

\$2.50

WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners

Newsletter : January 2003

Wireless Hill 2003 Finalists

Novice Others Poetry

Leigh Matthews
Ron Ingham
John Hayes
Peter Drayton

Open Others Poetry

Kerry lee
Rusty Christensen
Rod Lee

Open Yarn Spinners

Leigh Matthews
Rod Lee
Peter Nettleton
Rusty Christensen

Novice Own Poetry

John Hayes
Kerry Lee
Syd Hopkinson
Peter Nettleton

Open Own Poetry

Rod Lee
Leigh Matthews
* Yealering Heat

See winners details P. 2



Come and Cheer them on at Wireless Hill
Australia Day 2003

"Come All Ye" at the Raffles Hotel

cnr Canning Highway and Canning Beach Rd Applecross

(Upstairs in The River Room)

Next Meeting Friday 3/01/2003 at 7:30pm

Lorelie's Letters



The contestants for the 2003 Championships have been decided and no doubt they are all practising feverishly for the big day on **Sunday 26th January at Wireless Hill, Ardross at 1.30 p.m.** The five category trophies will be brought from the Heritage Room at the Melville City Council and will be on display before being awarded to the winners in the different categories by Her Worship the Mayor of Melville, Katie Mair, at 4 p.m. Judges Gary Cerie, Bill McAtee and Charles Goodrich are prepared. Former judge Val Mazalevskis is recovering well from her bypass operation and hopes to be in the audience.

You will notice on the yarnspinning trophy that the first engraving in 1996 is for **Connie Herbert**. I am saddened to report that Connie died suddenly on Monday 9th December. Her last performance was "Fire at Ross's Farm" at the Second Heat on the Friday night previously. At the heat, Geoff Bebb and Peter Nettleton referred to Connie as an "icon" to which Connie quickly retorted, "More like a one-eyed Con."

Her funeral was held at Fremantle on 20th December. **Peter Capp** wrote and recited a special poem for her which was very moving. This is printed elsewhere in this Newsletter. You might like to re-read the pieces about Connie in our July 2001 and August 2002 Newsletters. She was one of our 'real characters' and will be greatly missed.

* We'd like to welcome two new competitors to our Wireless Hill Challenge this year - from Yealering. They are the winners of our inaugural Country Heat. **Tania Parker** won the Yarn Spinners section and **Tim Heffernen** won the Own Poetry section. We hope to have more country heats from different districts in the future.

Remind all your friends and family to come to the Wireless Hill Championship on Sunday 26th January. Bring a picnic for lunch, a chair and be ready for some first class entertainment. In the meantime remember the January **COME ALL YE at the Raffles on 3rd January at 7.30 p.m.** (For committee members there will be a meeting at 6.30 p.m.)

Lorelie

Michelle's Musings



Dear members,

Welcome to the final newsletter for this year 2002. I hope that you have enjoyed reading your articles and poems and that in the New Year you will continue to send in some equally interesting and varied contributions for us all to read.

This Year of the Outback 2002 certainly has been a momentous year. I hope that Australia's collective recognition of its own unique history, culture and environment continues in the years to come and doesn't stop here. On a number of levels, we certainly need to be aware of what to preserve and equally what to discard in an ever changing world.

For my small contribution I certainly have enjoyed producing this publication this year and look forward to seeing it continue its high standard and I hope improve that standard over 2003. Our membership reached an all time high of 183 in June this year, with a momentary drop to 83 in July before people remembered to rejoin. Now we are back up to 95 and steadily rising again. As your contribution, please remember to pass on the benefits of being in the association to friends who may have lapsed and introduce new ones to the delights of Bush Poetry in 2003.

I am disappointed that we overlooked staging a Written Poetry Competition this year. The foundation of our new poetry is written these days instead of being passed on by word of mouth around a campfire. We need new material. With this end in mind please keep writing both for the magazine and also for a pool of poems which may be considered for a competition during next year, perhaps even before Wireless Hill. The Committee is considering its format at meetings early in the new year.

Happy New Year 2003

Cheers,
Michelle

Come All Ye December 2

2nd Heat of the Wireless Hill Challenge

We had a line up of 9 more brave souls to enter the Wireless Hill Challenge. **Geoff Bebb** came out his European retirement to be our International MC for the evening. Some of the entrants commented that Geoff said such nice things about them as an introduction that they didn't recognise themselves and had to be called up twice.

Thanks Geoff, the most positive gentleman I have ever met (even with a hefty bias on my part) I think you'd have to agree Geoff is a terrific MC. We also missed **Ron Evans** who was apparently out digging ditches way into the night.

We had a very good evening with about 70 people in attendance. Our youngest member was John and Anne's grandson who held a spot on the floor with his self propelled stroller.....

To carry on with the talented Hayes family we had **John Hayes** in full regalia with 3 full costume changes:- the first was in the **Novice Others Category** with "Second Class Wait Here" by Lawson (one of the longest poems I've ever heard; which John said took him about 500 repetitions to learn). Followed by "Cheque Mate" (complete with illegal shearer's comb) for the **Own Poetry Category** and lastly, in spaghetti outfit, as Frederic Fettuccini of the Futuristic Farmers Federation for a great yarn to start the **Open Yarn Spinners Category**. Would you believe John's innovative ideas were in the papers this week. Really! (See article on page 5).

Barry Higgins also competed in the **Novice Others Poetry Category** with Syd Hopkinson's "Illiterate Stockman" and the poor bloke caught in the mop bucket "Ouch!" by Blue the Shearer. (That one always makes me wince! Ouch alright!) But it seems to be an old favourite, judging by the audience's reaction. Is it the human penchant for delighting in finding another bloke who is even more stupid than ourselves?

Ron Ingham recited a poem by this prolific 'Anonymous' writer about a rather nasty 'sheila' who tried to rob a poor defenceless boozed up shearer. She got her comeuppance from a native Gwyder River Redback Spider. Justice was done - I'm so glad of that. Sorry, I didn't get the name of the poem Ron. Could you pass it on to us next meeting?

In the **Own Poetry Category** we also heard **Syd Hopkinson** with a terrific new poem "Under the Weather"; about the impossible station names and the poor ABC weatherpersons' difficulty with those - to the point of getting RSI of the tongue. (Watch out insurers here comes some possible new claims from the poets as well). He also gave us a humorous poem about Charlie "The Working Man" or should I say non-working man. I think that he and Rod Lee must be in Cahoots!

Kerry Lee recited her own "Tribute to Sunny" straight from the heart upon the death of her marvellous chestnut mare and friend of 15yrs. As Geoff said Kerry's standard of writing and reciting poetry has just skyrocketed in the last few years. The crowd agreed with great applause. I'm also biased - being a lady and loving horses Kerry's got my vote.

In the **Open Own Category** for previous winners we had **Leigh Matthews** with another tragic horse poem commemorating the 16,000 horses that were the final victims of War in the Middle East. Hope history doesn't repeat itself in the next few months Leigh. Thank you for a very sensitive rendition.

Connie Herbert - our own icon recited the classic and very topical "Fire at Ross' Farm" by Lawson. I hope the people of NSW have a better Christmas and that the fires abate for them. Here's a personal message to Connie "Connie, watching over the Bushies, Aussie battlers and the Poets, you may have some influence here, considering how passionately you always recited this one. Put in a good word eh!"

Beth Scott entered the **Novice Own Category** with a traveller's vision of our outback. Beth relates how sweet home is after a terrific trip to Alaska. I also miss the mountains and greenery but you're right, there is magic in this place. Beth also gave us a yarn for the **Open Yarn Spinners** as a 'vegetarian activist'; about a 19yr old dog and her Fremantle animals, "Dog Run Over". This was so convincing, knowing Beth's penchant for animals, that I'm still not sure whether it was true or not. Is it Beth?

Other Yarners for the **Open Yarn Spinners Category** followed in profusion. We very seldom have so many. I've already mentioned John and Beth so I shall go on to **Rod Lee** who reminded us of his hard work with the TV remote control on the 'Lee Selection in Oakford' while poor Kerry was out in her night gown, wellies and trusty tech screws dealing with a cyclone in the middle of the night. You can tell whose side I'm on (more feminist bias) but a darn good yarn Rod.

Rod also recited Jack Drakes "Visitors From Hell" starring Woody the Cattle Dog. This is \$5000 Woman's Weekly prize-winner. Keep writing WA Poets you can do as well.

Peter Nettleton gave us his new Ned Kelly Yarn. I didn't know about this new Fred Kelly brother before. You may have started a rumour that will expand the legend and be known for centuries to come Peter. Good One.

Geoff then finished off with an equally amazing yarn about a real Swiss (forger) 'Ned Kelly' called Farinet which we came across in our latest travels to the wine district of the Vallais in Switzerland. Funny how these legends are universal; we all love a renegade.

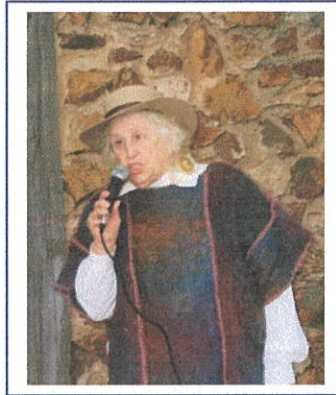
Rusty Christensen gave us a final Year of the Outback Yarn about Rex the dog who was greatly misunderstood - or rather his name was misunderstood. . Now I know why I like cats. Well enough bias from me lets go to the next page to see what the judges said:

Cheers,

Michelle

Connie Herbert

There's a Poet's breakfast up in heaven,
 Connie Herbert's on her way
 Banjo will greet her, and Henry will meet her
 And Dorothea will have a say
 But Connie will smile and after a while
 Will offer to do a poem
 Leonard Teale will say, Connie Giday
 Please make yourself at home
 I'm sure one year you served me a beer
 When I was down on earth
 In Freo I think I had a drink
 Or maybe in downtown Perth



The love of people and the spoken word
 Were two of Connie's many traits
 A special individual woman
 With lots of genuine mates
 You survived hard times and nearly death
 But you kept it all together
 Some of us should have seen you more
 We thought you'd live forever
 But your turn came too early
 Though you were passionate till the end
 Goodbye and thank you Connie Herbert
 Our wonderful Australian friend.

© Peter Capp



Vale Connie Herbert 25.11.1924 – 9.12.2002

On behalf of The WA Bush Poets Association I would like to offer our deepest sympathy to Connie's friends and family.

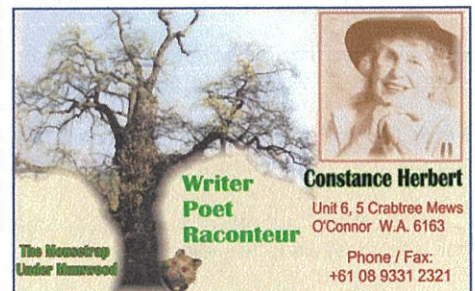
Constance Herbert

For these people, like myself, who only met Connie a recently upon joining the Bush Poets, here is a small fraction of her life story gleaned from members:-

Connie was born in Pemberton to Irish parents living on the "Group Settlement Scheme". Early life was extremely hard for this lady whom, as the 5th child of 14 children, was entrusted with the care of her siblings at a very early age until she was 21 so that her mother could earn extra money during the depression to keep food on the table. These formative years forged the basis of a very varied and interesting future. Multi-talented Connie could turn her hand to anything. Combine this trait with a flair for writing, theatre, an Irish sense of humour and a love of people and you create a very unique and endearing "Aussie" character.

Some of the Fremantle members of the Bush Poets remember Connie entertaining her siblings in a makeshift theatre in her backyard, as a young girl. She used her theatrical and writing talents to sail through a kaleidoscope of work and life experiences. Here's just a few :- living in a tent in Albany until it burnt down, being an extra in "The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll", working as a stewardess on the SS Orcades caring for children from England, station cook at Gascoyne Junction, teaching Public Speaking to health workers as a secretary at the Aboriginal Health Programme. Connie also shared her writing talents as an active member of many writing groups and societies in WA over many years.

I knew her in her later years as our extremely philosophical and flamboyant lady vice-president who lived in The Mousetrap under Mumwood (that's another story) and made up the rich tapestry of characters in the WA Bush Poets Association.



**Toodlepip Connie,
 The Ed.**

Wickerpin - Using its Noodle

John Hayes' yarn has indeed become topical. The Shire of Wickerpin wants farmers to use their noodle. Farmers devastated by drought are checking out the feasibility of setting up a local, organic Hokkein noodle processing plant. It would use local organic wheat being grown by farmers.

The fresh noodles would satisfy a growing local and overseas market requiring increasingly popular organic foods. The plant would operate along similar marketing lines to the wineries. Tourists would be welcome to view and buy. This would therefore create employment on several levels.

Thanks John for the idea and the West Australian for the article. Picture: Facey Group Executive Officer and study coordinator Sarah Miles.



Letter to the Editor - response to article by Peter Nettleton December 2002 issue

"I'm responding to the article on P5 of the December newsletter herein Peter Nettleton deplores the accent of Americanism to the detriment of 'Australianism' (if there is such a word?)

After the 1st World War, my aunt in Manchester answered the call for Englishwomen to emigrate to Australia. She settled in Bondi Beach, married 3 times, came once to London to see me and my family and then returned to Australia, confessing that "now I am an Australian". However even in those far off days, she was of the opinion that Australia was losing its identity, individuality and succumbing to everything American. She was staunchly Australian And terribly upset even then, at that trend and hoped that in some way, it would be reversed.

Here's then to the Bush Poets, their cohorts and their efforts".

Sincerely,
Evie

2002 Year of the Outback

The certificate below was presented to the WA Bush Poets at the finale of this commemorative year by Bruce Campbell MBE, Founder and Chairman of the 2002 Year of the Outback Council.



A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION PRESENTED TO

Wireless Hill Challenge 2002

IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS
UNITING AUSTRALIANS TO FOCUS UNDIVIDED ATTENTION ON OUTBACK AUSTRALIA;
ITS IMMENSE DIVERSITY, ITS EXTRAORDINARY PAST AND ITS VITAL ROLE IN OUR FUTURE.



Bruce Campbell
Bruce Campbell MBE
Founder and Chairman



2002 Year of the Outback

Lets carry on the good work with Wireless Hill Challenge 2003.

Under The Weather

Being young and starry eyed, I always wished to be
 A radio announcer, with the A.B.C.
 By doing things like pulling strings, and brushing up my grammar
 I got the job that promised me, a life of style and glamour
 But now that I have started, I find it dull and painful
 They've given me the rotten job, of reading out the rainfall.
 Pronouncing names of country towns soon fixed my constipation
 But the horrors really started when, I got to outback stations.

So now, when Northern rivers run, I soon became distraught
 I'd sooner take a sickie than read the rain report.
 Cooralya and Midadalya are not too bad, I tell ya
 Binthalya is a little worse, but what of Coolcalalaya?
 Wondinong and Yallalaong, I can handle fairly well
 But Woolgorong and Woogalong and Billabalong are Hell
 Lalla Rookh and Boolathanna, I read in stylish manner
 And go to pieces once again, on Mundabullanganna!

And then there are the tricky ones, where the game is very dodgy
 Why spell a place as Wydgee, and then pronounce it Wodji?
 Recently one error just made me feel so silly
 How could I know Belele, should rhyme with Milly Milly?
 Having mastered Weelarrana, I got stuck on Moogooree
 And the answer, when I asked for help, was "go to Boogooree"
 Booylgoo and Oobagooma, each time are a little harder
 And I always get the stutters, when I gat to Calwynyardah.

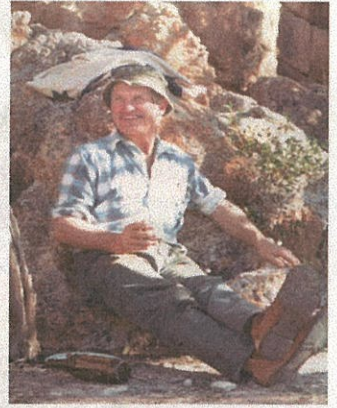
Yesterday Koonmarra, Jingemarra, Thundelarra
 Yinnietharra, Pippingarra, Youangarra, Berringarra
 Gnaraloo. Ningaloo, Wonganoo and Minderoo
 Bullardoo, Boodanoo, Boolaloo and Boologooroo
 Mooloogool, Edaggee, Coodardy, Doorawarrah
 Jeedamyah, Eudamullah, and there'll be worse tomorrah.
 Station names are crazy, invented just to fool ya
 And anyway who cares about one mil. At Meeragoolia!

With names like Innouendy, Millbillillie, Kirkalocka
 Is it any wonder that I'm going of my rocker
 The tension is unbearable; I'm bound to get the shakes
 All those people listening, just to laugh at my mistakes.
 Now I know the job's so bad, and I've been made a bunny
 My union's working hard for me, demanding extra money
 My brow is hot, my nerves are shot, when it rains up North I cry
 And because of all those station names, my tongue has R.S.I. !

© By Syd Hopkinson

This poem beautifully combines two sources of inspiration for Syd - a love of the beauty of the Australian Bush and the quirky humour, which its frustrations instill.

Syd forwarded this stunning photograph of Kirkalocka Station in full bloom with paper flowers.



Trig Station Names

Let me tell of the fate of the Trigs in this State,
Whose names are now fast disappearing:
It's all part of a need, for computers can't read,
And a number is all that you're hearing.

Now Surveyors all know that the names have to go
To prevent any further confusion;
But I somehow suspect, that the mind will reject
The new-numbering system's intrusion.

For we'll all feel the loss of such great names as Gosse,
Binda Boudna or Cooyooraparie
For those numbers, you'll find, won't inspire your mind
Like Myntabyng, Viks or Safari.

And the Trig Name men find satisfaction in Lyne,
Bull ya cobbie or Yarrabolina,
Whilst a name such as Finke, would annoy those that think
The numerical system a winner.

A numerical king, will hear Wallabyng,
Or Cudyea and be aggravated
But the name men can see, worth in Yandandaree
And in names like the Knoll or Serrated.

Paisley, Whitefield and Hiern will all go in their turn,
With Coondambo, Bulpara and Purvis
And it seems such a shame, that we'll lose all those names
That have given such excellent service

All the number men scorn Hogarth Hill, Peppercorn,
Lookout, Eba or Balta bal tanna
But pray what do they see in K763
As compared to the name Wirricanna,

It just doesn't seem wise that the name, Hallam Rise,
Coober Pedy, Heartbreak and Derf-ecce
Won't be there for us all, to help us recall
Stirling trips like the Kingoonya Recce

Numbers can't call to mind all the stories you'll find
Of the ruggedness out there at Lepa
Of the climb at Woorong (and you're sure to be wrong)
When recalling which number is steeper

And the new numbers mean that we're losing Sabine,
Al yu kurlpy, Red Lake and Compeera
And Wingilpin it's true, will be going out too
As the new number system comes nearer

All our links with the past, will be severed at last
When the new number system's completed
For in few years you'll find, that the names from your mind
Unconsciously will be deleted.

© Geoff Bebb



I picked Geoff's poem as it had some remarkable similarities to Syd Hopkinson's poem. Despite both being written from vastly different work experiences in the Australian outback.

Geoff's inspiration came from his days as a surveyor in and around Woomera Rocket Range.



Psssst! This is a top-secret photograph of the Europa missile being fired from Launcher 6A. Readers are requested to view the picture with their eyes closed.

Dear readers,

I desperately need really top quality poems for the coming newsletters in 2003. These should have:-

- Australian content in the form of experiences and people of Australia (not necessarily about the outback).
- Very good internal rhythm as well as rhyme.
- Be of a wholesome nature suitable for a family magazine.
- Be topical or thematic if possible

Thanks Ed.

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

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

Many Thanks

The Editor

WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc

Coming Events

Date	Event	Co-ordinator
Sun 26 th January 2003	Wireless Hill Challenge	Lorelie Tacoma – 9310 1500
Fri 7 th February 2003	Come All Ye at the Raffles	TBA
Sat 15 th February 2003	Wandering Brook Winery Dave, Rod and Kerry Lee performing	Rod Lee 9397 0409

Return Address

The Editor
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

Syd Hopkinson

94 Kingsway
NEDLANDS WA 6009