

BULLY TIN



& Yarn Spinners

..... ☆ **Next Muster** - **December 7th 2007, 7.30pm** ☆

Mt Pleasant Bowling Club, Bedford Rd, Ardross

MC for November, Rusty Christensen



December is

*Summer Silly Season School Holidays
Cards, Cooking, Christmas
Bushfires*

The Committee of the WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners wish all members and friends a very “



**Merry Christmas
and a
Healthy & Happy New Year.**

We would like to see you all at our December Muster. Why not bring along a friend or two and join us. Remember that we will have special guests, folksingers Leslie and Mike from Timetrackers.

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The Bushfire season upon us once again — Bushfires have always been a natural disaster that we, in Australia face each summer, this poem looks at a disastrous fire almost 120 years ago. .

Breaking Broken Hill

Disaster in Australia is recorded on the date,
Monday, the Sixth of November, Eighteen Eighty Eight.
A wild inferno razed the street of downtown Broken Hill,
beginning shortly after six smoke filled the air so still.
The banks and pub succumbed to flames whipped up by winds so strong,
and panic like the wildfire spread as gusts blew it along.
Attempts to save possessions were huge efforts made in vain,
the building's very tinder dry, 'twas so long since the rain.
Solicitors with documents handed them to strangers,
then rushed inside to save some more not thinking of the dangers.
The crowd, confused, all tried their best but overcome by heat,
had stumbled, then watched helplessly as fire burnt Argent Street.
Fire bells had tolled so loudly while the whistle from the mine
had screamed and shrilled incessantly. The fire raged on past nine.
By midnight Argent Street was gone, lucky no-one died.
Broken Hill was left in ashes, it's buildings had been fried.
Disaster in Australia is recorded on the date,
Monday, the Sixth of November, Eighteen Eighty Eight.

Author unknown—found on website “Suzie’s Sanctuary”

Santa Claus

Halt! Who goes there? The sentry's call
Rose on the midnight air
Above the noises of the camp,
The roll of wheels, the horses' tramp.
The challenge echoed over all—
Halt! Who goes there?

A quaint old figure clothed in white,
He bore a staff of pine,
An ivy-wreath was on his head.
'Advance, oh friend,' the sentry said,
Advance, for this is Christmas night,
And give the countersign.'

'No sign nor countersign have I,
Through many lands I roam
The whole world over far and wide,
To exiles all at Christmastide,
From those who love them tenderly
I bring a thought of home.

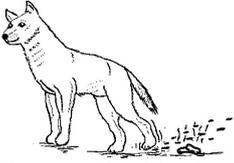
'From English brook and Scottish burn,
From cold Canadian snows,
From those far lands ye hold most dear
I bring you all a greeting here,
A frond of a New Zealand fern,
A bloom of English rose.

'From faithful wife and loving lass
I bring a wish divine,
For Christmas blessings on your head.'
'I wish you well,' the sentry said,
But here, alas! you may not pass
Without the countersign.'

He vanished—and the sentry's tramp
Re-echoed down the line.
It was not till the morning light
The soldiers knew that in the night
Old Santa Claus had come to camp
Without the countersign.

A.B. (Banjo) Paterson
Sydney Mail, Dec 24 1900
Written when a war correspondent in South Africa





Scratchings

G'day once more Members,

Well the "Silly Season" is once again upon us which brings with it going to grandkids school concerts, gift buying, Christmas Parties, visiting people we've not seen for yonks, sending out Christmas Cards to people we rarely if ever see, and

then on the big day, overindulging in expensive rich food that our doctors tell us we shouldn't eat, drinking too much and getting in a total frazzle. Perhaps it might be better if we gave it all a big miss and took a holiday away for the whole of December. Be that as it may, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and those you love all the best for the festive season and for the year to come.

Looking back at last month, it was nice to see quite a number of members put on their Melbourne Cup hat and outfits for our November Muster. The Hayes family took out the Quinella for the hat / best dressed. Congratulations to both Anne and John.

Once again we started pretty well on time due to most of the poets contacting the MC before the night. This allows the MC to have most of the organising done without having to wait to see who turns up and then rushing to arrange a programme at the last minute. On this same theme, it is no good arriving late without having previously contacted the MC and then expecting the programme to be changed to accommodate you. You will join the end of the queue.

Another problem that can have a big impact on the arranged programme is when performers take an excessive time for their performance. The time slots are calculated to average just six minutes **which includes your introduction**. While some are shorter than this, this is no excuse for others to monopolise the evening with very lengthy preambles, in some cases which have little to do with their poem or story. People taking excessive time unfortunately deprive others of having their fair share and also deprive the audience of hearing a full range of performers.

There is one situation in which performers are given extra time, and this we saw at our last muster. This is when a member or guest has been invited to come along as a Star Performer. In some cases, this will be a special act (as we have this month) or it will be a member who we rarely see, in particular, those from regional areas.

We were very fortunate last muster to have Corin Linch down from Jurien.

We also had a new innovation, compliments of Geoff Bebb who gave us a video background for his performance. And so we now see Bush Poetry entering the Multi media presentation. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have a permanent custom built venue where the equipment for such innovations could be a fixture

Again I would like to thank all those who helped make the evening a success. The performers, especially our "Star Billing" Corin Linch; Our MC for the night, Wally Williamson; those committee members doing their various roles; Edna's willing helpers; Dot for her scribing and organising the many people who we thank for getting all of the equipment packed away in record time.

Is there any regular attendee who would like to learn a bit more about the running of the Public Address System. There are times when I would like someone else to be available for adjusting microphone levels and for helping to set up the gear. If you are interested, please let me know.

Do you have any suggestions which may improve the running our Association, our performances, our finances or improving our exposure to the public. If so, we'd love hear from you, "Good Ideas" are always welcome. Perhaps you would like to be personally involved— As I've said before, It's YOUR association just as much as it is the committee's

.Regards to you all, and we'll see many of you at the December Muster

Brian Langley, President WABP&YS Assn.

Inaugural Geraldton Poetry group meeting — report by Irene Conner.

There were six of us there, and one absentee. Not sure what happened to a couple of others who said they'd come along. .

Unfortunately, the chef at the café we went to was sick that night, and they had to close the café, but they left one staff member on so we could still be there, and maybe the other people came along and saw the closed sign.

It was really just Catherine and I that recited (read, in my case!!!) some poetry, as nobody else bought any with them - not quite knowing what format the night was taking. However, hopefully there will be others next time.

All in all, it was a good night, and hopefully will now get bigger and better.



Australia Day - As usual, we will be having our annual "Bush Poetry Showcase" at Wireless Hill.

We would, as always like to make this a top class varied and extensive event. We would like to see as many seasoned performers as possible take part in what is our major public event here in Perth.

The Showcase is being coordinated by our Vice President, Tom Conway, so could all prospective performers

please contact Tom **ASAP** indicating their availability.

Daylight Saving gives us an opportunity to extend the performance a little longer than we have in the past. We are intending to start about 1.30pm and go until around 5pm. With the inclusion of some traditional music, this will give our audience the opportunity to hear from all of our highly skilled and entertaining performers. It is hoped that the weather will be bit (a lot) kinder than it was last year. If you recall, it was an extremely hot and windy day with the temperature up in the 40s.

Here's a poem of his that member, Brian Gale, sent in for Remembrance Day. Unfortunately it got missed in last month's Bully Tin, but as this month's is actually closer to the actual day, I thought it appropriate to include it here.

The Anzacs

Were you there in the Flanders fields,
as the battle raged around?
And were you ever at Tobruk,
in a foxhole underground?
Did you see the warplanes overhead,
as the bombs came raining down?
And did you head for cover
as the shrapnel flies around?
Were you there upon the beaches
with the battle at its height?
Did you hear them dying round you,
crying softly in the night?
Did you charge them with the bayonet
as you fought them hand to hand
And gave it everything you had,
as you strove to save our land?
Did you sail from your homeland,
to the sound of pipes and drum?
And did you not return again,
when the battle hymns were sung?
Or are you just a picture,
of a young man in his prime
To be remembered as he was,
until the end of time?
Yes, you fought them in the jungle,
and you fought them on the plain,
If you could live your life once more,
would you do it all again?
Now the spirit of the ANZAC
is still a memory,
And when he wrote his name in blood
for all the world to see

Yes, we'll always be indebted
to those gallant men of yore
May they always be remembered,
may we never lock the door.

Poets in the Park

It was a beautiful spring afternoon, a light breeze wafting in from the ocean. Rusty, Cobber, Grace, Wayne and Brian were all geared up to entertain the audience with a combination of old and new poetry beneath the "tree of Knowledge" where the WA Bush Poets first performed for the public. The birds were trying to compete, some even came for a closer look. The only thing that was missing was the crowd. Unfortunately spring must have taken them elsewhere for the numbers were very low, but, those few who did come thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The poets, their families and friends had a nice afternoon and we may well get a couple of new members as a result of the poetry.

Many families have their traditions at Christmas, here's one :

From **An Aussie Christmas**

by Allan Goode (2007)

(The full poem can be seen at <http://www.ipswichpoetryfeast.com.au>)

The kids were all excitable, like every year before,
They all expected lots of toys, with games and so much more,
For Christmas was a special time for friends and family,
With promises of joyous times, and lots to do and see,
A family tradition that was started way, way back,
A barbie by the river down near uncle Jimmy's shack,
With lots to eat, like steak and snags, some eggs and chicken too,
Some prawns and seafood top it off and veggies, just a few,
But this year held a special treat, to give the kids a ball,
Something that would make them squeal, and drive us up the wall,
We'd organized a jumping castle, big and bright and bold,
Just the thing to make their day and take their fun off hold,
But all at once the wind picked up, with new intensity,
And that was when we realized, what all had failed to see,
That now we were confronted with a truly awesome sight,
The red and yellow castle was attempting to take flight,
So screaming children ran in fear with mothers close in tow,
While uncle Jim and all us blokes watched castle flying low,
Then all at once it happened and it caught us all off guard,
'Cause uncle Jim had caught its rope and tried to dig in hard,
But then the wind picked up some more and pulled him in the air,
And half of us yelled, "let it go!" while others stood and stared,
Well uncle Jim's not silly, so he let go straight away,
But still he stayed attached to it, I still recall today,
The peg had hooked him through the belt; he hung there upside down,
And there was nothing we could do, below him on the ground,
The red and yellow castle made a funny shaped balloon,
And uncle Jim just dangled there, below it like a loon,
It dragged him through the tree-line and he disappeared from view,
So we quickly grabbed the nearest car, and chased him as he flew,
But luck it seemed had found him, and the castle slowed in flight,
The air was quickly emptying, A ghastly wrinkled sight,
We had to follow on the road, but found him soon enough,
He'd landed in the cattle yards within the water trough,
A splash of luck my dad would say, with just a scratch or two,
The castle looked an awful sight, all caked in cattle poo,
A pile of red and yellow streaked all over country brown,
But uncle Jim was happy just to finally be down,
The castle was the awkward thing to clean and then return,
I'm sure the smell will stay with it until they have it burned,
The barbeque had ended when the castle took to air,
But no-one was complaining, there was laughter everywhere,
The Christmas celebrations were continued through the night,
And gathered round the camp fire we recalled that silly sight,
And every year we gather and we joke at how we stared,
At poor old uncle Jimmy and his castle in the air.

Our Pioneers

Our children don't appreciate our pioneers' lives;
Men left beloved homesteads, leaving children and their wives.
They toiled in harsh conditions that we never see today,
And lined their wooden cottages with hessian bags and clay.
Years later came their families, and they too ploughed the land,
The hardships that they suffered we will never understand.

Val Read - Whistling Foxes

November Muster Wrap-up - by Dot

It was a night which had a decided EQUINESSENCE*** flavour along with the EQUINOLOGY study as we told stories and poems while we all enjoyed the examination of the EQUESTRIANTHOLOGY OF THE HORSE !!!!

Also we remembered our Fallen Heroes with suitable poems for Remembrance Day



Our Master of Ceremonies for the night was Wally Williamson dressed for the part and resplendent in a Top Hat and Tails. Some of the audience joined in the fun with a smattering of people dressed up in fashionable hats.

An Apology in last months muster where I attributed a poem from **Sylvia Rowell** as one of her own. As she wrote to me explaining that in no way could she see herself being as good a writer as Banjo's and it was one of his "By the Grey Gulf Water". After reading it, it doesn't seem like the Banjo's usual type of presentation so hence my confusion.

Our first presenter was **Brian Langley** with one of his own "Melbourne Cup" with all the hype that goes with this race, not forgetting all the silly hats and the wine, but after its all over, there's few who will remember which horse won—but it really doesn't matter for "its just a great excuse to take some time away from work".

Geoff Bebb then had one of CJ Dennis's about when Trivalve won the Melbourne Cup in 1927. It was titled "I had the Money in m' Hand". This punter had the money in his hand to place his bet but with everyone is telling him what a hopeless runner it was and that it looks like a hairy goat he didn't place a bet. Much to his dismay the horse won and he still had the money in his hand.

When **Rusty Christensen** reminded us that the racing industry has the third highest employer but with the Equine Influenza the racing industry is in trouble. He presented "The Strapper" by Anon which tells of the little bloke who rakes and cleans out the boxes, travels miles between the races and gets the shine on the horses. Who remembers him when the horse wins and the owners are fat and prosperous but the strapper is a credit to his trade.

With "The Little Worn Out Pony" by Anon **Grace Williamson** gave a beautiful rendition of this common little pony with a strip down his nose, who saved the child when the cattle spooked with the lightening started to stampede and run towards the Hogans child. The little pony dashed out and saved the child who clung to his back as they out ran the cattle.

It was **Caroline Sambridge's** birthday and she did one of her own, "Birthday Blues". After visiting the Dentist and what with his drilling and the pain she couldn't talk properly. This was the first time that Caroline has done one of her own poems without using her word sheet. Well done.

Welcome to the city, **Corin Linch**, our visitor from Jurien. Corin has spent most of his life working in the country up north. With "The Colt from Old Regret" by Neil Macarthur we heard what happened to that horse that got away - or was it? They sent the horse to Sydney to be trained but they found that the mongrel wouldn't run. The trainer then gelded him and that seemed to help a bit. They entered him in a race and Clancy bet all his royalties on him. But they had drugged the horse up to the eyeballs that he got so paranoid that he turned and ran for the bush.

With his second, one of his own "Changing Places for the Good Life", he asks, why would you change this life of rolling your swag when its raining and the fire is all wet and you can't make a cup of tea. Or what about when the grounds all wet and boggy, and the meat has all been fly blown and you can't tell the currants from the flies. But the best part is knowing that the rain is filling all the dams.

There was a request by **Bob Chambers** for a book "North of the 28th". Written by a Kimberley stockman. **Can anyone help?** Bob did some of his stories about financial matters, camels living in the zoo and a talking rabbit.

With Paterson's "In the Droving Days", **John Hayes** told of the old grey stock horse that be bought because it reminded him of his days gone by. Their days filled with wondrous light and the dry sweet scent of the bush as they kept their watch in the cold and the damp. The drover buys the old tired and worthless horse to serve out his time sleek and fat on the homestead flat.

As a protest against the gambling that goes with the running of the CUP **Wayne Pantall** had his own "The Race that Stuffs the Nation". This race halts all production and takes food off the table as gambling addicted punters place their last dollars. The hideous hats along with the fashion in the field all look like they had a ball as they fall down and are right off their faces with drink. Their day turns into champagne, cheers, tears and beers.

Wally Williamson had "The Goanna" by GM Smith, in the month of August as they saddled up and rode across the plains they came across a big black goanna. The goanna ran towards the creek and then ran up the colt's back where he stuck in his claws and held on fast. The colt squealed and bucked and the saddlery burst as the horse rolled over onto that big black goanna and squashed him.

We then had three of our poets get together to present **John Hayes** new poem "Waterloo". John, Geoff and Brian took part in this presentation of a longish poem. This epic kept trying to get bigger and bigger but John reckons that he had to stop before it just got away from him. As everyone knows there is always a horse that will definitely be a winner, as long as he can keep his mind on the racing. But when that horse meets a high strung filly named Waterloo, his mind turns to other matters therefore hemeets his waterloo!!!

Brian Langley launched his second poetry booklet tonight. I know that other poet's wives and partners share this

with me as they listen to the struggles to put pen to paper and then sit through hours of rehearsing and THEN when there is enough material ready for a book you endure again as the birth of this book nears completion. I sincerely congratulate everyone who has ever written a book whether it be poetry or their own family story. The hat parade had 4 gentlemen and 7 ladies showing off their headgear. The Hayes family scooped the pool. Well done John and Anne.

After a lovely supper **John Baldock** did the readings from the classics. With a very long preamble about fox hunting I got a bit lost as it didn't seem to relate to this poem. The presentation then took up quite a bit of time. C.J Dennis's; "The Push" is about the soldiers sent to Egypt and the pride that they felt to be Australian and to be there amongst the fighting men. The changes that these men went through as they went from the rough and ready to become good cobblers and brothers through conflict.

Another new innovation tonight was **Geoff Bebb's** presentation of "The 1990 Railway Stakes". With a computer generated video presentation running in time to his poem, Geoff told us about the racing and punting tales of never betting on an outside barrier draw runner, as he will never win. But this horse did break all the rules and he beat the bookies with his jockey urging him on in a frenzy as he ran down the inside track to win. But he didn't back it coz you never bet on a horse from the outside barrier draw.

With his musical accompaniment **Keith (Cobber) Lethbridge** started his presentation and then did one of his own "Never Forget" about the men who died to keep this country free as they marched in desert heat. Don't forget the women folk who work on the farms and in the factories. Never forget the dark people who stood together black and white for some didn't come back. With silence at the dawn parade we will never forget.

We welcomed back featured guest **Corin Linch** with Murray Hartin's "Rain From Nowhere". This poem is a tribute to our folk on the farms who are suffering from drought and there just seems to be nowhere to go except to end it all. The desperation as the farmer takes a shower and kisses his family good night knowing he is going to end it all tonight with the aid of a shotgun. On the way though he stops at the mail box and finds a letter from his Dad telling him of his anguish when the farm wasn't doing very well. With a reminder that it's a cruel and wicked game but don't let the demon get to you son because you have to talk to someone. It seems that his Dad also contemplated ending it all but he heard his son calling him and he stopped. As he swallowed his pride and decided to give it another go, he heard in the distance a roll of thunder and smelt the rain coming.

With his second Corin gave us Will Ogilviey's "Harry Morant". The story about the Breaker who was a fantastic horseman, with his uncanny ability to take a green horse and control him with the hand of a master horseman. The breaker sleeps peacefully now but his memory still lives on.

He concluded with his own poem "Spirit of Australia" the story is about the people who opened up the Kimberley and carried their swags to become a fencer or a shearer. Where Paddy Hannan found gold, to the Fields of Flanders and on the Kokoda Track through Changi and Burma they faced hardship and you will find the spirit through out this wide land.

Beth Scott concluded the evening with her salute to the Melbourne Cup "Old McGinty's Goat". This goat when he saw the ladies in their special hats took off like a flash to where the horses were parading and as they started to run he joined in. He is always remembered to this day as the goat that won the Melbourne Cup

*** A challenge was issued to come up with appropriate words to help explain the night's entertainment with the horse as the focus point. Therefore with some 'Poetical' license I created the Equine words at the beginning of this wrap.

Dot Note This one is from Beth. Why are there more men poets than women poets? Well the answer is easy. It's because they have got more time!!

Boyup Brook

I know it's a bit early but you need to make sure that your diary has the Feb 14 - 17 2008 tagged. That is the weekend of the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival. As well as some of the states best Country Music Artists, there are a number of Bush Poetry events, an "open mic" on Saturday morning and the main event, the **Poets Breakfast** on the Sunday morning. This is WA's largest Bush Poetry event with over 1000 people attending in past years, a big crowd is expected for 2008. Bill Gordon tells me that accommodation is already booked out but there is some room on his property. Phone Bill on 9765 1098. Website www.countrymusicwa.com.au

A Recipe for Christmas Cheer. (from Dot)

Combine loads of good wishes.
Hearts full of love and arms full of hugs.
Sprinkle with laughter and garnish with food.
Top off with presents.
Serves everyone!

How's your Memory

Perhaps it's not too great, can't remember your lines. Well it may be that it's what goes into your stomach that is affecting it. Recent studies have found that mental wellbeing (including memory) is improved by eating food high in Omega 3 (eg fish) but can be diminished significantly if taking some medications, particularly those used for heart disease and severe pain

