a man in the corner rose;
 Said he "I've traveled a plenty but never heard names like those.
 Out in the western Districts, out on the Castlereagh
 Most of the names are easy - short for a man to say.
 You've heard of Mungrybambone and the Gundabluey pine,
 Quambone, Eunonyhareenyha, Wee Waa and Buntijo-"
 But the rest of the shearers stopped him: "For the sake of your jaw, go slow,
 If you reckon those names are short ones where such names prevail,
 Just try to remember some long ones before you begin the tale."
 And the man from the Western District, though never a word he said,
 Just winked with his dexter eyelid, and then he retired to bed.



Ron Evans

Cay Meeting - Continued

Tess Stubbs. Her first poem was based on the sad fact of "Divorce", but written with sensitivity and a very different twist, as the new 'non-couple' leave the courthouse to go to visit their grandchild. The second was a nostalgic poem on the demise of the "Baker's Cart" delivering bread. A reminiscence of childhood, a lament of the personal service that has disappeared, along with the beautiful talking horse that pulled the cart.

Rosa Calenza recited her newest poem inspired by our poetry workshop, "The Day That Football Hit Her Head". This was a true poem about the perils of creative childminding. That was quite a wack Rosa; hope you are OK now.

The finalé was delivered by **Peter Nettleton**, who did a collective rendition of J. O'Brien's "Said Hanrahan". (This could be the beginning of an association ritual, perhaps). It was followed by a final farting er sorry, parting poem that seems to be a Nettleton special from his uni. days. My mother both blushed and laughed at this one.

As the majority of poems this evening mentioned animals in one way or another I would like to share a true story about a superb animal Geoff and I have just met. He is a border collie, called Wilbur, who *really* reads minds. He is loved by both his owners, half of South Perth's children and our local café patrons. We were so impressed with this wonderful creature that he inspired us to write our dog poems about him and Lady. Through this incident Geoff and I have subsequently met his owners who are lovely people as well. They kindly allowed me to have his picture and publish the poem.

A Chance Meeting With Wilbur

I sipped my café idly, whilst toying with some bread ...
The rays of autumn sunshine gracing soft upon my head

I spied a dog just waiting there
Just sitting by his master's chair

My thought were slowly drifting, as he turned up by my side ...
He offered up a friendly paw, his brown eyes open wide

He had a most appealing stare
And a showman's natural flair

Hello! my name is Wilbur, and I'm nearly 8 yrs old ...
I don't mean to be a nuisance, but may I be so bold

I sensed your thought from over there
And knew at once you'd really care

I'm a well bred border collie, an example to my race ...
Could I regale you with a tale, or charm you with my grace ?

We hope you all enjoyed the evening. See you for the Grand Finale of the CAY
Year, on the AGM and Paterson / Lawson Night on the 6th July.

Cheers, **Michelle**

Perhaps some tidbits we could share
Whilst you just write about my ... 'flair'

We could chat of canine wisdom... (I'll stay here in my place)
Of black and white relations and the troubles that we face.

Then his master moved his chair
And so we settled our affairs

I've enjoyed our friendly chatting but I hear my master's call
We're going for a little walk, - perhaps we'll throw a ball

I hope that's all you need to know
Maybe a treat before I go?

© Michelle Sorrell



AGENDA Annual General Meeting Raffles Hotel on Friday 6th July 2001 at 6 p.m.

1. OPENING
2. TO BE PRESENT- Peter Nettleton, Lorelie Tacoma, Barry Higgins, Joan Macneall
Geoff Bebb, Michelle Sorrell, Phyllis Tobin, Trevor Cooksley, and all members.
3. APOLOGIES - Rusty Christensen, Kay Stehn, (committee members)
Brendan Parker, Gayle Batten, Ben Mainstone
4. MINUTES OF LAST A.G.M. 7th July 2000
5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Peter Nettleton
6. TREASURER'S REPORT – Geoff Bebb
7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Nominations have been received as follows –

President	Lorelie Tacoma	Committee	Rusty Christensen
Vice President	Connie Herbert	Committee	Barry Higgins
Treasurer / Editor	Geoff Bebb	Committee	Rod Lee
Secretary	Michelle Sorrell	Committee	Kerry Lee
Committee	Peter Nettleton	Committee	Joan Macneall

8. GENERAL BUSINESS –

- Price Rise – Newsletter Costs
- Members Absences from Committee Meetings

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10. CLOSE OF MEETING

**Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Paterson
1864-1941**

Born at Narrambla, near Orange NSW on 17 February 1864, the eldest of a family of seven children, both parents coming from pioneering families. He grew up on the family sheep station and maintained a deep affection for the bush and its people all his life.

He was sent to school in Sydney where he showed early promise as a writer as well as an all-round sportsman. On leaving school, Paterson was articled to a Sydney solicitor and was himself admitted to practice on 28 August 1886.

About the same time he embarked on his writing career and his first published poem was *El Mahdi to the Australian Troops*, which appeared in the *Bulletin* on 28 February 1885, followed by *The Bushfire* under the *nom de plume* 'The Banjo'. Both are described as political satires, but they do display his range of interests and in particular, give some insight into his feelings of "compassion for his fellow man and his distaste for the insensitivity of the age."

In 1888 he published *Old Pardon, the Son of Reprieve*, giving notice of what was yet to come and with *Clancy of the Overflow* in 1889 he established his reputation as a fine balladist. That reputation was set in concrete with the publication of *The Man from Snowy River*, probably his best-known poem, in 1890, the same year his father died. Paterson gave up his law practice in 1900 in order to go to South Africa as a war correspondent. Thereafter, he made his living and his reputation from his writing.



**Henry Lawson
1867-1922**

Born in a tent at Grenfell near Mudgee NSW to Louisa (*nee* Albury), daughter of an English immigrant bush worker and a young Norwegian seaman turned gold-digger named Niels Larsen. Growing up his family moved from bush town to mining town, but despite an erratic education and suffering deafness from the age of 9, he showed an early aptitude for observational writing. Left school at 16 and worked as a labourer for his father until his parents separated and he joined his mother (by then a political publicist) living and working in Sydney.

Lawson published his first verse 'Song of the Republic' in the *Bulletin* in 1887. He followed it with his first short story 'His Father's Mate' in 1888, just before his father died. He moved to WA in 1890, spending time in Coolgardie, Albany and Fremantle., however he was disappointed with what WA had to offer and ended up back in Sydney.

He began a very prolific period, writing mainly for the *Bulletin*, a contemporary and sometime rival of AB ("Banjo") Paterson. They both purported to depict life in the outback, Paterson from a romantic-comic point of view, Lawson from a poignant-sardonic one.

Sent to Bourke in 1892 to gather material, he faced the worst of conditions the land had to offer and returned to Sydney with a wealth of stories and a deeply scarred psyche. Deserting drought and depression in Australia, he went off to NZ but returned to Sydney in less than a year. He married Bertha Bredt in 1896 who had literary and political connections. They settled in WA for a short while before again trying NZ in 1897 where he taught at a Maori school. Returning to Sydney in 1898 he soon grew restless and headed off to try his art in England. His writing flourished but his marriage suffered and they returned to Australia in 1902, separating shortly thereafter.

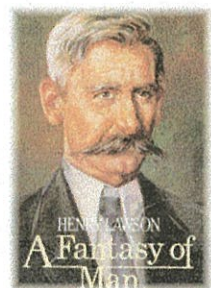
His work began to decline, as did his health and mental stability. From about 1905, he was frequently institutionalised for failure to maintain his family and alcoholism. His work was mainly erratic verse. He was supported to a large extent by old friends and colleagues but seemed to be on an inexorable decline.

During World War I, he gave his written support to the armed forces and was regarded as inspirational, despite the fact that he was a homeless, penniless vagrant on the streets of Sydney. Almost too late, the governments of the day acknowledged his circumstances by providing him with a special pension.

Suffered a stroke in 1921 but kept working on his memoirs until his death in Melbourne in 1922. His last published poem was "Tom Mutch's Political Pyjamas" in 1921 He was given a state funeral, the first writer to be afforded one. His eulogy was given by Prime Minister Hughes, who described him as "...the poet of Australia, the minstrel of the people".

Lawson was responsible for an impressive body of work, consisting of some 312 poems, 187 short stories and numerous articles and letters.

Both Biographies by courtesy of Peter Nettleton





Profiles of Nominees for 2001- 2002 Committee of WABP&YSA

A number of people have suggested we run a profile of nominees for the coming committee elections so that members may be more informed when voting. Here are the candidates as at June 12 2001.

Peter Nettleton: Immediate Past President 2000-2001. Peter is a lawyer in his day job. He has many interests outside of this demanding work. Doing a BA (Theatre/Drama) and an MA (Laws) is just some of these. Peter has been in the Association for 6 yrs. Loves and promotes the arts generally. He is a guitarist, singer, actor and member of a number of theatre and arts groups.



Rusty Christensen: Founder and inaugural President of WABPA 1995. Busily "retired", he promotes Bush Poetry and "Keeping the Aussie Tradition Alive" at every opportunity throughout his community, in the country and overseas. "Citizen of The Year" in 2001. In his 'spare time' he does therapeutic massage in his home clinic. His business card reads Bush Poet, Balladeer and Story Teller. Rusty started the Pioneer Lakes Environmental Education Centre about 1995 as well.



Lorelie Tacoma: Inaugural Secretary (for 4yrs.) of WABPA. A tireless and very efficient community worker. Also officially "retired", Lorelie is President of the Winthrop/Murdoch Group and Vice President of the National Seniors Melville Branch and Probis Association of WA.. Lorelie has fostered the liaison between our Association and Melville City Council which has granted us much support since our inception in 1995.



Barry Higgins: Committee, Member since 1997. Another busy retiree. Apart from being a dedicated member of the committee, who always sees opportunities, he has an eye for details that enhance our Association. He has manned our very successful product table for the entire year. He is President of the Two Rocks Yanchep Residents Association and promotes our Association at their writer's group and in the community at large. Barry is a member of 12 community groups.

Joan Macneall: Committee Member for 6yrs. Joan helps run T&J Boiler Services as well as being a passionate WABP member who has promoted and run our "Sandgroppers Children Competitions" for 3 yrs. She actively promotes Bush Poetry in schools and various community organisations and is determined that poetry will carry on via our young people. Joan also runs cooking (cake decorating) classes.

Joan is too shy to give us a picture of herself!!

Geoff Bebb: Treasurer and Editor 2000-2001. Also "retired", Geoff uses his 40 years of computer expertise to keep this double job running smoothly for the Association. He also promotes the Association by reciting at community venues and shares his writing skills by running workshops for the Association. He is still Chairman of his international company Surpac Software and Mentor for a number of small businesses around the country.



Michelle Sorrell: Secretary and member of the editorial team 2000-2001. Part-time teacher and graphic designer. Michelle combines her newly discovered computer skills and artistic tendencies with information gathered from members via the secretarial position to produce the Newsletter. She assists Geoff with workshops and is discovering her latent writing talents to produce poetry and colourful columns in the newsletter.

Kerry Lee: Association Member since 2000. Kerry is the accountant for the Lees' family furniture business. Kerry writes and promotes Bush poetry in the community and schools. She also runs a hobby farm on the outskirts of Perth which is a rich source of her written material. The family is also very involved in their local church where they recite their poetry.



Rod Lee: Association Member since 2000. Rod is the owner/manager of the family's furniture business. He also assists Kerry on the farm (though he may deny this for literary purposes). Rod came second in the "others competition" Wireless Hill" 2000. Rod also writes his own poetry, and recites with gusto and passion. Rod's mum is in Roethorpe village and they often do recitals there as well as in the country. Rod and Kerry love the bush and camping.



Connie Herbert: Inaugural Member. Connie was featured in the June magazine. She is a life member and federal Past President of the Society of Women's Writers. Connie is also founder of "The Jolly Jotting Company of Writers". And State president of the "Penguin Club". She has been a columnist for "The Stammers Local News" and "The Rockware Journal" UK. Her expertise will be greatly appreciated by the WABPA. Connie is a prolific writer and winner of many literary awards, including the inaugural "Yarn Spinning" prize in the Bush Poets Australia Day Challenge in 1996.

WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Assoc Inc

Dear Edna

**Your YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION is now due.
To continue to receive this Newsletter,
please send your Subs (see Editorial) to**

**Hon Treasurer
Unit 1, 8 Hill St
South Perth WA 6151**

WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc

Coming Events

Date	Event	Co-ordinator
5 th July 2001	Last Day for discounted subscriptions \$10	Geoff Bebb, Unit 1, 8 Hill St. South Perth
6 th July 2001	AGM of BPYSA and Paterson and Lawson Night. 6pm for AGM 7:30 pm Paterson / Lawson	Michelle Sorrell Ph: 9367 4963 Barry Higgins - coordinator Paterson/Lawson 9407 5311
8 th July 2001	Derby Boab Festival	P.O. Box 87 Derby WA 6728 PH. 08 9193 10
5 th August 2001	Spring in the Valley – prelude at Chapel Farm, Middle. Swan 1 – 4pm.	Michelle Sorrell Ph: 9367 4963
Sept 20 th 2001	Royal Show – Poets wanted for Breakfast	Michelle Sorrell Ph: 9367 4963
15 th October 2001	Final entries for Children's Competition (member's children welcome)	Joan Macneall 9451 6008 H 9451 3330 W
30 th November 2001	Final entries for adult Written Competition 2002 Wireless Hill Challenge	Geoff Bebb – Competition Judge 9367 4963

Return Address

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