

\$2.50

# WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners

Newsletter : March 2002

## Welcome to our new members from Australia Day



Our membership count is now 129. We now have members in every State but, alas, not in the Northern Territory where there are bound to be some fabulous bush poets. (Perhaps some of our members know some Territorians who may be interested in joining our association to rectify this gap). If you wish to purchase some extra newsletters to introduce new members we would be only too glad to print some for you.

Please contact any of our committee members with any query or suggestion to make our association better than ever.

## Committee Contacts Year 2001 – 2002

Name	Address	Position	Phone	E-Mail
Lorelie Tacoma	16 Gratwick Tce Murdoch, WA 6150	President	9310 1500	tacoma@tpg.com.au
Peter Nettleton	3 Ashwood PI South Lake, WA 6164	Past-President	9417 8663	stinger@iinet.net.au
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Geoff Bebb	Unit 1, 8 Hill St South Perth, WA 6151	Treasurer	9367 4963	geoff@surpac.com
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Rod Lee	160 Blair Road Oakford, WA 6113	Committee	9397 0409	daverodkerry@bigpond.com
Kerry Lee	160 Blair Road Oakford, WA 6113	Committee	9397 0409	daverodkerry@bigpond.com
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Joan Macneall	23 Streatham St Beckenham, WA 6107	Committee	9451 6008	macneall1@iinet.net.au
Constance Herbert	Unit 6, 5 Crabtree Mews O'Connor, WA 6163	Vice President	9331 2321	
Barry Higgins	140 Bernard Road Carabooda, WA 6033	Committee	9407 5311	

**"Come All Ye" at the Raffles Hotel**

cnr Canning Highway and Canning Beach Rd Applecross

**(Upstairs in The River Room)**

**Next Meeting Friday 1/03/2002 at 7:30pm**



## Lorelie's Letters



March is going to be one of the most exciting months in 2002. First of all, the Come all Ye on Friday 1st March, upstairs at the Raffles Hotel at 7.30 p.m. We hope to welcome some more new performers and writers.

On Friday 15th March at 7.30 p.m. Milton Taylor will be our special guest at the new Piney Lakes Environment Centre on Leach Highway, Winthrop, between Murdoch Drive and Riseley Street, south side. Look for the pink concrete entrance statement, go down the road and park on the right. Milton is one of Australia's most highly regarded Bush Poets, currently performing in the U.S. Admission \$5 and \$3 as usual.

The following evening, Rod and Kerry Lee are inviting us all to their property at 160 Blair Road, Oakford from 4.30 p.m. onwards for Poets, Yarn spinners and musicians and another opportunity to meet and hear Milton Taylor. (See details below) Phone Rod or Kerry on 9397.0409 (home) or 9493.4333 (work). Bring your own Chair, Barbecue meat and picnic food. It will be a real fun event.

Rod is organising a Poets' Workshop with Milton on Wednesday 20th March at 7.30 p.m. to enable our local poets to learn from Milton's experience. \$5 each. Venue to be advised. Contact Rod at the Come All Ye, or phone him on the numbers above.

The weekend at Marybrook Winery at Vasse, out of Busselton, is shaping up with top line performers Leigh Matthews, Rusty Christensen, Rod and Kerry Lee and Peter Nettleton supporting Milton Taylor. Sunday morning breakfast will be an "open-mike" when others too will entertain all the early birds. Phone Aub or Jan House on 9755.1143 for tickets at \$15 each. Food and drinks and Marybrook wines are available for purchase for the evening and the breakfast.

We will keep you informed of Year of the Outback events as they come to hand.

Have fun.

**Lorelie.**

### **Milton Taylor Night (1)**

**Piney Lakes Environment Centre on Leach Highway, Winthrop  
Friday 15th March at 7.30 p.m.**

"Reflections of Australia"

Featuring Milton Taylor Australia's Reigning Poet

M-C Kel Watkins (also Performing)

Special Guest Artist Kerry Lee  
with cameo performances from Rod Lee and Rusty Christensen

BYO drinks and nibbles



### **Milton Taylor Night (2)**

**160 Blair Road, Oakford  
from 4.30 p.m. onwards**

**A light Hearted celebration of our ability to laugh at ourselves**

**TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM FRIDAY NIGHT – No repeat performances, no repeat artists**

BYO drinks and nibbles (Tickets at \$5 each must be pre-booked.)

### **Next Special Event**

Come all Ye Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at Raffles Hotel

**Featuring our very own Peter Capp**

Supporting Artists by Invitation only





## CAY for February 2002

We had 65 people on the night. About half were non-members. Many had been stimulated to come by our Wireless Hill Challenge. Five new members joined on the spot. Welcome these new people. I especially love to hear of the couple, who happened to come up by accident from the entertainment downstairs, were persuaded to stay a while and enjoy the show. They must have really liked the show for they joined the association that evening! Our CAY evenings are well-hidden secrets which deserve to be better advertised and attended. In fact "Secrets" was the title of two of our poems.

**Kerry Lee**, who was our "L-Plate" MC for the night, did such a fantastic job that Anne Hayes gave her a "P-Plate" half way through the evening.

We had a couple of new and near new faces as well this evening - all ladies. These were **Maureen Cunningham** from Hyden with her "Ode to Cocky", **Wendy Walton** with "Laughing Eyes" – her entry in the written competition for Wireless Hill 2002, **Sandra Mc Alpine** with her "Basic Blues" and **Trish Joyce** with her "Blue Moon Skiers".

**Val Read**, our Written Competition Winner for 2002, who up to now rarely recites her wonderful poems, also braved the nerves and recited her "Country Wives". Thank you, ladies for your courage in getting up in front of an audience to recite. I hope you enjoyed the exhilaration of performing beyond the nerves. It's lovely to get new blood and fresh material for our association.

Our more seasoned performers were (in order of appearance) – **Geoff Bebb, Joan Macneall, Arthur Leggett, John Hayes, Leigh Matthews, Connie Herbert, Rusty Christensen and Rod Lee**. We usually have an unwritten theme that runs through the evening as if by magic, however it was very obscure tonight.

We had the classics such as "Man from Ironbark", "The Man from Snowy River" and "How McDougall Topped the Score" and "The Bush Christening".

We had contemporary poems from our own authors such as Joan's. "Unknown Heroines", Connie's "Everything's Bloody North of 28", Geoff's "Itchy" (a true story) Arthur's "Masonic Poems" and "Old Soldiers" and John's "Australian History" and "I'm Sorry". There were also some ripping yarns from Leigh.

We had contemporary others' poems such as Bob Magor's "Catastrophe" and Murray Hartin's "Turbulence" to really wake us up before going home. These were repeated-on-demand performances from the greats of Wireless Hill 2002.

We in fact had a pot-pourri of performances, which produced a stimulating, entertaining evening.. See you next month. Keep poeting in this great Year of the Outback 2002.

Cheers, Michelle



Mary is panning for gold in the 'Outback'

### **Written For Many A Rover**

Many of our members are flung far and wide across this land, each with their own remarkable stories, many write, but may never perform. One such member is **Mary McGregor-Craigie**. Mary is a prominent grazier and farmer in Broadwater, Vasse. She wrote a poem upon her return from one of her Aussie Safaris. Her message epitomises the Year of the Outback. Here's an excerpt from her poem :-

*There' nothing like a mulga campfire when the desert night cools down,  
You'll find a world of contrasts when you break your ties with town,  
There's nothing like a river pool, or the sun's reflections on a tropic sea,  
And you'll need no taps with meters where nature's luxuries are free.*

© **Mary McGregor August**

### **A Declaration from Joan Macneall**

Joan is a lady of many talents, being one of our dedicated committee members, a poet, a business lady and a cake decorator. She would also like to bring to the attention of our members that she is a **Commissioner of Declarations** and as such she can provide her services as a legal witness to documents. If this service would be helpful to you at any time, please give her a call on **9451 6008**.





## WIRELESS HILL CHALLENGE 2002

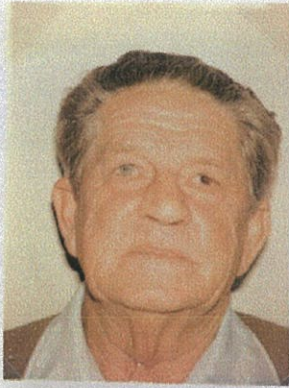


Australia Day was another memorable occasion for the WA Bush Poets. On a very gentle summer's day between 300-400 people attended our annual event at Wireless Hill. We were one of the first celebrants of the Year of the Outback, in WA, which was attended by coordinator **Barry O'Sullivan**. Her Worship the Mayor, **Katie Mair**, was also made an honorary member of our association on this day. Thanks to all our participants and organizers.









Don was runner-up, by a whisker, at our Wireless Hill Challenge 2002, with this poem, "As I Was Told". Here is the story behind his poem which I thought was about his own family:-

*"I was fiddling with some lines of prose on my W/P but in no way could I get them to gel. It was supposed to be a poem about my family - but a story I heard from an Albany friend sounded so much more interesting that I incorporated that.*

*And the result, after many revisions, I sent to the BP&YS for their editor's opinion".*

Well, what a RESULT Don, thanks for submitting this magnificent poem.

Ed.

## As I Was Told

When our family first came to Australia,  
Meaning dad's mother's parents I guess,  
I was told that grandma wore corsets,  
Buttoned boots and bustle no less,  
Neath her skirts I was told she wore pant-lets,  
Long of leg with lace down below,  
While above them in multiple layers'  
Skirts were set just like sails in a blow.

Well it didn't take long for great grandma,  
To toss bustle and corsets away,  
For she found them to be "most restrictive",  
When she rode on her horse every day.  
Then the next thing to go was her skirt length,  
And she raised that six inches or more,  
Being tired of the dust and the rubbish,  
It gathered when sweeping the floor,

Next she turned her attention to grandad,  
By poo-pooing his wide cuffs and coat,  
And explained in un-lady-like-language,  
What she thought of the stubborn old goat.  
"Those old clothes were not made for this country,  
And though new ones may cost you a 'bob',  
You'd be far better off wearing 'bo-yangs',  
And not dressed like some snide English snob".

Well, great grandad puffed up like a blowfish,  
Kind of gulping and gasping for air,  
And while glaring at her through his glasses,  
He thinks, 'Maybe she's got something there'.  
So she fits him out just like a 'bushman',  
With stout boots and a hat hung with corks,  
Plus a red flannel shirt with two pockets,  
While the clerk in the clothes shop just gawks.

And when grandma first sights this new turnout,  
She's amazed at the change in her man,  
For the clothes make him look quite authentic,  
Not at all like some aged Dapper Dan.  
They then purchased some land up in Queensland,  
To grow cane and a groundnut or two,  
Ending up with a fine strapping family,  
Of eight kids and an old dog named Blue.

And their children did well at their schooling,  
Becoming doctors and lawyers and such,  
While the girls married men who were wealthy  
And were blessed with the gold making touch.  
Then the land that the old folk had farmed on,  
Was surveyed and then split into lots,  
To become the first town in all Queensland,  
That was privately owned by the Scotts.

And that's how my family got started,  
When they came to this land long ago,  
To escape these cold winters in Scotland,  
With it's rains and it's sleet and it's snow.  
To a land where the sun's always shining,  
With it's people deemed equal at birth,  
Where a man can go farming or mining,  
And so prove to himself what he's worth.

© Don Hamilton





### Yarns, Ballads, Past and Present.

Adam Lindsay Gordon, who was a cousin to Lord Byron, was credited with the earliest ballads that were identifiably Australian. This was at a time of adequate print media, even in those early colonial days. So our ballad tradition is really a literary tradition. I doubt we ever really had an oral ballad tradition in any real sense of the word. At least, not when compared with genres such as the Scottish Border Ballads.

So what are we doing with ballads today? Just having fun really. Maybe we are perpetuating the art of recitation. Certainly not "saving" our ballad tradition. That is very safe in the hands of the publishers, as evidenced by a trip to any "Australiana" section of any good bookshop. That is not to say that perpetuating the tradition of recitation is any less important. I think, mostly though, we are having fun, playing with something we love.

And where is, and was, the Yarn? It is plain, as Bill said in his letter of last month, that the companionship in the outback and around the campfires and along the beaches was largely cemented by talking. We all do it. Get four people together and have one tell a 'snake tale', and you will quickly get another two (or more) from the others. The academics and theorists can argue over whether we are telling stories or yarning to each other.

I always had the suspicion that yarning incorporated a little stretching of the truth. At least, that's how I differentiate between a story and a yarn. One of the snake tales may be a story and the next one may be a yarn. It is a thin line but a listener can usually tell when a well polished and oft told story crosses the line. Like a stone in a river it is polished with each telling until, eventually, the teller would have a problem remembering where the line was between the truth and the embellishment in their own story.

I think we romanticise about the legendary yarnspinners, outdoing each other with Speewah tales, getting taller and taller as each person in the circle (around the campfire?) takes up the baton. The reality is that this was probably a rare event. I would like to think that there are people out there that could tell some Elsewhere tales with an air that indicated it was second nature to them.

Ask Peter Capp, Rod Lee, Bill McAtee and anyone else who has 'yarned' for us. We get an idea, a joke, a snippet or a line from somewhere, join it to a few more, put it in a bag, shake it up, and as we pour it out, refine it and – hey presto – we are telling a yarn. Not really perpetuating an old Australian tradition, just having fun really.

Kel Watkins



### Milton Taylor Visit – Recitation Workshop

A recitation workshop for poets with Milton Taylor is proposed for **Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> March**. For only \$5 per head this would be an invaluable experience to work with a real professional. Venue TBA. Please call **Rod Lee** if interested **ASAP on Ph: 9397 0409**

### The Third Annual Family Picnic and Ghost Story Concert

**Date:** Saturday March 9th 2002      **Time:** Picnic starts at 6.30pm - as usual after dark  
**Cost:** Adults \$10.00 Family \$20.00 Children \$5.00      (Pay at the gate)  
**Venue:** The practice fairway of the Point Walter Golf Course, Bicton  
**Bring:** Your picnic and a blanket (to hide under!)  
**Tellers:** Final list

**Anne E Stewart** would need no introduction on the eastern seaboard but there may be many here who have not been graced by the brilliance of her storytelling. Anne is, to put it bluntly, bloody good!

**Cecily Scutt** of course!. A favourite of both concerts and a 'must have' performer.

**Glenn B Swift** who was a delight last year and making a most welcome return

**Neville Blampey** who has it on good authority that there are some urban Werewolves around the Wester Suburbs

**Christina Ray** poet, writer and storyteller is well known for her verbal skills and cheerful smile. Christina will be a welcome addition to this year's group of tellers.

Please give **Kel Watkins** a call on **0412 488131** if interested.

### **Bowman Furniture Industries P/L**



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Maddington WA 6109**

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**Fax: 9493 4933**

**Email: daverodkerry@bigpond.com**



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

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

**Many Thanks**

**Geoff Bebb - Editor**

## **WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc**

### **Coming Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Co-ordinator</b>
1- 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2002	Nannup Festival	<b>Lorelie Tacoma</b> – 9310 1500
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> March 2002	Ghost Story and Picnic Night	<b>Kel Watkins</b> - 04 1248 8131
Frid 15 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2002	Special Come All Ye Meeting at Piney Lake Reserve Melville, featuring <b>Milton Taylor</b> from East Coast and supporting Local Poets	<b>Rod Lee</b> – 9493 4333 (Performers by invitation only)
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar 2002	Marybrook Winery poets evening and breakfast.	<b>Lorelie Tacoma</b> - 9310 1500 (Performers by invitation only)
31 March 2002	Bronze Swagman Written Comp entries close	<b>Louise Dean</b> – Ph/fax: <b>(07) 4741 5041</b>
Frid 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2002	Special Come All Ye Meeting Featuring Peter Capp and supporting Local Poets	<b>Barry Higgins</b> - 94075311
20-24 <sup>th</sup> June 2002	Waltzing Matilda Bush Poetry Awards	
Frid 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2002	AGM and Traditional Poetry Night	<b>To Be Advised</b>

### **Return Address**

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