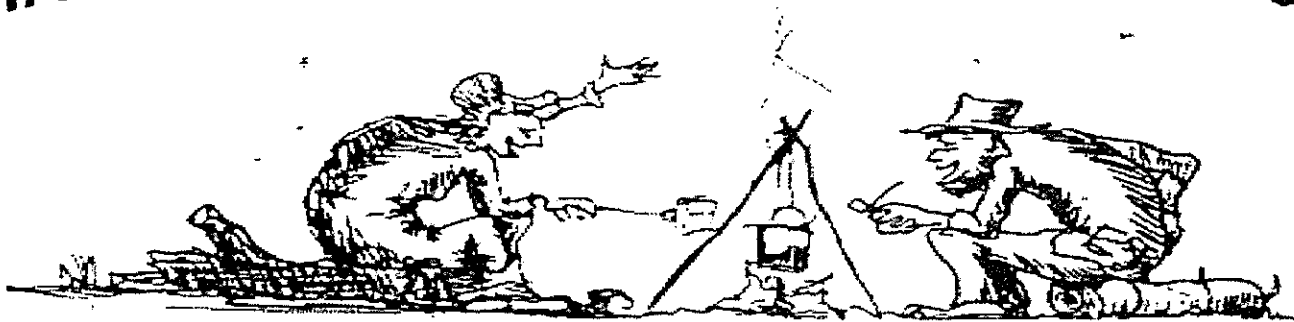


# WA BUSH POETS & YARNSPINNERS



Return Address: The Secretary, Michelle Sorrell, Unit 1, 8 Hill Street, South Perth, WA 6151

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Newsletter April, 2000

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As we prepare for our third Annual General Meeting, and our troupe of bush poets spreads the word, more and more folk are enjoying the revival of rhyming verse. People are heard to say "Yes, I heard this wonderful poem on the radio just the other day, and it made me recall ..." Acquaintances of mine are finding dusty, old school books of verse and quoting a favourite line with fingers tapping out rhythm on the tabletop. Young children have brought much folded and crumpled paper for me to read. Flushed with pride, and doubting the worth of the poem they have written, but still delighted to have completed the rhyme.

I guess what I am saying to each of you, is keep up the good work. If you enjoy being entertained by our poets, then be in the audience. If you write, keep writing. If you are brave enough to perform, do so. If you are clever enough to learn the words written by poets who have gone before us, then let the words be heard. If you wish to practice, share your work with the lonely or the frail. If you are able to encourage a youngster to read a poem, recite a rhyme or write a couplet, help them.

If you have time to spare, or ideas to share, speak to our new Secretary, Michelle Sorrell. She can be found at the door of the Riverview Room at the Raffles on the First Friday of the month sorting things out for the "Come All Ye" gathering. Or write her a letter (see return address above).

And remember too, this newsletter is the only contact some members have with our association. We are all interested in what you are up to, so let us know what is happening in your circle. Drop a note to me, for inclusion in a future newsletter.

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## DROPPINGS FROM THE BOSS COCKY

With the resignation of our inaugural secretary Lorelie Tacoma, the Association has lost a valuable asset with her consistent and methodical handling of the most important position in any organization. Her decision to stand aside was precipitated by her involvement and assuming office in a couple of other active groups.

On behalf of all members a big "Thank You, Lorelie". We wish you all the very best in your new endeavours.

All is not lost as Lorelie is continuing as an active member of our growing group and knowing her she will apply herself diligently to any task she takes on. I might add that in her usual efficient way she has lined up a replacement for this rewarding (not financially) position in the form of another efficient lady Michelle Sorrell (phone: 9367 4763). Michelle is Geoff Bebb's partner.

It is timely to remind members that ALL positions on the executive from President to committee members become vacant and must be filled at the A.G.M. ON July 7<sup>th</sup>. We have something good going so let's make an effort to make it that little bit better, don't keep leaving it to the hardy annuals, fresh blood and ideas are vital to stimulate any organization.

By the time you receive this, I will be in Queensland – perfect one day, under water the next – first to Tenterfield (NSW) to a bush poetry event before leaving from Toowoomba on a 14 day safari organized by our good friend Carmel Randle's daughter Jay – as Judy puts it "on secret bush poets' business".

The tour takes in Winton over Easter for the Qantas Waltzing Matilda Bush Poets Awards, then on to Charters Towers for another bush poetry competition before having two relaxing days on Great Keppel Island, then returning to Toowoomba (it's tough, but someone has to do it).

The "First Friday Come All Yees" are getting better all the time, the one in April was interesting as the standard is getting better and more even as performers gain confidence, it is still the best show in town for the price – tell your friends.

The Boss Cocky      A.K.A. Rusty Christensen

WHAT A FUN NIGHT OUT!

*see you at the Bush Poets "Come All Ye" gatherings at the Raffles Hotel  
(Upstairs in the Riverview Room)*

*Bring the family, bring your friends. Bring a few nibbles and buy a drink there.  
Every FIRST Friday of the month through 2000*

## **The Boy and The Kangaroo**

by **Graham Pearce**

Winning Poem Senior Section (12-13 years)

Sandgroper 2000 Written Poetry Competition

In the arid desert near Coolgardie,  
There was a young lad called Billy Hardy.  
On a very hot and sunny morning,  
The water pump ruptured with no warning.  
There was no water for the station hands,  
None for the jumbucks that graze on the sands.  
He had to act fast to stop a great thirst,  
A huge kangaroo through the desert burst.

The kangaroo hopped up and licked his nose,  
It said "G'day, mate, can I solve your woes?"  
"You can solve my plight right now," Billy said,  
I need some water or I will be dead.  
"That is very dire," said the kangaroo,  
"So I'll finish eating, then I'll help you."  
They trekked for miles,  
"Look! There's a billabong!"  
Yelled Billy, as he burst into a song.

Billy filled his drums till his arms were sore,  
Then hit himself violently on the jaw,  
He crashed on a rock then fell to the ground.  
When he woke up to his horror he found,  
There was no water for the station hands,  
Or the big jumbucks which play in the sands.  
The water had gone in the stifling hot air,  
There wasn't a droplet, this wasn't fair.

He tried to get up but he was too weak,  
The kangaroo helped; the prospects were bleak,  
Billy slipped hard and fell flat on his face,  
He fell on a sandy and shady space.  
Billy got a massive lump on his head,  
He was dehydrated, that's why he's dead.  
Billy's kin were anxious and very sad,  
They dug a hole and buried the young lad.

Now, if you go to the desert near Coolgardie,  
In the dark, you may see Billy Hardy,  
Asking for water for the station hands,  
There will be no answer from the dry lands.  
His grave, on a hill, ten miles from the town,  
If you look hard, you may see something brown.  
Tis the grave stone of brave Billy Hardy,  
That bright young lad from the bush near Coolgardie.

## **The Clearing by Kate Ansell**

Winning Poem Junior Section (8-10 Years)

Sandgroper 2000 Written Poetry Competition

Through the clearing where nothing stirs  
And the native birds chirp away  
Where the ground is covered in prickly burrs  
And the branches of the karri sway

The kangaroo bounds  
And weaves through the trees  
Over the termite mounds  
While the waratahs bend in the breeze

The koala climbs completely unaware  
Of the dangers below its tree  
And the wombat burrows without a care  
Not knowing it should flee

As it should without a doubt  
For disturbing the quiet of the clearing  
Comes the hunters shout  
The indigenous hunters are nearing

In search of food and water  
As they hear only the droning of the bees  
They turn, in need of food to slaughter  
They are the aborigines

### Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners – Come All Ye April Meeting

April's meeting was really lively with about 50+ people present. It is always amazing and wonderful to see new faces amongst the stalwarts every meeting. We have a couple of new members to welcome this evening, **Eddie van Rinjwoud** and **Mary Craigie**.

Every meeting has its own flavour and character. I would say that this evening was predominantly full of fun. Kerry felt she had to apologise for introducing a serious poem to the multitude. Kerry's poetry needs no apologies for they are always beautifully and sensitively conceived and executed and life is always a wonderful tapestry of contrasts and colours.

**Kel Watkins** was our MC this evening. He used the opportunity to weave his tall tales into the proceedings between introductions and setting the tone for the evening. There were 9 presenters in all.

**Geoff Bebb** started the evening with Thomas Spencer's "Rum and Water". (I swear to you he doesn't drink) however you could be misled by this performance. His own work of the "Showdown with Denis O'Neill" was rendered with his usual passion. Loved the twist on the end.

**Syd Hopkins'** "Under the Weather" and "Trying it for Size" (both his own) makes us wonder about the state of matrimony sometimes. Syd's reflective laconic style really makes me think "Australia".

**Keith 'Cobber' Lethbridge** brought us a musical interlude with the harmonica and hammers and then a couple of poems about his real life experiences from his twenty first birthday onwards. While most 21sts tackle large kegs of beer, Keith was apparently wrestling a "Crocodile" and later a small plane belonging to an outback parson called "The Flying Dogma". No wonder overseas people don't believe Australia is for real.

**Rod Lee** regaled us with yarns and poetry from his Boyup Brook experience. Rod never has "Nothing to Do" when his prolific mind produces so many original poems, all with a twist or an unusual angle to them.

We had 3 new very brave and entertaining people perform for us tonight

**Courtney Thompson** read us a very letter from overseas. It was an Irish lampoon, which was so funny she had trouble reading it amongst the laughing, (hers and the audience.)

**Trevor Demmery**, all the way from Dubbo, entertained us with his two "Drunken Tales". The pub atmosphere certainly brings out the Aussie humour all over Australia. Trevor's innovative use of the microphone cord will ensure that the cord will never be the same again.

**Glen Sweet** fully involved his audience in his own yarn/legend of the "Quokkas coming to Rottnest". Can I pinch this one for my Primary classes? They would love it. Please all come back and give us some more.

It was great to see **Ron Evans** back after his hard work at Woorooloo. He has obviously also been spending a great deal of time learning new "old" Aussie classics like Patterson's "Saltbush Bill's 2<sup>nd</sup> Fight" and C J Dennis' "Mar". Wow, what a memory.

**Kerry Lee** as mentioned previously, gave us her reflective poems "Unlikely Travellers" and "Tony's Poem" showing her deep concern for the fate of our forests and her caring nature.

**Rusty Christensen** also showed his sensitive side with his rendition of Keith Lethbridge's "Cobber's Dad". Happy travelling to you Rusty.

Then it was back to the humour (not for the birds) with **David Sear's** "Blasted Crows", the bane of every farmer's life.

And **Peter Nettleton's** guitar accompanied "Jonathon Livingston Budgerigar" added more musical flavour to the evening. Kel finished this night of humour in similar vein with more hard times at "Elsewhere" and the lethal "Spider on the Gwyder". Thank you one and all. A great night that lifted our spirits. And **Peter Nettleton's** guitar accompanied "Jonathon Livingston Budgerigar" added more musical flavour to the evening. Kel finished this night of humour in similar vein with more hard times at "Elsewhere" and the lethal "Spider on the Gwyder". Thank you one and all. A great night that lifted our spirits.

## CHATTER WHILE THE BILLY BOILS

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### **News from Brian Gale, Margaret River**

At the Boyup Brook Poets Breakfast in February where our Poets were quite impressive, one among the crowd was Glenn Weiland, organizer of the Agricultural Society in Perth and also for the Royal Show. Through him, I got and invite to the opening of the Agricultural Hall of Fame, where seven people were indoctrinated into it. They got me to open the show with a poem and I chose "A Tribute to our Pioneers" and at the end closed the show with something light-hearted "Getting your Own Back", in my second book.

There are strong feelings about getting a group of Poets to perform at the Royal Show this year. The organizers said

they'd get back in touch so I'll keep you posted in this regard. I suggested we have a few mornings of it, to enable as many as possible to benefit from the opportunity. So get the Poets to keep this period on their calendar.

Rod & Kerry Lee and myself did a morning of Poetry in Bunbury recently when the Air Race was on for the ROYAL flying Doctor Service. They're great to work with. A small crowd turned up as it was not organized well, but we enjoyed it for sure, and had an evening together telling Lies.

I'm off to Norfolk Island on May 14 for 3 weeks. They hold the Country Music Festival there each year and I hope to get a bit of poetry

over, or may have to introduce it like I did in Mildura in 1994. I heard it took off after that, as there was nothing there then. Even had to pay to get on stage once, competing against a stack of singers.

I'm still working on a weekend of Camping and Poetry at Harvey Dickson's, Boyup Brook in the not too distant future. Harvey's in favour of us being there, camping on his property and using his magnificent venue to our advantage. It should work out very well, similar to the Donnelly and Albany ventures. I think we should have these get-togethers at least once or twice a year. It sure helps keep moral up.

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### **Notes from V.P. Read (Our Val from Bicton)**

I've just received Joan Strange's book "Country Calling" and it's a great book of poetry. Well worth having on your shelves. Simple, clear, poems. So easy to read, and very nostalgic of a childhood and life in the bush. To get a copy of your own, write to Joan Strange, P.O. Box 357, Merredin, WA 6415

Melville Civic Centre have offered a large room free as a meeting place for Melville Writers. Mutual support, encouragement and feedback are the aims of this new group. The location is the Garden City Library Room 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 2pm to 4pm. Three tutors will be available for assisting writers with poetry and general prose, stories and essays and family histories. Beryl has all the details, phone 9339 2858.

I'm still scanning poetry for my book (which was due out by the end of March). Everyone insists that I just give Angie the poems (all prestigious competition winners and place-getters) but I know they're not right yet. I find myself not only listening to other people reciting, or reading their work, but mentally scanning it as well. I dream scanning. Sometimes it drives me nuts. And when you find yourself scanning other people's conversation, you surely need to be debriefed. But I love it!

## BOYUP BROOK WEEKEND

A report by Brian Gale

Friday evening was the dinner and dance and I managed to put a few poems over during the meal and give a mention for the poetry gathering at the Hotel Saturday morning and Poets Breakfast on Sunday. For over four hours on Saturday morning until after 1pm, eight of us entertained a changing crowd of enthusiastic listeners. It was fun for all the poets who had a chance to try out some new material and meet old friends and some new ones. A new-comer who came out of the woodwork to join us was Bob Fraser. Rod and Kerry Lee and Chris Sadler were the four new bloods who put in a wonderful display on each day. The stalwarts of Ron Evans, Mike Davey, Arthur Leggett and myself kept the crowd wanting more, each Poet with their own individual style. It was great to see these people make the effort to support me and my heart-felt thanks once again for joining together for an event that must only get better. Rod Lee brought down his son's amplifier system, which gave the show an air of professionalism and so far I have not heard a complaint from anyone --- anywhere. Regrets from the following who hoped to make it and couldn't were Peter Capp, Stinger Nettleton, Brett Gale, Peter Blythe from Salmon Gums and Val Read. Next year of course, will be bigger and better so keep the **Third weekend in February** for this even at **Boyup Brook**. Thanks again to all my Poet Friends.

### COMING EVENTS

#### COME-ALL-YE Bush Poets & Yarnspinners

A MONTHLY GATHERING on the **FIRST FRIDAY** of Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May & June

Sit back and enjoy the entertainment or enter this non-competitive performance evening

Raffles Hotel, Canning Bridge - Upstairs in the Riverview Room

7.30pm till 10 pm

Entry for everyone \$2 at the door. No performance fee.

Bar Open - Bring your own Nibbles.

For further info and encouragement: **Rusty Christensen Tel. 9364 4491**

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