

\$2.00

WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners



Newsletter : January 2001

Wireless Hill Australia Day Challenge 2000 Results

Poets' Own Work

- | | |
|-----|------------------|
| 1st | Keith Lethbridge |
| 2nd | Peter Capp |
| 3rd | Geoff Bebb |

Yarn Spinners

- | | |
|-----|------------------|
| 1st | Peter Capp |
| 2nd | Keith Lethbridge |
| 3rd | Peter Nettleton |

Poets' Other's Works

- | | |
|-----|------------------|
| 1st | Keith Lethbridge |
| 2nd | Rod Lee |
| 3rd | Geoff Bebb |

Adult Written Competition

- | | |
|--------|------------|
| Winner | Geoff Bebb |
|--------|------------|

"Come All Ye" gatherings at the Raffles Hotel
(Upstairs in the River Room)

Next Meeting Friday 2/02/2001 at 7:30pm



AROUND THE TRAPS with the Top Dog



G'Day and welcome to the second century of Federation. All major historic milestones deserve to be commemorated in art and I think our art form is particularly apt. I am sure I am preaching to the converted when I say that we should be even more pro-active this year than we have been in the past.

We already have some major events to look forward to this year – Vasse in March, Greenough in April, probable country heats later in the year – but still I would like you spies out there to keep me and the committee informed of other events that we might have input into. I am thinking particularly of those of you who belong to other organisations, which have parallel or complimentary aims and objectives.

Thanks again to all concerned for the smoothest running (and hence most enjoyable) Australia Day Challenge yet. Congratulations to not only the winners but to all who competed - it's not whether.. etc...you know?

Finally, let me reiterate the statement I made in my closing address on Australia Day - that henceforth we will be positively discriminating at all of our events in favour of those performers who take the trouble to learn their stuff, whether it be original or otherwise. That way we can show both the performers and the audience that we really care about them.

Catchya,
Stinger



Editorial

Well another Wireless Hill Australia Day Challenge has been and gone. From the feedback I received on the day and also by telephone afterwards, everyone seemed to enjoy the day and agreed that there was a very high standard of presentation. The committee will be hoping that next year will attract an even greater number of participants, to challenge and keep the "Old Stalwarts" honest.

It is intended that Keith Lethbridge, John Hayes, I will attempt to run a Poetry Writing workshop in May this year. The aim will be to teach the basics of Rhythm and Rhyme, which are the backbone of Traditional Bush Poetry. It is relatively easy to write poems, which rhyme but it is quite another thing to write poems that have a natural rhythm, which enables anyone to be able to perform the work. If you would be interested in such a workshop, please register your interest with me (9367 4963), as soon as possible.

Geoff Bebb

Come All Ye Report January 2001

We were all pleasantly surprised to see an excellent roll-up to the first CAY of the new millenium. Forty eight members and non-members, represented a wonderful growth in numbers when compared with the 15 that attended the same meeting last year. The meeting's co-ordinator and M-C was **Geoff Bebb**. As Michelle had some urgent family business to attend to, this report is the combined efforts of **Lorelie** and **Geoff**.

As with a number of our CAY evenings, this evening assumed its own unplanned theme, which was "Nostalgia". Whether this was because of our attention being drawn to the Centenary of Federation, no one was able to say, but the theme was very evident.

Kerry Lee got the ball rolling by reciting a Richard Magophin's "From The Lantern" a very nostalgic piece recalling station life of yesteryear. **Kel Watkins** took us to Elsewhere to hear how Merv was arrested for eating a platypus. This was somehow linked to the '74 drought where conditions were so bad that Merv's family ate the front lawn.

Connie Herbert kept the nostalgic theme going with a dramatic presentation of Henry Lawson's "The Fire at Ross's Farm". Everyone was moved by the story and its eloquent exposition. Nice to hear a Lawson poem. **John Hayes** gave a fluid rendition of his own "The King and Queen of Hearts", a nostalgic look at his love for his parents, two 'Aussie Battlers'.

Rusty Christensen stepped up to recite Bob Magor's "Who Gives the Bride Away", which Rusty does with great passion – you'd almost think he was the bride's father. This was followed by **Sid Hopkinson** with his own "Touch and Go", a look at reality in the life of a shearer in the Murchison in 1934. The first segment was completed by **Geoff**, who recited Paterson's "Saltbush Bill JP".

Rod Lee started the second segment, with a convoluted yarn about Dingo Dave in pursuit of Nullabor Chickens, which he assured us, were the direct result of the atomic explosions at Maralinga, which propelled Emus at supersonic speed across the desert. The atomic tests certainly stirred up nostalgic but perhaps not very pleasant memories for the M-C and Beth Scott.

John Hayes told us two short poems of his own "Till the Soil" and "Working in the Wheatbelt", both moving accounts of life in the bush. This was followed by a **Bob Wake** who read us Des Berry's "Trials of a Sheepdog", told from the sheepdog's point of view. Anyone, who has ever owned a cattle dog, would relate to this tale.

Anne Hayes read two of husband John's poems, "Dream Artist", which reflected nature's own canvas and "Cricket" which had a laugh at the army of armchair cricket "experts". **Barry Higgins** related the tale of the "Illiterate Stockman" from the pen of Barry's favourite author, Syd Hopkinson. One can only imagine what a wallet, one and a half inches thick with bank notes, would be worth today. The segment was concluded by a visitor **Val** who read us "Over The Wine", by Victor Daly – a nostalgic look back through the eyes of an old man.

The evening's final segment was kicked-off by **Beth Scott's** hilarious yarn about taking her ex shopping in Fremantle. She swears that this is a true story – I bet the taxi drivers (all three of them) have all dined out on that story. **Rusty** followed with "Grandma's Washing Machine" by Bob Magor, a story we have heard many times from Rusty, who never fails to impress with the amount of stuff he is able to memorise.

Rod Lee contributed to the nostalgia with Paterson's "A Bush Christening", which prompted him to tell us of a recent visit to Raethorpe Nursing Home where a gathering of the residents mostly in their 70s and 80s had never heard Paterson's great poems. Amazing!!

Then by far the highlight of the evening, was **Connie Herbert's** presentation of her own piece "From the Beginning" a poem written about Federation and just as relevant today. Connie's sense of drama, her timing her use of language, is a dead giveaway to her long experience in the theatre. The Committee has invited Connie to perform this poem at Wireless Hill.

Joan Macneall read us a piece from the local paper "All is Secure on Christmas Day", followed by Bob Wake who read a second poem from Des Berry, "Warner's Lament" about the cruel fickleness of footy fans and journalists. The evening was concluded by **Tess Stubbs**, who read us one of her own poems, "The Tale of a Mermaid".



Poetry Page

Profile of Phyllis Tobin

Born in Fremantle. Lived first three years in the goldfields at Spargoville where father worked as an engine driver at mine. Grew up in Fremantle, attending East Fremantle Primary School and Princess May Girls High School. During the last year at school attended classes in the grand old buildings of the Fremantle Art Centre. Left school with commercial qualifications and always worked in that field, mainly for General Motors-Holden in Mosman Park prior to children, and for nine years at the Melville City Council after children were all at school.

Married Neil Abbott from East Fremantle in 1963 and have lived ever since in Applecross and then Ardross for now nearly 33 years. My three children grew up in Ardross but both daughters now live in Fremantle and my son and his wife in Geraldton.

I was widowed in 1987 only four weeks after starting work at MCC. There I met Trevor and we tied the knot in 1990. Fortunately Trevor is also a fan of bush poetry. We enjoy long rides on the Harley and the occasional campervanning tour (so far entirely within Australia).

Because of my role as Mayor's Secretary at Melville I was aware of the WABPA from its inception, but was hooked after attending the Wireless Hill event in 1997. It has been interesting watching the organisation grow and sincere thanks to all the performers for keeping us entertained.

The Dash

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend
 He referred to the date on her tombstone, from the beginning to the end.
 He noted that first came her date of birth and he spoke the following date with tears
 But he said what mattered most of all, was the dash between those years. 1900---1970

For that dash represents all the time that she spent alive on earth
 And now only those who loved her, know what that little line is worth.
 For it matters not, how much we own the house, the cars, the cash.
 What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard, are there things you'd like to change?
 For you never know how much time is left, that can still be rearranged.
 If I could just slow down enough to consider what's true and real,
 And always try to understand the way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger, and show appreciation more
 And love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.
 If we treat each other with respect, and more often wear a smile
 Remembering that this special dash might only last a little while.

So when your Eulogy's being read with your life's actions to rehash
 Would you be proud of the things they say about how you spent your dash

Author Unknown

2001 Australia Day Challenge

We were very blessed with excellent weather – temperature in mid 20s' and a nice sea breeze to enhance this magnificent venue. A crowd of between 350-400 came along to see the show. Rusty kept the day precisely on schedule with a very professional M-C performance. (We'd expect nothing less from the Citizen of the Year).

The standard of the Own Poetry segment was very high with very little separating all three place-getters. It was great to see Beth Scott and Maisie Davey appearing for the first time as finalists in this section. The variety of poetry in this section is very encouraging from the Association's point of view. Congratulations to Cobber on another masterly display.

One can only stand in awe at the wonderful word usage that Peter Capp can weave into a yarn. His word associations and persistent play on words had everyone doubled up with laughter. Well done Peter for another award winning performance.

The standard of the School Children's competition was quite high, with the quality of Allen Gill's bush poem being outstanding. Everyone truly admired his very professional recovery after the mental blank. Well done Joan Macneall for organising this section.

The audience was simply blown away by the quality of the "Other's" section. The judges reported that there was only 3 points separating the top three places in a total of 300. The audience response and later comments certainly confirmed this judgement.

A million thanks to all those who assisted during the day. Especially we'd like to thank Trevor Cooksley for the sound, Peter Capp for the stage backdrop, the Video and TV crews, Joan Macneall for 'personning' the product table, Keith Lethbridge for judging the Written competition, Michelle Sorrell for the organisation, Syd Hopkinson the time keeper and the three able judges – Gary Cerie, Brendon Parker and Bill McAtee. Thanks Connie for your Centenary poem - very aptly suited for the occasion Lastly we'd like to thank Rusty, our expert M-C.

Speedy Recovery to Lorelie Tacoma

We were all disappointed that, for the first time, our Vice President Lorelie was not able to be present, at the Australia Day Challenge. She'd been laid low by an illness while travelling down south. We know she was with us in spirit and we all wish her a speedy recovery.

Marybrook Vineyards & Winery 16th, 17th, 18th March 2001

All poets interested in this event **please contact Rusty immediately** as the final program has to be in place soon.

The program is to be heavily promoted as the "Alternate Leeuwin Festival" by Aub House who is also on the Dunsborough Festival Committee. There is a suggestion of turning the event into an annual one and the Poets and Yarn Spinners could turn it into a heat of State Championships.

There are sponsors for the event, accommodation available, and possibly some remuneration as well as the publicity for poets, naturally. The venue is exquisite as well as the wine.



Poetry Page

Profile of John Hayes

John was born in Kalgoorlie in 1937, son of a miner and lived in Boulder until the age of eleven, when the family went to Esperance until 1950 before again moving to Perth.

It was whilst attending the Esperance Primary School that Headmaster John Rintoul stirred his interest in Australian ballads, especially those of AB. Patterson.

He fell in love with country life and the farm; he farmed at Ballidu and Kalannie. Many people of those areas will quickly recognise some of those named in the ballads. There is equal interest with those of the goldfields and the Lake Grace area where other yarns were born.

It was really when his daughter Kerry asked him to write a poem for school that his writing of poetry began and within six weeks John had written thirty poems.

In 1984 his first book 'Till the Soil' was published and a cassette was also produced. Ten years later his second book 'Fireside Reflections' was produced in which one hundred poems for one hundred years are portrayed. Fireside Reflections deals with poems from early farming right through to the present - day dealing with the problems of modern society. Many ballads are about the incidents and people of that time - a great deal of his writing comes from his life experiences.

Whilst travelling around the countryside John recites his poetry at campfires and barbecues. He has attended many charity organisations to recite for people and has had a very good response to his work. He has recorded with the Australian Broad Casting Radio Stations for the Country Hour and other special features.

LAND OF MY HEART.

Land of my heart my country, from mulga to the sea
Great dividing ranges, stately forest trees,
Rugged ironstone ridges span across the North
of raging river torrent, or arid water-course.

Wide is the land - my country, of many moods and faces
lonely outback stations, far forgotten places
Spinifex and saltbush, stillness of the night
kangaroo and emu, black cockatoos in flight.

Along it's shores my country, tempest by the sea
thunder-clouds and lightning, rains are flooding free
Wattle of the spring-time, scented sweet the gum
flowers in abundance, coast to cattle run.

From the highest peak my country, across the mountains tall
flowing deep her rivers beside the water-fall.
Through the distant valleys, toward the rolling plain
with herds of sheep and cattle, seas of golden grain.

This is my land my country, amid her cities throng
from the isolated settler, to her hundred thousands strong
Her blazing sun by day, her nights a crystal dome
may this land - my country, forever be my home.

John Hayes ©

Obituary – Joan Strange

Joan Strange [Nee Budd] was born at Cunderdin in the Western Australia wheatbelt. She lived in Merredin until she became ill. She then moved to Kalgoorlie to be with her daughter and family. Joan was married with three sons and five grandchildren. She had been writing since her early schooldays. She has won competitions over the years in literary competitions. Her poetry, which was nostalgia of the old days, was in the form of ballads, which dealt with the joys of life and problems in every day living in the country.

John and I knew Joan when she lived in Merredin. She was a real lady and very modest person, who loved to help other people. She was well known for her charity work in the seniors citizens in Merredin and outlying districts. She travelled all over the Australia reciting her poetry and winning many awards for her work.

The Bush Poetry will sadly miss her and her efforts in promoting bush poetry. The following poem was written by Joan for a friend of hers, but reflects how John and I feel about Joan.

Anne and John Hayes.

Good Bye

I said goodbye to Shirley, my friend of sixty years;
My aching heart was heavy, my vision blurred with tears.
My mind was full of memories of childhood days gone by,
When suddenly, a rainbow bright was dancing in the sky.

It shimmered like her laughter against those leaden skies;
The rainbow seemed to smile at me just like her smiling eyes.
It lifted up my spirits and eased away my pain;
I gazed upon the rainbow and saw my friend again.

© Joan Strange

Rusty Christensen named Melville Citizen of the Year

At a breakfast ceremony at Wireless Hill on Australia Day, our founding President Rusty Christensen was named Melville Citizen of the Year. All of the Members of the Bush Poets and yarn Spinners Association join with me in congratulating Rusty on a very worthy award.

Arthur Leggett receives the Australian Senior Achievers Award 2000

We are also pleased to announce that Arthur Leggett received this award for his community activities and life style for older people as well as his mentorship in High Schools in 2000. Well done Arthur!!

Committee Contacts Year 2000 – 2001

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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

Geoff Bebb - Editor

Calendar of Events for Australian Bush Poets Association,

In June 2000, we joined the Australian Bush Poets Association, a.k.a. ABPA, so as to keep in touch with events that are happening in other parts of Australia. Here is a brief calendar of their events to the end of January 2001. We will keep this updated so that if you are interested you may enter their competitions or just attend.

2001	
Feb 16-18	Chinchilla Melon Festival Poet's breakfast, field day. Information 07 4668 9564
Mar 10	Urunga Bush Poets Showcase: Golf Club dinner and show. Ph. Maureen 02 6568 5269 or Keith 02 6655 6835
Mar 15-18	John O'Brien Bush Festival: Poets brekky Sat,Sun Ph. Julie Briggs 1800 672392
Mar 16-18	Dunedoo Bush Poetry Festival: Ph. Marie Hensley bh:02 63 75 1975 ah:02 63755 1015 Yackandandah Folk Festival: contact 02 60269224 Email :yackfolk@netc.net.au
Mar 17-18	High Country Poets: Stanthorpe Qld. Cash prize for original and traditional Ph; Jack 07 4683 7169
Mar 18	Country Music Rush Bush Poetry competition: Jondaryan Woolshed Qld. Ph. Dell 07 4635 6429 ah
Mar 30	Closing date : Eulo Mother's Day written comp.: Ph. Janine 07 4655 4862 or Helen 07 4655 4849

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